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J. D. Brearley

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## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

For the realisation of the Restoration settlement of Church and State, it was essential that the central authorities received the co-operation of local officials who shared their aims and interests, and were prepared to re-establish and maintain order in the provinces. Cosin, Bishop of Durham, 1660-72, was the chief instrument of the government in the north-east of England. Within the Diocese he attempted to enforce universal compliance with the Church of England. As Lord-Lieutenant, he worked to maintain religious and political order and discipline. He did not regard himself as a government agent, but recognised the interdependence of the Church and the political order, believing neither could be strong if the other were weak. For his jurisdiction to be efficacious, the loyal service of similarly-minded ecclesiastical and secular deputies was imperative, as was the moral and military support of the gentry. Whilst the interests of the central government, the Church and the gentry seemed coincident, the complicated and finely-balanced arrangement could function successfully.

Cosin was dedicated and industrious. His single-mindedness and obstinacy was apparent. He believed in the righteousness of the restored social and political order. His conviction that Nonconformity threatened both the Church and State caused him

to undertake measures to eradicate religious opposition. He was never successful; the large Nonconformist element in Newcastle was a particular irritation to him. The possibility of political revolt was a constant fear. Its roots were discerned in religious unorthodoxy. Cosin acted promptly when an uprising seemed imminent in Durham in 1663 and later. In eliminating seditious designs and withstanding Dutch attack, he relied on gentry support. When Cosin proved that his allegiance to his interpretation of the privileges of the County Palatine and the position of the Bishop was greater than his regard for the gentry's demand for Parliamentary representation, the alliance was disrupted. His lasting success was in restoring the dignity of the Anglican Church and respect for the Bishop.

DISCIPLINE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN  
THE DIOCESE OF DURHAM, 1660-72.

Thesis submitted for the degree of M.A.  
at Durham University.

J. D. BREARLEY

JULY, 1974.

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PREFACE.

A restoration of the past has more emotional appeal than practical possibilities. Belief in, and reverence for, a past golden age recurs throughout history, particularly at times of uncertainty or political, social or economic change. Different groups with different ideals and interests have pointed to alternative past happier times and conditions. In 1660, the overwhelming desire of the country was to return to a state of political stability. Most Anglicans and Royalists wanted to revert to the secular and ecclesiastical forms of government which had been so abruptly disrupted since the outbreak of the Civil War. However, the events of the previous twenty years were of such momentous significance that inevitably permanent effects remained and coloured most aspects of life and thought. The settlement produced in the years after 1660 was a confused compromise; some reforms and changes were retained, others were abandoned, some which were nominally abolished were destined to reappear in a variety of different guises and some older forms and conditions were re-established. Religious and secular idealism and experiment seemingly had failed and were discredited and the country experienced a conservative and emotional reaction. The search for stability overrode the pursuit of principle. Nostalgic romanticising of

the past precipitated the restoration of the monarchy as the only conceivable alternative to the uncertainty and instability of the period before 1660, and the theoretical and practical identification of the king with the established social system and episcopal Church of England resulted in the expedient of their joint restoration.<sup>1</sup>

When John Cosin became Bishop of Durham in 1660, he faced a considerable task in re-asserting episcopal control and government, restoring the dignity and authority of the Church of England, establishing respect for it, enforcing conformity and suppressing political and religious opposition. As Bishop and as Lord-Lieutenant of Durham, he was the chief instrument of the central government in imposing the settlement of Church and State in the north-east. In the later seventeenth century, the authorities lacked the modern material paraphernalia of power, the means to effect decisions and programmes of government policy. Armies, prisons and methods of policing were inadequate and communications for publicity, propaganda and disseminating information were insufficient. The government's problem was how to govern the regions where power lay with great landowners and influential families rather than with

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1. See G.E. Aylmer, ed., 'The Interregnum. The Quest for Settlement, 1646-60' (London, 1972), especially 183-204; G. Davis, 'The Restoration of Charles II, 1658-60' (San Marino, 1955); D. Ogg, 'England in the Reign of Charles II' (2nd ed., 1956; rpr., London, 1972), 1-34.

bureaucrats. The solution was to harness the local strength of the Church and the gentry to assist the government. The Church and the gentry were the agents of the central authorities in the provinces for the essential duties of enforcing national laws and preserving order. There was no alternative to such a devolution of authority. But the government had to accommodate the interests of both for they could be unco-operative if the government's policies appeared to conflict with their own interests. Moreover, it was important that the ecclesiastical authorities and the gentry shared common aims. The system could only operate effectively so long as the interests of the parties coincided or were interdependent. After 1660, the gentry were anxious to eliminate religious dissent when it appeared to threaten order and political stability, whilst the Church recognised that Nonconformity weakened its own position. So long as religious dissent was associated with sedition, and recent experience suggested it menaced the social and political order, the government, the gentry and the ecclesiastical authorities combined to oppose it. Once Nonconformity proved that it had no treasonable designs, the Church found it increasingly difficult to retain the support of the secular powers for its attempts to enforce uniformity.

Unlike today, a few discontented men had not the means

at their disposal seriously to disrupt the political and religious settlement. But the very real and potent emotional fears generated by the activities of those unwilling to accept the Restoration markedly directed government policy in the decade after 1660. Idealism, sometimes laudable, can be exceptionally dangerous to any established order, particularly when such idealism is backed by a complete conviction of righteousness. When such idealism and religious enthusiasm become inextricably involved with political demands and economic grievances, it can assume a strong, threatening character. Such was the fear of the restored authorities that the Good Old Cause was not dead. That such a movement never developed sufficient cohesion or unity of purpose can only be recognised with the benefit of hindsight. Many contemporaries of different persuasions believed that it could. Much of the legislation which succeeded the Restoration was specifically designed to prevent the emergence of such an opposition, not as a result necessarily, of rancour or revenge, but rather for reasons of self-preservation. Probably many who would, theoretically, have tolerated a wider freedom of expression in religious matters retracted when confronted with the political consequences of religious extremism. So it was the refusal of the Quakers and others to comply with established social customs and norms, and not their doctrinal beliefs, which caused suspicion, apprehension and their persecution. As the

Church and the monarchy had become mutually dependent, had fallen together and been restored together, so to oppose one was to oppose and challenge the other. The Anglican ecclesiastics, who believed in enforcing conformity in religious practices and doctrines, after 1660 were in the fortunate position that their opponents were tainted with accusations of designs against the King, the government and the social order, even though this judgment was true only of a minority. Therefore conventicles, communal meetings of like-minded Nonconformists, were regarded as seedbeds of revolt, their members as conspirators and were forbidden. Such persecution was destined to fail as attitudes changed and time and example healed old wounds. Cosin believed sincerely that Nonconformity in its various forms should be deracinated and destroyed, as it was a cancer in the spiritual and secular body. During his episcopate he worked to this end.

It was an inadequate system upon which the government depended for the enforcement of law and implementation of policy. The depositions of informants were essential when there was no effective system of organised intelligence. The loyalty of the gentry was imperative. They had to be mobilised and deployed, principally in the militia system. Nor were government directives always consistent. The period between the Declaration of Breda and the enactment of the Clarendon

Code was one of confusion and uncertainty for many bodies outside the Anglican Church. It was no easy matter to eradicate practices which had become woven into the normal way of life of a significant minority of the population. During the 1660s, religious persecution was relieved sporadically, according to the current political climate. The government was compelled to use the localities and yet defer to them, and successful administration there rested upon relations with the leaders of the Church and the community. The office of Lord-Lieutenant was central to this, and was sometimes combined with episcopal authority, as in Durham after 1660, nominally acknowledging the tradition of political and religious quasi-independence.

The aim of this thesis is to examine to what extent the Restoration settlement was successfully imposed in the Diocese of Durham. The imposer was, essentially, the Bishop of Durham, John Cosin, from 1660 until his death in 1672. The work endeavours to assess the practical problems with which the Bishop was confronted, the degree to which they were surmountable and surmounted, and the factors which aided him and which worked against him. It does not attempt to provide a sociological or economic appraisal of the period. Nor does it examine Cosin's distinguished career as a theologian, his activities in Durham before the Civil War which compelled him to

leave, nor his private life. It does not survey the operations of the Bishop as a landlord or his relations with the Durham dean and chapter.<sup>1</sup> It looks at his attempts to restore ecclesiastical discipline and eliminate political and religious dissent.

Where does one begin to express one's thanks? I am greatly indebted to historians and librarians in Durham, Newcastle and London, too numerous to mention. I must particularly thank my supervisor, Dr. D.M. Loades, whose encouragement, advice and inspiration I value very much. I thank him for his meticulous reading and study of my work and his constant help. I owe so much to my parents for making this work possible. I must express gratitude to my friends for tolerating the moods, conversations and bizarre hours of work which accompanied the completion of this study.

The material contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other degree in any other university. Although many have influenced my work, particularly, as will be apparent, several key works, the content and interpretation involved is my own responsibility, and is the result of my own work.

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1. A wealth of material relevant to the period exists in Durham and London, and a great deal of work remains to be undertaken.

STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS  
(Details in Bibliography)

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| AA       | Archaeologia Aeliana  |
| Add      | Additional Manuscripts  |
| AHR      | American Historical Review  |
| BM       | British Museum  |
| CCB      | Common Council Book   |
| CLB. 1-5 | Cosin's Letter Books, Volumes 1-5   |
| C.S.P.D. | Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series   |
| CVB      | Cosin's Visitation Book   |
| Darnell  | W.N. Darnell, ed., 'The Correspondence of Isaac Basire, D.D., Archdeacon of Northumberland and Prebendary of Durham ...' (London, 1831) |
| DCCT     | J.C. Dewdney, ed., 'Durham County and City with Teesside' (Durham, 1970)  |
| DCL      | Durham Cathedral Library  |
| DCRO     | Durham County Record Office   |
| DCY      | J. Raine, ed., 'Depositions from the Castle of York ...' SS, vol.40 (1861)  |
| DI       | F. Bate, 'The Declaration of Indulgence ...' (London, 1908)   |
| DNB      | Dictionary of National Biography  |
| DUJ      | Durham University Journal   |
| DUL      | Durham University Library   |
| DUPD     | Durham University, Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic  |
| EHR      | English Historical Review   |
| Howell   | R. Howell, Jr., 'Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the Puritan Revolution ...' (Oxford, 1967)   |

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Hunter                 | Hunter Manuscripts  |
| Hutchinson             | W. Hutchinson, 'The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham', 3 vols. (Newcastle, 1785-94) |
| JEH                    | Journal of Ecclesiastical History   |
| JFHS                   | Journal of the Friends' Historical Society  |
| JHL                    | Journals of the House of Lords  |
| LAB                    | W.H.D. Longstaffe, ed., 'Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes', SS, vol.50 (1867)                      |
| Mickleton and Spearman | Mickleton and Spearman Manuscripts  |
| Miscellanea            | G. Ornsby and others, eds., 'Miscellanea', SS, vol.37 (1860)  |
| NCA                    | Newcastle City Archives   |
| NLC                    | C.E. Whiting, 'Nathaniel Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham 1674-1721 ...' (London, 1940)                         |
| Ornsby                 | G. Ornsby, ed., 'The Correspondence of John Cosin ...' 2 vols, SS, 52 (1868), 55 (1870)                     |
| Osmond                 | P.H. Osmond, 'A Life of John Cosin, Bishop of Durham, 1660-72' (London, 1913)                               |
| PCR                    | Privy Council Register  |
| PRO                    | Public Record Office  |
| PSAN                   | Proceedings of the Society of Antiquities, Newcastle-upon-Tyne  |
| QB                     | W.C. Braithwaite, 'The Beginnings of Quakerism', (London, 1912)   |
| Q2                     | W.C. Braithwaite, 'The Second Period of Quakerism', (London, 1919)  |

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| RH        | Recusant History  |
| SEP       | C.E. Whiting, 'Studies in English Puritanism from the Restoration to the Revolution, 1660-88', (London, 1931) |
| Sharp     | Sharp Manuscripts   |
| SP Dom/29 | State Papers, Domestic Series, Charles II   |
| SS        | Publications of the Surtees Society, Durham   |
| Surtees   | R. Surtees, 'The history and antiquities of the county palatine of Durham ...', 4 vols. (London, 1816-40)     |
| TAPS      | Transactions of the American Philosophical Society  |
| TCWAS     | Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society                         |
| TRHS      | Transactions of the Royal Historical Society  |
| VCH       | W. Page, ed., 'The Victoria County History of Durham', 3 vols. (London, 1905-28)                              |

NOTE CONCERNING DATES

Two methods of calculating the calendar year were in use in Western Europe during the seventeenth century. Most countries had adopted the New Style - the revised calendar of Gregory XIII (1582). Until 1752, Britain retained the Old Style, or Julian calendar, which meant that its dates were ten days behind those of the rest of Europe. For most legal purposes until 1752, the new year in England was held to begin on Lady Day, March 25th.

The dates in this work are given in the Old Style, although the year is taken to begin on January 1st.

NOTE CONCERNING MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscript quotations usually follow the original spelling. Archaic spellings of common words have been modernised. Abbreviated words have been extended where necessary.

NEWCASTLE

'Newcastle' throughout refers to Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

RESTORATION SONG

The country doth bow  
 To old justices now,  
 That long aside hath been lain;  
 The bishop's restored,  
 God is rightly adored,  
 And the king enjoys his own again.

Fanatics, be quiet,  
 And keep a good diet,  
 To cure your crazy brain;  
 Throw off your disguise,  
 Go to church and be wise,  
 For the king bears not the sword in vain.

Let faction and pride  
 Be now laid aside,  
 That truth and peace may reign;  
 Let every one mend,  
 And there is an end,  
 For the king bears not the sword in vain.

A Country Song, Entitled 'The Restoration',  
 (1661), verses 3,9,10.<sup>1</sup>

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1. S.E. Prall, ed., 'The Puritan Revolution: A Documentary History', (London, 1969), 284-6.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND SECULAR ADMINISTRATION OF BISHOP COSIN

I

In 1302, the steward of Antony Bek, Bishop of Durham, claimed that there were

two Kings in England, namely the Lord King of England wearing a crown in sign of his regality, and the Lord Bishop of Durham wearing a mitre in place of a crown in sign of his regality in the diocese of Durham.<sup>1</sup>

The independent legal history of the County Palatine of Durham was largely curtailed by the Jurisdiction of Liberties Act of 1536, but the Bishop retained particular powers until 1836.<sup>2</sup> Although in 1646 the Palatinate was abolished and after 1654 Durham enjoyed the same legal position as all other counties, at the Restoration Bishop Cosin reverted to his judicial privileges and the County Palatine resumed its rights and practices which remained.<sup>3</sup> No feudal rights were revived but, for the loss of such privileges, the Bishop was compensated with a financial payment.<sup>4</sup> As an important temporal lord and great landowner, the

- 
1. Quoted by K. Emsley in DCCT, 181.
  2. For the legal history of Durham, see G.T. Lapsley, 'The County Palatine of Durham. A study in constitutional history', (New York, 1900); hereinafter referred to as 'Lapsley'.
  3. Lapsley, 199-200.
  4. Osmond, 250-1; Hutchinson, I, 539.

Bishop's prestige was still impressive and in the later seventeenth century Roger North said that at

Durham the bishop entertained, who is a sort of sovereign, or count palatine, there, but much shrunk below the ancient authority and dignity. All process of law is original, without dependence on London.<sup>1</sup>

At the end of the century, Spearman outlined the judicial rights and practices of the Bishop of Durham, with special reference to Cosin, and argued against the continuance of his secular position, which, he claimed, was prejudicial to the welfare of the County and anachronistic.<sup>2</sup> Like previous and subsequent Bishops, Cosin lived in considerable splendour in his castle at Durham and the episcopal palace at Auckland. His singular pre-eminent position in the north-east was enhanced by his appointment as Lord-Lieutenant of the county and, as Count Palatine, his nomination as ex-officio Custos Rotulorum. It is essential to examine his ecclesiastical, secular and judicial functions and in what manner he exercised them.

The Diocese of Durham was widespread and generally sparsely populated, interspersed with a number of small towns, many villages and some embryonic industrial centres. It was, however, one of the

- 
1. Quoted in A. Browning, ed., 'English Historical Documents', vol.8, 1660-1714 (London, 1953), 446-7.
  2. J. Spearman, 'An Enquiry into the Ancient and Present State of the County Palatine of Durham' (written in 1697, and published Edinburgh, 1729). Part contained in Mickleton and Spearman MSS, vol.91, f.15.

wealthiest sees in England. The Bishop of Durham's palatinate jurisdiction extended over County Durham, the familiar area between the Tyne and the Tees, and the earldom of Sadberge, the areas north of the Tyne known as Northhamshire, Islandshire and Bedlingtonshire, and the Yorkshire manor of Crayke and the peculiars of Northallertonshire and Howdenshire. The Diocese of Durham, and therefore the Bishop's ecclesiastical authority, extended also over the remaining parts of Northumberland, with the exception of Hexhamshire, which came under the direct ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Archbishop of York, and the parish of Alston, in Cumberland.<sup>1</sup> Durham City was the episcopal administrative centre of the Diocese and was said to be 'a noble place and the aire so clear and healthy that persons Enjoy much health and pleasure'.<sup>2</sup> Newcastle was the largest town in the Diocese and the most spectacular of the provincial centres. It owed its eminence to its strategic and commercial importance, and already had a distinctive character and tradition of independence. Like Durham, its buildings were aesthetically pleasing,

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1. NLC, 47-54, 60-2. For a full geographical and economic appraisal of the diocese in the later seventeenth century, see C.E. Whiting, 'The Bishopric of Durham in the days of Bishop Crewe', DUJ, vol.30 (1936-8), 439-463; for the economy of northern England after 1660, see D. Ogg, 'England in the Reign of Charles II' (2nd ed., 1956, rpr. London, 1972), 46-50, 78.
  2. C. Fiennes, 'Through England on a Side Saddle in the time of William and Mary' (London, 1888), 182; see also W.J. Kaye, 'A Londoner's Visit to Durham in 1705', DUJ, 28 (1932-4), 116-24.

and its economy was vital and expanding.<sup>1</sup>

Cosin endured seventeen years in exile during the Civil War and Commonwealth periods, devoting his time and energies to ministering to Anglican and Royalist fugitives and becoming involved in controversies and debates which played a decisive part in defining and preserving the character of the Church of England.<sup>2</sup> He became one of the dominant leaders of the group of exiled ecclesiastics gathered around the displaced royal court in France, and his writings ensured his recognition as an outstanding Anglican theologian and apologist. Cosin and Morley emerged as the leaders of the banished Church, and their hardships, sufferings and unswerving loyalty became a recommendation for preferment in 1660.<sup>3</sup> In its antipathy towards the anarchical situation in England, the Anglican Church moved towards an uncompromising emphasis on episcopal church government. Cosin played a significant part in this maintenance of Laudian principles. The identification of the Church of England with the Royalist cause was affirmed and strengthened, and the

- 
1. C. Fiennes, see above, 176; NCL, 49-51; Howell, 1-34; W. Gray, 'Chorographia, or A Survey of Newcastle upon Tyne' (Newcastle, 1649, rpr. 1970); E. Mackenzie, 'A Historical and Descriptive view of the County of Northumberland and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne' (Newcastle, 1811), II, 611-2.
  2. Osmond, chapter 5; Ornsby, I, xxxiii-xxxix.
  3. W.G. Simon, 'The Restoration Episcopate' (New York, 1965), 25; for Morley, see DNB and Packer, see note below, passim.

writings of Cosin and his associates ensured that, with the restoration of the monarchy, the Church would be restored on the foundations of episcopacy and the Book of Common Prayer.<sup>1</sup>

Cosin was consecrated Bishop of Durham on December 2nd, 1660, was enthroned by proxy on the 8th, and received the temporalities on the 14th of that month.<sup>2</sup> He was already a well-known figure in the Diocese, having been domestic chaplain to Richard Neile, Bishop of Durham (1617-27), Master of Greatham Hospital and tenth prebendary in the cathedral since 1624.<sup>3</sup> During his subsequent career in the Diocese, he had also held a benefice at Elswick and had been rector of Brancepeth, where he first exercised his taste for ornamental extravagance.<sup>4</sup> As a prebendary at Durham, he had become renowned among the Church party, and notorious in the less sympathetic eyes of the Puritan element in the Diocese and the country. He was both praised and condemned for his theoretical and practical support of the High Church policies of Archbishop Laud, and their emphasis upon ritual and ceremony, order and uniformity. He was also known

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1. J.W. Packer, 'The Transformation of Anglicanism, 1643-1660', (Manchester, 1969), 127, 157, and see also, 72-3.
  2. Hutchinson, I, 532.
  3. VCH, II, 43; Hutchinson, I, 533; Osmond, 15.
  4. Hutchinson, *ibid*; Osmond, 15, 19.

for his fastidious checking, compilation and preservation of the rights, privileges and history of the cathedral church. This had ultimately led, in the years preceding the ascendancy of the Long Parliament and the outbreak of the Civil War, to the sustained opposition and profound animosity of the Puritan party, and an increasingly vituperative personal campaign against him and his activities.<sup>1</sup>

Cosin was in his mid-sixties when appointed to the see of Durham, but, despite his age, many personal sorrows and anxieties, and the increasing severity of a chronic, painful disease, he directed all his efforts to the rehabilitation of the Church for which he had struggled and suffered. During the final years of his life, he was compelled to remain in London as his health deteriorated, and was unable to fulfil his intention to return to his Diocese. He died of pectoral dropsy on January 15th, 1672.<sup>2</sup> There is ample evidence that his physical condition was almost permanently infirm during his episcopate, resulting from strangury and successive stages of a dropsical condition, which was relieved for short periods. In March, 1663, he wrote to Miles Stapylton, his auditor, secretary and commissioner resident

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1. For Cosin's earlier career at Durham, see Osmond, chapters 1-4; D. Nicholson, 'John Cosin, 1595-1672', *DUJ*, 28 (1932-4), 288-94; Ornsby, I, x-xxxiii; *VCH*, II, 43-9.
  2. Osmond, 298.

at Durham that he did

not mend so fast as you and others may imagine,  
for though the swelling of my leggs be abated,  
yet the weaknes of them continueth still, and  
the shortnes of my breath will not leave me,

adding that he was

beginning to learne how I can goe a little abroad  
and endure the coach, having ventured to creep in  
it to Durham, for the setting of the Militia there,  
but returned very sore and weary.<sup>1</sup>

His deep and genuine religious beliefs and intense  
personal faith were a great strength to him throughout his  
life and enabled him to surmount adversities. His principles  
were unbending, and his conviction of the righteousness of the  
Church of England had been unshaken by events, by the debates  
concerning doctrine and discipline or by his personal scrutinous  
investigations. His personal appearance was described as

tall and unbending under the weight of years, of  
an open manly demeanour, with even some mixture  
of country plainness and occasional asperity of  
manner, of a commanding presence, and a countenance  
in which frankness and dignity were mingled, yet  
somewhat verging, if we may trust his portraits,  
towards severity.<sup>2</sup>

His impulsive irritability and sardonic irascibility, apparent  
particularly in his letters to Stapylton, were tempered by an  
endearing, though sometimes incisive, humour, sarcasm, and

- 
1. Ornsby, II, 103-4; see also *ibid*, xxxvii-xxxix, 153, and Surtees, I, cxiii.
  2. Surtees, I, cxiii.

simple generosity. He was also liable to occasional expressions of vanity and vaingloriousness.<sup>1</sup>

Faith alone would not destroy the mountains Cosin hoped to move; he needed the help of fellow clerics and members of the gentry. Apparently, Cosin was popular, initially, among the majority of the gentry in the Diocese, who were eager to demonstrate their loyalty to the restored regime, and whose support and encouragement were essential for the fulfilment of his ambitions for the Diocese. During the march south of General Monck, a riot in Durham demanded the return of the King and the election of a free Parliament, and men of influence demonstrated their loyalties.<sup>2</sup> At about the same time, a petition to Parliament, signed by over sixteen hundred of the Knights, gentlemen and inhabitants of the County Palatine of Durham, lamented the past wars and their consequent sufferings, which had not only deprived them of their ancient rights and privileges, but also of 'our spirituall Comfort' when the Church was abolished.<sup>3</sup> It regretted that

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1. See Ornsby, II, passim, and 'The Correspondence of Miles Stapylton', in J.C. Hodgson, ed., 'Northumbrian Documents', Part II, SS, vol.131 (1918), 134-267, passim.
  2. VCH, II, 53.
  3. DCL; Hunter MSS, vol.7, f.38. This document is undated. See also Surtees, I, cxxxix.

our adversaries have endeavoured the utter overthrow and extirpation of the true protestant religion established by law in the Church of England, which far surmounts all our temporall losses And outward sufferings whatsoever, Occasioning thereby the leprous spreading of Heresies, sects and schisms,

and implored not only the restoration of

our former rights in the enjoyment of our Liberties and priviledges belonginge to our said Church and County Palatine, but also that ancient Church Government by Bishops, Deans and Chapters, which is and was established by law.

Similarly, in May, 1660, the town of Newcastle submitted a loyal address to the King, expressing the hope that he would be instrumental in uniting a divided Church, settling a distracted kingdom and easing an oppressed people. Royalist tracts circulated in the town after the Restoration, expressing joy at the King's return and emphasising Newcastle's steadfast faithfulness during the entire interregnum.<sup>1</sup> Howell stresses the pragmatic attitude of Newcastle, which caused the town to move with events rather than to attempt to direct or oppose them.<sup>2</sup>

Cosin was greeted with great enthusiasm when he reached the Bishopric and received the ancient falchion of the Conyers, the traditional symbol of regality. On August 22nd, 1661,

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1. C.S.P.D., 1660-1, 4; Howell, 211-3.

2. Howell, 209-13, 217, 337-8.

he wrote:

The confluence and alacritie both of the gentry, clergie, and other people was very great; and at my first entrance through the river of Tease there was scarce any water to be seene for the multitude of horse and men that filled it, when the sword that killed the dragon was delivered to me with all the formality of trumpets and gunshots and acclamations that might be made.<sup>1</sup>

He added, however, that he was 'not much affected with such showes', although he did acknowledge with some pleasure the cheerfulness of his reception. He immediately concerned himself with his spiritual and temporal duties, and within a month of his return wrote that:

I am so full here of the Bishopricks affayres, that I have not the least leisure for any thing els.<sup>2</sup>

He held a number of confirmations at which large congregations gathered, many of whom would have been unfamiliar with the rite, and at Newcastle he noted that

the number of people at the Sermon was no lesse than 3 or 4 thousand.

This was followed by an ordination and a deliberative

Synode of the Clergie, one at Durham and another at Newcastle; where I shall preach among them, and put them in some order, if by any fayre meanes I can.<sup>3</sup>

1. Ornsby, II, 21.
2. *ibid*, II, 31.
3. *ibid*, VIII, 31, 35-6.

A formidable task confronted Cosin in repairing the damage of the previous twenty years, which had made a permanent impression on the architectural splendours, the social characteristics and the spiritual condition of the Diocese. Damage to church fabrics was more the result of neglect than iconoclasm and the ravages of war. He desired a restoration of the beauty of the churches, the dignified status of worship and ceremony, and a reaffirmation of faith. He believed that order and uniformity could best be re-established by exalting the virtues of episcopal government, restoring the rights and practices of a Prince Bishop in their entirety, and ensuring a scrupulous pastoral and spiritual government of an orthodox laity. Isaac Basire, the Archdeacon of Northumberland, noted in one of his memorandum-books:

The Archdeaconry of Northumberland will take up a whole man: 1st, to reform the persons; 2d, to repair the churches.<sup>1</sup>

The achievement of the second of these objectives was to be the Bishop's most lasting tangible memorial.

In Cosin's survey of the Bishopric of Durham in 1662, many personal observations in his own handwriting, comments and queries concerning uncertainties in his income, demonstrate him to have been a most careful and thorough landlord, remarkably

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1. Darnell, 207.

well-acquainted with the County and his rights.<sup>1</sup> It reveals the acutely dilapidated condition of many of his properties. In the manor of Auckland in Darlington ward, he recorded bitterly that the episcopal castle,

built of old by Anthony Beke and other Bishops but of late ruined and almost utterly destroyed by the ravenous sacrilege of Sir Arthur Haselrig.<sup>2</sup>

He had already authorised its repair 'to his great cost', and he described the construction of a new chapel, the restorations being, he claimed,

better, fayrer, and more commodious than they were in all other Bishops times before.

He had found that Stockton Castle had been totally ruined in the time of the late rebellion. And now nothing is left there but a few broken stones, which may serve to be employed and exchanged towards the Reparations of the Bishop's other houses at Durham, Aukland and Darlington.<sup>3</sup>

Despite this melodrama and pessimism, Cosin organised the virtual reconstruction of the chapel at Auckland and repairs

1. DCL; Sharp MSS, vol.167.
2. Sharp, 167; f.1. Haslerig, or Hesilrige, had purchased the manors of Auckland, Easingwood and Wolsingham when the see had been officially dissolved, and the lands and houses of the Bishop of Durham sold. He became Parliamentary governor of Newcastle and sat on various governmental committees; see Howell, 187-8 and passim, and DNB.
3. Sharp, 167; 151.

to the palace, the enlargement and enrichment of Durham Castle, the reconstruction of his house at Darlington, the building of a library adjoining the exchequer on Palace Green in Durham and other schemes. All were ornately decorated and furnished according to his detailed directions. Cosin was proud of his building enterprises, and through them sought the spiritual regeneration of the Diocese.<sup>1</sup> He was extremely fond of his library, which he always kept a careful watch over and which was richly-stocked with books and systematically ordered.<sup>2</sup> In 1664, he instituted the reconstruction of the guildhall in Durham, and the repair of the courts of justice, the exchequer and the court of chancery.<sup>3</sup> In a statement of his expenses 'in the Repayres of his Castles, and in other charitable uses' between 1660 and 1668, £ 41,885 had been spent, which included the restoration of the fabric of his residences, the re-establishment of schools and hospitals, presentations to churches and the cathedral, and donations for the relief of various distressed persons.<sup>4</sup>

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1. For his work of reconstruction, see Hutchinson, I, 538-9; Ornsby, II, 171-4, 356-83.
  2. DUL; Mickleton and Spearman MSS, vol.91; f.66 is a copy of the charter of the Foundation of the Library by Cosin.
  3. W. Fordyce, 'History of Durham', (Newcastle, 1857), I, 202.
  4. Ornsby, II, 171-4.

Cosin's Visitation Articles of 1662, which were used again in 1665 and 1669, demonstrate the importance which he attached to this function. They also show his particular interests.<sup>1</sup> The articles were presented to the churchwardens and parochial officials in every parish. They were responsible for the care and repair of the parish church and church property, the provision of all essentials for services and worship, the detailed accounting of all parochial income and expenditure, and the presentment of all parishioners guilty of offences within the cognisance and jurisdiction of the church courts.<sup>2</sup> The questions in the articles were divided into eight sections. The first two sections concerned the fabric and furnishings of the church, the condition of the churchyard, parsonage, almshouses, glebe and the receipt of tithes. The Bishop asked detailed questions concerning the condition of the church, many of which illustrate his emphasis upon Laudian principles which

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1. Hunter, 11; 80; see also J. Rogan, 'Episcopal Visitations in the Diocese of Durham, 1662-71', AA, 4th Series, vol.34 (1956), 92-109, hereinafter referred to as 'Rogan', and to which I am particularly indebted for references.
  2. E. Trotter, 'Seventeenth Century Life in the Country Parish', (Cambridge, 1919), 17-41; see also F.C. Mackarness, 'Prideaux's Practical Guide to the Duties of Churchwardens', (16th ed., London, 1895), J. Addy, 'The Archdeacon and Ecclesiastical Discipline in Yorkshire, 1598-1714, Clergy and the Churchwardens', (York, 1963), and C. Drew, 'Early Parochial Organisation in England. The origins of the office of Churchwarden', (London, 1954).

had generally been abandoned during the previous twenty years. He examined the survival of chancel screens in the church, the positioning of the table in the upper part of the church for the ministration of the Lord's Supper, the availability of Communion vessels, the provision of Bibles and Prayer Books and the incumbent's vestments. In the third section of the articles some important questions were asked:

Is your Minister, parson or vicar a Deacon or a priest ordeyned by a Bishop according to the Lawes of the Church of England?

The Bishop had to confirm the authenticity and orthodoxy of the resident minister, and inquired:

... did he within two moneths after his Induction publicly read in your Church upon some Sunday or Holy Day in the time of Divine Service, and in the audience of his parishioners, all the 39 Articles of Religion set forth and established in the Church of England by authority? And did he then profess and publish his assent unto them all, subscribing his name thereunto in the presence of the Churchwardens and other persons of your parish who can beare witness of the same?

Cosin further questioned whether the incumbent carefully observed the Book of Common Prayer 'without ommission, addition or alteration', and added to underline the importance of the point, 'using all the Rites and Ceremonies appointed in that Booke'. The articles went into considerable detail concerning the observation of holy days, fasting and correct attire, and went on to scrutinise the sincerity, industry and fidelity of the minister to Church of England doctrine and practices,

to the exclusion of all others.

'Doth he preach unfeigned faith, and obedience to God's Knowne Commandments, submission and loyalty to the King, and his Lawes, together with true Christian piety, and Charity among the people?' 'And hath he not at any time ... preached any false, hereticall, seditions or schismaticall doctrine in his sermons, whereby the people may be led into severall sorts, and factions against the peace and unity of the Church?'

Such questions were central to the problem of enforcing uniformity within an exclusive Anglican Church, and a true son of that Church was expected to undertake some missionary work in promoting orthodoxy and enforcing compliance.

'Doth your minister endeavour to reclayme all popish Recusants, and other sectaries inhabiting within your parish, to the unitie, obedience, and true Religion established in the Church of England?'

The moral conduct of the minister was of importance to the Bishop who required to know details of his period of residence, his availability to parishioners, the quality of the company he kept, and whether he was involved in any 'mechanical trade', unfitting to the dignity of his office.

The personal conduct of the parishioners was similarly examined by the connected measures of moral behaviour and orthodoxy. Cosin asked whether any were known to be of bad moral character, who 'hath committed Adultery, fornication or incest', or were, or were harbouring such as were, 'unclean and filthy talkers or any sowers of sedition, faction and

discord among their neighbours'. In addition to ensuring that none worked on a Sunday, that all attended Church and conducted themselves respectfully there, kneeling for prayers, standing for the Creed and responding to the psalms, and that all had their children baptised and received the Lord's Supper, the Bishop demanded:

'Is there in your parish any person who is commonly knowne, or reputed to be a heretick, or schismatick, any papist, formolist, Anabaptist, Independent, Quaker or other sectarie that refuse to come unto the publick assemblies of the Church or that make profession of any other Religion, than what is established in the Church of England, and if there be any such what are their names?'

The articles scrutinised the credentials and activities of parish clerks and sextons, reminding them of their duties and obligations, and of curates, schoolmasters, physicians and midwives, demanding evidence of their diligence and industry and proof of their licence to act as such. Schools were required to receive official sanction and to function according to strict regulations. The officials of ecclesiastical courts were obliged to prove their appointment and qualifications, and parochial officials were examined for their legitimacy and assiduity.

To the primary purpose of the articles as an instrument of investigation and for the bringing to justice of offenders, was added its secondary function as a reminder to the churchwardens and their associates of their duties, and as a clarification

of such. It was also designed as an exercise to demonstrate the omnipresence and omnipotence of the ecclesiastical authorities. The parochial officials were reminded that they were required to present a complete reply as the 'chief meanes whereby publick disorders, sinnes and offences in your parish may be reformed and punished'. They were severely warned that any omissions or perjury in the returns would result in proceedings against them being undertaken in the ecclesiastical courts.

Increasingly, during the later seventeenth century, the machinery of ecclesiastical jurisdiction was declining in efficacy; both the will driving it and the effectiveness of its implementation in the courts was declining.<sup>1</sup> The evidence for this is provided, in part, by the growing practice of presenting nil returns to the visitation articles, which are valueless as an indication of the spiritual condition of a parish, but demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the system, particularly when such returns are neither followed up nor questioned. Any campaign waged through the ecclesiastical courts, like that against nonconformist sects, was crucially dependent upon the active co-operation of the local incumbent and the churchwardens.<sup>2</sup> At a time when communications were

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1. K.V. Thomas, 'Religion and the Decline of Magic. Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England'. (London, 1971), 263.

2. *ibid*, 261.

improving, a continuing conviction in the necessity and righteousness of ecclesiastical control and government should have enhanced its efficacy. Surviving returns of the diocesan visitations of 1662 and 1665, contained in Cosin's Visitation Book, show that the Bishop was presented with many examples of nil returns in 1662.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes he was able to record 'omnia bene' in the parish, as at Cockfield, Croxdale, Esh and Muggleswick. However, clearly, this often failed to satisfy the authorities, and in many parishes the churchwardens were presented for negligence in preparing their returns and accounts, including Bishopwearmouth, Chester-le-Street, Netherwitton, Tweedmouth and Witton-le-Wear.<sup>2</sup> In 1665, the proceedings following the first visitation had probably had some effect, for there were fewer presentations of nil returns or of churchwardens.<sup>3</sup> Some parishes like Escomb, Newbiggen, Shilbottle and Trimdon made no presentations, but on fewer occasions were churchwardens presented, as they were at Chatton and Doddington and Rothbury.<sup>4</sup> In many parishes with nil returns or with the churchwardens presented in 1662, quite full replies were made

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1. See Appendix, Table A.

2. DUPD; CVB, 101 v, 108, 99 v, 168, 169 v, 159, 165.

3. See Appendix, Table B.

4. CVB, 20, 54, 61-2, 69 v, 57.

in 1665, as at Netherwitton, Tweedmouth, Muggleswick and Bishopwearmouth.<sup>1</sup>

The visitation returns often told less about the spiritual condition of the parish than about the diligence and application of the churchwardens and parochial officials. They revealed their particular concerns and idiosyncrasies and personal interpretation of offences. The emphasis was variously laid upon papists, nonconformists, Quakers, non-attendance at the parish church, failure to take Holy Communion or refusal to pay church dues.<sup>2</sup> Presentations of papists, popish recusants and recusants was the most common offence and often achieved high numbers.<sup>3</sup> Non-attendance at the parish church accounted for the majority of citations on other occasions; in 1662, thirty were presented for such at Easington, twelve at Bishop Middleham, sixteen at Garragill and eleven at Norham.<sup>4</sup> Failure to take Holy Communion was sometimes the chief offence; in 1665, fifteen were presented for such at Stainton, twelve at Warkworth and twenty-four at Lamesley.<sup>5</sup> Lists of previously

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1. CVB, 54, 56-56 v, 82, 72 v-74 v.
  2. See also Rogan, 94-101, and for Nonconformity, below 95-6.
  3. See Appendix, Tables A, B and C.
  4. CVB, 97 v, 106, 123, 164.
  5. *ibid*, 9, 36 v, 79 v.

excommunicated persons occurred in 1665, and there were twenty-six cited at Norton, thirteen at Auckland, St. Andrew and four at Warkworth, with no indication of their denomination or offence.<sup>1</sup> Many were presented for their failure to pay dues owed to the church, probably for a variety of reasons; in 1665, twenty-nine were cited at Auckland, St. Andrew, seventeen at Haydon, twenty-seven at Kirkharle and at Bishopwearmouth seventy-two had withheld their Easter dues.<sup>2</sup> Very high figures and detailed presentations, as at Berwick, doubtless were expressive of the diligence or over-enthusiasm of the local officials, rather than of a particularly obdurate or morally corrupt parish. Comparison of overall figures in 1662 and 1665, show no alarming increase or recognisable decline in offences. The disorganised and uncertain state of affairs in 1662 would have distorted the figures, and in 1665 greater care would have been taken not to offend the Bishop.<sup>3</sup>

Sabbath-breaking was frequently a cause of presentment; eleven were presented at Billingham in 1665, eleven at Gateshead in 1662, whilst in the same year, the churchwardens of All Saints', Newcastle, cited fifteen persons for variously misbehaving in the churchyard, being irreverent during the service,

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1. CVB, 11, 17 v, 36 v.
  2. *ibid*, 18, 33-33 v, 43 v, 74 v.
  3. See Appendix, Tables A, B and C.

drinking during the sermon and being incorrectly dressed.<sup>1</sup> Offenders were presented for illegal and clandestine marriages, as were ten at Auckland, St. Andrew, and eight at Bishopwearmouth in 1665, and there were occasional cases of burials which contravened the regulations, probably by Quakers, as at Medomsley and Staindrop.<sup>2</sup> It was an offence to fail to have children baptised or confirmed or not to visit church to give thanksgiving after childbirth; in 1662, eight at Medomsley, three at St. Oswald's, Durham, and, in 1665, three at Hartburn and a further five at Medomsley were presented for having unbaptised children.<sup>3</sup> Being unlicensed schoolteachers, physicians and midwives were common offences, and there were many cases of fornication, adultery and bearing illegitimate children.<sup>4</sup> Drunkards, gossips and scolds were cited for their excesses.

Individual cases provide some interesting indications of life in the parishes. Six persons were presented in Whittingham in 1662 for taking the Book of Common Prayer from the hands of the minister and assailing him with abusive language,

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1. CVB, 8 v, 93, 156 v-158.
  2. *ibid*, 18, 72 v, 94 v, 120 v, 81.
  3. *ibid*, 94 v, 114 v, 40, 80 v.
  4. See Appendix, Tables A and B.

and the same year in Norham fourteen were accused of having gone fishing on a Sunday. One parishioner in Bedlington in 1662 did not kneel at the name of Jesus, and in Hartlepool, in 1665, fourteen people behaved badly inside the parish church. In 1662, four were presented for stealing lead, bells and stone from the parish church at Alnmouth, and in 1665 Lord Grey was the only presentation for his refusal to repair the church at Belford, which was in a seriously decayed condition.<sup>1</sup> Offences were as various as dancing, playing cards and playing football on a Sunday, sowing sedition and discord among neighbours, abusing the churchwardens and holding a fair in the churchyard. If the parochial officials had scrupulously followed the Bishop's instructions, life would have been difficult both for parishioners and the church courts.

Cosin was, in many respects, successful in reviving an authoritative Church, firmly entrenched in positions of spiritual and secular power, although the permanence of such an institution, regulating society and re-establishing a system which had broken down during the previous twenty years, was dependent upon his character and industry, or that of one like him.<sup>2</sup> However, the

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1. CVB, 151, 164 v, 154 v, 24, 147, 58.

2. M.E. James, 'The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in DCCT, 223.

exclusive nature of the Restoration Church settlement and the sacrifice of comprehension also worked, in the long-term, against Cosin and his like. The agents of the official Church had to devote their energies towards the exclusion rather than the inclusion, of large numbers of the laity. The doctrinal rigidity of the Anglican hierarchy ensured the eventual recognition of parallel sects which existed.<sup>1</sup> Cosin achieved a large measure of temporary success because of the reaction against religious fanaticism and controversy, and the desire for order among many of the influential sections of society, who were prepared to support him. But the seeds of ultimate failure were sown in the efforts he had to employ for the persecution of papists and sectaries to the detriment of the spiritual and pastoral care of the Diocese. What success he had owed much to his deputies, Isaac Basire, Archdeacon of Northumberland, and Denis Granville, Archdeacon of Durham.

Isaac Basire, having been chaplain to Bishop Morton since 1632, already knew Durham when he returned to England from Transylvania at the Restoration.<sup>2</sup> On receipt of the King's dispensation, he was restored to all his preferments, his prebendal stall at Durham, the rectory of Egglecliffe,

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1. I.D. Jones, 'The English Revolution, 1603-1714', (London, 1931; rpr. 1966), 124-5.

2. Darnell, iii.

the archdeaconry of Northumberland, and he was appointed rector of Stanhope.<sup>1</sup> He was a pious and learned man and extremely industrious with regard to his duties as archdeacon, undertaking two visitations of the archdeaconry every year, in spring and autumn, on horseback, until with his health failing, he needed to be assisted by his son after 1670.<sup>2</sup> Early in 1662, he wrote to Cosin, enclosing a copy of the articles he had prepared for a visitation of the Northumberland parishes, requesting their speedy return for he had learned that many buildings were in a ruined condition and many incumbents were without 'canonicall ordination', both of which must be remedied as soon as possible.<sup>3</sup> He always treated his Bishop with respect and deference, asked for his advice and guidance, and served Cosin admirably in an important sphere of diocesan work.

Denis Granville, archdeacon, and subsequently dean of Durham, married Anne, Cosin's daughter, in 1662. The marriage was to cause the Bishop much vexation and personal anguish when Granville deserted his wife and publicly declared her mental instability, which Cosin always denied.<sup>4</sup> Although he was

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1. Hunter, 9; 99; Darnell, 202.

2. Darnell, 207.

3. Hunter, 9; 109; printed in Ornsby, II, 87-8.

4. J.C. Hodgson, ed., 'Northumbrian Documents', SS, 131 (1918), 210n.

furnished with vast ecclesiastical preferment by his father-in-law, he was constantly in financial difficulties which culminated in his arrest, was guilty of lavish expenditure to Cosin's acute embarrassment, and was frequently absent from his benefices, spending a great deal of time in social and literary circles in London and Oxford. He was installed as first prebendary in the cathedral in September, 1662, became archdeacon of Durham and rector of Easington the same year, in 1664 became rector of Elwick, which, in 1667, he resigned on obtaining the rectory of Sedgefield, and in 1668 he was removed to the second, or 'Golden', stall in the cathedral. Despite his failings he was a man of religious principle and threw himself into the work of reconstruction and acted with zeal in his several positions, except for his occasional lapses of residence. His visitation inquiries reflected his patron's vigour and determination, and are detailed and exacting. As archdeacon, his aims and policies coincided with Cosin's and furthered his work.<sup>1</sup>

It was essential to Cosin's aims of the restoration of ecclesiastical dignity and authority, and the enforcement of uniformity and discipline, that he was supported by hard-working men who shared his beliefs and principles. When he returned to

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1. Miscellanea, xvii-xxii.

the Diocese, he had had little opportunity, personally, to fill the prebendal stalls in the cathedral; in six, the old occupants had been reinstated, and in at least five of the remainder, the King had appointed men before the Bishop received the temporalities of the see. Ecclesiastics with Puritan sympathies were still to be found within the chapter, like Dr. Wood, who also became dean of Lichfield in 1663, and the indifference of other members hindered Cosin's endeavours to make a shining example of his cathedral church to the rest of the Diocese.<sup>1</sup>

Basire outlined some aspects of the condition of Northumberland which were not apparent in the Bishop's returns. Early in 1662, he noted that

there is a great need of a visitation of the churches in these northern parts, many of them being either altogether unprovided of Ministers, or provided with such as are, in effect, noe ministers; and are soe farr from conformeing themselves, that they preach against those that are conformed, and intrude themselves upon their charge, by baptizeing children and marryeing the persons of such as are enemies to the orders of the Church of England. And likewise the fabricks of many Churches and Chappells are altogether ruinous and in great decay, and cannot be gotten repaired without Visitations. Besides in many Churches there be neyther Bibles, Books of Common-Prayer, Surplisses, Fonts, Communion-tables, nor any thing that is necessarie for the service of God. Nor will the churchwardens (not being yett

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1. Miscellanea, xiii-xv.

sworne) contribute any assistance for the supply of those defects. In all which respects there is great necessitie of Visitations, soe soone as convenyently may be.<sup>1</sup>

The replies to Basire's visitation articles of the same year gave a comprehensive view of the state of the Church in Northumberland.<sup>2</sup> Although some parishes were unmentioned, the returns, grouped under the respective deaneries of Newcastle, Morpeth, Alnwick, Bamburgh and Corbridge, demonstrated the wide-spread incidence of scandalous ministers, the activities of schismatics and papists, the extensive disrepair and destitution of churches and the common problem of impropriations. From some parishes the archdeacon was presented with no, or few, meaningless returns, but, generally, they revealed the extent of necessary reform and reconstruction, both of buildings and persons. Even after the ejections of 1662, among the remaining clergy were some of a disreputable or indolent moral character.<sup>3</sup>

Within the deanery of Morpeth, it was reported that Mr. Edward Prowse, parson of Bothall, 'is blamed by some for scandall and negligence', while at Corsenside Mr. Gram, the curate, 'is sordid and scandalous'.<sup>4</sup> The archdeacon attempted

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1. Hunter, 11; 68; printed in Miscellanea, 251-2.
  2. Hunter, 80; 2; returns printed in J.C. Hodgson, ed., 'A Survey of the Churches of the Archdeaconry of Northumberland. Temp. Charles II', AA, 2nd series, 17 (1895), 244-262. Hereinafter referred to as 'Hodgson'.
  3. For the ejections, see below, 83-5.
  4. Hodgson, 247-8.

to rectify the situation and was sometimes successful; in the deanery of Corbridge, Mr. Andrew Hall, vicar of Bywell, St. Andrew, was admonished for his undignified behaviour, and in the deanery of Alnwick, at Whittingham, the scandalous minister, Mr. Tallantire, was 'now said to be reformed upon the arch-deacon's publique admonicion'.<sup>1</sup> At Long Houghton, the minister 'is not instituted nor inducted', whilst in Kelloe 'most of the ministers are Scotchmen'.<sup>2</sup> In June, 1663, Cuthbert Ridley gave evidence to a justice of the peace against Humphrey Dacre, vicar of Haltwhistle, who, the previous day, a Sunday, had come to the informant's house in a seemingly drunk condition, and, when refused more ale, had behaved in a most undignified manner. By beating on the door with a great stone he had

so gott into this Informer's house. And seeming either mad or drunk attempted to break his windowes but was prevented by good neighbors that did hold him.

In the struggle which followed the vicar had drawn a knife, threatened to kill the informer, cursed and used foul oaths, and talked in his passion of killing Dr. Basire, whom he accused as being a papist knave and rascal, using irreligious

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1. Hodgson, 258, 252.

2. *ibid*, 254, 256.

expressions 'not becoming a good Christian'.<sup>1</sup> Dacre denied these 'malicious informations'.<sup>2</sup> However, apparently already he was notorious as a habitual drunkard,

being so drunke on the first Sunday in this yeare as he would not come to doe service in the Church.<sup>3</sup>

Not surprisingly, many parishioners were said to have fallen away to popery, and the vicar was presented to the archdeacon by the churchwardens. Scandalous ministers remained; in 1672, James Booth, rector of Bothall, was charged with coin-clipping and evidently he had been guilty of other offences.<sup>4</sup>

The list of destitute and ruined churches in the archdeconry in 1662 was extensive as a result of war and neglect.<sup>5</sup> In a letter to Cosin of November 8th, 1669, Basire reported that many repairs were still necessary.<sup>6</sup> On his visitation of that autumn he had been to

as many churches as I could, sundry of which scandalously ruinous, and the sequestrations very difficult, if not impossible, men being loath to undertake them against such potent patrons as the Duke of Newcastle, for one, one of whose churches, (Hepburne) in Morpeth Deanery, I saw upheld with no less than 13 rough-hewen props, so as none dare officiate there without imminent danger.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Hunter, 9; 166.
  2. *ibid*, 167.
  3. Hodgson, 257; see also the case of Mark Grieve, vicar of Felton, who left his parish (Hunter, 7; 59, 61), and Gilbert Rowell of Alwick who refused to conform (DCY, 85)
  4. DCY, 189-90.
  5. Hodgson, *passim*.
  6. Darnell, 281-3.
  7. *ibid*, 282.

In the same letter, however, he thanked God that he could record some successes,

As Felton by name in the Deanery of Alnwicke, which was downe, body and chauncel, but have now found all new leaded and seated.

Impropriations continued to be an insoluble problem; in the deanery of Newcastle it was recorded that 'all the parochial churches in this deanery are impropriated', whilst 'the impropriators in Northumberland are generally recusants'.<sup>1</sup> Nonconformists and sectarians were also active and sometimes influential in the parish communities.<sup>2</sup>

The condition of his cathedral church was central to Cosin's vision of a revitalised and authoritative episcopal government of his Diocese. The articles of inquiry exhibited to the dean, prebendaries, minor canons, clerks and other officials of the cathedral church of Durham on his first episcopal visitation on July 19th, 1662, compared with his diocesan visitations in their exhaustive and thorough demands.<sup>3</sup> When he was a prebendary he had made a close study of the statutes relating to the dean and chapter and other documents of foundation, so he had a detailed knowledge of the rights,

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1. Hodgson, 245, 248.

2. See below, 99-100.

3. Hunter, 11; 78; printed in Miscellanea, 252-60.

privileges, practices and precedents of the cathedral and its officials. In 1665, Cosin compiled a list of such privileges, and of what were not privileges, which was hardly a complete statement of such, but served to point out to the dean and chapter that which was within the Bishop's jurisdiction, and that which was within theirs.<sup>1</sup> No returns for the primary visitation are extant, but there are some replies to the second visitation of July 17th, 1665.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, Cosin was not satisfied with the replies and compiled a detailed series of

Comperts and Considerations upon the Answers  
of the Deane and Prebendaries of Durham to  
the Articles of my second Visitation, the 17th  
day of July 1665.<sup>3</sup>

He did not consider the collective nature of the returns sufficient:

They answer not particularly as they are bound by their Oath to do the Severall Articles, but refer to the generall writing subscribed by the Deane and eight Prebendaries joyntly.

He observed that the places of seven petty canons were still empty, 'for the supply whereof the Bishop hath expressed these 5 yeares together, and yet nothing done, which is contrary to their Statutes and their Oath'. He desired to know what steps

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1. Hunter, 11; 82.

2. Hunter, 11; 81, 95, 97; printed in Ornsby, II, 116-24.

3. Hunter, 11; 83; printed in Miscellanea, 262-68.

had been taken to fill the places, and added that

All other Cathedrall and Collegiate Churches of England have by their care got the full number of their Quire, and taken order sufficiently to maintaine them, only the Church of Durham is defective herein, which cannot be well taken, or suffered either by the Bishop at home, or by others abroad, or by his sacred Majestie when Hee shall know of it.

In the same document, the dean was condemned for not having yet compiled a survey and record of lands belonging to the cathedral church, various shortcomings of the prebendaries were outlined and their self-congratulation was sarcastically censured. He was scornful of the work of reconstruction which had been done:

The Inhabitants of the City, neighbours and strangers, many of them find as much fault with the patching of the Church by rough mortar and lime.

The Bishop's complaints embraced the behaviour and decorum of the church dignitaries, their many failings with regard to their offices, the failure to restore the cathedral, the college fabric and the condition of lands belonging to it, and he compared their inactivity and shortcomings with his own laudatory behaviour when a prebendary.

In conclusion they hope that all these Answers will satisfy the Bishop, and professe that they will observe the Oath which they have taken to the Church. Of which their obedience to the Bishop's lawfull commands is one and yet they do not observe and obey the Bishop's Injunctions.

Between August 23rd and 25th, 1665, the prebendaries wrote to the Bishop. Basire stated that he had nothing to add to the joint statement sent by the dean on behalf of all the prebendaries, and Denis Granville replied similarly.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Dalton, the fifth prebendary, wrote that he had

once againe very diligently perused and well observed every Article in your Lordship's last inquiries ... And I finde nothing that I can Add unto that my former as I humbly conceive seperate Answer (it being subscribed by me under my hand) ... and therefore I humbly beseech your Lordship to take this as a satisfactory Answer.<sup>2</sup>

Richard Wrench, Thomas Wood, John Neile and Guy Carleton replied in the same manner, humbly but shortly.<sup>3</sup> The problem was resolved at a meeting of the Bishop and the dean and prebendaries at Durham on September 12th, 1665, at which agreement was achieved on several major points of difference. It was decided that a suitable schoolmaster be appointed within six months, a survey of lands belonging to the church made and recorded within a year, that the graves in the churchyard be repaired and that an exemplification of the statutes of the church be procured. With regard to the most important

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1. Hunter, 11; 85-6.
  2. Hunter, 11; 87.
  3. Hunter, 11; 88-91.

point at issue a compromise was reached

that the Petty-Canons be made and kept up to the Number of Six within a yeare following the date hereof: That within a yeare of that, they shall be made up to the Number of Eight. And that within a yeare after that, they shall be made up to the Number of Ten: In order to the making up of the full number according to the Statutes.<sup>1</sup>

A more detailed list of injunctions to be made included the suspension of dilatory cooks, the repair of the episcopal seat, the orderly regulation of the churchyard and a variety of administrative and financial undertakings.<sup>2</sup>

Like the diocesan visitations, Cosin's visitations of the cathedral were triennial, and the articles of 1668 were a continuation of previous examinations. The dean and chapter were asked whether all the matters found wanting three years earlier had been rectified, whether the dean had fulfilled his required offices, whether services had been performed, alms distributed, and hospitality and residence maintained.<sup>3</sup> The articles were as detailed and thorough as before. Seemingly, difficulties were still being encountered in filling the places of the petty canons but the dean was attempting to achieve this.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Hunter, 11; 92; printed in Ornsby, II, 135-7.
  2. Hunter, 11; 93.
  3. Hunter, 11; 109; printed in Miscellanea, 269-74.
  4. Ornsby, II, 196 n.

The minor canons and other officials, like the prebendaries, were similarly examined.<sup>1</sup> Basire's reply of August 21st, 1668, admitted the existence of some non-residence and absenteeism, but attributed this, predominantly, to such excusable causes as the fulfilment of other duties, inclement weather and the difficulties of communications. He explained to the Bishop that the churchyard had still not been levelled because of the technical problems the task involved, nor had the consistoral seat been established, as the Bishop required.<sup>2</sup> The same problems were evidently still unsolved in 1671 after the fourth visitation, as Basire's reply of that year testified.<sup>3</sup>

At the time of the fourth visitation illness prevented the ageing Bishop from personally conducting the examination. On April 26th, 1671, he wrote from London to his faithful amanuensis at Durham, Miles Stapylton, concerning arrangements for the visitations, should he be unable to return to his Diocese, though he still entertained hopes that this would be possible.

In case I cannot by reason of my infirmity get down into the country, as I hope I shall, a Commission must be made by Mr. Rowell, according to former precedents, and sent up hither for my seare, to empower Mr. Chauncellor Burwell, Dr. Robert Grey, Mr. Richard Wrench,

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1. Hunter, 11; 110, 113; latter printed in Ornsby, II, 196-7.
  2. Hunter, 11; 112.
  3. Hunter, 11; 117-8.

and Mr. George Davenport, to visit my Diocess for me, and apeculiar Commission to Mr. Chauncellor Burwell alone (if there were no other joyned with him in the last Commission granted to him) to visit the Deane and Chapter.<sup>1</sup>

The articles submitted to the seventh prebendary, Basire, showed the familiar precision and again asked whether previous admonitions and injunctions had been acted upon.<sup>2</sup> Cosin's single-minded exhortations, ceaseless pressure and sharp asperity had achieved much in the previous ten years and more trivial matters were commanding attention. Basire's return was concerned with the cathedral roof which had been repaired, the communion rails and mats, and the churchyard, although the problem of absenteeism was still unsolved. He wrote

that I do feare the usuall non-residence of halfe the body contrary to our Statutes is still a malum omen of the decay, if not ruine, of this famous Church, partly through the abuse by surreption, of the Royall Dispensations, partly through the usurpation of selfe dispensations, so frequent that it is impossible for those few that reside to keep a Chapter singulis quindenis, and the burthen is too heavy for three or foure to beare all the yeare long, against the rule of equity, good conscience, and to the great distraction and discouragement of those who do attend that service.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Ornsby, II, 278; Thomas Burwell was Chancellor of the Diocese of Durham, Mr. Rowell was Cosin's solicitor, and Dr. Grey, Mr. Wrench and Mr. Davenport were prebendaries, probably particularly trusted by Cosin.
  2. Hunter, 11; 116; printed in Ornsby, II, 288-9.
  3. Hunter, 11; 117; printed in Ornsby, II, 289-90.

As a consequence of this, cathedral sermons were frequently supplied by curates, contrary both to the statutes and the Bishop's former injunctions. Despite Basire's customary gloom, apparently the cathedral was in most respects repaired and refurnished and many of the abuses checked.

Cosin envisaged a strong and authoritative Church, encompassing all English Christians, except Roman Catholics and extreme sectaries, respected and revered by all, and permeating society and commanding discipline and stability. He sought to achieve this by a restoration of the dignity of the Church, embodied in beautiful ecclesiastical buildings, standardised doctrine and observed worship, and a reformation of the moral conduct of both clergy and laity. He believed that Christian life would only achieve sententious regeneration by a powerful ecclesiastical hierarchical establishment practising and enforcing orthodoxy. This was the purpose of his assiduous visitations, the articles for which were designed to be examinatory and also were intended to be didactic. Presentations were referred to the church courts, and Cosin hoped that by this means, nonconformity and moral misbehaviour could be reduced. He succeeded in some of his objectives by persistent industry and by the opprobrium and harassment he employed against officials. Despite his advanced age and deteriorating health, and the magnitude of the problems he

encountered, he achieved the restoration of some discipline, but the system was dependent upon his personal character and labour.

## II

He was unable to reconcile himself to the changed religious climate, nor was what he sought in reality a restoration of earlier conditions. The Church which he aimed to establish, with an emphasis upon ceremonial, rites and Laudian doctrines, could not embrace many who, before 1640, were theoretically at least, a part of the Church of England. Their experience of recent freedom and the legislation after 1662 made the Anglican Church exclusive in nature, the largest of many sects. His desire for uniformity and order arose from a profound conviction of the righteousness of the doctrines and practices of the Church of England, and a belief in the need for compliance and strict organisation in a Christian society. He was prepared to practise persecution, not as a result of rancour, but of necessity. His belief in order and conformity coincided with that of the government, although the two began from very different premises, the government regarding such as imperative for the political stability of society and as a bulwark against a recrudescence of fanaticism, social unrest and insurrection. In his ecclesiastical

administration, for pious religious reasons, Cosin was acting in the interests of the central government. Therefore, he was the obvious candidate as a secular representative in the locality, and epitomised the post-Restoration alliance of Church and State.

Osmond recorded Cosin's appointment as Lord-Lieutenant of the County Palatine of Durham on August 29th, 1661, and attributed this to his influential position as a landowner and temporal lord and to the fact that the practice was customary.<sup>1</sup> Strangely, Surtees did not credit the Bishop with this appointment, attributing the position to Thomas, Viscount Fauconberg.<sup>2</sup> He was the nephew of John, Lord Bellasis of Worlaby, a distinguished Royalist, who became Lord-Lieutenant of the East Riding and governor of Hull, and Thomas, the second Viscount Fauconberg, was nominated as Lord-Lieutenant of the North Riding, despite his earlier allegiance to the Cromwellian regime.<sup>3</sup> Lapsley similarly did not record Cosin's appointment as Lord-Lieutenant, and wrote only of the decline of the Bishop of Durham's influence in military affairs in the later seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup> However,

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1. Osmond, 250.
  2. Surtees, I, 147.
  3. H. Aveling, 'Northern Catholics. The Catholic Recusants of the North Riding of Yorkshire, 1558-1790' (London, 1966), 319; for details of the family, see *ibid*, *passim*, DNB and Surtees, I, 202-4.
  4. Lapsley, 309.

clearly Cosin was made Lord-Lieutenant of Durham and undertook the duties demanded by this position.<sup>1</sup> A letter to the Bishop of Durham of September 17th, 1661, confirmed the appointment and arranged that 'all letters and instructions relating to the Leivetenancy of Durham may be directed to your Lordshipp'.<sup>2</sup> It added that the appointment of the Deputy Lieutenants, though the prerogative of the Bishop, must be approved by the King.<sup>3</sup>

It was in the King's interests for the Bishop to be Lord-Lieutenant of the county, so long as he was loyal to the government and the political order. Although the Bishop of Durham retained the right to appoint justices of the peace and other secular officers, the Lieutenant was distinctly the representative of the Crown, and the Bishop had not always been appointed to the Lieutenancy.<sup>4</sup> Old practices assume a different character in changed circumstances; after 1660, the interests of the King and Cosin were in many respects coincident, and just as he owed his episcopal appointment not only to his religious piety and orthodoxy, but also to his loyalty to the

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1. F.W. Harding, 'Defence and Security Measures in the County Palatine of Durham chiefly in the 17th Century from the Evidence of the Mickleton and Spearman Manuscripts', DUJ, 47 (1954-5), 113. Hereinafter referred to as 'Harding'.
  2. DUL: CLB, vol.2; f.20; printed in Ornsby, II, 29.
  3. *ibid*, 30; see also Harding, 113.
  4. G.S. Thompson, 'Lord-Lieutenants in the Sixteenth Century' (London, 1923), 52-5.

restored régime, so too he was the immediate candidate for the lieutenancy. It was not disguised that bishops still were nominated for political reasons, and political and ecclesiastical functions could successfully combine and complement one another. Recusants and Nonconformists were regarded as a danger to both Church and State, and it was convenient to the central government if a bishop could combine the apprehension and conviction of such elements. Although subordinate to the State, the Church had a dominant influence upon education, the pulpit was the prime disseminator of information in the provinces at the local level and often framed political opinions and hence loyalty to the King, and as a landowner and in Parliament it was an important power. Landownership gave the Bishop local prestige; this was particularly true in the rich see of Durham with its peculiar privileges which enhanced the respect the Bishop commanded. Nor could a bishop attempt to make the position hereditary for his own family, a practice which often caused the gentry to clash with the government with regard to secular offices.<sup>1</sup> The Church was useful to the government in protecting the established order of society and its ruling class, and the Bishop of Durham as Lord-Lieutenant symbolised the union.

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1. C. Hill, 'Economic Problems of the Church', (Panther ed., London, 1971), 21.

For the successful and effective fulfilment of this convenient coincidence of interests, several conditions had to be met. The Bishop was not limited by a separation of ecclesiastical and secular jurisdiction and with the support of the King, could unite the two offices of government. For the King, it was essential that the Bishop was diligent in his duties as Lord-Lieutenant, implemented the instructions he was given and reported any irregularities and shortcomings. As the agent of central government, the Bishop, as Lieutenant, must share its political aims and ideals of the royal authority and represent it in an area he knew well. He must have the support of the local gentry, be surrounded by loyal members of it in the delegated offices of the Lieutenancy, but not become an instrument of the local ruling class, or act in their interests when they ran counter to the ambitions and practices of the government. Only if these conditions were fulfilled could the arrangement operate effectively and harmoniously.

Cosin's diligence in the practical undertaking of his tasks as Lord-Lieutenant reflected the thoroughness of his ecclesiastical administration and his visitations. Yet his industry was not always efficacious. Sometimes it is difficult to differentiate his actions as Bishop from those as Lieutenant. In 1665, he was acting as Bishop when he investigated the

hospitals of the Diocese, but the visitation was initiated at the express request of the King.

'Having taken notice of many Complaynts concerning the ill Governing of Hospitalls and misemploying of their Revenues', the King ordered a national enquiry.<sup>1</sup>

The Archbishop of York wrote to Cosin and sent him the King's letter and instructions.<sup>2</sup> The Bishop organised the enquiry and received the answers of the masters of the six hospitals in the Diocese.<sup>3</sup> He experienced some difficulty in completing the rigorous demands of the investigation and apologised to the Archbishops of York and Canterbury for his delay, whilst his final answer was incomplete.<sup>4</sup> On this occasion, the King used the episcopal system to make the enquiry for the Church controlled the hospitals. Similarly, the King and Council issued an order on November 7th, 1666 for the collection of contributions within the province of York for the relief of persons who had suffered in the Great Fire; Cosin organised the collection within his Diocese and sent the money to the Lord Mayor of London.<sup>5</sup> Although the most devastating effects

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1. Mickleton and Spearman, 46; 51; printed in Ornsby, II, 110.
  2. *ibid*, 46; 55, 57; printed in Ornsby, II, 109-11.
  3. *ibid*, 46; 63-7, 71, 82-3, 86-92, 97; partially printed in Ornsby, II, 138-42, 144-7.
  4. *ibid*, 46; 223-4, 59-61.
  5. *ibid*, 20; 6-8, 10-12.

of the plague of 1665-6 were experienced in the south-east of England, it was incident in some areas of Northumberland and Durham, the result of the contact of the ports with London. Money was sent to the capital for the relief of the infected, but help was needed in South Shields, Gateshead, Sunderland, Newcastle, Jarrow, and the pestilence penetrated inland as far as West Auckland and Witton-le-Wear. It lingered in Newcastle until 1667, and on December 11th, 1666, the mayor and corporation wrote to the Bishop informing him that, in accordance with his instructions, collections had been raised for the relief of the infected in the kingdom, but pointing out that much was required for such a purpose in Newcastle itself.<sup>1</sup> The implication was that the Bishop was prepared to put his duty to the King's requests before local needs. They begged pardon for their boldness, but had mildly rebuked their Bishop's actions. They had some justification; in three months in 1665, thirty people died in Sunderland alone, and South Shields experienced comparable losses.<sup>2</sup>

A detailed study has been made of the military operations and arrangements of Cosin in his capacity as Lord-Lieutenant.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Mickleton and Spearman, 20; 1-3, 9.
  2. W.C. Mitchell, 'History of Sunderland', (Sunderland, 1919), 66; G.B. Hodgson, 'The Borough of South Shields from the earliest period to the close of the Nineteenth Century', (Newcastle, 1903), 104-5; see also Ornsby, II, xxiv.
  3. Harding, 110-8; for background, see *ibid*, 75-83.

These show him to have been a strong personality who did not neglect his military responsibilities. He was expected to undertake all measures to preserve and enforce the King's peace, to secure and imprison all dangerous persons within the Lieutenancy, and to keep forces in readiness for external threats to the kingdom. Among the provisions of the Militia Act of 1662, was the delegation to Lords-Lieutenant of powers of muster and martial law, and authority to train, exercise and prepare militia forces.<sup>1</sup>

Cosin found the preservation of law and order no easy matter. The discovery, development and ramifications of the Derwentdale Plot in 1663-4 taxed all his resources.<sup>2</sup> The attempt of local Dissenters, in league nationally with supporters of the Good Old Cause, demanded that the Bishop organise their apprehension and imprisonment, and the co-ordination of militia forces. This Cosin worked hard to achieve.<sup>3</sup> But such an attempt presented formidable difficulties; in the wake of the attempted insurrection, the Dean of Carlisle, Guy Carleton, a Durham prebendary, in a probably exaggerated claim, criticised the Durham militia, asserting

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1. 14 Car. II, c. 3; J.R. Tanner, 'English Constitutional Conflicts of the Seventeenth Century, 1603-89', (Cambridge, 1928, rpr, 1971), 223-4.
  2. See below, Chapter 3.
  3. Harding, 113-5.

that it was so scattered and disorganised that thirty good horse could capture the officials and leading members of the gentry and effectively destroy it at a stroke.<sup>1</sup>

The years after 1660 were a troubled period, not only in the north-east.<sup>2</sup> The continued existence of deposits of arms and of disbanded soldiers trained to use them, were the origin of a series of alarms at both national and local level. The refusal of Dissenters to accept the Restoration Church settlement, and the violent inclinations of extremists among them, threw the shadow of suspicion of rebellious intent over all Nonconformists, and coloured their conscientious objections with disloyalty to the State. Cosin and his Deputy Lieutenants organised musters and were instrumental in the arrest of various malcontents.<sup>3</sup> The Bishop urged his officials to be 'very watchfull and circumspect', and to give the rebels no opportunity to effect 'their wicked purposes and designes'; they were instructed

'to hinder all publick Concourses of People ... to do your utmost endeavour to prevent or discover all conventicles held or designed to be held', in order 'that you have strict eye over all disaffected persons ... especially such as you shall observe to keep any Horse, Horses or Arms above their rank and quality.'<sup>4</sup>

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1. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 381.
  2. For a discussion of this and the effectiveness of the militia system, see J.R. Western, 'The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century. The Story of a Political Issue, 1660-1802 (London, 1965), 3-51. Hereinafter referred to as 'Western'.
  3. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 40-1 and passim.
  4. *ibid*, 31; 28, no date; see below, 157.

Cosin and his Deputies worked closely with the Deputy Lieutenants of Northumberland and Yorkshire to secure seditious persons and suppress rebellious elements in 1663-4.<sup>1</sup>

So far as the government was concerned, the purpose of the militia was to secure the permanence of the Restoration by a show of force and by the frustration of plots and the repression of sedition. By 1666, the fear of republican-inspired insurrection was declining, and the incidence of reported plotting decreasing. Cosin and officials like him played a significant part in the cause of this, not by flawless organisation or technical efficiency, which left much to be desired, but rather by the conspicuous mustering and advertising of the militia, by taking the offensive against leaders of the plotters and breaking the spirit of the movement.

The Second Dutch War complicated old fears and encouraged new ones. One worry was that foreign enemies would coalesce with seditious elements at home. Antipathies towards Roman Catholics were provoked during the Great Fire of London; Cosin was informed by Colonel Byerley, of Midridge Grange, Durham, and Goldsborough, Yorkshire, on September 8th, 1666, that Frenchmen had instigated the destruction.<sup>2</sup> Riots in

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1. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 53, 58, 60-9; see below, 157-65.

2. CLB, 1; 157; printed in Ornsby, II, 155.

many parts of the country against excessive unemployment and high taxation in the winter of 1666-7, aggravated the nervous condition of the authorities.<sup>1</sup> So did the rebellion in Scotland of late November, 1666, of which Cosin was informed in a letter from the Bishop of Edinburgh.<sup>2</sup> When the Dutch war began, a fear often expressed was that the enemy would join forces with discontented sectaries in England.<sup>3</sup>

The government expected an invasion by the Dutch forces and instructed local officials to be in readiness for such an eventuality.<sup>4</sup> On May 29th, 1667, Arlington wrote to the Lords-Lieutenant of the southern and eastern maritime counties, warning them of an imminent invasion attempt and commanding that the militia be alerted.<sup>5</sup> At about the same time, Cosin wrote to the Commanders of volunteers, informing them of the expected landing and ordering that the militia be raised and sent to the sea coast, that it be permanently alert and ready to assemble at short notice; he added that

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1. G. Clark, 'The Later Stuarts, 1660-1714', (2nd ed., London, 1956, rpr. 1965), 66.
  2. Ornsby, II, 158-60; see also R.C. Latham and W. Matthews, ed. 'The Diary of Samuel Pepys', vol.7, 1666 (London, 1972), 395-7.
  3. Western, 43; see below, 166-8.
  4. C.S.P.D., 1665-6, 466, 538.
  5. C.S.P.D., 1667, 130; printed *ibid*, xii, and in P.G. Rogers, 'The Dutch in the Medway', (London, 1970), 72.

'formerly wee have observed at the Rendez-vous of your Voluntary Troops many of them were defective in their Armes and Furniture, and considering how much encouragement our enemies may take from the slacknes of our preparacons, and how great disadvantage it may be to the King and Country's service in case of such Invasion,' this must be rectified.<sup>1</sup>

Considerable preparations had already been made and clearly the troops had been insufficiently equipped.<sup>2</sup> Local officials shared the government's fears and undertook security preparations.<sup>3</sup> False alarms had increased the sense of danger, as when, during a storm in July, 1666, a Dutch man-of-war had come within shot of Hartlepool.<sup>4</sup> An engagement took place off the coast of South Shields the same month and there were other alarms.<sup>5</sup> Preparations had also been made in Northumberland, in Norham and Islandshire, and at Tynemouth Castle.<sup>6</sup> In Newcastle on June 17th, 1667,

the Common Council having taken into account the general dangers threatening the nation ordered that the walls, gates and drawbridges be repaired and rubbish there removed and that canons and carriages were to be procured from the townships and planted thereupon.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 36, no date.
  2. Harding, 115-6.
  3. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 20-5.
  4. CLB, 1; 153, 158; printed in Ornsby, II, 152-3, 155-6.
  5. G.B. Hodgson, 'The Borough of South Shields ...' (Newcastle, 1903), 105-6.
  6. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 37; NCA, CCB, 1656-1722, 97 v.
  7. NCA, CCB, 1656-1722, 98.

Constables were to survey and record all powder, ball and match in the town, none was to be allowed to leave and subscriptions were to be requested for the common security. Such precautions and preparations continued throughout the supposed emergency, musters were held regularly and Cosin and his deputies, particularly Sir Gilbert Gerard and Sir Thomas Davison, did all in their power to produce an efficient defensive force for organised resistance.<sup>1</sup>

Cosin recognised the interdependence and mutual interests of Church and State. He saw his tasks as Bishop and as Lord-Lieutenant as two parts of a whole - the re-establishment of order and discipline in a society which had become disorientated and anarchical. As religious radicals and extremists were a danger and threat to the Church settlement and the political peace, his duty was to enforce both. Cosin knew the Church could not be safe without the political settlement, which he was bound, as an ecclesiastic, to safeguard. So he fulfilled the government's intention of securing the social and political order of society. He was a useful agent of the government and a purposeful upholder of it. He followed implicitly the instructions which were continually being issued from London, and passed on the demands to the executors of his authority. In its series of circulars, the government did not fail to remind

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1. Harding, 116-7; Gerard and Davison were Sheriffs of Durham, see Ornsby, II, 11 n, 30 n; for local defensive measures within their national context, see Western, 41-51.

the Lieutenants of the imperative need for vigilance and the continuance of the system of standing guards. Cosin always fully reported developments in the Bishopric to the central government. After he had used the militia to arrest seditious persons in March, 1663, on April 3rd he received a letter from Whitehall thanking him and the Deputy Lieutenants for their speed and decision

touching a dangerous designe of divers seditious persons within your Lieutenancy. And we returne our hearty thanks for your Care and timely informacon thereof.

The letter included his Majesty's grateful thanks, and advised the maintenance of circumspection and any further necessary arrests and examinations.<sup>1</sup> Clarendon voiced the same sentiments of the need for 'utmost diligence and vigilance' in a letter to the Durham justices of the peace on March 25th, 1665.<sup>2</sup> Although the techniques, equipment and turn-out of the militia were not always sufficient to meet requirements, Cosin was tireless in trying to achieve them.<sup>3</sup> The government ministers wanted representatives in the counties who shared their aims and would further their policies. The Bishop of Durham was their ally

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1. PRO; SP Dom/29, vol.70; f.58 and PRO; PCR, vol.56; f.373; see below, 155.
  2. Hunter, 11; 102.
  3. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 34, 71-3, 95, 97-9.

and their instrument and worked to secure stability in the north, which was essential for his interests and theirs.

For the system to operate smoothly, it was essential for the Lord-Lieutenant to be advised and supported by loyal officers, and to command the respect and help of the local gentry. Only with the active support of the gentlemen and landowners of the County could the militia be an effective force, and therefore the legal and military systems carried out efficaciously. Cosin in part owed his appointments to his previous association with the Palatinate and his knowledge of it. His marriage in 1626 to Frances, the daughter of Marmaduke Blakiston of Newton Hall, near Durham, an influential and pluralist member of the chapter, allied him to one of the most ancient and respected gentry families in the Bishopric.<sup>1</sup> So long as the gentry remained convinced that the Bishop shared and looked after their interests, they continued to support him; generally, in the preservation of law and order, the eradication of dissident elements and the opposition to a foreign enemy, the Bishop's, the central government's and their own interests coincided. Nor did the Bishop's activities in attempting to impose conformity to the religious settlement conflict with their personal considerations,

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1. Ornsby, I, xvi-xvii; Hutchinson, I, 533.

except in the case of a minority of Recusants and Nonconformists. It was only when the relationship was soured by the controversy over the parliamentary representation of the Palatinate between Cosin and leading members of the gentry after 1666, that the co-operation became strained.<sup>1</sup> Without such joint operation, mutual trust and credence, the machinery of local government was unworkable.

Fortunately, the positions of deputy lieutenant, sheriff and their assistant officers and the distinction of justice of the peace commanded dignity and prestige in the localities, and such officers usually took their functions seriously, not least for reasons of self-interest. Socially, economically and politically, as leading members of the propertied gentry, the officers had most to lose by the collapse of their legal authority and hence the established order. The Bishop, as Lord-Lieutenant, was able to choose his own officials so long as the choice was acceptable to the King. A letter from Sir Henry Bennet, of October 29th, 1663, stated that

His Majesty doth very well approve of Sir Francis Bowes to be one of the Deputy Lieutenants for the County Palatine of Durham, and that the Rt. Reverend Father in God the Lord Bishop of Durham his Majesties Lieutenant of that County give order for the issueing out his Deputacion accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

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1. See below, Chapter 4.
  2. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 16-7; Harding, 113.

This was usually a formality but a useful check. Presumably, with his accustomed care, Cosin chose men of industry and loyalty. They worked closely with him and undertook the everyday affairs of supervision, organisation, intelligence and arrest. In a meeting at Auckland Castle on July 3rd, 1666, between the Bishop and most of his Deputy Lieutenants, detailed arrangements were made concerning the militia, in accordance with the King's instructions.<sup>1</sup> The orders were signed by Cosin, Nicholas Cole, Ralph Davison, Cuthbert Carr, John Hilton, John Tempest and Anthony Byerley.<sup>2</sup>

Although Cosin was no diplomat, least of all with the gentry as the issue of representation demonstrated, for the first years of his episcopate and lieutenancy events were on his side. The uncertain nature of the political and religious settlement and the legacy of the pre-1660 situation, and its culmination in the Derwentdale plot, compelled the gentry to assist the Bishop in his attempts to reduce conspiracy and enforce discipline. In the aftermath of the revelation of the plot the gentry pledged their support for the Bishop's measures. On January 14th, 1664, at the General Quarter Sessions

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1. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 71-2; C.S.P.D., 1665-6, 466, for the King's letter of June 27th.
  2. For details of these officers, see Ornsby, II, 210 n, 211 n, 155-6 n, and for a list of Palatinate officers, see Hutchinson, I, 553-4 n; see also the useful biographies of leading members of the gentry, etc. in M.S. Childs, 'Prelude to Revolution: the Structure of Politics in County Durham, 1678-88', (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Maryland, 1972), 517 ff

held at Durham, 'A Voluntary and free Agreement' was 'made for the better preserving of his Majesty's peace, and the safety of his loyall subjects in this County.'<sup>1</sup> The subscribers acknowledged recent 'Plotts and devices of divers disaffected persons', and 'in testimony of the true affection and zeale' they had promised that in a future comparable situation,

upon any notice or summons given us by his Majesty's authority from the Lord Lieutenant or Deputy Lieutenants of this County, wee and every one of us, from time to time will be ready with our Horses and Armes, and with all the free assistance that wee can procure from our neighbours, to repaire unto such place or places as shall be appointed us, and at our owne voluntary charge, for the space of so many dayes (more or lesse as need shall require) to receive and follow such orders as shall be given us by the authority aforesaid, for the suppressing of all Insurrections and seditious designes either of Quakers or Anabaptists or other disaffected or disloyall persons in this County.

This was to be in addition to

the common charge imposed upon us by Act of Parliament for the ordering and maintaining of the Militia.

The undertaking was signed by leading members of the gentry of the Palatinate. Forces were organised within the several wards of the County.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, similar voluntary subscriptions were made throughout the County.<sup>3</sup> The authorities in Northumberland

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1. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 77.

2. Harding, 114.

3. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 75, 76, 78, 80-2, 84, 86, 88-9, and 91; 12.

and Newcastle had pledged their support in the summer and autumn of 1663.<sup>1</sup>

Co-operation continued during the years after the plot as new fears were voiced and Whitehall continued to recommend vigilance. Despite the strain imposed by the argument over representation, the xenophobic passions aroused by the Dutch War stimulated the survival of the relationship. During the last years of his life, despite Cosin's absence from the Diocese, he still issued instructions regarding his charges from London through his secretary and deputies.<sup>2</sup>

The Restoration settlement combined with the ancient traditions and institutions of the County Palatine made it convenient for the central government to work with the Bishop in measures for defence and security. The ecclesiastical and secular aspects of his administration and jurisdiction were seen as united parts of a single authority. When the Bishop's interests reflected the King's the one supported the other, and, even though Cosin was singularly jealous of Palatinate rights, these rarely clashed with government policies. But only with the active participation and goodwill of the local gentry and their resources and influence could the machinery of local government function efficiently.

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1. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 68-9.
  2. Ornsby, II, 208 ff; his correspondence from London was vast; see CLB, vols. 4, 5, passim.

In the church courts, Cosin attempted to enforce moral discipline and penalise those who would not conform to the ecclesiastical settlement. Lists of excommunicated persons figured frequently in the presentations made after the visitations. Despite the iron discipline he worked to employ, he was capable of sympathetic actions.<sup>1</sup> The Bishop also saw himself as a temporal lord. The rights and privileges of the County Palatine of Durham and the special position of its Bishop, which Cosin tried so valiantly and truculently to preserve, were in many respects a myth. Though during the dispute over representation he claimed 'Breve Regis non currit in Comitatu Palatino Dunelmensi', the truth was of a different nature.<sup>2</sup> The claimed independent legal character of the Palatinate was in reality illusory. Cosin retained the trappings of a Prince Bishop and lived in grandiose circumstances, but this was only the semblance of power, of which the King commanded the substance. The Bishop of Durham was permitted those jurisdictional powers which were unlikely to conflict with the government's interests, to perpetuate the theoretical independent nature of the Palatinate, but very little of importance escaped the Crown's jurisdiction. As it

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1.     ibid, xxxiv-xxxv.

2.     Hunter, 24; see below, 194.

was imperative to the government to secure the co-operation of the Bishop after 1660, it was content to defer to him as a conventional courtesy, but really Cosin could only approve what had already been decided.

The Bishop of Durham had enjoyed power to issue writs in his own name, try criminal offences and pardon, until the Act of 1536.<sup>1</sup> After that date, the peace of the Bishop was replaced by that of the King, who assumed judicial supremacy in all the franchises of the Bishopric. Although the institutions and organisation of Palatinate courts remained, appeal against their judgements was to the King's Bench. Commissions of assize and gaol delivery were issued by the Crown and the Bishop of Durham granted a warrant to reissue them to the circuit judges. The King appointed the judicial officers of the County and all legal processes ran in his name. In practical terms the Palatinate had been assimilated into the circuit system. The Bishop of Durham still had the right to recommend the persons to be inserted in the Durham gaol delivery to the Lord Chancellor before each assize.<sup>2</sup> As Custos Rotulorum the Bishop sat with the judges at the assizes, but it was largely an honorary position.<sup>3</sup>

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1. 27, Henry VIII, c 24.

2. J.S. Cockburn, 'A History of the English Assizes, 1558-1714', (Cambridge, 1972), 43-4.

3. *ibid*, 59-60, 67; see also M.S. Child, 'Prelude to Revolution: the Structure of Politics in County Durham, 1678-88', (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Maryland, 1972), 1-8.

On the northern circuit the judges travelled to Hull, York, Durham, Newcastle, Carlisle and Appleby, and were entertained regally by the Bishop at Durham before going in ceremony and state to Newcastle.<sup>1</sup> The assizes were held twice a year. Travelling was hazardous and the judges had to be guided and protected by the local authorities. The cases which were dealt with reflected the lawlessness of the time. Seditious words, conspiracy and witchcraft were common offences. Violence was endemic and they tried offences of highway robbery, cattle-stealing, duelling, murder and arson.<sup>2</sup> Penalties were severe,<sup>3</sup> In matters of local government and in their adjudication in disputes the dean and chapter were important, and the Bishop's Chancellor and the archdeacons joined Cosin as magistrates.<sup>4</sup>

The Act of 1536 had left some powers to the Bishop. He had his own Court of Chancery and by a patent appointed the sheriff, under sheriff, county clerk, gaoler, the clerk of the crown, the protonary, the clerk of the peace, the cursitor and other officials.<sup>5</sup> His temporal courts included a Court of Pleas and various fines and recoveries fell to him, and he could preside

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1. *ibid*, 46; DCY, viii-x.
  2. DCY, 99-100, 154-7, 184, 187-9, and *passim*; see below, 125-7.
  3. *ibid*, xxxv-xxxvi.
  4. G.B. Hodgson, 'The Borough of South Shields' (Newcastle, 1903), 106-13.
  5. NLC, 54; see Anon., 'The Practice of the Court of Chancery of the County Palatine of Durham' (Sunderland, 1807).

in any of his judicial courts.<sup>1</sup> The Bishop drew revenues from ferries and fairs and had rights over some boroughs and granted charters to guilds. Within the Palatinate, the Bishop had the royal jurisdiction of admiralty and received the dues and profits involved, which belonged to the King elsewhere. In 1671, Cosin exercised his rights to a wreck on the coast at Easington, although there was some difficulty clarifying the legal position.<sup>2</sup> But Cosin was clutching at the remnants of the powers of a Prince Bishop, which had been eroded for many years. He did not regain the right to wardship and other feudal dues, which had been lost during the Commonwealth.<sup>3</sup> It was his appointment as Lord-Lieutenant of the County which in reality was responsible for his secular power and gave him prestige and authority, and this nomination was made directly by the King and bore no relation to any rights or privileges of the County Palatine.

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1. NLC, 54-8.
  2. Ornsby, II, 274-8, 280-1.
  3. Hutchinson, I, 539.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF NONCONFORMITY

Before discussing Cosin's attempts to restrict and destroy Non-conformity and his personal attitude towards its chief advocates and adherents, it is necessary to trace the growth of Dissent and the extent of its incidence before and after 1660. It is not within the brief of this work to discuss the occurrence of Roman Catholicism, in the forms of Recusancy and occasional conformity. Most Catholics found it impossible to conform to the established system before, during or after the Civil War and Interregnum, although some found it expedient to compromise their consciences and conform outwardly to the Anglican Church after 1660 for reasons of social and economic security. The north was traditionally conservative in religious matters, and Cosin was presented with many papists in his diocesan visitations. At no time during the period under consideration was there any theoretical toleration of Roman Catholics and they continued to be regarded as a serious threat to both Church and State.<sup>1</sup>

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1. For a full definition of the legal position of Roman Catholics, see J.A. Williams, 'English Catholicism under Charles II: the legal position', RH, vol. 7 (1963-4), 123-43; for attitudes to Catholicism before the Civil War, see R. Clifton, 'Fear of Popery' in C. Russell, ed., 'The Origins of the English Civil War' (London, 1973), 144-167; and after 1660, see J.P. Kenyon, 'The Popish Plot' (London, 1972), 1-31; for a sympathetic appraisal of the extent of Catholicism, see B. Magee, 'The English Recusants. A Study of the Post-Reformation Catholics Survival and the Operation of the Recusancy Laws' (London, 1938); and see also D. Mathew, 'Catholicism in England, 1535-1935. Portrait of a minority, its culture and tradition' (London, 1936); K.J. Lindley, 'The Lay Catholics of England in the reign of Charles I' JEH, vol.22 (1971), 199-221; M.J. Havran, 'The Catholics in Caroline England' (London, 1962). For Roman Catholicism in the north-east, see H. Aveling, 'Northern Catholics. The Catholic Recusants of the North Riding of Yorkshire, 1558-1790' (London, 1966); NLC, 361-3; W.V. Smith, 'Catholic Tyneside from the beginning of the Reformation to the Restoration of the Hierarchy, 1534-1850' (Newcastle, 1930), esp. 45-70, 85; PSAN, 3rd series, vol.4 (1911), 27-8; SS passim; for presentations after 1660, see below Appendix, Tables A-C; Rogan, 95-6; for the continuing strength of Roman Catholicism, see M.S. Child, 'Prelude to Revolution: the Structure of Politics in County Durham, 1678-88' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Maryland 1972) 720-22.

Before the Civil War, Puritan practices and sympathisers at the parochial level were rarely a potent force or serious threat to the Anglican hierarchy in the north-east, although, in some areas, particularly the upland regions and more remote valleys of western Durham and northern and western Northumberland, there was sometimes a chronic shortage of trained ministers for pastoral care and inadequate ecclesiastical control. In the early seventeenth century archiepiscopal authority was not applied vigorously, allowing a significant Puritan movement to take roots in Yorkshire, but in the 1630s Archbishop Neile widened the scope of his earlier efforts in the Diocese of Durham, and devoted himself with considerable success to destroying Puritan activists and movements.<sup>1</sup> In the Diocese of Durham, to a degree greater than was usual elsewhere, the alliance of the early Stuarts and the Church was effective, and the identification realised by the bishops' often enjoying military and secular functions together with their ecclesiastical jurisdiction.<sup>2</sup> This made the control of Puritanism more possible.

The failure of Puritan movements to make any meaningful impression upon the religious life of the greater part of the

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1. C. Hill, 'The World Turned Upside Down. Radical Ideas during the English Revolution' (London, 1972), 60; for Yorkshire Puritanism, see J.A. Newton, 'Puritanism in the Diocese of York (excluding Nottinghamshire), 1603-40' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1955).
  2. M.E. James, 'The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries' in DCCT, 221; Harding, 78-83, 110-3.

north-east at the local level is particularly surprising, considering that, in a variety of ways, the Anglican Church was weak. Parishes were frequently too large to be controlled effectively, and whole areas were far removed in place and time from the ecclesiastical centres of government and virtually inaccessible. No doubt here many unorthodox practices from an earlier age survived but never came within the cognisance of the ecclesiastical authorities. There were insufficient ministers and many of the clergy were of an educational level inadequate for their position and functions.<sup>1</sup> The Church exacerbated this situation by the practices of pluralism, nepotism and absenteeism. Cosin's pluralistic benefices have been recorded, and although Isaac Basire claimed that, having searched the cathedral register, he had found that never once did Cosin, as prebendary, claim a dispensation but was scrupulously attentive to the rights, privileges and antiquities of the Church, and despite his work at Brancepeth, his commitments outside the County would have meant that, in some parishes, he would have neglected pastoral duties and been permanently non-resident.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Howell, 65-6.

2. See above, 17-8 ; Hutchinson, I, 533; see also the pluralism of Cosin's father-in-law, Marmaduke Blakiston, Ornsby, I, 82, 160.

The situation in these respects did not change at the Restoration, and the prestige and influence of the Church was further seriously hampered by the ruined and decayed fabric of many churches, the shortage of suitably qualified ministers following the ejections and resignations of many incumbents, widespread impropriations, dissenting influences and insufficient legal sanctions for the ecclesiastical authorities. Though such abuses as pluralism and absenteeism were most common in cathedral chapters, the repercussions must have been serious at the parochial level. Evidence of the inadequate provision of pastoral supervision in the parishes was illustrated by the information presented to the Long Parliament in 1642 concerning Muggleswick and adjacent areas by George Lilburne, mayor of Sunderland.<sup>1</sup> The complaint was that

we are a people in that our parish of Mugleswicke who have beene destitute of a preaching Minister; yea, ever since any of us that now are breathing were borne, to our soules great griefe and dreadful hazard of destruction; neither is it our case alone, but also ten, yea or twelve Parishes all adjoining, are in like manner void of the meanes of salvation, whose case and condition is deeply to be deplored ...

One John Dury was appointed by the Durham chapter but he was rejected by the parishioners

because wee knew him to be no Preacher, and his life and conversation scandalous, and had two places at that present already.

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1. 'A Most Lamentable Information of Part of the Grievances of Muggleswick Lordship in the Bishopricks of Durham', quoted in Surtees, II, 388-9; see also Howell, 67.

After there had been no minister for a year, the congregation independently found one, but he was unacceptable to the ecclesiastical authorities who nominated one Bradley, who was condemned as 'one of the most deboist amongst the sonnes of men' and allegedly refused to undertake his preaching and pastoral duties.<sup>1</sup>

Puritan sympathisers in the Durham chapter were led by Peter Smart who conducted a protracted and bitter campaign against Cosin and his Laudian associates.<sup>2</sup> Despite the practical neutrality of Bishop Morton (1632-46) who, though outwardly orthodox in his views, was passively sympathetic to the Puritan movement, Laudian influences increasingly dominated the Durham chapter, and they attempted to implement Archbishop Neile's instructions for the sustained repression of Puritans in the Diocese. However, the Puritans bided their time, and a consequence was that, after the fall of Newcastle in October, 1644 and the collapse of Royalist control in the area, there was a measure of support for the Parliamentary cause from a section of the Church party which had been alienated by the Arminianism of Cosin and his supporters.<sup>3</sup> Other interests were surfacing and becoming increasingly vocal. George Lilburne, the Mayor of Sunderland who had

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1. Surtees, II, 388; for Bradley and Dury, see A.G. Matthews, 'Walker Revised. Being a Revision of John Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy during the Grand Rebellion' (Oxford, 1948), 139-41
  2. Osmond, 32-110; Hutchinson, I, 534-6.
  3. For the fall of Newcastle, see Howell, 159-68.

presented the Muggleswick petition, a rich and powerful merchant, led a body of interests in the north-east of Durham which included families involved in mining and trade, like the Greys of Southwick and the Shipperdsons.<sup>1</sup> The Lilburnes' inclination towards Puritanism and radical politics was to play a decisive role in the Cromwellian settlement of the region.

Newcastle was to become a centre of Nonconformity after 1660. In 1629 at Heddon-on-the-Wall, one Cornelius Glover habitually addressed the congregation in the parish church after the resident vicar had completed his offices, and on occasion the clergyman was encouraged to speed up the devotions so there was time for Mr. Glover to preach. He later attracted the attentions of the Church authorities and was obliged to flee from the district.<sup>2</sup> Puritan lecturers were active in Newcastle during the first half of the century, like Alexander Leighton, James Bamford, John Knaresdayle, William Swan and Robert Slingsby.<sup>3</sup> In a large urban situation like Newcastle where it was difficult for the authorities at Durham to maintain a vigilant control, Puritan ministers found more freedom to operate, as they succeeded in

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1. M.E. James, 'The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in DCCT, 222-3; George Lilburne was uncle of John Lilburne, the prominent leader of the Leveller movement, and of Robert Lilburne who played an important part in Cromwell's Scottish campaign.
  2. M. Phillips, 'The Meeting-House at Horsley-upon-Tyne', AA, 2nd series, 13 (1889), 33-4.
  3. LAB, 302-3, 299-300, 308, 313; Howell, 81-2.

doing in the more remote areas of the Diocese, like Berwick and Barnard Castle, where there was little effective episcopal supervision.<sup>1</sup> The Laudians had allies in Newcastle, like Thomas Jackson and Yeldard Alvey, who co-ordinated the attempts to eradicate Puritanism. Faced with opposition their opponents became more organised and cohesive. The movement drew strength from being small and exclusive, and was reinforced by the support of leading merchants, by the town's extensive trading contacts and cosmopolitan intercourse, by contact with the Scots, the comparative anonymity the metropolis lent, and by the largely inefficacious and counter-productive harassment of its leaders.<sup>2</sup>

At the outbreak of the Civil War, the Puritan movement in the north-east was a nebulous collection of sympathetic pockets centred upon Newcastle and the Tyne valley, and extending vaguely into the more remote areas. It was as much a reaction to the inadequacy of the Anglican parochial system and the inability of the Church authorities to provide sufficient ministers, as it was a theological or doctrinal revolt against the Laudian Church. It was most active in the towns, strengthened by mercantile interests, though it was never merely a middle-class phenomenon, nor did it embrace the austerity and strictness of the Scottish

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1. Howell, 82-3.

2. Howell, 84-119, 218 ff; R. Howell, 'Puritanism in Newcastle before the summoning of the Long Parliament', AA, 4th series, 41 (1963), 135-55.

Covenanters. However, before the war began, the region was overwhelmingly conservative in attitude and loyalties.<sup>1</sup>

The years between the defeat of the Royalists and the Restoration of 1660 witnessed the frustration and failure of the attempt to impose a rigid Presbyterian system of church government and uniformity in England, and in its place the evolution of a broadly-based Protestant Church, tolerating all but the extreme sectarians, Quakers and Roman Catholics.<sup>2</sup> A Presbyterian settlement was never securely founded in the north-east although attempts to establish such a system in some areas were made.<sup>3</sup> Most of the Diocese settled down to a passive acceptance of whatever might be enforced or permitted, though areas of resistance to the government endured; the north-east made the most intensive preparations for the Royalist conspiracy of 1655.<sup>4</sup> Finding sufficient ministers of a good education and

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1. Howell, 339, 343-4.
  2. For the Presbyterian contribution to the period, see G.R. Abernathy, Jr., 'The English Presbyterians and the Stuart Restoration, 1648-1663', TAPS, new series, 55, part II (1965); for the religious settlement in England, see C. Cross, 'The Church in England, 1646-60' in G.E. Aylmer, ed., 'The Interregnum. The Quest for Settlement, 1646-60' (London, 1972), 99-120; see also D. Underdown, 'Settlement in the Counties, 1653-8', *ibid*, 165-82, and A. Woolrych, 'Last Quests for a Settlement, 1657-60', *ibid*, 183-204.
  3. VCH, II, 50-2; Howell, 224 ff.
  4. D. Underdown, 'Royalist Conspiracy in England, 1649-60' (New Haven, 1960), 138-9; see also P.H. Hardacre, 'The Royalists during the Puritan Revolution', (The Hague, 1956), A.H. Woolrych, 'Penruddock's Rising, 1655' (London, 1955), C.H. Firth, 'Cromwell and the Insurrection of 1655', EHR, vol.3 (1888), 323-50, vol.4 (1889), 313-38, 525-35.

godly persuasion proved a formidable problem for the Commonwealth authorities in the area, as a result of the tenuous hold Puritanism had had there and the religious vacuum left by the flight of many Anglican clergymen.<sup>1</sup> However, the period 1645 to 1660 was decisive in altering the religious complexion of the north-east. Newcastle particularly became liberally provided with preaching ministers who built up considerable congregations.<sup>2</sup> The names of many of the ministers, who were to be a constant source of trouble to Bishop Cosin after the Restoration, are found in the Newcastle Common Council Book of the 1650s, and Howell noted the close co-operation which existed between the Presbyterians and Independents.<sup>3</sup>

Cosin shared the belief of many leading Anglican ecclesiastics that, until Puritanism could be rendered impotent, both Church and State were imperilled. The majority of the clergy and laity shared the conviction that a definitive declaration of the doctrines and practices of the Church of England was essential, and this was backed by legislation to procure its enforcement. Charles II, in the Declaration of Breda of April 4th, 1660, had promised 'a liberty to tender consciences', but this never materialised.<sup>4</sup> The political and religious settlement

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1. Howell, 218.

2. See Howell, Chapter 6, 'The Religious Life of Newcastle, 1645-62', 218-73, for an authoritative study of religious developments.

3. NCA; CCB, 1650-9 ff, 95, 113, 192, 257, 339, 342, 411; Howell, 245-8; LAB, 126.

4. ~~For the declaration, see S.R. Gardiner, 'The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution, 1625-60' (3rd ed., Oxford, 1906), 465-7.~~

which Parliament authorised after the dilatory negotiations between the Presbyterians and the Anglicans had broken down, ensured that the Church of England would become an exclusive institution, but any deviation from orthodoxy would be severely punished and those who would not conform, persecuted. The Act of Uniformity of 1662 was central to the series of laws enacted to enforce the settlement.<sup>1</sup> Although many of the clergy conformed to the settlement for reasons of expediency, sincere Puritans had to resign, or were ejected from their livings on St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24th, 1662. The number of those ejected has never been completely established, although the traditional number is in excess of two thousand.<sup>2</sup> Many pious and well-educated men found themselves unable to compromise their conscientious beliefs and comply with the Act of Uniformity; they were compelled to resign or be ejected. These ministers, and the congregations which remained with them or were gathered afterwards, became the core of the Nonconformists. They were penalised because of the excesses of the more extreme political

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1. For the legislation of the 'Clarendon Code', see W.C. Costin and J.S. Watson, 'The Law and Working of the Constitution. Documents, 1660-1914', vol. 1, 1660-1783 (2nd ed., London, 1961), 15-7, 20-9, 34-9; J.P. Kenyon, 'The Stuart Constitution, 1603-88' (Cambridge; 1966, rpr. 1969); 361-86; J.R. Tanner, 'English Constitutional Conflicts of the Seventeenth Century, 1603-89' (Cambridge, 1928, rpr. 1971), 201-32; for Act of Uniformity, see SEP, 1-42; for persecution, see G.R. Cragg, 'Puritanism in the period of the Great Persecution, 1660-88' (Cambridge, 1957).
  2. For a discussion of the evidence, see SEP, 9-14; see also H.H. Henson, 'Puritanism in England' (London, 1912), 183-204; H. Barbour 'The Quakers in Puritan England' (New Haven, 1964), 224.

and religious radicals with whom they were assumed to be associated. A problem of the history of the period is that the government and ecclesiastical authorities often failed to differentiate between the extremists, like the Fifth Monarchists and Anabaptists, and the more generally moderate Independents and Presbyterians. Similarly, there was often no differentiation between those who were tolerated neither before nor after 1660, like the Quakers and Roman Catholics, and those who were part of Cromwell's broader settlement but outside the confines of the Anglican establishment. Nor, frequently, did the authorities recognise any distinction between political revolt and religious dissent for, so far as the apprehensive authorities were concerned, the two elements had been inextricably interdependent.

Palmer had no doubt about the loss to the Church of England of the ministers who resigned or were ejected after 1660.

This act of uniformity which made such an alteration in all parts of the Kingdom, by ejecting so many valuable and useful persons, (of whom a particular account is to be given) was passed in a heat, but its effects have been dreadful and lasting. So that we may well, it is hoped without offence, drop a tear, upon the remembrance of so many worthies in our Israel, who were buried at once in a common grave.<sup>1</sup>

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1. 'The Nonconformists Memorial; being an account of the Lives, Sufferings and Printed Works, of the Two Thousand Ministers ejected from the Church of England, chiefly by the Act of Uniformity, originally written by Edmund Calamy', Abridged, Corrected and Methodised by S. Palmer, 3 vol. (2nd ed., London, 1802), I, 33. Hereinafter referred to as 'Palmer'.

He detailed eighteen ministers who resigned or were ejected in County Durham, and thirty-eight in Northumberland.<sup>1</sup> He claimed a further twelve later conformed in Durham and six in Northumberland.<sup>2</sup> Matthew's authoritative study is much more reliable; he totalled seventeen ejections in Durham, nine in 1660, three in 1662 and five at uncertain date, and six who afterwards conformed, and thirty-four in Northumberland, nineteen in 1660, twelve in 1662 and three at an uncertain date, and two who later conformed.<sup>3</sup> It is a reasonable assumption that some ministers of a Puritan persuasion conformed to the settlement, primarily for their own economic welfare. Numbers of such are impossible to assess and there was no mention of Puritan clergy in presentations. Essentially, they were the last generation of a dissident element within the Anglican Church. As the Nonconformist sects became organised and established outside the Church of England the dichotomy became permanent. It became increasingly evident after 1662 that the breach was irreparable. When persecution failed, the alternative of peaceful co-existence was postulated more and more.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Palmer, II, 177-84; III, 52-85.

2. *ibid*, II, 184; III, 85.

3. A.G. Matthews, 'Calamy Revised. Being a Revision of Edmund Calamy's Account of the Ministers and Others Ejected and Silenced, 1660-2' (Oxford, 1934), xii; details *passim* under names itemised by Palmer. Hereinafter referred to as 'CR'.

4. For the growing belief in toleration after 1660, see J.A.W. Gunn, 'Politics and the Public Interest in the Seventeenth Century' (London, 1969), 153-204.

The early Quaker movement made a significant impression upon the north-east, but the Society of Friends, as they called themselves, had not yet assumed its later pacific character and its members were dogged by the excesses of extreme radicals among its ranks. James Nayler, Thomas Holme of Kendal and other leading Quakers visited the area as early as 1653. There is evidence of a systematic campaign in the Bishopric to win converts and monthly meetings of Friends began in May, 1654.<sup>1</sup> The movement was strengthened and assumed some respectability by the recruitment of Anthony Pearson, of Ramshaw Hall, near St. Helen's Auckland in 1653; he was a justice of the peace and had been secretary to Sir Arthur Haslerig and clerk and registrar to the Committee on Compounding. His influence achieved much in organising the movement and mitigating the rigour of the authorities. His residence became a place of meeting and a sanctuary for ministers and the centre of a growing movement in County Durham.<sup>2</sup> Pearson met, corresponded and travelled with George Fox, the Quaker leader, who visited the County in 1653 and 1657, and claimed to have won many converts.<sup>3</sup> During his latter visit, he vehemently opposed

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1. QB, 114-5, 143.

2. For Pearson, see J.W. Steel, 'Early Friends in the North' (London, 1905), 8-11; G.F. Nuttall, 'George Fox and the Rise of Quakerism in the Bishoprick', DUJ, 36 (1943-4), 94-7; QB, 112-14, 116, 143, 327-31, 457, 463-4.

3. N. Penny, ed., 'The Journal of George Fox' (Cambridge, 1911), I, 135, 310-4.

the establishment of the proposed college in Durham, which Cromwell had approved and which was being instituted.

There was a man come doune from London to sett up a Colledge there to make ministers of Christe as they saide. And soe I and some others went to the man and reasoned with him and lett him see that was not the way to make you Christs ministers by Hebrew greeke and latine and the 7 arts which all was but the teachings of the naturall man.<sup>1</sup>

By the late 1650s the organisation of the Society of Friends in the Bishopric was systematic and meetings were held regularly, petitions were directed to the London government and missionaries continued their work. Collections of money for the cause were made and association with other groups of members in the northern counties maintained.<sup>2</sup> Pearson's influence protected the Quakers from severe persecution and Besse recorded only one paragraph concerning persecution in Durham before 1660.<sup>3</sup>

The Quaker missionaries did not find their work in Newcastle and Northumberland so easy, and faced opposition both from the people and the authorities, and the Quaker movement there was

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1. N. Penny, ed., 'The Journal of George Fox' (Cambridge, 1911), I, 311; for the college at Durham, which was destroyed at the Restoration, see J.T. Fowler, 'Durham University' (London, 1904), 15-21; Howell, 330-4; C.E. Whiting, 'The University of Durham, 1832-1932' (London, 1932), 17-29; C.D.R. Ranson, 'Oliver Cromwell's College, Durham' (n.p., 1912).
  2. QB, 324-38; H. Barbour, 'The Quakers in Puritan England' (New Haven, 1964), 43-51.
  3. J. Besse, 'A Collection of the Sufferings of the people called Quakers ...' (London, 1753), I, 173.

of a more desultory nature.<sup>1</sup> Publications appeared in Newcastle as early as 1653 condemning the Quakers, and the Puritan ministers joined forces to outlaw the activities of the Friends.<sup>2</sup> Fox found in Newcastle in 1657 that

they saide the Quakers would not come Into noe great toundes but lived in the ffells like butter flyes ... and now we was come Into their toundes they woulde not come att us but print bookes against us: whoe was the butterflyes now. And nevertheless wee gott a little meetinge amongst freindes and freindely people att ye Gate Syde.<sup>3</sup>

Opposition continued in Newcastle, Fox was compelled to leave and the Quakers, like the Roman Catholics, were discriminated against by the Merchant Adventurers of the town.<sup>4</sup> A congregation flourished at Pipewellgate in Gateshead, and later at the house of Richard Ewbank in the High Street.<sup>5</sup> In 1662, six people were presented for breaking the Sabbath by attending a meeting at the home of Richard Ewbank in Gateshead.<sup>6</sup> Presentations of Quakers in Northumberland were comparatively few and in Newcastle they were virtually non-existent, although, probably, many of those

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1. QB, 116.
  2. Howell, 256-7.
  3. N. Penny, ed., 'The Journal of George Fox' (Cambridge, 1911), I, 310; Howell, 259-60.
  4. J.R. Boyle and F.W. Dendy, ed. 'Extracts from the records of the Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, I', SS, 93 (1895), 28.
  5. QB, 373; Howell, 258, 260; M. Phillips, 'Notes on some forgotten burying grounds of the Society of Friends: Gateshead, Whickham, Boldon and South Shields', AA, 2nd series, 16 (1894), 192 ff; see also J.W. Steel, 'A Historical Sketch of the Society of Friends, in scorn called Quakers, in Newcastle and Gateshead, 1653-1898' (London, 1899), and J.W. Steel, 'Early Friends in the North' (London, 1905), passim.
  6. CVB, 93.

presented for Sabbath-breaking and for conducting illegal marriages and burials, were Quakers. Citations in presentations depended upon the interpretation of the offence by the parochial officials, so it is very difficult to assess the numbers of Nonconformists. Quakers were presented at some of the larger towns of Northumberland, Berwick, Morpeth and Tynemouth, in 1662, although, of these, only Morpeth presented Quakers in 1665.<sup>1</sup>

The Quaker movement failed to maintain its ascendancy in the Diocese of Durham after the Restoration, although the effects of persecution can not be cited as primarily responsible for this. In other areas, the Quakers thrived on persecution. Anthony Pearson defected from the Friends and came to terms with the restored order, becoming Cosin's under-sheriff of Durham and a member of the Church of England until his death in 1665.<sup>2</sup> His compliance and support had played a decisive role in the growth of the movement at a critical time, although it has been suggested that its growth, under his encouragement and with protection against severe persecution, gave it an unnatural character which withered away in the face of the persecuting authorities.<sup>3</sup> John

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1. CVB, 168, 152 v, 158 v, 52 v.
  2. QB, 114, 463; Howell, 261 n: He was also indicted in the Plot (see chapter 4), but asked the Bishop and Stapylton for clemency and was never convicted; CLB, 3; 14.
  3. G.F. Nuttall, 'George Fox and the Rise of Quakerism in the Bishopruck', DUJ, 36 (1943-4), 97.

Longstaffe, of Bishop Auckland, who had worked with Pearson, and Humphrey Norton also fell away, having also been important supporters of the embryonic movement in the area.<sup>1</sup> The Quakers met with active persecution in the period after the Restoration, which was sustained and increased after the alleged discovery of Quaker involvement in political plots against the government. Legislation backed the persecution in the provinces.<sup>2</sup> Quaker records demonstrate the severity of the measures which were employed against them. In 1660, a group of Friends in Allendale, led by Thomas Sharp and Thomas Williamston, were incarcerated in a filthy dungeon at Hexham for several weeks before being moved to Morpeth gaol. Two years later, when Williamston appeared in court with his hat on, he was put in the stocks and then spent three months in gaol again, because he could not find surety for his good behaviour, 'though he had not broken Law nor done violence to any man'.<sup>3</sup> Robert Linton was a leading adherent of the sect and lived at Laygate Lane, South Shields, the garden of which was later a Quaker burial ground. On August 10th, 1661, a list of names was

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1. G.F. Nuttall, 'George Fox and the Rise of Quakerism in the Bishoprick', DUJ, 36 (1943-4), 97.
  2. Q2, 7-81; QB, 512; SEP, 133-213; H. Barbour, 'The Quakers in Puritan England' (New Haven, 1964), 224-31.
  3. NCA: MA 74, 19, Archives of the Society of Friends, Newcastle, 'Allendale and Northumberland Sufferings of Friends, 1660-1766 and 1792'.

taken at a meeting at Robert Linton's at South Shields by Major Graham, the deputy-governor of Tinmouth Castle, and cast into nasty Holes there, where they lay a full month and then he turned them out, having so far as appeared to them neither Order, Authority, nor Warrant, for any Part of his Proceedings.<sup>1</sup>

Linton was a relatively rich merchant, and, among other interests, owned several of the economically vital salt-pans of Shields; he was one of the twenty-seven taken in 1661.<sup>2</sup> Quakers were excommunicated for their practices, like Robert Whitfield and Robert Wilkinson of Shields in 1663.<sup>3</sup>

One explanation of the unparalleled degree of persecution which the Quakers suffered is that they conspicuously defied the ecclesiastical and secular authorities, made no secret of their meetings and were distinguished by their dress, mode of living and manners. Their conviction of righteousness and acceptance of Christ's prediction that his true followers would suffer on earth, energised their intransigence and steadfastness. Belief in an imminent moral transformation of the world engendered some eccentricities and apocalyptical excesses which coloured the entire movement.<sup>4</sup>

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1. J. Besse, 'A Collection of the Sufferings of the people called Quakers ...' (London, 1753), I, 174-5.
  2. M. Phillips, 'Quaker burial grounds', see above, 202.
  3. G.B. Hodgson, 'The Borough of South Shields ...' (Newcastle, 1903), 97; J.W. Steel, 'A Historical Sketch of the Society of Friends, in scorn called Quakers, in Newcastle and Gateshead, 1653-1898' (London, 1899), 8.
  4. H. Barbour, 'The Quakers in Puritan England' (New Haven, 1964), vii; for the Quaker inheritance from earlier Puritanism, see *ibid.*, 2-8; see also Q2, 8; SEP, 133-40, 143; R.M. Jones, 'Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries' (London, 1914), 336-49.

Faced with the opposition of the Church authorities and the penalties in the ecclesiastical courts, the animosity of the denizens of Newcastle and other large towns, and the lack of strong leadership, the Quaker movement declined in the north-east after 1660. A significant element survived but it did not retain its initial enthusiasm and support.<sup>1</sup> Generally, where numbers of Quakers were small in 1662, as at Hartlepool, Shotley, Stanhope and Mark Hesleden, they had significantly declined or disappeared in 1665.<sup>2</sup> In many of those places with a considerable number of Quakers in 1662, they maintained or strengthened their position during the next few years. More Quakers were presented in Medomsley, Durham and Staindrop and other villages in the Bishopric in 1665.<sup>3</sup> Rarely were any Quakers presented in parishes in 1665 when there had been none in 1662, even though the pressure upon churchwardens to make full returns was greater at the second visitation. To some extent, the figures would have been indicative of the zeal, or lack of zeal, of the parochial officials, but the general picture was one of decline, partly as a result of a lack of leaders and increased persecution, but also in consequence of an inevitable

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1. G.L. Turner, 'Presentations in Episcopal Visitations, 1662-79, Durham', JFHS, vol.13 (1916), 20-2, 64-5, 142-3; 14 (1917), 105-7; 15 (1918), 67-8; 16 (1919), 91-2; 18 (1921), 88; 25 (1928), 32; 'The establishment of a Monthly Meeting in Durham, 1654, and a note on Anthony Pearson', 48 (1957), 119-22; see also Rogan, 97.
  2. CVB, 117 v, 118 v, 125, 100 v, 24, 71 v, 14, 32; see Appendix, Tables A-C.
  3. CVB, 94, 108, 114 v, 117 v, 120, 80 v, 69, 84 v, 15; see Appendix, Tables A-C.

decrease in support after the particularly emotional initial appeal. To many who had never experienced a vital, personal faith, the emotive appeal of Quakerism and its antipathy towards the Church they had known to care little for them, was understandably attractive. It was a novel experience, offered a release from the uncertainties and argument in the Church of England, which had left many confused, and was not overburdened with doctrinal debate. It provided a distinctive way of life and personal identity. In Northumberland, where local ties to landowners were strong, the movement made little impression; in Durham and the Tyne Valley it grew in those areas especially where Puritans had already established footholds, but not where Puritan churches were powerful. The strength of Nonconformity in Newcastle prohibited the Quakers from making any real headway in that town. Where a Puritan experience had been known but had not become dominant, and in rural areas especially, the entire Puritan group might have been persuaded to join, and a strong impact made on all social classes, notably among farmers and craftsmen.<sup>1</sup> The discovery of Quaker involvement in anti-government conspiracy also damaged the integrity and numbers of the sect.

The Quakers and Roman Catholics were the perpetual Nonconformists, tolerated neither by the régime before 1660 nor by the

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1. H. Barbour, 'The Quakers in Puritan England' (New Haven, 1964), 83-5, 88-91.

government of the Restoration, though the extent of persecution and the intolerance of both varied periodically according to the political and religious climate; the Quakers suffered to a greater extent in the early years of the Restoration, and the Roman Catholics after the Great Fire of 1666 and again during the Popish Plot of 1678.<sup>1</sup> The persistent persecution was a reflection of the fear of the authorities that the bodies were involved in treacherous activities as at times some of their number were. Extremist sectarian groups like the Anabaptists and Fifth Monarchists made little impression upon the religious life of the north-east, even though the authorities often used the labels freely and indiscriminately.<sup>2</sup> It is now necessary to discuss the incidence of those groups which were part of the broad-based Protestant church in England before 1660, but found themselves apart from the established Church after the Restoration - the Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists. It must be remembered, though, that the majority

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1. See Q2; W.G. Bell, 'The Great Fire of London' (3rd ed., London, 1923); J.P. Kenyon, 'The Popish Plot' (London, 1972), *passim*.
  2. For further information regarding these elements, see L.F. Brown, 'The Political Activities of the Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men in England during the Interregnum' (London, 1911); B.S. Capp, 'The Fifth Monarchy Men. A Study in Seventeenth Century English Millenarianism' (London, 1972); C. Hill, 'The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution' (London, 1972); R.M. Jones, 'Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries' (London, 1914); P.R. Rogers, 'The Fifth Monarchy Men' (London, 1966); SEP, 233-322; Howell, *passim*.

of the north-east was religiously conservative, loyal to the parish church, and ready, sometimes eagerly, sometimes indifferently, to accept the restored discipline of the Anglican church. Although Basire presented a picture of many examples of schismatics and sectaries, this was immediately after the confusion of the Interregnum, cases were isolated and the picture was probably unduly pessimistic and exaggerated.<sup>1</sup> Dissent was not strong, nor was it growing alarmingly stronger.

It is impossible to assess the strength of Nonconformity from the visitation returns. Many of those presented for non-payment of dues, absence from church, failure to communicate and other offences, would have been Protestant Nonconformists. Many others would have practised occasional conformity, attending the parish church but also taking part in the activities of the sects. Many were presented as sectaries, schismatics and fanatics in 1662, whereas increasingly they were presented as Nonconformists in 1665, and their sects not distinguished. Ten sectaries were presented at Billingham in 1662, and two at Warkworth, but the terms were used less frequently in 1665 when eleven Nonconformists were presented at Newcastle, St. Andrew's, fifteen at Warkworth, twenty-two at Ponteland, eight at Norham, twenty-five at Alwick and five at Jarrow.<sup>2</sup> Presbyterians were mentioned only once,

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1. Hodgson, 244-62; Rogan, 97.

2. CVB, 112, 147, 27 v - 8, 37, 38 v, 58 v, 62 v, 76 v.

in 1662 at Hart and Hartlepool, where four were presented.<sup>1</sup> Eighteen Independents were presented at Ovingham in 1662; twelve at Medomsley, and one at Bywell, St. Andrew, but numbers were few in 1665; three were presented at Witton-le-Wear and one at Houghton-le-Spring, although the lists of excommunicated persons would contain many Nonconformists previously presented.<sup>2</sup> Anabaptists were cited more frequently, although it was a pejorative term and probably covered a wide range of Baptists and more extreme sectarians. Anabaptists were presented in 1662 at Brancepeth, Medomsely, Witton Gilbert, St. Hilda Chapelry, Whitburn, Shotley and Tynemouth, and in 1665 at Hamsterley, Morpeth, Bishopwearmouth and Medomsley.<sup>3</sup> The figures would seem to show a decrease overall, but this was because the Nonconformists were cited for other offences in 1665 and can not be separately distinguished. The parochial officials and ecclesiastical authorities generally identified papists and Quakers, but classed other sects together.<sup>4</sup>

The Baptists stood in an equivocal position, usually tolerated before 1660 but under suspicion because of the behaviour of many Anabaptists in England and abroad. Mention

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1. CVB, 117.
  2. CVB, 123, 94, 125 v, 19, 83.
  3. CVB, 89 v, 105 v, 94, 95, 106 v, 110, 125, 158 v, 20, 53, 72 v, 80.
  4. See Appendix, Tables A-C.

of Anabaptists was liable to instil fear into the government and people alike.<sup>1</sup> By 1652, a Baptist church was functioning in Newcastle, led by Paul Hobson and Thomas Gower. It met in a chapel on the Tyne Bridge without any substantial opposition from the civic authorities. Gower remained in Newcastle until at least 1669 when he was arraigned for preaching in Gateshead.<sup>2</sup> Thomas Tillam had gathered a Baptist congregation at Hexham of which an offshoot was founded at Muggleswick in the Bishopric, but, as a result of a dispute with the brethren at Newcastle, it was already in decline by 1660.<sup>3</sup> Lewis Frost and Michael Coatsworth of South Shields belonged to a group of Baptists there and became implicated in the plot of 1663.<sup>4</sup>

Persecution of the Baptist communities was spasmodic in the early years of the Restoration, but among their ranks were some radicals and intractable republicans and old army officers, and after involvement in anti-government conspiracy,

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1. For general histories of the Baptists, see T. Crosby, 'History of the English Baptists' (London, 1738-40); A.C. Underwood, 'A History of the English Baptists' (London, 1947). For the north of England, see D. Douglas, 'History of the Baptist Churches in the North of England from 1648 to 1845' (London, 1846); F.G. Little and E.F.T. Walker, 'The Story of the Northern Baptists' (Newcastle, 1945). For an explanation of different Baptists and numbers in England in 1660, see SEP 82-3.
  2. Howell, 249, 254; LAB, 351, 150 n, 407-8.
  3. Howell, 249-54; SEP, 85; B. Underhill, ed., 'Records of the Churches of Christ gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys and Hexham, 1644-1720' (London, 1854), 297, 304; For Baptists at Muggleswick and Hexham, see D. Douglas, 'History of the Baptist Churches in the North of England from 1648 to 1845' (London, 1846), 11-2, 16-29, 31-6, 60-9, 71-3.
  4. G.B. Hodgson, 'The Borough of South Shields ...' (Newcastle, 1903), 99-101; see below, 148-50.

the authorities regarded their meetings as centres for sedition and took repressive measures in self-defence. In 1660, Tillam was imprisoned for suspected disloyalty to the government and after his release went to Holland; he returned to England in the summer of 1661 with Christopher Pooley, a Norfolk Baptist, and one Love, a preacher who had been exiled to the Dutch Republic.<sup>1</sup> They spent some time in the Palatinate, intending to induce some two hundred families to settle in Holland, and the government became wary of their activities, particularly as Tillam was thought to have connections with continental Anabaptists.<sup>2</sup> Tillam continued to be involved in plots in England until, in 1664, he led a group of fellow Baptists to settle in Germany.<sup>3</sup> In the Diocese of Durham, numbers of adherents decreased as persecution was applied.<sup>4</sup> No licences were granted to Baptists in the four northern counties under the Declaration of Indulgence of 1672, although communities still practised at Newcastle, Muggleswick and probably South Shields.<sup>5</sup> In 1674, at the court of the archdeacon of Durham, proceedings were taken against twenty-one Baptists, twenty-six Quakers, and thirty-three whose

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1. SEP; 86, 113; T. Crosby, 'History of the English Baptists' (London, 1738-40), II, 180-5.
  2. C.S.P.D., 1661-2, 79.
  3. C.S.P.D., 1664-5, 101-2.
  4. Rogan, 97.
  5. DI, xxvi, xliii, lxvi, lxxv; SEP, 117, 402; G.B. Hodgson, 'The Borough of South Shields ...' (Newcastle, 1903), 101.

denomination was not defined, but this was an unusually vigorous year for the ecclesiastical authorities.<sup>1</sup>

Identification of Presbyterians, Independents or Congregationalists is difficult. In the same way as there is confusion about presentations for recusancy, many recusants being Protestant Nonconformists who refused to attend the parish church as well as those still loyal to the Church of Rome, similarly there is confusion about those labelled as fanatics, schismatics and sectaries by the Church authorities. The Presbyterians and Independents, because of their small numbers, had learnt the value of co-operative action and mutual support before 1660, and the experience was not wasted or abandoned when both elements were confronted with the opposition of the restored Anglican authorities. Most of the ejected ministers belonged to these groups and many retained congregations after they had been outlawed by the Church. The Presbyterians made up the majority of those ejected in 1662, and of those who took advantage of the Declaration of Indulgence in 1672, they were the most numerous, although they increasingly failed to practise true Presbyterianism. Many still hoped for an imminent reunion with the Church of England and they were never a violent, fanatical sect.<sup>2</sup> The 'schismatics' and

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1. NLC, 363.

2. For full lists of those granted licences in 1672, see DI, xxvi, xliii, lxvi, lxxv; SEP, 43-63.

'seducers' that Basire found at Tynemouth, Kirkely, Alnwick, Eglingham and elsewhere in Northumberland, would have been predominantly Presbyterians and Independents, although very rarely did he mention them by name.<sup>1</sup> The Independents had played no part in ensuring the Restoration and expected nothing from it; their chief difference from the Presbyterians lay in the positions of their respective ministers, but, although differences between the two were not sharp, an attempted union failed to be achieved in 1669.<sup>2</sup>

The subsequent careers of some of the ejected ministers illustrate what was happening in the diocese, as they continued to draw congregations despite the harassment of the authorities. Luke Ogle was ejected at Berwick-upon-Tweed and was imprisoned for six weeks for continuing to preach in 1662. He was presented for his failure to attend church and imprisoned again for alleged complicity in plotting. He resumed his preaching and drew large crowds, even though compelled to live outside Berwick. Ogle was licensed as a Presbyterian in 1672 and maintained his dangerous existence until 1696.<sup>3</sup> Robert Lever, ejected from Bolam, Northumberland, afterwards lived at a small estate at Brancepeth,

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1. Hodgson, 244-262.

2. SEP, 69-75.

3. Palmer, III, 55-8; CR, 372; DI, xliii; see also the examples of Thomas Dixon and William Pell in M.S. Child, 'Prelude to Revolution: the Structure of Politics in County Durham, 1678-88' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Maryland, 1972), 230-2 ff

near Durham, where he was licensed as a Presbyterian minister in 1672. Although he conformed by attending the parish church, he also preached at his own house and in the Newcastle area.<sup>1</sup> The inflammatory language used by some of the ejected ministers was sufficient to put the authorities on their guard. In 1661, John Seaton, ejected from Felton, Northumberland, was indicted for saying,

how the times are come for the persecution and tryall of the saints. And we are all turning back againe to Egypt. The booke of Common Prayer is comeing amongst us, which is nothing else but the Masse translated out of Greeke. The King deeply ingaged against the booke of Common Prayer and if I may say itt is sworne against itt too.<sup>2</sup>

Language such as this frightened the secular as well as the ecclesiastical authorities, and in March, 1666, eight of the northern ejected ministers were required to sign a declaration that,

it is not lawfull, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take up armes against the King; and that we doe abhorre that trayterous position of takeing armes by his authority against his person, or against those that are commissioned by him in pursueance of such commissions; and that we will not at any time endeavour any alteration of government, either in Church or State.<sup>3</sup>

The declaration was sworn by John Pringle, John Weld, John Thompson, Thomas Wilson, John Davies, Thomas Trewren, Robert

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1. Palmer, III, 58-60; CR, 323; DI xxvi.
  2. CR, 431; see also Palmer, III, 67; for a similar example, see DCY, 85.
  3. DCY, 135-6.



Pleasaunce and Ralph Wickliffe.<sup>1</sup> Alexander Gordon, ejected from Tynemouth in 1662, was bound over on December 28th, 1663, that he would not speak or contrive against the King or the government but would present himself to the deputy lieutenants of Northumberland when required, and appear before the next general sessions.<sup>2</sup> Many of the ejected ministers were presented for their failure to conform with the requirements. Thomas Wilson was presented at Lamesley for not attending the parish church there in 1665, and Thomas Dixon, ejected from Kelloe, Durham, after being turned out of his church in tumultuous circumstances, continued not to conform and was presented for non-attendance at St. Oswald's, Durham.<sup>3</sup> Rarely, however, did presentations and penalties prohibit the activities of the ministers, and only when the political stability of the area appeared to be threatened, did the secular government support the ecclesiastical authorities sufficiently to produce significant results and suppress the preachers. Moreover, presentations depended upon the diligence and outlook of the churchwardens and parochial officials, and in areas like Newcastle, where Nonconformity was strong, officials were often reluctant to take the steps necessary to quieten dissident activists.

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1. For details of these ministers, see DCY, 135 n; CR, 400, 482, 537-8, 159, 495, 392, 528-9; Palmer, III, 67; II, 184; III, 60; II, 182; III, 60-1; III, 79-80; II, 181; III, 80-2, respectively.
  2. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 392; CR, 229; Palmer, III, 80.
  3. CR, 537-8, 165.

It was to Newcastle that many Puritan clergymen had come during the years before 1660, and after the Restoration they were joined by many other ejected ministers of the area.<sup>1</sup> Of the older Puritan divines in the town, William Cole, Richard Prideaux, Henry Ashburnham and John Knightbridge conformed after 1660.<sup>2</sup> But other ministers proved to be very active in the years after 1660, particularly William Durant, Richard Gilpin, John Pringle and Henry Lever. They were educated men, talented preachers, had influential connections, were quite wealthy and highly respected. They made Newcastle the chief Nonconformist stronghold of the area, a fact which Bishop Cosin was never able to correct.<sup>3</sup>

William Durant had been a lecturer at St. Nicholas', Newcastle in 1645, at all Saints' in 1646 and at St. John's in 1647, and had founded an Independent church in the town with Cuthbert Sidenham. He was licensed as a Congregational minister in 1672.<sup>4</sup> His position at All Saints' was confirmed on a temporary basis on June 25th, 1660, but shortly afterwards he was obliged to resign.<sup>5</sup> He lived in a pleasant mansion in Pilgrim Street and had married Jane, the sister of Sir James Clavering, a leading member of Newcastle society and mayor in

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1. Howell, 218-73; NCA, CCB, 1656-1722, 31-3.

2. *ibid*, 268-9.

3. SEP, 399-403.

4. LAB, 342; Palmer, III, 77-8; CR, 174; DI, xliii.

5. NCA; CCB, 1656-1722, f. 32 v; see also *ibid*, 48, 51, 70, 78 v, 97, 124 v; J. Clephan, 'Nonconformity in Newcastle Two Hundred Years Ago' (Newcastle, 1862), 2. Hereinafter referred to as 'Clephan'.

1663.<sup>1</sup> On October 11th, 1661, Cosin was hoping for some agreement with Durant for he wrote of him that,

I intreated and ordered to forbear preaching till he made it appear that he was an ecclesiasticall person, as he is not, having neither episcopall nor presbiteriall ordination.<sup>2</sup>

Richard Gilpin had been ejected from Greystock, Cumberland, and came to Newcastle soon after the Restoration, where he lived till 1700 and was licensed in 1672 as a Congregational minister.<sup>3</sup> Soon after the Five Mile Act was passed in 1665 he was fined and, as he refused to pay, his goods distrained. Ambrose Barnes, the leading Newcastle Merchant with whom he lodged, promptly bought them back for him, and, to prevent his banishment, persuaded the civic magistrates of his usefulness as a physician.<sup>4</sup> John Pringle had been vicar of Eglington, Northumberland, before 1662, after which he lived in Newcastle, where he was granted a licence as a Presbyterian in 1672. Like Gilpin, he was qualified in medicine as well as divinity and was periodically imprisoned and presented for his activities.<sup>5</sup> Henry Lever had succeeded Cosin at Brancepeth and had a record of Puritan connections. He became curate of St. John's, Newcastle,

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1. Howell, 223; Clephan, 2.

2. Ornsby, II, 36.

3. Clephan, 2-3; SEP, 400-1; LAB, 141-7; DI, lxxv.

4. C.E.S. Collingwood, 'Memoirs of Bernard Gilpin, parson of Houghton-le-Spring and apostle of the north' (London, 1884), 243-4. Ambrose Barnes, sensing the changing political climate resigned as an alderman on Sept. 7th, 1659; NCA, CEB, 1650-9, 538.

5. Palmer, III, 67; CR, 400; Clephan, 3-4; DI, xliii.

in 1660, where he remained until his ejection in 1662, even though his salary had been suspended earlier.<sup>1</sup> After his ejection, he resided at Brancepeth and preached at Newcastle, to which he moved in 1665 and was licensed in 1672 as a Presbyterian.<sup>2</sup>

The Nonconformists of Newcastle proved to be a stubborn and truculent community and the chief obstacle to Cosin's attempt to enforce conformity in the Diocese. Fairly large conventicles were held at all times and the ecclesiastical authorities did not receive the co-operation they required either from the parochial officials or the civic leaders, because of their indifference or sympathy for the Nonconformists. In 1662, Basire noted that 'many conventicles are held in New C by papists and schismatics, shoemakers etc.'<sup>3</sup> In 1663, Cosin wrote to the mayor of Newcastle, demanding that action be taken against the Nonconformists in the town, particularly the 'ringleaders', Durant, Lever, Gilpin and Pringle, whom he described as 'caterpillars' eating into the vitals of the Church and endangering the well-being of many souls.<sup>4</sup> In a letter to Whitehall of October 13th, 1663, the

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1. Palmer, III, 78-9; CR, 322;3; Clephan, 4-5; NCA, CCB, 1656-1722, 47 v.
  2. DI, xliii.
  3. Hodgson, 246.
  4. E. Mackenzie, 'A descriptive and historical account of the town and county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, including the borough of Gateshead' (Newcastle, 1827), 370 ff; Clephan, 1.

government was informed that at the last sessions there had been no indictments against Nonconformists in Newcastle and Northumberland. A few Catholics and sectaries had been presented in the town but the writer did not know what the situation was in Durham. He clearly thought the position was alarming because of the current unstable nature of the area with the trained bands in a posture of alarm.<sup>1</sup> The Conventicle Acts and the other restrictive legislation had little effect on the regular meetings of dissenting congregations, although they were, to some extent, discreet about their activities.

On November 23rd, 1668, Cosin wrote to the government concerning the seditious meetings current in Newcastle. He enclosed the information of Thomas Naylor, the chief orthodox minister of the town and the Bishop's greatest ally there.<sup>2</sup> Naylor's letter informed him of a public meeting of about five hundred people, led by Gilpin, at the Barber Surgeons' Hall on November 1st. The antipathy of the assembled multitude to the government, claimed the informant, was demonstrated by their singing of Psalm 149, which contained the lines,

To bind their stately Kings in chains,  
 Their Lords in iron bands,  
 To execute on them the doom  
 That written is before.  
 This honour all his Saints shall have,  
 Praise ye the Lord therefore.

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1. SP Dom/29, 81; 80.

2. SP Dom/29, 249; 146, 146 (1).

The writer claimed that the seditious implications of this were apparent. He added that Durant, Lever and Pringle similarly maintained large assemblies, even though the mayor had forbidden such meetings. A letter from Isaac Basire of April 7th, 1669, to Cosin told him of a recent notorious conventicle of three hundred Newcastle and Gateshead people, which had met in Gateshead.<sup>1</sup> He stressed the frequency of such assemblies under the guidance of the four leaders, without whom the activities of the Nonconformists could probably be controlled and suppressed. Gilpin, by travelling between Newcastle and Carlisle, was avoiding the jurisdiction of the Bishops and justices of both dioceses. He had purchased the manor of Scalby Castle in Cumberland, where a Nonconformist congregation also held meetings, and therefore had two places of refuge.<sup>2</sup> In a letter to Basire of December 5th, 1668, in reply to the archdeacon's information about a conventicle of five hundred persons, Cosin related that the dean of Carlisle had given him similar intelligence, but had numbered the congregation at three thousand.<sup>3</sup> On July 22nd, 1669, Cuthbert Nicholson, a cordwainer, gave evidence before Ralph Jenison, mayor of Newcastle, concerning a meeting at the house of William Durant

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1. SP Dom/29, 258; 132; see also Darnell, 271-2, 279.

2. SEP, 401.

3. Hunter, 9; 245; printed in Ornsby, II, 197-8.

in Pilgrim Street, of one hundred and fifty persons, which had been broken up by one of the serjeants-at-mace and the churchwardens of the parish.<sup>1</sup> Shortly afterwards, on August 4th, the same informant deposed that, in the very early hours of the previous Sunday, he had seen a large number of people enter the house of Richard Gilpin in White Friars. Despite the fact that it was five or six in the morning, he immediately notified John Shaw, lecturer at St. John's and rector of Whalton, who, together with the churchwardens, constables and serjeants-at-mace, went to Gilpin's home and broke open the locked doors. Forty people were discovered at the conventicle, and Nicholson's evidence also indicted the other leading ministers and a number of important citizens.<sup>2</sup>

Cosin was only too aware of the problem but the support and co-operation of the civic authorities was necessary for the success of his measures against the Nonconformists. In his letter to Basire of December 8th, 1668, he thanked the archdeacon for his zealous efforts to suppress conventicles and commended the services of Mr. Naylor in Newcastle. He suggested that it might be useful if the chancellor of Durham, Thomas Burwell, Basire and Dr. Carleton, dean of Carlisle,

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1. DCY, 172 n; LAB, 408.

2. DCY, 172-4; LAB, 408-9; Clephan, 6-8.

conferred with the mayor and

the rest of the Governours and Justices of the Peace in that towne, urging them earnestly to put the lawes now in force against the four principall heads and ringleaders of the faction, least the mischief spreads further both in that towne and in the country about them.<sup>1</sup>

On December 7th the King sent an instruction to the leaders of the town through the Bishop, bidding them execute the laws against conventicles.<sup>2</sup> The answer of the mayor, Ralph Jenison, and aldermen of Newcastle to the Bishop was conciliatory but hardly sufficient to placate Cosin's increasing concern. They insisted that laws against conventicles had been implemented, several persons convicted and steps taken to prevent meetings, any offenders escaping punishment only for lack of evidence.<sup>3</sup> The opprobrium of Cosin's trenchant reply of December 22nd demonstrated his growing irritation and sense of frustration.<sup>4</sup> He acknowledged that some measures had been taken, but regretted that

you have had neither any information nor any evidence given you against such unlawfull assemblies in your Town, when the notoriety of that fact by their numerous meeting at your Barber-Chirurgeons' Hall upon All Saints' Day last ... was such, that it was voic'd and made known to all the Town and Country about ...

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1. Hunter, 9; 245; printed in Ornsby, II, 197-8.
  2. C.S.P.D., 1668-9, 91; J.C. Hodgson, ed., 'Northumbrian Documents, SS, 131 (1918), 188.
  3. CLB, 1; 173; printed in Ornsby, II, 198-9.
  4. CLB, 1; 174; printed in Ornsby, II, 199-201.

The Bishop added that the four Nonconformist leaders had also held a fast on November 25th lasting most of the day:

Of all which surely you had or might have had knowledg; and if you had not, you will give me leave to say, without offence, that many of your Townsmen are very backward in discovering to you and attesting their knowledg of such disorderly assemblies; and that you are very great strangers to the affaires and disturbances of your owne Towne, the government whereof under his Majesty, is committed to your care.<sup>1</sup>

In June, 1669, Cosin informed Basire of the King's repeated request that conventicles be suppressed, and he attempted to institute a renewed campaign to this end by reminding all ministers and parochial officials of the need for vigilance and strenuous efforts to halt the spread of cancerous Nonconformity. He was also indignant at the presumptuous behaviour of Newcastle corporation in 1667, in appointing Mr. Ashburnham to the curacy of St. John's, without any reference to him. On August 6th, 1669, he again wrote to the mayor and corporation.<sup>2</sup> He stressed that it was his office to maintain peace and order, and to uphold the laws of the nation, to which end his earlier letters had been directed, and yet in Newcastle the leaders of sedition and religious dissent were still at liberty.

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1. For Fasts, see PSAN, 3rd series, 2 (1907), 312.

2. CLB, 1; 181; printed in Ornsby, II, 205-8.

I would fain vindicate the Towne of Newcastle from the foule imputation of being the nursery of faction in these northern parts, which, as things now stand, I cannot; but rather must, and, according to my duty, will report the contrary to the King and his Counsell, and then any one may easily forsesee the evill consequences.<sup>1</sup>

He concluded that this was his final warning, because of 'my speciall respect to the Towne', and he hoped to hear soon that the laws had been executed. The 'foule imputation' struck the root of the matter; Newcastle indeed was the centre of Nonconformity and, until it was crushed there, the entire Diocese would be infected and gathered congregations elsewhere given hope and encouragement. This Cosin singularly failed to achieve. It is difficult to know whether he really believed 'evill consequences' would have followed such a report to the central government. If the local authorities could not solve the problem, the central government could not; the purpose of the provincial secular and ecclesiastical authorities was to undertake that which the government was unable to carry out itself and so delegated. Moreover, although Cosin continually emphasised the personal nature of the King's directives to suppress conventicles, it would have been a strange exercise in self-delusion, particularly as he was himself in London after 1670, if his confidence in the King's sincerity in desiring such never wavered. As plotting against the government steadily

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1. CLB, 1; 181; printed in Ornsby, II, 205-8.

decreased and Nonconformist congregations were increasingly less identified with treason, sedition and conspiracy, conventicles were regarded with less suspicion, a growing indifference and even toleration. Despite the revival of the Conventicle Act in 1670, Cosin's attitude, and that of others like him, was being left behind by the direction of public opinion. He was living in a changing world, and the attitudes and standards of others were changing more than his own. He was attempting to restore something which had never been, and was only frustrated by discovering that those who should theoretically be supporting him were not doing so.

In Newcastle, he did not receive the support of the civic authorities to which he thought he was entitled, even though they continued to pay him lip-service and profess their approbation of his aims. The main problem was that many of the leading members of Newcastle society were involved in, or sympathetic towards, the activities of the Nonconformists, despite the political changes in the constitution of the corporation at the Restoration.<sup>1</sup> Cosin was informed by the dean of Carlisle that the mayor's wife had been present at one of the meetings in 1668.<sup>2</sup> George Tunstall, who was cited

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1. Howell, 185-6, 209-13, 336-7, 339; see also NCA, CCB, 1656-1722, 57, for a declaration of loyalty to the King by the freemen of Newcastle in 1662.
  2. Hunter, 9; 245; printed in Ornsby, II, 197-8.

on the evidence of Nicholson in 1669 as a Nonconformist present at the conventicle at Gilpin's house, was the town's physician.<sup>1</sup> Among the names of merchants, tradesmen, gentlemen and women at the meetings were the names of five ex-sheriffs of Newcastle and four ex-mayors.<sup>2</sup> Many of those presented for their failure to communicate at All Saints' church in 1662, were associated with the Puritan government of the town.<sup>3</sup> Ambrose Barnes, the influential leading merchant and politician, used his connections to protect the Nonconformist ministers. He was imprisoned in Tynemouth Castle soon after the Restoration, was presented, excommunicated and had his goods distrained, but he was intransigent and his activities continued.<sup>4</sup> Meetings were held at his house and at the homes of other prominent men of the locality, like Sir William Middleton's house at Belsay and the residences of John Biddleston, Henry Hudson and Lancelot Turnbull, and others,

living a little way out of town, in places of retirement and privacy, gave hospitable entertainment to many fugitives, and two widows, Ann Jeffreson and Barbara Cay, freely ventured their mault-lofts, to be places of assembly for preaching and praying when they had opportunity ...<sup>5</sup>

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1. DCY, 173.
  2. Clephan, 8.
  3. Howell, 269; see also PSAN, 3rd series, 4 (1911), 28.
  4. LAB, 174-5, 190, 197-8; SEP, 400.
  5. LAB, 198, 200.

Sir William Middleton's residence at Belsay was licensed as a Presbyterian meeting place in 1672.<sup>1</sup> He was made a baronet in 1662 and became sheriff of Northumberland in 1666-7; John Davis, ejected from Bywell, was among the preachers who held meetings at his house.<sup>2</sup> By these means the Nonconformist ministers were able to avoid apprehension by the ecclesiastical authorities, so that the assiduity of Cosin and his officers had little effect when countered by the ambivalence of such influential personages.

The authorities of Newcastle generally were prepared to leave the Nonconformists to their devices so long as their activities were not blatantly ostentatious or designed to provoke a direct confrontation with them. Had they attempted to direct a vigorous campaign against them they would have found the task arduous, because of the connections with leading merchants and gentlemen, the formidable organisation of the movement and the comparative anonymity the town lent it. Generalisations are always dangerous, but the evidence suggests that Dissent in the Diocese was assuming a middle-class and urban character; in rural areas, particularly, Cosin was supported by the leading squires and gentry, but in Newcastle

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1. SEP, 417-8; DI, lxxv; see *ibid* for a full list of licences.
  2. Palmer, III, 60-1; CR, 159; for such a meeting, see C.S.P.D., 1666-7, 292-3; a collection was made for him in Cockermouth in 1670 - see B. Nightingale, 'The Ejected of 1662 in Cumberland and Westmorland' (Manchester, 1911), I, 335.

he did not command such loyalty. There were some exceptions like the Catholic Riddells of Newcastle and the Nonconformist Lady Vane of Raby Castle.<sup>1</sup> Newcastle was already assuming a right to direct its own affairs; if the Dissenters were not involved in political or seditious actions the civic leaders were reluctant to exercise persecuting powers. Their attitude was practical and pragmatic and resented the interference of Cosin and his officers. The parochial officials were often coloured with the same general principle of non-interference, and even when they made presentations the penalties were inadequate to make any significant impression.

Cosin's personal attitude towards the Nonconformists requires some explanation. He was not a man moved by rancour, nor was he of a persecuting inclination. He was capable of the most calumnious philippics against those outside the Church of England, but at the same time he made considerable conciliatory efforts. His opponents at the Savoy Conference soon after the Restoration noted his attempts to reconcile differences.<sup>2</sup> Although he insisted on conformity to the Book of Common Prayer and episcopal ordination and compliance with episcopal government, he was anxious to convert Nonconformists

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1. W.V. Smith, 'Catholic Tyneside from the beginning of the Reformation to the Restoration of the Hierarchy, 1534-1850' (Newcastle, 1930), 45-6; SEP, 417-8.
  2. Osmond, 270.

to orthodoxy by persuasive peaceful means. He was sincere and solicitous in attempting to persuade John Lomax, ejected from Wooler, to conform, and, whilst he never succeeded, he always spoke of him with respect.<sup>1</sup> Lomax was an educated and well-mannered man, and after his ejection, moved to Newcastle for some time before going to North Shields, where he practised medicine and opened an apothecary's shop, besides preaching and periodically leaving the area to avoid persecution. When Dr. Cartwright, one of the Durham prebendaries, spoke in a derogatory manner about Lomax and other Dissenting ministers in Cosin's presence, the Bishop said:

Doctor, hold your tongue, for to my certain knowledge John Lomax is a learned man.<sup>2</sup>

On several occasions Cosin rebuked those who disparaged Nonconformists and in some cases he respected their sincerity and conscientiousness.<sup>3</sup> Richard Frankland, a graduate of Cambridge, had received Presbyterian ordination and had been appointed to the staff of Cromwell's college at Durham. Before his ejection from Auckland, Cosin tried to effect his conformity, offering him great preferment and a private, conditional ordination. To the Bishop's disappointment, he declined and

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1. Palmer, III, 83-5; CR, 327.
  2. M. Phillips, 'John Lomax, ejected from Wooler, Northumberland in 1662, with some account of his family', AA, 3rd series, 2 (1906), 44, 48; Palmer, III, 85; G.B. Hodgson, 'The Borough of South Shields ...' (Newcastle, 1903), 102.
  3. J. Stoughton, 'History of Religion in England' (revised ed., London, 1881-4), III, 467-8.

moved to Rathmell, in Yorkshire, where he established an academy in 1670.<sup>1</sup>

Despite such personal inclinations and kindnesses, Cosin singularly pursued the objective of enforcing conformity to the Restoration settlement of the Church of England. He believed in the righteousness of the Church of England and that if the religious laws were not maintained and enforced, political stability would collapse. Although the motive of the secular authorities in demanding repression was essentially political, which seditious plotting seemed to vindicate, Cosin's vision was of a wider nature. Until the political fears subsided, attention was directed away from the Anglican authorities' primary religious task. Perhaps the general reaction to Puritanism in the country was underestimated, innovation was at a discount and the practices of the past revered. Cosin perpetuated the outlook of an earlier period, for increasingly religious enthusiasm was becoming unfashionable. He never had the means to effect conformity to the Anglican establishment; the legislation was insufficient, it was not backed by the will of the central government, nor was it sustained when the fears of political insurrection decreased. Cosin's was a thankless task, for when he attempted

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1. Palmer, II, 177-81; CR, 211-2; SEP, 458-9; Osmond, 217-2.

to take the measures directed, he never received adequate support from Whitehall or provincial officials, because they did not share his basic ideals and premises of the purpose of the attempts to enforce conformity. His political aims corresponded with theirs, but in the religious basic reasons for his work, he was alone.

The struggle between the ecclesiastical authorities and the Nonconformists was a contest between minorities in the midst of apathy and indifference. The general picture of the Diocese was not one of Dissenting strength. The real problem the Church faced was the lack of interest and poor religious education of the parishioners. But the resources of the Church were directed towards the deracination of religious unorthodoxy. Only the Quakers had made a really significant impression at the parochial level, and their influence was decreasing. Probably superstition and religious misconceptions were the greatest threats to Christian life, together with the usual problem of indifference amongst ordinary people. The Church was threatened by religious over-enthusiasm and, on the other hand, lack of interest. Nonconformity flourished in Newcastle and was a factor in other towns. Generally, the rural parishes were conservative and orthodox, not for reasons of piety, but by the example of their social superiors and for their unwillingness to accept new ideas, and the convenience and

expedient of compliance with the ecclesiastical authorities. In concluding that Cosin met with some success, qualifications must be made. Granville recorded, probably in 1675 after Cosin's death:

The Bishoprick of Durham is without dispute the most conformable part of England, for Ministers do generally when they read service, read it according to their rubrick, which is a very rare thing in other dioceses; but if conformity be the observation of our Common Prayer Booke, then this countrey is only comparatively conformable, and farr from being really so.<sup>1</sup>

Cosin achieved more success in regulating orthodox practices in the parish churches than in his dealings with the Nonconformists. In Newcastle he failed because of his own position of weakness and the strengths of the Dissenting movement. The diocese was comparatively orderly in 1660, and other factors were at work in the decline of some of the sects. In Newcastle itself, towards the end of his life, Ambrose Barnes recorded the deterioration of Nonconformity, the spread of faction and jealousy among the sects, the growth of scepticism and formality.<sup>2</sup> Cosin had been unable to establish a modus vivendi with many of the Commonwealth preachers, some of whose virtues he recognised, and their presence in the Diocese

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1. G. Ornsby, ed., 'The Remains of Denis Granville ...', II, SS, 47 (1865), 23.
  2. LAB, 200, 241, and passim; for a summary of Nonconformity in the Diocese of Durham in the later seventeenth century, see NCL, 363-71.

was a constant irritation to him throughout his episcopate. Of his industry, high sense of duty, stability of conviction and principle, and his application to the duties which were expected of him, and which he set himself, there can be no doubt. Where he failed, it was the result neither of weakness of character nor shortcomings in assiduity, but because the task was too great for any man. He has been accused of intolerance and obstinacy, but he was a man who conscientiously could not have compromised his principles. That he succeeded in achieving some of his objectives is creditable enough, considering the magnitude of the tasks he encountered.<sup>1</sup>

The Nonconformist movement had its own strengths. Tactically it was able to make use of itinerant preachers, to meet almost spontaneously in secluded places and to break up quickly before the authorities could act. Its underground organisation depended upon verbal arrangements and, as it did not require tangible expressions of reverence in worship, it was difficult to pin down, and evidence was lacking. The problem was complicated by the outward conformism to the Church of England of some of its adherents. When presented or arrested, invariably Nonconformists were intractable,

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1. For the subsequent development of Nonconformity, see M.S. Child, 'Prelude to Revolution: the Structure of Politics in County Durham, 1678-88' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Maryland, 1972), 222-328.

unrepentant and self-righteous. Punishment on earth was part of God's purpose. It is aphoristic to say that it is impossible to legislate for the minds of men, for their thoughts, beliefs and attitudes, especially when such beliefs stem from religious conviction. Rarely can legislation successfully alter attitudes, certainly in the short-term. Allied with intense and sustained persecution it can be efficacious in the long-term. In England, after 1660, it was not usually harsh or of continuous severity. Nor, frequently, did local officials desire to persecute leading or useful members of society, when their only crime was to hold conscientious views outside those of the Church of England. They were no longer regarded as heretics or agents of the Devil, even by so stern a disciplinarian as Bishop Cosin. Conversely indeed, extremists among the Dissenters were more intolerant of their adversaries than their opponents were of them. A belief in the toleration of all Christians, or at least Protestants, so long as they behaved orderly, was increasing. It was ultimately delayed by reason of the unknown political consequences, the danger of insurrection, the memory of the past, the intransigence of a section of all the parties involved, and the problem of the Roman Catholics. In this respect, the later seventeenth century was decisive in proving the impossibility of enforcing religious conformity in England.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DERWENTDALE PLOT AND POLITICAL DISSENT

1663. The Commons-wealth men were now thinking, that they saw the stream of the nation beginning to turn against the Court: And upon that they were meeting, and laying plots to retrieve their lost game.<sup>1</sup>

Surtees underestimated and ridiculed the conspiracy in Durham in 1663 and depreciated its wider ramifications and implications. He conceded that 'in the Bishopric of Durham the Darwent-dale Plot excited no little commotion', but meant that the ecclesiastical and secular authorities rather over-reacted.

The Cavaliers, who saw with dismay the good old cause rearing its ominous head in more places than the green banks of the Derwent, had every reason for preserving the ascendant they had just regained ... the swell of a nocturnal hymn peeling down the mountain-side from some conventicle of separatists, must have spoken of war and disaster, ruin and defeat, of Naseby, of Worcester, and of Long Marston.

He concluded that the episode and the alarm which it precipitated were the result of an exaggeration of an event of no real consequence, because of the unease and insecurity of the authorities so soon after the Restoration.

And thus the two troops of Anabaptist horse, and the men who forded the Darwent with glittering broad swords, are reduced into Joseph Hopper, who took a five weeks' jaunt into Ireland, and had reasons for not informing his wife.<sup>2</sup>

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1. G. Burnet, 'History of his own Time' (London, 1724), I, 198.
  2. Surtees, II, 390-1.

More recent work, however, has demonstrated that the conspiracy which was discovered in Muggleswick in March, 1663, was part of a nationwide scheme, which possessed a remarkably sophisticated organisation and was designed and intended to rise against the government in the autumn of 1663. It was not until the end of 1663 that the wider plot was rendered useless after severe repressive actions by the authorities, and throughout the decade, there were sporadic fears and alarms of its recrudescence.<sup>1</sup> The reaction of the national and local authorities, and the seriousness with which they regarded the plot is only understandable within the context of the emotional atmosphere of the time. The government saw its fears and precautions as vindicated. In the years after the Restoration the country was alive with rumours of miraculous happenings and of plotters dedicated to the overthrow and destruction of the régime. Hearsay was accorded wide credence in a credulous age, and the authorities expected opposition, which they were at pains to resist. The momentous event of the restitution of monarchy and the Church of England was not so universally

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1. The chief works are, W.C. Abbott, 'English Conspiracy and Dissent, 1660-1674', AHR, vol.14 (1909), 503-28, hereinafter referred to as 'Abbott'; H. Gee, 'The Derwentdale Plot, 1663', TRHS, 3rd series, vol. 11 (1917), 125-42, hereinafter referred to as 'Gee'; F. Nicholson, 'The Kaber Rigg Plot, 1663', TCWAS, 2nd series, vol. 11 (1911), 212-32, hereinafter referred to as 'Nicholson'; C.E. Whiting, 'The Great Plot of 1663', DUJ, vol. 22 (1918-22), 155-67, hereinafter referred to as 'Whiting'.

accepted and acclaimed as has been commonly depicted. Most of the revolutionary leaders had fled, were imprisoned or under surveillance, but there still existed disbanded soldiers, lesser officials and extreme sectarians, whose loyalty was to the discredited party.<sup>1</sup> Many were not prepared to accept the changes passively.

The years immediately before and after 1660 were a time of uncertainty and unease. Apocalyptic, chiliastic and millenarian predictions were rampant. Portents were seen and then interpreted and disseminated in a variety of publications.<sup>2</sup> Prophecies had circulated that the mid-1650s would witness remarkable events culminating in the fall of Antichrist, which, after 1660 were transposed into an explanation for Puritan and republican failure and evidence of the ungodliness of the restored system. During the plague of 1665-6 and the Great Fire of London, despairing forecasts of the imminence of the end of the world were revived.<sup>3</sup> In a world where prodigies and portents were readily believed, the Dissenters, and Catholics too, systematically made use of their incidence in an attempt to overthrow the Restoration settlement, discredit the King and prove divine disapprobation

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1. Abbott, 503-4.
  2. For details of Puritan literature, see SEP, 545-71.
  3. C. Hill, 'The World Turned Upside Down. Radical Ideas during the English Revolution' (London, 1972), 72-4, 238, 286.

of the Church of England.<sup>1</sup> In the later 1660s, the belief in magic and miraculous happenings began to decline, but Quakers and other sectarians continued to advertise them.

The King made use of the prevailing climate to strengthen his own position by a reversion to his cure of Scrofula.<sup>2</sup>

Such attitudes were also manifested in a continued belief in malevolent magic and witchcraft. A professional witch-hunter had been employed in a scare in Newcastle and Northumberland in 1649-50, and a belief in diabolical possession of persons and maleficent hauntings survived throughout the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup> For many, religion was frequently a superstitious experience, Christian practices were regarded as magical acts, and miraculous rumours generated fear and recriminations. Malicious words used in a moment of passion or eccentric activities resulted in accusations of sorcery and the bringing of charges for witchcraft. In Newcastle in 1661, Jane Watson was accused of giving children a bewitched apple to spite their mother, and so causing the children great torment. Jane Simpson of Newcastle was accused of invoking fits and visions on one Dorothy Heron in 1664,

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1. K.V. Thomas, 'Religion and the Decline of Magic. Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England' (London, 1971), 89-90, 95.
  2. *ibid*, 144, 247, 260, 127, 142-3, 193, 195-6, 204-5, 413-4.
  3. *ibid*, 486-7; Howell, 232-4.

and in 1667 Emmy Gaskin was said to have induced madness and psychic manifestations after using threatening words.<sup>1</sup> The Devil was still seen as an evil omnipotent agent in the world, whose aid and power could be conjured and harnessed by human beings. Among a largely uneducated population which knew dearth, poverty, sickness and sudden disaster, magical explanations seemed straightforward and irrefutable. It explains the potency of rumour and the calumny it provoked.

In the same way, it was a dangerous practice to speak of the government or the King in a derogatory manner, for words uttered in a light-hearted manner could be interpreted as seditious or treacherous. There were many cases of people indicted in the period after 1660 for using seditious language, for the authorities were determined to crush opposition. To cast an aspersion on the integrity of Charles II was a serious offence, and defamatory and dissentient voices were severely dealt with. Even casual remarks assumed sententious proportions. Margaret Dixon was brought before the Newcastle magistrates on May 13th, 1660, for saying:

What! can they finde noe other man to bring  
in than a Scotsman? What! is there not some  
Englishman more fit to make a King than a  
Scott? There is none that loves him but drunk  
whores and whoremongers. I hope hee will never

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1. DCY, 92-3, 124-5, 154; for other local cases between 1660 and 1670, see *ibid*, 88-9, 112-14, 127, 176-7; K.V. Thomas, 'Religion and the Decline of Magic ...' (London, 1971), 494, 532, 556.

come into England, for that hee will sett on fire the three Kingdomes as his father before him has done. God's curse light on him. I hope to see his bones hanged at a horse tayle, and the doggs run through his puddins.<sup>1</sup>

It was even more serious if slander of the King was backed by suggestions of overthrowing him by violent means. Henry Ashton carelessly said that he had been a good marksman and killed many Cavaliers, Sarah Walker intimated that she would organise an army to oppose him, and James Parker said in 1663:

I served Oliver seaven yeares as a souldier, and if any one will put up the finger on the accompt that Oliver did ingage, I will doe as much as I have done. As for the Kinge I am not beholdinge to him. I care not a fart for him.<sup>2</sup>

Such instances as these were trivial compared with the very real plots which were taking form throughout the country, but they served to demonstrate that the republican cause was not yet lost. It was defeated but not yet dead. The existence of trained soldiers, congregations of Dissenters, and arms dumps, coupled with the residual anti-royalist feeling, were responsible for the last concerted rising with any real organisation in 1663.

Evidence and information of conspiracies against the

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1. DCY, 83; there are many other examples, *ibid*, *passim*, esp. 84, 116 n, 158.
  2. DCY, 130, 99, 115-6.

government soon became available from many parts of the country. Doubtless some of the fears which were expressed and the plots which were alleged were exaggerated, others were illusory, some might have been fomented by the government to take severe repressive measures. Venner's rising of Fifth Monarchists in January, 1661, terrorised the capital, and its proximity to the very centre of government, resulted in a proclamation forbidding seditious meetings and conventicles under pretence of religious worship.

These things have produced these effects. That no man shall have any armes that are not registered. That no man shall live in the City that takes not the oath of allegiance. That no person of any sect shall out of his own house exercise religious duties, nor admit any into his house ...<sup>1</sup>

Action was taken against the Post Office after letters had been intercepted in March, 1661, at the time of the elections to Parliament, which showed the strength of anti-episcopal feeling in London. A letter addressed to Newcastle on March 18th exhorted the town to follow the example of London and elect Presbyterians and Independents.<sup>2</sup> In the early months of 1661, the government received a stream of reports of feeling against the King, of plots to overthrow the authorities and refusals throughout the country to take the oaths of allegiance.<sup>3</sup> On

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1. SP Dom/29, 28; 42; see also C.S.P.D., 1660-1, 470-1.
  2. SP Dom/29, 32; 84; see also C.S.P.D., 1660-1, 535-43.
  3. C.S.P.D., 1660-1, 465-9, 484, 500, 504, 507 and passim.

January 10th William Delavalle wrote from Gateshead that a treacherous party of one hundred and fifty horse the previous night had attempted to take the town, 'though their owne feares made it then take no effect'. He feared that the danger was not yet over and the worst was still to come, and suggested that the militia be settled to secure 'those persons that are irreconcilable to monarchy', like the traders that dispersed 'infinite quantities of powder and shot both into the northerne countyes and into Scotland'. He went on to warn that many forces around Newcastle would join a new war which was encouraged from the pulpits, and common talk was that the government would not last a year, 'which to any reasonable iudgement must suggest the hellish designes now in their embrio'.<sup>1</sup> His alarmist fears rather belie the claim that all was quiet in the area in the years after the Restoration until 1663.<sup>2</sup> The Quakers were seen as a particular threat because of their large meetings, refusal to take the oaths of loyalty and alleged seditious intent; reports of their treasonable activities came from all parts of the country, including Durham.<sup>3</sup> In January it was reported from Yorkshire that they had grown bolder,

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1. S.P. Dom/29, 28; 40.

2. VCH, II, 54.

3. C.S.P.D., 1660-1, 466, 472-7, 481, 514 and passim.

abused their liberty and on market-days went naked through the streets, crying 'Woe, woe to Yorkshire', and met in great multitudes to plan designs to overthrow the government.<sup>1</sup> During the summer, rumours increased and talk of a major conspiracy gained momentum, a plot was discovered in the west midlands in November, and by December, informants told of a widespread plan led by an inner committee which was negotiating for foreign support.<sup>2</sup>

The government and the local authorities took appropriate action to counter these developments. Large numbers of Quakers were arrested and imprisoned under existing laws and in May, 1661, the Commons began to frame a stern Bill to restrict and penalise the Friends, which the following year became the Quaker Act.<sup>3</sup> Francis Howgill, a leading Quaker, in the spring of 1661 wrote to a Friend in Durham, Richard Hickson, informing him that four thousand Friends were in prison throughout the country and five hundred in London. He encouraged him to endure the sufferings in this world which would be rewarded in the next.<sup>4</sup> Measures were taken to disarm the disaffected and a proclamation in April ordered all cashiered officers

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1. SP Dom/29, 28; 45.

2. Abbott, 506-9.

3. 13 & 14, Car II, c 1; Q2, 9-10, 14-5, 21-3.

4. SP Dom/29, 32; 69.

to leave the capital.<sup>1</sup> Action was taken to cleanse town offices of those whose loyalty was suspect, which became backed by the Corporation Act of 1662.<sup>2</sup> The government did all in its power to demonstrate its strength and discredit the previous regime, including the exhumation of Cromwell and other revolutionary leaders. A more effective intelligence system was organised and government spies began to operate, whose purpose was to search out plotters and inform of designs, and restrictive measures were employed against the literature of sectaries.<sup>3</sup> In 1662, as rumours increased, the militia was set in order, more severe action was taken against conventicles and national strongholds were garrisoned.<sup>4</sup>

The government were expecting serious attempts at insurrection which seemed to be borne out by the multiplying rumours and reports in 1662. The disaffected parties were greatly incensed by the repressive measures, particularly the Act of Uniformity. Fears engendered more fears and rumours became more frequent and definite, which in November crystallised in the discovery of a conspiracy in the capital

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1. C.S.P.D., 1660-1, 567-8; see also *ibid*, 150, 415; J.R. Western, 'The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century. The Story of a political Issue, 1660-1802' (London, 1965), 32-3.
  2. See J.H. Sancret, 'The Restoration Government and the Municipal Corporations', *EHR*, vol.45 (1930), 232-59.
  3. Abbott, 504-5.
  4. *ibid*, 511; J.R. Western, 'The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century ...' (London, 1965), 34.

which even implicated the King's own guards.<sup>1</sup> In January, 1662, orders were made to search for arms in Kent, a plot was unearthed in Southwark and there were claims that soldiers were ready to 'try one bout' for they would 'shortly have gallant times again'.<sup>2</sup> In February, some letters of Quakers found on the high road near Cockermonth 'containeing such suspicious expressions' of plotting throughout his Majesty's three kingdoms were sent to Secretary Williamson, together with examinations of two Quakers and details of their meetings and collections which gave 'great an opportunity to malicious dissatisfied spiritts'.<sup>3</sup> In February, came news of villains in Amsterdam corresponding with the disloyal in England, in April the Quakers were said to be purchasing the best horses, for which they paid double and treble in Macclesfield, while in June the government was informed of twenty thousand disaffected in Ireland.<sup>4</sup> Information from Yorkshire, Somerset, Hampshire and other areas coalesced during the summer into the imminent probability of an organised general rising.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Abbott, 512-5; Gee, 127-8; Whiting, 155-7.
  2. C.S.P.D., 1661-2, 248, 255, 258; instances are numerous of which these are merely examples.
  3. SP Dom/29, 50; 8. (Sir John Williamson, in 1660 fellow and tutor at Queens College, Oxford, became secretary to Sir Edward Nicholas, Secretary of State, after the Restoration. After 1662 he filled the same post under his successor, Sir Henry Bennett, later Lord Arlington, whom Williamson himself succeeded, 1674-9; see also DNB.)
  4. C.S.P.D., 1661-2, 274, 356, 385, 398.
  5. C.S.P.D., 1661-2, 418, 431, 434, 439 and passim.

On July 16th, Lord Fauconberg, Lord-Lieutenant of the North Riding of Yorkshire, wrote that he had

received severall Informations of meetings and much riding in the night of Disaffected persons.

He believed that there were grounds for real suspicion because the governor at Tynemouth was said to maintain disaffected chaplains and old army soldiers, and the examination he enclosed was relevant to letters intended for there concerning a general rising of Presbyterians, Quakers and Scots in the north on August 28th. He added that in Lancashire,

Ministers there are very Confident, and high in their Language, little Lesse than Treason, and not one man in the whole County intends to Conforme.<sup>1</sup>

On July 17th, the government ordered vigilance and the settlement of the militia,

there being too much reason to believe that there is a design among men of desperate fortunes to make some sudden insurrection.<sup>2</sup>

During the autumn, intelligence was received that the rising had been postponed until the spring but that plotting continued in Dorset, Cheshire, London, Devon, Berkshire, Somerset, Wiltshire, Kent and Bristol.<sup>3</sup>

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1. SP Dom/29, 57; 70, 71 (1).
  2. C.S.P.D., 1661-2, 442; see also *ibid*, 603.
  3. C.S.P.D., 1661-2, 523, 526-8, 530-1, 538-41, 598.

It was at this time that evidence of the extension of the plot to Durham first came to the notice of the local authorities, although it is impossible to know whether or not the area was, at this stage, central to the general design. Its instigators certainly intended it to be a general design. Informers told of messages carried throughout the country, and to fellow-conspirators abroad, and correspondence between the different areas was maintained. Government directives had already put Cosin on his guard, and in the autumn, in his capacity as Lord-Lieutenant, he became acquainted with an intercepted correspondence between Paul Hobson and John Joplin in London and Mary Hutchinson and others in Durham.<sup>1</sup> Hobson had been a Baptist in Northumberland, a Lieutenant-colonel and deputy-governor of Newcastle before 1660. He had been an appointed visitor of the college founded at Durham and was a vigorous opponent of Royalists.<sup>2</sup> John Joplin had been the governor of Durham gaol before the Restoration and was deeply opposed to the restoration of the Anglican Church.<sup>3</sup> Sending details of the letters to his son-in-law and deputy lieutenant, Sir Gilbert Gerard, Cosin said of Hobson:

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1. Gee, 129.
  2. Howell, 248-9, 333 n, 204-5.
  3. DCY, 107 n.

Out of which you may see which way he Drives.  
The Deputy-Lieutenants here (to whom he is knowne  
better than to me) conceive him to be a very  
Dangerous and Disaffected person.

Hobson's letters said that

Tis a time to try all our confidence, comforts,  
principles, practise ... I dare not write the  
news; though there is very much, good and bad,  
but most bad, [and] All friends are well,  
though the devils reig.

In June, Joplin had written to Durham that:

Neither I nor no honest man can expect our liberty  
or lives one hour for now the beast doth not only  
roar but rage. The prisons are full, and the cryes  
of the oppressed goes up to the ears of the Lord  
mightily.<sup>1</sup>

In themselves, the letters told little, but Cosin realised the  
seriousness of the men and others and secured their arrest.  
However, they were subsequently released on bond and, though  
Hobson returned to London, Joplin continued his work in the  
Bishopric.<sup>2</sup> Their liberation proved to be a grave error of  
judgement.

Although in December, 1662, the King attempted a different  
tactic in issuing a Declaration of Indulgence designed to win  
the support of sectaries, relieve Catholics and Nonconformists,  
stop conspiracy and stabilise his own position, it was soon  
revoked because of the opposition of Anglicans, Dissenters and  
Parliament, and the discovery of plots in Ireland and Durham

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1. SP Dom/29, 63; 34, 34 (1); quoted in Ornsby, II, 99-100.
  2. ibid; SP Dom/29, 103; 110, 110(I); Gee, 129; Ornsby, II, 98, 104.

in the spring of 1663.<sup>1</sup> What came to light in Durham in March, 1663, became known as the Derwentdale Plot or Muggleswick Conspiracy. It was planned and formulated at meetings in Muggleswick Park on Muggleswick Common, in the grounds of an ancient residence of the priors of Durham, and came to the attention of Cosin by the information of a defector from the ranks of the conspirators, one John Ellerington. In various depositions, he explained the aims of the plot, its organisation and its chief adherents.<sup>2</sup> Surtees described Ellerington as 'an infamous scoundrel', which seems a harsh judgement, even though he might have been motivated by the prospect of personal gain and repute, despite his affirmation that he had become conscience-stricken at the enormity of the design.<sup>3</sup>

Muggleswick lies in the north-west of County Durham, west of Castleside in the thickly-wooded Derwent valley. Even today access to it is difficult and it is merely a small collection of cottages, a farm and a church. Muggleswick Common is wild moorland with a commanding view over the county to the east. There had been a Baptist congregation there since

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1. Abbott, 515-20; Ornsby, II, 101-2.
  2. SP Dom/29, 70; 13; SP Dom/29, 96; 69; SP Dom/29, 97; 33, 33(I) 33 (II); SP Dom/29, 98; 4, 34; BM; Add. MS, Vol.33770; f 37; Gee, 129-32; Whiting, 157-9; Ornsby, II, 314-7.
  3. Surtees, II, 389-90; SP Dom/29, 70; 13; SP Dom/29, 98; 34; Add, 33770; 37; Harding, 113-4.

1652, of which Ellerington professed to be a member.<sup>1</sup> He was a servant of Lady Forster of Blanchland, the widow of Sir Claudius Forster of Blanchland and Bamburgh, and had known of the plot some time before he informed Lady Mallory, a servant of Lady Forster, who sent him immediately to communicate the story to Basire and the Bishop, who informed Whitehall.<sup>2</sup> He said in April, 1664, that initially the Bishop had not believed him, but certainly Cosin reacted by notifying the central authorities and his deputy lieutenants. Other meetings had preceded the great rendezvous in Muggleswick Park of March, 1663, and those present had sworn an oath of secrecy that none would divulge their aims and activities, and they had discussed the support which they would receive from other parts of the country and the accumulation of arms and ammunition.<sup>3</sup> After his initial depositions, Ellerington was again sent into the north-east where he claimed plotting continued in 1664.<sup>4</sup>

The discovery of the plot in Durham did not halt the preparations for a general rising, which had already been postponed until the spring of 1663 and was postponed again until the autumn.<sup>5</sup> Plotting continued through the summer and the authorities became acquainted with plans for a general

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1. D. Douglas, 'History of the Baptist Churches in the North of England from 1648 to 1845' (London, 1846), 81-6; see above, 97-8.
  2. SP Dom/29, 70; 13; SP Dom/29, 98; 4; Ornsby, II, 105-6.
  3. SP Dom/29, 70; 13; Add, 33770; 37.
  4. SP Dom/29, 97; 33, 33(I), 33(II).
  5. SP Dom/29, 61; 79; SP Dom/29, 70; 13.

rising in October.<sup>1</sup> Meetings took place at Harrogate, Knaresborough and elsewhere of conspirators from Scotland, Durham, Westmorland and Yorkshire.<sup>2</sup> The culmination of the efforts was a rising at Farnley Wood, near Leeds, and an attempted rebellion in Westmorland where the rebels met at Kaber Rigg, on October, 12th.<sup>3</sup> Only twenty men were at the Yorkshire rising and thirty in Westmorland. A party was expected to rise at Woodham Moor in the Bishopric on October 13th, but there is no record of the rising materialising.<sup>4</sup> To understand fully the plot's significance, of which the northern element was only a part, though in the event the most active part, it is imperative to examine the aims of the conspirators, their strength of men and organisation, and what kind of people were involved. The efficiency and organisation of the central and local authorities must be similarly scrutinised. Although little disturbance took place within Durham and Northumberland many local people were involved and implicated.<sup>5</sup>

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1. SP Dom/29, 81; 77.
  2. SP Dom/29, 98; 1. The development of the plot during 1663 is documented in Gee, 130-9; Whiting, 159-64; Abbott, 521-4. Sir Thomas Gower's paper (SP Dom/29, 81; 77) details chronological developments during the year.
  3. SP Dom/29, 82; 37; Add, 33770; 47 v; Nicholson, 215-6; DCY, xvii-xxi, 102 n - 3 n.
  4. SP Dom/29, 82; 37(II).
  5. Most of our knowledge of the aims, means, strength and organisation of the plot comes from the depositions of informers, and the examinations of participants after the revelation of the plot to the authorities and after the events of October 12th. Add, 33770 is a transcription of the depositions of Yorkshire plotters and other informers. The depositions of different conspirators correspond to a significant degree.

When Cosin wrote to Whitehall on March 22nd, 1663, after he had received the information of John Ellerington, he stated that the aim of the conspirators was,

to Rise in Rebellion against the present Government and to destroy this present Parliament which had made a Law against liberty of Conscience and murder all Bishops, Deans and Chapters and all other Ministers of the Church, to breake all Organes and further kill all the Gentry that should either oppose them or not joyne with them ...

They intended to destroy all prayer books, seize the money and arms magazines in Durham and plunder the town.<sup>1</sup> A rising proposed for March 25th was postponed in order to discover the attitude of Parliament towards toleration of tender consciences. Having secured many of those cited as plotters, Cosin again wrote to the Privy Council to explain that after examinations,

they all stiffely deny the contents of the information to be true, more than that they have had frequent meetings together in severall numbers for teaching, praying, and exhorting one another to constancy in endureing persecution.<sup>2</sup>

In May, 1664 Ellerington informed that

they lift up their hands and prayd that God would deny them their portion in heaven if they discovered the designe (which was) to destroy the Church and all powers.<sup>3</sup>

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1. SP Dom/29, 70; 13; printed in Surtees, II, 389; see also Add, 33770; 37.
  2. SP Dom/29, 70; 58; printed in Ornsby, II, 105-6.
  3. SP Dom/29, 98; 4; printed in Ornsby, II, 315-7.

After the discovery of the plot in Durham the party in the north attempted to construct a manifesto of their aims which would embody their grievances, clarify their position and perhaps serve as a petition or statement of demands after a successful insurrection. The declaration which was designed was largely the work of Dr. Edward Richardson, a Baptist ejected from Ripon and a physician, who was deeply involved in the organisation of the plot and, after its revelation, fled to Holland.<sup>1</sup> There was considerable disagreement though, and it was frequently altered and revised. It proposed a variety of religious, political and economic reforms. The confessions of Yorkshire conspirators said it was 'to restore the old Parliament', 'against Tithes, Excise and Chimney Money', 'to declare for Liberty of Conscience, and against the proceedings of General Monk in the bringing in his Majesty, and against the established Church Government, against the Oppressions of the Poor in the Land', and 'for a Gospel Magistracy and Ministry against Bishops and the Common Prayer and against Excise'.<sup>2</sup> Similar or identical aims occurred throughout the confessions of those apprehended as being plotters.

Different defendants remembered different aspects of the declaration, for they would have recalled most easily those

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1. CR, 410-1; SP Dom/29, 94; 112.

2. SP Dom/29, 81; 77; Add, 33770, 5 v, 8, 20.

which had particular personal appeal. Although the economic demands and grievances would have been popular among many, the demand for freedom of worship and liberty of conscience predominated. The conspirators were prepared and enthusiastic to use violent means to effect an overthrow of the restored Church of England, the ecclesiastical and episcopal hierarchy and the enforced uniformity. This was of more importance than the defeat of the King, for they were, more often than not, Nonconformists first and republicans second. But many of the extremists saw the Church and monarchy as synonymous, for experience had taught them that without the King they had been free to worship in their own way. It was indeed the Good Old Cause. The monarchy was accused of promoting Catholicism and Antichrist; a Leeds clothier was told by a conspirator, Peregrine Corney, that 'this Year was to be Rome's ruin'.<sup>1</sup> In the programme they adopted, their basis for protest and schemes for change hinged on religious convictions, and unlike the Levellers, Diggers or the Ranters of the Interregnum years, they did not seek a radical or immediate change in the social order. Nor did they desire the forcible establishment of God's millenium and rule as the Fifth Monarchists had done. Rather this was the emotional reaction of the more extreme element among the

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1. Add, 33770; 23. Ellerington's assertion that papists were involved in the plot (SP Dom/29, 70; 13; Surtees, II, 389), was an isolated and doubtless fanciful suggestion.

Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists, who had just been deprived of the freedom to practise their faiths to which they had become accustomed. They reacted with a fervent desire to overthrow a government which supported an uncompromising policy of persecution and was bent on destroying all outside the Church of England. The importance which the plotters attached to the support of influential persons and mighty subjects also suggests that it was no mere social revolt. It was too calculated and ordered to have been a revolt of economic origins, which would have been more likely to have been manifested in a blind, impassioned, spontaneous insurrection. It was not the child of the extreme, radical views of the Civil War or Commonwealth years, nor was it an appeal to the King, Parliament, or an alternative authority. It was born of frustration at the Anglican settlement and directed against the inseparable evils of the Church and the King. The prime motive was religious, backed by their faith, and the overriding aim was to restore freedom of worship by the restoration of the republic.

The tactical plans of which the conspirators boasted were both ambitious and optimistic. Sir Thomas Gower, the high sheriff of Yorkshire and a deputy lieutenant of the North Riding, whose tireless vigilance and systematic counter-espionage activities played a determining part in the frustration of the plot, knew in detail and in advance, the likely operations of

the plotters.<sup>1</sup> He was informed that, in assize week, attempts would be made to capture York, Durham, Newcastle and Berwick. At the same time, a party would fall on Whitehall, Nottingham and Gloucester would be taken for their strategic importance, Boston would be fortified to receive Dutch supplies, and Scotland and the south-west of England would subsequently rise. The plans were formulated at a series of meetings in Yorkshire of conspirators from the northern counties and Scotland. Richardson later said in a confession in Rotterdam that none was involved in the plot north of Durham or south of Nottingham, except for two London contacts, of which one was Paul Hobson.<sup>2</sup> It seems likely that, although tenuous contacts were maintained with the disaffected in other parts of the country, and certainly with London, the northern plot was the most carefully planned and developed. The confessions and information of others told the same general story. Ralph Robinson of Cockerton said that on October 13th, he and other Presbyterians and Anabaptists were to meet at Woodham Moor in the Bishopric, to be led by one Captain Jones who would command the horse, and that they believed it would be part of a national rising.<sup>3</sup> The Westmorland conspirators planned to join their fellows in Durham and capture

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1. SP Dom/29, 81; 77; Add, 33770, 33 v - 34; Gee, 135.
  2. SP Dom/29, 94; 112.
  3. SP Dom/29, 82; 37(II).

the northern towns and cities at the same time as the Yorkshire rising.<sup>1</sup> In Durham, a thousand men were ready, it was supposed, led by Jones, who had come from London.<sup>2</sup> Captain Mason and Captain Jones in Durham expected to be joined by horses from Northumberland and the combined force would seize the treasury of the Bishop of Durham, which was thought would contain at least three thousand pounds.<sup>3</sup> The outline of the tactical plans were similarly deposed by different conspirators, but few details had been evolved for the actual mechanics of capturing the strongholds. The rebels were concerned with the strength of numbers and the quantity of available arms, both of which were exaggerated to improve morale and win further support.

It is difficult to assess the strength of the movement because of the exaggerated claims and fears of plotters, informers and government officials alike. Depositions frequently referred to a central organisation in London which issued instructions and co-ordinated arrangements. There were said to be

six persons together, to Act as a Councill, namely Blood, Locker, Capt. Wise, Joanes; by the name of Mene Tekell, Carew and Maior Lee, their designe was to take houses one near the Tower, one neare White hall and others in severall places of the Citty.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Nicholson, 214-6.
  2. Add, 33770; 3 v.
  3. Add, 33770; 8-9 and passim.
  4. SP Dom/29, 115; 36 (I).

Their purpose was to effect the rising in London and they directed affairs in the rest of the country. John Atkinson, a stockinger from Askrigg, Yorkshire, and cited often as a leading organiser of the central committee and the plot, confirmed that he had taken messages from London to the north, and claimed that Jones had been similarly employed.<sup>1</sup> Gower noted the communications between London and the north in 1663 and the resulting alterations of plans which were decisive in the failure of the scheme. He also recorded the differences among the northern conspirators and between London and the north. A meeting was called at Stank House in Yorkshire in August 'to reconcile and unite the dissentinge sects against royall interest.'<sup>2</sup> Messengers were sent to London to discover the readiness of preparations there and instructions regarding the north.<sup>3</sup> The depositions clearly demonstrate that there was a great deal of correspondence between conspirators in different parts of the country. John Joplin was cited as the main intermediary between London, northern England and Scotland, and was entrusted with the task of winning support among ministers.<sup>4</sup>

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1. SP Dom/29, 115; 38.
  2. SP Dom/29, 81; 77.
  3. Add, 33770; 6, 6 v, 8, 11, 34, 40 v.
  4. SP Dom/29, 82; 108.

All who were in the design confidently expected the rising to be in every county, and the numbers said to be involved must have assured the northern conspirators of inevitable success.

The plotters expected that as many as ten thousand men would join them after the initial insurrection. Eight thousand were expected to rise in the south-west alone.<sup>1</sup> In Nottinghamshire, three hundred were said to be ready, one thousand in Leicestershire, five thousand in Wiltshire and similar contingents were, allegedly, prepared throughout the country. Jones and Mason,

in Bishoprick would be ready with three hundred<sub>2</sub>  
Men well Armed and horsed to pursue the design.

The vast disparity between the estimated numbers which would be engaged in the design and the mere handful who attempted to rise on October 12th, can be explained in several ways. Morale would have been raised and more converts won if it had been generally believed that large numbers were involved who seemed strong enough to realise their objectives. The conspirators genuinely believed in their strength. Doubtless, many messengers and missionaries for the cause in the country would have received nominal approval and support from many who were discontented but were not actively prepared to take part in the uprising. A change of plan at the eleventh hour did most to frustrate the design. Although on September 25th the northern plotters were informed

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1. SP Dom/29, 81; 77; SP Dom/29, 80; 115.
  2. Add, 33770; 8.

by their envoys on their return from London that all was ready and the date was fixed for October 12th, on October 9th a messenger from London rode north with orders to postpone the enterprise for a fortnight. The delay was explained by the fact that the respite would allow some important individuals to join their ranks, and also by dissidence among the plotters, particularly between Fifth Monarchists in London and the rest.<sup>1</sup> The delay allowed Gower to move against the northern conspirators. Refusing to accept the delay, Captain Oates led some of his party to Farnley Wood, and similar contingents assembled briefly at Kaber Rigg, Holbeck and Topcliffe. The postponement was fatal to the design. When Gower drew up a comprehensive list of agitators named in the conspiracy, in June, 1664, he classified them according to their counties of origin. Although the numbers in most southern and western counties were small, in the northern counties especially Durham and Yorkshire, they were considerably greater.<sup>2</sup> The Duke of Buckingham was told that two hundred men met at Farnley Wood, but this conflicts with other evidence.<sup>3</sup>

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1. SP Dom/29, 81; 77; SP Dom/29, 80; 139; Add, 33770; 8, 11.
  2. SP Dom/29, 99; 169; see Appendix, Table D.
  3. SP Dom/29, 82; 37(I); Add, 33770, 47 v; DCY, xvii-xxi, 102 n, and passim for examinations of accused Yorkshire conspirators.

Gower received information that the plotters had agents in France, Holland and Scotland and that they were well furnished with ammunition.<sup>1</sup> Lewis Frost, the South Shields merchant, was the chief provider of ammunition and arms in the north-east. A Yorkshire plotter was informed by George Roomfoot of the Durham party that

one Lewis Frosta Master of a Ship in the County of Durham and brought from London several Arms and betwixt 40 and 50 Blunderbusses which he would land at Shields against the time prefixed.<sup>2</sup>

It was intended to seize leading members of the gentry and acquire their arms; the Yorkshire plotters hoped to capture one hundred horses and arms from Lord Fauconberg's house with which to secure the area.<sup>3</sup> The plotters were aware of the necessity for large numbers of men, readily available cash and foreign help, but in their enthusiasm and optimism they failed to plan such arrangements in sufficient detail but merely accepted the hearsay of others, until their resources assumed limitless proportions and the prospect of failure seemed impossible. Ellerington claimed that there had been ready, 'match, powder, hand granadoes and other things for

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1. SP Dom/29, 81; 77.
  2. Add, 33770, 23 v.
  3. Add, 33770, 34.

the carrying on that business', and that he personally had been employed delivering parcels and letters and bringing arms into the country.<sup>1</sup>

The conspirators were generally humble men, farmers or tradesmen, led by officers and soldiers of the Cromwellian regime. The bulk of those arrested in Durham after Ellerington's revelations were agricultural workers of rural Durham and Northumberland. However, Ellerington implicated several better-known persons who were imprisoned; he claimed to have conveyed letters between Joplin and Captain Mitford of Mitford relevant to the plot, that Thomas Burdis of Durham was familiar with Joplin and the seditious plan, that Captain Edward Shipperdson of Murton and Mr. Timothy Whittingham of Durham were involved. Other members of the middling gentry were named by Ellerington and secured.<sup>2</sup> He claimed that meetings were held at the home of Robert Selby in Durham and at the house of John Ward at Muggleswick. He provided a comprehensive list of those who plotted treason at Muggleswick, some of whom must have travelled long distances to attend meetings.<sup>3</sup> Lewis Frost of South Shields was deeply implicated by Ellerington and others; he and Cuthbert

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1. SP Dom/29, 96; 69; SP Dom/29, 98; 4.

2. SP Dom/29, 96; 69; printed in Ornsby, II, 314-5 with important notes; SP Dom/29, 96; 70(I); see Appendix, Table E.

3. Add, 33770; 37; see Appendix, Tables F and G.

and Michael Coatsworth were Baptists and Ellerington claimed that Frost had attempted to bribe him to stop his informing, and

he might see what encouragement he had gott for his Informinge against the good people whoe desired to Establish the good lawes of God in Suppressinge the Bishopps and present Government: which occasioned these insufferable taxes and vexations upon the people of God.<sup>1</sup>

The plotters were usually generically termed 'Anabaptists and Presbyterians'.<sup>2</sup> It was 'Presbiters and Anabaptists' who were expected to meet at Woodham Moor, Independents were also sometimes mentioned, and Ellerington so described them.<sup>3</sup> Quakers too were often cited in large numbers as being party to the design, a threat intended to instil fear into all who heard. On October 15th, 1663, Bernard Walker of Newcastle claimed to have met about eighty mounted, armed Quakers and Anabaptists near Carleton in Coversdale, who demanded to know his business. He had learnt in an alehouse that five hundred such men were travelling freely through the dales inciting sedition.<sup>4</sup> It was asserted that 'many Quakers of Bishoprick were ingaged in the design', some acted as messengers, Dr. Richardson had said one thousand would join them, and the same number had even been said to be prepared in Durham County alone.<sup>5</sup> The Fifth Monarchists

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1. SP Dom/29, 97; 33(I).
  2. For example in an early information, SP Dom/29, 61; 79.
  3. Add, 33770; 19 v, 32 v, 37.
  4. SP Dom/29, 81; 106.
  5. Add, 33700; 10, 19 v, 32 v, 34 v.

were said to be responsible for the postponement of plans; a messenger, one Marsden, on his return from London said they had refused to join the present scheme, but there was no mention of them in the north.<sup>1</sup>

The conspirators believed that they had the support of a number of leading men in the country and attached great importance to this. Such a claim occurred frequently in depositions and it might have been that some of them knew of the plot and even prepared to give it tacit approval, without committing themselves to an active part in it. The names of Fairfax, Manchester and Wharton were freely used by messengers and informers as being favourable to the scheme, although afterwards such accusations never stuck or were proved.<sup>2</sup> Captain Oates, after the escapade at Farnley Wood, said that Lord Wharton had been expected to join the design along with other important gentlemen, and Enoch Sinkler of Leeds had been told that Henry Cromwell, Fleetwood and Ludlow were part of it.<sup>3</sup> Paul Hobson's connection with the Cromwellian regime has been established, and the other members of the London council were said to be old soldiers, one of whom, Captain Roger Jones, was appointed to lead the Durham party, though

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1. Add, 33770, 11, 31.

2. Whiting, 164; Abbott, 525; DCY, 103 n.

3. Add, 33770, 6 v, 20.

his family was in London.<sup>1</sup> He was to be joined by other old soldiers in the Bishopric for the enterprise, like Captains Mason, Hutton and Shipperdson. A northern council led by John Atkinson attempted to co-ordinate plans.<sup>2</sup> Atkinson was particularly active as a messenger and publicity agent. Captain Robert Atkinson was to lead the Cumberland and Westmorland contingent as he did at Kaber Rigg. He had been governor of Appleby Castle and was one of the leading plotters in the north, and was eventually executed after escaping from prison.<sup>3</sup> Many other soldiers of the previous regime were involved, like Colonel Greathead, whose military knowledge was regarded as essential for the success of the plot.<sup>4</sup>

Too many people knew about the conspiracy for it to have been withheld from the notice of the authorities. Consequently, the local and central officials were able to take effective preventive measures. Early in August, 1663, Gower secured about one hundred of the chief designers in Yorkshire in only two days, and they were taken to York,

upon pretence of illegal meetings, not expressing the least suspicion of a plott.

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1. SP Dom/29, 115; 36(I); Add, 33770, 33 v.
  2. SP Dom/29, 97; 98.
  3. SP Dom/29, 84; 64.
  4. SP Dom/29, 83; 42.

The design was broken and they were dismissed on good security and carefully watched, and many promised to give intelligence to the authorities. By a careful system of counter-espionage Gower was enabled to remain acquainted with the developments in the plot. After the message from London on October 9th postponing the rising again, the following day Gower rounded up ninety of the principal officers and agitators in the north. This action and the confusion the message itself had provoked among the various northern bands, meant that the rising on the night of October 12th would be a pathetic gesture.<sup>1</sup> It was, but with a little more secrecy, a little more care, greater organisation and preparation, the rising might have been a formidable attempt and caused the government some considerable anxiety.

The plot was the dominant problem which the central and local authorities faced during 1663 and 1664. A measure of this is the seriousness with which it was regarded and the preparations which were made to counteract it. It was so important in creating the frame of mind which was responsible for the repressive legislation and measures of the next few years, that it is surprising that it has been so often overlooked. When Charles II opened Parliament on March 21st, 1664,

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1. SP Dom/29, 81; 77.

the issue was his main concern. After his opening remarks, he continued:

You may judge by the late Treason in the North, for which so many Men have been executed, how active the Spirits of many of our old Enemies still are, notwithstanding all our Mercy. I do assure you that we are not yet at the Bottom of that Business. This much appears manifestly, that this Conspiracy was but a Branch of that which I discovered as well as I could to you about Two Years since, and had been then executed nearer-hand, if I had not, by God's Goodness, come to the knowledge of some of the principal Contrivers, and so secured them from doing the mischief they intended. And if I had not, by the like Providence, had timely Notice of the very Hour and several Places of their Rendezvous in the North, and provided for them accordingly, by sending some of My own Troops, as well as by drawing the Trained Bands together, their Conjunction would have been in greater Numbers than had been convenient ...

You will wonder (but I tell true); they are now even in those Parts, and at this Time, when they see their Friends under Trial and Execution, still pursuing the same Consultations. And it is evident they have Correspondence with desperate Persons in most Counties, and a standing Council in this Town, from which they receive their Directions, and by whom they were advised to defer their last intended Insurrection; but those Orders served only to distract them, and came too late to prevent their destruction. I know more of their Intrigues than they think I do, and hope I shall shortly discover the Bottom; in the mean Time, I pray, let us all be as watchful to prevent, as they are to contrive their Mischief.<sup>1</sup>

From the beginning the authorities had acted quickly and decisively. After receiving Ellerington's information, on March 30th, 1663, Cosin wrote to London that:

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1. JHL, vol. 11 (1660-6); 582.

Myself and the Deputy Lieutenants together with other justices of the peace, have employed the Captaynes and Officers of the Militia here, to apprehend them: among whom, nyne of them being taken ...

He added that they had been committed to prison until the next gaol delivery, but, despite a diligent search, many had fled into Scotland and Northumberland and could not be found.<sup>1</sup> Cosin was thanked by the Privy Council for his vigilance and circumspection four days later.<sup>2</sup> The Bishop and his deputies experienced great difficulty in bringing sufficient evidence against the alleged conspirators for he had only the one witness for the prosecution, Ellerington. However, he later recognised the significance of the discovery of March, 1663, which 'I conceive was the first discovery of the late intended plot in other places.'<sup>3</sup> His efforts continued throughout the year; in August he was thanked by the deputy lieutenants of Northumberland for his intelligence, and they promised to meet and 'presently secure all suspected persons in our County.'<sup>4</sup> On the same date, August 9th, the corporation of Newcastle informed the Bishop that warrants had been issued there for examining and securing all persons who could not give an account of their

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1. SP Dom/29, 70; 58; printed in Ornsby, II, 105-6.
  2. PCR, 56; 373.
  3. SP Dom/29, 91; 81; printed in Ornsby, II, 107.
  4. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 58.

business.<sup>1</sup> His investigations were still continuing when the events of October occurred. There were alarms in the area although no rising materialised, and the local authorities were prepared for any eventuality. In Newcastle, the mayor had received notice of the possibility of an attempt, from Cosin, the officials of two companies were put in readiness and the troops prepared quickly.<sup>2</sup> The gentry and freeholders of Northumberland met at Morpeth on October 15th, 'in Reddynes to serve your Lordship and to assist our Neighbouring Countys'.<sup>3</sup> Similar precautions were taken throughout the country at the proposed date of the uprising.<sup>4</sup> Gower acted rapidly in Yorkshire, where he had been joined by the Duke of Buckingham, and Sir Philip Musgrave hunted down conspirators in the north-west.<sup>5</sup> Local and central officers were employed in the arrest and conviction of plotters.<sup>6</sup> The government stressed the importance of such security measures and no relaxation of diligent vigilance, in a letter to all Lord-Lieutenants on November 2nd:

notwithstanding his Majesty's incomparable  
Clemency to persons disaffected to his Govern-  
ment, they have not hitherto desisted from

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1. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 69.
  2. SP Dom/29, 81; 79.
  3. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 68.
  4. Gee, 138-9; Abbott, 523-4; Whiting, 162-4; C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 299 ff.
  5. SP Dom/29, 82; 37.
  6. See Gee, Whiting, Abbott, Nicholson, passim.

plotting and contriving new mischiefs against the same, in their frequent assemblies, dangerous meetings, and Conventicles, in many parts of this Kingdome; whereby wee are, in prudence, obliged to apply all Remedies that may prevent these evils, which such practises may draw upon this Nation. And amongst others, by ordering the Militia into such a posture, as may bee most useful to that purpose ...<sup>1</sup>

The die was cast for all Nonconformists and old soldiers. All Dissenters were suspect and the Conventicle Act soon followed, since Nonconformism was equated with sedition. Reports of conventicles multiplied in the months after October from all over the country. Such meetings at Penrith were brought to the attention of the authorities.<sup>2</sup> In July, 1664, Cosin requested details from Basire of all in the parishes who had served as soldiers for Parliament and Cromwell, and which amongst them continued to be disaffected to the Church and the State.<sup>3</sup>

During the autumn and winter of 1663-4 Cosin, in common with other officers of state in other parts of the land, continued his investigations. At an uncertain date, he issued detailed instructions for wariness to his deputy lieutenants in the wake of the attempt 'to raise a new Rebellion in these parts'.<sup>4</sup> He was aided by the deputy lieutenants of Northumberland. Those

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1. SP Dom/29, 83; 7.
  2. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 326 and passim.
  3. CLB, 1; 111; printed in Ornsby, II, 108.
  4. Mickleton and Spearman, 31- 28; see above, 59.

examined told of mysterious meetings, and of the activities of men seen on horses at night carrying broad swords. Joseph Hopper of Ebchester, to whom Surtees attached such importance, was accused of being engaged on some seditious business abroad, but in his examination of November 16th, 1663, he said that he had spent five weeks in Ireland visiting friends, but had not told his neighbours or his wife, who would have been unwilling to allow him to go.<sup>1</sup>

Examinations of those implicated began at once by the justices and deputy lieutenants throughout the country. Many were interrogated, and the more humble men suffered first, but it proved very difficult to find sufficient evidence against those thought to be the leaders. Some were remanded time and again. Those who were thought to be the chief agitators were committed to London, and examined in an attempt to make them fully implicate their confederates. Major Greathead was sent from York to the capital, and it was expected that he would be useful in declaring the whole design, of which he was an indispensable part; he hoped to be pardoned and rewarded for his help, and Gower advised leniency to encourage other informers.<sup>2</sup> Ellerington spent much time with the authorities in Yorkshire helping them unravel the plot, and, because his

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1. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 60, 62-7.

2. SP Dom/29, 83; 42, 51, 51 (I).

information and evidence was so central to the discovery and the prosecution, was sent to London in the spring of 1664, where he made more depositions.<sup>1</sup> Other prisoners were sent up and committed to the Tower.<sup>2</sup> Paul Hobson spent some time in the Tower of London, then the prison at Chepstow, and after a year petitioned to leave the country.<sup>3</sup>

Dangerous conspirators were remitted to the various assizes during the early months of 1664, but, in many cases, it was a long and frustrating business. The process of examination, imprisonment and trial was a tedious affair. At York in January, twenty-one persons were condemned to death for treason, eighteen of whom were executed at York and the remainder at Leeds; their heads were pitched on the gates of the city, except for two sent to Doncaster and two to Northallerton for display on the Great North Road as a warning to travellers of the consequences of defying the King's authority.<sup>4</sup> Trials of the Westmorland conspirators took place at Appleby in March, and the authorities there continued their searches and examinations.<sup>5</sup> On January 29th, 1664, Cosin wrote to Sir Christopher Turner, Baron of the Exchequer, that he was expecting a gaol

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1. SP Dom/29, 97; 20(I), 67.

2. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 593-4.

3. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 292, 670.

4. SP Dom/29, 90; 95; SP Dom/29, 91; 4.

5. Nicholson, 222-4 ff.

delivery on the northern circuit, but said that as witnesses were so difficult to find, the prisoners might be discharged, 'though never so guilty'.<sup>1</sup> The same month Sir Gilbert Gerard sent the Bishop news of the trial in York of those accused of high treason, but on April 26th he wrote that the prisoners were 'extreeme clamorous for their libertie' and further information against them was necessary to answer their accusations of injustice 'and secure them by a more legall imprisonment.'<sup>2</sup> Events in the north-east continued to cause the authorities alarm. By March the deputy lieutenants had secured most of the persons demanded by Cosin, had armed the trained bands and were settling the militia.<sup>3</sup> On March 16th Sir William Blakeston of Pittington, a deputy lieutenant, reported that:

in Truth the Bishobrick of Durham is in a  
very sad condition for we have neither horse  
in readines nor foot nor any place of strenth.

His fears were accentuated by the threat that he would be one of the first to be murdered in the conspirators' plans.<sup>4</sup> It was hoped that Ellerington in London would supply sufficient information to convict the prisoners in the prisons of Durham and York. These included John Ward, an Anabaptist smith at whose

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1. SP Dom/29, 91; 81.
  2. Mickleton and Spearman, 31; 40, 41.
  3. SP Dom/29, 94; 13(I).
  4. SP Dom/29, 94; 40; SP Dom/29, 91; 90; Add, 33770, 25 v.

house the Muggleswick plotters had met, John Joplin, Lewis Frost, Michael and Cuthbert Coatsworth, preachers of South Shields, Captain Mitford, Thomas Burdis, Timothy Whittingham, William Leving, Thomas Randall and other substantial men as well as several farmers.<sup>1</sup> But evidence was not forthcoming and Blakeston reported that things were very out of order; some of the Durham conspirators had not been apprehended by July and others escaped from London.<sup>2</sup> The Dean of Carlisle, Guy Carleton, wrote of corrupt proceedings at John Joplin's trial at Durham on August 10th, 1664, in a letter of October 24th to secretary Bennet. Seemingly, he had been allowed privileges whilst imprisoned and had been allowed to visit Newcastle and Shields. Carleton said that at the trial, the Bishop had absented himself from the bench and the jury had contained Joplin's own friends who acquitted him; they had been bribed, he claimed, and even though Joplin was one of the chief designers and the plotters' treasurer, he had been freed and was continuing his plotting. He further alleged that Joplin had friends among the deputy lieutenants, which doubtless was an exaggerated accusation.<sup>3</sup> Because he was considered dangerous, Joplin was retained in prison in Scarborough

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1. See Appendix, Table E.
  2. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 652-3.
  3. SP Dom/29, 103; 110, 110(I).

Castle. In December, 1666, Cosin tried to reimprison him as a dangerous, furious fanatic when he reappeared in the Bishopric, but he produced a warrant permitting his liberty, and remained free even though he was thought to be planning further mischief.<sup>1</sup>

Probably sufficient information to convict the Durham men in prison was never found. Ralph Robinson and Thomas Parkinson spent many years in prison at York.<sup>2</sup> John Ward and Rowland Harrison were among those presented at Muggleswick for not attending the parish church in 1665, so had presumably been freed by that date, even though they were considered to be leaders of the plot.<sup>3</sup> The Durham conspirators were fortunate that no rising had materialised in the Bishopric in October. The leaders of the rebellion who had taken part in the rising, Captain Oates at Farnley Wood and Robert Atkinson at Kaber Rigg, were executed.<sup>4</sup> Atkinson was particularly unlucky as his reprieve arrived after he had been hanged.<sup>5</sup> Others, like Richardson, escaped by leaving the country. Cosin was not alone in having difficulty in rounding up the conspirators and proving their complicity. On November 7th, 1663, Gower

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1. SP Dom/29, 180; 68.
  2. DCY, 111 n.
  3. CVB, 82.
  4. Whiting, 165-6; Nicholson, 228.
  5. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 676; SP Dom/29, 102; 33.

reported that 'the rebells trye all wayes to escape punishment'; one had cut his throat, another had drowned himself, whilst John Atkinson of Askrigg

is still in the Bishopbrick, and has put him selfe in a laborer's habit, and colored his Face.

Disguise was ingenious, but others were less resourceful.

Many are every day discovered, and taken, many absent them selves from their houses, and are fled quite out of the Countrey.<sup>1</sup>

Proclamations were issued for the capture of such men, some of whom were found.<sup>2</sup> Sir Roger Langley and the deputy lieutenants of Yorkshire found the extraction of confessions difficult because of intimidation by other prisoners.<sup>3</sup> John Waller wrote from Durham gaol in April, 1664, to his uncle, Captain Robert Atkinson in the Tower, asking him for particulars of the Bishopric plot, which he himself did not know, so that he could save his own life.<sup>4</sup> In Lincolnshire, a man named Richardson was arrested for his part in the plot until it was realised that he was the wrong man.<sup>5</sup> It was even suggested that Sir Thomas Gower was a friend of the plotters.<sup>6</sup> Others

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1. SP Dom/29, 83; 47.
  2. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 334.
  3. SP Dom/29, 96; 70.
  4. SP Dom/29, 97; 18.
  5. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 440, 467.
  6. SP Dom/29, 96; 33.

attempted more conciliatory tactics; William Leving confessed his part in the plot and asked for clemency in return, promising to remain loyal in the future.<sup>1</sup> Gower was well aware of the problems. On June 21st, 1664, he made some observations concerning the trial of Mr. Stockdale who had been corresponding with the plotters whilst a Member of Parliament;

the Tryall of Mr. Stockdale being of more than ordinary moment because he is a member of Parliament, and also in the opinion of men of iudgement is privy to the secrets of the conspiracy as any in the North (if not more).

Many conspirators, he stated, had changed their confessions, and many could no longer be convicted because key witnesses had already been executed. There was inadequate proof against many of them, including ministers who were demanding liberation after three months imprisonment, according to their legal right, and no jury would be convinced of their guilt as the law stood. He recommended that it would be dangerous to let such men go free as they were so well-instructed in legal knowledge that they would be able to give counsel to others about how to escape justice and continue with their designs. Many considerable persons in the north involved in the conspiracy had not yet been secured.<sup>2</sup> He was apparently anxious to clear up the affair but too many considerations prevented this, and were to save many

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1. SP Dom/29, 99; 30, 30(I), 72, 144.

2. SP Dom/29, 99; 110; for Stockdale, see K. Feiling, 'Two Speeches of Charles II', EHR, 45 (1930), 292.

of those accused of complicity.

The plot had been broken and in 1664 proceedings were taken against many of its organisers. But many escaped or could not be convicted and, for years afterwards, from throughout the country came alarms of its reorganisation. The fear of insurrection dominated the correspondence of the time and the authorities maintained their wariness. Sir Philip Musgrave in the north-west and Sir William Blakeston in the north-east were particularly prolific in notifying London of imminent disaster and impending insurrection, and their dire warnings continued throughout the decade in decreasing numbers. In February, 1664, Blakeston warned that many illegal horsemen were active near Doncaster, and the following month he was informed that the fanatics were rebellious and dissatisfied and

begin againe to meet with much confidence,  
which is much to bee feared will be an oppor-  
tunity for them to hatch their Rebellion.<sup>1</sup>

In May, he advised that many disaffected and dangerous people were contriving in Westmorland, were obstinate and supercilious and plotted a new design, and his assertion in July, that the authorities had more cause for alarm than ever before, was supported by the information of Yorkshire gentlemen.<sup>2</sup> In April,

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1. SP Dom/29, 92; 38; SP Dom/29, 94; 9.

2. SP Dom/29, 98, 79; SP Dom/29, 100; 17, 26, 45, 85-6.

he had learnt that the committee was still meeting in London, encouraged by ministers overseas, and he thought that County Durham was the most disaffected area but least prepared for defence.<sup>1</sup> In August and September these northern fears were supplemented by reports of renewed plotting in London.<sup>2</sup> It was still believed that a national design was under way.<sup>3</sup>

After 1665, fresh considerations complicated and accentuated the preparations of the local and national authorities. The spread of the plague necessitated preventive measures and interrupted travelling and communications. With the start of the Dutch War, not only had precautionary measures to be undertaken on the coast to prepare for the possibility of invasion, but also sectaries had to be kept under surveillance, since many hailed the Dutch as allies and lauded the war as a providential interposition to further their designs. Still the conspirators were reported to meet, correspond and seek to organise their hostility to the government.

Sir William Coventry was in York in August, 1665, and informed Lord Arlington that the Duke of York had ordered the Bishop of Durham and other Lieutenants and their deputies to secure all dangerous men, because fanatics had a design on

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1. SP Dom/29, 97; 19.

2. C.S.P.D., 1663-4, 660; C.S.P.D., 1664-5, 6.

3. C.S.P.D., 1664-5, 35.

London with help from Scotland and the Dutch, who were providing transport of men and provisions. On August 15th, the King ordered Lieutenants to watch faction, imprison dangerous subjects and muster the volunteers.<sup>1</sup> On September 19th, Christopher Sanderson of Eggleston wrote to secretary Williamson warning him that the fanatics hoped that Dutch success against the English navy would be followed by the coasts being infested with Dutch ships and action could follow the disruption of commerce and communications. He added that they rejoiced that the plague was so violent in London for this seriously hampered efforts against them.<sup>2</sup> The following July he heard that the malcontents believed that God Almighty, the Dutch, the French and the Dane were together engineering their deliverance, that there was to be an attempt to introduce popery, that the English were unable to defend themselves in the Thames, and soon their work would be fruitful.<sup>3</sup> In his letter of September, 1665, he complained of the laxity of the Bishop of Durham in not convicting John Cock, the steward of Lady Vane of Raby Castle, when he was brought before him. An 'Intelligence from Durham' of May, 1666, listed thirty-six dangerous persons in the north of England, including John Cock, who were supposed to be plotting, were corresponding with friends

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1. C.S.P.D., 1664-5, 514, 518; see also *ibid*, 506, 508, 510 ff.
  2. SP Dom/29, 133; 11.
  3. SP Dom/29, 162; 63.

in Holland, and were thought to have played a part in the conspiracy of 1663.<sup>1</sup> A compilation of a list of suspicious persons in Durham and London in 1666 included Cock, and it was proposed to intercept their letters. Cock was described as

beeing adored amongst theyre tents which are a great many of them, not over well affected to the Government: for in that person and that place is the greatest dainger in the Northrene parts.

It was affirmed that,

Meetings are more frequent of late in the County than ever, and kept and upholden by the most eminent of that party in the County. That the disaffected there are very high and Keeps correspondency with all parts. That they can not containe themselves from expressing there exspectation of a sudden alteration, and that they are assur'd, that the Dutch have engag'd to land all the English and Scotch, and some assistance some where in the Northren parts, which is relyed on exspected by all that party and then they are all reddy to rise.

It was thought that Raby Castle and Hartlepool were the most likely to be surprised because of their great strategic importance, one by land and one by sea.<sup>2</sup> In June, 1668, the prospect of a new bloody rebellion was reported and that persons, led by Cock, were planning to seize Raby Castle as a place of refuge if attempts were made to subdue them.<sup>3</sup>

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1. C.S.P.D., 1665-6, 376-7.
  2. SP Dom/29, 187; 157.
  3. C.S.P.D., 1667-8, 437-8.

It may have been that Cosin was less inclined to take stringent measures against plotters after 1665 for other matters were claiming his attention. He was accused by Carleton of flouting the King's authority in unjustly seizing Sir Henry Vane's estate.<sup>1</sup> He was having a disagreement over leases with the dean and chapter.<sup>2</sup> John Ellerington had been extremely badly treated since his return to the Palatinate.<sup>3</sup> The rising in Scotland in November, 1666, demanded inquiries into reports of their confederates in the Durham area.<sup>4</sup>

In the final years of the decade, reports became more sporadic and less certain. Sometime in 1666, John Ward confessed that the Quakers and Nonconformists who had plotted together in 1663, 'are as reddy for action as ever they were, and are more Numerous than formerly'. Presumably, he had been apprehended again as the result of a new scare and was being more co-operative this time. He said they planned to raise one thousand men and had re-armed to take advantage of the situation created by the Dutch War.<sup>5</sup> On June 18th, 1667, Charles Howard, Earl of Carlisle, was appointed

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1. SP Dom/29, 127; 33; C.S.P.D., 1665-6, 44, 224, 232; Ornsby, II, 319-22.
  2. C.S.P.D., 1666-7, 269-70.
  3. SP Dom/29, 127; 33; printed in Ornsby, II, 317-8.
  4. Ornsby, II, 158-60 n; C.S.P.D., 1666-7, 320, 318, 293, xix-xxiii; it was the result of the Proclamation of October 11th - see SP Dom/29, 175; 78(I).
  5. SP Dom/29, 187; 159.

to bee Our Lieutenant Generall of all and singular the Militia Forces and others of what nature soever aggregated to them, in Our Countyes of Cumberland, Westmerland, Northumberland and Durham, and within Our Citty and Garrison of Carlisle, Our Towne and Garrison of Berwick upon Tweed, Tinmouth, Newcastle, Durham, and all other Townes, Garrisons, Forts and places within the said foure Countyes.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Ogle shared the appointment which was an emergency measure and did not supersede Cosin's position as Lord-Lieutenant, but was in addition to it. They were expected to co-ordinate defence arrangements, muster forces, check arms, maintain discipline and obey all orders from London. Two days later, the King informed the mayor of Newcastle of the commission and requested cheerfulness and vigour in the assistance of Carlisle's requirements.<sup>2</sup> On June 21st, Colonel Edward Villiers wrote to Williamson that Carlisle would find things well-organised in Durham, where he had inspected three hundred volunteers whose affections should be cherished, for, as dragoons, they would give good service in frightening an enemy at a distance.<sup>3</sup> The appointment was a wartime expediency. Fears of a Dutch invasion and the operations of a Fifth column at home were very real, not least in County Durham.<sup>4</sup> Dangerous

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1. SP Dom/29, 206; 59.

2. SP Dom/29, 206; 92.

3. SP Dom/29, 206; 130.

4. Western, 38, 43; see above, 166-8.

elements were still being secured, as is evident from a communication of Sir Thomas Gower on August 14th, 1667. He advised 'that none of the Criminalls be tryed at Durham this Assize', although they were so guilty as could be imagined.

There are many other Considerations in this businesse, the bottom of that designe is not yet discovered, but may be if well followed, and by their last attempt in rescuing Mason, it is manifest how they finde them selves concerned to cover it, and the success they triumph in.<sup>1</sup>

In May, 1668, Sir Philip Musgrave reported that intelligence from Durham revealed that

the Phanatticks are very ready when an opportunity shall be offered to raise a new rebellion.

In 1670, he was still warning London of dangerous Quakers active in Durham, but his was becoming a lone voice.<sup>2</sup>

The abundance of reports during the decade 1660 to 1670 suggests that there was a considerable number of people in the country prepared to use violent means to overthrow the restoration settlement, which was symbolised by the King and the Anglican Church. It was led by old soldiers and dedicated republicans and supported by some dissatisfied members of Nonconformist congregations, who resented their loss of freedom of worship. Sometimes they were prepared to participate actively in plans of insurrection, but more often

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1. SP Dom/29, 213; 90.

2. SP Dom/29, 239; 158; C.S.P.D., 1670, 291.

their support was passive, which explains the discrepancy between the numbers the conspirators believed they commanded and those which actually materialised. The belief and actuality of plots goes a long way in explaining the theoretical severity of repressive legislation against Nonconformists. Despite his personal inclinations, after 1660 even the King was converted to the need for such measures, at least in the short term, and little relaxation of them was attempted before 1672. It appeared that the apprehensions of Parliament, Churchmen and some members of the government were not illusory, and it suggests that the King and the government were not compelled to introduce such legislation solely by extreme, vindictive Royalists and Anglicans in Parliament, as has commonly been asserted.

The plotting of the early years of the Restoration reached a zenith in 1663, which proved to be the swan-song of republicanism. But elements still harboured treacherous designs, which achieved a new dimension during the foreign wars. A belief in the existence of fifth columnists at the time of a national emergency always arouses the strongest passions; not only are such persecuted if discovered, but the belief in their existence alone is enough to promote national unity. The conspirators of 1663 were not all simple men, rather they demonstrated a simplicity in their firm conviction of ultimate

success, the lack of care with which they divulged their plans to all who expressed interest, and their over-estimation of their resources. Their organisation was considerable within the context of the time, but their own divisions and alteration of plans played a significant part in the frustration of their aims. With more care and definitive organisation, they might have been able to effect a serious uprising and rebellion; they might have caused the government and local authorities no small embarrassment. In the event, the uprising itself was so pathetic as to have been largely forgotten. Many men of quality were involved and more were implicated, who would perhaps have joined the rebellion had it demonstrated any possibility of success. In Durham, as elsewhere, the plotters included farmers and craftsmen who represented the extreme wing of the Nonconformist movement, though not the radical social and religious elements of the Civil War and Cromwellian eras. Most Nonconformists were prepared to live quietly and accept the status quo until things improved, but a section wanted to use force to correct the imposed religious settlement and supremacy of the Church of England. Their prime motive was not ideological republicanism, but they joined the military adventurers. Henceforth, all Nonconformists were suspected of treacherous inclinations, and joined the Roman Catholics as alleged traitors of Church and State, between which no dichotomy

was made.

It was not the conspirators' own shortcomings alone which ensured their failure. National and local officials acted with determination and force to overcome the rebels. They were helped by the depositions of many informers, who were always active in an age of suspicion and superstition, and the information gathered by planted spies. Therefore Gower was always aware of the plotters' next move and could, and did, act accordingly. The militia system was employed effectively despite its makeshift character; its presence and assembly, rather than its fighting potential or technical brilliance, had a deterrent effect. The government forces were able always to take the offensive, and by capturing and tormenting the leaders of the movement, not allowing the ranks to coalesce again, and advertising their own strength, the spirit of the movement was broken. Slowly the plots died out, and when the scare was aroused once more in 1678 it was the turn of the Roman Catholics to be accused.

Certainly there was a minority in Durham and the immediate area actively involved in conspiracy throughout the decade. Perhaps to them the Bishop of Durham and his power epitomised the alliance between the secular government and the Church of England and was a particular source of irritation. In their provincial naivety, it might have been supposed that if the

Bishop fell, the government of the country, which was responsible for the legislation against Nonconformists, would crumble with him. Significantly, where Nonconformity was never successfully challenged, Newcastle, there was no support for the plot. Cosin realised the seriousness of the plot and helped the authorities in London and Yorkshire round up those involved and eradicate the conspiracy. He was always prompt in conveying news of developments to Whitehall, and was rarely accused of hesitation. He was aided by the gentry in rooting out the seditious elements, and without their support he would have been impotent. Perhaps the assertion that, but for the Derwentdale Plot, the County had a period of quiet unknown since the Reformation, is overstating the case.<sup>1</sup>

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1. VCH, II, 172.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE ISSUE OF REPRESENTATION

In 1666 the contest between the Bishop and Gentry of the County, on the subject of Parliamentary Representation, was renewed; and Bishop Cosin lost much of his well-earned popularity by his opposition on this occasion to the general wish.<sup>1</sup>

The support of the gentry in the County was essential to Cosin for the fulfilment of his aims to restore ecclesiastical discipline and to realise the imposition of his secular authority. So long as the gentry's ambitions and interests appeared to identify with those of their Bishop, the alliance was effective. But Cosin was no pragmatist prepared to pursue expediency, nor would he cultivate such a relationship, particularly if it clashed with his regard for, or interpretation of, Palatinate privileges and precedents. He had been accused of putting Palatinate rights before royal claims, and he was certainly unwilling to concur with the wishes of the gentlemen of the County for Parliamentary representation to the detriment of his view of the Durham episcopal privileges. Nor was the ability to compromise among his virtues. It is hardly unfair to describe him as obstinate or his elevated view of his position and Palatinate rights as unrealistic and anachronistic. One must, however, recognise the sincerity of his outlook and the characteristic determined and steadfast manner with which he clung to his

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1. Surtees, I, cxlviii.

principles.

The idea of Parliamentary representation for Durham County and City was not new. Dissatisfaction with Bishop Neile among leading members of the gentry in the 1620s had culminated in a petition to Parliament for representation and the introduction of a Bill, but the attempt had been thwarted. The question arose again in the 1630s in connection with opposition to Ship Money, but it was not until the Commonwealth period in 1654 that the privilege was granted. Members were sent to Parliament until the Restoration when the right was abolished.<sup>1</sup> With the exception of this brief interlude, Durham, as an exempted jurisdiction, had sent no members to Westminster, and there was an assembly and Bishop's Council in the Palatinate which had administrative functions.<sup>2</sup> Clearly this was one privilege many substantial families in the County were not eager to see restored.

The efforts to regain representation in Parliament demonstrated an anxiety to restrict the Bishop's arbitrary

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1. G. Allan, ed., 'Collectanea ad Statum Civilem et Ecclesiasticum Comitatus Dunelmensis' (n.p., 1774), 8. 'Extracts from the Journals of the House of Commons concerning the Bishoprick of Durham, and sending Members to Parliament, for the County, City of Durham, Barnardcastle, and Hartlepool'; hereinafter referred to as 'Allan'; see also M.E. James, 'The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in DCCT, 221-3.
  2. Lapsley, 112, 149-50; NLC, 75-6; For a detailed appraisal of the attempts to achieve Parliamentary representation, see M.S. Child, 'Prelude to Revolution: the Structure of Politics in County Durham, 1678-88' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Maryland, 1972), 8-30.

power and assert their own political independence. The issue was revived shortly after the Restoration and in 1660 a Bill was introduced into Parliament, but again it was successfully opposed.<sup>1</sup> When Cosin wrote to Miles Stapylton on January 22nd, 1662, he expressed his satisfaction that, although the question had been mooted again, it had, for the time being, been abandoned.

It is well that the gentlemen at the Sessions were persuaded to pass over that business for Knights and Burgesses so quietly.<sup>2</sup>

The Bishop's influence had prevailed again, but probably the uncertainty and other considerations of the time had come to his aid. Other preoccupations dominated the gentry's affairs, notably the fear of insurrection, which explains why little is heard of the issue. By 1666, however, there was less desire to avoid offending or obstructing Cosin. He had increasingly discredited himself by exploiting his position to raise heavy fines and endow his family, and many of the gentry were less prepared to defer to his authority. Cosin was aware that the movement was an indirect challenge to him personally and to the position of the Bishop. When it was renewed in 1666 it was of a more organised and formidable nature, although both sides in the dispute continued to disguise the reality

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1. VCH, II, 172; Allan, 8.

2. CLB, 2; 26; printed in Ornsby, II, 86.

of the argument by appealing to precedents, rights and comparison to justify their position.

At the General Quarter Sessions held at Durham on October 3rd, 1666, the grand jury presented a petition to the court in the name of the freeholders of the County, explaining

that they do not enjoy the privilege of sending members to parliament as all the other counties of the Kingdom do.<sup>1</sup>

The fifteen members of the grand jury expressed confidence that the justices of the peace would support them in the nomination and sending to London of fit persons to petition Parliament to grant 'this just and reasonable request'.<sup>2</sup>

Cosin entered his protestation against such an action and five other justices of the peace recorded their dissent - John Sudbury, dean of Durham, Isaac Basire, Thomas Craddock, Samuel Davison and William Blakeston. However, it was approved by eleven justices - Sir Nicholas Cole, Henry Lambton, John Tempest, Anthony Byerley, Ralph Davison, Cuthbert Carr, Lodwicke Hall, Robert Clavering, Ralph Carr, John Morland and Christopher Sanderson.<sup>3</sup> Most of these gentlemen had

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1. Hutchinson, I, 539-40; NLC, 76.

2. Allan, 9, 'An Account of the Proceedings in Parliament (1666, 67 and 68) between Dr. Cosins then Bishop of Durham, and the Gentlemen Freeholders of the County Palatine of Durham, relating to their having Knights and Burgesses to serve in Parliament'.

3. *ibid*; Hutchinson, I, 539-40.

worked with Cosin since 1660 in settling the County, and several were deputy lieutenants.<sup>1</sup> The project went forward and on February 14th, 1668, William Davison wrote that the previous day,

A Bill for constituting Knights to serve for the Countye Palatyne, and Citizens to serve for the City of Durham was read the second time.

It had been committed for consideration to a large committee of members, including many northern representatives, who were to meet on the following Saturday in the Speaker's Chamber, with authority to send for necessary relevant persons, papers and records.<sup>2</sup> In a division of the Commons on March 26th, 1668, the Bill was rejected by sixty-five votes to fifty.<sup>3</sup> The argument persisted throughout the remainder of Cosin's life, and it was not until after his death, in 1673, that an Act was passed 'to enable the County Palatine of Durham to send Knights and Burgesses to serve in Parliament.'<sup>4</sup> It is in the argument employed by both sides in the dispute that the true nature of the conflict is revealed. They attempted to demonstrate conciliation and restraint and the justice of their case, despite the passions involved.

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1. See above, 67.
  2. SP Dom/29, 234; 178.
  3. Allan, 9.
  4. 25, Car. II, c.9.

A document, probably of 1662, enumerated the reasons why the County required, and was entitled to, Parliamentary representation.<sup>1</sup> It referred to the fact that all other counties and counties palatine were represented, and that Durham had the same 'inconveniences and sufferings' as Cheshire had before it was granted the right. The people of Durham would have no security until they were allowed to take part in the creation of laws which affected them. Ever since the time of Bishop Neile, the people of Durham had paid the same subsidies and public taxes as the rest of the country, and had been promised representation in return. Among the penalties which the County had suffered as a consequence was the cost of paying the Scottish army, which had been imposed on the gentry and never been repaid by Parliament. This was an imposition which still rankled after the Restoration. The gentlemen of the county had complained before of the cost they had borne of quartering the army, but had never received any satisfaction from Parliament.<sup>2</sup> The money had been remembered when the establishment of a college in Durham was mooted in 1650, when it was suggested that the finance necessary could be provided by the debt owed by Parliament.<sup>3</sup> Although the gentlemen had not

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1. DCRO; D/Lo/F239(1).

2. DCRO; Salvin MSS, D/Sa/X4; D/Sa/X3.

3. Howell, 332; see above, 87.

received any repayment during those years in which they had achieved representation, which is hardly surprising considering the changed régime, it did not prevent them from arguing that, had they been represented twenty-two years earlier, their interests would have been safeguarded. The most interesting part of the document related to the suggestion that 'in all probability', knights and burgesses would be 'very advantageous to the church of Durham'. This was rather ingenious.

The gentry of this County (take them generally) are as well affected to the Church of England, and the government of it by bishops, as in any other County in this Kingdome: out of these the Knights for the shire must be chosen ...,

and consequently, it was argued, they would work in the interests of the Church. It continued that, since two-thirds of the County belonged to the Church, many freeholders must

have such a dependence upon the Bishop or Deane and Chapter, that they would not readily oppose them in the election of Knights and the shire; but (as obliged by their tenancies) will (in all probability) give their votes to such fit persons as they shall nominate for that employment.

Similarly, as the City of Durham was so dependent upon the Bishop and dean and chapter, it would vote only for good citizens who were in the confidence of the Church. The advantages of this were fully outlined for the benefit of the rather sceptical Church.

Now for the Bishop, or Deane and Chapter to have the nomination of four members in the house of Commons, to speake to all emergent motions there which may concern the Church of Durham, and to prevent any preiudice that may befall it (which in all probability they may, having such a great influence upon the Elections) this must apparently be of high advantage for the said Church: and the want of members there for this county may at some time prove very preiudicial to it: for it will be much easier to crushe a businesse in the first motion and to make it abortive when it is but an Embrio; then it will be to stop it in the house of Lords, after it hath got the strength and countenance of the house of Commons.<sup>1</sup>

The language was colourful, the argument was rhetorically presented to appear logical and irrefutable, but the Church party, and Cosin especially, was not convinced.

In a more systematic account of their grievances and exposition of the reasons for their action in seeking Parliamentary representation, the freeholders and their allies outlined the

Reasons why there should bee Knights and Burgesses for the County and Cittie of Durham to sitt in Parliament.<sup>2</sup>

The chief arguments put forward were that all other counties were able to send representatives to Parliament 'to present Grievances and Consent to publique Taxes, Durham onely excepted'.

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1. The Bishop of Durham was, of course, a member of the House of Lords and could be influential there, as Cosin often stated when it was claimed that Durham was not represented in Parliament.
  2. Hunter, 24; this is an unbound collection of a small number of documents which have not been numbered; see also, Hutchinson, I, 540 ff.

The County Palatine of Chester had been granted the privilege since the reign of Henry VIII, and Durham was subjected to the same taxes and demands without having redress. It was argued that trade would benefit directly representation was introduced, and that the jurisdiction and ancient privileges of the County Palatine would not be impaired.

Cosin published a detailed answer to these arguments.<sup>1</sup> With reference to the fact that other counties had the right and Durham had not, he explained that this was so because

it hath by ancient Custom and Prescription  
an Immunity to the contrary, which the Bishop  
of Durham is bound by Oath to preserve.

For Cosin, custom was sufficient justification and the rights and privileges of the County and of the Bishop were sacrosanct, and he was singularly scathing about the granting to Durham of representation by

CROMWEL the late Usurper, after He and his  
pretended Parliament had murdered the Kings  
Royal Father of Blessed Memory, and taken  
away both the Bishoprick and all the Rights  
of that County Palatine: which, by the publick  
Laws and Constitutions of the Kingdom, with  
all the Rights and ancient Customs thereunto  
belonging have since reverted to the Bishop.

Faced with an affirmation of such loyalty the government could hardly accede to the freeholders' demands. It was probably the strongest card in the Bishop's hand, for the right not to be

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1.    ibid.

represented in the Commons was important to Cosin, Cosin was important to the government and had demonstrated his personal loyalty to the King, who would not want to offend him.<sup>1</sup> Cosin traced the historical development of, and differences between, Cheshire and Durham to contradict any parallel between the two, a comparison which, he claimed, was not valid. He acknowledged that the freeholders and inhabitants of Durham paid aids and taxes, but did not accept that this entitled them a priori to representation.

There can be no strength in this Reason whereby they would infer the necessity of Electing Knights and Burgesses to consent unto these payments of Aids and Taxes, unless they will also infer that they are not to be paid without their consent, which is injurious to the King, and Parliament, and contrary to the dutiful and ancient practice of this County Palatine.

He noted that the clergy and the ecclesiastical tenants would not be responsible for the proposed elections even though they paid the same taxes. In answer to the assertion that trade suffered, the Bishop reiterated that his position in the House of Lords forbade any prejudice to the County being possible, and he was always prepared to present grievances and labour for the communal benefit of the people of Durham. He claimed that the jurisdiction of the County Palatine would

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1. Cosin's loyalty to the King was forcibly demonstrated by the case of Lord Roos' Divorce Bill - see Ornsby, II, xxx, 233 n.

be greatly impaired, and the object of earlier moves to secure representation were to

humble the Bishop and his Courts, together with all his Clergy, especially those of his Cathedral Church.

In another answer to the freeholders' demands Cosin made twelve points, the essence of which was the same as before, and the printed declaration was doubtless intended for display.<sup>1</sup>

The argument central to Cosin's answers was that it was a particular privilege of the County not to send representatives to the House and Commons, and,

All the Bishops of Durham, at their first Entrance and Inthronization, take a Solemne Oath to Defend and Preserve all the accustomed Rights, Priviledges, and Immunities (whereof the aforesaid Priviledge and Exemption is one) appertaining to his Bishoprick and Countie-Palatine. And this Oath the Bishop is bound to Observe; nor doth he yet know any Expedient that will free him from it.

He certainly believed in the sanctity and justice of Palatinate rights, but was prepared to amplify the extent of the reality of his jurisdiction; the King, not the Bishop had been the supreme authority in the Bishopric since 1536.<sup>2</sup> Cosin was aware that his authority was being challenged, despite protestations to the contrary, and would be weakened by the granting

1. Hunter, 24; Hutchinson, 540-6.

2. See above, 13.

of representation. By claiming that he was bound by the ancient rights of the Palatinate and could do no other, and reaffirming his loyalty to the King, he was able to defeat and delay the movement.

Those responsible for the action at the Quarter Sessions were not idle in summoning support for their cause in the ensuing period. In a letter written by the Bishop to Miles Stapylton on February 13th, 1668, he recorded and commented upon recent developments. He had

heard from another hand that there is a good deal of plotting among some men in the country, you know whom, against me and the rights of the County Palatine, which I labour to defend.<sup>1</sup>

Seemingly, both sides in the dispute had been attempting to organise support for their cause, and the Bishop's opponents had been boasting that Cosin had not received the support of the dean and prebendaries of Durham in that particular. The freeholders had been acquiring subscriptions in the County and issuing new allegations against the Bishop. Cosin wanted it made clear that these were untrue. He had been informed that

the same agents and solicitors, having prepared their owne accounts in a fair parchment of the countrey's money receited for the King and parliament, intend to bring it up hither together with new subscriptions for Knights and Burgesses, and to annex a complaint thereunto that the Bishop,

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1. J.C. Hodgson, ed., 'Northumbrian Documents, II', SS, 131 (1918), 173.

by his officers, keep much of the country-mony in his owne hands, and have not duely payd it in, that it may be returned to the King.<sup>1</sup>

The Bishop was nobly supported by Stapylton who set forth a very full declaration of the privileges of the Palatinate and his concordance with the Bishop's answers to the freeholders' demands.<sup>2</sup> He traced the evolution of the County's rights 'since the body of St. Cuthbert was first brought to Chester', through Saxon and Norman times, when the Bishop's privilege of being the sole representative in Parliament was confirmed by kings and parliaments.<sup>3</sup> He reasoned that

it is cleare that the Bishops of Durham are at this day in actual possession of their ancient and undoubted right of solely appearing at the King's High Court of Parliament and there consenting to such Lawes and Ordinances as shall be binding to all the inhabitants of their jurisdiction.

He then answered the freeholders' several points in a similar manner to those of the Bishop. He sarcastically suggested that their citation of Cheshire as having representatives was somewhat superfluous as they had previously stated that all other counties had such:

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1.    ibid, 173-4.
  2.    Hunter, 24.
  3.    i.e. Chester-le-Street, County Durham.

they might as well also instead of two made two score, have had as many several reasons as there are Counties in England and Wales.

He noted that the servants of the Bishop and chapter in the County twice outnumbered the freeholders,

and yet all these servants pay their proportions of all Aids and subsidies as the freeholders do, and the value of the freehold land of this Countie Palatine in the possession of Lay men is not at most above a third part of the whole.

He believed that the presence of the Bishop was sufficient representation in Parliament for the County for he always worked for its advantage, and in answer to the final claim that the Palatinate jurisdiction would not be impaired, denied this, adding that he was pleased that

at last they beginne to have some regard to the rights and liberties of the Countie Palatine.

Cosin could not have been given more full-hearted support or shown greater loyalty than that of Stapylton, who in many of his letters received the full brunt of the Bishop's sarcasm and asperity. He continued to safeguard Cosin's professed rights and maintain the opposition to representation following the Bishop's confinement to London.

It might have been that at one point the Bishop wavered in his resolution to oppose the freeholders, when tempted by the suggestion that he might have some say in the election

of knights and burgesses. Perhaps he contemplated a form of compromise, although it was more likely to have been wishful thinking on the part of his adversaries. On December 6th, 1667, from Durham, Dr. Thomas Smith wrote to Williamson that, since coming there, he had learned that the Bishop was

somewhat more inclinable then formerly to yeild to the desires of the Countrey for sending up of Knights and Burgesses to the Parliament, on condition at least that they will hearken to his recomendation in the choice of the persons.<sup>1</sup>

He added that Colonel Tempest led the design in the County. Cosin wrote to Tempest and Ralph Davison on December 4th, 1667. He regretted that they continued to press the business against his advice and intended to petition for a Bill in Parliament. He added a postscript which suggests that some conciliatory conversations had taken place.

I doe not find in your Bill the saving of any Rights or Priviledges proper to the Bishop himselfe, but onely such as are common to the Inhabitants of the County Palatine, who derive all their Liberties and Immunities from and under him, nor doe you keepe your first offer and promise in assuring him that the Bishop for the time being shall have the Choosing of One Knight and One Burgesse. And divers Other Clauses you have omitted in that your Bill whereunto you said you would agree.<sup>2</sup>

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1. SP Dom/29, 224; 52.

2. Hunter, 24.

The demand for representation continued throughout the remaining years of Cosin's life and, although his illness compelled him to remain in London, he maintained a vigorous and unrelenting interest in the dispute's development, and advised his officers in what ways to counter the activities of the protagonists. Even though the Bill designed to grant representation to the County was defeated in Parliament, the controversy persisted in Durham.<sup>1</sup> Cosin wrote to Stapylton on December 4th, 1669, concerning the information he had received of meetings held to promote 'their restless designe', led by Cuthbert Carr, George Morland of Windlestone, and Mr. Bristow of Great Lumley.<sup>2</sup>

If they still proceed in their designe, I pray you speake to the Officers belonging to my Courts that they also would be as busy and careful to oppose it, for now the country is pretty well satisfied that it will doe them more hurt than good.

Cosin also wanted an assurance that the ecclesiastical officials and other sympathetic justices of the peace would be present at the next sessions to oppose the freeholders. The mayor of Durham and other justices gave him such a promise.<sup>3</sup> Carr continued to endeavour to raise subscriptions and contributions to promote the design and Cosin urged that vigilance be

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1. CLB, 4; some of which are printed in Ornsby, II, 210-64, passim.

2. CLB, 4; 3; printed in Ornsby, II, 211-3; see also CLB, 5, 56

3. CLB, 4;5; printed in Ornsby, II, 215.

maintained. Late in 1670, a new attempt was mooted and  
Cosin noted:

It is a pretty thing that Mr. Carre will  
never give over that business, whereunto  
I can never give consent, and which he  
knows the country for the best part of  
them doe not pretend to set up any more.<sup>1</sup>

The Bishop himself was the chief obstacle to the  
successful prosecution of the freeholders' demand, as they  
themselves realised. Respect for him, his dignity and his  
age by the government and others frustrated their aim. With  
his death the obstruction was removed, and in 1673 the Act  
empowering the freeholders of the County to elect two knights,  
and the Mayor, Aldermen and Freemen of Durham City to elect  
two burgesses to represent them, was passed. It was described  
as:

An act to enable the county palatine of  
Durham to send knights and burgesses to  
serve in parliament.

It acknowledged their grievances and arguments:

Whereas the inhabitants of the county palatine  
of Durham, have not hitherto had the liberty  
and privilege of electing and sending any  
Knights and burgesses to the high court of  
parliament, although the inhabitants of the  
said county palatine are liable to all pay-  
ments, rates, and subsidies granted by parlia-  
ment, equally with the inhabitants of other  
counties, cities, and boroughs in this kingdom,

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1. CLB, 4; 105, 5-6, 15, 121; printed in Ornsby, II, 258,  
215-7, 226-7, 264.

who have their knights and burgesses in the parliament, and are therefore concerned equally with others the inhabitants of this kingdom, to have knights and burgesses in the said high court of parliament of their own election, to represent the condition of their county, as the inhabitants of other counties, cities and boroughs of this kingdom have.<sup>1</sup>

The Act was passed during the vacancy of the see, a year before Bishop Crewe was translated from Oxford to Durham. The privilege was important to the freeholders of the County; as Cosin himself noted, they had by 1669 attempted seven times to secure it in Parliament.<sup>2</sup> Cosin was able to prevent its realisation during his episcopate but he could only delay the inevitable. When Crewe became Bishop, representation was a fait accompli.

The most significant consequence of the controversy was the increasing alienation of the gentry and freeholders from their Bishop. They supported him during the Dutch War when they too seemed threatened, but it was, perhaps, fortunate that Cosin did not require their moral, financial or military aid during the later years of his episcopate to any marked extent, as he had proved his unwillingness to identify himself with their interests and ambitions and they would have been

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1. Hutchinson, I, 547; for further details and the subsequent elections, see *ibid.*, 548-50; NLC, 76; M.S. Child, 'Prelude to Revolution: the Structure of Politics in County Durham, 1678-88' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Maryland, 1972), 30-8 ff.
  2. CLB, 4; 3; printed in Ornsby, II, 212.

less prepared to support him in his. The Bishop required their help in the fulfilment of his aims to restore the Church of England and enforce law and order, and it was fortuitous that the dispute did not achieve great importance or engender bitterness in the years immediately after 1660 when the alliance was most urgent. Cosin sincerely believed that neither he nor anyone else had the right to tamper with Palatinate privileges, whilst at the same time recognising that any such interference would have been prejudicial to his own position and the episcopal authority. His fears were in most respects imaginary: the elevated position he attributed to the Bishop of Durham and his extensive jurisdictional powers were in reality illusory. The days of the Prince Bishop were over, and only the ceremonial and theoretical powers remained. He enjoyed the semblance of power but not the substance. Parliamentary representation did damage the pre-eminent position of the Bishop in that no longer was he the sole representative of the County in Parliament, but as in truth and practical terms Durham resembled all other counties of England in its legal position, it was a natural development. By resolute high-handedness and obduracy Cosin resisted the demand, the validity of which he would not admit but clung to a past which no longer existed. He achieved his objective but it was a transitory success and would not survive long

after his death in January, 1672.

The disagreement over Parliamentary representation soured the Bishop's relations with the gentry. It also disrupted the finely-balanced relationship upon which the effectiveness of the system of local government depended. Government in the provinces was unable to operate successfully without co-operation between the government officials and the local gentry, and a mutual belief in the other's intentions. Cosin destroyed this trust by his intransigence over this issue. It was seen that the Bishop's interests were not necessarily coincident with the gentry's. If the Bishop did not share their aims, the gentry were less likely to support his. But the days, in the early years of the Restoration, of political uncertainty and fear of insurrection were coming to an end. Cosin's death removed the only real obstruction to the granting of representation. Fortunately, in the final years of his episcopate, as the fear of political insurrection decreased and the threat of foreign attack was eliminated, the Bishop did not require any great military or moral support from the gentry. Respect for his age, his character and his position, prevented a major confrontation. It was realised that his health was failing. Cosin's very character, his strong will, his vigour and assiduity, and his work to restore the dignity of the Church of England,

had achieved much in re-creating respect for the Bishop of Durham in the area, a respect which would outlive his death, even though the days of the Prince Bishops were, in reality, over. At his death, his body was returned from London to the Diocese, for a funeral service conducted with great pomp and ceremony. According to his own detailed instructions, he was buried in the chapel of the palace at Auckland.<sup>1</sup>

For twelve years Cosin had energetically worked to restore the Church of England within his Diocese. He desired a Church loyal to the Laudian principles which he had introduced in the north-east before the Civil War. But the government was no longer interested in particular points of doctrine and discipline and the tide of opinion was turning against rigidly formal issues of uniformity. Religious unorthodoxy was only important to the secular authorities if it patently represented a political threat to the State. Cosin was convinced that it did but others were no longer so sure. The Bishop never achieved the restoration of a Laudian Anglican Church or the eradication of Protestant Nonconformity. His important contribution to the life of the Church lies elsewhere: he revived the material fabric and the dignity of the Church in the diocese. This was no small achievement since, in the twenty years before 1660, not only

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1. Osmond, 301 ff.

had the organisation and spiritual jurisdiction of the Anglican Church been destroyed, but so had its practices and observances. A generation had grown up which had never known the episcopal system of government and universal organisation of the Church of England. Cosin restored the parochial system responsible to the Bishop, he revived many Anglican practices and insisted upon the reconstruction of church fabrics. He could never destroy Nonconformity but he made it the exception and identified it with sedition, which probably served to restrict its growth and development. After the exposure and destruction of the conspiracy of 1663 he diligently laboured to create a greater political stability within the north-east of England. Respect for his age and his past reputation ensured no serious conflict with the gentry and that respect was reflected in a deference to the office of the Bishop. That respect and the ecclesiastical organisation he re-created survived his death in 1672.

APPENDIX

Tables A - C are compiled from Cosin's Visitation Book.

Tables A and B.

- Column 1 records those parishes which presented no offences.
- Column 2 records those parishes where the churchwardens were presented for negligence or misdemeanours. (ff. 126-144 in Cosin's Visitation Book record the appointments of church officials.)
- Column 3 records the numbers of those presented as Papists, recusants or popish recusants.
- Column 4 records the numbers of parishioners presented for non-attendance at Church or failure to take communion.
- Column 5 records the numbers presented as Quakers.
- Column 6 records the numbers presented as other Protestant Nonconformists, variously termed schismatics, fanatics and sectarians. Occasionally particular denominations are defined - e.g. Presbyterian, Anabaptist or Independent.
- Column 7 records the numbers presented as unlicensed doctors, teachers, and midwives.
- Column 8 records those presented for offences like adultery and fornication.
- Column 9 records the numbers presented for other offences, the most common being failing to pay church dues, sabbath-breaking, having unbaptised children, illegal marriages and burials and being excommunicate.
- Column 10 records when a page is torn or information is missing.



| Parish                 | 1          | 2 | 3  | 4  | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9  | 10 |
|------------------------|------------|---|----|----|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| Durham, St. Giles'     |            |   | 7  |    | 3 |   |   |   |    |    |
| Durham, St. Margaret's |            |   | 20 |    | 2 | 2 | 2 |   |    |    |
| Durham, St. Nicholas'  |            |   | 5  | 14 |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Durham, St. Oswald's   |            |   | 39 | 4  |   |   |   |   | 3  | ✓  |
| Durham, The Bailey     |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Earsden                | no returns |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Easington              |            |   |    | 30 |   |   |   |   | 7  |    |
| Ebchester              |            |   | 4  |    | 2 |   |   |   | 1  |    |
| Edlingham              |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Edmondbyers            |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Egglescliffe           |            |   |    |    |   |   | 2 |   |    |    |
| Eglington              |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Ellingham              |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Elsden                 | no returns |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Elton                  | no returns |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Elwicke                |            |   | 4  |    | 4 |   |   |   |    |    |
| Embleton               |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Escomb                 | no returns |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Esh                    | ✓          |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Framlington            | no returns |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Felton                 |            |   |    | 9  |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Fenton                 |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Ford                   |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Gainsford              |            |   | 18 | 5  | 8 |   |   |   | 9  |    |
| Garragill              |            |   |    | 16 |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Gateshead              |            |   | 2  |    |   |   | 1 |   | 11 |    |
| Greatham               |            |   |    | 10 |   |   |   |   | 2  |    |
| Great Stanton          |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Grindon                |            |   | 7  |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Haltwhistle            |            |   |    | 22 |   |   | 2 |   | 11 |    |
| Hamsterley             |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Hartburn               |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Hart & Hartlepool      |            |   | 20 |    | 2 | 4 | 4 | 5 |    |    |
| Haughton-le-Skerne     |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Haydon                 |            |   | 7  | 1  | 1 |   |   |   |    |    |
| Hebburn                | no returns |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Heddon-on-the-Wall     | no returns |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Holy Island            |            |   |    |    |   |   |   |   | 2  |    |
| Horton                 | no returns |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Houghton-le-Spring     |            |   |    | 7  |   |   |   | 4 | 3  |    |
| Howick                 | ✓          |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Hunstanworth           |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Hurworth               | no returns |   |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Ilderton               |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Ingram                 |            | ✓ |    |    |   |   |   |   |    |    |
| Jarrow                 |            |   | 7  | 6  |   |   |   |   | 2  |    |
| Kelloe                 |            |   |    | 60 |   |   |   | 4 |    |    |













TABLE C

COMPARISON OF PARISHES WITH A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PAPISTS  
AND NONCONFORMISTS IN 1662 AND 1665

| Parish                  | 1662 |    |    |    | 1665 |    |    |    |
|-------------------------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
|                         | 1    | 2  | 3  | 4  | 1    | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| Alston                  | 2    | 3  | 3  | -  | -    | -  | -  | -  |
| Auckland, St. Andrew    | 2    | 3  | 10 | 1  | 7    | -  | 24 | -  |
| Auckland, St. Helen     | 4    | -  | -  | -  | 4    | -  | 1  | -  |
| Barnard Castle          | 2    | 2  | -  | -  | -    | -  | 9  | -  |
| Berwick                 | 38   | 75 | 17 | -  | 9    | 14 | -  | -  |
| Billingham              | -    | -  | 9  | 10 | -    | 16 | -  | -  |
| Bishop Middleham        | -    | 13 | -  | -  | 11   | -  | -  | -  |
| Bishopton               | 19   | -  | -  | -  | 13   | -  | -  | -  |
| Bishopwearmouth         | -    | -  | -  | -  | -    | 17 | -  | 3  |
| Brancepeth              | 65   | -  | -  | 4  | 42   | -  | 11 | 2  |
| Coniscliffe             | 23   | -  | 2  | -  | 26   | -  | 3  | -  |
| Dalton                  | 16   | 2  | -  | -  | -    | -  | -  | -  |
| Durham, St. Giles'      | 7    | -  | 3  | -  | 37   | -  | 10 | -  |
| Durham, St. Margaret's  | 20   | -  | 2  | 2  | 38   | 11 | -  | -  |
| Durham, St. Nicholas'   | 5    | 14 | -  | -  | 13   | 19 | -  | -  |
| Durham, St. Oswald's    | 39   | 4  | -  | -  | 40   | 24 | 5  | -  |
| Easington               | -    | 30 | -  | -  | -    | -  | 24 | 14 |
| Hartlepool              | 20   | -  | 2  | 4  | -    | -  | -  | -  |
| Houghton-le-Spring      | -    | 7  | -  | -  | 4    | 5  | 4  | 2  |
| Kelloe                  | -    | 60 | -  | -  | 46   | -  | -  | -  |
| Mark Hesleden           | 16   | -  | 9  | 11 | 23   | 8  | -  | -  |
| Medomsley               | 12   | -  | 12 | 14 | 16   | -  | 18 | 10 |
| Morpeth                 | 17   | 23 | 5  | -  | 15   | 16 | 4  | 3  |
| Muggleswick             | -    | -  | -  | -  | -    | 11 | -  | -  |
| Newcastle, All Saints'  | -    | 1  | -  | -  | -    | 44 | -  | -  |
| Newcastle, St. Andrew's | -    | -  | -  | -  | 6    | 15 | -  | 1  |
| Newcastle, St. John's   | 9    | 4  | -  | -  | 3    | 25 | 3  | -  |
| Ryton                   | 47   | -  | 8  | -  | 28   | -  | 2  | 2  |
| Seaham                  | 11   | -  | -  | -  | 12   | -  | -  | -  |
| Staindrop               | 1    | -  | 17 | -  | 4    | -  | 21 | -  |
| Stanhope                | 8    | -  | 5  | -  | -    | 3  | 1  | -  |
| Tynemouth               | 2    | -  | 7  | 8  | -    | 5  | -  | -  |
| Washington              | 13   | -  | -  | -  | 12   | -  | -  | -  |
| Witton Gilbert          | 4    | -  | 6  | 5  | 7    | -  | 10 | -  |

Column 1    Papists  
Column 2    Absentees and Non-communicants  
Column 3    Quakers  
Column 4    Other Nonconformists

TABLE DSIR THOMAS GOWER'S LIST OF COUNTIES OF ORIGIN OF CONSPIRATORS

(SP Dom/29, 99; 169. June, 1664).

| <u>County (or area)</u> | <u>Numbers of Conspirators</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Berkshire               | 6                              |
| Buckinghamshire         | 3                              |
| Cumberland              | 3                              |
| Derbyshire              | 2                              |
| Devon                   | 1                              |
| Dorset                  | 4                              |
| Durham                  | 22                             |
| Huntingdonshire         | 3                              |
| Lancashire              | 9                              |
| Leicestershire          | 2                              |
| Lincolnshire            | 5                              |
| London                  | 10                             |
| Norfolk                 | 3                              |
| Nottinghamshire         | 8                              |
| Northumberland          | 12                             |
| Shropshire              | 2                              |
| Staffordshire           | 2                              |
| Suffolk                 | 6                              |
| Surrey                  | 3                              |
| Somerset                | 7                              |
| Westmorland             | 8                              |
| Wales                   | 11                             |
| Wiltshire               | 7                              |
| West of England         | 11                             |
| Yorkshire               | 50                             |

TABLE EIMPRISONED DURHAM CONSPIRATORS, APRIL, 1664.SP Dom/28, 96; 69. April 8th

The Prisoners now secured at Durham and at Yorke.

At Durham

Capt. Mitford  
 John Smith  
 Geo. Watson  
 Tho. Burdis  
 Wm. Brass  
 Rob. Joblin  
 Mr. Timothy Whittingam  
 Rob. Selby  
 Lewis Frost  
 Josep Heylinge  
 --- Bateman, of Durham.

At York, of Bishoprike prisoners

John Joblin, the Jalor formerly  
 at Durham.  
 Mr. Wm. Levinge  
 Jo. Ward  
 Tho. Randall  
 Tho. Parkinson  
 Ralph Robinson

There are verie many omitted that Ellrington knowes to have bene ingadged in this designe, that are inconsiderable for their quality, and therefore not named in this Information.

SP Dom/29, 96; 70(I). April 9th

Names of nine persons in Durham Jail Ellerington is bound over to prosecute.

John Ward, a smith and Anabaptist  
 John Jopling, friend of Paul Hobson  
 Lewis Frost of South Shields  
 Michael Coatesworth, preacher  
 Cuthbert Coatesworth, preacher  
 John Shaw, farmer  
 John Oliver, farmer  
 John Hopper, farmer  
 Nic. Harrison, farmer

TABLE FCONSPIRATORS NAMED BY ELLERINGTON

(Add, 33770;37)

John Redshaw  
 Robt. Blenkinsop  
 Rowland Harrison  
 John Ward (at whose house many meetings were held)  
 Capt. Dowhanby  
 Capt. Gower  
 Robt. Redshaw, son of John  
 Robt. Taylor of Eastbridge  
 Mark Taylor "  
 John Marsh "  
 John Joplin of Foxhole  
 John Marsh of Ridley Mill  
 Cuthbert Newton of Kindley  
 Rich. Taylor of Bromley  
 Henry Angers  
 Cuthbert Maughan of Breckinside  
 Geo. Redshaw of Edmondbiers  
 John Oliver "  
 Lewis Frost of South Shields  
 Cuthbert Collesworth "  
 Michael Collesworth "  
 John Hopper of Cary Shields  
 Cuthbert Ward of Black Headley  
 Ralph Hey ) (presumably an error for Ralph Hey of Edmondbyers)  
 Edmund Biers )  
 Thomas Redshaw of Paddam Syke  
 Michael Ward of Shotleyfield  
 Richd. Johnson of Sunderland  
 --- Forrester "  
 Richd. Ord of Brakenhugh  
 John Ord "  
 James Carr of Airdley  
 Robert Bulmer of Crooked Oakes  
 Richd. Harrison  
 Hicholas Harrison

These Ellerington named as the conspirators who met at  
 Muggleswick and took the oaths of secrecy.

TABLE GLIST OF NAMES OF PLOTTERS GIVEN BY JOHN ELLERINGTON

(Cosin's Letter Book, 3; 44) May 27th, 1664

Captain Dough neare Cetan Delavale. Oliver's Captain  
 Lewis Frost of South Sheels  
 Captn. Edwd. Shepherdson of Sunderland  
 Cuthbt. Coatsworth of Sheels a merchaunt  
 Mich. Coatsworth his brother  
 John Jobler Gaoler of Durham  
 John Joplin of Muggleswick  
 Rowland Harrison Senr. )  
 Nicholas Harrison )  
 John Byerley )  
 Robt. Blenkinship ) of Muggleswick  
 John Ward )  
 John March )  
 Rowland Harrison Junr. )  
 Robt. Taylor of Edisbridge  
 Marke Taylor of the same  
 George Taylor also of the same place  
 Cuthbt. Newton of Heighley  
 John March of Ridly Mill  
 Henry Angs  
 Richd. Ord the preacher and an Anabaptist  
 John Ord Jnr.  
 Captain George Lilburn of Sunderland Oliver's Captain  
 Paul Hobson a great stickler  
 Capt. Gower  
 Sir Henry Withrington  
 Edwd. Fenwick of Stanton  
 Mr. Timothy Whittingham  
 Mr. Selby the Durham Apothecary  
 John Burdis of Durham  
 Ralph Bainbridge )  
 Lee Shooemaker ) of Durham  
 George Beadnell of Newcastle  
 Mr. London of Newcastle

(All are said to have been involved in the 'late horrid plot hatched in Muggleswick'. The document is signed by John Ellerington in the presence of Isaac Basire Jnr., the son of the Archdeacon of Northumberland.)

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