

Max S. Weremchuk

John Nelson Darby Research Papers

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Contents

John Nelson Darby Research Papers

Introduction	4
1. County Clare	4
2. Powerscourt Connections	7
3. Legal Training	9
4. Calary	15
5. William Cleaver Letter	16
6. Early Views	17
7. Dates, etc.	21
8. Joseph Wolff	27
9. Darby and the Roman Catholic Church	27
10. Vaughan Family	34
11. Edward Hardman and the “Seven Churches”	35
12. Vaughans/Darbys	38
13. Richard Sinclair Brooke	40
14. John Walker	42
15. John Henry Newman	44

John Nelson Darby – A Biography

Revised Version of Chapter 1: Beginnings

Family Tree	46
Leap Castle	47
The Darbys and the Vaughans	49
Marriage	51
Westminster	54

John Nelson Darby Research Papers

Introduction

I thought I'd write and tell you how I am making progress in the revision of the Darby biography. There is much work ahead of me. Instead of bringing certain points to a conclusion, I find more and more avenues of research opening up. This time around I would very much like to be able to reconstruct the times. They *were* different. Even the language. We easily fool ourselves into believing we understand how things were.

What is becoming ever clearer to me is that our picture of Darby is very incomplete. The published material is not enough, scratching only the surface. Too much has been edited and left out. The man is missing. We need more material like Darby's letter to his brother Horatio (published in *Leap Castle. A Place and Its People* written by Marigold Freeman-Attwood, a Darby descendant) to complete the picture.

I realize I am risking things somewhat, coming out with items from my research before the book's publication. Someone might "jump the gun" on me through this. (We authors/researchers can be very "possessive" of what we feel "we" have uncovered.) But in the long run what I'm after is the truth. Being able to reconstruct things as they actually were is my goal.

Every blessing, Max Weremchuk

March 2003

1. County Clare

I recently had part of the so-called "Sibthorpe/Darby Collection" here with me. I had photocopies of some of it before, but having the originals to study is a completely different thing – as the following will show. Among the letters to Darby there is the following (mentioned in my biography¹):

Dated this 2nd of February 1829

Dear Sir

I hope you will take notice for your own sake
Not to be Disturbing the people of Corofin –
By your invading business coming like a
Thief at night Seducing the people of Corofin by your
Bible business and if you dont mind what
I Say you will meet with your fate at last
In Corofin So darby return to your own
Native place we have heard who you are and
What your Sceaming way of living is so you
Rascal we have listened a long time to you

1 Max S. Weremchuk, *John Nelson Darby*, Neptune, NJ (Loizeaux) 1992, p. 87. – I give the lines as in the original, with spelling mistakes and deletions. Due to folds not everything is legible.

But no longer make off as soon as possible you
 Swing ____ you ____ which
 has brought you to the country or if you attempt
 to come any more it is their your life
 Will end but to finish with you I Desire
 You abandon this place before
 No more at ____ Written by Captain
 Rock

Corofin is in County Clare in Ireland. I wrote there and came into contact with very friendly and helpful historians – particularly Ciarán Ó Murchadha.

“Captain Rock” was not a real person. What is being referred to here are the Rockites, something like a “civil rights” or protest group. Groups with a religious grievance of some sort, either with their landlord or local Church of Ireland clergyman or similar, used the designation “Captain Rock”.

Ciarán Ó Murchadha wrote to me in this connection:

“This type of letter, or often notice, posted outside recipient’s residence, as you probably know, were extremely common in Ireland throughout the nineteenth century. This one appears to be somebody’s copy, as the handwriting seems too practised: often the writers were near illiterate, or tried to present themselves as so being in order to disguise penmanship that would otherwise be recognisable. The Captain Rock signature is also typical: others would have been Captain Starlight or Captain Moonlight. It may be that there is a police report on this in the relevant files in the Chief Secretary’s Office, in the National Archives.

In the late 1820s County Clare and parts of the adjoining counties of Limerick and Tipperary were convulsed by an agrarian uprising brought about by a movement whose participants were known as the Terry Alts. Although poor market conditions had much to do with this explosion of popular anger, it was expressed in anti-Protestant sentiment because of the injustice of the whole tithing issue, etc.

This was also the time of Emancipation, which as you will know was achieved after O’Connell’s victory in the Clare election of 1828. Sectarian passion was high enough as it was, but to make things worse the Terry Alt rising and the O’Connellite agitation coincided with an intensive missionary campaign in parts of Ireland by evangelical Protestants, the first phase of the famous ‘Second Reformation.’

In Clare the centre of the Evangelical Mission was Corofin and the neighbouring parish of Ruan/Dysert, where a local landlord named Edward Synge (kinsman to the later J. Millington Synge) made a determined attempt to proselytise his Catholic tenants, with bitter results that are still remembered today.

At Corofin he established a ‘colony’ with all the usual paraphernalia, schools, scripture readers and so on, and his activities brought much an angry reaction from the Catholic population, particularly those who were prepared to take direct unlawful action to redress perceived grievance.”

But he also mentioned something which got me very excited:

“Rev. Darby clearly was one of the evangelical clergymen at the Corofin colony, where local lore has it ‘Bibles were as common as raspberries.’ You should find a

reference to this in Ignatius Murphy's *The Diocese of Killaloe 1800–1850* (Four Courts Press, Dublin 1993) and in Flan Enright's article, 'Edward Synge, the Dysert Proselytiser' in *The Other Clare*, vol. 8 (1982), pp. 8–11."

So I went on a search in the internet and found the following under O'Dea Online:

"Most of the lands of Dysert (which for centuries belonged to the Diocese of Killaloe) went to the family of Synge which had been involved in ecclesiastic affairs in the Established Church since the 1670s. Nicholas Synge was Bishop of Killaloe in the middle of the eighteenth century and was probably responsible for the building of the fine three-story house at Carhoo in Dysert. Edward Synge, who gained control of the land in 1823, was a religious fanatic who swore to stamp out the great evil of 'Papism'. Edward Synge built schools which taught religious instructions most of the day. Though strongly opposed by the parish priest in Corofin, he continued his religious missionary zeal until his Dysert school was burned during the night in 1826. Synge himself captured two of the miscreants whereupon a police guard was placed upon his house. Things came to a head on Ash Wednesday in 1831, when shots were fired at Edward Synge's car as he was returning home from Corofin. His driver was killed while Synge was miraculously saved by a Bible he always carried in his breast pocket. (The Bible and bullet are today on display at the Corofin Heritage Center.)

Edward's son, Francis Hutchinson Synge, took over the Dysert lands in the latter half of the nineteenth century and carried out much needed repairs to the old chapel of the O'Deas, the round tower, and the high cross. He is buried under a stone of polished granite just outside the walls of the Dysert O'Dea church."²

This got me all the more excited because it also reminded me of a William Kelly remark in a letter dated 22 February 1901:

"You are likely right as to Sir F[rancis] H[utchinson]; but I cannot speak with certainty. Dr O'B[rien], the famous bishop of Ossory, married Mr Darby's niece, daughter of the Lord Chief Justice Pennefather. Mr Synge of Syngefield was a remarkable early, who stood through the shots of the Tipperary murderers day and night unharmed. A bullet was once stopped at John XVII.15 over his heart. His servant was shot beside him in driving. So was his brother whom Lady Powerscourt used to call 'Naughty William Sadleir:' a fire-eater, etc, etc, but next a lamb."

I recently found mention of this in the Fry Manuscripts as well:³

"After his [Darby's] return to Ireland Mr. Synge was shot. Darby heard of it & was so concerned. He was so poor that we helped him through it."

This is helpful in placing Darby's visit and meeting with Newton. Mr Synge was shot "Ash Wednesday in 1831", which took place – as Newton writes – after Darby returned to Ireland.

Darby was not just involved with John Synge and Francis Hutchinson, but also with Edward Synge. This the "Captain Rock" letter confirms.

2 <http://odeaclan.org/clan-history/>

3 Large book, p. 239 (from vol. 8, p. 26).

In the past, letter writing – or posting – was expensive. They did not use envelopes. The letter was written on one side and then folded together with the address of the recipient on the other side (enclosures cost extra). The letter in question has been glued to another sheet as reinforcement. On the one hand this was a good idea because otherwise the letter would have fallen apart, on the other hand it is not good because the address is now covered. The letter is glued in such a way that trying to remove it would destroy it. You can see the address when held up against the light – but not clearly. “Darby of” is clear, the rest is difficult. It seems to read “Delivered to ___ Darby of ___”

One of my sons meant, after “Darby of” it seems to be “Dy___”. I agreed. And an “s”: “Dys__”. At first it didn’t make sense. And then I looked at Ciarán Ó Murchadha’s email again. “Edward Synge, the *Dysert* Proselytiser”! Looking at the letter again it was clear: “Dys__t”. Darby was staying at Edward Synge’s place at the time in question.

Ciarán Ó Murchadha had more helpful information for me:

“Synge himself deviated from his Church of Ireland connection, after experiencing a form of spiritual conversion shortly after arriving at Carhue, Dysert in 1823 to manage his family’s estates. According to Enright his religious beliefs made him ‘equally distant from Protestant and Catholic.’

A brother of his, Colonel Charles Synge, was an extensive landowner on Mount Callan, Inagh parish in Clare.

There is a Powerscourt connection here locally. One of the few decent landlords in Clare during the mid-nineteenth century was Colonel Wingfield, as you are aware, the family name of the Powerscourts, and owned land near Ennistymon.”

The interconnections among the early Brethren, particularly among the “Gentry”, are amazing. Much more than the usual published material shows. Darby had very early connections to Rev. Daly and through this with many others – but more of that in my next paper.

2. Powerscourt Connections

Edward Pennefather knew Rev. Robert Daly – so there was this early connection to Darby (as noted in the biography), but there is more.

I have a copy of the diary of Lady Anne Jocelyn. This started me on my journey. Frances Theodosia Jocelyn, Anne’s sister, married Richard Wingfield Powerscourt. The Jocelyns knew the Howards and often got together. Both families knew Robert Daly well. (Synge and Hutchinson names also appear in the diary.) Hugh Howard had three daughters: Isabella, Frances and Theodosia. Isabella married Granville Leveson Proby, Frances married William Hayes Parnell and Theodosia married Richard Wingfield Powerscourt after the death of his first wife. (Interesting, the men are all “P’s”.)

The following remarks are from the Edward Lear site:⁴

“John Joshua Proby, eldest son of Granville Leveson Proby, afterwards 3rd Earl of Carysfort, by his wife Isabella, daughter of Colonel the Hon. Hugh Howard, was

4 http://www.nonsenselit.org/Lear/LiS/LiS_intro2.html

born, with a twin sister Kitty, who died 4 years later, on April 3, 1823. The other children of his parents were: Frances (Fanny), b. 1819, d. unmarried 1863; Elizabeth Emma, b. 1821, married 1844 Lord Claud Hamilton, d. 1900; Granville, afterwards 4th Earl of Carysfort, b. 1825, d. 1872; Hugh, b. 1828, d. 1852; Isabella, b. 1830, d. unmarried 1866; Theodosia Gertrude, b. 1833, married 1859 W. M. Baillie, d. 1902; and William, afterwards 5th Earl of Carysfort, b. 1836, d. 1909. Their mother died in 1836 after giving birth to William.

John Joshua, though the son of a younger son, was marked out from birth as the eventual heir to the Carysfort title and estates, for William Allen Lord Proby, his father's eldest brother, had died unmarried in 1804 and John, the second brother, who was also unmarried, had become incurably insane in 1817.

His early years were spent almost entirely in Ireland, at Glenart, the Irish home of the family, where his father, who had been M. P. for County Wicklow since 1816,^(k) had been settled for several years, and at Bushy, the home of his maternal grandfather, the Hon. Hugh Howard, which was only thirty miles away.

His mother's sisters, Theodosia,^(l) second wife of the 5th Viscount Powerscourt, and Frances,^(m) wife of William Parnell Hayes, also lived in County Wicklow, and the Proby family paid frequent visits at Powerscourt and Avondale.

(k) Granville Leveson Proby, 3rd Earl of Carysfort, b. 1782; joined the Navy in 1798, was present as a midshipman at the Battle of the Nile, where he was in charge of a boat sent to rescue Casabianca, and appears with Nelson and others on the Quarterdeck of the *Vanguard* in Orme's picture of the Battle. He was a lieutenant on H. M. S. *Neptune* at Trafalgar. His last command as captain was the *Amelia* (which had formerly been commanded by his eldest brother William Allen Lord Proby) which he paid off in 1816. M.P. for Co. Wicklow 1816–1829; succeeded his brother as 3rd Earl of Carysfort in 1855; d. 1868."

These Navy connections suggest that Proby knew Sir Henry D'Esterre Darby. (The Penefathers came from Tipperary. Did they know the Darbys near them there?) I find Proby's M. P. position to be of importance as he is mentioned as saying that "he lived amongst the Protestants of property, in the county of Wicklow, and he was enabled to say that their opinions were not adverse to the Roman Catholics" in my copy of the House of Commons meeting on 2 March 1827 to discuss Catholic Emancipation. Proby's remarks stand in connection with the Petition from Wicklow. It was here that the famous Petition which got Darby excited was read! (Did Darby hear of how things went through Proby?)

In *Memoir of the Late Right Rev. Robert Daly* by H. Madden there is a letter by Rev. Daly to Granville Leveson Proby's wife.⁵

"(l) Lady Powerscourt became a widow in 1823, the year after her marriage, and died on December 10, 1836. Her stepdaughter, Catherine Anne Wingfield, afterwards Hon. Mrs. H. E. Stuart, and her niece Catherine Parnell, afterwards Mrs. G. V. Wigram, who lived with her, were playmates of the Proby children, to whom Lady Powerscourt took the place of a mother after the death of her sister, whom she only survived by ten months. She was very prominent in evangelical circles in the Church of Ireland, but during the last few years of her life was a member of the Plymouth Brethren. Her *Letters and Papers* were edited in 1839 by Robert Daly, Rector of Powerscourt (afterwards Bishop of Cashel).

5 Mrs Hamilton Madden, *Memoir of the Late Right Rev. Robert Daly, D. D., Lord Bishop of Cashel*, London (Nisbet) 1875, pp. 73–77.

(m) Her third son John, b. 1811, married, in 1834, Delia Stewart, daughter of Commodore Charles Stewart, U. S. Navy, and was father of Charles Stewart Parnell.”

These interconnections are amazing! I have yet to find out how Pennefather got to know Susan Darby, but all these families knew each other and had contacts with each other. Early Brethren history almost reads like a “family affair”.

The Proby family (Earl of Carysfort), the Howards (Earl of Wicklow), the Jocelyns (Earl of Roden) – a group of “higher society” people. Darby worked among the poor and loved doing it.⁶ All the more amazing considering his background. Darby’s father received his title in the 1820s. Fellow Commoners at Trinity College were described as, among others, “sons of ... social climbers”. That designation would perfectly fit Darby’s father.

3. Legal Training

This information is very important because it requires me to correct and rewrite an important section of the biography. A serious mistake on my part, but it opens up new avenues of research and may result in some very interesting conclusions.

I had always thought that Darby went from Westminster to Ireland and stayed there till after his ordination, riding accident and breaking of bread in Dublin. I thought he was admitted to an English Inn but studied law in Dublin. Wrong, wrong, wrong.

The Legal year was divided up into four terms of roughly three months each.⁷ Hilary Term began in January (after 1831 January 11–31), Easter Term in March or April (after 1831 April 15 – May 8), Trinity Term after Whitsunday/Pentecost, 50 days after Easter (after 1831 May 22 – June 12).⁸

So, taking the above information I have: Darby was admitted to King’s Inns during the Trinity Term of 1815 (in May or June perhaps). He was admitted to Dublin University (Trinity College) on 3 July 1815. While at the University he “ate his way through” King’s Inns for nine terms. Then he was admitted to Lincoln’s Inn on 9 November 1819 (Michaelmas Term), spent eight terms there and graduated during the Hilary Term (beginning of the year) in 1822.

It is pretty clear that Darby was slated for a career in Law from the start. He was admitted to King’s Inns *before* he was admitted to the University. Darby did not train at King’s Inns, he held his terms there (concurrently with those at the College), which did not involve more than dining in the Commons. Darby *did* go to London, to Lincoln’s Inn, for his legal training!

On 28 November 1821 Darby presented his petition to take a certificate that he had kept the required number of terms and to have his name taken off the books of the (Lincoln)

6 In a letter he wrote the following admonition: “Care for the poor; they are often more true to their convictions than many of the rich. Seek them out when they are scattered” (CW 20:290).

7 Terms: academic sessions. “Eat one’s terms” was to be a law student at the Inns of Court, since for many years to dine there a certain number of times was the only requirement for becoming a barrister. (Tuition was not necessarily involved.)

8 See Daniel Pool, *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew. From Fox Hunting to Whist – the Facts of Daily Life in Nineteenth-Century England*, New York (Simon & Schuster) 1993.

Society – this was standard for students called to the Irish bar (to which he was called on 21 January 1821).

A further confirmation of Darby being in London for his actual legal training is that Pennefather's name is given in Darby's King's Inns Admission Bond, whereas William Henry Darby (his brother, who practised law and had also been at Lincoln's Inn) is mentioned in John Nelson's Lincoln's Inn Admission Bond.⁹ This changes everything!

In his Greek Interlinear Bible Darby had written: "[I] loved Christ, I have no doubt sincerely and growingly since June or July 1820, or 21, I forget which."¹⁰ This would have been while he was in London. The possibility of influences and so on are suddenly completely different to what I had supposed previously! Now things make more sense.

Darby also wrote:

"I think Scott's essays gave a strong determination to my thought at one time, while my mind was working upon it. I had always recognized the truths, but I am speaking of their power, for my mind had passed, after its own repentance, under the dark cloud of the popish system (i. e., to look for the powers of Christ's agency in the visible authority of the Church), though God was with me through it all. And I used to hold up Christ to my brother as availing against the claim of men on their points, yet it prevailed so far as to prevent my mind from finding comfort in the truths I honestly urged on him, which I had found in what poor reading of Scripture I had."¹¹

Thomas Scott was still living at the beginning of Darby's Lincoln's Inn time (he died 23 April 1821). The brother here is William Henry Darby – as I mentioned in my biography. William was involved in John Nelson's legal career in London. Discussions with him as to Rome must have taken place during this time.

A confirmation by Benjamin Wills Newton is also to be found in the Fry Manuscripts:¹²

"I often think he [Darby] was in the employ of Jesuits; his brother was a Catholic and he himself at one time was known to be on the verge of joining, just before he left the Bar."¹³

So, this opens up completely new fields. What had happened in London? Through whom?

I can also now better understand W. G. Turner stating in his Darby biography that Pennefather hoped Darby might "reduce the legal chaos to order".¹⁴ Why? Well, I have been informed, legal education was in a state of complete collapse and something of a scandal back then. Students who actually wanted to practise had to learn their law by private

9 A letter from William Henry Darby on 23 December 1821 carries the address: 8 Northfolk Crescent, Bath, Gloucestershire.

10 Weremchuk, *John Nelson Darby*, p. 204.

11 Ibid.

12 Large book, p. 249 (from vol. 4, pp. 44–45).

13 Darby's oath when called to the Irish Chancery Bar contained the vow to prevent the further growth of popery, and his first paper – "Considerations Addressed to the Archbishop of Dublin" – is very clearly and strongly anti-Catholic, the Papacy being comparable to heathenism in his eyes.

14 W. G. Turner, *John Nelson Darby*, ed. by E. N. Cross, London (Chapter Two) 1990, p. 16.

study, watching cases in court, working for a solicitor and so on. There was no formal education offered by the Inns.

This reminds me of Darby's supposed "theological training" – of which there is still *no* evidence. Was he self-taught here as well? The Church of Ireland required candidates for the ministry to have attended the divinity lectures given by the Regius Professor of Divinity at Trinity (Richard Graves for the time 1814–1819). Darby did *not* attend these – which is understandable, because he was intending a career in Law and was not yet converted at the time. Later, after returning to Dublin from London, the lecture attendance registers for Trinity College (1822–1823) have no references to Darby having attended undergraduate lectures.

As it stands at present, Darby was probably able to be ordained because of his general training (as in the case of Thomas Scott referred to in my biography) and his connections, e. g. Rev. Robert Daly.

★ ★ ★

Thu, 20 Mar 2003

I must come back to my remarks on the "Catholic" influence on Darby with an astounding piece of information – for me at least. Others may think: So, he finally noticed.

Parallels have often been drawn between the life of John Nelson Darby and John Henry Newman:

Darby was born in November 1800
Newman was born in February 1801

Darby went to Trinity College, Dublin
Newman went to Trinity College, Oxford

Darby was ordained deacon in 1825
Newman was ordained priest in 1825

The connection between the two was Newman's brother Francis William. Or was that the only one?

Darby was admitted to Lincoln's Inn on 9 November 1819
Newman was admitted to the same Inn on 19 November 1819, ten days later!

Apparently Ward in his *Life of Cardinal Newman* is wrong with his June 1819 date for that.¹⁵

It is quite possible, but not necessarily so, that they met each other during their "Lincoln" time. This time at Lincoln's Inn was not a good one for Newman, which may explain the reason for the sparse information I have been able to gather on it. Newman not mentioning Darby need not mean they did not know each other. There is a similar case: Darby and Joseph Philpot knew each other at an important point in their lives and yet they are both strangely silent, or almost silent, on this.

15 Wilfrid Ward, *The Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman, Based on his Private Journals and Correspondence*, London (Longmans, Green, and Co.) 1912, vol. 1, p. 34, n. 3.

Newman had a conversion experience in 1816. Darby's was later, in either June/July 1820 or 1821. Both were greatly influenced through the ministry of Thomas Scott, which both confessed to – amazing in Darby's case because he otherwise refrains from mentioning influences, and expressly mentions his “essays” as important for him (them?).

Interesting thing is that Newman quit law and decided to take Orders in 1821. Why is this year so significant in the lives of these two men? During this time Darby was attracted to Rome, but became convinced it was the wrong path. Newman first became ordained in the Anglican Church and later became Roman Catholic.

I find this all to be very fascinating.

★ ★ ★

Tue, 25 Mar 2003

My further researches show that it would have been nigh to a miracle if Darby and Newman had not met at Lincoln's Inn. Keeping Terms was very strict – and could get costly – so they were sure to have been together several times.

I am getting pretty excited about a lead which has turned up and which might prove to be very helpful in getting together who could have had a theological influence on Darby in the beginning. My clues seem to have a confirmation through facts in my other Darby material.

★ ★ ★

Sun, 30 Mar 2003

As to my new lead: I will wait until I receive a certain book from England and have checked some points before I pass my information on. I don't want to be getting ahead of myself. It has to do with possible influences of a prophetic character.

I believe we have often made a mistake in looking for sources where we can say this is an obvious or direct influence. I believe that Darby, in the main, was influenced by views which opposed the view he is so well known for. He reacted to what he considered wrong views and thus formed his “own”. In Darby's case the things are backwards. I would not say he did it purposely or consciously, but it is almost as if he was driven to “come up” with a different view.

★ ★ ★

I have not finished my studies on Darby at Lincoln's Inn yet – to the contrary, I seem to be only beginning – but as I have kept promising you material I'm sending this now as it is.

Darby was at Lincoln's Inn from 1819 to 1822. William Warburton, the later Bishop of Gloucester, was preacher to Lincoln's Inn in 1746.

From *A Short History of Lincoln's Inn* by Sir Gerald Hurst:¹⁶

“In 1768 Bishop Warburton endowed a lectureship, which still bears his name, in order that the Society should have the advantage for ever of sermons ‘to prove the truth of revealed religion’, and, in particular, ‘to explain prophecies in the Old and

16 Sir Gerald Hurst, K. C., *A Short History of Lincoln's Inn*, London (Constable) 1946, p. 76.

New Testament which relate to the Christian Church, especially to the apostacy of Papal Rome’.”

From *The Student’s Guide through Lincoln’s Inn* by Thomas Lane:¹⁷

“In 1768 a course of lectures, in the form of sermons, was founded by the bishop of Gloucester (Dr. Warburton), late preacher to this society, for proving the truth of the Christian religion from the completion of the prophecies in the Old and New Testament. These lectures continue to be regularly delivered, pursuant to the direction of the founder, on the first Sunday after Michaelmas term [ended 28 November] and the Sunday immediately before and after Hilary term* [began 23 January, ended 12 February].

A preacher and chaplain are appointed by the society; and divine service is regularly performed here on Sundays, as well as on the usual days appointed by the church.

* The first person who preached the Warburton lectures was Bishop Hurd, who was succeeded in this duty by Halifax bishop of Exeter, Bagot bishop of St. Asaph, Dr. Apthorpe, Dr. Nicholson, Dr. Layard, the rev. Richard Nares, Dr. Pearson, the rev. Philip Allwood, rev. John Davison, and the present lecturer, the rev. Thomas Reynell.”

Looking at the list of books from Darby’s library which were auctioned after his death the following is among them:

Warburton (Bp.) Works, with Life by Bp. Hurd, 12 vol. portrait 1811
 Hurd Letters to Hurd, portraits 1809
 Hurd Tracts 1789
 Hurd Unpublished Papers, by Kilvert, plates 1841

Apparently these works were of interest to Darby.

John Davison (1777–1834), mentioned above, was the Lecturer for the time period from 1819 to 1823 – covering the time Darby was at Lincoln’s Inn. His lectures were published as *Discourses on Prophecy, in Which are Considered Its Structure, Use and Inspiration*.¹⁸ If my calculations are correct, the lectures relevant to Darby’s time at Lincoln’s Inn would have been:

1819: 21 November
 1820: 16 January, 13 February, 26 November
 1821: 21 January, 18 February, 25 November
 1822: 20 January

Did Darby attend? Did they have any influence?¹⁹

17 Thomas Lane, *The Student’s Guide through Lincoln’s Inn*, London (Lane) ⁴1823, pp. 27–28.

18 London (Murray) 1824. This volume is not in the Darby Library list – which does not mean Darby did not have it. Not all his volumes were offered for auction. Spurgeon has this volume in his list of commentaries.

19 I have just recently obtained a copy of Davison’s book and still need to read it. Skimming through it there definitely are points that could have been a stimulus. “Dispensations” reoccurs often enough. But at this time prophecy was not of such importance to Darby as questions regarding salvation and Rome were. For many years Darby held the “standard” view. Only later did prophecy become prominent when he began to develop his own views. For this reason I am very reluctant to place any great weight on Darby’s time at Trinity College and any influences he might have had while there. (I have been able to find out that he did *not* attend the divinity lectures!) While at Trinity Darby was still an unbeliev-

The Chaplain during Darby's time at Lincoln's Inn was William Walker. The Preacher was Charles Lloyd (from June 1819 to February 1822, later Bishop of Oxford). Did any of these men influence Darby?

After Darby converted he struggled with the attractions of the Roman Church. He went through trials that John Henry Newman (enrolled at Lincoln's Inn 10 days after Darby) would go through years later. The following quotes are from Darby's "Analysis of Dr. Newman's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*: with a Glance at the History of Popes, Councils, and the Church" in *Collected Writings* 18. Darby says of the struggles Newman experienced:

"In many things I agree; many of his thoughts I have gone over in my own mind."
(p. 158)²⁰

What is of interest here are the two following remarks by Darby:

"I looked for the church. Not having peace in my soul, nor knowing yet where peace is, I too, governed by a morbid imagination, thought much of Rome, and its professed sanctity, and catholicity, and antiquity – not of the possession of divine truth and of Christ myself. Protestantism met none of these feelings, and I was rather a bore to my clergyman by acting on the rubrics. I looked out for something more like reverend antiquity. I was really much in Dr. Newman's state of mind." (p. 145)

"I fasted in Lent so as to be weak in body at the end of it; ate no meat on week days – nothing till evening on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, then a little bread or nothing; observed strictly the weekly fasts, too. I went to my clergyman always if I wished to take the sacrament, that he might judge of the matter. I held apostolic succession fully, and the channels of grace to be there only. I held thus Luther and Calvin and their followers to be outside. I was not their judge, but I left them to the uncovenanted mercies of God. I searched with earnest diligence into the evidences of apostolic succession in England, and just saved their validity for myself and my conscience. The union of church and state I held to be Babylonish, that the church ought to govern itself, and that she was in bondage but was the church." (p. 156)

Who was this clergyman? (A number of possibilities have turned up, and I am following up the names I have in the hope of being able to find out more. This will probably take some time.)

Taking some of the above remarks and comparing them with others, it seems to be that Darby, though rightly termed a "High Churchman" during this period in his life, was not

er. He came to saving faith while in London. The years immediately following this give no indication of anything near a pre-trib rapture in his thoughts.

In the past I had considered Francis Newman's comments on the end times in his well-known description of Darby in *Phases of Faith* as being his own false interpretation – but very probably Newman (strongly influenced by Darby) *was* giving Darby's view as it was then. My conviction is becoming stronger that looking for direct influences for Darby's "rapture" view is futile. Darby was reacting to many of the views surrounding him. They may have given him impulses, but more in the sense that he developed his views in reaction to them. When Bellett returned to Dublin all excited with new insights, Darby reacted to it by saying he had his own – ones developed *before* Bellett returned.

20 Darby uses similar language when reviewing John Henry Newman's brother Francis' book *Phases of Faith*: "for I also have had my 'phases of faith'" (CW 6:27). Though going through experiences similar to those of the Newman brothers, Darby came to very different conclusions. The "Catholic" period in Darby's life is something I am working on as an extra item.

a fully convinced Anglican. It was the best he could find at the time. This would also explain his remark that “I was induced to be ordained. I did not feel drawn to take up a regular post” (*L 3:297*). He did it reluctantly because it seemed the best thing to do. That he was fully devoted to his work once ordained is something else altogether.

4. Calary

I know I promised you something new on Darby and the Lincoln’s Inn connection. Well, I still haven’t received the information I need – so this will have to wait a bit. The following will probably more than compensate for it though.

John Nelson Darby was a curate in Calary from 1825 to about 1829. Calary was not a separate charge until Darby left. Powerscourt, Delgany and other parishes then contributed areas to Calary. Before that the curate from Delgany would take care of Calary. Do you know who that was for the time period 1817 to 1820? Well, believe it or not, Darby’s older brother Christopher L. Darby!

While active as a curate, Darby had to do with Rev. Robert Daly, but also with Rev. William Cleaver. More connections to the past! Cleaver had attended Westminster Public School as well! He was of course there much earlier than Darby, but closer in time to Darby’s older brothers.

Here is a small comparison:

William Cleaver was born 24 March 1789
he was a King’s Scholar at Westminster in 1803
matriculated Christ Church Oxford in 1807
B. A. 1812
M. A. 1813
Rector of Delgany from 1819 to 1837

William Henry Darby was born 1790
left Westminster in 1805
matriculated Christ Church Oxford in 1811
B. A. 1813
M. A. 1818

Christopher L. Darby was born 9 February 1793
he was a King’s Scholar at Westminster in 1806
matriculated Christ Church Oxford in 1811
B. A. 1815
M. A. 1826
Curate in Delgany from 1817 to 1820

Back in 1983 Canon Empey gave me information on Christopher Darby, but it dealt mainly with his time after coming to Kilkenny. He was ordained deacon in 1815, was Rector of Killenaule from 1822 to 1874 and Vicar of Kells from 1828 to 1874. So there was a definite gap. His time at Calary fills some of it.

Maybe John Nelson Darby’s being “induced” to be ordained and being advised by others “more advanced” than himself in the “christian world” and his wanting to “get round amongst the poor Catholics of Ireland” – as he himself said (*L 3:297*) – was not so much

Rev. Robert Daly's influence as it was his brother's? Especially as Christopher was responsible for looking after the Calary area his brother John Nelson would be curate of years later. Or Cleaver's? Or all in some way together?

Well, it seems that interconnections go much further than the Howard, Proby, Powers-court, etc. ones.

5. William Cleaver Letter

I'll be sending you some Lincoln's Inn material within the next few days (along with some insights on Darby's early attraction to the Roman Catholic Church). For now here are some thoughts on the William Cleaver letter.

I disagree with Timothy Stunt's remarks on Darby's uncertainty for so long after his accident. I cannot share his suspicion of Darby's remarks made in later life about the early years. Actually I have discovered an amazing consistency in these remarks – taken from various decades in his life. Darby himself explains the uncertainty Stunt writes about, namely his knowing or being convinced of certain things but out of fear and weakness not taking an open stand for them. If he was uncertain, it was not about his ideas, but rather about their effect when made public.

In the "Darby Collection" there is a letter to Darby probably from Rev. William Cleaver. In his book Stunt suggests a date of 1828 for this letter – as proof of Darby being active in the Church again after his accident.²¹ In it "Cleaver" is asking Darby to visit a family who want to conform. From all I know of Darby, I can't imagine him actively getting people to join the Established Church after the "insights" he gained while recuperating from his accident.

I have had the original letter in question in my possession. There is no year given, only April 9th. In pencil someone has added 1826. This year seems more correct; agrees more with the contents of the letter.

There is also the letter from "Captain Rock" dated 2 February 1829 and the farewell letter from Darby's parishioners dated 28 March 1829. These two seem to confirm the change in Darby *after* his accident. What would he otherwise be doing in County Clare, obviously working in an evangelistic way – that's why the threat – far away from the parish and people he was actually responsible for as a clergyman? Simple answer: He wasn't one any more. The parishioner letter fits in well here – not the letter from Cleaver!

If Darby left the Establishment some time after his accident and went to County Clare in February 1829 (to visit Synge or Vaughan relatives?), his getting a farewell letter in March from his parishioners makes sense. What doesn't make sense is getting a letter in April 1828 from Cleaver (from Delgany) asking him – obviously as a curate of the Established Church – to visit people every day for a week to help them conform! Stunt's dating of this letter must be wrong. I would place it before his riding accident.

★ ★ ★

21 Timothy C. F. Stunt, *From Awakening to Secession. Radical Evangelicals in Switzerland and Britain 1815–35*, Edinburgh (T & T Clark) 2000, p. 172, n. 87.

I now have information to confirm the year of the Cleaver letter to Darby in which he asks Darby to be of assistance in helping the Sheridan family conform. 1826 was too early, but it *was* before his riding accident! It took place in April of 1827.

The letter carries the date April 9th and Cleaver writes:

“There are two persons at Windgates, Sheridan & his wife, who have expressed themselves desirous to conform. I have only seen Sheridan once myself upon the subject. Mr. Ball however has seen him – and I have begged Manning to pay every attention to him in his power. But you would greatly oblige me, by having man & wife together – would it be too much to say – every day during the present week – I know not whether they would be prepared to make a public profession next Sunday – But what makes me feel the more anxious to have the benefit of your instruction for them is that I cannot but feel that the change which they are contemplating affords a choice opportunity for presenting Christianity to them in all its importance & power. I will be guided by you, whether or no to postpone their public profession beyond next Sunday.”

A historian from County Wicklow wrote to me yesterday and said:

“Sheridan, I can tell you that he did conform ... Thomas Sheridan of Windgates, Anne his wife and 2 children conformed on 22 April 1827 which was the Sunday after the one which they tried to get them to make the public profession (15 April).”

So, that is one small piece of the puzzle solved. What is interesting is the fact that Darby kept this particular letter a lifelong.

6. Early Views

Sun, 16 Jun 2003

I realise that you are familiar with most of the material below, but for the sake of completeness I have gone into detail. Please bear with me to the end.

There was so much going on in the field of prophecy and the future of the Jews before Darby became really interested in it. I would need real hard evidence first before I could accept the idea that Darby was influenced while at Trinity College through Richard Graves (or others). Even his time at Lincoln’s Inn is too early, regardless of whom he might have heard or read there. After his conversion and up till his deliverance while recuperating from his riding accident, questions on prophecy did not seem to have played any major role. He was *not* struggling with questions as to the future during this time. He was struggling with his own sinfulness and lack of assurance of salvation as well as the attractions of the Roman Church and the demands of tradition and antiquity.

Bellett and others were more involved or interested in prophetic questions. Bellett returned to Ireland from England (in 1828 and after Darby’s accident) and was all excited about what he had heard there. Darby, in his report of the incident, reacts to Bellett’s enthusiasm with: “I have it” (that is: without your influence).

Bellett’s version is different. He simply says, Darby was ready for such thoughts. Contrast Bellett’s reaction to Groves’s comments on meeting as Christians with this one. In Groves’s case it made a deep impression on Bellett, but not here. If Darby really gained

the insight into prophecy at the time he implies, why was Bellett not more impressed? Why does Bellett simply say: “Full of this subject as I then was, I found him quite prepared for it also, and his mind and soul had travelled rapidly in the direction which had thus been given to it.”²² He does *not* say: Darby had the answer. By “given to it” Bellett probably means through his previous letters to Darby, but he also states that they – he and Darby – had “never yet talked of” these things before though he had often visited him in “his mountain parish”. So prophecy really does not seem to have played a major role in Darby’s thoughts at the time. Everybody else was full of the subject, but he wasn’t!

From 1820/21 to 1827/28 Darby held “traditional” views on prophecy. During this time things were “happening” in the Christian world, but without apparent effect in his case. There was Lewis Way’s *Latter Rain* (1821); George Stanley Faber’s *Treatise on the Genius and Object of the Patriarchal, the Levitical, and the Christian, Dispensations* (1823; Darby had other volumes of Faber’s in his library); Henry Drummond’s *Dialogues on Prophecy* (1828/29); Edward Irving’s *Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty* (1827) and so on. The Jews, their restoration, a different future for them than the Church, coming judgement, irrecoverable ruin – all this was up in the air at the time.

Darby’s remark dated April 1827 in his notebook is of great interest:

“The Lord, whose I am, and whom I serve, give grace to the least and unworthiest of His servants to minister to His glory in all the wisdom of the righteousness of the saints, gathering fruit unto His glory, which He has sown, and to obtain a place in the many mansions of His Father’s house, through grace. Oh! for His appearing. Yet I know the love which causes Him to bear long.” (*N & C* 7:261)²³

Darby wrote that the time of his recuperation was one of greatest importance:

“I am daily more struck with the connection of the great principles on which my mind was exercised by and with God, when I found salvation and peace, and the questions agitated and agitating the world at the present day: the absolute, divine authority and certainty of the Word, as a divine link between us and God, if everything (church and world) went; personal assurance of salvation in a new condition by being in Christ; the church as His body; Christ coming to receive us to Himself; and collaterally with that, the setting up of a new earthly dispensation, from Isaiah xxxii. (more particularly the end); all this was when laid aside at E. P.’s in 1827; the house character of the assembly on earth (not the fact of the presence of the Spirit) was subsequently. It was a vague fact which received form in my mind long after, that there must be a wholly new order of things, if God was to have His way, and the craving of the heart after it I had felt long before” (*L* 1:344–345).

Important is his remark: “It was a vague fact which received form in my mind long after, that there must be a wholly new order of things, if God was to have His way”, because this actually applies to his view on the Lord’s Coming. If we compare the above with the text below:

22 *Interesting Reminiscences of the Early History of “Brethren”*, Weston-super-Mare (Scott) n. d., p. 3.

23 This early attitude is confirmed by him much later in *N & J* 99: “Before ever I knew about the Lord’s coming, I think I loved His appearing. I knew nothing about the doctrine, but the principle of loving His appearing was in my mind, though I could not define it. I do not talk now of the rapture, though it is most blessed to get that, too. What I delight in, is Christ’s coming and setting aside the whole thing I am in.”

“But I must, though without comment, direct attention to chapter 32 of the same prophet (Isaiah); which I do the rather, because it was in this the Lord was pleased, without man’s teaching [no help from Bellett here], first to open my eyes on this subject, that I might learn His will concerning it throughout – not by the first blessed truths stated in it, but the latter part, when there shall be a complete change in the dispensation, the wilderness becoming the fruitful field of God’s fruit and glory, and that which had been so, being counted a forest, at a time when the Lord’s judgments should come down, even great hail, upon this forest; and the city, even of pride, be utterly abased. That the Spirit’s pouring out upon the Jews, and their substitution for the Gentile church, become a forest, is here adverted to, is evident from the connection of the previous verses” (CW 7:108),

one could come to the conclusion that all these insights as to a “wholly new order of things” happened in 1827 (or early 1828) while he was at the Pennefathers. But Darby writes of the need for a wholly new order of things taking form in his mind “long after”. The “vague fact” of a change being necessary cannot at the same time be a “I have it” in the complete sense that implies.

Francis Newman came to know Darby at this important period in his spiritual life. Darby exerted a strong influence on him, moulded his thoughts and views. But Newman’s description of prophetic expectations – obviously Darby’s – doesn’t fit together with Darby’s claimed insights at this time. They are “classic” – not radically (pre-trib like) new:

“... if in five and thirty years the Lord descended from heaven, snatched up all his saints to meet him, and burned to ashes all the works of the earth?”²⁴

No pre-trib here. Darby’s remarks:

“the absolute, divine authority and certainty of the Word, as a divine link between us and God, if everything (church and world) went; personal assurance of salvation in a new condition by being in Christ; the church as His body; Christ coming to receive us to Himself”

clearly and accurately give what he was going through at the time, but:

“and collaterally with that, the setting up of a new earthly dispensation, from Isaiah xxxii. (more particularly the end); all this was when laid aside at E. P.’s in 1827”

must have been *after* his time at Pennefather’s. “Collaterally” is correct as it was a development or result of what went before – just the timing is off. Darby retained classic views much longer than some would like to believe. Benjamin Wills Newton wrote repeatedly of Darby writing he had come up with a solution *after* he had returned to Ireland from Oxford where he had met Newton. When Darby and Newton first met, they went through Matthew 24 together and could not make head nor tail of it. Darby’s earliest papers, also those dealing with prophecy (in which he also quotes from Irving), do not support any pre-trib rapture views.²⁵ For this reason I feel it is unwise to look for major or direct influences on Darby’s prophetic views before 1828. It seems as if all the excitement others were demonstrating as to prophetic subjects at the time by-passed him because he was

24 Francis William Newman, *Phases of Faith; or, Passages from the History of my Creed*, London (Chapman) 1850, p. 35.

25 Roy Huebner is very wrong in trying to prove such an early date for them.

pre-occupied. Of course he could have heard and read many things before his accident, he could have heard from Richard Graves' views through Joseph Singer (with whom he had contact after returning to Ireland in the 1820s), he could have read Irving (he certainly did later) and others, but they do not appear to have affected him much at the time. I still feel his final Church/Israel distinction and pre-trib rapture views were a reaction, a sought-for alternative, almost as if he tried to be "original".

Darby struggled with the claims of the Law for seven years, but he also struggled with the claims of the Church. His High Churchmanship is evidence of that. The demands he felt this placed on him almost drove him to despair, and he sought an outlet for his conscience through the way he practised his "religion" at the time. Was he not trying to drown the voice of his conscience through all his dedication and activity? He gave up Rome and fasting²⁶ while still at Lincoln's Inn because both did not provide what he needed – but he was

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- 26 Newman says that Darby did not fast on purpose (*Phases of Faith*, p. 28). So that period of asceticism in his life was over by the time Newman met him. But I feel that it was over, in its extreme form, long before that. It seems to have been connected with his Roman Catholic phase, or his attraction to that Church.

"I would guard this part of what I say. I still think fasting a useful thing in its place, if spiritually used. I still think there were sacramental ordinances instituted ... What saved me then, I think, from being a Romanist was the ninth and tenth of Hebrews. I could not for priesthood, which I believed in, practically give up our great High Priest and His work. What delivered me from this whole system was the truth. The word of God had its own, its divine, authority over my soul, and maintained it through grace. I was looking for the true church honestly but in the dark." (CW 18:156)

(The Word of God having "its own, its divine, authority over" his soul is not the same thing as years later when he could write of his 1827/28 experience to Prof. Tholuck:

"An accident happened which laid me aside for a time; my horse was frightened and had thrown me against a door-post. During my solitude conflicting thoughts increased; but much exercise of soul had the effect of causing the scriptures to gain complete ascendancy over me. I had always owned them to be the word of God." (L 3:298)

That he had always "owned them to be the Word of God" corresponds to their having their own, divine, authority over him, but not yet a "complete ascendancy". At the time of his deliverance from the attractions of Rome while at Lincoln's Inn, the Word was still somehow connected with the authority of the external Church. Note his remark "the Church ... yet had certain traditional power over me" in the quote below:

"I add that at the same period in which I was brought to liberty and to believe, with divinely given faith, in the presence of the Holy Spirit [1827/28], I passed through the deepest possible exercise as to the authority of the word: whether if the world and the Church (that is, as an external thing, for it yet had certain traditional power over me as such) disappeared and were annihilated, and the word of God alone remained as an invisible thread over the abyss, my soul would trust in it. After deep exercise of soul I was brought by grace to feel I could entirely. I never found it fail me since. I have often failed; but I never found it failed me." (CW 1:38)

"The principle of which you speak in the postscript of your letter, is monasticism, where that is sincere. I gave way to it at the beginning of my conversion. I said to myself, If I fast two days, three would be better, seven better still. Then that would not do to go on, but I pursued the system long enough. It led to nothing, except the discovery of one's own powerlessness." (L 2:429)

"I used once to fast in that way myself. On Wednesdays, and Fridays, and Saturdays I did not eat anything at all, but on the other days I did eat a little bread. I said, If I fast three days I can fast four, and if four, five, and if five, better six, and if six, better seven; and what then? I had better die. Thus there was something that made it impossible to go through with the thing. I went on with it, but God delivered me." (CW 27:91)

Though Darby writes "I pursued the system long enough", this does not imply years. His writing "I went on with it, but God delivered me" does not imply at his deliverance in 1827/28. For me it seems clear that Darby's attraction to Rome and his overdoing it in the area of asceticism were connected. It could be that the fasting lasted longer than his attraction to Rome, but his remark "I had better die" does not appear to me to justify thinking he continued this practice for years and even on to the time he was a clergyman. That he *did* practice a milder form of asceticism is clear from other remarks Darby makes and not the question here.

far from deliverance. The Church of England seems to just barely have convinced him: “I searched with earnest diligence into the evidences of apostolic succession in England, and just saved their validity for myself and my conscience” (CW 18:156).

His realising himself to be one in Christ brought real deliverance. But was not the resulting emphasis on the “spiritual” an escape hatch? Could not now all elements dealing with tradition and ritual – which had troubled him so – be ignored and conveniently pushed into the sphere of “earthly Israel”? Why were others who worked with Darby during his time as a clergyman not driven by the same despair as he? Why did they continue on? And that with obvious success and blessing? Was not Darby’s “solution” a very personal one? One he then applied to the Church at large? Not as a possibility, but as a demand!

Considering his own remarks that the appearing had been so important to him in the past, his remarks below are most harsh:

“He who awaits Christ’s appearing, as the time in which he is to go to be with Him, has denied the proper hope and proper relationship of the church with Christ. On this point there can be no compromise. Ignorance of privilege is one thing (it is our lot, all of us, in one shape or other), the denial of it another. When once we have seen that we are to appear with Christ, and that, consequently, our hope of Christ’s coming for us is not properly His appearing, all our habits of thought and our spiritual affections are changed.” (CW 7:154)

The “all our habits of thought and our spiritual affections are changed” applied very well to him personally, because it brought deliverance from demands which had almost crushed him. But what about others who never felt the same way? never had the same struggle? were actually happy in what they did?

Darby struggled many years to come to a conclusion which finally brought him peace. But then he went and made this a requirement of all other believers! This became the standard he used to judge the “true” spirituality and devotedness of other Christians!

7. Dates, etc.

Darby came to Oxford in 1830. He writes of this himself:

“Two years later (1830), I went to Cambridge and Oxford. In this latter place, some persons who are still engaged in the work, shared my convictions, and felt that the relation of the church to Christ ought to be that of a faithful spouse.” (L 3:301)

In *Interesting Reminiscences* he writes:

“It was subsequently after July, 1830, I went to Oxford (where Wigram was at Queen’s) and joined him and Jarrett, and thence went to Plymouth” (p. 14).

He is wrong here, it was *before* July that he went to Oxford.

From compiling Benjamin Wills Newton’s various references to his first and second meeting with Darby (on two consecutive days) from the Fry Manuscript Book we get the following:

Francis Newman came and told Newton Darby was in Oxford and he should come to meet him (Fry 235, 239, 240, 241). Newton went reluctantly and held himself in the back-

ground, but opened up towards Darby during the evening. Darby was a guest of the Vice Principal of St. Edmund's Hall (Fry 239), this was John Hill. Timothy Stunt refers to Hill meeting Darby in *From Awakening to Secession* (p. 218), mentioning Hill's diaries. I do not have access to these or copies of them, but the date Stunt gives for the diary reference in connection with Darby is 26 May to 6 June 1830. So Newton's meeting with Darby must have taken place about that time.

Because Newton was so impressed with Darby he asked him to visit him the next day, which he did (Fry 236, 240, 241, 245, 249). This was the second meeting. Newton had some important questions, which Darby answered to his satisfaction. (Would Darby preach the Gospel to sinners as sinners? What did he think about Matthew 24?) Apparently they looked at Matthew 24 together, but could not answer all open questions to their own satisfaction. (This is important for later.) Newton claimed that at that time they both agreed on 24:15 referring to the destruction of the temple under Titus. Darby left the next day for London.

Three weeks after that – so roughly somewhere between 15 May and 27 June – Newman came to Newton with a letter about spiritual gifts in Scotland (Fry 234, 236). Newton wrote to Darby (in London) and asked him to look into things, which he did, Darby's own statement in *CW* 6:284 being: "Yet he [the 'Irish clergyman'] went rather as deputed for others than for himself." According to Newton he stayed in Scotland for three weeks.

Newton's letter from Plymouth, not Oxford, to Wigram in Scotland asking him to look into things as well is dated 31 July 1830 (Fry 264). At the time Newton had not yet heard Darby's report of events there. All of this is a very rough dating and I do not know when Darby received Newton's request to go and if he left immediately, but given the above information, Darby's stay in Scotland would have been in July 1830.

As a further point of interest: The following seems to confirm that Darby returned to Oxford from his visit to Scotland:

"Darby had been most cautious, not giving us an opinion [about the happenings in Scotland]. But what decided him when on the spot was that when those who were inspired were expounding prophetic Scriptures, such as those in Isaiah, respecting Israel & Jerusalem they explained them as being prophetic of Christian Churches of this dispensation. That determined me too. I had just then been writing a 'Report' for the meeting of the Jews' Society." (Fry 237)

"He [Darby] came once into my room at Oxford as I was writing, & asked what it was. It was a report for the Jews' Society to be read at the forthcoming meeting. I was the Secretary. I asked Darby to help me by suggesting what I should say. He answered 'Say that we can take as our words & embody in our experiences all the Spiritual blessings and experiences of the Israelitish saints.' So you see he was right enough then; but he afterwards withdrew from that & said very differently." (Fry 208)

"As a result of these meetings in London a Jews Conversion Society was framed, and I was the Secretary of that at Oxford. Once while I was writing out the 'Report' Mr. Darby called, & asked what it was. I told him & gave it him to read, inviting any suggestion. He advised me to add that 'All the expressions of Israel's realized blessings then are equally now expressions of our confidence.' That shews clearly enough what his mind then was." (Fry 233)

“One of the very first things [John Henry] Newman published in Oxford said that as Zion & Israel had forfeited all their blessings both spiritual & temporal, they belong to the Gentile church both Roman & Anglican, Zion being cut off. This was just after, & in reply to, a Report that I had published of the Jews’ Society in Oxford which stated that we Gentile Christians forestall the spiritual blessings of Israel.” (Fry 210)

I am still trying to get information on Newton’s report and John Henry Newman’s publication. The following fits the thoughts Newton mentions in Newman’s case, but the date doesn’t match, viz. 20 and 27 May 1838.

[On Deut. 32:13; 33:13–15:] “These were present real blessings. What has He given *us*? – *nothing* in possession? *all* in promise? This, I say, is in itself not likely; it is not likely that He should so reverse His system, and make the Gospel inferior to the Law. But the knowledge of the great gift under consideration clears up this perplexity; for every passage in the Old Testament which speaks of the temporal blessings given by God to His ancient people, instead of conveying to us a painful sense of destitution, and exciting our jealousy, reminds us of our greater blessedness; for every passage which belongs to them is fulfilled now in a higher sense to us. We have no need to envy them. God did not take away their blessings, without giving us greater. The Law was not so much taken away, as the Gospel given. The Gospel supplanted the Law. The Law went out by the Gospel’s coming in. Only our blessings are not seen; *therefore* they are higher, *because* they are unseen. Higher blessings could not be visible. How could spiritual blessings be visible ones?”²⁷

When did Darby return to Ireland? Newton writes in Fry 239:

“Darby stayed in Ireland some time, three or four months and came back to Oxford just as Bulteel was leaving the Anglican Church.”

Bulteel’s sermon was preached on 6 February 1831. So he was back in Oxford by then at the latest. At the latest, because Darby’s letter to the *Christian Herald* in *CW* 2:42 is dated *Plymouth*, Jan. 13, 1831. So Darby would have been in Ireland roughly from September 1830 to January 1831.

There is a reference to Darby’s whereabouts in the Fry Manuscript that doesn’t square with the facts. Newton writes (Fry 239):

“After his [Darby’s] return to Ireland Mr. Synge was shot. Darby heard of it & was so concerned. He was so poor that we helped him through it.”

Edward Synge was shot at on Ash Wednesday, 16 February 1831. Darby was in England at this time, which “Darby heard of it” underlines, viz. he was apparently not there when it happened. Not having the originals I cannot say, but could “After his return *to* Ireland” maybe more correctly read “After his return *from* Ireland”?

Who does Newton mean when he writes “he was so poor”? Darby or Synge? Synge was apparently not poor, but wealthy.

27 John Henry Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, New Edition, London/Oxford/Cambridge (Rivingtons) 1868, vol. 7, Sermon 12: “The Gospel Feast”, p. 167.

“The character of Mr. Synge is so well known to every person as to render it needless for us to make more than a passing observation. In possession of ample income, his charities, we may say, were unbounded.”²⁸

Or does he mean “poor” in a non-material sense here? Is maybe helping Darby through the hard time of his “concern” for Synge the meaning? Edward Synge obviously meant a lot to Darby, and I am presently involved in trying to get more information about him. He has been described as having a “new creed of biblical fundamentalism ... equally distant from Protestant and Catholic”; “he expressed the opinion that being a member of any institutional church, whether Protestant or Catholic, was inconsequential in comparison to reading the Bible.” His religious views were apparently formed in 1823! My other research has shown that Edward Synge and Darby knew and worked with each other at least as early as February 1829. Did Synge influence Darby’s ecclesiastical views in any way?

There is also a conflict in Newton’s account regarding the time when he came to his insight that Matthew 24 was dealing with something yet future. He places this as *before* meeting with Darby in one account (namely after getting together with Newman while he was on a visit in Oxford in 1828, Fry 241) and in others *after* meeting Darby (Fry 242). The more correct time would appear to be *after* he met Darby, because when they did meet both were still unclear on Matthew 24.

“Darby came to my rooms at Oxford one day & we read Matt. 24 together, but neither of us understood it a bit. [This must have been the day after first meeting each other together with Francis Newman and John Hill. See Fry 239.] We couldn’t go right through it; & after some careful & attentive study I gave up the whole subject, laid it aside for 18 months as hopeless to expect any good. Then, 18 months after, I called on a friend ...” (Fry 242)

Given the rough date of Darby and Newton’s first meeting in May/June 1830 plus 18 months we have November or December 1831. Darby would have been in Ireland at that time. This would confirm Newton’s writing “when he [Darby] came back” in the quote below:

“When Darby came on the scene, in my first interview [which was their second meeting in Newton’s rooms and not at Newman’s place] I asked him Do you preach the Gospel to sinners as sinners & not merely as something for the elect? And his answer satisfied me. For some while after I had met De Burgh’s book on prophetic subjects, I lost sight of Darby: he was in Ireland. [Newton skips over the entire Scotland episode here which obviously took place shortly after Darby’s first visit to Oxford and before returning to Ireland.] But when he came back [possibly in January 1831?] I asked him about the Immediate Coming, and he would not decide either way. I argued with him that it couldn’t possibly be sinful to hope for the Lord’s return in the way that evidently Paul hoped for it – namely with intervening events. He wouldn’t decide.²⁹ Two years passed, [January 1833?] and he wrote from Ireland

28 *The Clare Journal*, Thursday, 17 February 1831.

29 Darby was later preoccupied in Oxford with writing his paper on the Reformation: “The Doctrine of the Church of England at the Time of the Reformation, of the Reformation itself, of Scripture, and of the Church of Rome, Briefly Compared with the Remarks of the Regius Professor of Divinity” (CW 3).

“What did Darby do? Why he went to our College library and looked up all the foolish and repulsive

saying that he had a scheme of interpretation now which would explain everything & bring all into harmony. And he would tell what it was when he came. When we met I inquired, and it was this elimination of all that could be considered Jewish. I warmly remonstrated.” (Fry 245–246)

“At last Darby wrote from Cork saying he had discovered a method of reconciling the whole dispute, and would tell us when he came. When he did, it turned out to be the ‘Jewish interpretation.’ The Gospel of Matthew was not teaching Church-Truth but Kingdom-Truth – & so on. He explained it to me & I said ‘Darby, if you admit that distinction you virtually give up Christianity.’ Well, they kept on at that until they worked out the result as we know it. The ‘Secret Rapture’ was bad enough but this was worse.” (Fry 238)

When asked when Darby wrote the Letter from Cork, Newton replied “1832 or 33” (Fry 239). Using my calculations above, 1833 seems to be the right date. William Kelly refers to Newton telling him that Darby had written a letter to him in which he mentioned Thomas Tweedy suggesting 2 Thess. 2:1–2 as a help in understanding the rapture (in the article “The Rapture of the Saints: Who Suggested it, or Rather on What Scripture?”³⁰). In *B. W. Newton and Dr. S. P. Tregelles* by George H. Fromow we read:³¹

“About the year 1833, an Anglican Missionary came from London to Dublin, and was admitted into this circle. He told them that, while the first fourteen verses of that chapter (Matt. 24) were Christian, the remaining portion was ‘Jewish,’ and that, although Jewish believers might be guided by that Scripture, after the Church had been taken up to meet the Lord, it had nothing to do with the Church in the present age. Said he, ‘We have found the key never discovered before.’”

Could this have been Tweedy? Would this not have been the “clue” Darby still needed to come to the conclusion of the “Jewish interpretation”? I would not be surprised if Darby at some time thought of a partial rapture – as appears in Margaret MacDonald. Could this be what the “secret rapture” meant? The help Darby received from Tweedy and thus resulting in his “Jewish interpretation” led to the now well-known “Brethren” view of the rapture.

As I referred to in a previous paper, Darby’s prophetic understanding in the early years is not clear at all! Of course many seek to read back into his early statements insights gained later (Darby does that himself as to the 1827/28 experience), but this is not honest research. Comments in the early papers are not clear and his real standpoint is hard to ascertain – maybe for the very simple reason that he himself did not yet have one he could defend with the conviction evidenced in his later years.

Reading Darby’s early papers and letters dealing with prophetic subjects, I get the strong impression much is still experimental. Almost as if he were jockeying for a position. Of course there are points where he is firm and things he sees as mistakes or errors in other

things that the Reformers had said in favour of Calvinism. And when the Laudian controversy came, they used it. Dr. Burton wrote to me kindly asking if I could tell him who wrote it. I said yes, it was an Irish clergyman who was not a member of the University.” (Fry 240)

30 *The Bible Treasury*, N. S. 4 (1902/03), pp. 314–318.

31 George H. Fromow, *B. W. Newton and Dr. S. P. Tregelles: Teachers of the Faith and the Future*, London (Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony) 1969, p. 41.

expositors, but it doesn't seem that he has a complete concept. There are loose points here and there. This is not in any sense negative when one considers that it was still a phase of development and consolidation, but this fact must be honestly recognised by such who say Darby's prophetic scheme came into existence full-blown. I feel that Darby did have definite views on some particular aspects of prophecy, but there was much he was unsure of. His interaction with others, often in way of critique, helped define his own position – and that took time!

In his well-known letter to James McAllister J. G. Bellett writes:

“In the year 1834 many more were added, and in that year J. N. D. being in Dublin, it was a question with him whether he should come and help us at Aungier Street as God might give him grace, or preach as he had been invited to do at the Asylum in Lessor Street. He was all but detached from the Church of England. He visited different places either that year or the next, among them Oxford, Plymouth, Cork and Limerick, ministering wherever he might the truth that God had given him from His word; and I doubt not, from what I remember, that he found in all these places evidences of the same independent work of the Spirit of God in the hearts and consciences of the saints. In Limerick and Cork he occasionally preached in the pulpits of the Established Church.”

I really don't always want to be picking on poor Bellett, but maybe his 1834 year is off here – as he usually is by a year. I have been able to find out what “the Asylum in Lessor Street” was,³² and maybe some records could be obtained from there to help determine

32 Timothy Stunt sometime back asked about some items in Bellett's letter to McAllister regarding Darby's invitation to preach at the Asylum in Lessor Street. Well, Timothy is probably right in his assumption that it should be Leeson Street. I could find no Lemon or Lessor Street. In C. T. M'Cready, *Dublin Street Names, Dated and Explained*, Dublin (Hodges, Figgis, and Co.) 1892, there is the following:

“Leeson's-walk. 1756. -str. 1765. -yd. 1766. -pk. 1860. From Joseph *Leeson* (cr. Earl of Milltown, 1763), who in 1735 leased part of his garden, near S. Stephen's-green. [Haliday, 193.] In 1756, the south side of S. Stephen's-green, q. v., is called Leeson's-walk. In 1728, Leeson-str. lr. is strangely called (probably by a mis-print) Suesy-str. in Brooking's map.” (p. 57)

Fitzwilliam Street and Pembroke Street run parallel to each other from (on a map) top right to down left into Leeson Street (south of Fitzwilliam Square), which runs from top left to down right.

In G. N. Wright, *An Historical Guide to the City of Dublin*, London (Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy) ²1825, I have found:

“THE MAGDALEN ASYLUM – is a brick building in Leeson-street, near Stephen's Green: this institution, the first of the kind in Dublin, was founded by Lady Arabella Denny, and was opened June 11, 1766. Its objects are the protection and subsequent reformation of deserted females, who having at first departed from the paths of virtue, have become disgusted with vice, and seek the means of qualifying themselves once more to associate with moral society.

Its means of support are, the interest of 2,000*l.* raised originally by voluntary subscriptions, the collection of the annual charity-sermon, and the Sunday collections of the chapel. The produce of the penitents' labour is partly bestowed upon them, as an incentive to industry, and a part is reserved for donations upon their being restored to moral habits, and permitted to quit the asylum.

The chapel is capable of containing upwards of 500 persons, and is always crowded by the most respectable classes; consequently, the collections are considerable, probably amounting to 500*l.* per annum. Among other causes this is to be attributed to the eloquence and popularity of the preachers.” (p. 119)

This is very probably the street, Leeson, and the Asylum.

the exact year. Of course Darby would have been in Cork many times. Could he not have met Tweedy in Dublin at the time Bellett mentions and then gone to Cork and written to Newton about his new insights from there?

8. Joseph Wolff

I have now a copy of *Joseph Wolff: His Romantic Life and Travels* by H. P. Palmer, London (Heath Cranton) 1935.

“He reached Dublin harbour in May 1826 ... When Wolff was safely landed in Dublin, he soon found himself the guest of eminent people, as we are told that, after speaking at the Rotunda, ‘he spent some days with Lord Roden and the Archbishop of Tuam.’ ... After Wolff had spent some weeks in Dublin, his activities were cut short by an invitation from Henry Drummond and Edward Irving, the founder of the ‘Catholic and Apostolic Church,’ to come to London.” (pp. 142–144)

Darby was of course a curate in Calary at this time. He knew the Rotunda meeting place (at the very least because of the Bible Society and Rev. Robert Daly) and Lord Roden (Jocelyn – related to the Wingfield/Powerscourt family) and Archbishop Trench. Did Darby meet Wolff at this time? Possibly. Given the circumstances and people involved I’d be quite inclined to think so. Was he given a further nudge as to his own prophetic views at the time? Madden in *Memoir of the Late Right Rev. Robert Daly* writes:

“An interesting account is given in the Memoir of the Rev. Edward Irving of some meetings which were held in the year 1826, at Albury, the seat of Henry Drummond, Esq.

Lady Powerscourt was present at these meetings, as appears from a letter to Mr. Daly, of which the following is an extract: – ‘I am going to the prophets’ meeting at Mr. Drummond’s.’” (p. 150)

It is also very probable that Lady Powerscourt met Wolff while he was in Dublin as well. That not everybody was excited about Wolff’s subject matter is clear from the Wolff biography:

‘1834 ... he travelled in Great Britain and Ireland on behalf of the London Society in company with its secretary. Never was there a more ill-matched pair. Wolff was always determined to speak about the Millennium and the restoration of the Jews, while the secretary maintained that he should devote his attention to the doctrine of justification by faith. The ladies at Carlisle who supported the Society sent a request to Wolff through the secretary that he should speak on the latter subject only. Wolff proved adamant. ‘If I come,’ he said, ‘I shall want to convert them to my views, not that they should convert me to theirs.’” (p. 192)

The search continues.

9. Darby and the Roman Catholic Church

Discovering that Darby’s and John Henry Newman’s time at Lincoln’s Inn overlapped was a surprise. If they ever met during that time cannot – as of yet – be proven. Nev-

ertheless Newman is interesting as a comparison. He would struggle with the attractions of the Roman Church later than Darby, and later Darby would comment on that in his “Analysis of Dr. Newman’s *Apologia pro Vita Sua*: with a Glance at the History of Popes, Councils, and the Church” in *Collected Writings* 18. We can find much about what Darby himself went through in the “Analysis”.

Darby writes:

“I know pretty well, in theory and practice, what Romanism is” (CW 18:145).

“I pity Dr. Newman; I feel his difficulties; I have felt them myself; I do not judge him ... In many things I agree; many of his thoughts I have gone over in my own mind.” (CW 18:158)

Darby said that he had always believed in God, but that it was the beauty in creation that gave him a feeling of responsibility towards Him (L 2:466). This is of interest because Darby accuses Newman of being influenced by “sense perception”:

“The secret of the course of Dr. Newman’s mind is this – it is sensuous;* and so is Romanism.

* No reader must confound this with sensual.” (CW 18:145)

“Romanism ... is a sensuous religion, fills the imagination with gorgeous ceremonies, noble buildings, fine music, stately processions. It feeds it with legends and the poetry of antiquity; but it gives no holy peace to the conscience – ease it may, but not peace” (CW 18:152).

“His [Newman’s] imagination was at work on new scenes naturally enough. ‘The sight of so many great places, venerable shrines, and noble churches, much impressed my imagination,’ he tells us. He heard singing in a country church at six o’clock, and his heart thus also was touched. Now, a religious congregation singing, when heard from without, has this effect – touches deeply the religious imagination where it exists. It could not have been anything really spiritual in his mind; for he did not know what they were singing” (CW 18:177).

Darby in his Greek Interlinear New Testament mentions coming to a saving faith in Christ either in June or July of 1820 or 1821. Why can he roughly pin-point it? In any case, it was during his time at Lincoln’s Inn. His upbringing at home did not bring him to a saving faith. His time at Westminster School (which involved quite a bit of occupation with Scripture – as my Westminster-related research seems to indicate) did not bring him to that point, nor his time at Trinity College.

Darby wrote about Newman:

“The circle of university affections is most powerful, formed as they are, just when the heart is fresh and growing to manhood and amiable; and the reference to them is one of the attractive points of Dr. Newman’s book” (CW 18:145).

If Darby can make this observation, it is probably due to his having experienced it himself. But who belonged to his own “circle of university affections”?

Darby’s entire upbringing was strongly anti-Catholic. (His relatives on his mother’s side were Unitarians, but if they had any influence has not yet been determined.) He was taught and trained to be anti-Catholic. And yet he became attracted to Rome in this

strongly anti-Catholic setting after his conversion – at a time when being Catholic was not popular. The Oxford Movement was years away.³³

Where did this attraction come from? Who was involved? It is difficult for me to believe it was only through books and literature. William Henry Darby was Catholic for a time, but the circumstances involved have eluded me so far. (He fluctuated a bit: Church of England, Roman Catholic, Plymouth Brother and finally Church of Ireland.) John Nelson writes of trying to persuade William of Rome's errors after he himself had come free of Catholic attractions. He does not mention William as a previous influence (which might have been possible nevertheless, I just don't have evidence for it). Who did Darby know and converse with in London? Newton describes traveling to London with Darby many years later and making visits. It would be of great interest to know who these people were. Family? Friends from his Lincoln's Inn time?

Darby was converted, but where should he go? Should he stick with the Church he had been baptized into? Apparently this was *not* an obvious conclusion for him to come to:

“From the first Oxford influences he [Newman] came under, he had a horror of Protestantism. I understand that horror. How earnestly, when I was in the state I have referred to elsewhere in these pages, I should have disowned, and did disown, that name! I looked for the church. Not having peace in my soul, nor knowing yet where peace is, I too, governed by a morbid imagination, thought much of Rome, and its professed sanctity, and catholicity, and antiquity – not of the possession of divine truth and of Christ myself. Protestantism met none of these feelings, and I was rather a bore to my clergyman by acting on the rubrics. I looked out for something more like reverend antiquity. I was really much in Dr. Newman's state of mind. But such a feeling as to Protestantism is shallow, and little founded on fact.” (CW 18:145–146)³⁴

“I turn more immediately to Dr. Newman's book. Let me be forgiven speaking for a moment of myself, as what I say has a bearing on these points. I know the system. I knew it and walked in it years before Dr. Newman (as I learn from this book) thought on the subject; and when Dr. Pusey was not heard of. I fasted in Lent so as to be weak in body at the end of it; ate no meat on week days – nothing till evening on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, then a little bread or nothing; observed strictly the weekly fasts, too. I went to my clergyman always if I wished to take the sacrament, that he might judge of the matter. I held apostolic succession fully, and the channels of grace to be there only. I held thus Luther and Calvin and their followers to be outside. I was not their judge, but I left them to the uncovenanted mercies of God. I searched with earnest diligence into the evidences of apostolic succession in England, and just saved their validity for myself and my conscience. The union of church and state I held to be Babylonish, that the church ought to govern itself, and that she was in bondage but was the church.” (CW 18:156)

33 “Yet opposition to the church of Rome was part of the theology of the church of England divines, and none in office in the church of England could be otherwise than in hostility to the church of Rome” (CW 18:238).

34 Darby's remark that “The aristocratic mind tends to popery; the popular to infidelity. Ecclesiastical authorities are powerless against the former; they are the chief abettors of the latter” (CW 18:152) is of interest as regards himself. Though not of the aristocracy, his family did belong to the gentry.

The above is well known and has often been quoted. Who the clergyman is Darby “always” went to depends on the Church he attended. There are four possible Churches, and I have been able to find out who was officiating there at each one at the time in question (1819–1822), but no references to Darby have turned up (yet).

The Church of England never really sat easy with Darby – even if he became known as a High Churchman and spoke of his love for it. (Dissent might have appealed to him at one time, but he later abhorred it.) He did not become ordained because he felt he had to in the sense of a calling. He followed the advice of others and not an inner conviction.

Darby accused Newman of being influenced by too many wrong things, among them “antiquity”, but he himself had viewed that as an important criterion.

A definite Catholic influence on Darby at this time was Ignatius. He writes:

“And why does he [Newman] take Ignatius? And why do all who love the system Dr. N. has followed? Why did I myself delight in it, found my thoughts on him? Because he already liked and had adopted the system found in his published writings, not from any real, ascertained authority in Ignatius.” (CW 18:182)

Darby defends his initial attraction to Rome with:

“Being disposed towards Rome is nothing uncommon or surprising; but souls are kept, often almost unconsciously, by some truth which guards them. I was, especially by Hebrews 9 and 10.” (CW 18:185)

Hebrews 9 and 10 is something he cites several times as leading him away from Rome:

“What saved me then, I think, from being a Romanist was the ninth and tenth of Hebrews. I could not for priesthood, which I believed in, practically give up our great High Priest and His work. What delivered me from this whole system was the truth. The word of God had its own, its divine, authority over my soul, and maintained it through grace. I was looking for the true church honestly but in the dark. I believe in the church now, but I know it in its reality only as the living body of Christ united to Him by the Holy Ghost.” (CW 18:156–157)

Darby’s “Familiar Conversations on Romanism – First Conversation: Faith is in God and His Word, not in the Church” in *Collected Writings* 18 very probably reflects much of Darby’s own experience. For this reason I quote from it at length:

*N**. Well, James, I hear you have been visited by some Roman Catholics, and are in some perplexity.

James. I have, and they spoke very fair; and I cannot deny that I do not see clear. Christ surely left a church on earth, and some authority to guide us poor people, and instruct us in the right way. It is a great comfort to feel assured that one is of the true church that Christ founded. And, after I had been reflecting awhile on what they said, I began to feel that I have got no proof that the Bible is the word of God.

*N**. And did you ever doubt it before, James?

James. No, I cannot say I did; I have always believed it to be the word of God; and, though I am afraid I have sadly neglected it many a year ... But, since I have got more serious and anxious in my mind, I have found the Bible bring trouble into my conscience. I hardly know where I am with God – it condemns me: I see there is

goodness and wonderful grace in Jesus; but then I have no peace in myself, and now I see there is a deal I do not understand, and I should like to know the bottom of it.

Bill M. (my neighbour, who has turned Catholic), says he has never been so happy in his life, his soul never got rest till now. He never thought much about religion, it is true, ... but he says he knows some who never get a minute's rest in their souls, that were always seeking it, till they found it in the true church. It was he that asked me how I knew it was the Bible; and if the true church had not kept the Bible and given it, who could say it was the word of God? and how did I, an ignorant man, know it was the word of God, as I called it? And that has dashed me uncommonly, because, though I never doubted it a moment before, and saw in infidels that there was no good nor godliness in their ways, yet I felt I had no proof to give, and what am I to do? I know it speaks of a church that Christ would build on the rock, and I think if that would give me certainty it would be a great rest to me." (CW 18: 276–277)

"N*. *The word of God, James, carries its own authority in the heart of him in whom it has wrought.* And, mark this, if it has not wrought in a man's heart, though all the churches in the world should accredit him, that man is lost. If they believe it to be the word of God, why not take it and see what it says? They dare not: it is too plain, it condemns their whole system. For instance, you know that it is said, 'Where remission of these (sins and iniquities) is, there is no more offering for sin' (Heb. 10:13). Now their whole system depends upon there being still offerings for sin. The very way a Roman Catholic is described is – *he goes to Mass*. Now the Mass is an offering for the sins of the living and the dead. And when the word says there is no more offering for sin, and the most important distinctive point in their doctrine, and the keystone of the system they belong to, is, that there *is still an offering for sin*, it is easy to understand why they try to shake your confidence in the word, or to make you think that you cannot understand it. It is because it *is* very plain indeed, for the poorest, that they do not like it." (CW 18:278–279)

"It is said (Heb. 9:25), 'Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place with blood of others, for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And, as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.' Mark the words 'ONCE' and 'bear the sins.' Does Christ bear sins in the Roman Catholic Mass? If not, it is a new way of getting forgiveness, which sets aside the unspeakably gracious but heart-bowing way in which God has wrought salvation out for us, namely, the dreadful but infinitely precious *sufferings* of His own Son. If Christ does suffer in the Mass, He is not glorified at the right hand of God. True Christianity and the doctrine of the Mass cannot go together. And the more you examine chapters 9 and 10 of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the more you will see how the truth of God is set aside by the Mass. For the apostle is shewing the value of Christ's offering *because it was only once*, in contrast with the Jewish offerings which were repeated. Those offerings, he says, were a remembrance of sins, brought them to mind; the sins were still there, or why would the offerings for sin not have ceased to be offered?" (CW 18:279–280)

"And note, this repetition of it, if I admit it, denies the lasting, perfect, efficacy of the offering He Himself made. For if it be lasting and perfect, why repeat it? My

objection to the Roman Catholic system on this head is that it is built on a pretended offering which Christ does not offer, in which no blood is shed, in which Christ does not suffer, in which Christ does not bear sins, which is therefore utterly worthless; but which, by the pretension to offer Christ *again*, denies the abiding efficacy of Christ's one real offering of Himself. What a fraud of Satan's, to be sure, it is!" (CW 18:280–281)

"N* ... You see what forgiveness is, but you have yet to learn more fully what divine righteousness is – what it is to be made the righteousness of God in Christ. You will find that there is a fulness in the deliverance of which God has made you partaker, of which you are hardly yet quite aware. You see that there is a perfect forgiveness, and that the blood of Christ has blotted out all the wretched sinful fruits of your old nature; that He has borne your sins and died for you as a sinner, and that all that you are as such is done away by His death, in God's sight; for sin in the flesh has been condemned in the sacrifice He has made for sin, as well as sins atoned for. But, besides that, Christ is risen, and has taken a new place as an accepted Man, who as such is God the Father's delight, and this is your place before God. You are accepted in Him; as well as the sins of your old man, and all its guilt, put away. He has been raised again for our justification.

And this connects itself, you see, with a new life in us, the power of which has been displayed in His resurrection. It was divine power, no doubt, which was displayed in that, but in the way of the energy of life, and that life is made ours in Christ. We are quickened together with Him, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Him. We are made the righteousness of God in Him." (CW 18:290–291)

Of course the above was written long after Darby's own experiences in London and after his riding accident. It is written with the insight of later years, but I feel we can still find traces of what he went through in it. His coming free of Rome's attraction was one thing; the Word of God gaining "complete ascendancy" over him was another and took place in connection with his riding accident years later.

A possible Catholic influence on Darby could have been the Roman Catholic barrister Charles Butler (1750–1832) – whom Samuel R. Maitland apparently greatly admired. Below is information I was sent in connection with my inquiries regarding him:

"Butler, who was half-French (and fully conversant with Continental Catholic thought), was lay Secretary of the Catholic Committee in England and Wales from 1786 until the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829. In 1831, shortly before his death, he was made a King's Counsel (an office which had been denied him by law until the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act) and a bencher of Lincoln's Inn, to which he had been admitted in 1775. For most of his career he practised as a conveyancer (that being the highest legal to which he could aspire as a Catholic) and was reckoned to be the finest such practitioner for much of his career. Butler was also steeped in the Scriptures and published on the subject. One of his kinsmen was Charles Plowden (1743–1821), Provincial Superior of the English Jesuits from 1817 to 1821. Though Plowden was based at the Jesuits' headquarters at Stonyhurst College in Lancashire, he was regularly in London, visiting Fr Edward Scott, SJ (1776–1836), the London agent of Stonyhurst College from 1817 to 1832, and Plowden could well have met Darby on a visit to Butler. Certainly, Darby

seems to have been heavily influenced by Jesuit literature on pre-trib rapture and these influences could have come via Butler and Plowden and/or Scott.”³⁵

Darby writes in CW 18:185:

“There was no motive for [Newman] keeping aloof from Rome, but the pope’s being Antichrist; which for my part, however anti-Christian he may be, I do not believe.”

Since when did Darby *not* believe that the Pope was Antichrist? It was a common belief among Protestants at the time.

The Catholic influence may go further than suspected. Who did Darby converse with during his Catholic phase? How much teaching did he hear? These questions become important for the development of Darby’s prophetic views later. There are very many Catholic (Jesuit) elements involved in it. Darby’s view is not Ribera’s, nor Bellarmine’s, or Lacunza’s, but there are just too many corresponding elements when compared with each other that “chance” does not seem to be an honest explanation.

All the “elements” were there in the 1820s and 1830s: the concept of ruin, of dispensations, of an Israel/Church distinction, of a rapture (even though only a 45-day gap, but nevertheless, a gap), the days as days and not years in Daniel – and so on. It was all there. Darby just brought it all together in a way that seemed to be right.

I do not believe that Darby took over a Catholic prophetic scheme, but I do believe he *did* get impulses from them and very many other sources: Wolff, Irving, MacDonald, Tweedy and so on. At some point everything came together and the individual contributions resulted in a “whole”. To look for a single influence on the formation of Darby’s views or a single event is wrong. I am convinced that they are the result of very many different ones over a longer period of time. I plan to go into these in depth elsewhere.

Darby was careful, this for maybe many reasons. But when dealing with Newman he often comes back to the point of honesty:

“Now, on so solemn a subject as what is the true religion, to act week after week on others without knowing the true religion oneself, I call moral levity of the worst kind. That he [Newman] was not at rest he tells us ... Now, I do think an earnest, serious, conscientious man would not have done this; a modest man would not, he would have waited till he saw what the truth was himself, till he was at the end of his journey. And why did he go on when he knew he had not come to any settled conclusion? Because he had immense confidence in himself. He never was led to distrust his own convictions (that is, himself – his own mind), though they were changing every day; he was on his ‘journey.’ This is what I call moral levity and self-confidence.” (CW 18:170)

“Dr. Newman scarcely even excuses himself here; if he does, it is only for guilt in his vain confidence, so far as he had strong persuasions in 1832, which he has since given up. I do not blame him for giving up what he thought wrong. I blame him for lightly pretending to reform and rebuild the Anglican body, that is, to form a church as it should be, when he had not searched the grounds on which he did it; when he knew he was not at rest but on journey, as he has told us, and doing it in a free and

35 Someone else Darby may have known was Mark Aloysius Tierny. He was ordained a priest in 1818 and became associated with Lincoln’s Inns Fields in 1819.

easy way, and, I must say, with some effrontery, telling us that he had ‘a lounging, free and easy way’ in the matter. Was this God-fearing?” (CW 18:182–183)

I think the above may be helpful to understand why Darby took so long to come out publicly with his views. He took longer to reach his conclusions because he was still “on journey”, but once reached, he seems to have regarded them as nigh to “infallible”. The seed may have been sown at the time of his riding accident, but it required a lot of “fertilising” and “watering” over a period of several years before the prophetic views he is credited for came out in full bloom. Many people contributed to this at different times and in different ways.

Darby knew and stood in contact with many persons who were prominent because of their involvement with the study of prophecy. He had connections to people involved with the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews. Joseph Wolff was in London while Darby was at Lincoln’s Inn. Darby may have met him in Dublin in 1826 (see my previous paper). Where did Wolff get his views on prophecy from? (He had initially been Roman Catholic.) Darby knew Charles Simeon personally and visited him (CW 10:133). (Who did he visit in Cambridge when he relates that he went to Cambridge and Oxford in 1830?) All the important books, all the important people, were accessible to Darby.

Darby’s library sold at auction after his death is of great interest. Listed in it is William Cave’s *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria* in 2 volumes (edition from 1740–1743). Cave wrote of the ruin of the Church. Darby also had Cardinal Bellarmine’s *Disputationes de Controversiis* in 4 volumes (edition from 1721). Bellarmine defended the futurist view of Ribera. (Darby refers to Bellarmine repeatedly in the *Collected Writings*.)

Actually what interests me more are the titles *not* offered for sale. Darby’s heirs were allowed to do with them as they saw fit. Some titles Darby mentions having in his *Letters* and *Collected Writings* are not to be found in the list. Darby quoted from Lacunza/Irving’s work – so he must have had it, but it is not in the auction list.

I have read somewhere that original letters were burned after Darby’s death because they could be used to harm the correspondents in some way. Did this happen to some of Darby’s books? Did they disappear into private libraries?

I feel that in some points what we don’t know is more important than the information we have.

10. Vaughan Family

My research is continuing and I’m concentrating on Joseph Wolff – Charlotte Elizabeth Tonna – Hugh McNeile connections.

This has recently been sidetracked by some very helpful and useful information from a most kind historian in the States. He has sent me a large amount of material on the Vaughan side of Darby’s family – with reference to the Darby family in London! At long last I know why I couldn’t find John Darby and Anne Vaughan’s marriage papers – they were married in America in 1784! (Anne Vaughan, d. 1847, was John Nelson Darby’s mother.) This squares with other information I had, that John Darby had been in America.

11. Edward Hardman and the “Seven Churches”

That Darby was well-read is well-known. That he was also well-acquainted with papers dealing with prophecy in his time is evidenced by the following extracts from his *Collected Writings*:

Reflections upon the Prophetic Inquiry and the Views Advanced in it (Dublin 1829)

“It appears to me that, on the subject of prophecy (divisions on which now shame godliness), both those who hold and those who strenuously oppose views, which, for convenience’ sake, we may call Millenarian, are deeply culpable. *Many have written on one side and the other ignorant of each other’s views*” (CW 2:1).

“There are some observations I would make on these subjects, being convinced of the extreme precipitancy in which *many have written upon them*” (CW 2:2).

“I confess I think *the modern writers on prophecy* justly chargeable with following their own thoughts hastily, and far too much removed from the control of Scripture” (CW 2:4).

“The observations on the ‘*resurrection from among the dead,*’ published in the *Christian Examiner* (sound in criticism, and temperate in spirit, and calculated to be useful) point out an instance of the extreme carelessness with which bold statements are made by writers on these subjects: but having been there discussed, I omit it here.

There is an error of another kind, small in importance, perhaps, because of obvious correction, but illustrative of the way in which men inconsiderately make statements, when they fall in with their system, in the face of the simplest testimony of Scripture itself. In the third and fourth sermons on Daniel’s vision of the four beasts and of the Son of man, *by Mr. Irving*, Zephaniah is stated to have prophesied before the carrying away of Israel captive; and it is assumed that they carried the book of that prophet to Nineveh, whereby Nineveh would know of its threatened judgments.” (CW 2:6)

“Again, in the translator’s preliminary discourse to *Ben-Ezra*, we have (p. 55), ‘And to this effect I understand Rom. 8:1, ‘There is no condemnation’ (*krisis*, i. e. judgment),’ etc. The word is *katakrima* without a single various reading in Wetstein or Griesbach ...

I shall quote but one concentrating sentence – but the observations will apply to the whole spirit shewn from *p. 55–65 of this preface* ... I am not questioning here, be it remembered, the hope of Christ’s coming, but *Mr. Irving’s statements* respecting death ... But it is the proper distinction of Christianity to have neutralised that power of death which *Mr. Irving is preaching*; ‘for the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law’; but both are dead to the believer in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour ... As to the promise, *Mr. Irving is writing* against his own opinions; for, if he hold that Christ will come again, he believes that He will bring His saints with Him, so that they which are alive and remain have no preference.” (CW 2:7–8)

“But, perhaps, we are passing our subject. I shall therefore next take notice, merely with this view, of a commonly current work, ‘*The Cry from the Desert,*’ in the hope

that it may lead to a more accurate examination of Scripture itself, before any of the writings of men upon this subject are adopted or rejected.” (CW 2:10)

“One subject yet remains on which I shall shortly touch. In a deeply interesting and, I think, profitable and *timely sermon of Mr. Irving’s*, I found the following passage on false accusers. After stating that it meant the spirit of accusation generally, *he says, in the ‘Last Days,’* p. 204, ‘It may therefore be laid down as a general principle of doctrine, that as the law of Christian life is love, so the law of Christian life when love is rejected or maltreated is forbearance, forgiveness, blessing, and intercession with God. As the office of the Christian Church on earth, is to preach, and to minister the grace of God unto all men; so also is it her office to make continual intercession before God for those who reject His offered grace, and trample under foot the blood of His covenant. And, of these two functions, the ministry of free grace, and the ministry of intercession for free grace rejected, if I were asked which is the more important, I would answer they are equally important to the integrity of love and the demonstration of divine grace; but of the two, that which is the highest and noblest exercise of love is surely intercession for him who hath spurned our love.’

What shall we say after this, when we consider their own writings? They have come forward to the bar of public opinion (see *‘False Accuser,’* pp. 208–10), and avowedly descended to fight their accusers on their own ground by public accusation. I feel unwillingly entirely to detail here the language and statements of the article on the *Theology of the Periodical Journals*. I think *Mr. Malan* right, and I think *Mr. Erskine* (though in many respects useful, and that extensively) is entirely wrong, if judged properly by Scripture, and wrong for pursuing his own thoughts without just subjection to Scripture, conceiving them new, when many, very many, have held them faithfully without mistake ... *Mr. Erskine*, they say, wishes to state this highly important fact, namely, that by the incarnation of the second Person of the Trinity, the whole creation (i. e., limiting the word ‘creation’ to this planet and the beings who inhabit it) is become beneficially interested in the work of Christ. This is certainly a very obscure and unintelligible proposition, and not *Erskine’s*, nor representing his views. This fact, they say, he expresses by saying, ‘that the world is pardoned by the incarnation of Christ.’ But the proposition attributed to *Mr. Erskine*, whencesoever drawn, is not so expressed by him. He says that ‘All are pardoned – believers are a little flock.’ If he had said the world was pardoned (though I should have thought it an error) properly understood, I could have made an allowance for obscurity of expression; but he says all, i. e. all *men*, are pardoned; and on this the whole argument of the *Morning Watch* depends. The Reviewer was occupied with his own views, but there is not the slightest ground in *Mr. Erskine’s book* for the position he takes. Righteousness is a scriptural as well as conventional term: I do not recollect that *Mr. Erskine* ever touches upon this, or uses the word. Scripture does; and this renders his whole view defective, however excellent as an individual.

But the *Morning Watch*, prepossessed with its own views, and willing to have *Mr. Erskine* as a client or ally, has wholly passed by the whole question raised on his book, and not stated his assertions truly but as partisans, and stands itself on a level with the worst conduct of those it accuses. They themselves shall be witnesses.” (CW 2:19–21)

“Another subject is the restoration of the Jews to their own land. The calm and judicious *Lowth*, in a day when nothing but the force of Scripture influenced him, could not withhold assent from the directness of the testimonies to this.” (CW 2:26)

On “Days” Signifying “Years” in Prophetic Language (1830)

“To the Editor of the *Christian Herald*.

SIR, – The following remarks on the statements of *Mr Maitland*, in the *Morning Watch*, and of *R. D.*, in the *Christian Examiner*, were written in short intervals of constant occupation.” (CW 2:32)

“I had read both of *Mr. M.’s pamphlets or Inquiries*. It is very possible my paper (in the *Christian Herald*) does not take adequate notice of them ...

Plymouth, Jan. 13, 1831.” (CW 2:42)

The above are early dates: 1829, 1830 and 1831. The following letter from 1833 is of great interest:

“VERY DEAR BROTHER [James L. Harris], ...

Hardman,³⁶ a dear brother in the Lord, a clergyman, was here lately, and he was speaking at large on the Seven Churches. I was not here, but this ground I hear he took. *Sardis, the Reformation*, on which, ‘if therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know,’ etc. *Philadelphia, the separation of little bodies of believers* with a little strength (there is comfort in that), but the Lord on their side, ‘I will keep them from,’ etc. ‘Behold I come quickly, hold fast that which thou hast,’ etc. And then *the church left in its Laodicean state*, its state generally now, at which He stands at the door and knocks – there being still some remaining perhaps amongst them, but He is at the door. What do you say to this? The result to the Laodicean church is to be spued out of His mouth. It is an important consideration in the present state of things. It commends itself morally to one’s mind ...

Yours most affectionately in the Lord.

I shall be rejoiced to stay awhile with you, when it pleases God to bring me back to Plymouth. I should probably go by London.

Limerick [received], August 19th, 1833.” (L 1:19, 22–23, 24)

The above is intriguing because it is so late. If Darby was so well-acquainted with what was being written, why is the above referred to as if it were an interesting new insight?

1833 is a late date for Darby to notice it because this teaching had appeared in 1830! I quote from Froom’s *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*:³⁷

“The launching of *The Christian Herald* in 1830, in the very heart of Roman Catholic Ireland, was quite a venture. Edited by EDWARD NEWENHAM HOARE (1802–1877) ...

36 Alan Acheson wrote to me that Edward Hardman was one of the Aughaval clergy who defected from the Establishment.

37 LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, vol. 3, Washington (Review and Herald) 1946, pp. 579–580.

‘R. H.’ IDENTIFIES TIME AS PHILADELPHIA PERIOD. – In volume 1, by means of a diagram, ‘R. H.’ identifies the seven periods of the Christian church as symbolized by the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3; Ephesus is the apostolic age; Smyrna, persecution under pagan Rome; Pergamos, temporal prosperity under Constantine; Thyatira, papal persecution of the martyrs in the Dark Ages; *Sardis, the sixteenth-century Reformation*; Philadelphia, spiritual emphasis in the early nineteenth century; and *Laodicea, the time of great declension prior to the second advent* and the judgment of Antichrist. He thus identifies *his own time as that of Philadelphia*, and believes that the advent is drawing near.⁵

⁵ *Ibid.*, April, 1830 (vol. 1, no. 4), p. 56.”

Could “R. H.” be Hardman? “Rev. Hardman” (his first name was Edward)? In any case, Darby read the *Christian Herald* – and contributed articles.

He might have known more of what was going on in connection with the *Christian Herald* than just contributing articles. Why? Well, who was the publisher of the *Christian Herald*? It was Richard Moore Tims – one of the first “Brethren” in Dublin!³⁸

The time between the *Christian Herald* article and Darby mentioning Hardman teaching the same material is almost 3½ years! If Darby found these thoughts interesting in 1833 why not in 1830? Didn’t he know about the article? Didn’t Tims inform him?

12. Vaughans/Darbys

When working on the first edition of my biography I could find nothing on Samuel Vaughan and little on Darby’s parents. This time around I’m swamped with material. Many people have been very helpful in supplying information and material or pointing me in right directions. (Especially Charles Darby, Philip McNair, Danny D. Smith and Timothy Stunt.) I now have portraits and letters and so on – but there is still a long way to go. The following is in every sense “preliminary”.

Members of the Darby family have been very, very friendly in sending me copies of letters written by Jonathan Darby (John Nelson’s grandfather) to his son John (John Nelson’s father) in the 1770s. These letters convey the impression of a concerned and loving father. John was in London “in training” and Jonathan was writing to him from Ireland. John’s address in London was Old Jewry.

Jonathan often mentions Samuel and Benjamin Vaughan as good friends of his in the above-mentioned letters.³⁹ Darby/Vaughan contacts existed long before John married Anne Vaughan. Samuel Vaughan was a wealthy merchant in London (who also had a residence in Jamaica), his place of business was actually not too far away from where Darby was situated. Previous accounts which state that the Vaughan family related to the Darbys through marriage came from Golden Grove, Ireland, are incorrect.

38 Tims is a very interesting person, and I am attempting to find out more about him. Other than that his son Robert married into the publisher Samuel Bagster family I have not been able to obtain much as of yet. I do have a list of the titles he published. There are important “non-Brethren” books on prophecy among them.

39 I am not sure if the Benjamin here is Samuel’s father, brother or son – there were Benjamins in all these “categories”.

Samuel Vaughan was born on 23 April 1720 as the youngest son of Benjamin and Ann (Wolf). He married Sarah Hallowell (born 26 February 1727) on 1 February 1747 and together they had 11 children. Sarah was the daughter of Benjamin Hallowell (1699–1773), who was a major shareholder in a land company owning 1½ million acres in central Maine in America. Samuel made her acquaintance during his travels.

Much can be said about the Vaughan family which is very interesting and intriguing – especially the lives of some of Samuel’s sons (some of them are to be found in the *Dictionary of American Biography* and *American National Biography*), but that would detract here where it does not have direct relevance to Darby and his immediate family.

One interesting piece of information supplied to me by Danny D. Smith is the account of a cousin of Darby’s from America who visited his relatives in England in 1801. He mentions Darby’s mother and his getting along quite well with Darby’s brother Jonathan and sister Susan. I’ll quote in detail in my book.

The Darby Archives in East Sussex make mention of John Darby’s trip to America (“During his absence in America”), but without any exact dates. Archives in America help. Besides the extensive exchange of letters between Samuel Vaughan and his sons with George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin there is also one letter written by John Darby to George Washington from Boston dated 2 August 1783. John Darby mentions letters of introduction and letters from friends for Washington and his own wish to meet him personally.

John Darby married Anne Vaughan on 21 July 1784 in Trinity Church Parish, New York. (Its sister Church is St. Mary-Le-Bow in Cheapside, London, very close to Old Jewry, where John Darby lived. Today this area belongs to the parish of St. Mary-Le-Bow, but it didn’t in 1784.)

Samuel Vaughan came with his family from Jamaica to Philadelphia on 8 September 1773 (son John had been sent ahead to arrange things). He was elected one of the Vice Presidents of the American Philosophical Society there in May 1784. In September 1787 his wife and at least one daughter returned to England while he remained in America for some time. He went to Jamaica, then back to America and then finally to England in 1790.

The family was Unitarian – though Anne Vaughan was baptized in a Presbyterian Church in London – and Samuel Vaughan seems to have been more interested in architecture and gardening than religion.

John Darby and Anne Vaughan knew each other from London, but they married in America. John Darby was probably there because of business matters and Anne because of the “family trip”. Had the marriage in New York been planned in advance? Or was it a decision made while both were in America?

Just recently I have received a small collection of Darby family letters. These are most interesting. Among them is a letter of Anne Darby’s from 1787 to her sister Rebecca, who was staying with the well-known Unitarian Dr. Priestly at the time in Fair Hill (Birmingham). It contains advice on what a woman should be like. At the close Anne mentions her daughter Susan, who must have been two years old at the time. This is especially interesting because I also have a photocopy of a letter by Susan, then Pennefather, from 1809 describing her brother Jonathan’s illness and death. Whereas Anne’s 1787 letter gives one the impression that she had a detached attitude to religion – she advises her sister not to

overdo it in religious matters and tells her to seek Priestly's recommendation on which books to read – Jonathan and Susan seemed to have been more devoted.

From other letters it seems as if John and Anne's daughter Sarah was in America for a while, or this could be references to Anne's sister of the same name.

Anne's brother Benjamin, the 4th eldest son of the family, was known – among other things – for his extensive library. With the family connections to Philadelphia and Benjamin's wide range of interest, I wonder if Morgan Edwards' *Two Academical Exercises on Subjects Bearing the following Titles; Millennium, Last-Novelties* was part of this library? It was published in Philadelphia in 1788. In the past Darby having any knowledge or access to this work seemed questionable – to say the least. But now, given these family connections?

13. Richard Sinclair Brooke

Marigold Freeman-Attwood's book *Leap Castle: A Place and Its People*⁴⁰ has caught the attention of some Brethren due to the Darby family connection. Marigold included a letter by John Nelson Darby to his brother Horatio in the Appendix dated 5 October 1835. This is of interest for various reasons, but one of them is the following.

Richard Sinclair Brooke, D. D. wrote *Recollections of the Irish Church*. My copy is the 1877 edition published by Macmillan and Co. Many people Darby knew and worked with are mentioned in it. Chapter 4 is of particular interest. Brooke writes:

“In the year 1828 I went down to the King's County, having accepted the curacy of Kinnity. My rector was the Rev. John Travers, a truly religious man; he was as scholarly and as quaint as Parson Adams, and as kind and as simple-hearted as the Vicar of Wakefield.

On my way I spent a few bright days at Leap Castle with my friend Mr. Horatio Darby, who told me a fact which I do not think our English neighbours are at all cognisant of, – that a very large body of respectable Protestant yeomanry, numbering some hundreds, were among his brother's tenantry, and this in the immediate neighbourhood of Tipperary the turbulent.” (p. 45)

Brooke also mentions people like Robert Daly, Irving, Magee, Parnell, Pennefather, Synge, Wingfield and Wolff among others. He also mentions Darby's fellow clergyman William Cleaver:

“The beautiful county of Wicklow, abounding in resident gentry, and possessing a fine body of Protestant yeomanry, was studded with good ministers, between whom and the wealthy laity much cordiality of feeling and community of action existed. The Rev. William Cleaver, a Christ Church Oxonian, and the son of the late Archbishop, held the parish of Delgany, a gem of rural beauty, made up of landscape contributions from sea, and valley, and forest, and down, and mountain. He was a scholar, and a refined gentleman in mind and bearing, and united in himself things that were ‘true, and just, and pure, and honest, and lovely,’ in a singular degree. His influence was as extensive as his kindness, and through both he drew within the

40 Norwich (Russell) 2001.

circle of his beneficence, not only the neighbouring clergy, but also the gentry, and a number of young men preparing for orders, who gladly listened to his eloquent Gospel pleading, and profited by the example of his pastoral activity.” (pp. 19–20)

All references I have found on Cleaver present him in a consistently positive light. He worked closely with Darby. Actually everybody Darby worked with turns out to be very commendable – Daly and others. Magee was not as negative a person as he is often presented to be.

Some scholars have seen an important influence on Darby through Richard Graves at Trinity College. Of course there may have been contact and an indirect influence, but Darby did not attend Graves’ classes and Graves was not his tutor. Joseph Singer was. It is odd that so much emphasis is placed on a man Darby is not known to have been close with – and one he was close with is almost entirely ignored!

Here is what Brooke writes about Singer:

‘In 1822 I became a student of Trinity College Dublin, as a Fellow-commoner. My tutor was Dr. Joseph Henderson Singer, afterwards Bishop of Meath. He had obtained his fellowship at the early age of 23, and was a man of universal and accurate information, possessing very polished manners and a kind and winning address. He was a prodigious reader, not even despising the lighter literature of the day, which he swallowed, but probably did not care to digest; a steady preacher of Evangelical truth and a bold upholder of Scriptural education, of course he was shut out from all Government patronage till the advent of the Conservatives to power brought in a more liberal atmosphere, and shortly after Dr. Singer became Bishop of Meath.

His pet name among the college alumni was ‘Cantor.’ We liked to see him ascending the chapel pulpit. His sermons were neither original, profound, nor dogmatic, but they were gentle, sound and moderate, and thoroughly fluent. He had, if anything, too much of the *copia fandi*.

We also liked to see him approach our division in the hall with his watch in his square cap, and his papers in his hand, for he was a patient and gentlemanly examiner, and contrasted strongly with another ‘Socius,’ a rough creature, whom P—— one of our lads, a droll fellow, always styled ‘Inexorabilis Dis.’” (pp. 8–9)⁴¹

Singer apparently made the greater impression on Darby. In later years (i. e. after Darby’s Trinity time) Darby worked together with him and personalized a copy of his *Doctrine of the Church of England at the Time of the Reformation* for Singer with “Rev. J. Singer from the Author”.

In 1832 Darby wrote *A Letter to the Rev. Dr. Singer, F. T. C. D. on the Opinions of His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin*. In the *Collected Writings* vol. 32 this *Letter* is entitled “A Letter on a Serious Question Connected with the Irish Education Measures of 1832”; the reference to Singer is left out, but I have a copy of the pamphlet as originally published and it includes the name.

Someone wrote to me in connection with not placing any great value on a possible influence on Darby through Graves:

41 Brooke does mention Graves as well: “Old Doctor Graves, afterwards Dean of Ardagh, and the author of *Discourses on the Pentateuch*, was a learned but rather ponderous preacher” (p. 10).

“There is no doubt that Trinity College Dublin was a hotbed of literal interpretation, when compared with other educational institutions of the day.”

That might well have been the case, and Darby may have heard things at Trinity that only later became of interest to him. Nevertheless, it was not Trinity where he came to a saving faith. It was one or two years later in London, and connected with that was a strong attraction to the Roman Catholic Church.

If Darby was greatly interested in prophecy later, he was not so in the beginning. Bellett’s remarks on the time in question (Trinity, London, Wicklow) suggest that prophecy was not a subject matter between them of any great importance. Darby kept insisting nobody had influenced him. Why, when he was surrounded by influences?

After Trinity, where he had also been with Darby, Bellett studied in London during the time Darby was there. It is hard to believe they did not see each other. Apparently in 1821 he was impressed by the life of Henry Martyn and the preaching of Charles Simeon. What influence did this have on Darby?

14. John Walker

Mon, 22 Jan 2007

Many years ago H. H. Rowdon pointed out the strong similarities between the Brethren and the Walkerites. Other more recent works have gone into the possibility of there having been connections, but often drawing conclusions based on incorrect assumptions (e. g. “... while John Walker was a fellow at Trinity College, where he most likely knew Darby”⁴² – impossible as Darby was a small child in London at the time in question). Nevertheless I do feel that it is not totally wrong to suspect influences, as some of the material I have turned up certainly does not rule out the possibility.

From 1817 to 1819 Christopher Darby was a curate in the same area in Wicklow (Delgany) where his younger brother John Nelson would be years later. He married Miss Mary Boyle, a niece of Mrs. La Touche, there. Alexander Knox is mentioned as having attended the wedding. Knox lived in the La Touche home of Bellevue in Wicklow from 1803 until the death of Peter La Touche in 1828. A friend of John Wesley, he was well known in his time and a man “consulted by government ministers, bishops, scholars and London Publishers”. Knox had an exchange with Walker on his views (see e. g. John Walker’s *Seven Letters to Alexander Knox*).

In the “Editor’s Preface to the Third and Fourth Volumes” of *Remains of Alexander Knox, Esq.* is the following:⁴³

“The Rev. Christopher Darby, rector of Kells, in the county of Kilkenny, had enjoyed an intimacy with Mr. Knox of sixteen years’ continuance; and there was, I believe, no subject on which Mr. Knox was not in the habit of communicating with him, without any reserve.”

42 Michael D. Makidon, “From Perth to Pennsylvania: The Legacy of Robert Sandeman”, in: *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society*, 15:1 (2002), p. 88, n. 51.

43 James J. Hornby (ed.), *Remains of Alexander Knox, Esq.*, vol. 3, London (Duncan) 1837, p. xxxvi.

William Cleaver, rector of the parish of Delgany in the county of Wicklow (1819–1847), also had very close connections to Knox and is mentioned repeatedly in the above *Remains*.

The ideas of John Walker are certainly items that would have been discussed. Granted, the Walker/Knox exchange was of a much earlier date, but Walker certainly left his mark, as William Pennefather – Darby’s nephew – wrote about him in 1834:

“Mr. W. was an Irishman, Fellow of Dublin College, and he gave up his fellowship because he could not agree with the Church of England, but I believe he did not succeed in drawing many followers in this country [England].”⁴⁴

Christopher was Darby’s brother, Cleaver worked together with Darby – they both knew Knox well. That Darby met Alexander Knox is thus very probable.

If Pennefather was acquainted with Walker, Darby definitely more so – to which can be added something of great interest: Darby was at Lincoln’s Inn in London from 1819 to 1822. Walker was in London from 1819 on. The Walkerites had a Church in Portsmouth Street in Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields – which borders on Lincoln’s Inn, where Darby was.⁴⁵ Given the fact that Darby was converted during this period, it would not be surprising if he knew of the Walkerites. He was a “strict Churchman” at the time, nevertheless something could have been planted then that sprouted later.

What is becoming more and more evident to me is that Darby had the tendency to present things as new (and sometimes as “his”) years after they had been presented by others. I have more examples of this from the field of prophecy,⁴⁶ but apparently it is also the case in ecclesiastical matters.

Edward Synge might be an example. Darby worked with him at least as early as 1829. Synge is described as having a “new creed of biblical fundamentalism ... equally distant from Protestant and Catholic. He expressed the opinion that being a member of any institutional church, whether Protestant or Catholic, was inconsequential in comparison to reading the Bible.” It has been impossible to discover more accurately what Synge’s views were (though a Synge descendant who is also working in this direction has been kind enough to remain in contact with me over the subject for some years now and we hope to progress).

44 Robert Braithwaite (ed.), *The Life and Letters of Rev. William Pennefather, B. A.*, London (Shaw) 1879, p. 18.

45 James and Freeman Wills, *The Irish Nation: Its History and Its Biography*, vol. 4, Edinburgh/London/Dublin (Fullarton) 1876, p. 454.

46 For example, it is quite odd to read Darby saying “I am afraid, that many a cherished feeling, dear to the children of God, has been shocked this evening; I mean, their hope that the gospel will spread itself over the whole earth during the actual dispensation” (CW 2:319) and “As the Jewish dispensation was cut off, the Christian dispensation will be also” (CW 2:321) in 1840 when back in 1825/26 Irving and after that many others were preaching and writing about the Lord’s soon coming to judge the Church and restore Israel. The idea that began to become popular back then was that judgment was coming – and coming soon – for an unfaithful Church.

Then there is the example I have referred to elsewhere, where Darby remarks on the application of the Seven Churches in Revelation 2 and 3 to the history of the Church as an interesting new insight though it had been in circulation for years.

The end result of Darby's views on the Church and on prophecy may have carried his individual stamp, but they were definitely influenced and "supplied" by many others.

15. John Henry Newman

It has been some time since I have contributed something, but I haven't really continued my research. It is quite frustrating to know where sources of information are, but not being able to obtain them.

A good friend of mine will be writing his doctoral thesis on John Henry Newman. This got me interested again, because I am sure Darby and Newman knew each other much earlier than supposed.

In earlier "Research Papers" I had gone into the amazing similarity of development in both Darby and Newman. For example, that they were both at Lincoln's Inn at the same time. Here are two quotes from *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*:⁴⁷

"Friday 19 November 1819 entered at Lincoln's Inn." (vol. 1, p. 69) The footnote here reads: "Newman continued to be a member until July 1825."

16 May 1822: "The last Term I kept at Lincoln's Inn was, I think, Lent year – thus I suppose I have missed five terms. Altogether, I think, I have kept three." (vol. 1, p. 141)

Pennefathers are mentioned often in volume 2 (January 1827 to December 1831). Some of these, if not all, were related to Darby's brother-in-law Edward Pennefather. One at least is certain. In the index a Richard Pennefather is listed with "of Balliol (1824)". This was the son of Edward Pennefather's brother Richard. This son lived from 1808 to 1849. He matriculated at Balliol College, Oxford, on 24 June 1824. In 1826 he entered Lincoln's Inn.

Sad to say, it is difficult to ascertain which "Pennefather" is meant in Newman's letters and diaries, because he simply writes "Pennefather". One example:

"Tuesday 22 April 1828 ... letter from Frank thro' Pennefather." (vol. 2, p. 67)

The reference is to his brother Francis Newman, who was a tutor for Edward Pennefather's children.

Darby wrote of his conversion taking place either in June or July of either 1821 or 1822. So I checked the Newman letters – and found something amazing in vol. 1, p. 108 for the date 1 June 1821:

"Between these two entries is placed one for '1821 June or July':

'I speak of (the process of) conversion with great diffidence, being obliged to adopt the language of books. For my own feelings, as far as I remember, were so different from any account I have ever read, that I dare not go by what may be an individual case.' A. W., p. 166. 'In the matter in question (conversion) my feelings were not violent, but a returning to, a renewing of, principles, under the power of the Holy

47 Ed. by Ian Ker and Thomas Gornall, S. J., Oxford (Clarendon Press) 1979.

Spirit, which I had already felt, and in a measure acted on, when young.' *ibid.*, p. 172; cf. pp. 79–80.

Two unpublished documents, both dated June 1821, set out Newman's theology of grace at this, his most intensely evangelical period. A 'Comment on Phil. 2. 12–13' is a discussion of the text, 'Work out your salvation'. The other long essay, 'A Collection of Scripture passages setting forth in due order of succession the doctrines of Christianity', is an attempt by Newman to summarise his evangelical beliefs, which he continued working on until the early part of 1822. This latter paper 'falls ... into two parts: the first is more properly doctrinal; the second is the description of conversion. The first part seems better to represent Newman's own personal thought and shows clearly the influence of Thomas Scott; it has a markedly Trinitarian stamp and lays great stress on the Law of God and the need for internal holiness. The second part, which was done more with the aid of books other than Scott, describes a conversion which Newman never experienced; it is the classical Evangelical conversion.' *Sheridan*, p. 58. For a detailed discussion of the two papers in the context of Newman's thought, see *Sheridan*, pp. 44–58.

There is a third paper, ten pages long, on which Newman has written '1822 or 1823?' It is concerned with the theology rather than phenomenon of conversion, and is an attempt to reconcile the evangelical doctrine of conversion with the institution of baptism (especially infant). See *Sheridan*, pp. 58–62; also pp. 62–6 for a discussion of Newman's views at this period."

Isn't this interesting? Not only the mention of Thomas Scott as in Darby's case, but also the uncertainty of the month and the year. Is this all coincidence?

It is strange that if Darby and Newman really did know each other from Lincoln Inn's days they do not mention it. Strange for us, but not necessarily for them. I have been reading some literature from the 19th century and what comes across very strongly is the feeling – which was commonplace then – for propriety and not betraying a confidence. This may be somewhat difficult for us to understand today as we tend to be very open and unashamed, but in the past people would remain silent about things for reasons we would not.

John Nelson Darby – A Biography

Revised Version of Chapter 1: Beginnings

Family Tree

“Birth. On Wednesday morning, Mrs. Darby, of Great George Street, Westminster, of a son.”

So read the small announcement in the lower right-hand corner of a page in the *London Times* in November 1800. The baby, John Nelson Darby, born 18 November 1800, was Mrs. Darby’s sixth son and eighth child.¹ (Her last child, a daughter, would be born in 1802.)

John Nelson Darby descended from the Darby family connected with Leap Castle in Ireland, but the early history of the family is somewhat of a mystery. In the first English publication of my biography in 1992 I had written:

“The Darbys were an old family. Records in England go back to the fifteenth century and to Gaddesby (near Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire). The church in Gaddesby contains an altar tomb from the fifteenth century with graven figures of the knight William Darby and his wife.”

This information needs to be corrected. The book *Leap Castle: A Place and Its People* written by Marigold Freeman-Attwood (a Darby descendant) has cleared up a number of discrepancies in the family history. Contrary to what one may find elsewhere, John Nelson Darby’s family line does not appear to have any connection with the Darby family of Gaddesby, Leicestershire, which died out in the mid-1300s.

Charles Darby (a descendant of John Nelson’s brother George Darby) and his wife Glenys of New Zealand have been most helpful to me in my new research into Darby’s background. They have investigated the Darby family history by accessing contemporary records and original material from the times under study. They have come to the conclusion that the published records of the past 120 years are in error on key points. These conclusions are based upon original evidence which they viewed in person, and they were able to identify unproven aspects of family history as such. Though Gaddesby can now almost certainly be eliminated as the homeland of Darby’s family prior to the mid-1500s, the actual family homeland remains a mystery. Nevertheless, extensive circumstantial evidence does suggest that the family origins lie in East Anglia rather than in the Midlands, at least from the 12th to the 16th century.

Charles Darby wrote to me:

“The belief that the Darby family of Leap Castle (and later Sussex) originated from Gaddesby, Leicestershire, stems from the Burke’s ‘Landed Gentry’ publications.

¹ Here, right at the beginning, we find one of the many discrepancies that will turn up in John Nelson Darby’s life. 18 November 1800 was not a Wednesday, but a Tuesday.

However, there is no evidence to support this belief and much to refute it. There was indeed a Darby family of Gaddesby, but they died out long before the time of John Darby of Leap and there is no evidence of any connection between the two families.

So if JND's family did not come from Gaddesby, where did they come from? There is much circumstantial evidence suggesting that his family originated in the southern Lincolnshire villages of Leake, Leverton, Wrangell and Bennington, and that in the 13th–14th centuries parts of that family moved to Norfolk, Suffolk and possibly elsewhere.”

Leap Castle

In my original biography I had written:

“The connection between the Darby family and Ireland began in the sixteenth century when a John Darby, son of Edmund Darby, served under the Earl of Sussex as a Captain of Horse in his campaigns there, either in the year 1557 or 1559. The Earl besieged the castle of Leap² belonging to the family of the O'Carrolls of Eile in the part of Ireland later known as 'King's County' but today as Offaly.”

Charles Darby wrote:

“Although very little evidence survives from those days before the formality of church records, a document in the British Museum provides an important clue. A John Darby is named in 'Officers Commanding the Queen's Forces, Anno 1569', a list of 'The Names of the Principal Officers and Captaynes' of an army commanded by the Earl of Sussex (who, despite his title, was from East Anglia). Also named are a number of John Darby's fellow-officers from the same area of Lincolnshire where the Darby family is believed to have originated. Although the John Darby connection with Leap Castle is not confirmed by this document, it does prove that there was indeed a Captain John Darby in the 'army' of the Earl of Sussex in the mid-1500s, and that he probably came from East Anglia. Further, if he had gone to Ireland with the Earl in 1557, he must have returned to England by 1567. This ties in with the fact of the O'Carroll family returning to Leap after 1557.

... the Earl of Sussex was a major player (if not the main player at army-commander level) in the intensifying English occupation of Ireland that took place during Queen Elizabeth's reign.

There is an alternative theory that the first Darby to reach Leap was a soldier with Oliver Cromwell's forces, and that he may have received the Leap estates in lieu of pay. Again, this theory is not proven, and indeed Cooke in his *History of Birr* (1875) casts doubt on it by recording that the Darby family of the time 'appear to have remained faithful to the King' and 'valiantly resisted Cromwell's forces'. Unfor-

2 Leap Castle's exact origin is not known, nor the exact meaning of its name, Leím Ui Bhanáin, or Leap of O'Bannon. In all probability it had been built in the 14th or 15th century on the site of an earlier fortification as a tower house, with additions and alterations later. It came to be considered as the most haunted castle in Ireland until its destruction in the 1922 revolution when it was bombed. It was a ruin for some time, but has since been restored and people are living in it again.

unately, since Cooke's evidence for this assertion is not quoted, it carries no greater authority than does the 'Gaddesby theory'."

A legend remains in the Darby family connected with Leap Castle. Yes, it is a legend, but legends are usually based on some historical fact. Returning to the siege of Leap Castle mentioned above, the story goes that during one of the attacks on the castle John Darby was captured and held prisoner in the castle in a room measuring four by seven feet. Food was passed to him through a hole in the wall. This was the duty of O'Carroll's young and beautiful daughter Finola. Not surprisingly this contact led to their falling in love with each other. When Finola discovered that her father planned to hang John Darby she helped him to escape by unbarring his door. As Darby was racing down the stone stairs to expected freedom he was confronted by Finola's brother, who sounded the alarm. Darby turned and ran back up and out onto the battlements. From there he jumped into the branches of a large yew tree and escaped. The siege of Leap Castle continued and ended in its finally being taken by the English forces. John Darby later married Finola O'Carroll, the heiress of the castle, and through her acquired a part of the Leap estate.³

Concerning this connection to Leap Castle, Charles Darby remarked in contrast to Marigold Freeman-Attwood's book:

"like us, Marigold had concluded that the Gaddesby origin was not supported by any evidence whatsoever and thus she dismissed that part of the Burke's publications as a fabrication. In that situation, she settled upon the earliest 'official' records as being indicative of the time that a Darby first went to Leap, i. e. the presence of High Sheriff Jonathan in the time of Oliver Cromwell, and his demise in 1684. While that may be correct, it is not evidence that Jonathan was the first Darby at Leap.

Where we differ from Marigold is that, given the proven existence of Captain John Darby in the militia of the Earl of Sussex in 1567, we believe that the story of a John Darby going to Ireland with the Earl of Sussex in 1557 cannot be dismissed, especially as the O'Carrolls are known to have re-occupied the Leap estates after 1557."

Once again, in my original publication I had written:

"The greater part of the estate remained in the possession of its Irish proprietor. John Darby died in 1608. The Irish portion of Leap was later confiscated for the use of the English King James I (1603–1625), but the Darby part remained in the Darby family. In the rule of Charles II (1660–1685) the confiscated portion was sold to a certain John Holland. The Darbys later bought this part from him and so the entire Leap estate passed into Darby hands."

Charles Darby had some helpful insights here as well:

3 Sources of information on Leap Castle and Darby family: *The Clans of Ireland. Their Battles, Chiefs, and Princes*, Dublin (Sullivan) n. d.; *Burke's Irish Family Records*; *The Landed Gentry: Ireland*; George Cunningham, *Roscrea and District. Illustrated Guide*, Roscrea (Parkmore) 1976; Thomas Lalor Cooke, *The Early History of the Town of Birr, or Parsonstown*, Dublin (Robertson & Co.) 1875; Arthur Charles Fox-Davies, *Armorial Families*, London (Hurst & Blackett) 1929; James Fleming, "Historic Irish Mansions, no. 51: Leap Castle, Co. Offaly, Seat of the Darby Family", in *Weekly Irish Times*; Dermot F. Gleeson, *Roscrea*, Dublin (Sign of the Three Candles) 1947; Irish Tourist Board, Dublin; John Feehan, *The Landscape of Slieve Bloon*, Dublin (Blackwater Press) 1979; Leicestershire Library Division for Melton Mowbray; Edward MacLysaght, *More Irish Families*, Dublin (Irish Academic Press) 1982.

“This is interesting. I have seen a reference to the effect that the Leap estate (or part of it) was mortgaged to John of Holland, not sold to a Mr J. Holland.

Remember here that ‘Holland’ was the generic name for that part of low-lying, swampy southern Lincolnshire because it resembled the nation that we now call Holland. And all of our research indicates that our Darby family originated from that part of Lincolnshire once known as Holland, spreading into Norfolk and Suffolk and possibly also elsewhere in the 13–14C.

So if Leap was mortgaged to John of Holland (rather than simply to a certain Mr Holland), that provides another bit of evidence linking the Leap Darbys with Lincolnshire.”

In 1745 the owner of Leap, Jonathan Darby (the eldest son was always named Jonathan), married Susannah Lovett. In the course of their marriage they had eight sons and one daughter. Their third oldest son, Henry d’Esterre (born 1749), joined the Navy and won a name for himself through his gallant conduct as the captain of the ship *Bellerophon* in the battle of the Nile in 1798. He was a very distinguished man, said to be Lord Nelson’s favorite commodore. In 1819 Henry became an admiral and was later knighted.⁴ The inheritance of Leap Castle fell to him after the death of his oldest brother Jonathan (Robert, the second oldest, had died earlier, in 1764).

The Darbys and the Vaughans

Henry d’Esterre’s younger brother of three years was John Darby (born 9 December 1751). He married Anne Vaughan and seems to have spent most of his life in England. John and Anne were the parents of John Nelson Darby. When working on the first edition of my biography years ago I could find nothing on Samuel Vaughan, the father of Darby’s mother. Since then I’ve been swamped with material. Many people have been very helpful in supplying information and material or pointing me in right directions. I have already mentioned Charles Darby and his wife Glenys, but I must also mention Philip McNair, Danny D. Smith and Timothy Stunt.

From Charles Darby I have copies of letters written by Jonathan Darby (John Nelson’s grandfather) from Ireland to his son John (John Nelson’s father) in the 1770s. These letters convey the impression of a concerned and loving father. John was in apprenticeship in London at that time. The address there from at least May 1770 to May 1780 was ‘Messrs Read & Rigby’s, Merchants, Old Jewry, London.’ Apparently John’s younger brother Christopher was with him or at least nearby, as father Jonathan often asks of his well-being and is very concerned that he begins in some profession. To John himself he gave the following advice in a letter dated 27 July 1771: “Yet there is one thing I would if I could guard you against, which is a too hasty desire of being rich. The sure and certain mode is industry, perseverance and a mode of acquiring something by degrees.”

4 Charles Darby wrote to me: “In 1820, Betham (the incumbent Ulster King of Arms) granted Admiral Henry Darby the right to augment his family coat of arms with a naval coronet, an anchor and the word NILE in recognition of his naval service. That family coat of arms, and variations of it, was used by Admiral George Darby in the mid-1700s, and was used by Darbys in Suffolk, Norfolk and Lincolnshire going back to the 13C. I do not know exactly how these East Anglian Darbys tie in with my Darby family.”

Jonathan often mentions Samuel and Benjamin and John Vaughan as good friends of his in the letters referred to above. (These were apparently all brothers.) Jonathan Darby often asks John to greet John Vaughan (Samuel's brother) and his family.

Samuel Frier Vaughan was a wealthy merchant in London⁵ (who also had a residence in Jamaica), who was born in Ireland on 23 April 1720 as the fourth and youngest son of Benjamin and Ann (Wolf) – their twelfth and last child. He was apprenticed to his brother William – who was a broker – on 27 September 1736. On 12 October 1744 he became a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Scriveners (professional copyist or writer, from “scribe”) and on 29 July 1746 a Liveryman (able to take part in the election of the Lord Mayor of London).⁶ He was appointed to the Court of Assistants (the governing body of the company) on 20 November 1765 and was Master of the Company from 1771 to 1772.⁷ According to Sally V. Eagle,⁸ Samuel Vaughan was sent to Jamaica via Boston by his company to attend to the export business there. While in Boston he married Sarah Hallowell (born 26 February 1727) on 1 February 1747 (New South Church, Boston, Massachusetts, by Rev. Joseph Sewall D. D.), and together they had eleven children. Sarah Hallowell was the daughter of Benjamin Hallowell (1699–1773), the King's Naval Commissioner, who was a major shareholder in a land company owning 1½ million acres in central Maine in America. The newlyweds then went to Jamaica, where son Benjamin was born in January 1751. (He was raised in London and educated at Cambridge and Temple Inn. At university, he became associated with the group including Joseph Priestley, Benjamin Franklin, Jeremy Bentham, and William Petty, the Earl of Shelburne.)

From 1736 to 1752 Samuel Vaughan was mainly in Jamaica, after which the family went to London, where he opened his own merchant-banking firm⁹ and obtained his own sugar plantations in Jamaica and eventually owned 300 slaves. Anne, the Vaughans' fifth child, was born on 24 October 1757. The Vaughans were Unitarians¹⁰ and not Church of England. Two of the sons, Benjamin and William, were tutored by Joseph Priestly¹¹ at Warington Academy (an Arian academy established in 1757). Anne Vaughan was baptized in Crutched Friars, a Dissenting Church in London.¹²

Samuel returned to America with his wife and three daughters in 1783 and arrived in Philadelphia on 8 September. He was elected one of the Vice Presidents of the American

5 There are accounts that the Vaughan family related to the Darbys through marriage came from Golden Grove, Ireland, but these are incorrect.

6 A “Freeman” was someone who had the privilege of earning money and owning land. Only members of guilds or livery companies, “Liverymen”, could engage in commercial activity.

7 Personal email from “The Clerk” (Andrew Hill) of the Scriveners, dated 5 November 2003.

8 At <http://genforum.genealogy.com/hallowell/messages/284.html>

9 Samuel Vaughan (“and Son” added in 1783), Dunster's Court, next to Clothworkers Hall, off Mincing Lane. Information supplied by Philip McNair.

10 From the “unity of God”, i. e. the belief that there is only one person in the deity and not three as in the Trinity. Unitarianism stresses individual freedom and the use of reason in religious matters.

11 Well-known and authoritative spokesman for Unitarianism. Denied the Immaculate Conception and believed Jesus to be a man. Famous for discovering oxygen in 1774.

12 On 21 November 1757 by the Rev. Dr. George Benson, Pastor of the Crutched Friars Presbyterian Church. Information supplied by Philip McNair.

Philosophical Society there in May 1784. In September 1786 his wife and daughters returned to London while he remained in America for some time. He went to Jamaica in 1787, then back to America in 1789 and finally to England in 1790.

As mentioned above, Samuel Vaughan and his family were Unitarians, and he seems to have been more interested in architecture and gardening than religion. Samuel left his mark in many ways in America through his friendship with George Washington and others. He even commissioned a portrait of Washington, which is apparently the only one showing him with his natural teeth, and sent him a marble mantelpiece from his home in London. His involvement in gardening extends from landscaping Independence Square (then known as “State House Yard” or “State House Garden”)¹³ to being instrumental in the publication of *Arbustum Americanum: The American Grove, or, An Alphabetical Catalogue of Forest Trees and Shrubs, Natives of the American United States, arranged according to the Linnæan system* by Humphry Marshall.¹⁴ The following can also be found: George Washington and Samuel Vaughan, “Serpentine Double-Row Tree Allée”, *Plan For Mount Vernon, Virginia* (1787) and Samuel Vaughan, *Plan for a Public Garden, Pennsylvania State House, Philadelphia* (1785–1787).¹⁵ Nevertheless religious matters were not completely uninteresting for him. In George Willis Cooke’s *Unitarianism in America: A History of its Origin and Development* under the heading “King’s Chapel becomes Unitarian” we find:

“... Rev. William Hazlitt, the father of the essayist and critic of the same name, who had been settled over several of the smaller Unitarian churches in Great Britain. In the spring of 1783 he visited the United States, and spent several months in Philadelphia. He gave a course of lectures on the Evidences of Christianity in the college there, which were largely attended ... He gave in Boston his course of lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, and it was received with much favor by large audiences. The winter of 1784–85 was spent by Mr. Hazlitt in Hallowell, Me., in which place was a small group of wealthy English Unitarians, led by Samuel Vaughan, by whom Mr. Hazlitt had been entertained in Philadelphia.”¹⁶

Much more can be said about the Vaughan family which is very interesting and intriguing – especially the lives of some of Samuel’s sons (some are mentioned in the *Dictionary of American Biography* and *American National Biography*), but that would detract here where it does not have direct relevance to Darby and his immediate family.

Marriage

When the Vaughan and Darby friendships are taken into account together with the fact that John Darby and the family of Samuel Vaughan lived in London, it is quite possible that John Darby and Anne Vaughan knew each other from London. But the story is somewhat more intriguing than that.

13 https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/hh/17/hh17f.htm

14 <https://specialcollections.nal.usda.gov/series-x-marshall-note-usda-history-collection>

15 <https://web.archive.org/web/20080724152537/https://www3.nd.edu/~tschlere/Tjschlereth/chapteroutlinea.htm>

16 <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/8605/8605-h/8605-h.htm>

The Darby Archives in East Sussex make mention of a trip by John Darby to America (“during his absence in America”), but without any exact dates.¹⁷ Archives in America have helped. Besides an extensive exchange of letters between Samuel Vaughan and his sons with George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin which I have come across during my research, there is also one letter written by a John Darby to George Washington from Boston dated 2 August 1783.¹⁸ John Darby mentions letters of introduction and letters from friends for Washington and his own wish to meet him personally. This John Darby is very probably John Nelson’s father.

This American reference is of importance. I had never been able to find John and Anne Darby’s marriage papers. Other researchers’ efforts had been just as futile. We were all looking in the wrong places. Danny D. Smith came to my help and supplied the necessary information: John Darby and Anne Vaughan married in America, not Great Britain. Following this lead I was able to find more information.

John Darby was married to Anne Vaughan on 21 July 1784 by the rector of Trinity Church Parish, New York, Rev. Samuel Provoost.¹⁹ (Its sister Church is St. Mary-Le-Bow in Cheapside, London, very close to Old Jewry, where John Darby lived. Today this area belongs to the parish of St. Mary-Le-Bow, but it didn’t in 1784.) A newspaper account indicates the marriage took place in Flushing, New York, on Long Island,²⁰ very probably at St. George’s Parish. Anne Vaughan brought a dowry of £2,500 with her into the marriage.

I had the great fortune of being contacted by Ron Kley, the Curator/Archivist at the Vaughan Homestead in Hallowell, Maine (USA). He informed me of a large collection of correspondence between the Darbys and Vaughans and was so generous to supply me with copies and other information related to their contents, and I am greatly indebted to him.

As noted above, Samuel Vaughan was in America with his three daughters from September 1783 on and Darby at least since August. How well John Darby knew Anne Vaughan before this time or what his feelings for her were cannot be determined, but one thing is sure: Things came to a head while he was in America. The letters in the Vaughan Homestead collection prove this without a doubt.

John Darby returned to England in December of 1783, and while at sea he wrote to Anne’s brother Charles. In this letter (No. 3156 in the collection) he mentions a ball held for General Washington among others, and he writes of his strong profession of love for Anne – using her family nickname of “Nancy”. Anne rejected him at this point, and he

17 Mentioned in item no. 194 “Letter from John Darby to George Lambert, Bedford Row [17 Dec 1821]”, East Sussex Record Office, AMS 6146, Archive of the Darby Family of London and Markly in Warbleton 1789–1894.

18 George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, 1741–1799: Series 4 “John Darby to George Washington, August 2, 1783”.

19 Rev. Dr. Samuel Provoost was appointed Rector of Trinity in 1784 and in 1787 he was consecrated as the first Bishop of the newly formed Diocese of New York. He represented the rationalistic mentality that became the Broad Church Party.

20 “New-York, July 22. On Tuesday was married at Flushing, on Long-Island, by the Rev. Dr. Provost, John Darby, Esq., of London, to Miss Vaughan, eldest daughter of Samuel Vaughan, Esq., of Philadelphia.” *The New York Packet and the American Advertiser*, Thursday, 22 July 1784, p. 3, col. 1.

was heartbroken. I have a copy of the letter in my possession, and when reading it one almost gets the impression one is reading a draft or basis for a Jane Austen novel. Here I allow myself to quote Ron Kley's excellent description of it:

"I think you'll find the first of the letters to be quite a treasure. It was written at sea by John Darby after a rather traumatic parting with Anne in Philadelphia. It seems that her parents and siblings were united in their affection for John, but 'Nancy' wanted nothing more than his 'brotherly' affection. The letter provides an almost breathless play-by-play of who said what to whom on the occasion of their 'final' meeting at a grand social event. I don't know how much of this you might want to incorporate into a straight-faced biography, but it has to rank as one of the most personally revealing and un-reserved letters among the thousands of very decorous and reserved communications that we've seen among family correspondence."

Ron Kley also directed me to the Charles Vaughan collection of letters in the Special Collections Division of the Bowdoin College Library in Brunswick, Maine, and I am very thankful to the Archivist Caroline Moseley for providing me with copies of those I was interested in. The official designation for the Charles Vaughan papers is M-180. Ones containing interesting Darby references Mr. Kley outlined as:

Box 1, Folder 12

10 December 1783: Letter from John Darby in Philadelphia to Charles Vaughan at Montego Bay, forwarded to him c/o William Vaughan at Mincing Lane, London.

Topic(s) opaque, but forwarding indicates that Charles Vaughan has made an unexpected trip to London. Darby says in this letter that he has been rejected by Anne (Charles's sister). Anne did, however, eventually marry John.

Box 1, Folder 13

12 December 1783: Letter from Anne Darby to Charles Vaughan at Montego Bay.

She apologizes for her stupidity in failing to heed Charles's advice (perhaps in regard to her rejection of John Darby).

Box 1, Folder 20

5 August 1784: Letter from Sarah (Hallowell) Vaughan in Flushing, Long Island, New York, to Charles Vaughan in London.

She is concerned about Charles's health and that he has left Jamaica (apparently for health reasons) when his presence there was essential to his father's interest. Reports that her daughter Anne and her husband (John Darby) have left for England and suspects that she will never see Anne again. (At this time Sarah Vaughan thought that her family was relocating permanently to Philadelphia.)

I have been able to trace some Darby family letters at the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. Among them is a letter by Anne Darby from 1787 to her sister Rebecca, who was staying with the well-known Unitarian Dr. Priestly at the time in Fair Hill (Birmingham). It contains advice on proper feminine behaviour. At the close Anne mentions her daughter Susan, who must have been two years old at the time.²¹

21 American Philosophical Society, Benjamin Vaughan Papers 1746–1900, "Darby, Ann, ALS to Vaughan, Rebecca [Merrick] Letter of advice. 1787 June 19. 4 p."

Whereas Anne's 1787 letter gives one the impression that she had a detached attitude to religion at that time in her life – she advises her sister not to overdo it in religious matters and tells her to seek Priestly's recommendation on which books to read – her children Jonathan and Susan seemed to have been very religious.²²

Whatever Unitarian influences there had been in Anne's life, she was later very definitely Church of England. Through Philip McNair I have learned that letters existed which she wrote to her son John Nelson Darby after he had left the Church, stating that she could well defend the Anglican position against the one he had taken. John and Anne's first three children, Susanna (1785), Jonathan (1787) and William Lovett Henry d'Esterre (1788), were all baptized in St. Olave, Jewry.

John Darby moved from Old Jewry to a large house at St. John's, Cambridge Heath, Hackney, in rural Middlesex. He had his business at 7 Russia Row, Milk Street, in Cheapside, at first as John Darby & Co., Merchants, and later as John Darby, Gibb & Co., Merchants.²³

Westminster

In 1800 the family, then numbering seven children, moved to a house in Westminster (London), number 9 Great George Street,²⁴ which they leased from the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey. Great George Street was a private speculation by James Mallors, who obtained Parliamentary powers to have it built. The first houses were erected in 1755.²⁵ Number 9 was not occupied until 1761, and the Darbys were the 9th occupiers. The building no longer exists, but photos and a description in *Survey of London: 1926* (pp. 30–31) still do.

“The general exterior of the premises is of plain brickwork, relieved at the level of the third floor by a modillion cornice, while plain flat bands indicate the levels of the first and second floors. The entrance doorway has side lights, with a semi-elliptical fanlight over.

The main staircase walls at the first-floor landing are decorated with plaster panels enriched with foliated scrolls and swags of fruit and flowers, while the line of the modillion cornice is continued around the well with a moulded stringcourse enriched with foliated scrolls. The tracery treatment at the head of the panels is interesting, and records the Gothic motifs in use at this period. The main cornice to the stair-well below the elliptical lantern-light is heavily moulded, and has a coved frieze with a scroll ornament. The back staircase has turned balusters and moulded close strings.

22 I have a copy of a letter by Susan Darby, then Pennefather, from 1809 describing her brother Jonathan's illness and death. American Philosophical Society, Benjamin Vaughan Papers 1746–1900, “Pennefeather, Darby, ALS to her relatives [1809 September]. 4 p.”

23 Information supplied by Philip McNair. Benjamin Wills Newton said that John Darby, through his brother Henry d'Esterre, was aided by Lord Nelson in getting orders for supplying the Navy with food-stuffs (Fry Manuscripts, large book, p. 61).

24 In 1825 the street was renumbered and 9 was changed to 10.

25 Isobel Watson, *Westminster and Pimlico Past*, London (Historical Publications) 1993, pp. 41 and 49.

The front room on the first floor contains a moulded and carved white mantelpiece with fluted Corinthian columns. The wood skirtings, chair-rails and linings are moulded and carved with a fret.

The back room to this floor contains a decorative plaster ceiling in low relief, which is now intercepted by a partition.”

It was here, on 18 November, that John Nelson Darby was born. He was baptized fifteen weeks later on 3 March 1801, at St. Margaret’s Church, according to the rites of the national church. In 1874 he wrote, “The circumstances of my own baptism, though done bona fide, and in the main with right intentions, were not such as I should wish, but I do not think it can be repeated.”²⁶

His first name John was in keeping with a long tradition of “Johns” in the family. His middle name, Nelson, certainly was given to him because of his uncle’s connection with the man by that name who at the time was the active head of the Navy and hero of the British people. No evidence has of yet been found, but from earliest accounts of his life it was said that Lord Nelson was Darby’s godfather. If he was, he was not present at the baptism. One Darby biographer claimed that Nelson held the baby over the baptismal font himself. Besides the fact that Nelson at the time had only one arm, having lost the other at the battle of Teneriffa, he was on his ship, the *St. George*, at Spithead on 3 March 1801; the *St. James Chronicle* reported him to have been at Yarmouth on 4 March, and not in London at all. Yet this does not mean that Lord Nelson could not have been Darby’s godfather. William Kelly, a close friend of Darby’s in later years, stated this as a fact in one of his letters dated 22 June 1899. Nelson was probably represented by a sponsor at the actual baptism, which was permitted then as it is today.

One interesting piece of information supplied to me by Danny D. Smith is the account of a cousin of Darby’s from America who visited his relatives in England in 1801. He mentions Darby’s mother and his getting along quite well with Darby’s brother Jonathan and sister Susan (Susanna).

From *Early Recollections of Robert Hallowell Gardiner 1782–1864*, Hallowell, Maine (White & Horne) 1936:

“Immediately after taking my degree, my name was entered as a student at law in the office of Mr. John Lowell, and I went to spend the summer in Kennebec. My health had been delicate from infancy, and it was feared that the same disease which had carried off my mother and sisters was commencing its ravages upon me. Instead, therefore, of going into a lawyer’s office I was advised to travel in Europe till I should attain my majority, when my presence would be necessary here. Unfortunately, I was not prepared for foreign travel. I could read French but was unable to speak any language but my native tongue, and I had little knowledge of the literature, manners, or customs of continental Europe. My letters of introduction were only to merchants and might be considered merely as bills of exchange for a dinner. And tho’ I became acquainted in England with a few country gentlemen and their families, this acquaintance was quite limited, and I was introduced to no literary or scientific society. I went to England with the family of Mr. Dickerson, an English

26 *Letters of J. N. D.*, Lancing, Sussex (Kingston Bible Trust) n. d., vol. 2, p. 292.

merchant who had made a large fortune in this country, to which he had become attached, and would not have left it but for the urgent solicitations of his father.

On my arrival I went immediately to Mr. Wm. Vaughan's²⁷ [1752–1850, Director of Royal Exchange Assurance Corporation from 1783–1829], who kept bachelor's hall in London. He received me into his house in the most friendly manner and after a few days dispatched me to his mother, my aunt [Sarah Hallowell/Vaughan], who spent part of the year at Brighton with her aged husband and two unmarried daughters. She had a fine understanding and great dignity of character, and that Christian kindness and courtesy which are superior to all artificial polish of manners, and was strongly endued with that most useful of all qualities, common sense.

I arrived there at tea time and was received with the cordiality to be expected for the only son of a beloved brother [Robert Hallowell]. After many enquiries about my health and habits, finding that I did not wear flannel, without saying anything to me on the subject, she had a suit made up that evening and placed at my bed side ready to put on in the morning. Mrs. Darby [Anne Darby], the oldest daughter of Mrs. Vaughan, was staying at the same time at Brighton with some of her children, and I there first became acquainted with them. Mr. Darby belonged to an Irish aristocratic family possessed of valuable estates, but as a younger son he was without fortune. Disregarding the prejudices of his class he established himself in London as a merchant, and from his own character and the standing of the family, he became the principal agent of the extensive linen manufacturers in the neighborhood of the family estates and acquired a handsome fortune. He had a family of eight children, with several of whom I subsequently became intimate.

When I was staying with them at my aunt's at Hackney, I formed a particular friendship with Susan [Darby], the oldest daughter, an uncommonly fine woman, who subsequently married Mr. Pennyfether [Edward Pennefather], an eminent Irish barrister, who became Chief Justice of Ireland with the title of Baron Pennyfether [the Baron reference is incorrect, that was Edward's brother Richard]. The oldest son, Jonathan [Darby], was a young man of most excellent character but died soon after I left England. Mr. Darby's oldest brother, an Admiral in the British navy [Henry d'Esterre Darby], was never married, and upon his death the extensive Irish estates descended to Mr. Darby's son, William Henry, being then the oldest." (pp. 48–50)

"Upon my return to London I spent some weeks among my relations in the vicinity of that city. At my Aunt Vaughan's, I renewed my intimacy with the Darbys, one or more of the children being constantly with their grandmother. With Jonathan, a young man of high principle and with Susan, afterwards Mrs. Pennyfether [Pennefather], I became on the most friendly terms." (pp. 54–55)

We do not know enough about John Nelson Darby's parents to be able to accurately describe the atmosphere that ruled in the house. In the past I had even less information on John Darby than what I have now. That led me to reach the rather hasty conclusion that

27 "Note of R. H. G. 2nd. Father used to tell us that when he first arrived in London and was staying with Mr. William Vaughan, he suggested to Mr. V. that as he had two or three months at his command, he would like to go into his counting room and learn bookkeeping. Mr. V. answered 'learn bookkeeping in three months! Why you could not think of doing it under seven years, and that would be scarcely time enough.' And to this father added to us the remark, Mr. Vaughan kept five distinct sets of books, and contrived to bookkeep away the whole of his own and the family estates, and died a bankrupt."

John Darby was not a pleasant man. But this was based mainly on his business letters or business dealings. For example, while still living in Hackney he leased six small houses adjoining his premises “for the express purpose of not permitting improper persons to get into possession of them.” He allowed a man by the name of William Griffin to live in one of these houses and asked him to collect the rent from those living in the other houses. In 1816 Mr. Griffin himself was behind in paying his rent. Even against the advice of his solicitors, Darby had this man arrested and sent to prison. Viewed superficially, that appears to be very hard and uncompassionate. But I have been able to obtain somewhat more information on the case and it appears that Mr. Griffin was not a very trustworthy person.

One mistake we are all in danger of is applying our feelings and opinions of the 21st century to the 19th. Doing so we will misunderstand many things. John Darby may not have been a father prone to romping about the livingroom with his children, but that need not make him to be an unconcerned or unloving father either. The letters which have come to light regarding his romance with Anne Darby (and which Ron Kley, who from his handling letters from this period has attained a certain expertise, described as “one of the most personally revealing and un-reserved letters” seen thus far) reveal a very “romantic” and warmhearted John Darby and not just a cold, calculating “businessman”.

James Butler Stoney, a close friend of John Nelson Darby’s, once noted an interesting incident: “When J. N. D. was a young man, and exposing the defects of others, his father said to him: ‘I say, John, improve the world by one man.’”²⁸

Among the Darby letters at the American Philosophical Society mentioned above there is one from Anne (Vaughan) Darby to her brother Benjamin Vaughan dated 4 March 1806 in which she writes: “I can add with pleasure that our children are generally esteemed wherever they are known and none of them deficient in abilities.”²⁹

28 *Letters from J. B. Stoney*, Lancing, Sussex (Kingston Bible Trust) n. d., vol. 2, pp. 267–268.

29 American Philosophical Society, Benjamin Vaughan Papers 1746–1900.