

CULLEN PAPERS IN THE IRISH COLLEGE ROME (1821-1879)

(CUL/, CUL/AME, CUL/OCO, CUL/TBG, CUL/NC)



Aims of this guide

This is a guide to all the papers pertaining to Dr Paul Cullen held in the archives of the Pontifical Irish College, Rome. Cullen material in this archive has undergone rearrangements and a number of major separations during the last century- these separations have not been reversed.

This guide aims to put the papers into **context** by providing some **biographical history** on Cullen. It explains how these papers came to exist in the Irish College (**provenance**) and it aims to explain the separations and the resulting collections to researchers (**archival history**). The **content** and **arrangement** of the material is explained and finally **access conditions** and **finding aids** are identified.

Cullen Papers in the Irish College Rome

Covering Dates: 1821-1879

Collection Codes: The 'core' Cullen Collection is coded CUL/. Cullen Supplements are coded CUL/OCO, CUL/AME and CUL/TBG. Cullen material in the 'The New Collection' is coded CUL/NC.

Finding Aids: Electronic catalogue for the Cullen Collection. The New Collection catalogue is currently being compiled.

Context

Biographical history

Paul Cullen was born on 29 April 1803 near Prospect, County Kildare. He came from a prosperous farming family with clerical connections. He began his clerical studies at Carlow College in 1816. Having been offered a place in Maynooth in 1820 by Bishop Doyle of Kildare and Leighlin he instead chose to enter the College of Propaganda Fide, Rome. He was to leave Rome some thirty years later as archbishop of Armagh. A brilliant student, he took his doctorate of theology in 1828, defending it in the presence of Pope Leo XII, and was ordained the year after. After teaching Greek, Hebrew and Scripture in Propaganda Fide, he was appointed rector of the Irish College in 1832 by Gregory XVI.

As well as rector of the Irish College, he was the Irish hierarchy's official agent in Rome, which carried a salary of £100 per year. In this position he became privy to all Irish church business in Rome thereby allowing him to maintain and expand a network of important friends at the Curia. As a friend of two Popes, Gregory XVI and Pius IX, he used his position to further Irish interests.

The Irish College expanded during his rectorship of seventeen years. Student numbers doubled to over forty in 1835 due in no small part to Cullen's organisational brilliance. Since the re-foundation of the College in 1826 it had resided in the Umbrian College. In 1837 Gregory XVI presented Cullen with the church of Sant'Agata dei Goti, Via Mazzarino, to house the community.

Cullen's allegiance to Rome and the papacy 'was uncompromising' according to Emmet Larkin. During the upsurgeance of Italian nationalism and while the papacy was in crisis during the 1840s, Cullen took over as rector of the Urban (Propaganda) College. As rector he protected the institution and gave asylum to clerics under threat from the new Roman republic. In 1859 he recruited the Irish brigade against Garibaldi and in 1860 he mounted a national appeal and collected £80,000 to defend Pius's temporal power in Italy against France and Piedmont-Sardinia.

Pope Pius's gratitude for Cullen's stalwart services in the crisis was shown in 1849 when he was appointed Archbishop of Armagh following the sudden death of Archbishop Crolly. The rectorship of the Irish College then passed to his vice-rector and life-long friend, Dr Tobias Kirby. Cullen returned to Ireland as Primate and apostolic delegate charged to reform the church and put an end to in-fighting among the bishops.

Cullen's papers at the Irish College archives are mostly coextensive with his rectorship at the Irish College. However, after his return to Ireland, Cullen maintained an extensive correspondence with his successor Dr Kirby. Kirby meticulously filed these and other incoming letters. Researchers should, therefore, also consult the Kirby Collection (KIR/) and The New Collection (KIR/NC) to evaluate Cullen's immense influence on the Irish Catholic church as Archbishop of Armagh and later Archbishop of Dublin. There they will find Cullen's thoughts and strategies for the Synod of Thurles in 1850, the foundation of the Catholic University and catholic education, Holy Cross College at Clonliffe, the "devotional revolution", his championing of missions and his opposition to the "priest in politics" etc.

He died on 24 October 1878, and is buried in Holy Cross College, Clonliffe.

Provenance and archival history

Cullen papers in the Irish College Archives mainly consist of incoming mail, received and kept by Paul Cullen during various periods. Also includes draft letters and sermons created and kept by Cullen.

As noted the papers have undergone a number of major **separations**.

- **The Cullen Collection. (CUL/)** This is the 'core' Cullen Collection from which all the separations were made. It is unclear how items from Cullen's period in Armagh and Dublin have come to Rome but one suspects that they may have been sent by Cullen to Kirby and were subsequently separated from the Kirby Papers by an unknown agency
- **The New Collection** consists of papers taken from the archive by Cardinal Archbishop Francis Patrick Moran of Sydney whose intention was to write a biography of his uncle, Paul Cullen. Moran took papers from both Cullen and Kirby papers. He appears to have focused on early 19th century letters and documents dating from the Rector Blake and Rector Boylan rectorships (PCUL/NC), Cullen's pre-Irish College days at Propaganda Fide (CUL/NC), material dating from Cullen's time as rector (CUL/NC) as well as focusing on later letters written by Archbishop Cullen to Kirby between 1850 and 1860 (KIR/NC). The collection was returned from St Patrick's College, Manly in the mid-20th century. It has, therefore, been referred to in the past as the 'Manly Collection'.
- **The Cullen Supplements (CUL/AME, CUL/OCO, and CUL/TBG)** These papers were separated from the bulk of the Cullen papers (CUL/) by some unknown agency and grouped into themes. It is likely that this separation occurred after the separation of the New Collection.

Content and Structure

Content

The collections consist mainly of correspondence received by Rector Cullen during his rectorship at the College (1832-1849).

While the bulk of incoming correspondence was addressed to Cullen, one also finds letters written to third parties which occasionally were sent to Cullen as enclosures. One also finds letters to students, staff and visitors to the college which were lodged with Cullen's papers. Printed enclosures like press cuttings and circulars and a small number of outgoing draft letters also appear. There are also items pre-dating and post-dating his rectorship.

- His period of studies and office in Propaganda Fide (1821-1831). Includes incoming correspondence, class notes, sermon drafts, administrative and financial notes from Propaganda College library and printing works, printing proofs, memoranda, reports, ecclesiastical circulars. Material mainly in Latin and Italian. (CUL/ and CUL/NC1-4)
- His period as Rector of the Irish College (1821-1849): Includes incoming correspondence from the Irish hierarchy, the Holy See, missionary clergy and overseas hierarchy, family and friends, employees and suppliers, former students and students' families. Includes correspondence sent to Cullen for translation and/or personal delivery to Propaganda Fide. (CUL/ and CUL/NC/4-6)
- Correspondence with Irish-American hierarchy during his period as Rector of the Irish College (1824-1849): Includes incoming correspondence, memoranda, status reports separated from the main Cullen Collection. (CUL/OCO, CUL/AME, CUL/TBG)
- His periods as Archbishop of Armagh and of Dublin (1850-1878): Includes incoming correspondence with Irish hierarchy, family and friends (CUL/ and CUL/NC). Researchers should also look to the New Collection (KIR/NC) for letters from Archbishop Cullen to Rector Tobias Kirby.

Arrangement

- **Cullen Collection (CUL/)** Arranged chronologically and numbered continuously 1-2025. Some later insertions caused duplicate numbers with –A and –B additions.
- **Cullen Supplements (CUL/AME, CUL/OCO, and CUL/TBG)** These letters were separated along thematic lines and are named "Letters from America", "Letters from Trinidad and British Guiana", and "Letters from Bishop O'Connor [of Pittsburgh]". These are also in chronological order, numbered 1- 38 (CUL/OCO/ Bishop O'Connor), 1-137 (CUL/AME/ American letters), and 1-57 (CUL/TBG/ Letters from Trinidad and British Guyana). They are catalogued at the end of the Cullen Collection.
- **The New Collection (PCUL/NC, CUL/NC and KIR/NC)**. These documents were separated from the bulk of the papers by Cardinal Archbishop Francis Patrick Moran of Sydney. They have been divided into three periods
 - **PreCullen New Collection (PCUL/NC)**. 1759-1825. Divided into five sub-series, dividing the material chronologically.
 - **Cullen New Collection (CUL/NC)**. c1820-1851 Arranged for the first part thematically (Cullen Student of Propaganda, Cullen Office Holder Propaganda). Drafts are separated from incoming correspondence. Correspondence is then arranged by date when known.
 - **Kirby New Collection (KIR/NC)**. 1840-1895 Contains many letters from Archbishop Cullen to Kirby. It has been arranged into nine sub-series. The first four series contain incoming and draft outgoing correspondence. The first series contains dated correspondence arranged chronologically. The second series contains drafts of outgoing letters. The third series contain undated correspondence arranged alphabetically. The fourth series contains undated and unidentified correspondence. The remaining five series contain agency material and legal points, lecture notes, spiritual and devotional material, pastoral letters and encyclicals and finally prose.

Access and Use

Access conditions.

Physical: open access.

Virtual: open access subject to copyright. Material digitized to a resolution of 200 dpi and is being made available at <http://www.cflr.beniculturali.it/Patrimonio/IstitutiCulturali/CPI.php>. (Note- digitization project is ongoing- for further details please contact the archivist of the Irish College at archives@irishcollege.org)

Language:

English, Italian, Latin, French

Finding aids:

Electronic catalogues The Cullen catalogue has been copied from an earlier paper catalogue, with some slight amendments. The catalogue for the New Collection is in the process of being written- for further details please contact the archivist of the Irish College at archives@irishcollege.org)

Related material:

Researchers should also consult the Kirby Collection (KIR/) and Kirby material in the New Collection (KIR/NC) for letters and documents **from** Dr Cullen while Archbishop of Armagh and Archbishop of Dublin.

Archivist, Irish College Rome.

