

(SECRET) 10070-1-1714

to the Portsmouth Diocese. If any records were moved from Clifton to Portsmouth then they were completely destroyed during a raid by the Luftwaffe in 1941.

Under these unpromising circumstances I have consulted Don Frederick Hockey, sub-prior of Quarr Abbey in the Isle of Wight, who is also a much-respected historian of Church affairs. He thinks that the actions by the various Church orders and institutions in France threatened by laws proposed or enacted by the anti-clerical factions about 1901 would have been conducted with much secrecy and therefore the Bishop of Clifton would have been kept informed only in confidence and no written papers are likely to have been kept.

Would you therefore be so kind as to confirm or to correct my impressions-

- (1) that Charles Frederick COOKSEY, then a professional Estate Agent in Southampton, acted for the Monastery in England by buying Bustard Manor Farm, Martin, Hampshire, about 1901, and actively assisted in transferring Monastic property to England from Cherbourg;
- (2) that he arranged that either the whole Abbaye de La Trappe, or only that part established at Martin, be registered as an English company (S.A.); (Note: our laws require that the company has a registered address in England, which could have been his own business address in Southampton).
- (3) that he disposed of Bustard Manor Farm for the Abbey about 1921.

Could you also comment upon my impression that La Trappe was only one of many French church institutions which bought land abroad as a safeguard against possible suppression. I understand, for example, the Jesuits went to Guernsey or Jersey. Further, I understand that although the attitude of the French Government was changed after the 1914-18 War, during which La Trappe ran an invaluable military hospital, the objectionable legislation has not been repealed and that many institutions have, for their protection, acquired the status of schools or hospitals. Is La Trappe still a foreign company?

I shall be grateful for your help in writing the memoir of Cooksey. If there is any aspect which is still delicate will you please say specifically what I should avoid writing for publication.

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G.M. Bryer

