

## Chapter XX

1907-1913

### Dunnabeck : Canon of Carlisle: Twenty Five Years at Crosthwaite

Amid all Hardwicke's varied activities, local, national and international, some of his friends felt that it would be easier and better for him to live nearer to the hub of the nation, instead of being isolated in a small country parish. Edith and Hardwicke, however, thought quite differently and felt that they could not bear to leave the Lake District, but came to the conclusion that what they really needed was a peaceful retreat, where they could gain rest and refreshment in order to meet further challenges. As a result, in January, 1907, on the anniversary of their wedding day, they bought a small, secluded property called Dunnabeck, consisting of a cottage and a few fields from which there were beautiful views, especially of Rydal Water. This proved to be a very good decision, particularly during the War, when holidays could not be taken abroad. They shared their enjoyment by loaning the cottage to friends, when possible.

A few months later they were abroad again, taking with them Gertrude and Eleanor Simpson. Most of the time was spent at Assisi with Paul Sabatier and his family, but there were visits to the Cathedral of Milan, the Luini frescoes and the dome paintings of Gaudenzio Ferrari. Hardwicke always made sure that he was back in England from such visits abroad, to keep any appointments he had made. On this occasion he returned for the opening of St. George's School, Harpenden and to preach a sermon at St. Mary's, Oxford.

In 1909, Hardwicke, who had been an Honorary Canon since 1893, was offered the Second Canonry in Carlisle Cathedral, by Dr. Diggle, Bishop of Carlisle, "in token of grateful appreciation for long and faithful service in the diocese." This did not mean that he had to leave Crosthwaite, but that he had to be in residence at

Carlisle for three months of each year, with frequent visits in between. The appointment, which was well received, was considered to be a courageous one by Bishop Diggle. Hardwicke received numerous congratulations from the many organisations, with which he was involved and from his many friends.

The Canon's house at the Cathedral was rather gloomy and looked out on to graves, a far cry from the beauty of Crosthwaite Vicarage with its superb views, but Edith and Hardwicke set about transforming it into a warm and welcoming home. It came to life through their many social occasions, especially dinner parties, to which a great variety of interesting people from all walks of life and shades of opinion were invited.

The change from Crosthwaite to Carlisle struck Hardwicke forcibly. He found it to be colder, windier, but sunnier. He thought that the evening sun shining on the old walls of Carlisle made a beautiful picture. It was dirtier, with black dust from the factories, which seemed to collect everywhere and in addition, seven railways converged, making a great deal of noise and smoke, which he thought was very unpleasant, especially so at night, when shunting made sleep in the Abbey practically impossible.

In spite of this he worked enthusiastically, on behalf of the Cathedral, having special responsibility for school work in the Diocese. One of his first acts was to press for the opening of the Abbey gates which had always been locked. He felt that the locked gates created a barrier between the life of the Cathedral and that of the City. Hardwicke thought that the people of Carlisle should have access to their Cathedral. He met with stiff opposition to this suggestion, but eventually, it was agreed that there could be a year's trial for the scheme. When the year was over, Hardwicke successfully negotiated an extension and the gates remained open. He would have liked to have the high iron railings which surrounded the Cathedral removed, as well, but that was not allowed.

Much time and thought was spent on writing his sermons, which for the most part, applied Christianity to the practical problems of everyday life. Not many people at that time attended the Cathedral services, except to hear Bishop Diggle preach. Gradually, however, many who were involved in social work and reform, the welfare of the young and educational progress, realized that in Canon Rawnsley they had an ally and gave him their support. Others also came to understand that although he liked and suggested innovations, he held the old traditions in high regard.

He had the great gift of bringing together people of diverse beliefs, religious and secular, for the common good. On discovering from Hugh Falconer, the Presbyterian Minister, who became his close friend, that there was a Free Church Fraternal in Carlisle when ministers from those churches, met once a month in each other's houses for afternoon tea and to discuss current problems and matters of interest to them all, Canon Rawnsley felt that it would be valuable to adopt the practice, which Hugh Falconer had experienced when he was a minister in Jesmond, Newcastle, where all the clergy were included in the Fraternal. They agreed to arrange such an event in Hardwicke's study at the Cathedral. Hugh Falconer would invite the Free Church clergy and Hardwicke the Anglicans. The meeting was successful and led to others on a regular basis, which proved both useful and enjoyable.

From these meetings, at the instigation of Hardwicke, an appeal to the people of Carlisle was drawn up regarding public worship. It was signed by nearly all the Clergy and distributed throughout the City. This culminated in a large meeting, with outside speakers in the Drill Hall. The cost and the arrangements were for the most part borne by Hardwicke.

He worked hard at preserving established traditions, such as Mayor's Sunday and St. Luke's Day for the medical profession. In addition he arranged special services for the Y.M.C.A., Boy Scouts and Ambulance Brigade, with interesting speakers. Edith and Hardwicke were held in high regard by the Cathedral staff, as they took care over every detail of the services and were

particularly interested in the choir and Cathedral music. Edith also embroidered a red rose, on the shoulders of each of the black gowns worn by the Bedesmen. Altogether there were eleven residences, which involved a great deal of hard work for Canon Rawnsley, as he kept in touch with his own parish, which was being looked after by his three curates. The strict rule for attending services in the Cathedral, at 10a.m. and 4p.m. each day put a great strain on him, as he endeavoured to keep up his attendance at meetings, especially in London, which involved a great deal of night travel, because of the service times.

At Christmas, Edith and Hardwicke had the Cathedral decorated with holly and evergreens. Two large pine branches in green tubs were placed in the Sacrarium which pleased some people, while others disapproved, as they considered such things to be redolent of paganism. For part of Christmas Day they returned to Keswick to take part in the services at Crosthwaite. On the last day of the year they left Carlisle, as the residence ended, in time to keep the traditional customs at home. The bellringers and their wives, together with past and present curates had supper at the Vicarage on New Year's Eve. At half past eleven after singing, "Auld Lang Syne", they all proceeded to the belfry, where, five minutes before midnight, the funeral bell was tolled for the dying year. After a few minutes of silence, the bells rang out joyfully for the New Year. Hardwicke then read a poem and said prayers.

In the same year, 1909, as Hardwicke became a Canon of Carlisle Cathedral, he had been the vicar of Crosthwaite for twenty five years. His parishioners felt that the occasion should be marked in some way, to show their appreciation of all that Edith and Hardwicke had done for the parish. Five hundred years earlier, the font in Crosthwaite Church, had been given as a memorial to the work of Sir Thomas de Eskhead, vicar from 1363 to 1390, by Lady Maude, wife of Percy, Earl of Northumberland and her sister. He had been instrumental in settling a quarrel between the monks of Furness and those of Fountains Abbey over land in Borrowdale. Since the Rawnsleys had spent much time and money in caring for and beautifying the Church, it was felt that it would be fitting to

create a more pleasing setting for the font. This was achieved by moving it to the west end of the south aisle, where there had been an old vestry, thus creating a baptistry. This was panelled and paved with stone from the Elterwater quarries. The base is a single slab of 'Rodona breccia' from Serravezza, while the ivory white and green-veined inlay marble is Pavonazva, a rare marble from Carrara. The inscription in Old Gothic lettering is as follows:-

"In recognition of the life and work in this parish for twenty five years of Hardwicke Drummond Rawnsley MDCCCLXXXIII-MDCCCCVIII this baptistry is dedicated to the glory of God by parishioners and friends. Grant Lord, that all who are here baptized may continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants to their lives' end."

A copper ewer to be used at the font was designed and made at the K.S.I.A. as a token of thanks to Edith for all her work in the Parish.<sup>1</sup> The dedication took place on the 8 August 1909. Hardwicke's sermon on this occasion was entitled, "The Secret of Public Service" - the joy that follows all work done for the advancement of a holier and happier life for others.

This occasion gave great pleasure and happiness to Canon Rawnsley and his wife. They also had further joy in the visits of their grandchildren, Una, David, Conrad and Derrick, who came frequently to Crosthwaite, Carlisle and Dunnabeck.

This pleasant interlude in Hardwicke's busy life was short-lived. After his efforts to provide a memorial to Tennyson<sup>2</sup> at Somersby and his campaign over Tattershall Castle,<sup>3</sup> by the autumn of 1911, he found himself threatened with a libel action. Hardwicke was an outspoken opponent of white bleached bread, which he alleged was, " ... slowly starving the nation, robbing it of bone for the body, enamel for the teeth and proteids for the tissue."<sup>4</sup> He

<sup>1</sup>Wilson, Tom. History of Crosthwaite Parish Church Keswick, G.W. McKane & Son Ltd., Keswick, 1939 (revised 1970 by J.W. Kaye)

<sup>2</sup>See Ch XI, 'Memorials'

<sup>3</sup>Rawnsley E.F. - Canon Rawnsley, p.220 -221

<sup>4</sup>Rawnsley, E.F., Canon Rawnsley, p224

contended that the new steel roller mill process destroyed the nutritious part of the flour which was in the old mill-stone process. As so often in his campaigns, he was looking to the future, rather than standing in the way of progress. His difficulty was put in perspective when he suggested that what comprised standard flour should be defined by law and this was accepted.

At the end of the year, he received information from a Windermere resident that the Lake was being spoiled by the building of ugly looking hangars by an aviator, who intended to use them for constructing hydro-aeroplanes, with a view to opening a school for aviators, using the Lake as a practice ground. The storm which rose over this development reached gale force proportions. A Windermere Hydro-Aeroplane Protest Committee was formed and was joined by the Furness Railway Company, which ran the steamer services on Windermere. Hardwicke led the opposition movement with letters and articles to the press. A petition was signed by ten thousand people, many of them influential. Finally, a deputation, of which Hardwicke was a member, visited the Home Secretary. This resulted in the District Council being allowed to make restrictions. Nature, however, took a hand and after many strong wind storms had damaged and destroyed several machines, Windermere was deemed unsuitable and the scheme moved to Morecambe Bay.

That Canon Rawnsley disapproved of aviation is clear from a letter which he wrote to the *Daily Chronicle* and was reprinted in the *Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald*.<sup>1</sup> Evidently a young man had been killed taking part in a flying display at Bournemouth. After stating, that in no way did he disparage the efforts of the brave young man, who had died in his efforts to contribute to scientific progress, he pointed out that aviation being only in the experimental stage, flying displays should not be allowed. He sent deep sympathy to the bereaved parents. It seems that he was not entirely against flying, as such, but strongly deplored its possible use to carry war into the heavens, which were meant to be peaceful. The letter ends with a reference to a

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<sup>1</sup>The 23 July 1910

development at Lucerne of an aerial passenger project, which was considered to be an exciting tourist attraction, but which he thought would destroy the rest and peace, which visitors desired. He called upon the Board of Trade, " ... to make such stringent regulations as will discourage the venture."

All this activity led Hardwicke to suffer total exhaustion and his doctors urged him to rest. In the spring of 1912, after speaking at the Browning Centenary, in Westminster Abbey he decided to take their advice. With Edith, Eleanor and Gertrude Simpson he travelled to Italy for a quiet holiday at Varese. There he soon began to feel better and they went on to Venice. On a previous visit he met Signor Agassiz, the architect in charge of looking after the structure of St. Mark's Cathedral and now Hardwicke spent time with him, learning all he could about the building with its frescoes and mosaics. Later they continued their journey to Asolo where the centenary of Robert Browning's birth had been celebrated earlier and met the poet's son, who allowed them to spend several afternoons in his beautiful garden.

On his return from Italy, Hardwicke was appointed Chaplain to the King, which pleased his friends and gave him great pleasure.

Sad news followed later in the year with the death of two of the founders of the National Trust, friends of Hardwicke, Octavia Hill in 1912 and Sir Robert Hunter in 1913. At a memorial service in Southwark Cathedral for Octavia, Hardwicke was the preacher. His sermon was entitled, "The Power of Personal Service," in which he spoke of her good work, especially her efforts to improve housing conditions for the very poor, as well as her work for the National Trust.<sup>1</sup>

On the death of Sir Robert Hunter, Hardwicke wrote an article in the *Cornhill Magazine*, as a tribute to his work for the National Trust, noting his great success in preserving Epping Forest for the nation.

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<sup>1</sup>C.R.O. WDX/402, the 21 August 1912

In September, of the same year, Hardwicke was asked to entertain Mr. Walter Page, the newly appointed American Ambassador and his daughter. They had an enjoyable and instructive visit, as their host showed them the beauty of the district and told them of the literary associations. The Ambassador felt that Hardwicke had also done excellent service to diplomacy.

He even wrote a sonnet for Mr. Page and later in the year as the Rawnsley family placed headstones in Halton Holgate churchyard for their old friends, the parish clerk, Francis Haw and the rectory gardener, Edmund Smalley, he wrote verses for them. It seemed that he could write sonnets to order and when news of Captain Scott's heroic death reached England, the editor of the *Daily News* sent a telegram asking for a memorial sonnet by return. Although Hardwicke was in a committee meeting of the Board of Education, he complied with the request and telegraphed the sonnet to London that day.