



Seeking Holiness: Eliot, Auden, Betjeman

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AS war raged in Europe, two men, each a practising Christian in the high church or Anglo-Catholic tradition, and one on each side of the Atlantic, were composing what I am choosing to call 'poetry of the Incarnation.' Between 1940 and 1942, T.S. Eliot published 'East Coker', then 'The Dry Salvages' and finally 'Little Gidding', completing the sequence which, when added to the earlier, and initially free-standing 'Burnt Norton', became known as *Four Quartets*. Meanwhile, in the United States of America, W.H. Auden completed in 1942, and published two years later, *For The Time Being*, intended as an oratorio but which in the event was for the most part never set to music. Beyond the coincidence of dates and the shared (though very differently nuanced) faith of the poets, it may be entirely unfair to mention these works in the same breath, for they are very different pieces indeed: each musical, allusive and comprehensive of a variety of poetical forms – and, in Auden's case, inclusive also of a substantial piece of prose – but each immediately distinct: Auden's a knotty, expository and at times didactic piece, while the argument of *Four Quartets* is carried forward through the cumulative effects of families of images and the tide-like rise and fall of the language.

Yet the similarity of the subject matter is striking too. Auden's – subtitled 'A Christmas Oratorio' – presents itself quite openly as a reflection, a meditation, on the mysteries of the Christian story through what the liturgists call the 'cycle of the Incarnation' (running from Advent to Candlemass) although, in the poem, historical time rather than liturgical time is obeyed, with the Massacre of the Innocents and the Flight into Egypt coming after the 'Song of Simeon.' Eliot, by contrast, has no such neat framework; his 'liturgical cycle,' has come earlier, with the *Ariel*

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Poems, and it has gone on, of course, to the beginning of the second great cycle of fasts and feasts which give shape to the liturgical year, the Paschal cycle which runs from Ash Wednesday to Pentecost. Both the passion of Christ and the Pentecostal fire feature decisively in *Four Quartets*, but the thread which runs through the *Quartets*, and draws each of the four together, is what we might call the moment of the *Angelus*: the point of intersection between time and eternity of which the archangel's call to Mary is the herald, and which constitutes the melody around which the musical structure of the *Four Quartets* is built.

I began by noting that both Eliot and Auden were practising Christians in the Anglo-Catholic tradition. By the time of the composition of the wartime *Quartets*, Eliot had been a baptised and confirmed Anglican for some fifteen years; and those years coincided with the zenith of the Anglo-Catholic movement, including the last of the five spectacular Anglo-Catholic congresses, which concluded in 1933, and which marked the only epoch in the history of the modern Church of England when for a while it really did seem as though the catholic 'party' stood a chance of converting the whole of the established church to its ways. For Auden, the return to the practice of the faith into which he had been baptised in childhood, but from which he had drifted both prior to and then more decisively during his time as an undergraduate at Oxford, which took place little by little in 1939-40 was quite naturally fostered in the prevailing Anglo-Catholicism of the Episcopalian Church on the American east coast. This coincided perfectly with his aesthetic tastes in the practice of religion: 'Anglo-Catholic but not too spiky.' But neither Eliot nor Auden could be described as ecclesiastical party-politicians. As Humphrey Carpenter notes in his biography of Auden,¹ the surprise of some of his friends that Auden did not make the journey into the Roman Communion, when he returned to worship and the reception of the sacraments, failed to take into account his critical approach both to Scripture and Tradition expressed in his aphorism, 'Truth is catholic, but the search for it, protestant.' Auden's Christianity never lost this combination of the attraction to Catholic ritual with an – at times – radical approach to doctrine. He was never convinced, for example, of the truth of the doctrine of the virginal conception, fearing



anything which seemed to him to downplay the redemption of the body or smack of a dualism of body and soul. Manichaeism was one of the great enemies. Yet, as Carpenter again explains for us, it was Auden's encounter with the theological writings of Charles Williams which helped to re-awaken in him the stirrings of an active faith. Williams wrote of how it is through the life of the Church that the divine purpose behind human history is revealed and the workings of providence interpreted, and of how the Incarnation of Jesus Christ 'reconciled the natural world with the world of the kingdom of heaven.' That is a line which might serve as a gloss on *For The Time Being*, although 'reconciled' suggests something smoother and less turbulent than Auden's oratorio would imply: certainly, it is too simple and straightforward a tag for *Four Quartets*, even if it is by no means wholly beside the point.

To return to Eliot: I said that he, like Auden, was no ecclesiastical politician, although we do find some defiantly anti-Roman Catholic remarks among Eliot's writings, they are neither consistent nor passionately felt. The early, and it seems to me, much misunderstood, poem 'The Hippopotamus', presents a sympathetic view of the Church of England (whom surely the Hippo represents), comic, lumbering, feeble and erring, and yet (by the grace of God) taking wing to the heavenly places while the 'True Church' – the Roman Church – remains ultimately earthbound. Later, in the essay 'Thoughts After Lambeth' (1931),² Eliot argues not for the Church of England as a 'National Church,' still less an 'Imperial Church,' in an eighteenth-century Erastian sense, but rather as 'the Catholic Church in England,' not sectarian, in the way that (in England) the Roman Catholic Church inevitably must be – and therefore fruitful in mission. Anglo-Catholicism serves both to help a few on their way to their true spiritual home (that is, in full communion with the Holy See), but also, and more frequently, to keep those within the fold of the 'English Catholic Church' who would otherwise feel compelled to leave it. But the division between Anglo- and Roman Catholicism is in any case put into perspective by the remarks with which Eliot his essay, in which he notes that the real division is that between Christians and non-Christians, and the real challenge to the Universal Church that of



living more 'against the World than at any time since pagan Rome.... [for] The World is trying the experiment of attempting to form a civilised but non-Christian mentality.' The final sentence of 'Thoughts After Lambeth' recalls a key phrase from *Ash-Wednesday*: the vocation of the Church is that of 'redeeming the time' and preserving the faith through the 'dark ages before us' so that civilisation might be rebuilt and renewed.

'Poetry of the Incarnation,' I called both *Four Quartets* and *For the Time Being*. There is a brief mention of Newman, Pusey and Tractarianism in Eliot's essay 'Arnold and Pater' (1930),³ but only to make the point that, while 'passionate about dogmatic essentials,' the fathers of the Oxford Movement were 'singularly indifferent to the sensuous expressions of orthodoxy' – an incomplete judgement of Pusey who, while never himself given to ritualism (he considered it inappropriate to the spiritually impoverished state of the Church of England of his age)⁴, defended those who were. There is no evidence that I am aware of that points to Eliot having studied the writings of the Tractarians in the way in which he immersed himself in the theology – and the prose style – of their late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century forebears, especially Lancelot Andrewes. But what we can say, is that without the influence and after-life of the Oxford Movement, there would have been no expression of the Catholic tradition in the Church of England in which Eliot could have found a spiritual home. (The context in the United States, where the Episcopal church was fed by the tradition of Scots Episcopalianism was somewhat different.)

Let me emphasise just two points about the Tractarians. First, we need to remember Newman's tribute to John Keble: that 'he did for the Church of England what none but a poet could do: he made it poetical'.⁵ As Geoffrey Rowell has remarked, 'the allusive and symbolic character of poetry made it for Keble a powerful vehicle of Christian truth.'⁶ For the Tractarians, beginning with Keble, the rediscovery of the theological importance of the sacraments went hand-in-hand with a wider sense of the sacramental and the symbolic: hence, in Keble's hugely popular and influential verse collection *The Christian Year* (structured around the feasts and fasts of *The Book of Common Prayer*) the natural order of



creation can disclose the glory of God, for those whose hearts and minds are formed to perceive the ultimate reality above and beyond the surface appearance of things. Keble and Newman, too, gave back to the English Church the notion that Christian truth can be expressed poetically as much as propositionally. This insight did not originate with the nineteenth-century fathers: as Keble himself knew well, behind it lies Romanticism, Wordsworth and especially Coleridge, for whom the Scriptures were not to be viewed as a series of proof-texts in systematic theology, but rather as a rich source of symbols consonant with the truths which they conveyed. But it is with the Tractarians, not least with their 'doctrine of reserve' – that is, the idea that divine truths not only *need* not, but *should* not be expressed in such a way as to make them immediately accessible to all – that such an approach really matures.

Second, Tractarianism put the doctrine of the Incarnation firmly at the centre of the Christian faith once again. Recent writers have properly challenged the caricatured picture of eighteenth-century Anglicanism which persisted for generations. Nevertheless, there is sufficient truth in that caricature – of an age of increasing deism, in which God was perceived as a distant creator now largely or wholly removed from his human creatures – to make the Tractarian emphasis on the divine flesh-taking, and of the possibility, therefore, for human participation in the life of God which that entails (divinisation or *theosis*) burst upon the scene with electrifying effect. Keble praised Hooker for his strong sense of the mystery of the Incarnation, and, poetically, and controversially, he honoured the Blessed Virgin Mary as the one in whose very flesh Godhead and manhood are substantially united, describing how our response to Mary the Mother of the Church should be an *Ave*, as in the *Angelus* prayer, 'Hail Mary, full of grace'. (That same *Angelus* prayer constituted a key motif for Eliot, notably in *Ash-Wednesday* and 'The Dry Salvages'.) Pusey, exhibits a still more passionate theology of the Incarnation: it is 'a depth of mystery unsearchable,' it is the means by which 'all things, "both which are in Heaven and which are in earth," [shall] be gathered together and summed up in one.'⁷ The mystery of the divine flesh-taking is completed at the Lord's exaltation on Ascension Day and the consequent sending



of the Holy Spirit, by which man is taken up into God; and the terms in which Pusey – and Keble – speak of the Pentecostal fire is frequently not far removed from the texture of the language of ‘Little Gidding’. But if, for Dr Pusey, the Incarnation, fulfilled in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer, sets before the Christian soul the path to glorification and union with God, then the road to that glorious union must be trodden with prayer and penitence. Pusey would recognise Eliot’s *via negativa*, his emphasis on renunciation and the letting-go of self.

So here is the legacy of the Tractarian Movement – the sense of the poetical, the inescapability of the Incarnation, and the call to penitence – which would have formed part of the fabric of the High Church tradition into which Eliot was baptised, and in which he practised his faith for the rest of his life. In his poem ‘The Incarnate One’, Edwin Muir castigates the Calvinism of his Orkney upbringing:

*The Word made flesh here is made word again,
A word made word in flourish and arrogant crook.
See there King Calvin with his iron pen,
And God three angry letters in a book,
And there the logical hook
On which the mystery is impaled and bent
Into an ideological instrument.⁸*

How do you keep the Word made Flesh from turning back into word alone? This is the challenge facing liturgical language, and, by extension, of language which borrows from liturgical texts, and employs what we can call a ‘liturgical cadence.’ How do you convey the mystery of the moment of the *Angelus*, the very moment when, by a word of greeting and a word of ascent, the Word – the logos, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity – becomes the speechless, silent Word, hidden in the womb of a young woman?

Before coming back to *For Time Being*, and a brief look at how Auden got there (and a briefer glance still at our third pilgrim on the path of holiness, John Betjeman), I would indicate where these questions, and those key themes of the Tractarian inheritance, strike the text of Eliot’s poetry.

I

We will see that such themes reach back almost to the beginnings of



Eliot's work. We can start with 'Gerontion',⁹ in which the dilemma which I posed a moment ago is put precisely:

*Signs are taken for wonders. 'We would see a sign!'
The word within a word, unable to speak a word,
Swaddled with darkness.*

Here – in a poem predating Eliot's baptism by seven years – the world is unredeemed, the mystery of the Incarnation unapprehended. The opening stanza of 'Mr Eliot's Sunday Morning Service' proffers a comically overblown ('polyphiloprogenitive') but nonetheless depressing vision of the Word becoming 'words, words, words',¹⁰ which can be contrasted with the Umbrian painter's simple but moving depiction of the Incarnate Christ set amidst representations of the other two persons of the Trinity.¹¹ In 'The Hollow Men', we meet the multifoliate rose of Dante's paradise, the church with the saints forming the rose petals, but which also speaks of the Virgin Mary, the 'Rose of Sharon' of the Song of Songs,¹² who conceals the unborn Christ-child, the Word made Flesh, within her womb even as the enfolded petals of the flower conceal the bud. Perhaps, too, Part V of 'The Hollow Men' gestures towards the mystery of the Annunciation:

*Between the conception
And the creation
Between the emotion
And the response
Falls the Shadow.*

Could this refer to the moment of the archangel's visit to Mary, and could the Shadow be the Holy Ghost, who 'overshadows' the Blessed Virgin? In any event, 'The Hollow Men' ends (or almost ends) with a prayer and a petition, however compromised and broken it is. Yet in the little paragraph

*For Thine is
Life is
For Thine is the*

we find a hint that the way forward from 'the dead land' is that movement into the Kingdom of love and charity which alone can transcend it, and in which humanity is able to participate by virtue of the fleshtaking of Christ.



It is in the *Ariel Poems*, as I have already said, that we find an extended treatment of the key episodes in the unfolding of the story of the Incarnation. The best gloss on Eliot's apprehension of the meaning of the Incarnation is provided by the sermon given by Archbishop Becket in the Interlude in *Murder in the Cathedral*:

It was in this same night that has just passed, that a multitude of the heavenly host appeared before the Shepherds at Bethlehem, saying 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will'; at this same time of all the year that we celebrate at once the Birth of Our Lord and His Passion and Death upon the Cross.

As David Moody has commented: 'in Eliot's mind the Christmas tree becomes one with Christ's cross.'¹³ He might have added a further reference to 'The Cultivation of Christmas Trees' – a poem whose conclusion points forward to 'Burnt Norton' – in which the apprehension of wonder at the miracle of the Incarnation characterised by the child who really does see an angel at the top of the Christmas tree is co-mingled with the martyrdom of St Lucy and her 'crown of fire.'

'Journey of the Magi' turns on the association of the birth (of the Saviour) with his saving death, in a manner which both compels and disturbs the wise men. The words of 'The Dry Salvages' might have been written for them, 'We had the experience but missed the meaning.' It is not simply in the last section that birth and death come together: the passion of Christ is foreshadowed in the 'six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver, / And feet kicking the empty wineskins.' Simeon, in words which recall 'Gerontion', and which derive from the Christmas sermon by Lancelot Andrewes which Eliot quotes in his 1926 essay on that great divine, beholds 'the Infant, the still unspeaking and unspoken Word,' and also longs for death. Unlike the Magi, he has understood the meaning of the Incarnation, he has 'seen salvation'. His dilemma is that he cannot see beyond the Cross, so 'time future' is not redeemed:

Who shall remember my house, where shall live my children's children?

When the time of sorrow is come?

Then, the end of the first part of *Ash-Wednesday* locates us once again within the moment of the Annunciation:



Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death

Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.

This petition, of course, forms the conclusion to the *Ave Maria*, the thrice-repeated invocation of the Blessed Virgin which gives shape to the *Angelus*, the memorial of the Incarnation recited, traditionally, at the sixth hour of the morning and evening and at noon. The Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament continues the miracle of the Incarnation in the consecration and reception of Holy Communion, and Part III of *Ash-Wednesday* takes us almost – but not quite – to this point, with the words of the *Domine, non sum dignus*, the response to the invitation by the priest to the faithful to come to the altar and receive the Body and Blood. The words are the centurion's, as recorded by Matthew and Luke:

Lord, I am not worthy

Lord, I am not worthy

but speak the word only....

The fourth part concludes with yet another liturgical petition: this time from the *Salve, Regina*, the eleventh-century hymn to the Virgin. In the *Salve*, we pray to Mary as 'poor banished children of Eve,' asking that she will show us 'after this our exile' (the phrase Eliot quotes), 'the blessed fruit of [her] womb, Jesus.' Once again, as with all orthodox prayer to the Mother of God, the prayer takes us *through* the intercession of the Virgin to the vision of Her Son. The Incarnation is the miracle by which humanity recovers that intimacy with God which was lost through our banishment from paradise and our journey into 'exile'. But it is still more interesting that Eliot should use the *Salve*, in the light of his recurrent imagery of water and the sea, especially in Part IV of 'The Dry Salvages'. For it is, *par excellence*, the mariners' prayer.¹⁴ The Lady 'whose shrine stands on the promontory' is *stella maris*, the Star of the Sea, the one who not only guides seafarers but, figuratively, all humanity through the rough seas of this world; but whose place is also liminal, on the threshold of heaven and earth – the meeting-point of the Incarnation. Eliot himself wrote that 'there *ought* to be a shrine of the BVM at the harbour mouth of a fishing port.'¹⁵

In *Ash-Wednesday*, Part V, we come to the notion of the moment of Incarnation, pointed up by the quotation from the first chapter of John's gospel ('And the light shone in darkness'), as the still centre around which



the world turns, in the phrasing of 'Burnt Norton'. The refrain – 'O my people, what have I done unto thee' – comes from the 'Reproaches' set for the Solemn Litany of Good Friday, and which accompanies the ceremony of the Veneration of the Cross. Here we look forward to the Good Friday lyric, the fourth part of 'East Coker'. Finally, the whole *Ash-Wednesday* sequence closes with a pair of liturgical invocations which return us to the place of sacrifice, the altar of the Mass: 'suffer me not to be separated' from the priest's private prayer of preparation before receiving the sacred elements¹⁶ and then, the last line of all, 'And let my cry come unto Thee', part of the exchange between priest and server with which (here, in translation) the Tridentine Roman Mass begins.

II

To hold *For The Time Being* alongside *Four Quartets* is to come at the central mysteries of the faith from, as it were, the other side of the mirror. There is a general thematic link between the opening section 'Advent' and 'Burnt Norton': here, too, is an attempt to set out man's condition, from which the only way out comes through the gate of the Incarnation. The two poets – as we must expect from their common practice of the faith – share a common language, a common textual framework, but, in ways which reflect a combination of quite different assumptions about *where* consummation lies (and we cannot here overlook the two poets' personal histories), the path to holiness (to use the title of this chapter) is different for Auden. Look at the exchanges between Gabriel and Mary in 'The Annunciation', Part III, and in particular, at Mary's response to the archangel's word:

*What dancing joy would whirl
My ignorance away?
Light blazes out of stone
The taciturn water
Bursts into music,
And warm wings throb within
The motionless rose:
What sudden rush of Power
Commands me to command?*¹⁷



And then again:

*My flesh in terror and fire
Rejoices that the Word
Who utters the world out of nothing
As a pledge of His word to love her
Against her will, and to turn
Her desperate longing to love
Should ask to wear me
From now to their wedding day
For an engagement ring.*

The images – light, water, the rose, terror and fire – and the play on Word / word could come from Eliot. But the handling of them is different, and the last and unifying image – that Mary is the living ‘engagement ring’ between the Word and the world – is unimaginable in Eliot’s vision. For Auden, the Incarnation is primarily the means of the point of entry into the world of a new regime of love, which is itself incarnated in the real – physical and sexual – love between persons. This is the point of the sequence of temptations of St Joseph, and what is proclaimed by the Chorus of Angels (‘Unto you a Child, / A Son is given. / Praising, proclaiming / The ingress of Love...’). This is what the Shepherds see as the means of their ‘release from isolating wrong’; this, above all, is the meaning of the final Chorus:

*He is the Life.
Love Him in the World of the Flesh;
And at your marriage all its occasions shall dance for joy.*

For the earlier Auden, moments which disclose a sense of ‘communion’ – religious, quasi-religious, or at least ‘spiritual’ in feel – are to do with the company of his fellow human beings taking on a depth and a resonance beyond itself. The best example of this is the poem written in June 1933, ‘A Summer Night’, which Auden was later to see as describing an experience which, with hindsight, he saw as critical in the reawakening of his religious sensibility. Much later, ‘Precious Five’ (1950) will capture Auden’s ‘theology of communion’ in a single line: ‘*Bless what there is for being*’ (the italics are Auden’s).

III

The third poet I would mention is John Betjeman. Why? Not because I am putting him on a par, as a poet, with either Eliot or Auden. Neither simply because of the appealing connexions which tie him with Eliot, whose pupil he briefly was while a schoolboy at Highgate Junior School. Rather, it is because for Betjeman, the possibility of the Incarnation – that it might be true that the Word became Flesh – was always the ‘overwhelming question’. He never doubted that the Church of England was part of the Catholic Church. He reconciled, just, the irregularity of his personal relationships with the practise of his faith – much as Auden reconciled his active homosexuality. What mattered was that question posed in ‘Summoned by Bells’:

*Those were the days when that divine baroque
Transformed our English altars and our ways.
Fiddle-back chasuble in mid-Lent pink
Scandalized Rome and Protestants alike:
‘Why do you sojourn in a halfway house?’
And if this doubt had ever troubled me
(Praise God they don’t) I would have made the move.
What seemed to me a greater question then
Tugged and still tugs: Is Christ the Son of God?
Despite my frequent lapses into lust,
Despite hypocrisy, revenge and hate
I learned at Pusey House the Catholic Faith.¹⁸*

Betjeman knew that, if the Incarnation was true, then the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament was true also. Here are lines from his poem, ‘A Lincolnshire Church’, published in 1948, but written a few years earlier. They are contemporary with the great works, the wartime *Quartets*, and *For The Time Being*:

*The door swung easily open
(Unlocked, for these parts, is odd)
And there on the south aisle altar
Is the tabernacle of God.
There where the white light flickers
By the white and silver veil
A wafer dipped in a wine-drop*

*Is the Presence the angels hail...
There where the white light flickers
Our Creator is with us yet,
To be worshipped by you and the woman
Of the slacks and the cigarette...
The great door shuts, and lessens
That roar of churchyard trees
And the Presence of God Incarnate
Has brought me to my knees.*¹⁹

And here are the same sentiments, in a poem about a church in which Eliot himself worshipped, also from the 1948 collection – the name of the church, and the title of the poem, is ‘St Saviour’s, Aberdeen Park, Highbury, London N.’:

*Wonder beyond Time’s wonders, that Bread so white and small
Veiled in golden curtains, too mighty for men to see,
Is the Power which sends the shadows up this polychrome wall,
Is God who created the present, the chain-smoking millions and me.*²⁰

So, here are three poets of the Incarnation: all writing variously in the dizzying space opened up by the angelic salutation; and all finding their path to holiness along that royal road.

In an article published in November 2000²¹, Betjeman’s biographer A.N. Wilson wrote that

*there will be Christians in the next generation, but we can be sadly certain
that there will be no Christian literature – that came to an end with the
generation of T.S. Eliot.*

Is he right?

Notes

- 1 H.Carpenter, *W.H. Auden* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1981), p.301.
- 2 Published in *Selected Essays* (Faber and Faber, London, 1934).
- 3 Published in *Selected Essays*, *op. cit.*
- 4 He did wear the chasuble to celebrate the Holy Communion privately in his last years.
- 5 J.H. Newman, *Essays Critical and Historical* (Basil Montagu Pickering, London, 1871)
- 6 G. Rowell, *The Vision Glorious: Themes and Personalities of the Catholic Revival in Anglicanism* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1983), p.33.
- 7 Quoted in Rowell, *op. cit.*, chapter 4.
- 8 Edwin Muir, *Collected Poems* (Faber and Faber, London, 1960), p.228.
- 9 Quotations from Eliot’s poetry are all from *The Complete Poems and Plays of T.S. Eliot* (Faber and

- Faber, London, 1969).
- 10 A. David Moody puts it like this in *Thomas Stearns Eliot, poet* (Cambridge: University Press, Cambridge, 1979; 2nd edn. 1994), p.63. I acknowledge his influence on much of what follows.
 - 11 Is it Piero della Francesca's *Baptism of Christ*?
 - 12 Hence the name of the Holy *Rosary*, from *rosarium*.
 - 13 In *Thomas Stearns Eliot, poet, op. cit.*, p.132.
 - 14 The legend tells of a visit by a deaf and dumb woman to the cathedral at Le Puy in northern France. There was a storm which frightened all the people away; unable to hear the storm, she remained in the building, and found herself accidentally locked in after all the others had fled. Forced to remain in the cathedral overnight, she saw the Blessed Virgin appear over the altar, surrounded by a whole host of angels. Her hearing was miraculously restored, and she heard a beautiful canticle of music, whose words were those of the *Salve, Regina*. She remembered the words, and passed them on, and they spread throughout the world, especially as a prayer to the Virgin during times of storm and tempest.
 - 15 In Moody, *op. cit.*, p.233.
 - 16 In modern translation, the prayer runs: 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, by the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit your death brought life to the world. By your holy body and blood keep me from every evil and forgive me all my sins. Keep me faithful to your teaching, and never let me be parted from you.'
 - 17 Quotations from *For The Time Being* are from Auden, *Collected Poems* ed. Edward Mendelson revised edn. (Modern Library, London, 2007).
 - 18 Betjeman, *Summoned By Bells: A Verse Autobiography* (John Murray, London, 2001), p.95.
 - 19 *Collected Poems, op. cit.*, p.162.
 - 20 *Op. cit.* p.143
 - 21 'The Poisoned Chalice', *The Guardian* (London) Saturday, 25 November 2000: online at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4095933,00.html>