

Reference Code:	ACJ/EP
Title:	Papers relating to the history and development of the English Province of the Congregation of Jesus, f. 1929
Creation Dates:	1929–present
Level of Description:	Collection
Medium:	108 archival boxes; 4 outsize volumes
Extent:	26 linear metres
Creator:	Members of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, now the Congregation of Jesus
Administrative and Biographical History:	<p>The English Province was formally established in 1929, as part of worldwide changes to the organisation of the international Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary [IBVM] in which national provinces were created. The collection consists of material generated by the life and activities of the Province since 1929, with some older material relating to the earlier years of the Institute also included in the collection.</p> <p>The Province has its roots in the early missionary endeavours of Sr Frances Bedingfield (1616–1704), a close companion of foundress Mary Ward (1585–1645) in the early days of the order, f.1609. Following the foundation of the community’s house on Rue du Vieux Colombier in Paris in 1650 by Mary Poyntz and Winefrid Wigmore, Frances Bedingfield was able to re-establish contact with England, founding a convent and girls’ school in Hammersmith in 1669 and at the Bar Convent in York in 1686, thought to be the earliest girls’ schools of their kind in the country. The Hammersmith convent and school survived until the early eighteenth century, but soon fell into decline and by 1758 had only a superior and one sister resident within its walls. By 1781 the Hammersmith house was in serious decline, and in 1795, Vicar Apostolic William Douglass (<i>fl.</i>1790–1812) of the London district suggested that the virtually-abandoned convent be offered to the displaced English Benedictine community from Dunkirk, who had arrived in England in May of that year. At York, the school and the convent remain in operation, and it is the official provincial repository. In 1985, the school was handed over to lay management and continues as All Saints Comprehensive; and the convent was developed into a Living Heritage Centre and guesthouse at the same time [see collection ACJ: BC].</p> <p>In 1862, the Institute returned to the south of England with the foundation of a house and schools in Gloucester by Sr Ignatius Barrett and five companions, at the request of Bishop William Clifford (<i>fl.</i>1857–93). Beset by difficulties, it continued until Mother Joseph Edwards responded to Fr Bertrand Wilberforce’s invitation to relocate lock, stock and barrel to Hampstead, London in 1872. Initially at Haverstock Hill, in 1876 the community moved to Gifford’s Lodge in nearby England’s</p>

Lane, and from there to Fitzjohn's Avenue in 1927 where the house and school flourished until 1939, when the school was evacuated (see below). After the Second World War it reopened as a junior-school for day-pupils. From Hampstead, a house was founded at Ascot in September 1885 by Joseph Edwards and half of the London community, initially as a recovery home, but it soon became a convent and successful school its own right. In 1935 the Ascot community opened a domestic science/finishing school in Errolston, a house neighbouring the main school, under the guidance of Sr Perpetua Lawler. In 1984/5 the community moved into Errolston to leave more space for the school in the main building; it became school property when the community closed in 2004.

Joseph Edwards also opened an English house in Rome in 1897, functioning as a school for teaching English to adults until 1948 when it was absorbed into the Roman Generalate. At the same time, under the guidance of Mother Francis Pope, 5 members of the community left the Bar Convent to found a new house in Cambridge in September 1898. Initially at Furness Lodge overlooking Parker's Piece, the small boarding school moved to The Elms and neighbouring property Paston Lodge, in Bateman Street. The site eventually became St. Mary's School, Cambridge.

In 1921, Mother Cecilia Marshall founded the short-lived community at Sheringham from Ascot, which closed in 1940 due to a lack of Catholic pupils. Later, a house called Inglewood was purchased further up the same road, Cramer's Drift, in 1966 by Sr Gregory Kirkus, and used by the community with much pleasure as a holiday home and later as a retreat house until it was sold in 1988.

A community was established from York at Egton Bridge in Yorkshire in 1924 to enable sisters to teach at the local parish Catholic school. In addition, the sisters ran a small guest house on site. It was closed in 1945, and a holiday-house bought in Whitby, at St Marys on the Cliff, by Sr Ancilla Barton in c.1965.

During World War Two, the Hampstead house and school evacuated from Fitzjohn's Avenue to Ashburnham Place in 1939, and from there to Bratton House in 1942 and finally to Shaftesbury in 1944/5. Shaftesbury remained as an all-age boarding school, the last IBVM school founded in England, until it closed in 2020, while Hampstead re-opened after the War as a day preparatory school. In 1991, the community planned to close the Hampstead school but instead management of the school was taken over by parents. The community moved to 49 Fitzjohn's Avenue, while the school retained 47 Fitzjohn's Avenue. By 2012, smaller numbers necessitated downsizing, and the community moved to 244 Willesden Lane until it was sold in 2022.

In the late twentieth-century as a result of the adoption of new apostolates and as the schools were gradually handed over to lay

	<p>management, several new small communities were opened in the mid-1980s at the parish of St George in Norwich (1985–2010) by Sr Patricia Harriss; in London at Tufnell Park (1985–2011) and Kentish Town (1991–2001), originally created as a noviceship house; and in Hull (1997–2014) by Sr Josie Bulger, in order to manage the priestless parish of St. Stephen's. A provincial retirement home for those who needed medical care, dedicated to St Joseph, was also founded at York in 1985 at 27 Blossom Street and expanded in 2009 under the guidance of Sr Jane Livesey, then Provincial.</p> <p>Sr Jane Livesey was elected as General Superior of the Congregation of Jesus in October 2011, the first English General Superior since Agnes Babthorpe, elected 1621.</p> <p>9 sisters have served as Provincial since 1929 (see EP/G/2/4):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sr Cecilia Marshall, <i>fl.</i>1929–1960 2. Sr. Perpetua Lawler, <i>fl.</i>1960–1972 3. Sr. Gregory Kirkus, <i>fl.</i>1972–1981 4. Sr. Francis North, <i>fl.</i>1982–1991 5. Sr. Pia Buxton, <i>fl.</i>1991–1997 6. Sr. Cecilia Goodman, <i>fl.</i>1997–2003 7. Sr. Jane Livesey, <i>fl.</i>2003–2011 8. Sr Frances Orchard, <i>fl.</i>2012–2020 9. Sr Sarah Dobson, <i>fl.</i>2021–present
Archival History:	Assembled in the course of the life and activities of the Province since 1929, with some older material included in the collection. Material was housed at Ascot as the Provincial House until the mid-1980s, and additional items have also been donated by members of the order, and from others connected with the life and work of the CJs.
Scope & Content:	The collection consists of material relating to the English Province of the Congregation of Jesus, f. 1929, and includes documents relating to the history of the Congregation of Jesus, its early foundations in England, the houses founded in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the foundation of the IBVM Loreto branch of Mary Ward's institute. Further accruals are expected.
Arrangement:	Arranged and part-catalogued by Sr Gregory Kirkus (1911–2007), following an initial deposit of material from four provincial houses at Ascot, Cambridge, Shaftesbury and Hampstead in the late 1980s. This

original arrangement has been preserved, where possible, during large scale recataloguing carried out by Dr Hannah Thomas from 2018 onwards.

ACJ/EP consists of 11 series:

- **EP/C – History of the Province**
- **EP/D – Province Houses in England:**
 1. EP/D/1 General and overviews
 2. EP/D/2 Ascot (1885–2004) and Errollston (1935–2004)
 - a. EP/D/2/1 Summerley near Bognor (1669–1795)
 3. EP/D/3 Cambridge (1898–present)
 4. EP/D/4 Gloucester (1862–1872)
 5. EP/D/5 Hull (1997–2014)
 6. EP/D/6 London
 - a. EP/D/6/1 Hammersmith (1669–1795)
 - b. EP/D/6/2 Hampstead (1895–1939; 1946–present)
 - EP/D/6/2/1 Haverstock Hill 1872–6
 - EP/D/6/2/2 England’s Lane 1876–1927
 - EP/D/6/2/3 Fitzjohn’s Avenue 1927–1939 and 1946–2012
 - EP/D/6/2/4 Willesden Lane 2012–2022
 - c. EP/D/6/3 Ashburnham (1939–1942); Bratton (1942–1944) *Evacuated from Hampstead, split to Shaftesbury and Hampstead after the war*
 - d. EP/D/6/4 Tufnell Park (1985–2011)
 - e. EP/D/6/5 Kentish Town (1991–2001)
 7. EP/D/7 Norfolk
 - a. EP/D/7/1 Norwich (1985–2010)
 - b. EP/D/7/2 Sheringham (1921–1940) and Inglewood, Cramer’s Drift (1966–1988)
 8. EP/D/8 Shaftesbury (1944–2020)
 9. EP/D/9 Yorkshire
 - a. EP/D/9/1 The Bar Convent (1686–present)

- b. EP/D/9/1a St Joseph's retirement home (1985–present)
- c. EP/D/9/2 Esk Villa, Egton Bridge (1924–1945)
- d. EP/D/9/3 Whitby (1945–present)
- e. EP/D/9/4 Dolebank (1679)

EP/E – The Province Abroad

- 1. EP/E/1 General
- 2. EP/E/2 Gravelines
- 3. EP/E/3 Italy
 - a. EP/E/3/1 Rome (English House)
- 4. EP/E/4 Germany
- 5. EP/E/4/1 Munich
- 6. EP/E/4/2 Augsburg
- 7. EP/E/4/3 Passau
- 8. EP/E/4/4 Mainz
- 9. EP/E/4/5 Bamberg
- 10. EP/E/5 Austria
- 11. EP/E/6 Eastern Europe
- 12. EP/E/7 India
- 13. EP/E/8 South America
- 14. EP/E/9 South Korea
- 15. EP/E/10 Zimbabwe

EP/F – Provincial News and Events

- 1. EP/F/1 Communication with Rome
- 2. EP/F/2 Provincial Newsletters and Bulletins
- 3. EP/F/3 Letters to Province from Provincials
- 4. EP/F/4 Province Reports

EP/G – Individual Members

1. EP/G/1 General material
 - a. EP/G/1/1 General material about members
 - b. EP/G/1/2 Notes on recusant families
2. EP/G/2 Individual Members
 - a. EP/G/2/1 Members entered 17th Century
 - b. EP/G/2/2 Members entered 18th and 19th Centuries
 - c. EP/G/2/3 Members entered 20th Century onwards
 - d. EP/G/2/3a Living Members
 - e. EP/G/2/4 Papers of Provincials
 - f. EP/G/2/5 Members who left the order

EP/H – English Province Life

1. EP/H/1 Formation and Noviceship
2. EP/H/2 Vows
3. EP/H/3 Questionnaires, Surveys and Statistics
4. EP/H/4 Events and Celebrations
 - a. EP/H/4/1 Jubilee Days
5. EP/H/5 Death and Burial

EP/J – Rules & Constitutions**EP/K – Talks and Study Days**

1. EP/K/1 Winter School Talks
2. EP/K/2 Summer School Talks
3. EP/K/3 Retreats and Talks on Spirituality
4. EP/K/4 Study Days

EP/L – Directories and Catalogues of Members

1. EP/L/1 Province Catalogue, 1986–2011
2. EP/L/2 Province Directory, 2012–current
3. EP/L/3 Global Directories, 1924–present
4. EP/L/4 Lists of members

	<p>EP/M – Congregations, Meetings and Chapters</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EP/M/1 General Chapters 2. EP/M/2 General Congregations 3. EP/M/3 Province Congregations <p>EP/N – Province Finance and Property Transactions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EP/N/1 IBVM Charitable Trust 2. EP/N/2 CJ Charitable Trust 3. EP/N/3 Property Summaries and Overviews 4. EP/N/4 Provincial Finances and Accounts <p>EP/O – Material relating to IBVM Loreto</p> <p>EP/P – Material relating to the Society of Jesus</p>
Conditions Governing Access:	By appointment only, and at the discretion of the Special Collections Manager.
Language of Material:	English; Latin; German
Related Material:	See also ACJ/BC: Papers of the Bar Convent York; ACJ/SB: Papers of St Bede’s Centre, York and ACJ/MW: Mary Ward Collection.