

The Rise and Fall of Sectarian Liverpool



Post-Famine Irish Emigration (1840s onwards)

Two peaks (one in the 1850s and one in the 1960s) at which 15% and 20% of Irish-born people lived in mainland Britain respectively.

Roman Catholic Relief Act (1926)

Ban on religious dress and public processions repealed.

The Papal Visit (1982)

The first ever visit by a reigning Pope to the British Isles in the two thousand years of the papacy.

Irish Parliamentary Party (1885-1920)

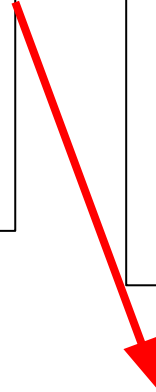
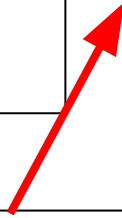
The Party is led by Parnell and later John Redmond to a position of dominance of the Irish seats in the UK Parliament.

Irish War of Independence (1919-1921)

26 Counties of Ireland gain independence from the UK forming the republic of Eire but setting the stage for decades of conflict in the northern counties.

The Troubles (1969-1997)

Sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland spills over onto with 175 deaths from terrorist incidents on mainland of Britain.

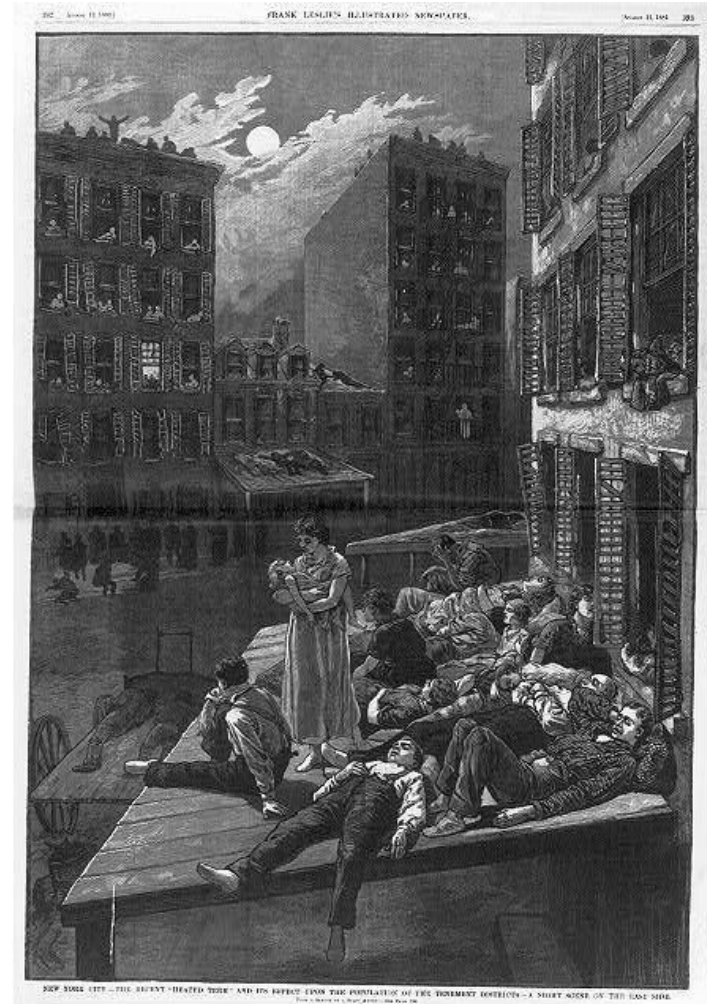


Irish Migration in the 19th Century

“During 1847, the worst year of the famine, Liverpool’s chief magistrate, Edward Rushton, instructed police to count the numbers of people landing from Ireland. Between mid-January and mid-December, the police counted 296,231. The figures appear to have reached their highest point in March that year, when the Commons was told that the number of people landing in the city was running at two thousand a day.

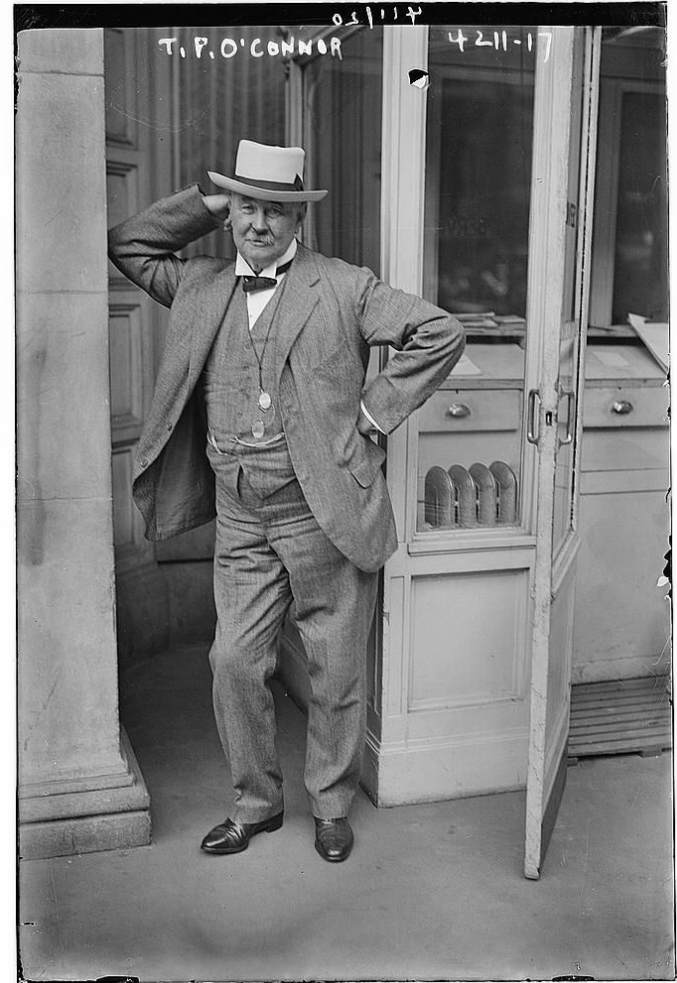
Rushton wrote to the home secretary to say that while 50,000 of the arrivals were not destitute, and around 130,000 were passing through Liverpool en route to the United States, the remaining 116,000 were ‘paupers, half naked and starving, landed for the most part during the winter.’”

- Ian Cobain, ‘The Evaporation of Hatred.’



'Tay-Pay'

Born in Athlone in 1848, TP O'Connor was a journalist before turning to politics. He was elected as the Irish Nationalist MP for Liverpool Scotland in 1885 and he continued to represent that constituency until his death in 1929 (at which point he was the Father of the House).



Tory Liverpool

"The Irish regard the English as foreigners in Ireland and their countrymen in Liverpool are certainly foreign in many of their ways to [our] ideas and principles. The influx of Irish into Liverpool brought poverty, disease, dirt and misery; drunkenness and crime, in addition to a disturbance of the labour market, the cost to ratepayers of an enormous sum of money."

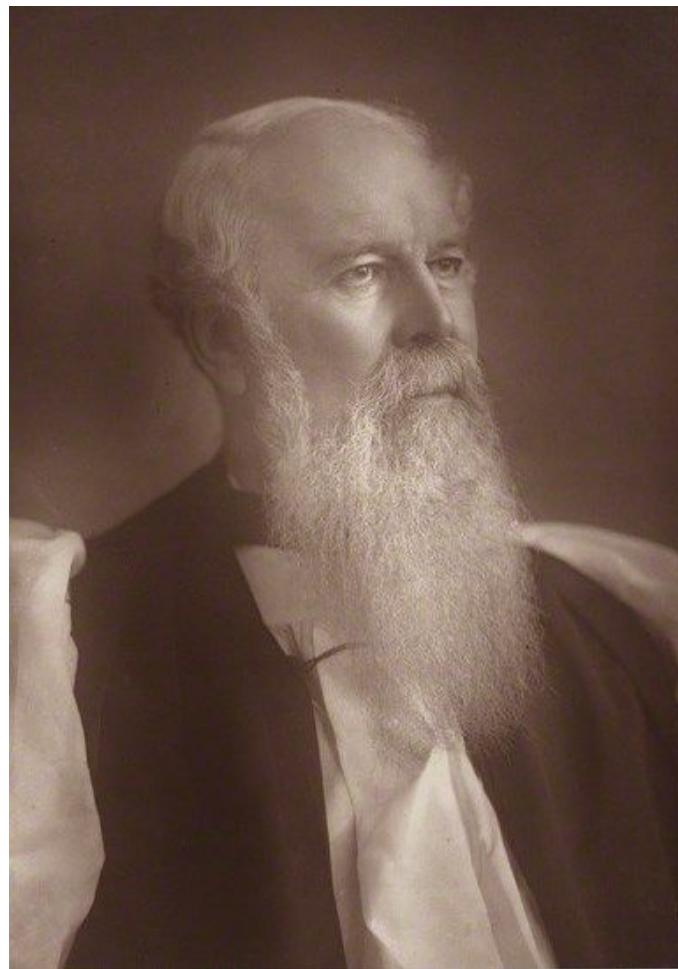
- A.B. Forwood (Conservative Councillor), speaking in 1893.



JC Ryle

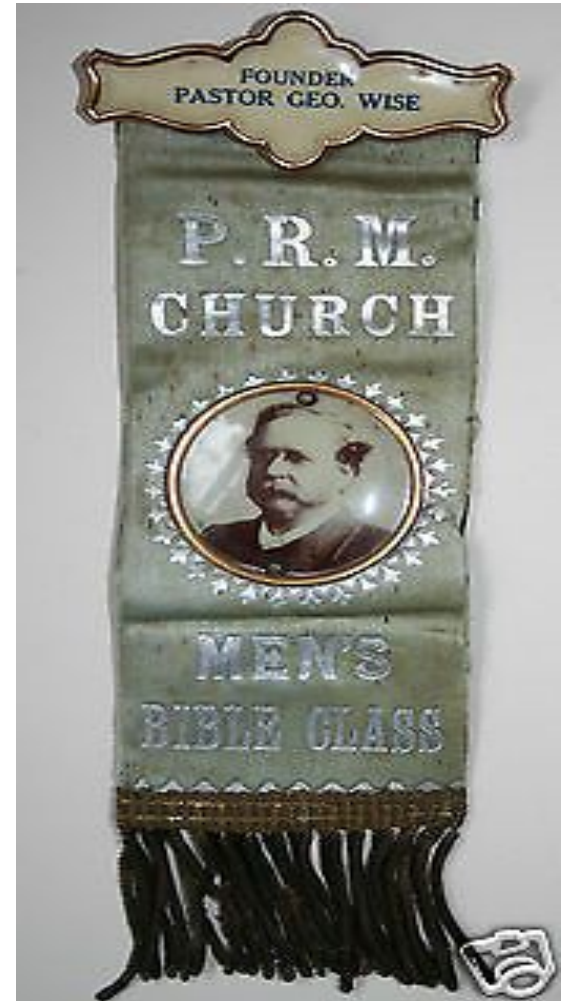
“The spurious liberality of the day we live in, helps on the Romeward tendency. It is fashionable now to say that all sects should be equal, that all creeds should be regarded with equal favor and respect, and that there is a substratum of common truth at the bottom of all kinds of religion, whether Buddhism, Mohammedanism or Christianity! The consequence is that myriads of ignorant folks begin to think there is nothing peculiarly dangerous in the tenets of papists — any more than in the tenets of Methodists, Independents, Presbyterians or Baptists, and that we ought to let Romanism alone, and never expose its unscriptural and Christ-dishonoring character. The consequences of this changed tone of feeling, I am bold to say, will be most disastrous and mischievous, unless it can be checked. **Once let popery get her foot again on the neck of England — and there will be an end of all our national greatness! God will forsake us, and we shall sink to the level of Portugal and Spain!”**

- J.C. Ryle, *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties and Roots* (1879).



George Wise

- Won the Liverpool School Board Election in 1900.
- Established the Protestant Reformers Memorial Chapel in Wavertree in 1902.
- Founded of the Liverpool Protestant Party in 1902.



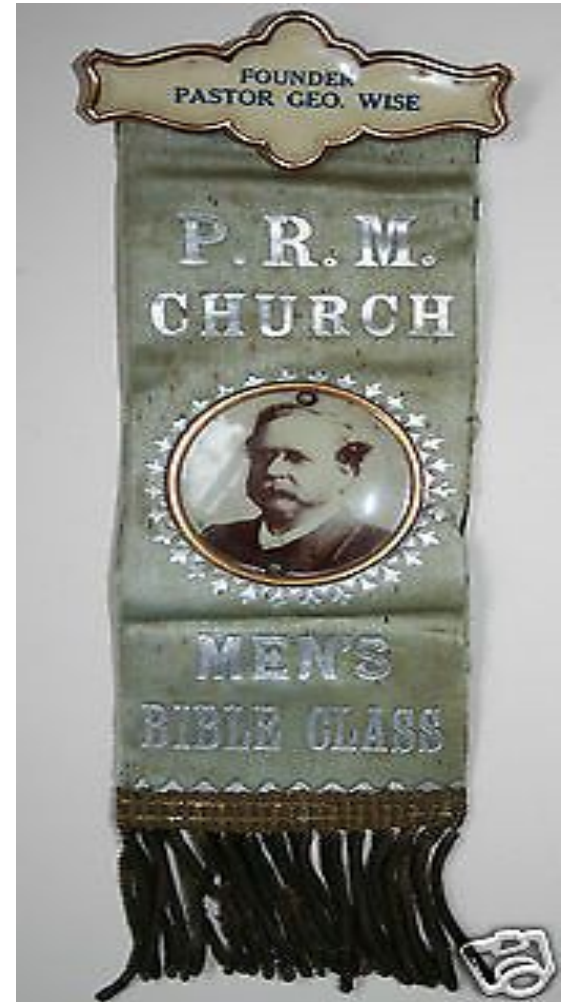
PROTESTANTISM & FREE SPEECH.

Do not allow the Romanists to triumph, but maintain your liberties. Support Mr. GEORGE WISE on SATURDAY NEXT, 7 30, at ISLINGTON-SQUARE. 23my24e

George Wise

“On the 15th and 16th Mr Wise held meetings in Islington square the subject of his address being *The Jesuits and the Oath*. On the 16th the Catholics who lived in the neighbourhood gathered in great numbers at this meeting and in consequence of what Mr Wise was then said to have done they became hostile. He appeared to have held a crucifix and beads and to have exhibited holy water and the Catholics made a rush at him. The police had to intervene to protect him from being severely handled. As it was he was knocked off his stool and the crowd was in a very angry mood indeed... The next meeting was on 22 May and Mr Wise's supporters were in the majority and Mr Wise addressed them asking them to turn up in force the next night adding that Jesuits were coming with sticks... The crowd answered that they too would come with sticks. He then said he would look to them as Britishers to protect him... On the following evening there was a rush of people at Mr Wise who had to be escorted to the Central Railway station. Before the rush Police Sergeant William Montague heard Mr Wise asking the crowd if Catholics drank holy water and the crowd replied 'no they drank whisky.'”

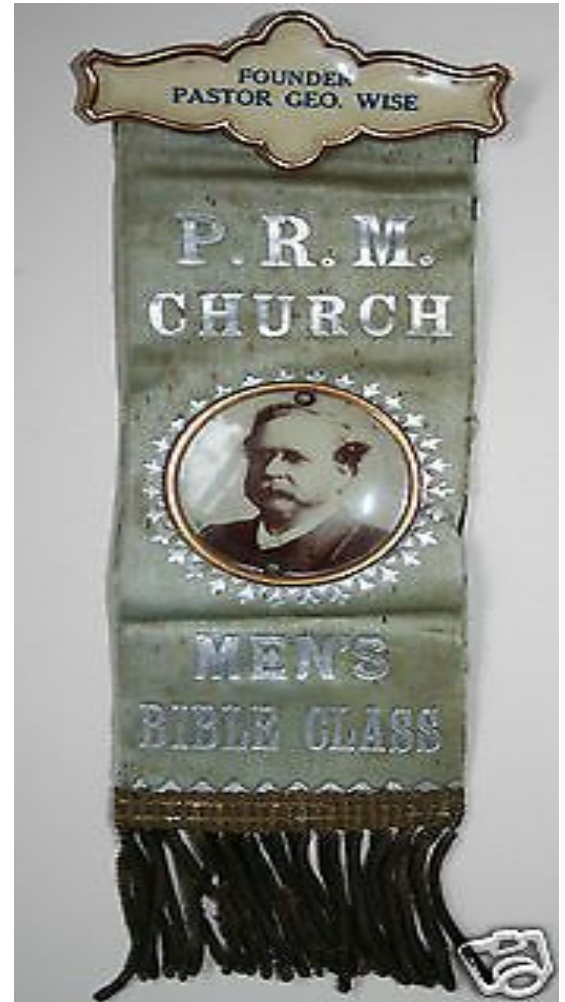
- *Liverpool Daily Post* (25 May 1900).



George Wise

“Wise was heard saying, in reference to Catholic priests, that they waste their lives with harlots, rob the poor to feed their own children, they are incarnate devils. Your Mass is gambled away. They live upon you and you know it. No man likes whiskey more than they. The monks in monasteries were living lives of devils. Monks and Nuns live together in impurity.”

- *Liverpool Daily Post* (25 May 1900).



John Kensit's Mission to Liverpool

“Last evening the Wycliffe preachers held a large and enthusiastic meeting. Mr John Kensit was present. Referring to the recent disturbances he said that they did not want bother. They were desirous of peace but being Britishers they did not want peace at any price. They wanted honourable peace. Speaking of the besotted Romanists, he said that in Walton Gaol of 1,200 prisoners at least 800 were Romanists. Of the pauperism, crime, drunkenness and degradation in Liverpool by far the greatest proportion was due to the Romanish system that they were exposing. He asked the audience to send a personal letter demanding to the home secretary demanding that [his son] be released... Outside the hall there was the usual crowd awaiting the departure of Mr Kensit and his friends...”

- *Liverpool Echo* (8 October 1903).



John Kensit's Mission to Liverpool

“A speaker at the meeting advised to audience to gather around Mr Kensit and escort him to the station for he had seen too much of Irish police to believe that their escort would be all they wanted it to be. The audience received this request with a hurricane shout of ‘We Will!’.. Mr Kensit made the few yards of the footwalk of the ferry entrance and as he stopped a number of youths came running down. Mr Kensit, taking the arms of two friends, made for the paygates. He had not gone more than a couple of steps when he uttered a loud groan and fell heavily to the ground.... It was found that he was bleeding freely from the left side of his face and he had in his hand the missile with thich he had been struck: a fifteen inch round file, an inch in diameter.”

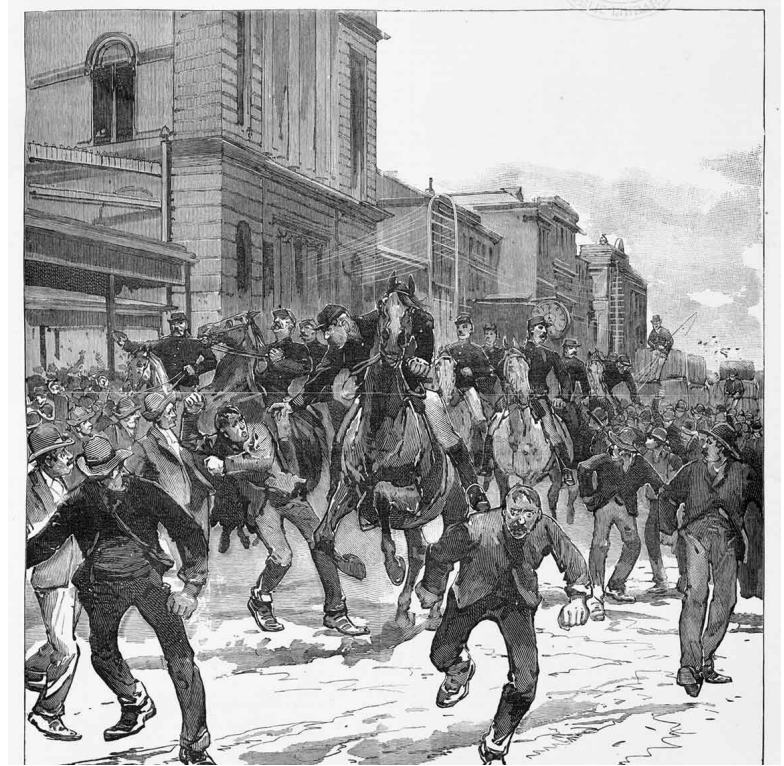
- *Liverpool Echo* (8 October 1903).



1909 Riots

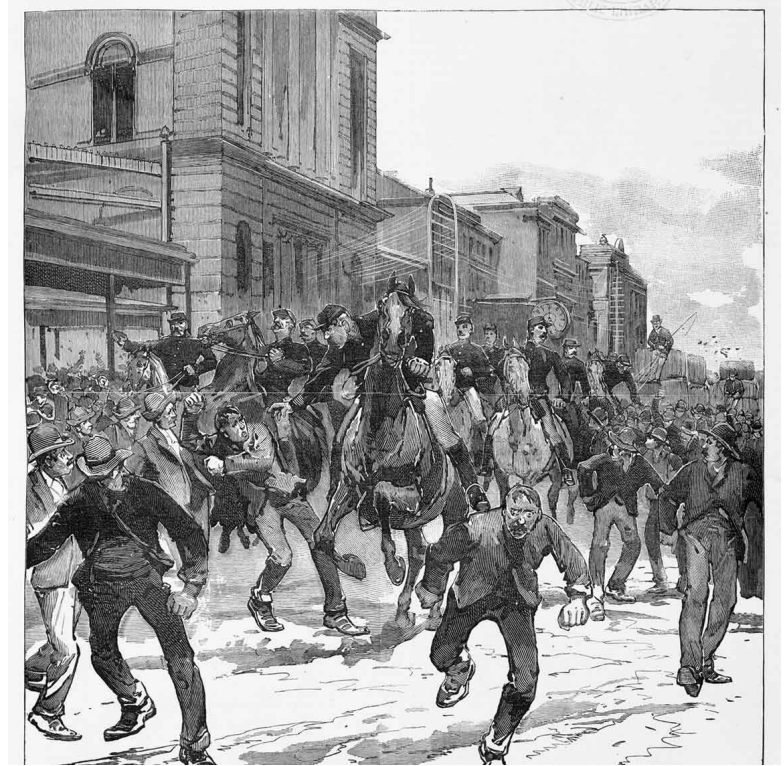
“The Protestant men of our congregation have strong reasons for believing that an attempt will be made to carry the Host (consecrated wafer) through the streets of Liverpool.”

- Letter from George Wise to Chief Constable Leonard Dunning (4 May 1909).



1909 Riots

- 9th May 1909.
- 4,500 people.
- Italian contingent carrying statues of the virgin Mary.
- Two members of religious orders wearing habits in contravention of the 1829 Roman Catholic Relief Act.
- Dunning receives thousands of letters of complaint and reports the case to the Attorney General .



1909 Riots

- 20th June 1909.
- Procession from St Joseph's Juvenal Street.
- Riots break out resulting in the arrest of fifty people, hundreds of injuries including twelve police officers.



1909 Riots

“When the procession started it was deemed wise to confine it to the immediate neighbourhood of the church, but the Orangemen were determined to prevent even this with the result that the two bodies came into collision and bricks, bottles and other missiles were soon flying as thick as hailstones. The fighting continued notwithstanding the presence of 600 police including the mounted contingent. Police assert that many Orangemen were carrying naked swords which they carried beneath their coats.”

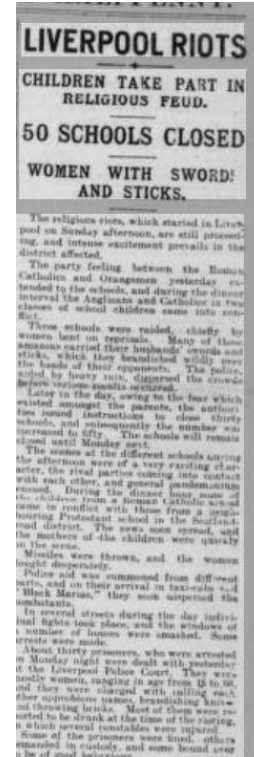
- Police report.



The 1909 Riots

“Party feeling between Catholics and Orangemen yesterday extended to fifty schools and during the dinner interval Protestant and Catholic children came into conflict. Three schools were raided by mothers of children bent on reprisals. Many of these amazons carried their husbands’ swords and sticks which they brandished wildly... Later in the day owing to the fear which existed among parents, the authorities closed thirty schools across the city... About one-hundred were arrested. They were mostly women ranging in age from 18 to 60 and they were charged with calling each other opprobrious names, brandishing weapons and throwing bricks. Most of them were reported to be drunk at the time of the rioting in which several constables were injured.”

- Liverpool Daily Post, (30 June 1909).



A Catholic Cathedral for Liverpool (1929)

“The Archbishop, who presided, said that every land had its story of Catholic emancipation but the story of their own land was a particularly glorious and inspiring one. The history of catholic emancipation could be arranged in three nocturnes: the black night, the darkness before dawn and the break of day. In the period of the black night the abomination of desolation was on this land when the sacrilegious ruffians of Henry VIII went about burning churches and tearing from their niches the effigies of the purest woman the world had ever known. During the second period, the legal disabilities remained. In the third, Catholics came into their rights largely through the efforts of Daniel O’Connell.”

- Liverpool Daily Post, (15 April 1929).





A Catholic Cathedral for Liverpool (1929)

“Liverpool City Council has decided to sell a site covering nine acres for the purpose of a Catholic Cathedral. Disorderly scenes followed interruptions in the Stranger’s Gallery by Reverend D. Longbottom, Pastor of the Protestant Reformers Memorial Church. Several persons including women were forcibly ejected. The protestors forming a procession carrying banners, walked through the city.”

- Frontier Sentinel (14 June 1930).



A Catholic Cathedral for Liverpool (1929)

“I would sooner have a poison germ factory than a Roman Catholic cathedral on the site. After all, a poison germ factory can at worst only poison the body...such a cathedral would poison the mind as well.”

- Pastor Harry Longbottom.



A Catholic Cathedral for Liverpool (1929)

"It is estimated that thousands crowded to Sunday's Protestant Demonstration at St George's Hall last night. The Reverend H Longbottom said they were not fighting Roman Catholics as individuals but were opposed to the iniquitous system miscalling itself the Holy Catholic Church. "There is no need of a Catholic cathedral in Liverpool," he said. "Don't let this blaze of figures issued from their pulpits deceive you as to their growth. She is losing ground where she has held sway for centuries."

- *Liverpool Echo* (27 October 1930).



The Visit of Pope John Paul II (1982)

“About 2,000 demonstrators opposed to Pope John Paul II's planned visit to Britain marched peacefully through central Liverpool today led by fife-and-drum bands of the Orange Lodge, a Protestant group. In another incident related to the six-day papal tour, scheduled to start May 28, a telephone caller saying he represented the "Orange Lodge Action Committee" took responsibility for a fire set at St. Mary's of Angels Church here Friday night. "Next time it will be a bomb," the telephone caller was said to have told the police. The official Orange Lodge condemned the arson attack. "We are dedicated to peaceful protest against the Pope's visit and will not condone troublemakers," said Richard Roberts, the lodge's grand master of England.”

- *New York Times* (20 May 1982).





