

Message from Canon John Moore,
International Director
of the Intercontinental Church Society

Greetings to you all as you celebrate the 175th anniversary of your Chaplaincy. ICS is privileged to have been involved in it from the beginning and that pleasure continues to this day. Our joint history makes fascinating reading.

A chaplaincy was established in Bordeaux in the wake of the Consular Act of 1825 that gave British Consuls discretion in maintaining and supporting ministry and buildings to a maximum of £500 and in equal measure to local contributions.

ICS appears on the scene in 1873 when under the Bishop of London there was an attempt to bring order to the irregular patterns of congregation life - run largely by lay chaplaincy 'managers' - which had developed. ICS set up a fund to aid this process and to provide help following the withdrawal of the Consular Act grants. ICS thus became linked with Bordeaux.

The work slowly grew and covered an area almost the size of England. Increasing numbers of English-speaking people moved to the area that was once described as the 'silent invasion'. The area itself became known as *La Petite Angleterre!*

The war years took their toll on the numbers of English-speaking people in the area and thus on the Chaplaincy work itself. The 1950s saw the work pick up and in 1981 the area was divided. One centre was Toulouse and the other Bordeaux. Both were supported by ICS grants. The Revd Brian Eaves, now chairman of ICS Council, followed the Revd Arthur Harvey in Bordeaux and saw the chaplaincy through the difficult period of disposing of its church building.

In the early 1990s with the arrival of the Revd David Wardrop and the hard work of many, ordained and lay people alike, foundations were laid upon which the Revd David Gerrish was able to build further. The Chaplaincy of Aquitaine - as it is now called - has recently become financially self-supporting and its membership continues to expand. A colossal achievement!

In 1999 the northern area became part of the new Poitou-Charentes Chaplaincy under the leadership of the Revd Michael Hepper. ICS grants, which had proved so vital to Bordeaux/Aquitaine, are going now to support this new work so it too can become financially self-supporting in due course.

None of this, of course, records the main purpose of the Chaplaincy in its effect on the lives of thousands and the faithful witness it has borne in the area. For this we are supremely thankful to God.

The 175th anniversary, which we now celebrate, is thus part of a long and continuing story. As even more English-speaking people move to live and work in this beautiful area, we pray that God's work will go from strength to strength. We have not only a great heritage but under God, a great future too.

The English in Aquitaine - a brief history

(Edited by: Lindsay Megraud, Gill and Ian Strachan,
Brenda and Jeff Worton)

It is a daunting task to attempt, in a few words, a complete history of an intimate relationship which began in the middle of the 7th century BC and which still links Britain and Aquitaine. What I hope to offer is a broad survey of this relationship and to highlight some of the key points in its history.

Two thousand years ago when Rome dominated the Western World, wine from Italy and Spain, and later from the Bordeaux region, was carried as ballast in the boats sailing north to bring goods to Britain and Ireland. The wine was appreciated particularly by the Roman legions serving in Britain, and by the Kings of Ireland and their Courts who were early connoisseurs of Bordeaux wine. The traffic extended to other luxuries and essentials from the Greco-Roman Empire in exchange for native products from England and Ireland - not only tin, gold and other precious metals, but also wool, cloth and, probably, oysters from Colchester, much appreciated by gourmets in Rome. The commercial wealth of Bordeaux was thus from the earliest days founded on trade with the British Isles.

During the anarchy and violence which followed the decline of the Roman Empire the Atlantic coast was pillaged by Vandals, Visigoths, pirates and other marauders. The tenuous link with the British Isles, however, continued.

Under the Norman kings of England, nobles, merchants and scholars were as at home in Bordeaux as they were in London or Bristol. The dynastic linking of England and Aquitaine was consummated by the marriage in 1152 of the heiress Eleanor of Aquitaine with Henry Plantagenet, Count of Anjou and subsequently King of England. To Henry's possessions, Eleanor brought her dowry of Aquitaine, Poitou, Périgord, Quercy, Limousin, Gascony, and claims on Toulouse.

The dynastic struggles which ensued between the Kings of England and of France were the prelude to the more intensive confrontation which ran from 1337 to 1453 and became known as the Hundred Years War. Yet this period - the so-called English Occupation - was a period of wealth and prosperity for Bordeaux. Commerce flourished and ships (mainly English) came and went between England and Bordeaux. The wine trade with England was especially favoured as a result of the difficulty of selling to other French provinces with the heavy tax barriers imposed and the competition of other wine-producing regions. All over Aquitaine are reminders of the English presence, in the Bastide towns (like Libourne, founded by the English knight Roger of Leyburn in 1270, and Monpazier, founded by King Edward I of England in 1284), in place names (like Hastings), and in square-towered churches.

As the armies of Duguesclin drove the Anglo-Gascons back towards Bordeaux the French king was able to reclaim his territory. Some 2,000 Gascons fled to take refuge and settle in London, Bristol and other English ports. The French king had a score to settle with the Gascons who had sided with the English. Restrictions and penalties were imposed, but trade with England and Ireland continued, if on a reduced scale. The exactions of the French king made the *Bordelais* even more nostalgic for the English rule. The *Bordelais* in London even founded the Vintners' Company, and one Bordeaux resident, Henri Picard, Master of the Vintners' Company, became Lord Mayor of London in 1335.

The French and British merchants clung obstinately to their traditional trading relationship. A note addressed to King Louis XI on his accession states:

*"Si la citié de Bourdeaus est une des grosses citié, et bien peuplée, elle le doit à l'isle d'Angleterre, grand royaume et riche Les dits Anglois apportent de l'or et de l'argent qu'ils convertissent en vins de Gascogne. Sans la communication et marchandise dudit royaume d'Angleterre, Bourdeaus ne peuet estre Bourdeaus."*¹

¹. Source unknown

Message from the Reverend David Gerrish, Chaplain

“Singing the Lord’s song in a foreign land.”

This is a time to thank God and praise him for his goodness.

What follows is in a sense a history of a people in southwest France seeking to worship God in English, either as their first or second language. Bordeaux, with its long association with the British, was a natural place for a church - English-speaking and Church of England - to be established. We thank God for the vision he gave to those who established the Chaplaincy and for their response to it.

We also thank God for the continuing vision and response of those who have prayed, worked and struggled for the Chaplaincy in changing conditions over our 175 years of existence.

One hundred and seventy-five years ago the Church of England was very different. It was between the Evangelical Revival with its emphasis on Word and the Oxford Movement with its emphasis on Sacrament. *Ancient and Modern*, the first recognisably ‘modern’ hymnal, had not been assembled. George IV was king and Charles Sutton had been Archbishop of Canterbury for twenty years. In the literary world, Jane Austen had been dead for eight years; the Brontes, Charles Dickens and Tennyson were young and unknown. Of the giants of 19th century science, Charles Darwin had just left school and Faraday was at work with Davy in the Royal Institute and yet to be appointed to his Chair.

Ten years before, France and Britain had met on the battlefield at Waterloo. Politically France was unsettled. Bonaparte had died four years before in exile and the Bourbon dynasty had already ruled ten years and was to be overthrown in the July revolution of 1830. The Chaplaincy launched out on stormy seas. We thank God for his goodness and protection.

For 175 years we have been able, as the Psalmist puts it, to “sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land”. The Jews who sang these words were exiles as prisoners. We live in France by choice. We enjoy the friendship and support of our French friends and neighbours. As Christians we also thank God for the privilege of our partnership with the local French churches, praying and working so that the Church may continue to be faithful and obedient to God. As Christians we are aware that our ‘fellowship in the Gospel’ transcends differences of culture, language and church organisation. We are pilgrims together with a shared citizenship in heaven.

Now we stand at the dawn of the third Christian millennium and look ahead with prayer and faith. To quote Dag Hammarskoeld, “For all that has been, thanks. For all that shall be, yes.”

The most faithful clients for the wines of Aquitaine were the kings of England who regularly sent their ships to ensure supplies. By the 16th century the annual traffic in wine in the port of Bordeaux again equalled the 100,000 *tonneaux* which it had enjoyed in the best years of the 14th century.

The history of France and England is a strange love-hate relationship between two peoples closely linked by blood, geography, common or competing interests, and commercial and cultural rivalry. Political, military, colonial and religious rivalry dominated Anglo-French relations through the 17th and 18th and into the 19th centuries. The Wars of the Grand Alliance against Louis XIV, of the Spanish Succession, of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years War restricted the traffic between Aquitaine and England, but the English remained faithful to the wine of Bordeaux. Meanwhile, at La Rochelle the English armies came to the aid of the French Protestants besieged by the forces of the French King and Cardinal Richelieu. A plaque on Vauban's Citadel at Saint Martin de Ré records the heroic resistance of the French forces besieged there by the English army.

The settlers in Aquitaine from the British Isles were above all Irish, mostly Catholic and Jacobite, taking refuge in France for religious and political reasons, and engaging particularly in the wine trade.

Despite the repeated blockades during the period of hostilities between France and England, the wine trade managed to continue a steady, if diminished, flow.

The Gironde estuary was never completely blockaded during the 18th century as it was to be during the wars of the First Empire from 1807. Bordeaux was able to pursue its European commerce by using foreign ships and ensuring that the merchandise was listed under neutral accounts.



Vue du port, des quais des Chartrons et de Bacalan à Bordeaux. Pierre Lacour. 1804.
With kind permission from the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Bordeaux

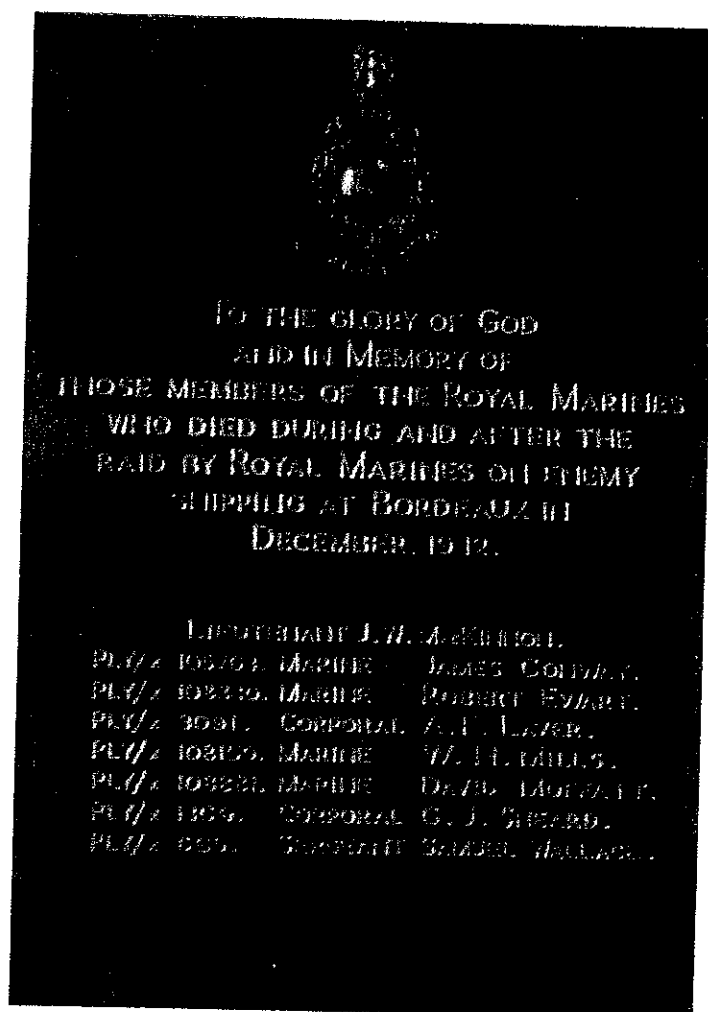
During the whole revolutionary period England continued to import French wines in quantities even slightly greater than before the revolution. The British Government practised a policy of selective blockade which did not prevent the importation of French wines and *eaux de vie*, using neutral ships and neutral ports of transit. This situation lasted until 1807, when the British Government decided to reply more vigorously to Napoleon's blockade of England, and until the end of the war Bordeaux found itself cut off by sea from many of its traditional markets.

In October 1813 Wellington and his army crossed the Pyrenees from Spain and invaded the south of France, defeating the army of Maréchal Soult at Toulouse on 10 April 1814, just four days after Napoleon's first abdication to exile on Elba. Wellington went on to besiege the Citadel at Bayonne, and the last battle of the Peninsular War between the armies of Wellington and Napoleon took place at Bayonne on 14 April 1814, when the besieged forces broke out of the Citadel. The Mayor of Bordeaux was then Jean-Baptiste Lynch, a descendant of one of the immigrant Irish families.

After 1815 Bordeaux's maritime commerce resumed its vigour, bringing to Bordeaux a foreign colony of Spaniards, English, Swedes and Americans. English ships represented more than half the ships visiting the port. The exchanges were also on the human plane, and by the middle of the 19th century it was the custom for young bourgeois *Bordelais* to spend a period abroad, particularly in England or in Ireland, attached to a business house or a shipping company, and frequently returning with a foreign wife. In the present century another trade with the British Isles developed - the Landes supplied much-needed pit props for the Welsh mines, with a return freight of Welsh coal to Bordeaux. This trade has almost disappeared since the late 1950s as the needs have phased out.

But other links of a different nature persist. The raid carried out in December 1942 by ten Royal Marine Commandos (later known as the 'Cockleshell Heroes') is remembered and commemorated the length of the estuary.

In the post World War II years, and particularly since Britain's entry into the EEC in 1973, the links with Britain have taken new forms. British businessmen and investors are visiting Aquitaine in increasing numbers. Some have already implanted themselves here, adding modern industrial resources to the traditional wine partnership.



Commemorative Plaque for the Cockleshell Heroes
St Nicholas Church, Bordeaux

The best augury for the future is perhaps the number of school and youth exchanges, the outstanding example being that of Bordeaux and Bristol. These exchanges started in 1947 out of the professional and personal friendship of Jean Loiseau, Professor of English at the University of Bordeaux, and Professor Stewart of the University of Bristol. At its peak, the Bordeaux-Bristol exchange catered for 1,000 youngsters in each direction every year! As the first youngsters grew up, they extended the exchanges into their professional lives, and now there are exchanges between lawyers, firemen, the post offices, police, and sports teams. No figure is available of the number of Bordeaux-Bristol mixed marriages, but it would be an interesting subject to research!

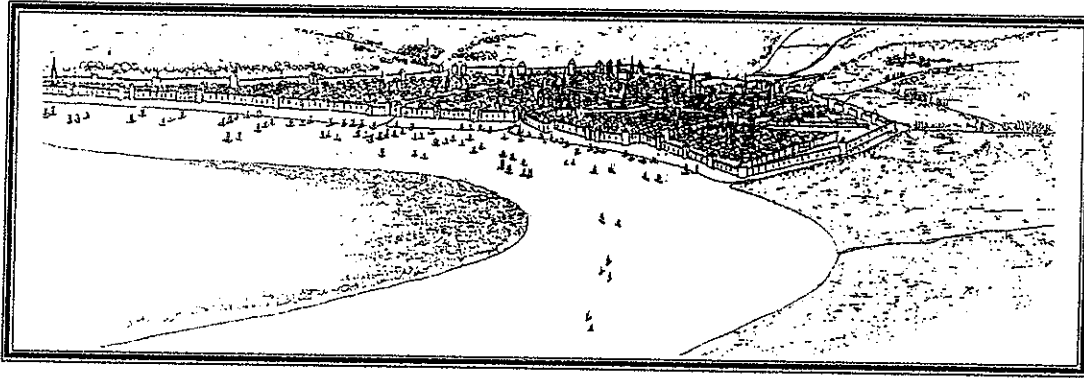
LIST OF CHAPLAINS 1825 - 2000

1825 – 1860	THOMAS ST. JOHN QUIN
1860 – 1882	EMILION FROSSARD
1882 – 1913	J. W. LURTON BURKE
1915	WENHOUSE RYDER (ACTING CHAPLAIN)
1916 – 1918	HORACE LINDSAY
1918	ROBERT WESTON
1919 – 1920	WILLIAM HEWETSON
1921 – 1923	CYRIL J. K. BURNELL
1924 – 1928	GEORGE R. MILNER
1928	R. C. HARWOOD
1929 – 1932	C. H. D. GRIMES
1932 – 1934	E. S. RAINSFORD
1935	CUTHBERT POWELL (TEMPORARY CHAPLAIN)
1935	J. W. VALLANCE (TEMPORARY CHAPLAIN)
1935 – 1938	NORTON THOMAS
1940	W. H. STANGER
1947 – 1951	JAMES A. CRAIG
1951 – 1961	W. S. BROOKS
1961 – 1969	WALTER BARNES
1970 – 1971	PATRICK N. CASSIDY
1971 – 1975	LAWRENCE MATHEWS
1976	DAVID G. S. RATHGEN
1977 – 1981	JOHN S. ODDY
1981 – 1986	ARTHUR E. HARVEY
1986 – 1991	BRIAN EAVES
1991 – 1995	DAVID J. WARDROP
1996 – 2000	DAVID V. GERRISH

Bordeaux – its growth as a regional capital

In the 7th century it was 'Good King' Dagobert who regained the town (once Burdigala under the Romans) and created a Duchy of Aquitaine with Bordeaux as its regional capital. Bordeaux is now France's fifth largest city with a population of more than 700,000, the seventh largest seaport (including Bassens and Le Verdon) and the sixth busiest airport.

Burdigala or 'Little Rome' was established on a dry left bank site some 98 kms upriver from the open sea; the surrounding land was low-lying, marshy and badly drained. Until the 18th century access to the interior was primarily via navigation along the Garonne and Dordogne rivers.



13th & 14th Century Bordeaux. Population: 30,000. Surface area: 170 ha.
Bordeaux Ville d'Art, with kind permission from the Tourist Office of Bordeaux.

The 15th century was the first 'Golden Age' for this market town and port, then under English tenure until their defeat at the Battle of Castillon in 1453, so ending the Hundred Years War:

"The one thing that was to ruin France as a whole was to provide wealth and happiness for Bordeaux: the One Hundred Years War took it to the pinnacle of its splendour."

Camille Julian

As France established an empire with overseas colonies in the 16th and 17th centuries, the advantages of a west coast situation were apparent. Foreign trade and port activities expanded and diversified. However, Bordeaux was regarded as "a town of fevers and malaria" and before further expansion could take place, major drainage projects had to be initiated.

"Militaire parfois, mais surtout commerciale, la rivalité franco-anglaise va culminer au XVIII^e siècle avec l'essor du commerce colonial. L'océan atlantique et l'océan indien deviennent alors le théâtre de manoeuvres d'où Bordeaux sortira tour à tour riche ou affaiblie."

ICI et Là. Le Magazine des Pays de France. Bordeaux. No. 32

The 18th century was the second 'Golden Age' in the history of the city; foreign merchants, entrepreneurs and French nobility were attracted here. Provincial representatives of the Crown had

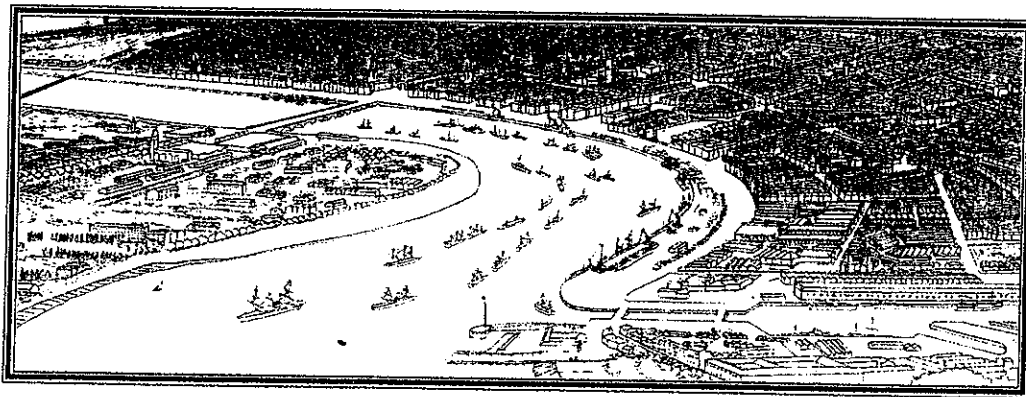
"a broad vision of a spacious well-planned city of avenues, promenades and parks to replace the haphazard tangle of narrow medieval streets."

From 1715 to 1790 the population of the town doubled and Bordeaux was now the major port of France; trade in wines and foodstuffs flourished, shipbuilding thrived and slave-trading was very profitable. A new social class was established with capital to invest in property and major projects. The Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1705 and in 1712 the Royal Academy had been built.

As a result more English families settled in the town, including that of 'French Tom' Barton, a wine trader who arrived in 1725.

The Empire Period of the early 19th century was a bleak time for the city, especially in 1806 when English shipping was denied access to the ports of Europe under the Continental Blockade. However, the Pont de Pierre was opened in 1822 and encouraged urban growth on the right bank of the Gironde and then in 1852 the railway era brought more business. To compete with the Loire and Seine ports, new dock-basins and quays were built followed by the construction of outports, Pouillac-Trampeloup in 1894 and Le Verdon in 1933, the latter at the point where the Gironde meets the ocean. Transit trade was also made easier by the ring-road and an expanding network of trunk roads and railways.

As a result of restored trade links and a rise in employment opportunities, the population grew - 1841: 100,000; 1891: 250,000; and then by 1954: 415,000; much of this growth is linked with the rural exodus from other parts of central and southwest France, and was made easier by further drainage schemes to the north of the town.



19th Century Bordeaux. Population: 194,000. Surface area: 4,217 ha.
Bordeaux Ville d'Art, with kind permission from the Tourist Office of Bordeaux.

It was in the period 1870-1940 that the city attracted the nickname 'The Tragic Capital' - in 1870 during the siege of Paris, in 1914 before the German offensive, and again in 1940, the French government fled south to take refuge in Bordeaux.

After the Second World War, Bordeaux once again recovered a dynamic spirit of enterprise and attracted government support with aeronautics, electronics, petrochemicals and missile research replacing many traditional industries. New bridges and an airport were opened and historic and heritage sites in the centre were protected. In 1967 service industries were expanding and accounted for 54% of employment in Aquitaine by 1975 and 71% by 1997. With research laboratories, hospitals, universities, an international exhibition site and a world wine and spirit complex, Bordeaux's sphere of influence was widening and by 1990 the TGV high speed train link to Paris was completed. It was in the post-war years that Bordeaux's skyline changed as high-rise apartment blocks and housing estates were built to solve the housing crisis.

Bordeaux therefore illustrates that culture and cultural activities, as well as a long and dynamic commercial past, can serve as potent strategies for development. Together they help to attract new companies, promote cultural and business tourism, expand further the service sector and help to enhance the city's public image at regional and national levels.

THE STORY OF THE CHAPLAINCY

"Thy hand, O God, has guided Thy flock from age to age."

1. The Early Days of the Chaplaincy: 1820 - 1840

The Roman Catholic Church was well-established, the Cathédrale St André had, of course, been in use since the 16th century and Scottish and Irish Catholic families were made welcome. It was the suburb of St Seurin which was regarded as 'the cradle of Christianity' in Aquitaine, and had its own church built in the 16th century.

For many in the English-speaking community there existed a spiritual vacuum. By 1797 an evangelical movement had begun and the Society of Promulgation of Church Knowledge established a branch in Bordeaux, and now the story of the pilgrimage begins. It has been written, concerning the influential families of the British community, that

"Les Barton ne parlent qu'aux Lawton, qui ne parlent qu'aux Cruse, qui ne parlent qu'à Dieu."

In 1824-1825 HM Consul General H. Scott called a meeting of all British families in the city - including the Bartons - to discuss the need for an English-speaking Anglican church. This spiritual awakening heralded the founding of the Chaplaincy and the first chaplain, Thomas St John Quin, was appointed in 1825 by HM Consul General, in response to the Consular Act.

In 1829 land was donated to the Anglican church by the Johnston family and several other Anglo-Irish families.

"Les Protestants, les immigrants sont relégués 'hors les murs'. Ils s'établissent alors sur le quai des Chartrons"

Ici et Là. Le Magazine des Pays de France. Bordeaux No. 32



Anna Guestier née Johnston in 1824, by Guérin.
Les Protestants et Bordeaux, with kind permission from
S. Pacteau de Luze.

The Colony in Bordeaux 1825+. Information from the Parish Registers

An analysis of the occupations given in the Chaplaincy Parish Registers gives us a fascinating insight of the expatriate 'colony' in the 19th century.

Many of the men who married or had their children baptised in the Anglican Church were manufacturers, directors of companies, or merchants; the next largest group were engineers and artisans and, as one would expect, a number of wine-coopers.

The wealth of a part of the expatriate population is evident in the number of those describing themselves as 'gentlemen'. Their households provided work for the number of coachmen, butlers and cooks. Surprisingly few men were employed in agriculture, with the mention of only one farmer and a forester. Amongst the less mundane occupations, however, were a variety artist and a jockey.

When George IV issued a circular in 1840 recommending the setting up of chaplaincies abroad, Bordeaux was one city at the forefront of "Singing the Lord's Song in a Foreign Land". The following year several English families, including Hugh Barton (son of Thomas Barton and co-founder of the Pavé des Chartrons) joined forces to build a hall to be used as a church for English-speaking Christians.

2. The Bordeaux Chaplaincy as St Nicholas Church: 1840-1989



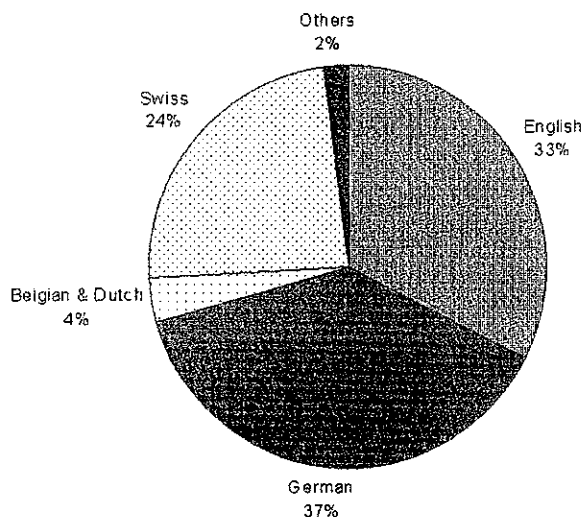
St Nicholas Church, Cours Xavier Arnoz, Bordeaux.
Bordeaux. Le temps de l'histoire, with kind permission from
 R. Coustet & M. Saboya.

The founding of the Anglican Church in the Pavé des Chartrons comes in 1829 when the Johnston family donated land in response to the need for a church. The move from a converted warehouse to a church came in 1841 when St Nicholas Church was built by Jean Burguet in response to an initiative by Daniel Guestier, father-in-law to Anna Johnston.

At the same time churches were being set up at Arcachon and St Jean-de-Luz to meet the needs of residents and summer visitors; by 1870 St Thomas' Church, Arcachon, was thriving and nine years later it was consecrated by the Bishop of London. Here is the rise and growth of the Early Church repeating itself in Aquitaine.

Composition of the Foreign Protestant Population in Bordeaux in 1851 (Source: Census)

Thesis on *Les Protestants de Bordeaux*, S. Pacieau-de-Luz, Archives Municipales de Bordeaux



Hugh Barton (son of Thomas Barton and co-founder of the Pavé des Chartrons).
La Saga des Barton, with kind permission from A. Barton & C. Petit-Castelli



Whilst the roots of the Intercontinental Church Society can be traced back to 1823, its arrival in southwest France in 1873 was significant and under the aegis of the Bishop of London efforts were made to regularise patterns of worship for the English-speaking communities. The First Visitation Report by Thomas Wilkinson, Bishop of North and Central Europe, reads as follows:

"I leave today for Arcachon I much wish that there was a prospect of building a Church in Bordeaux. The present building is not a suitable one and with seats being all let I understand that young men are given to stay away from the Church because no free seats are provided for them. This should not be." Parish Registers

The absence of a conventional building for services in no way deterred the growth of the evangelical work of the Church; when ships came into port services were arranged in the Sailors' Reading Room.

The First World War forced many men to leave the region yet services continued and the archives reveal some fascinating insights:

"Congregation of 51 at 10.30. The 3.30 service was cancelled as nobody attended." Chaplain Horace Lindsay commented in the Chaplain's Book, "No Service. Bordeaux people are not educated up to Holy Week or holiness". Bordeaux, Good Friday 1918

From 1940-1947 St Nicholas Church was closed. Many families were forced to leave and this was a difficult time for all those remaining yet church services continued at St Jean-de-Luz.



11th November 1947 – Parade in front of St Nicholas. Flag bearers: Mr Edward Perris, Mr William Putlick

The impact of wartime on one family was well-reported in "I remember Bordeaux. Wartime" by Yvonne Guibert de Bruet:

"It all began on June 16, a Sunday, when the Consulate advised them that owing to the German advance, they should return to England immediately. They were told that ships would be ready to take them from Bordeaux or Bayonne, to an undefined port in England. People were advised to take food for several days but no money. My parents were undecided, their son was an officer in the French Army, (wounded in Alsace on Good Friday 1940), their daughter (me) married to a Frenchman.

My parents left on the 'Nigerstrom', a Dutch ship built for 900 passengers, there were 2,000 on board. They forgot the five loaves of bread they had prepared..."

Chaplaincy Newsletter, Aug. 1996

The Revd James Craig was appointed Chaplain in 1947 and although based in St Jean de Luz he used the flat above the church. With many American families in France at this time, the American Chaplain also took services at St Nicholas.

"I'm afraid we were terrible colonialists and considered ourselves better than anyone else. We spoke two languages fluently. We were not Roman Catholics and not quite French Protestants. We were a block, with a Church, a Chaplain, a Consul, an Anglo-American Club..."

"I remember Bordeaux. Wartime", Y. Guibert de Bruet, Chaplaincy Newsletter, Aug. 1996

St Nicholas Church was now a spiritually vibrant centre of worship; bible study, Sunday School, Women's Guild, special services and sales of work thrived. In 1982 the Chaplain, Arthur Harvey, decided to start a choir. Even though there were only three volunteers - Freda Perris, Paul Dixon and the Chaplain, the first performance went ahead!

The 1979 edition of the Easter Newsletter for the Anglican Chaplaincy in southwest France records well both the size of the Chaplaincy and the increased number of church centres: Bordeaux, Cahors, Duras, Mussidan, Ribérac, Saintes, Sarlat, and La Massara (Andorra).

The dispersed nature of the rural population of Aquitaine was no deterrent for development and growth of worship. The voice of the Lord was heard through several families, whose commitment rose above local difficulties. At Tocane St Apre, the congregation started by meeting in a disused railway station at St Méard de Dronne in 1960 whilst the two Atkinson families founded a house group in Monteton in 1977. With a true ecumenical spirit the Roman Catholic Church helped the Anglicans find suitable churches for regular worship. As the Monteton congregation grew the Bishop of Agen was approached and suggested the local church be used. The Bishop of Périgueux recommended that the Limeuil congregation use St Martin's Church (1986-1987).

When it became apparent that ICS was to sell St Nicholas Church, times were difficult for the Bordeaux congregation. However, the Ecumenical Counsellor for the Catholic Church, Père Lanuc, helped the then Chaplain Brian Eaves to find a new church building. In 1990 it was decided to use the Chapel of the School of the Assomption. This was the start of a new era for both Bordeaux and the Chaplaincy.

Serving God

Since my earliest childhood, I cannot remember a time when I was not part of an Anglican congregation, in Sunday School, services, or in a confirmation class.

After our marriage, Roland and I have always joined the local Anglican church, wherever we have lived, and taken part in and served in various church activities, services or home groups.

Hence it is not surprising then, in planning our retirement in France, we looked for an area where there was a centre of Anglican worship. We studied the *Anglican Gazette* of that time carefully; it gave not only the centres

or churches, but also the names of local contacts. We followed these up and also attended services while searching for properties in the area and were impressed by our welcome. So we came!

We have found that we thus have an opportunity to continue to serve God, as well as to receive teaching and strengthening of our faith - in services, study groups, and in fellowship. Furthermore, we are delighted, as committed 'ecumenicals' that we are so welcome to use Roman Catholic churches. Would that this were the case everywhere.

Bettye Soward

3. The Modern Period: 1990 – 2000

The Chaplaincy map was now changing in a remarkable way with new church centres being established in response to the continuing spiritual renaissance throughout Aquitaine, now one of several popular areas for summer visitors and those in retirement.

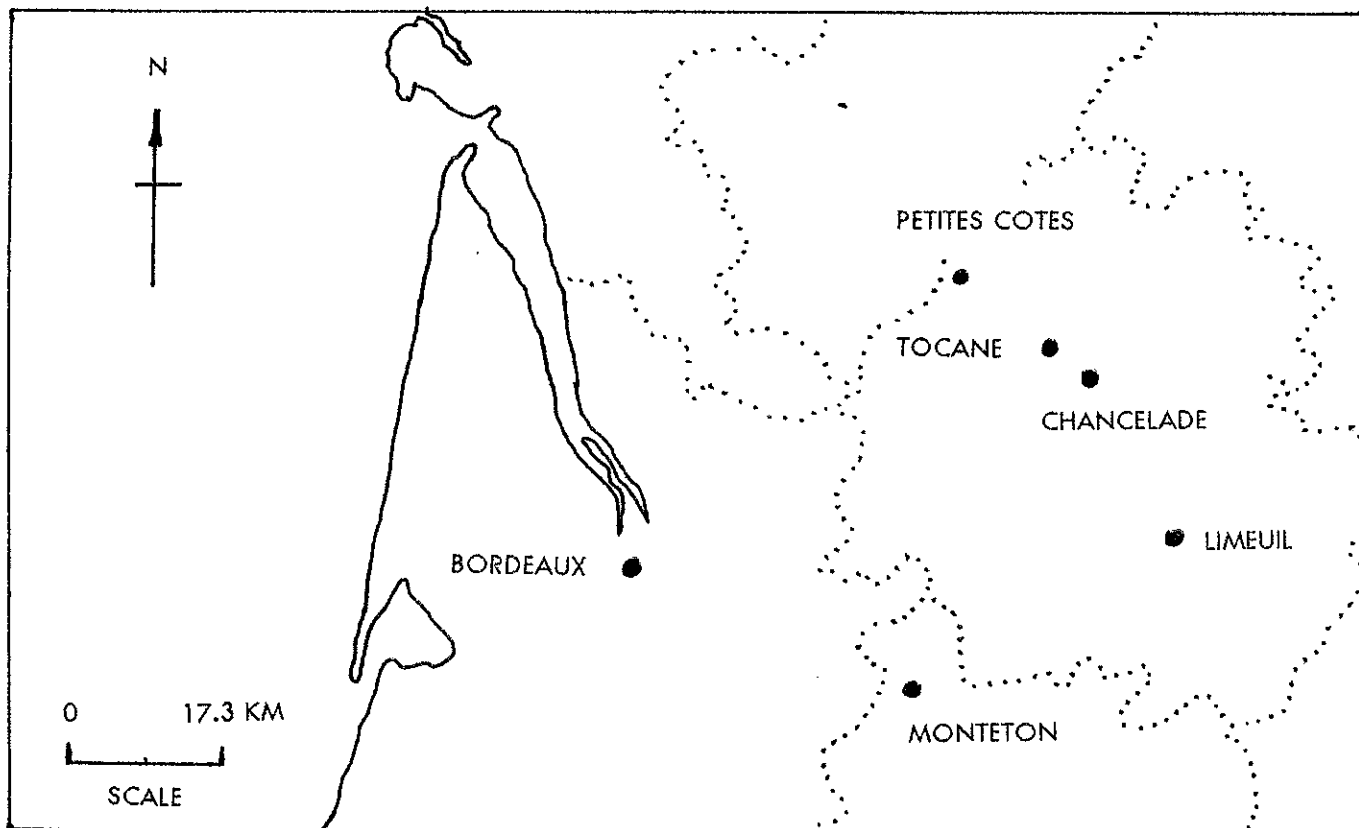
Spiritual growth became the common denominator across the Chaplaincy. Services became more frequent, venues sometimes necessarily changed – for example, when St Martin's Church came under repair, the Limeuil congregation accepted the Abbé's suggestion and moved to St Catherine's Church in 1992. Congregations grew at Cognac, and, at Chancelade, quarterly services increased to monthly.

As the Christian community grew, so administrative changes became necessary. In 1981 the Chaplaincy of Toulouse was created, and in 1999 Poitou-Charentes was separated from the Chaplaincy of Aquitaine. This latter development, to be funded by ICS for the 'early' years, was very much in response to the growth in areas such as Salles de Villefagnan, Beaulieu-sur-Sonnette, Brillac, and Chef Boutonne.

One significant consequence of this growth in church centres and the desire for frequent and regular services, has been the need for more officiants. When David Gerrish, Chaplain since 1996, publicised a six month training programme for Pastoral Assistants in 1998, the response was most encouraging. In April 1999 sixteen persons were commissioned in the Abbey at Chancelade.

Nonetheless, the Chaplaincy of Aquitaine, as with chaplaincies elsewhere, holds in mind what St Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians (3.13-14):

"Forgetting what is behind I press forward."



Geographical map of the centres comprising the Chaplaincy of Aquitaine in the year 2000

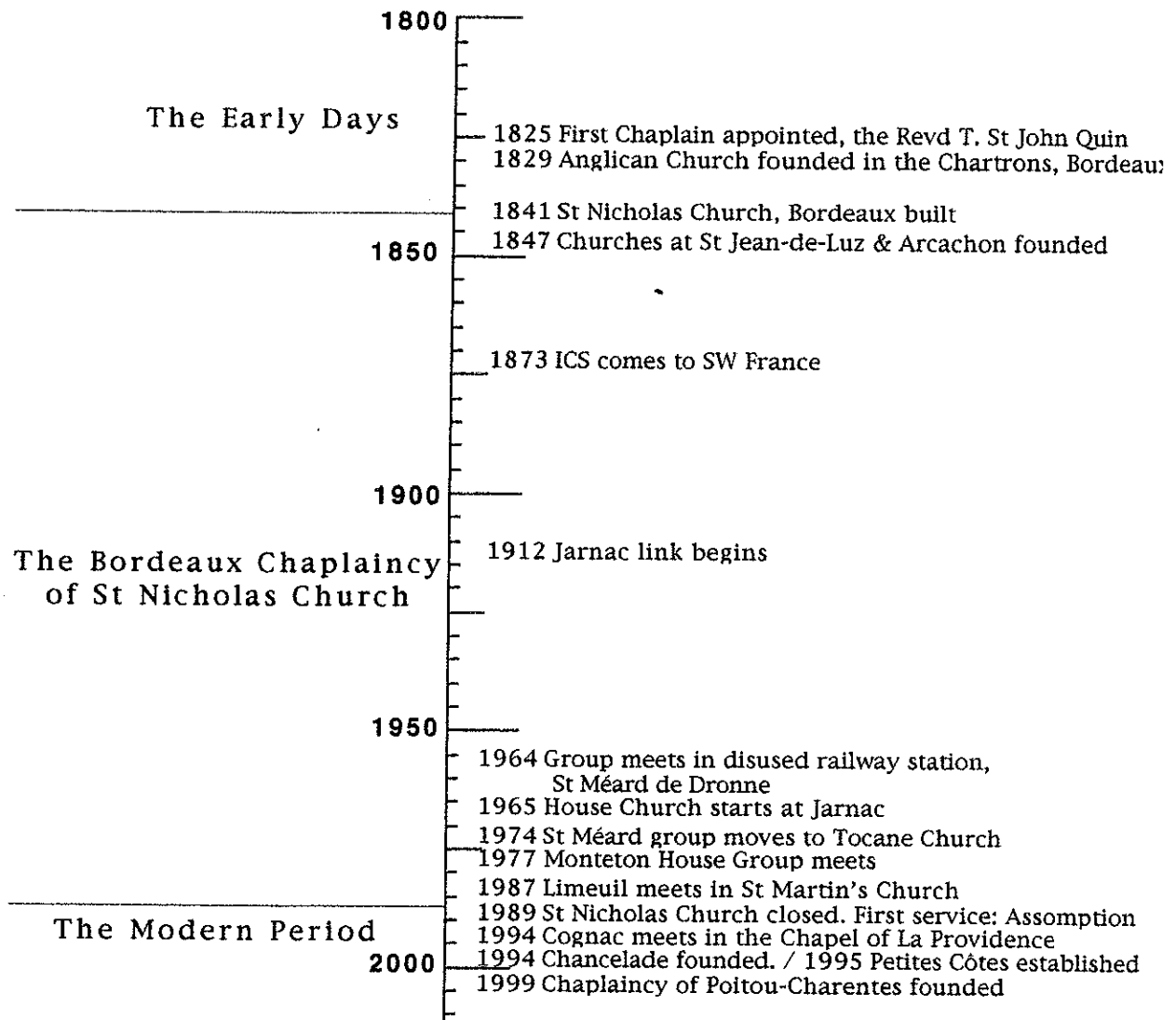
The Chaplaincy – a dynamic movement with a mission

The history of any Christian community is a dynamic story, a *Heilgeschichte*, a sacred history of God leading his pilgrim people through good times and bad. The essence of pilgrimage is that pilgrims never stay in the same place for long. Continuous change is one of the constants for Christians.

The Chaplaincy has, over the years, changed in an almost organic way. The nature of the British community in southwest France has varied over the years. Patterns of business, tourism, retirement and communications have meant that a church ministering to an English-speaking community has needed to respond.

The short items which follow show how this change has occurred within the memory of present members of the Chaplaincy community in response to the needs of Christian people in accordance with God's promptings.

Timetable of the Chaplaincy's Development



Vine & Branches, A Development Plan (1997-1999)



Border of stained glass window, St Nicholas Church, Bordeaux

Jesus said, *"I am the vine; you are the branches"*.

In 1997 the Chaplaincy of Aquitaine undertook the ambitious task of examining the infrastructure of its ministry and the purpose which it was to serve in the southwest of France. With the prompting of the Revd Ambrose Mason, Diocesan Director of Lay Training, the Chaplain designed a booklet entitled *Vine & Branches* to guide the Chaplaincy churches both individually and as a Chaplaincy in first taking an audit of their activity and influence. The second step was to look forward to what we think God's plan is for us in Aquitaine. Several small groups in each geographical centre met for a series of four two-hour sessions based on Scripture passages, to explore different aspects of Chaplaincy life and activity, and furthermore, to propose specific plans for improving our Christian mission. One of the most difficult tasks was the writing of a Mission Statement for the Chaplaincy:

"As part of the Body of Christ, the Chaplaincy of Aquitaine, as an English-language church, seeks to offer people worship, fellowship, teaching and pastoral care, equipping people for the loving service of God and of the community."

Indeed, the exercise of looking inward at ourselves (in order to reach out toward others) revealed that we needed to equip ourselves better to share in the ministry of the Church and of our Lord. The Pastoral Assistants' training course was one of the outcomes. Care groups were also created or reassessed in order to optimise their role in the community.

Practical aspects were studied, including financial security, improvements in our corporate worship, provision of a student worker amongst students in Bordeaux, and the running of a youth camp.

The repercussions of this project were meant to be both immediate and long-term, depending on the task. Many improvements have been made and outreach has become a focus. Most importantly, we have all taken time to think and pray about the purpose of an English-speaking church and how we can serve in that church and in the community.

We look to God for strength, wisdom, and support to enable us to press ahead with these specific plans, seeking to be a living and loving Church to the glory of his name.

The Chaplaincy Council Meeting

Bordeaux is twinned with Bristol. To give an idea of the extent of the Chaplaincy, imagine superimposing a map of Southern England on a map of Aquitaine – and then using the English rather than the French place-names.

For the convenience of members, the Council Meetings rotate among members' homes. The meeting on Saturday 18th January was held in the home of the newsletter editor in Ross-on-Wye. The Chaplain, one warden and the treasurer came from the Greater Bristol area, where they are fortunate in living within half an hour's drive of

one another. The other warden came from Petersfield, Hants. The secretary came from Newbury and another member came from just west of Reading. Two members from Stow-on-the-Wold and Northleach traveled together. The shortest distance was that traveled by the member living north of Ludlow. Only ill-health prevented the member from Buckingham from attending.

Are we perhaps justified in thinking that our 'parish' is exceptionally large?

David Lodge
(the warden from Petersfield/Pailloles)

Published in ICS' *Going Places*, May 1997

Memories of Bordeaux



Harold and Yvonne Mandefield

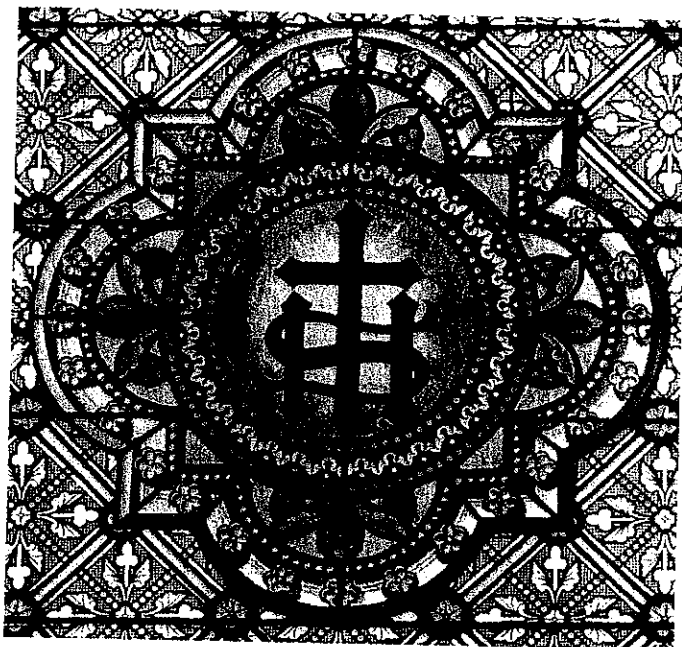
My father and mother, Ernest Mandefield from York, and Annie Walton from Barton-under-Needwood (Staffordshire), were married at St Nicholas Church, Pavé des Chartrons, on 28 March 1911, after the usual registration at the English Consulate, then on the Place des Quinconces - my mother's brother, William Walton, came over for the occasion. They settled in Rue Lombard, in the Chartrons - I was born there, 20 March 1912, and christened at St Nicholas on 8 December of the same year.

My brother Harold, born 2 March 1916, was also christened at St Nicholas in 1918. His godfather being at the Front, they waited till he had a leave and I remember the child walking.

We went to church regularly, particularly Mother, Harold and I. Father was a Methodist and would only be present occasionally. Mother used to go to the communion service at 8.30 (this service was not every Sunday) and always attended before breakfast. The Chaplain would read all the lessons - no participation by the congregation. We usually sat in the same pew, together with Miss Ivoy and Mrs Duret. She was a nurse in the 1914 war and had looked after Mr Duret (trading in olive oil in Bordeaux). He had been wounded and had become blind. They had a daughter whom I knew well (still living in the north of the Gironde).

The sermon (which always seemed so long to me) was always delivered from the pulpit. I remember the two stained glass windows either side of the altar. I never dreamt there was anything beyond those windows - in fact, I think there was quite a large piece of land. Mr Harold Clark generally took the collection - we would give one or two francs (old francs).

On the right of the entrance, a narrow staircase led to the organ. For years and years Mrs Mather played the organ. Mr Mather worked at the Cornubia and they lived on the spot. Mr Taylor, who had an English grocery shop on the quays, 'blew' the organ by strength of arm! No electric equipment then!



Stained glass window, St Nicholas Church

On the left, after the entrance, was the vestry, where ruled the verger, Madame Dupont, quiet and efficient, and always dressed in black. I should think she was in charge of the cleaning of the church. It was always so spick and span. The kneelers were all upholstered in dark red velvet - when the number of pews was reduced at the back, a few were for sale at five francs each, and I have one!

I gather there was a small flat above the organ, where a Chaplain could live temporarily, but I was not aware of it at the time. During World War Two, the church was closed.

The four hymns were sung heartily out of dark blue hymn books marked 'Not to be Taken Away' in gilt letters; that did seem strange to me - who would think of taking one home? They were part of the church - like the board where the numbers were announced (I'm so glad to see that very familiar item when I go to the Chapel at the Assumption).

The white marble cross was erected in 1922 (not quite sure of the date) - such an event was the unveiling. Even then, two names were of people I had met. The cross goes in my mind with the poppies sold at Armistice celebrations - one year they had violet petals - red might have been taken for a communist emblem!

At the end of the service, the Chaplain would stand at the entrance and greet the parishioners - he knew us all. We were all from Bordeaux or Caudéran, and nearby suburbs. We would often chat outside with friends but there was no 'hospitality' then - a thing that I appreciate in the present Chaplaincy. And we would just walk home through the public garden feeling it was really Sunday.

One chaplain had two blue boards, rounded at the top, fixed either side of the door, and an inscription was written (and changed from time to time, I remember) "Do it now". Do what? I couldn't quite understand.

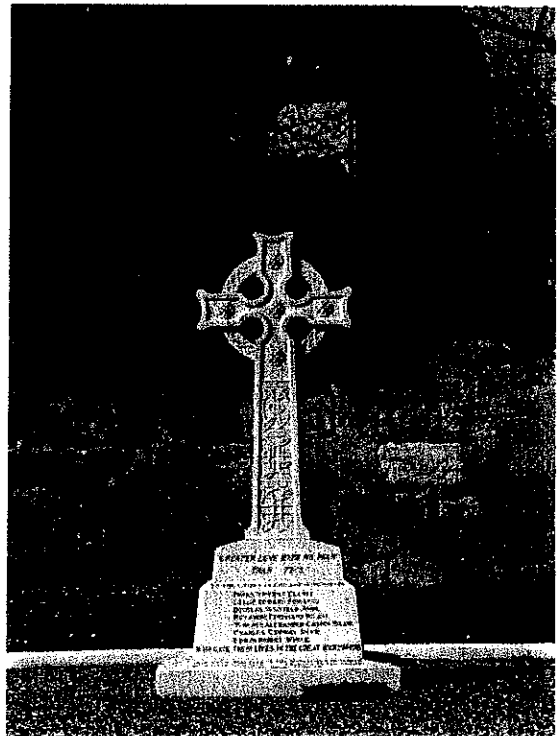
I was confirmed by the Archbishop of Gibraltar (Bishop Staunton of Fulham) on the 20 February 1927, (along with Priscilla Blackie, later Mrs Emmerson). He was a very strong, tall person with large feet because, he said, he covered a large area! It was Mr Milner who prepared us (a short lesson in the vestry) a little while before the service.

Harold was also confirmed at St Nicholas in 1931 by the Revd Grimes. Later he took the Sunday School for a time.

Most of the chaplains were most friendly, and in my mind, had a special aura. I seem to remember Mr Burnell and his nice wife - what a comfort they were to my mother when her mother died in 1923 in England, at what would seem quite a young age now, and no question of 'going over', as we used to say. Now she would have just taken the first plane from Mérignac.

I seem to remember especially Mr and Mrs Harwood, a middle-aged couple who became real friends; we corresponded until the Second World War.

Now when I go past St Nicholas, the door is always closed and no Union Jack flying above. I should love to have a peep in.



Commemorative Cross originally in front of St Nicholas Church, now in the Allied Forces Cemetery, Talence

Yvonne Guilbert de Bruet

The Chaplaincy of Aquitaine: Today and the Way Forward

At the start of the 175th anniversary year, where do we stand and where are we going?

Where we stand today is more or less where we hoped to be. In Lent 1997 we started a profile of the Chaplaincy under the title "Vine and Branches" - words from Jesus in John's gospel: "I am the vine; you are the branches"*, an image of great power in Bordeaux. The plan which we agreed on in 1997 became our guideline for developing the Chaplaincy during the next few years. The things to which we set our hand and were able to achieve, included developing lay ministry, developing more regular worship in the northern Charente, organising a youth camp, and being financially self-sufficient by the end of 1999. God, as so often when we trust him, exceeded our expectations, particularly in the Charente where God's leading and ICS' careful stewardship of their income and with the support of the Diocese, meant that in September 1999 a new chaplain, the Revd Michael Hepper, was able to be appointed, funded initially by ICS. One of the disappointments has been our failure to find a suitable person to work amongst the English-speakers at the University of Bordeaux, despite the funding being available.

At local level we now are back to five churches, Bordeaux, Chancelade, Limeuil, Monteton and Tocane, and we continue our close link with Petites Côtes. The catchment area is vast, with people often travelling an hour or more to attend services.

Each of the churches is different from each other. Monteton, Limeuil and Chancelade have one thing in common; the core congregation is made up of retired British people. Limeuil meets every Sunday, Monteton twice a month and Chancelade monthly. As Limeuil has generally two, and Monteton one Communion service each month, we have to rely on Pastoral Assistants and extra clergy to take the other services.

Tocane meets midweek, on one Wednesday each month. Wednesday as a day to meet has several benefits. It allows children to come, as there is no school and allows working families to have weekend together.

Bordeaux is a city church with a working, international congregation. The majority has not come from Anglican backgrounds. There is no common corpus of worship material for people from Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian backgrounds. This applies especially to liturgy, and, to a lesser extent, to hymns. The only really common material is that from the Bible. Nevertheless the people are happy to learn new ways of worshipping God together.

Chancelade is the newest church, meeting in a lovely, 12th century chapel in the grounds of Chancelade Abbey on the western edge of Périgueux. It meets monthly and is thriving though its present leadership comes from far edges of the Chaplaincy, to the east of Périgueux.

Petites Côtes is a Fellowship which meets at the home of Tony and Audrey Pinkney fortnightly and has a number of Home Groups. The services are run by clergy on sabbaticals at Petites Côtes with the Priscilla Trust scheme. It works closely with the Chaplaincy and many of its members also worship at Tocane or Chancelade.

Running a Chaplaincy the size of Wales provides particular challenges and opportunities. Because of both its size and the scattered nature of the people it is rarely possible for the Chaplain to 'drop in' when passing.

*John 15:5 which Louis Segond translates, significantly, "*Je suis le cep, vous êtes les sarments*".

But this means that local people take on the pastoral work. For the Chaplaincy to operate each of the churches needs strong local leadership, both people to organise the church and to lead the worship services. The former is done by a team of 'local wardens' and a local committee selected by each congregation to work with the Chaplain.

What of the future? Futurology is notoriously unreliable. As Christians we are not involved in guessing what might happen. We can read the signs of the times. We can be assured about the future. But also we should have a God-inspired vision.

Clothing this skeleton with flesh, we do not know what the future patterns of English-speaking settlement might be in our part of France, but we can see certain trends emerging.

The first is new patterns of employment. New patterns of employment are still replacing earlier ones. Just as changes affected Bordeaux with the decline of shipping, the rise of new technologies has affected places like Toulouse, Grenoble and Sophia Antipolis, and the building of the Tunnel has affected Pas de Calais, so the changes in electronic communications may affect Aquitaine. With people working with e-mail, e-commerce and the Internet needing "only an electricity socket and a telephone line", we are beginning to see new patterns of settlement and work; young families choosing quality of life away from the city. With e-education their children could benefit too.

A second trend is seen in the improved road, rail and air communications. In our part of France changes will take place as the TGV rail system is developed further. New motorways will change things too. For example, as a result of the completion of the new motorway from Bordeaux to Périgueux by the end of 2002, the east of the Chaplaincy will be easier to reach by a Bordeaux-based chaplain than it is at present. With cheaper air-fares and a more varied pattern of flights to local and regional airports we can expect to see changes in the pattern and rhythm of visits to, and settlement in, France.

A third trend which will probably affect us is the decline in the number of British people with a 'church-background'. There will, therefore, be fewer people returning to the faith than in the past, in our area as elsewhere.

We may also expect to see some congregations growing and others declining unless they regenerate.

What then should our priorities be as we look to the future?

- We should be a Chaplaincy with a clear sense of mission. What was laid out in the *Vine and Branches Plan and Report* substantially remains the same. Jesus commanded his followers just before his Ascension to "go into all the world, proclaiming the gospel and baptising*". Archbishop William Temple said (something like), "The church is the only organisation which exists solely for the benefit of others". Evangelism, mission, outreach, call it what you will, is at the heart of what being the Church is.
- We should be a Chaplaincy with a clear sense of worship. In worship we place ourselves before a gracious and loving God revealed in Jesus Christ, through the power of the Spirit, according to the Father's purpose. We must strive that our worship is God-centred "in Spirit and in truth"**. We must pray that we may be so lost in "wonder, love and praise" that we may go out into the world "in the power of (his) Spirit, to live and work to (his) praise and glory"***.
- We should have a clear understanding of the importance of our Christian witness; what it means to be doers, not just hearers, of the word. One of the ways in which Jesus revealed the presence of God's Kingdom was through the changes wrought in people's

* Matthew 28:19, ** Jesus in John 4:23, *** Prayer at the end of the ASB Communion Service (Rite A)

lives. Our changing and changed lives provide a powerful testimony to the truth of the gospel.

In the future we will have to seek to ensure how we can equip people in these ways so that we can evangelise, worship and witness more effectively.

How might we move ahead? First of all we need to reconsider the first Christians' way of being the Church****:

- The apostles' teaching: The Bible has to be fundamental. In it we discover God's word to his people. We should do all that we can to encourage people to read the Bible at home and explore it and discuss it in 'home groups'. All the groups don't have to be of the same kind of course. Books, Bible-reading notes and even e-Bible studies may be required. And let's not forget our younger people, growing up in a more secular world, e-Sunday School and Chat lines?
- Fellowship: It is so easy to think of fellowship as friendship but it is much more. It is the Church working together, sharing, yes, and suffering together, as the body of Christ. It requires time and a serious attempt to see others through the eyes of Jesus Christ. We need more 'home groups' to do this too.
- Prayer: This always seems so hard. There are so many books about it that we can be daunted. The disciples asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us how to pray". Hence the Lord's Prayer. How to pray? Just share your thoughts with God. Pray privately, pray prayerfully in church, home groups, with the prayer-chain.
- The Breaking of the Bread: This is almost certainly a reference to the Lord's Supper, Holy Communion. It is, therefore, the loving and grateful worship of a loving and gracious God focussed on the remembrance of his death for his world. his loving salvation together. With further growth we may need to look to more lay-led services too.

In the next years more home groups are needed. We have to provide more ways of helping people grow spiritually. People need to study the Biblical faith and to think more about it, trying to relate it to their daily lives.

We need to equip people for the caring aspect of ministry, so that they can stand knowledgeably and effectively, stand alongside the need.

We need to think about the wonderful opportunities which the new communication technologies offer us.

We still need to develop our ministry amongst the students and other people alone, often needy, in Bordeaux.

We need to see how we can bring the gospel to those who do not belong to churches and to stand alongside our French Christian brothers and sisters in doing this.

At a formative period of my life I read of a group from the Missionary Aviation Fellowship who were intent on taking the gospel to the Amerindian Auca tribe in the Amazon basin. They were killed by the tribes, but before Jim Elliot, the leader, left for the landing of the light plane on a river bluff, he wrote "I don't know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future". What the future holds for the Chaplaincy we do not know but we pray that we may remain faithful so that, in the future, we may become the sort of Church he desires.

John Stott summarises this as "*A learning church, a loving church, a worshipping church, an evangelistic church*".

**** Acts 2:42 especially, but up to verse 47.