

THE MARTYRS

360 MEN & WOMEN KNOWN TO HAVE DIED IN ENGLAND FOR THEIR CATHOLIC FAITH BETWEEN 1535 – 1681. OF THOSE 8 WERE ASSOCIATED WITH CHIDEOCK. SEVERN WERE PUT TO DEATH & KNOWN AS THE CHIDEOCK MARTYRS- THE EIGHTH ONE –JOHN JESSOP,DIED IN PRISON OR HIS FAITH. THE MARTYRS WERE GIVEN A TRAITORS DEATH. THEY WERE DRAWN ON A HURDLE TO THE PLACE OF EXCEUTION , HANGED BY THE NECK & BEING ALIVE CUT DOWN, THEY WERE DISEMBOWLLED , THE HEAD WAS CUT OFF & THE BODY DIVIDED INTO FOUR.

THE FIRST EVENT WAS IN 1587. THOMAS PILCHARD WAS A JESUIT. STUDIED AT OXFORD THEN FLED TO RHEIMS WHERE HE WAS ORDAINED A PRIEST. HE RETURNED TO ENGLISH MISSION BUT WAS ARRESTED AND BANISHED IN 1585. WITH FEARLESS COURAGE HE RETURNED IN 1586. BECOMING CHAPLIN AT CHIDEOCK CASTLE WHERE HE WAS CONCEALED. WHILE THERE MADE MANY CONVERTS INCL. WILLIAM PIKE – A CARPENTER. HE WAS ARRESTED WITH PIKE & ANOTHER COMPANION, JOHN JESSOP, DESCRIBED AS A GENTLEMAN. PILCHARD WAS HUNG DRAWN AND QUARTERED IN DORCHESTER IN 1587, JESSOP DIED IN DORCHESTER GAOL IN 1588, PIKE REMAINED IN PRISON FOR FOUR YEARS, FREQUENTLY TORTURED BEFORE BEING HUNG,DRAWN AND QUARTERED IN 1591.

THE NEXT ATROCITY TOOK PLACE IN 1594 .JOHN CONOR O'MAHONEY ,LATER KNOWN AS JOHN CORNELIUS BORN OF IRISH PARENTS AT BODMIN IN CORNWALL, ON THE ESTATE OF SIR JOHN ARUNDALL. SIR JOHN TOOK AN INTEREST IN THE TALENTED BOY ,TOOK HIM INTO HIS HOUSEHOLD & FINALLY SENT HIM TO OXFORD. EXPELLED FOR POPERY IN 1578. HE WENT TO A SEMINARY IN RHEIMS, THEN ENGLISH COLLEGE ROME. ONCE ORDAINED JOINED THE ARUNDALL HOUSEHOLD IN LONDON, CHIDEOCK & CORNWALL . AFTER SIR JOHN'S DEATH IN 1591 LADY ARUNDALL RETIRED TO CHIDEOCK WHERE CORNELIUS WAS HER CHAPLIN . HE MADE A NUMBER OF CONVERTS IN THE AREA. IN 1594 HE WAS BETRAYED BY A FAITHLESS SERVANT & ARRESTED AT CHIDEOCK CASTLE TOGETHER WITH HIS TWO SERVANTS, PATRICK SALMON & JOHN CAREY AND A KINGSMAN OF LADY ARUNDALL, THOMAS BOSGRAVE . THEY WERE ALL TAKEN TO DORCHESTER PRISON. CORNELIUS WAS TAKEN TO LONDON WHERE HE WAS TORTURED TO MAKE HIM REVEAL THE NAMES OF HIS CONVERTS . HE GAVE NO NAMES, BUT IT WAS HERE IN PRISON THAT HE WAS RECEIVED INTO THE SOCIETY OF JESUS. HE WAS

RETURNED TO DORCHESTER, PUT ON TRIAL TOGETHER WITH HIS COMPANIONS. THEY WERE ALL HUNG, DRAWN AND QUARTERED TOGETHER IN DORCHESTER. ALTHOUGH IT IS THOUGHT THAT THE THREE LAYMEN WERE HUNG UNTIL DEAD.

THE THIRD EVENT OCCURRED IN 1642. HUGH GREEN WAS BORN A PROTESTANT AND STUDIED AT CAMBRIDGE. HE WAS CONVERTED WHILST TRAVELLING ON THE COVENANT ENTERED ENGLISH COLLEGE AT DOUAI AND ORDAINED IN 1612. RETURNED TO ENGLAND AS A MISSION PRIEST AND BECAME CHAPLAIN TO THE ARUNDALL FAMILY AT CHIDOECK CASTLE. AT THE APPROACH OF THE CIVIL WAR THE PURITANS REVIVED THE LAWS AGAINST PRIESTS BANISHING THEM FROM THE LAND. A BRIEF AMNESTY WAS GRANTED, BUT UNFORTUNATELY HUGH GREEN WAS NOT ABLE TO ESCAPE IN TIME.

HE WAS ARRESTED AT LYME REGIS AS HE ATTEMPTED TO GET TO FRANCE. HE SPENT FIVE MONTHS IN DORCHESTER PRISON AND MANAGED TO CONVERT TWO CRIMINALS. HE WAS TRIED WITH BEING A PRIEST, AND CONDEMNED TO DEATH. HE WAS TREATED WITH CONSIDERABLE BARBARITY AND REMAINED CONSCIOUS THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS OF BEING HANGED, DRAWN AND QUARTERED. EVENTUALLY HE WAS BEHEADED AND HIS HEAD USED AS A FOOTBALL BY THE MOB.

ALL EIGHT MARTYRS WERE BEATIFIED IN ROME. FIVE IN 1929 (JOHN CORNELIUS, HIS THREE COMPANIONS AND HUGH GREEN) AND THREE IN 1987 (THOMAS PILCHARD AND HIS TWO COMPANIONS).