

The Speech of Squire de Lisle

Fr General, Fr Provincial, Fr Abbot, Rev Fathers, Ladies & Gentlemen.

Most of you know the de Lisle link with the Rosminians but, as this is a great historical day, I will go through-quickly- the essential dates since (over the years) some confusion has arisen.

Ambrose March Phillipps de Lisle (1809-1878) - my great grandfather, a father of 16 children by a capable and long suffering wife Laura Clifford (1811-1896)- was born 1809 and we celebrated the 2nd centenary of his birth last year.

He met Fr Antonio Rosmini (1797-1855) in milan in 1831 and, some years later, Fr Luigi Gentili (1801-1848) arrived here a.t Grace Dieu as Missioner and the family Chaplain.

It is said that Ambrose was never late for services: if he wanted a spin in his carriage (before a service), he would ask Fr Gentili to accompany him. Ipso Facto, services only began on their return!

Ambrose and his younger family moved to Garendon in 1864 but his elder son stayed here with his wife and 2 sons; unfortunately, her dress caught fire in 1871 and rumour has it that she may be the local ghost which has startled several Grace Dieu boys over the years!

The Rosminians founded Ratcliffe College in 1847 but rented Grace Dieu Manor in 1933 and acquired it- and Grace Dieu ruins- from my father in 1958. As we see today, it is a thriving and successful school in a magnificent setting.

By their zeal, the Fathers of Charity have done great mission workbesides scholastic accomplishments - and, on your behalf and the de Lisle family, I thank them individually and collectively for all their dedication sine 1835.

From a small Italian acorn has grown a large tree and, as it continues to thrive, we wish them all the best for the future.