



Tisbury Rally

600 Women Meet at Old Wardour Castle 1935

A rally of members of the Catholic Women's League took place at Old Wardour Castle on Saturday, when over 600 took part. Parties came from Bridgwater, Winchester and as far afield as Coleford in the Forest of Dean.

Tea was provided in the grounds of the Old Castle, after which the Bishop of Clifton, (Right Rev. W. Lee, D.D.), addressed the gathering. He referred to Old Wardour Castle as being once a stronghold of the Faith and spoke of the courage displayed by Lady Blanche Arundell in defending it. The Bishop said that the Catholic Women's League might fittingly take this valiant woman as a model of what women can do if they only try.

Mrs. Roger Ford (Bristol), Mrs. Austin King (Bath), Fr Hyland (Wardour) and Father Hookway (Tisbury) also spoke. On the platform were also Monsignor King, V.G. (Winchester), Monsignor Mullins (Tidworth), Mrs. F. Burt (chairman Wardour branch) and Mrs. Gornall (chairman Tisbury branch).

The people made their way to Wardour Castle, where Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given in the open by the Bishop, with Canon Iles (Taunton) as deacon and Father Dolan (Amesbury) as sub deacon.

After Benediction, the people were conducted to Wardour Church and shown around. Much interest was shown in the pre-reformation vestments, especially the "Westminster Chasuble" said to have been given by Henry VIII to Westminster Abbey on the occasion of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. The "pedlar's chasuble" was also on view. This was used by Catholic priests in the penal days, after the Reformation, when a priest had to say mass in secret for fear of imprisonment or death. The vestment resembles a patchwork quilt and the priest passed as a "pedlar"; hence the name given to the chasuble he wore. Several pewter chalices and altar stones used by these priests were shown to the people.

The chapel was also shown to the assembly. It was the first Catholic chapel to be officially opened after the Reformation. When Bishop Walmsley opened it in 1776, he said that there were more Catholics in Wardour and district than in any place in England outside of London.

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