

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_whs_01.php

Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

Editor: E. ALAN ROSE, B.A.

Volume 53

May 2001

MAKING HASTE SLOWLY : THE CAMPAIGN FOR LAY REPRESENTATION IN THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE, 1871-8

AMONG the 'dominant characteristics' of Methodism listed by Rupert Davies is 'the development of a Church Order in which the laity stands alongside the ministry, with different but equally essential functions'.¹ Modern Methodists are particularly proud of their Church's role in encouraging the ministry of the whole people of God, and tend to perceive their denominational history as one of lay emancipation and empowerment, extending beyond the purely ecclesiastical sphere to the arena of public life.² It is seldom realised that lay representatives were not admitted to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference until 1878, so that ultimate control of the largest Methodist body remained officially in exclusively ministerial hands for almost a century and a half after the beginning of the movement. The purpose of this paper is to describe the campaign for lay representation in the 1870s, examining the points at issue in the debate and the character of the representation achieved at the end of the process. First, however, it is necessary to sketch in some detail the history of the Conference and its place in the Methodist polity, and to reflect on the position of the laity in Wesleyanism before 1878.

The first Methodist Conference met in London in June 1744, and consisted of the Wesley brothers and eight other people. Although not unprecedented, and given greater significance in hindsight than by contemporaries, Conference soon became established as a key feature of Wesleyan polity, evolving into an annual forum for settling Methodist doctrine, administering discipline, and organising Wesley's 'connexion'. Its role remained advisory, and attendance fluctuated: although all of

¹ Rupert E. Davies, *Methodism*, 2nd revised edn (1985), pp. 11-12.

² John Munsey Turner, *Modern Methodism in England*, (Peterborough, 1998), p. 25.

the travelling preachers were eligible to attend, until the late 1760s it seems that Wesley restricted invitations.³

In 1784 Wesley took steps to safeguard the position of his Connexion for the future. Most Methodist property was held in trust for the use of preachers appointed by Wesley, or, in the event of his death, by the 'yearly Conference of the people called Methodists'. Legal opinion advised Wesley that this vague terminology might allow local trustees to take control of the property. In response, a Deed Poll, the so-called 'Deed of Declaration', was drawn up and enrolled in Chancery, defining the composition and frequency of the Conference. From Wesley's death, the Conference was to consist legally of one hundred named travelling preachers, who were to meet annually, with powers to fill any vacancies, to elect a President and a Secretary, and to admit or expel preachers from the Methodist body.⁴ These rights and responsibilities came into force in 1791, and Conference emerged from the battle over the shape of Methodism after Wesley as the controlling authority in the Connexion. With tactical wisdom as well as fraternal generosity, the 'Legal Hundred', then comprising just over half the total number of itinerants, agreed to open the Conference to all preachers in full connexion, simply reserving to themselves their legal duties according to the terms of the Deed Poll.⁵ Wesley thus left Methodism with a 'Legal Conference', but this body of one hundred preachers formed, with Wesley's posthumous encouragement, the heart of a 'general' Conference open to all preachers. From the 1790s various attempts were made to regulate the numbers attending Conference, but these restrictions were short-lived. As will be seen, the sheer size of Conference became one argument for reform in the 1870s.

In order to understand the debates on lay representation, it is important to grasp that the Wesleyan Conference was far more than the residuary legatee of Wesley's autocracy in the Connexion. The history of Conference as the product of institutional evolution needs to be supplemented by a sense of its role in the formation and self-understanding of the Wesleyan pastorate. John Bowmer writes justly that Conference was 'akin to the chapter meeting of a religious order'.⁶ The business of the assembly was conducted as a conversation, with scope for exhaustive deliberations on important or contentious topics.

³ Henry D. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast. John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism* (1989), p. 242; Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People called Methodists*, (Nashville, 1995), pp. 142-3; Frank Baker, 'The people called Methodists: 3. Polity', in Rupert Davies and Gordon Rupp, eds, *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, 4 vols (1965, 1978, 1983, 1988), 1, pp. 242-4 [hereafter *HMCGB*]

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 245-6; William Peirce, *The Ecclesiastical Principles and Polity of the Wesleyan Methodists*, 3rd revised edn (1873), pp. 23-30.

⁵ John Walsh, 'Methodism at the end of the eighteenth century', in *HMCGB* 1, pp. 278-80; Peirce, *Ecclesiastical Principles and Polity*, pp. 31-2.

⁶ John C. Bowmer, *Pastor and People*, (1975), p. 58.

The agenda began by confirming the membership of the Legal Hundred, filling gaps created by death or superannuation, and electing the President and Secretary. The next business concerned the composition of the ministerial body as a whole: receiving obituaries for all who had died during the previous twelve months, admitting ministers into full connexion, approving candidates for ministerial training, and resolving disciplinary charges. Debates on the policies and priorities of the Connexion were thus set within the framework of a community with an agreed discipline, a shared tradition of faith, and a common experience of itinerant ministry. Care should be taken not to idealize the brotherhood of the ministry; those who dissented from the official line found Connexional discipline swift and stern; but the small number of ministers who seceded from the Wesleyan Connexion in the feuding of 1797-1857 suggests that the theory of the united pastorate was more than mere rhetoric.⁷ Constitutionally the Conference exercised legislative, executive, and judicial functions; ecclesiastically it served as synod and collective episcopate; sociologically it shaped, expressed, and reinforced the identity of the Wesleyan ministry through precept, example, and discipline. Jabez Bunting, twice Secretary and four times President, called Conference 'the living Wesley': an appropriate description of its role and powers.⁸

Despite the presence of this all-powerful and exclusively ministerial body at the summit of the Wesleyan polity, it was a commonplace of nineteenth-century Wesleyan ecclesiology that in no other denomination were such rights and powers conceded to the laity as in Wesleyan Methodism. This case formed part of the apologetic for Conference in the Connexional controversies of the early and mid-nineteenth century, when lay and local rights were asserted against a centralised and clerical establishment.⁹ By the early 1870s, when the question of lay representation was canvassed in Conference, the *Methodist Recorder* could maintain that 'the amount of power and influence [the laity] possess ... is practically greater than the laity of any other Church enjoys'.¹⁰ Was the Wesleyan claim justified?

It may be suggested that two tendencies co-existed in the official Wesleyan approach to lay emancipation in the early and mid-nineteenth century. On the one hand, as David Hempton in particular has shown, the Wesleyan leadership in the early years of the century coped with the challenges of revivalism, political pressure and popular radicalism by asserting central control, emphasising loyalty and purging the disaffected. Lay leadership and local initiative, for instance in the

⁷ Oliver A. Beckerlegge, *The United Methodist Free Churches* (1957), pp. 33-6; Benjamin Gregory, *Side Lights on the Conflicts of Methodism* (1898), ch. 9.

⁸ Bowmer, *Pastor and People*, p. 52.

⁹ See, for instance, John Beecham, *An Essay on the Constitution of Wesleyan Methodism*, 2nd edn (1850), p. 71.

¹⁰ *Methodist Recorder*, 18 Aug. 1871, p. 474 [hereafter MR].

burgeoning Sunday schools, were deliberately checked. Demands for lay representation or delegation in Conference, voiced by a succession of reformers, were steadfastly resisted, and this contributed to a series of secessions from Wesleyanism, beginning with the Methodist New Connexion in 1797 and ending with the United Methodist Free Churches in 1857.¹¹ On the other hand, at Connexional level, lay participation was encouraged in a range of influential committees, and locally Circuit Stewards were urged to attend the District Meetings when financial matters were due to be discussed.¹² The link between the two tendencies was the drive for respectability and financial survival, especially in the difficult years after Waterloo. Wesleyan statesmen like Jabez Bunting sought and secured the co-operation of the laity, but only a monied elite was given the opportunity to exercise real power in the national structures of the Church. Lay involvement, moreover, was confined to financial and administrative business, leaving pastoral and spiritual matters to the preachers.

The middle years of the century saw a steady increase in lay participation in Wesleyan decision making, although the temporal/spiritual distinction was carefully preserved. In 1861 every District was given an elected lay representative on the Home Mission and Contingent Fund committee, and these representatives were gradually added through the 1860s to 'committees of review' which met immediately before Conference to discuss the growing work of the Connexional departments.¹³ The committees of review were large bodies, chaired by the President of the Conference and numbering representatives of the thirty-four Districts, ministers nominated by Conference, officers of the departments, and leading lay supporters of the work under discussion. It was open to the departments to invite observers, and since the committees met during the week before the opening of Conference, other ministers and interested spectators were likely to be present. Debates and resolutions in the committees were reported in the Methodist press in the same detail as debates in Conference, and it was expected that the committees' recommendations would be accepted by the ministerial gathering, although this could not be guaranteed, and the Conference retained ultimate power in its own hands.

By 1870, therefore, the prerogatives of the Wesleyan Conference remained as they had been in 1791. It was, however, potentially and actually a much larger body, since the 200 itinerants of Wesley's latter years had increased to more than 1,300, and host towns had to be prepared to accommodate 500 ministers, in addition to the local

¹¹ David Hempton, *Methodism and Politics in British Society 1750-1850*, (1984), ch. 4.

¹² Margaret Batty, *Stages in the Development and Control of Wesleyan Lay Leadership 1791-1878*. (Peterborough, n.d.), pp. 107-15; Bowmer, *Pastor and People*. p98.

¹³ Peirce, *Ecclesiastical Principles and Polity*, p431.

brethren.¹⁴ Despite a high doctrine of pastoral authority and theories of virtual representation, moreover, the Methodist laity were involved selectively in local and national administration, and specific issues of national policy were regularly dealt with by mixed committees of ministers and laity. The structure had been steadily modified, therefore, and although constitutionally the authority of the collective pastorate was still supreme, in practice the system operated with a considerable degree of consensus and consultation.

For much of its history, calls for the reform of the Wesleyan constitution came from circles far removed from the Connexional elite. In the early 1870s, however, dissatisfaction with the structure outlined above began to be voiced by people close to the centre of the Church. In 1871 two pamphlets were published advocating the admission of lay representatives to Conference. One, the anonymous *Lay Representation in the Wesleyan Conference*, was rumoured to be 'the production of a minister whose name is not unknown in connection with our East Indian mission'. The other, *Laymen in Conference?*, was written by T. Percival Bunting, solicitor son of Jabez, and his father's staunch ally in resisting the reform movements of earlier decades. The reviewer in the *Methodist Recorder* was not alone in noting that some readers would be 'not a little surprised at seeing the name of Bunting associated with the advocacy of a proposal which will be stigmatised as revolutionary by a certain class of old-fashioned Methodists'.¹⁵ It remains to be considered why the issue of lay representation was raised at this stage, how it was dealt with by the Wesleyan Connexion, and how the legal, practical and ecclesiological issues were addressed.

External encouragement to reconsider the role of the laity came from other Churches in Great Britain and Ireland. The late 1860s saw the beginning of diocesan conferences in the Church of England, with the first taking place at Ely in 1866.¹⁶ The Church of Ireland, whose disestablishment was enacted in 1869 and took effect in 1871, set up structures involving the laity in decision-making. Lay participation was already well established in the politics of the English Free Churches and the Church of Scotland, and lay representation was part of the *raison d'être* of many of the smaller Methodist groups. Critics of the Wesleyan system, like William Longbottom, claimed that it was 'in harmony with nothing but the loftiest and most arrogant pretensions of the Romish hierarchy'.¹⁷

Nineteenth-century Wesleyanism was noted for its cultural and intellectual self-sufficiency, and it may be doubted whether

¹⁴ MR, 4 Aug. 1874, p. 440.

¹⁵ MR, 9 June 1871, p. 307; the anonymous pamphleteer may have been William Arthur: compare Norman W. Taggart, *William Arthur*, (1993), pp. 4-13.

¹⁶ Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 2nd edn (1972), 2, pp. 359-60.

¹⁷ William Longbottom *Lay Representation and the Wesleyan Conference*, p.2. This pamphlet first appeared as an article in the *Methodist Quarterly* for Dec. 1871.

developments in other denominations or the familiar criticisms of what J. H. Rigg dismissed as 'rival *Wesleyoid* Societies' would have been sufficient to force change.¹⁸

There were, however, internal reasons for calling the existing system into question. The Irish Conference, constitutionally bound to the British Conference and defined by the Deed Poll, began to address the issue of lay representation in 1870 and to ask for guidance from the parent body, as did the small French Conference. Ecclesiological problems in France and Ireland could not legally be solved without British participation, so the issues before the French and Irish Conferences, prompted partly by developments in other Churches, became issues for the parent Conference too. Irish representatives sat in the British Conference and brought their Church's perspective into the debate. There were, moreover, close ties of personnel between the Churches, both through ministers like William Arthur and through laymen like the M'Arthur brothers.¹⁹ Less influential perhaps, but also significant, was the example of American Methodism, where after more than a decade of debate, it was agreed to give the laity a fuller share in the business of Conference, with the South leading the way in 1866 and the Methodist Episcopal Church following suit in 1872.²⁰

Examples of change in sister Churches and pressure for reform in France and Ireland coincided with a growing frustration with the system of preparatory committees of review. As noted above, the committees were ill-defined and unwieldy, sometimes giving the impression of handing control of important Connexional business over to the general public. Percy Bunting was scathing about the 'miscellaneous gathering of members and non-members all talking, proposing, seconding, supporting, opposing, and even voting, at their pleasure, and on equal terms'.²¹ As the debate on lay representation unfolded, it became clear that the committees of review had few friends. William Willmer Pocock, an influential and independent layman, wrote to the *Recorder* that the present system was 'cumbrous and inefficient in the extreme,' while William Burt Pope, who regarded the admission of the laity to Conference as 'impossible', nonetheless thought that the committees were 'utterly and hopelessly past mending'. Only the ultra-conservative George Osborn could be found speaking up for them.²² Most found the committees disorganised and time-consuming; lay members moreover resented the fact that committee decisions could be overturned at will by the ministers in Conference, so their work lacked 'finality'.

¹⁸ *The Watchman and Wesleyan Advertiser*, 14 June 1876, p. 190; J. H. Rigg, *The Principles of Wesleyan Methodism*, (1850), p. 106.

¹⁹ Taggart, *William Arthur*; ; Thomas M'Cullagh, *Sir William M'Arthur KCMG*, (1891).

²⁰ Russell E. Richey, *The Methodist Conference in America* (Nashville, 1996), p. 119.

²¹ T. Percival Bunting, *Laymen in Conference?*, (1871), pp. 9-10.

²² MR, 12 March 1875, p. 138; 13 Aug. 1875, p. 485; 11 Aug. 1876, p. 478.

General agreement on the inadequacies of the committees of review, however, did not lead immediately to a consensus on the possibility or desirability of lay representation in the Conference itself. Between 1871 and 1876 the twin issues of reform and representation occupied the attention of the Conference, the District Meetings and several special committees, leading to a variety of proposals for change, most of which fell short of admitting the laity to Conference. William Arthur moved, and then withdrew, a cautious resolution in 1871, and the following year the question of the legality and desirability of lay representation was raised by T. B. Stephenson. Although Stephenson's notice of motion had to be referred to a committee due to lack of time, this was not before he had attracted the influential support of Charles Prest, a senior Past President. The *Methodist Recorder's* correspondent noted that 'When JUPITER nods assent, there is some indication of a change in the universe.'²³ In 1873 Stephenson's resolution returned for further consideration, and again Prest and Arthur spoke in favour of investigating the possibility of lay representation. This time the issue was diverted into an investigation of the organisation of the committees of review, resulting in a proposal that these committees should be amalgamated. The Conference of 1874 received forty-one Circuit memorials requesting lay delegation, and several Districts also sent in suggestions on the subject. The scheme for one general committee of review, with a proposed membership of over 400, returned to the Conference of 1875, following consultation with a ministerial committee, the District Meetings and a mixed committee of ministers and laity. Many Districts were highly critical of the plan, and the mixed committee carried a resolution that 'the scheme proposed is not acceptable to the Connexion'. A further round of consultations led to a ministerial scheme for a 'mixed body' with extensive responsibilities and with guarantees that its decisions should be 'subject only to the rights and powers of the Legal Conference.' This endeavour to satisfy the aspirations of the reformers while preserving the ministerial character of Conference was rejected by a large special committee, which recommended instead direct lay representation in a two-session assembly: first, a session open to all ministers and dealing with pastoral matters, and then a session composed of equal numbers of elected lay and ordained representatives handling the Connexion's temporal concerns. This was overwhelmingly approved by the Conference of 1876 after a debate lasting four days. Details of the scheme were reviewed in 1877 and the first lay representatives sat in the Conference of 1878.²⁴

The debate on lay representation turned on a series of legal, practical, historical and ecclesiological issues, many of which interlocked. One

²³ MR, 20 Aug. 1872, p. 475.

²⁴ Detailed reports appeared in MR and *Watchman*. See also Robert Currie, *Methodism Divided*, (1968), ch. 5.

fruitful avenue of approach is to show how the case for the *status quo* was gradually demolished by the advocates of change, to the point where lay representation came to be seen as both attainable and desirable by the vast majority of ministers in the Wesleyan Conference.

The first plank in the conservative case was that the laity did not wish to sit in Conference and that they were content with the substantial degree of influence over Connexional policy they could wield through the existing structures of the Church. Colour was lent to this opinion by the slow response to the pamphlets of 1871, and even as late as 1873 W. M. Punshon, whose speech helped to win the day for reform in 1876, advised Conference 'to let the matter drop'. Punshon's friend and ally Gervase Smith, then Secretary of Conference, made the same point: 'The laity did not desire it, and ... there was no agitation among them for it.'²⁵ More conservative voices, both ministerial and lay, echoed this argument in the committees and Conferences of 1875 and 1876.²⁶ By this stage, however, the flow of Circuit memorials and the outcome of discussions in District Meetings had made this line hard to maintain. Particularly influential in this regard were the elections of lay members to the special committees of 1875 and 1876. Some District representatives attributed their election to their firm advocacy of lay representation in Conference itself, rather than the 'mixed body' proposals put forward by the ministerial committees.²⁷ The absence of agitation, moreover, could be turned into an argument for change, on the grounds that it was better to undertake measured reform in a period of calm than to be compelled to make concessions in the face of popular unrest. Henry Hartley Fowler's plea in the 1875 committee, 'Let them not have any agitation on the question,' could be a potent argument for concession, for there were still senior figures in the Connexion who remembered the fratricidal conflicts of 1849-52, and not all endorsed Dr. Osborn's unflinching conservatism.²⁸

The second element of the conservative case was that change to the composition of the Conference was illegal, because it involved breaching the terms of the Deed Poll, and might therefore jeopardise the security of Methodist trust property. Stephenson's notice of motion in 1872 recognised this difficulty, and asked for a legal opinion 'as to whether lay representation in Conference is non-permissible under the provisions of the Poll Deed'. Percy Bunting had already commented on the legal issue in *Laymen in Conference?*, and his opinion was vindicated when the Connexion took advice in 1876. It was decided that it was not within the powers of the Conference to admit lay representatives to the

²⁵ MR, 19 Aug. 1873, p. 472; 20 Feb. 1874, p. 92.

²⁶ MR, 13 Aug. 1875, p. 485; 30 July 1875, p. 432; *Report of the Proceedings of a Special Committee on Lay Representation appointed by the Wesleyan-Methodist Conference of 1875*, (n.d.), p. 33.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

²⁸ MR, 30 July 1875, p. 433; Special Committee, pp. 30, 45, 51.

Legal Hundred, but that the wider body functioned legally merely as an advisory assembly, and could therefore be opened to the laity. When the Revd Joseph Portrey argued that 'lay representation was legally impracticable', he was simply expressing conservative wishful thinking.²⁹

The third strand of the conservative position focused on practicalities. John Bedford, an experienced administrator, argued that a remodelled Conference would be unable to complete its business within the three weeks required by the Deed Poll. To this the reformers replied that lay participation and business acumen should shorten the Conference, rather than lengthening it.³⁰ A more potent argument deployed by the conservatives concerned the size of Conference and the inevitable 'disfranchisement' of many ministers who would lose their places to make room for the laity. Although the number of representatives under the reform schemes fluctuated before eventually settling at 240 ministers and 240 laymen, it was clear from the outset that a limit would have to be placed on ministerial attendance. This was picked up in the 1875 Conference by Joseph Posnett and F. J. Jobson, both staunch defenders of the old order, and it was one of a battery of arguments used by Dr Osborn in a circular letter dispatched in time for the May District Meetings of 1876. This attempt to appeal to the self-interest of the ministers may have been a little too blatant to be effective, and moreover, as has already been noted, the size even of the purely ministerial Conference was giving cause for concern before the issue of lay representation was raised.³¹

Although ministerial disfranchisement could be read as a tactical ploy by the conservatives, it was connected to a fourth element of their case which had a deeper appeal, and this concerned what Charles Haydon called 'the character of the Methodist Conference in its mutual brotherhood'.³² It has already been seen that the Conference was more than a deliberative assembly; it functioned as an expression of the Wesleyan pastorate, and there were fears that this fundamental identity would be destroyed by the admission of the laity. In the crucial debate of 1876 Dr Jobson spoke in touching tones of the brotherhood of the ministry:

There was no friendship to him like the friendship of Methodist preachers. He had looked upon each candidate for the ministry as received as one coming into a family of beloved brethren, and an old Methodist preacher was among the loveliest objects to be looked upon. And if the bringing in of businessmen to ministers devoted to the work of

²⁹ MR, 22 Aug. 1872, p. 488; Bunting, *Laymen in Conference?*, p. 29; *Special Committee*, pp. 5-11; MR, 13 Aug. 1875, p. 485.

³⁰ MR., 30 July 1875, pp. 432-3.

³¹ MR, 17 Aug. 1875, pp. 500-01; G. Osborn, *A Letter to a Junior Preacher concerning Recent Proposals of Legislation* (n.p., n.d.), p. 2; MR, 23 June 1876, p. 361.

³² MR, 17 Aug. 1875, p. 500.

God should alter the spiritual character of the Conference, and turn it into a debating association instead of a united and confiding brotherhood, he should regret it exceedingly.

Benjamin Gregory's response to this appeal was that Jobson's argument was 'a sentiment and not a principle'.³³ The expression of ministerial exclusivity inevitably irritated the laity: T. J. Moore protested in the 1876 committee 'against the ministers ... forming themselves into a brotherhood and considering themselves a brotherhood apart from me'. More positively, it could be argued that lay representation would draw the Connexion together, and express the unity of the Church more effectively.³⁴ Furthermore, the scheme presented in 1876 safeguarded the prerogatives of the pastoral office by leaving the election of the President and Secretary, the filling of vacancies in the Legal Hundred, the appointment of Conference officers, all matters concerning ministerial character, disciplinary appeals by ministers or members, stationing of ministers, and doctrinal questions as the province of an exclusively ministerial Conference, meeting before the arrival of the lay representatives. Reformers emphasised that, while the laity's say in the temporal business of the Church needed to be freed from the risk of reversal by a wholly clerical assembly, they had no wish to invade the prerogatives of the ministry with regard to pastoral matters.³⁵

This arrangement went a long way to meet the fifth aspect of the conservative case, which appealed to traditional Wesleyan ecclesiology, albeit in a more moderate tone than the mid-century statements of the high Methodist position. Joseph Portrey sent a reading list on 'lay delegation' to the *Recorder* in August 1874, including works by Beecham, Woolmer and Rigg. A year later he told the special committee on lay representation that it was a fundamental principle of Methodism that 'Conference was essentially and exclusively ministerial'. Charles Haydon set out in the same meeting the classical view of the pastoral office: 'As ministers they were the pastors of Methodism in a sense that no laymen were or could be, and the peculiar pastoral relation of that body to the Methodist Society would be strangely altered if there were mixed up with it a part of the flock, however estimable and however intelligent,³⁶ Dr Rigg's support for the reforms gave the case for change the backing of one of Wesleyanism's leading constitutional theorists, much to Portrey's dismay,³⁷ and as has been seen, to most Wesleyans the scheme seemed adequately to safeguard the legitimate rights of the pastoral office. A sustained attempt to argue against lay membership and for virtual representation was made in the 1876 Conference by William Burt Pope, the Connexion's greatest systematic theologian, but

³³ *Watchman*, 9 Aug. 1876, p. 257; *MR*, 11 Aug. 1876, p. 475.

³⁴ *Special Committee*, p. 35; *MR*, 8 Aug. 1876, p. 465; 11 Aug. 1876, p. 476.

³⁵ *Minutes of Conference*, (1878), pp. 349-51; *MR*, 30 July 1875, p. 432.

³⁶ *MR*, 28 Aug. 1874, p. 516; 13 Aug. 1875, p. 485; 17 Aug. 1875, p. 499.

³⁷ *Watchman*, 30 Aug. 1876, p. 283.

ill-health meant that Pope had to send his views by letter and was not able personally to respond to the theological riposte offered by Benjamin Gregory.³⁸

The final weapon in the conservative armoury was the appeal to tradition and history. The principal exponent of this argument was George Osborn, veteran of many battles with would-be reformers stretching back to the 1830s, and by the 1870s theological tutor at Richmond College. Osborn claimed that Wesleyan preachers were committed by their ordination vows to accept the Connexion's discipline, and not to seek to change it. As he told the 1876 committee: 'I made a promise not to mend our rules, but to keep them for conscience' sake.'³⁹ To this ethical case, which Osborn likened to the contemporary debate about ritualists in the Church of England flouting the Thirty Nine Articles, was added a reading of Methodist history casting the reformers as latter-day Kilhamites. In an hour-long speech on the third day of the 1876 Conference debate, Osborn made his appeal to the past:

Will any man tell me that the men who admitted me into full connexion - the men of 1797 - would have consented to a proposal for a mixed Conference? Sir, the men of 1797 brought me up ... If I had said to those honoured fathers, "I am in favour of a mixed conference of ministers and laymen," they would have said to me, any one of them, and all of them together, "My dear George, you have mistaken your place: go to the New Connexion." I go farther still. I say that I would have said the same to every man that has been admitted into full connexion since. I would have said the same to Dr Punshon if he had said in 1849 that he was in favour of a mixed Conference. I should have said, "My dear friend, four doors higher up is the New Connexion Chapel. There you will find a mixed Conference."⁴⁰

To the substance of Osborn's appeal to history the reformers' reply was simply that the scheme under discussion preserved intact the essential features of the Wesleyan polity: 'It is utterly impossible for us to degenerate into New Connexionalism.' In a telling speech in Conference winding up the debate, Punshon reminded the assembly that much had changed since 1849, including the now bearded Osborn's personal appearance: 'One of the very first debates to which it was my privilege to listen in the first Conference which I attended for ordination resulted in a declaration that a certain hirsute appendage was unbecoming a Methodist preacher (laughter). These are times of change, and we change with them.' More seriously, the Conference heeded the words of William Arthur, who claimed the support of Beecham and Jabez Bunting before concluding: 'If Methodist history has marked one record in indelible lines it is this, a policy of confidence is always

³⁸ MR, 8 Aug. 1876, pp. 465, 467; 11 Aug. 1876, p. 475.

³⁹ *Special Committee*, pp. 101-02.

⁴⁰ MR, 11 Aug. 1876, pp. 478-9.

followed by peace and prosperity; a policy of distrust by alienation and ultimate disaster.⁴¹

The overwhelming vote in favour of the scheme for lay representation - 369 in favour and 49 against - left some details still to be resolved. Among these was the question of how the representatives were to be elected, and this leads on to the final issue to be considered: the significance of 1878 in terms of lay emancipation.

Percy Bunting's original proposal for lay representation argued for a mixture of departmental nominees and people elected directly by Circuit Quarterly Meetings: 'Seek for a large infusion into your mixed Conference of your average people.'⁴² By 1876 the draft scheme envisaged that a quarter of the places would be filled by Conference itself, with the remainder being elected by District Meetings, which were composed entirely of ministers and Circuit Stewards. A mixed committee in February 1877 proposed reducing the proportion of Conference-elected members to one eighth of the total, and three months later Fowler suggested that lay places should be allocated to the Districts in proportion to membership, but filled by the Circuits in rotation. In this way he claimed, the constituency for electing representatives would be increased from about 3,600 in the District Meetings, many of whom were ministers, to 30,000 in the Circuits, numbering 'some of the wisest and best men in the Connexion,' and avoiding the problem of a predominant ministerial say in the elections. Bunting supported this idea in the press and in the committee.⁴³ When the committee met in June 1877, however, proposals for increasing lay membership of District Meetings or increasing the Quarterly Meeting's control over the choice of its representatives failed to win majority support. District Meetings remained assemblies of ministers and nominated Circuit Stewards, and they retained the power to elect the Conference representatives. Fowler declared in disgust that 'their provision for lay representation had shrivelled down to the merest shred, with which he would never be satisfied, nor would the Connexion'. Conference, however, approved the scheme, and this formed the basis for the representative assembly of 1878.⁴⁴

Surveying the first batch of lay representatives to Conference the *Recorder* commented: 'Any fears which may have been entertained that these posts of honour would be monopolised by any specific class, or that any particular phase of Methodist life would fail to find its legitimate place in the representative assembly will be found to be utterly and happily groundless.'⁴⁵ It has not been possible to analyse the

⁴¹ *Special Committee*, p. 59; MR, 11 Aug. 1876, p. 482; 8 Aug. 1876, pp. 468-9 (and compare *Special Committee*, pp. 11-19, with Bunting's dying words on p. 12).

⁴² Bunting, *Laymen in Conference?*, p. 26.

⁴³ MR, 4 May 1877, p. 254; 11 May 1877, p. 284; 18 May 1877, p. 308; T. Percival Bunting, *Last Words (probably) on Lay Representation* (Bristol, 1877).

⁴⁴ MR, 15 June 1877, p. 357; 10 Aug. 1877, pp. 495-6.

⁴⁵ MR., 23 July 1878, p. 412.

group in any detail, but a number of general comments may be made. In order to qualify for election the vast majority must have been members of Connexional committees or Circuit Stewards, both of which presupposed a certain level of income, and the ability to attend Conference of course required independence and leisure. An analysis of 106 of the representatives showed that 31 were over 60 years of age and only 23 under 40.⁴⁶ It was an exclusively male group: a comment on women's representation raised a laugh in the all-male 1875 committee and William M'Arthur saw no incongruity in voting against a Women's Suffrage bill in the House of Commons a few weeks before taking his place among the first lay representatives at the Bradford Conference.⁴⁷ The *Recorder* recognised that there was more to be done, but the sense of relief and satisfaction in many quarters had more about it of finality than evolution towards further lay empowerment. It is beyond doubt that the Wesleyans were very pleased with their reform, and took up with enthusiasm the proposal for a thanksgiving fund to celebrate the peaceful accomplishment of the change.⁴⁸

Writing in 1887 F.W. Macdonald reflected on the debate in terms which relegated it to the already remote past: 'It is difficult, on looking back over the few years that have elapsed since the principle of lay representation was adopted, to realise the fears it awakened and the opposition it received.... The arguments on either side, if not already obsolete, have little interest now save for students of Connexional history.'⁴⁹ Within two years, however, the arrangements of 1878 were being revised, and debates on the structure of Conference, particularly the relationship between the two sessions, continued through the 1890s.⁵⁰ Far from being obsolete, moreover, the issues of the 1870s, taken up again in the protracted negotiations for Methodist union in the early twentieth century, still surface from time to time as Methodism strives to live up to its reputation and self-image as an emancipator of the laity while coming to terms with its institutional history.⁵¹

MARTIN WELLINGS

(Martin Wellings is a minister in the Oxford Circuit, and has research interests in nineteenth and twentieth-century Methodist and Evangelical history. A version of this paper was presented at a conference on 'Evangelicalism and the Emancipation of the Laity' at the University of St Andrews.)

⁴⁶ *MR*, 23 July 1878, p. 412; 26 July 1878, p. 421.

⁴⁷ *MR*, 30 July 1875, p. 433; M'Cullagh, *Sir William M'Arthur*, pp. 210, 213.

⁴⁸ *MR*, 13 July 1877, p. 408; Henry D. Rack, 'Wesleyan Methodism 1849-1902', in *HMCCGB*, 3, p. 130, n. 23.

⁴⁹ Frederic W. Macdonald, *The Life of William Morley Punshon, LL. D.*, 3rd edn, (1888), p. 373.

⁵⁰ Currie, *Methodist Divided*, pp. 160-63.

⁵¹ The reunion of most strands of British Methodism in 1932 brought different expectations of ordained and lay ministry into the united Church.

Bicentenary of Rev. James Evans, inventor of the syllabic script for the Cree. 1801–1846

JAMES Evans was born in Hull on 18 January 1801. With the exception of relatively few people in Britain and Canada, his achievements have been forgotten and have even been challenged, yet his legacy is in print daily among the Inuit people of Nunavut and Arctic Quebec in Northern Canada. It is used among other native peoples in Canada and it hangs on by a thread in South West China. So why might we remember the bicentenary of this man whose invention has linked Hull, Canada and China?

James Evans, the eldest son of a master mariner, was born near Queen's Dock, the hub of Hull's Baltic trade. He grew up among the trading and ships and, typical of the congested city of Hull, where the wealthier families lived alongside the poorer, he was familiar with both the rough and the smooth of a port life. As a boy he went to the Baltic on his father's ship, ostensibly to dissuade him from a career at sea.

Hull was more than an important commercial and trading centre at this time. It was associated with radical changes in politics and religious revivals. William Wilberforce (1759 - 1833) first represented the town as MP in 1780, a popular son of the town, and a contemporary and friend of William Pitt, the Prime Minister. His influence continued as an MP for Yorkshire until 1812 and with it, the campaigns for which he is reknowned - the abolition of slavery and civil rights reforms. Wilberforce, articulate and outspoken, had, in Hull, been influenced by both Methodists and Evangelicals, particularly the Rev. Isaac Milner.

Hull experienced, in common with much of Britain, a religious revival from the mid-eighteenth century. John Wesley's third and last visit was in 1790 and another preacher was the Irish itinerant, Gideon Ouseley, in 1818. Local Methodists included Joseph Benson, Thomas Thompson, Wilberforce's business partner, later an MP and a leader of Methodism in England, and Sarah Snowden, all much-revered church leaders. Influential Methodist families included the Terrys and Thompsons, both 'merchants, brokers and gentlemen'. George Yard Wesleyan Methodist chapel was completed in 1787, and in 1814 Waltham Street Chapel was called 'the most spacious and elegant that the Society possesses.' Methodism in Hull was 'socially acceptable' and became a significant part of the city life from an early date.

The Evans family was Wesleyan Methodist, attending George Yard then Waltham Street chapels. When James Evans was apprenticed to a grocer after his immediate family had left Hull In 1818, he 'lived-in' and was included in the family worship and at the chapel. It was during the preaching visit of Ouseley that he was converted and for the next two years he taught in Hull Sunday Schools and preached in the neighbouring villages. These Sunday Schools also taught the rudiments of reading and writing, so James Evans had experience as a teacher, and in tough schools, before he left Hull in 1820.

Biographies suggest that he left Hull with a 'good command' of languages and shorthand. It is reported that he went to boarding school in

Lincolnshire but most probably he attended the reputable Methodist school of Benjamin Snowden in Hull, offering commercial and technical education', for boys 'intended for the accounting house or counter', as well as 'practical mathematics, particularly navigation and surveying'.

His knowledge of shorthand is significant for a later part of this story. The most common shorthand in use in the 1820s had been devised by Samuel Taylor in 1786¹. Pitman's shorthand became popular only after 1840, the year in which James Evans printed his first syllabic Cree book. Coincidentally Isaac Pitman was a school teacher and Methodist in Barton on Humber between 1832 and 1836.

Evans' family emigrated to Canada in 1820 and James and his youngest brother, Ephraim² moved to London to 'further their prospects' in a large glass and crockery business. In 1822 the brothers also went to Canada and James was soon employed as a teacher near L'Orignal, Upper Canada, reputedly managing a tough class by using experienced gained in the Sunday Schools of Hull. Later he moved to a school for Canadian Indians where his aptitude to learn and understand their language was noticed by Rev. William Case, a senior elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church. At Rice Lake among the Ojibway people, Evans became an active Methodist again. He was ordained in 1833 and continued to work among the Ojibway. He learned the language thoroughly in order to teach, preach and translate. His knowledge of it was such that when he realised that the roman alphabet was unsatisfactory for accurate translation, he started to devise a completely new script for their language. The characters of this syllabary are based on Taylor's shorthand script. The translation was completed by 1836, in close cooperation with Ojibway scholars, particularly Thomas Hurlburt, but the syllabic script was discouraged by the Bible Society in Toronto.

The Hudson Bay Company invited some Methodist ministers into its territory. At Norway House and Rossville, now in Manitoba, James Evans and his wife Mary lived and worked with the Cree, soon learned their language, which was closely related to the Ojibway, and within a year had created the syllabic script for it. Details of the drama of travelling and working in that area in the 1840s are told elsewhere, but it was tough in all seasons and the foreigner depended on the native people and worked closely with them. It was here that Evans first printed the script for the Cree language and the first ever printed book in Rupertsland, and another reason why his bicentenary is worthy of celebration.

In the 1830s the Cree had no written language but probably did use some signs for 'tracking' across the vast Canadian landscape. Evans identified the structures of the Ojibway and Cree languages accurately. His script was not an alphabet, such as we are accustomed to, but a syllabary, in which each symbol represents both a consonant and a following vowel. Each of the symbols, some of which resembled those in Taylor's shorthand, gave the consonant, and the vowel depended on whether the symbol faced up, down, left or right. Most important, it was easy to learn and teach. Once it had been

¹ Taylor's script had evolved from those of Gurney (1756) and Willis (1601)

² Ephraim Evans, 1803-1892, the youngest of the Evans children, became a prominent Wesleyan Methodist leader in Canada.

learnt, a person could easily teach other family and community members, so knowledge of this writing spread very quickly among the Cree in Canada. The Hudson Bay Company, on whose land the missionaries worked, insisted that the printing was used only for religious teaching as a condition of later allowing a printing press to Rossville.

James Evans is acknowledged as having invented the script but it is known that he and named Cree and Ojibway people developed it, eventually printed it and translated the books of the Bible. It was unique to the Cree in the early years, but it was so effective that it was modified for other Native Canadian languages and within twenty years its use was widespread. Neither the Cree people nor the missionaries could have developed the scripts without each other and they acknowledged this. This Cree script became their writing and was associated with their identity, as did its modifications for other groups in Canada. However, the development of formal school education and commerce with French and English traders led to the decline of the Cree script, although it is still in daily use among older people, is taught in schools and in print. Not so with the Inuit in Nunavut and Arctic Canada; their script was a modified syllabic script based on Evans' invention and developed by Edmund Peck, another missionary. Their syllabic script is an important feature in their new nationhood; newspapers and telephone directories are published, it is taught in schools and used widely on the internet. There is a revival in interest in the script among other native peoples of Canada.

James Evans of Hull was the inventor of this script, with the collaboration of Cree and Ojibway people. He returned to Britain in 1846, intending to return to Canada, but after preaching at a missionary meeting in Keelby, North Lincolnshire, he died of a heart attack. He was buried in Walton Street Methodist Chapel, the present Methodist Central Mission, Hull. When that site was redeveloped in 1954 it was agreed that his remains should be returned to Canada, to the people with whom he had worked and whose lives he had transformed by his invention.

China – where does this fit in? Two generations later a Methodist missionary left Devon for China in 1886. He too was a gifted linguist, knew shorthand and had read of James Evans' achievements. In 1904 he started working among the A-Hmao³ in Yunnan and Guizhou Provinces, and they too had no written language. The Rev. Samuel Pollard knew of James Evans' Cree script and he realised how much easier it was to learn for people who had no knowledge of reading and writing. He and A-Hmao leaders devised a script using local ideas and influenced by Evans' syllabary. They translated books of the New Testament and hymns. It was learnt enthusiastically, not only by the A-Hmao but also by other ethnic groups in Yunnan such as the Lisu and the Gopu. Until 1950 this script was used widely, but it has since declined because of the immense political pressures.

³ A-Hmao is their own name for themselves. The Hua Miao has been the name used in missionary literature hitherto. The A-Hmao are a sub group of the Miao National Minority in China.

Like the Cree script, that which was invented for the A-Hmao spread fast and for similar reasons. It was easy to learn. It belonged to the A-Hmao – it had been invented for them. It enabled them to become literate. It was soon in printed form, for both preaching and teaching, and became widespread. In 2000 this script also had its website, thanks to the devotion of three scholars in Britain.

For the A-Hmao and the Cree and Inuit in Canada, their unique scripts offered them literacy and some distinctive identity at times when their worlds were changing rapidly, albeit 65 years apart and on the other side of the world. James Evans' bicentenary is an opportunity to reflect on this forgotten son of Hull. His invention and the printing, and the skills of many translators, made it possible for people to read and to acquire one of the tools of a developing world – literacy.

References

- Anderson, T. (1882) *History of Shorthand*. London
- Burwash, N. (1911) 'The Gift to A Nation Language', *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*. No. 5, Section ii.
- Deverell, L. & Watkins, G. (2000) *Wilberforce and Hull*: Kingston Press.
- Enwall, J. (1994) *A Myth Become Reality. The History and Development of the Miao Written Language*. Stockholm University: Institute of Oriental Languages.
- Hutchinson, G. M. (1988) 'James Evans', *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. Vol. VII. Toronto.
- Jackson, G. (1972) *Hull in the Eighteenth Century. A Study in Economic and Social History* London: Oxford University Press
- Mason, R. B. (1996) *Travels in the Shining Island. The Story of James Evans and the Invention of the Cree Syllabary Alphabet*. Toronto : National Heritage Books.
- McLean, J. (1890) *James Evans Inventor of the Syllabic Script of the Cree Language*. London: Methodist Missions Rooms.
- Nicholls, J. (1996) 'The Cree syllabary' in Daniels & Bright, J. *The World's Writing Systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pilling, J. C. (1891) *Bibliography of the Algonquian Languages*. Washington: Smithsonian Institute.
- Young, E. R. (1899) *The Apostle of the North (James Evans)* London: Marshall Brothers.

Acknowledgements

Dr. L-J Dorais, Universite Laval, Canada, has assisted with current details for Canada.

ALISON LEWIS

Alison Lewis lectures in the Faculty of Social and Life Sciences, University of Lincoln, UK. Her ongoing research is into the encounter between missionaries and minorities in South West China.

‘MON PLAISIR’ AND THE METHODISTS OF GUERNSEY

WHEN Methodism was introduced into Guernsey in the late eighteenth century, Henri de Jersey and his family lived at the ‘Mon Plaisir’ estate in St. Jacques. They were amongst the first people to embrace the faith, and their home became one of the venues for the first meetings of Methodist people, prior to the building of any Chapels. Thus a long and valuable link was forged between Methodism and ‘Mon Plaisir’.¹ A major advance was made when two young preachers arrived in Guernsey in 1785. For the next few years they ministered in all the Channel Islands, but when in Guernsey they always lodged at ‘Mon Plaisir’.

One of the young men was Jean de Queteville. He was a native of Jersey, and in his teens he was sent to Winchester College where, among other subjects, he learned English. Soon after returning to Jersey he became a Methodist and, eventually, a minister. He led services at various homes in Jersey, which by then had 250 Methodist followers. Guernsey required a French-speaking missionary, and it was suggested that Jean be appointed. When he arrived he found the situation very different from Jersey: there were only eighteen people in all. He formed them into two classes: one French-speaking, the other English-speaking. Prominent in the French group were Henri de Jersey, his wife Suzanne, his son Jean and daughters Suzanne and Marie - meeting of course at their home.²

The other young man was Adam Clarke, the son of an Irish schoolmaster. As he was able to read French he too was sent as a minister to Guernsey. He later wrote warmly of the hospitality he received at ‘Mon Plaisir’. He was treated as if he was a child of the house, and loved the de Jerseys as if they were his own family. He continued his studies, sitting in what he called his ‘leafy study’. This was beneath a fig-tree, which provided shade as he continued learning Latin and Greek.³

Adam wrote that Jean de Queteville and himself not only lodged in the same house but also helped each other at the meetings, which were held in both languages. So Jean gave the substance of Adam’s sermons in French, and Adam gave the substance of Jean’s sermons in English. Both had to contend with persecution as opposition grew. Adam had to be escorted by naval officers to a meeting house, but they deserted him when a mob attacked. A plan to capture Jean when preaching was foiled only because that service was attended by two members of the Royal Court. Rowdy mobs came with dogs to disrupt the services and break windows. Servants who became Methodists were threatened with dismissal; similarly labourers could not obtain work. However, people gradually responded to the Methodist preachers, and numbers grew.⁴

¹ Francois Guiton: *Histoire du Methodisme Wesleyan dans Les Iles de la Manche*, 1846, p.238.

² Henri de Jersey: *Vie du Rev. Jean de Queteville*, 1847, pp.1,22–23.

³ Matthieu LeLievre: *Histoire du Methodisme dans les Iles de la Manche*, 1884, pp.227–228.

⁴ *Ibid* pp.224–225.

John Wesley landed in Guernsey on Wednesday, 15 August 1787, at the age of 84! Weather conditions in the Channel were very rough. Wesley wrote in his *Journal* that when they eventually disembarked at Guernsey they went quickly to Mr. de Jersey's house a little way out of town. They found there a most cordial welcome from the master of the house, and his family. At 7 p.m. Wesley preached in a large upper room on the north side of the house, which had an outside staircase. Next morning he preached again - at 5 a.m.⁵

Wesley was deeply impressed by the estate, especially the fertility of the soil. He wrote glowingly of the gardens and orchards - how vast and pleasant they were. He confessed that he knew of no nobleman in Great Britain who had such an excellent variety and quality of fruit, and quoted one example. On the estate they were gathering fifty pounds of strawberries daily for six weeks.⁶ This is confirmed by Adam Clarke, who wrote that for six weeks fifty to one hundred pounds in weight of strawberries were gathered daily (Sundays excepted). Clarke also wrote that one cabbage was higher than a full-grown apple tree, and that the stem was sixteen feet in length.⁷

On the Friday the gathering was so large that Wesley did not attempt to speak in the house but stood near it in the yard, preaching there surrounded by tall shady trees. He then sailed to Jersey and hoped to continue to Southampton, but weather forced him back to Guernsey, and he took full advantage of the extra time granted to him. He led services not only at 'Mon Plaisir' but also at the Assembly Rooms (now the Guille Alles Library), and on the communal plateau that we know as Cambridge Park. This continued for the next eight days until the weather allowed him to take grateful leave from the de Jerseys, and return to the mainland on 6 September.⁸

In the spring of the following year (1788) Jean de Queteville married Suzanne de Jersey, the daughter of his host, and continued living at 'Mon Plaisir'. He had fallen in love with her in spite of his conviction that because of his work as a minister he would never marry. Suzanne had other ideas. Thus, Jean decided that, if it was God's will for him to marry, Suzanne would accept his proposal. Of course, she did.⁹ A few days earlier Adam Clarke had married a Mary Cooke of Trowbridge, and he brought his bride back to 'Mon Plaisir'.

In June 1788 Adam wrote from the de Jerseys to John Wesley emphasising the need for a Chapel to be built in Guernsey. Henri de Jersey and a Mr. Walker had purchased a plot of land: they both subscribed £100, and de Jersey also lent £300, assuring the people that they could repay him whenever they were able, but he would not worry if he never received a penny in return. De Jersey had been on the eve of building a house for his daughter and new son-in-law, but declared that not a stone of it would be

⁵ *Standard Journal*, vi, 123: 14 August 1787.

⁶ *Ibid* p.123.

⁷ J.W. Etheridge: *Life of Adam Clarke*, 1858, p.95.

⁸ *Standard Journal*, vi, pp.124-129: 17 August - 6 September 1787.

⁹ Henri de Jersey: *op.cit.* p.53.

built before the Church was finished. So the first Methodist Church in the Channel Islands was opened in the Rue Le Marchant, near the Royal Court, on 20 April 1789. Adam Clarke preached the dedicatory sermon, and later that year he left Guernsey to continue his ministry on the mainland. He never returned to the islands.¹⁰

Jean de Queteville had felt the call to minister further afield: he hoped to go to Canada, but was sent like many others to be a missionary in France. This work was cut short by the first stirrings of the French Revolution. He returned to the Channel Islands where he and his wife Suzanne (nee de Jersey) continued to serve their Lord and the island Churches for many years.¹¹

John Wesley died in 1791, a momentous year for Europe as well as Methodism. Three years later Henri de Jersey wrote from 'Mon Plaisir' to Adam Clarke, who at that time was in Liverpool. He was seeking advice on how to petition the King. It was on behalf of Guernsey Methodists who, as in the other islands, were expected to train with the Militia on Sundays. This issue came to a satisfactory conclusion.¹²

The original Ebenezer Methodist Church was built in 1815 on the corner of Saumarez Street and Union Street, St. Peter Port; today it is a bank. A service took place there in October 1834, attended by a thousand people. The gas lamps began to waver and fluctuate, and several went out completely. This created panic among the congregation and, in the stampede to get clear of the building, a number of people (many of them teenagers) were killed or injured. Among the latter was Miss de Jersey of 'Mon Plaisir', a descendant of Henri, Wesley's host. It was reported that she recovered well.¹³

The de Jersey family continued to serve Methodism in the islands and in France in succeeding generations, not least in providing Methodist ministers or their spouses! Not only was Henri's son-in-law, de Queteville, a minister, but so were his grandson (also named Henri de Jersey) and great-grandson (Henri T. de Jersey). Two of his great-granddaughters married Methodist ministers (Louise to Matthieu Gallienne and Helene to Emile Cook).¹⁴

Today 'Mon Plaisir' is basically the same house that Wesley, de Queteville, and Clarke knew. However, the outside staircase to the room on the north side is no longer there, and bay windows and gables now feature. What is today the south side of the house had been a barn above which had been a conservatory. In this and in other greenhouses Guernsey lilies (nerines) had grown together with other flowers; and tomatoes. The stable today looks as it was depicted two hundred years ago, except that it now houses a motor car. The fig-tree is still there - Adam Clarke's leafy study. The interior of the house is as elegant as it had been when the de Jerseys were generous hosts to the early Methodists.

¹⁰ Matthieu LeLievre: *op.cit.* pp.312-318.

¹¹ Henri de Jersey: *op.cit.* pp.60, 78, 85.

¹² Matthieu LeLievre: *op.cit.* p.378. c.f. Arthur Mignot: 'Gideon's Army': *Proceedings*, 52, p.124.

¹³ *The Channel Islands Family History Journal* No. 49 (Winter 1990/91): Alex Glendinning.

¹⁴ May Morley (ed): *The Gallienne Letters 1835-1895* 1991, family tree.

There are other signs of bygone years. Outside the wall of the property, on the roadside, is a stone which had been used for the assistance of those mounting their horses. John Wesley, himself an accomplished horseman, preached from this mounting-stone, and an inscription above it marks that occasion: it is called the 'Wesley Stone'. Further along St. Jacques there is a house with the name 'de Quetteville' carved into the stone lintel.¹⁵ The Deeds of that house show that it was owned by the family of Jean de Quetteville. These are eloquent testimonies to the growth of Methodism in Guernsey, and the part played by the de Jerseys and Mon Plaisir.

ARTHUR MIGNOT

(The Rev Arthur Mignot is a retired Methodist Minister, now living in Alderney).

¹⁵ The spelling of 'de Quetteville' is inconsistent: one selects according to the source. I have followed his biographer (de Jersey) and others who use one 't'. However, other sources, and the lintel carving here, use the alternative spelling.

In *Intractable Dr Memis of Aberdeen*, Margaret Batty tells the story of John Memis, the founder of Methodism in the town. Hot-tempered and frequently difficult, Memis was also a manager of Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, where he often caused offence by his resolute pursuit of what he considered the correct course of action. The booklet is published by the Scottish WHS and can be obtained from George W. Davis, 6 Gowan Park, Arbroath, Angus, DD11 2BN, price £2.50 post free.

For All the Saints by William Leary is a series of pen portraits of twentieth-century Lincolnshire Methodists, arranged partly by occupation and partly by area. By the same author is *Musical Echoes*, an engaging collection of his memories of hymns from early childhood to the present, a hundred in all. Both books can be obtained from the author at 7 Balder Court, Scartho Park, Grimsby, DN33 3RD, price £4.00 and £2.00 respectively.

Among the latest booklets from WMHS Publications, 1A School Lane, Emsworth, PO10 7ED are *In Lighter Vein*, a collection of occasional writings by John Vickers, which includes 'Pulpit Notices in the style of Charles Wesley' and 'The Modern Vicar of Bray', not to mention several clerihews . . . and, in complete contrast, *A Chinese Diary* by the Rev Tan Chin-ching, translated by Geoffrey Senior. This diary covers events during the persecution of Chinese Christians in the '1925-27 Revolution'. *In Lighter Vein* is £3.00 post free, and *Chinese Diary* is £4.00 post free.

Methodist Archives: Manuscript Accessions, February 2000 - February 2001

Extracts from various 18th century antiquarian newspapers, 1781-89, relating to Methodism.

Box files from Methodist Church House, including MCODE minutes, Division of Ministries Executive Urban Mission, Home Mission, Ministerial Training, Open Learning Centres etc, 1970-99.

Handsworth College autograph book, 1885-1963.

Itemised Connexional expenditure book, containing specific details of Circuit and Society accounts (mainly debts), 1799-1805. The volume comprises an 'Account of Deficiencies', arranged by Circuit, details of the 'Yearly Collection' by Circuit, and of the 'Yearly Collection and Deficiencies', arranged by District.

Minutes of P.M. Quarterly Missionary Committee, 1900-1903.

Album of Wesleyan Methodist class tickets in name of Miss Emma Cooper, June 1878-Sept 1923.

P.M. class tickets, 1871-1932.

Wesleyan Methodist class tickets (c. 50), 1822-1925.

U.M.F.C. class tickets (8), 1872-4.

Class tickets from Bickerton, 1880-95.

Xerox Circuit Book of the Bible Christian London Circuit, 1823-57.

Records of Ashville College, Harrogate.

Photograph of Bible Christian Conference delegates, London, 1869.

Lists of early Richmond College students.

Photograph of group of delegates from the Barnsley Missionary (U.M.F.C.) rally, c. 1930.

Group photograph of the first Wesleyan Methodist 'mixed' (i.e. lay as well as ministerial delegates) Conference, 1878.

PETER B. NOCKLES

LOCAL BRANCHES REPORT 2001

Why not be a 'joiner'? You are reading the Journal of the national Wesley Historical Society, which is always full of good things, so probably you have joined the Society or at least know about it. But do you know that there is a network of local and regional Methodist Historical Societies which publish journals and arrange lectures and visits. So why not join your local Society and double your enjoyment of exploring our Methodist heritage? I receive all the local journals and am fascinated by the interest of the articles and lectures and the variety of visits - usually ending with a jolly good tea. Here is a list of names and addresses of the Secretaries of local Societies:

EAST ANGLIA. Mr. D. Elvidge, 14, Avon Road, South Wootton, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3LS

BRISTOL Rev. E. A. Clarke, 81, Shakespeare Road, Dursley, Glos. GL11 4QQ

CORNWALL Rev. D. J. Forway, Chy an Ula, Goonvrea Road, St. Agnes TR5 0UJ

CUMBRIA Mr E. A. Leteve, 6 Beech Grove, Houghton, Carlisle CA3 0NU

IRELAND Miss E. M. Weir, 5, Aberdelghy Gardens, Lambeg, Lisburn, Co. Antrim BT27 4QQ

NORTH LANCASHIRE Miss H. Spencer, 77, Clifton Drive, Lytham St. Annes FY8 1BZ

LINCOLNSHIRE Mr J. Stevenson, 10, Severn Street, Lincoln LN1 1SJ

LONDON AND SOUTH EAST Mr N. McMurray, 46, Lyndhurst Gardens, Barking, Essex IG11 9YB

ISLE OF MAN Mrs. T. Wilson, 28, Droghadfaile Road, Port Erin, Isle of Man IM9 6EN

EAST MIDLANDS Rev. S. Y. Richardson, 22, Garton Road, Loughborough LE11 2DY

WEST MIDLANDS Dr. E. D. Graham, 34, Spiceland Road, Northfield, Birmingham B31 1NJ

NORTH EAST Mrs Audrey Bland, 41, Paddock Wood, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 5BJ

SCOTLAND Mr. R. Moul, 25, High Street, Montrose, Angus

SHROPSHIRE Doreen E. Woodford, 7, King Street, Much Wenlock TF13 6BL

YORKSHIRE Mr. D. C. Dews, 1, Dragon Drive, Leeds LS12 4AS

ROGER THORNE

Alan Cass: An Appreciation

Alan Cass (1921–2001) was a long time member of the WHS and a former District Archivist for the Sheffield District. This is an extract from Professor Clyde Binfield's tribute at the funeral on 9 February 2001:

Alan Cass was as unobtrusive in death as in life yet his influence on all whom he steadily encountered was of a breadth and a quality which more obtrusive men and women must envy. The son of a United Methodist minister, he read history at Peterhouse, Cambridge, later becoming Assistant Librarian at Selly Oak Colleges. In fact, of course, he never left History. He kept his reading in first-rate repair and to the end of his life that reading matched his large intellect. Although he wrote little – a chapel history, several reviews, some encyclopedic entries – he was an instinctive historian with disconcertingly acute judgement. Like others I have benefited again and again from his comments and suggestions, often hesitantly made but invariable tin-opening. He kept us constantly in training and a large number will miss his notes alerting us to a book or an article or an as yet unconsidered fact, often accompanied by a mischievous clerihow and a frequently impossible conundrum. For his was a *New Statesman* mind. That is a turn of mind congenial to many historians and, I think, to many librarians. From 1950 to 1970 he was in the University Library, Dundee and from 1970 to 1986 he was in the University Library, Sheffield . . . there was in this unobtrusive life of faith a rare totality, led providentially in an 'optimism of grace' and now it is lived in its fulness, and though we miss him, we rejoice. His faith has improved our lives.

BOOK REVIEWS

Hugh Price Hughes: Founder of a New Methodism, Conscience of a New Nonconformity by Christopher Oldstone-Moore. (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1999, pp x, 393, £25.00. ISBN 0 7083 1468 6)

Hugh Price Hughes (1847-1902) was one of the giants of later Victorian Wesleyan Methodism, perhaps best known as a personification of what has been called 'The Nonconformist Conscience' and for his controversial role in the disgrace and downfall of the Irish Nationalist leader, Charles Stuart Parnell in 1891, for which he has been widely blamed. Oldstone-Moore discusses and reassesses that controversial episode, but only as a small part of a refreshingly comprehensive and rounded treatment of the energetic and somewhat turbulent public life and and career of one of the greatest preachers and social reformers of the second half of the nineteenth century. Although well served by a fine biography by his daughter, the author does not think that Hughes has been well understood by posterity. He explains (p. 3) the relative neglect of Hughes as an historical figure, however, by the fact that he was primarily a man of action rather than a writer. Nonetheless, as founder and editor for many years of the influential *Methodist Times*, Hughes was also a prolific propagandist and in many ways the literary

mouthpiece of that new and particular form of Methodism, known as the 'Forward Movement' which he brought into existence. It was through his popular journalism as much as through his oratory that Hughes made his contemporary mark as the foremost exponent of Nonconformist views on social questions. It might be nearer the truth to ascribe the recent neglect of Hughes to the current unfashionableness of some, though by no means all, of the causes which he espoused.

Oldstone-Moore charts Hughes's involvement in a whole panoply of moral, religious, and social causes, including temperance, social purity, anti-gambling, international and industrial peace, 'Social Christianity', non-sectarian education, and 'Ecumenical Unity'. He captures the combination of religious zeal (Hughes enunciated a concept of 'Christian audacity'), organisational vision, and impetuosity, which characterised him. Although adhering strictly to a chronological narrative framework and recounting the events of Hughes's life in almost exhaustive detail, Oldstone-Moore finds space for a perceptive and contextualised analysis of Hughes's ideas as well as organisational leadership. Hughes's pastoral years in Dulwich and Oxford, his foundation and promotion of the West London Mission, and his role in the Methodist Conference figure prominently, but also the rationale behind his burning crusades against the Contagious Diseases Acts, on behalf of temperance, and Irish Home Rule. Oldstone-Moore effectively rebuts the charge of narrow-minded moralism as applied against Hughes by a later age of moral relativism. He argues (p. 339) that his struggles for temperance and against the hated Contagious Diseases Acts (which like Josephine Butler, he castigated not only as embodying state sanction of prostitution, but as an invasion of a woman's personal liberty) were 'manifestations of the attempt by Victorian, and especially Nonconformist, reformers to bring a new level of democratic righteousness to a culture they believed was dominated by upper-class dissipation and neglect'. He shows how Hughes's brands of social and moral reform were interlinked, and also integral to his own 'preaching of the Gospel' and revivalist concerns. The author demonstrates (p. 177) how Hughes's *Social Christianity* (1889), was an exposition of Christ as social reformer, while his *The Philanthropy of God* (1889) elaborated the way in which Christ's example would effect both a religious and social revolution. Religious and social salvation were linked. Hughes had no time for what he regarded as 'the fatal divorce between Personal Christianity and Social Christianity'. Oldstone-Moore rightly emphasises the distinctiveness of Hughes's thought and approach from that of more well known contemporary Anglican Christian Socialists such as Henry Scott-Holland.

Hughes's zeal and vision often made him impatient with, what to him appeared to be, the somewhat narrowing confines of Wesleyan Methodism. He was always seeking the widest possible field of action and his ecumenical endeavours, culminating in the foundation of the Free Church Congresses, was a fruit of this quest. This created tensions and apparent contradictions in his position, which Oldstone-Moore does not fully acknowledge. On the one hand, as he shows, Hughes was largely instrumental in the completion of the process whereby Wesleyan

Methodism was transformed from a Connexion into a Church, and was thereby indeed the founder of a 'new Methodism'. At the same time, he allied Methodism far more closely than hitherto with the forces of Nonconformity and aspired to a quasi-leadership role over what became increasingly known as the 'Free Churches'. Moreover, his cultivation of closer relations with other Nonconformist denominations was underpinned (p. 203) by his espousal of a 'common theology of Nonconformity' - 'pure Scriptural Christianity'. This process inevitably, however, appeared to cement the earlier breach with the Church of England. Moreover, Hughes's anti-Catholicism and anti-sacramentalism (pronounced in his earlier years) and antipathy towards the Anglo-Catholic movement within the Church of England, was normative of late-Victorian Methodism. On the other hand, Oldstone-Moore brings out a less well known aspect of Hughes's teaching and practice - his determination not only to defend continued use of the Book of Common Prayer as the rightful basis of Methodist liturgical practice in the face of attempts to jettison it, but to recover for Methodism a more sacramental and liturgical style of worship. For Hughes, revival enthusiasm and social activism were to be encouraged by a refined liturgical service designed to appeal to the more sophisticated chapel-goers such as he found in his Dulwich ministry. The motivation was pastoral pragmatism and not a 'high church' theological acceptance of doctrinal sacramentalism on Hughes's part. Nonetheless, the consequence was that Hughes, already suspect for his social radicalism, found himself in conflict with influential Methodists such as William Arthur and J. H. Rigg for whom the Book of Common Prayer upon which the Methodist Book of Offices was based, contained 'the lamentably un-evangelical doctrines of priestly absolution and baptismal regeneration' (p. 87). Moreover, the ecumenical orientation of Hughes's later years, as exemplified in his promotion of the Grindelwald Reunion conferences in the 1890s, led him to adopt a surprisingly conciliatory attitude towards the established church. He made himself deeply unpopular in Methodist circles by his readiness to pursue the objective of even eventual reunion with the Church of England and to accept the historic episcopacy, albeit shorn of unacceptable high church gloss, as the principle of government of a united church.

Oldstone-Moore's chronological treatment means that some themes, such as Hughes's championship of non-denominational or 'secular' education as against his more conservative counterpart J. H. Rigg, are given comparatively less focused coverage. The author refers to the conflict with Irish Methodists which Hughes's Home Rule activism created, but does not develop the theme of the growing affinity between Wesleyan Methodism and the Unionist party, discussed by David Bebbington and others. This reviewer also wished for a slightly more critical note to be injected in places. The author seemed inclined to exonerate Hughes on every occasion, as in his campaign against Parnell (for which he has been condemned by historians such as John Kent) and surprising defence (given his outspoken anti-militarism and the opposition of his close associates) of the Boer War. A case can be made for Hughes in both these instances. Over the Boer War, Hughes was by no means happy over the conduct of the war and he

continued to criticise Cecil Rhodes and his treatment of the natives. Oldstone-Moore seems right to explain (p. 316) Hughes's stand in moral terms as an expression of a greater patriotism in which he expected evangelical Christianity to take the lead.

The author acknowledges Hughes's weaknesses of over-optimism and the demands which his espousal of a faith which he insisted had to be productive of results could place on his colleagues and followers. He also concedes Hughes's undoubted rhetorical excesses on occasion, but he perhaps understates the extent to which so much which he achieved and promoted was dependent on his own persona and the ability of others to follow in his footsteps. Scott Lidgett, the founder in 1905 of the Wesleyan Methodist Union for Social Service, may have taken up his mantle, but in one sense Hughes was almost irreplaceable. This meant that his premature death in 1902 was a particular tragedy for the later history of Wesleyan Methodism. The post World War I decline of Methodism was caused by long-term social and political trends and factors beyond Hughes's control. Hughes was certainly capable of reading the signs of the times. His later flexibility and moderation of his earlier hard-line message on Temperance and prohibition, reveals that he could be adaptable in the face of cultural and social currents. However, perhaps by identifying not only Methodism but a wider religious Nonconformity so much with temporary and contingent political structures, institutions, and campaigns (in particular, the fortunes of the parliamentary Liberal party), he left it that much more vulnerable to erosion from without as well as within when the character of political and moral discourse changed.

PETER B. NOCKLES

My Sons in the Gospel. An Analysis of Wesley's Itinerant Preachers by John H. Lenton. Wesley Historical Society Lecture 2000 (Wesley Historical Society 2000, pp.40, £3. No ISBN)

It is unfortunate, though understandable, that up to now Methodist researchers have not been equipped with a complete list of those who, at one time or another, served as travelling preachers during John Wesley's lifetime. The Conference *Minutes* are often misleading in detail and in any case often missing or uninformative on stations before the printed sequence begins in 1765. Myles's early list continues to be valuable, not least because it includes the substantial number of preachers who left the itinerancy. Kenneth Garlick's list, though useful as recording circuits in which preachers served, omits all but those who continued in the work. In any case the category of 'itinerant' was ill-defined in the early years. The late Frank Baker compiled a list of 677 men, plus some biographical details, stations and a list of sources. He had hoped that this might be part of the Conference volume of the Bicentennial Edition of *Wesley's Works* which he and I edited but this would have impossibly extended an over-stretched volume so a separate publication was planned and Mr Lenton has inherited

the work. The prospect now is for a list of 800 men who were connected with Wesley in one way or another as itinerants, whether or not they continued in the work.

A very wide range of sources has been used and though many of the men are obscure, biographical details have been collected as far as possible for a database from which a variety of statistical analyses have been constructed. Following Myles, who divided the preachers into three successive 'races', Mr Lenton has counted them in five 'cohorts' of ten years each (recruited in the 1740s, 1750s and so on). This has enabled him to bring out some very interesting and instructive differences between the characteristics of each cohort. The analysis includes consideration of place of birth, religious upbringing, class, education, age of entry and death, marriage, reasons for leaving and subsequent activities. The analysis is enlivened with examples and anecdotes.

This is a remarkable piece of work and Mr Lenton deserves high praise for his industry as well as the scope and quality of his analysis. Even in its necessarily summary form this lecture already makes a major contribution to understanding the early itinerants and much else about the character of eighteenth-century Methodism. The completed work will be a fundamental tool for future Methodist research.

HENRY D. RACK

The Soul of Methodism: The Class Meeting in Early New York City Methodism by Philip P. Hardt. (Lanham, Maryland, University Press of America, 2000, pp 232, \$37.50 ISBN 0 7618 1793 X)

This book details the fundamental changes that American Methodist communities underwent in the nineteenth century as the Methodist movement settled into an organised and regulated church. This shift of ecclesiology, from sect to church meant that a basic realignment of core values and purposes took place

Beginning with an overview of the class meeting in early British Methodism, Hardt moves to review the society and Circuit of New York between 1768 and 1832. The research about New York Methodism is clearly detailed and well documented in appendices. The most fascinating chapter however relates to the increasing demand for the Methodists to become a denomination, and leave behind many of the attributes of the 'sect', which had previously been embodied within the movement. The first casualty of this change was the class meeting. Again, Hardt uses specific examples to reinforce his argument, and the transition from 'sect to church', which entailed leaving behind many 'sect-like' mannerisms.

This book, whilst engaging the theme of the class meeting, casts a much wider net to show how the decline of the class, coupled with other changes within New York Methodism led to a decline in Methodism itself. From the settlement of the preachers into pastorates to the 'gentrification' of the membership, the class meeting suffered terminal decline.

Hardt concludes his study by considering the role of the class meeting for the Methodist Church today. Rather than confining the class to a previous age, Hardt argues that a rediscovery of the strengths of the class (among them mutual accountability and holiness) could have a positive effect to halt the thirty-year decline of American Methodism. He recommends a stricter standard for baptism, a blueprint for spiritual nurture, and the use of the small group as the first building block towards discipleship. Hardt concludes with a call to re-evaluate the way in which the small group is used within the church as a tool for instruction, evangelism and encouragement. A role the class meeting historically provided.

ANDREW GOODHEAD

The Moravian Settlement at Fulneck 1742-1790 by Geoffrey Stead. (Leeds, The Thoresby Society, 1999, pp viii, 128pp, £9.50. ISBN 0 900 741 55 4)

Most people's knowledge of the Moravian Church is hazy to say the least. We are greatly indebted to Dr Geoffrey Stead for taking a large step towards righting this situation. This account of the origins of and early life in the Moravians' settlement at Fulneck is largely the fruit of research into previously little used primary sources, particularly the extensive archive at Fulneck itself.

Dr Stead sets the scene with a brief account of the origins of the eighteenth-century Moravian Church, the Renewed Unity of the Brethren, focusing on the fundamental role played by the charismatic Saxon Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. The subsequent, virtually worldwide, 'explosion of spiritual power' in the decade 1740-1750 included the acquisition of about forty-five of Benjamin Ingham's newly formed religious societies in the district between Leeds and Halifax, including one in Pudsey. When visiting the Pudsey Society in 1743 Count Zinzendorf himself chose an adjacent site, locally known as 'Fallneck' for the establishment of a 'Place Congregation', a regional centre for the Brethren's work in West Yorkshire. Within a decade the nucleus of a settlement had been built. It was modelled on the Brethren's settlement established by Zinzendorf on his Saxony estate, which he had named Herrnhut (The Lord's Watch).

The Congregation Hall (Grace Hall, which included the Meeting Hall and other accommodation), completed in 1748 was swiftly followed by the two Choir Houses, the Single Sisters' House and the Single Brethren's House, both completed in 1752. Soon to follow were the workshops and the Widows' House. Also within the settlement were family houses, an inn, a shop and all the necessary craftsmen, tailors, a blacksmith, shoemakers, etc. After 1763 the local name of 'Fallneck' was adapted to 'Fulneck' which, as Dr Stead explains, 'was derived from one of the principal fifteenth-century strongholds of the old Bohemian Unity called Fulnek'.

Dr Stead describes how the settlement was organised on traditional Moravian lines, members being divided into 'Choirs' dependent on their age, sex and marital status. Hence the Single Brethren's and Single Sisters'

Choir Houses, each with its meeting hall, kitchens and workshops, residents within which were divided into 'Rooms' (a concept still used in the Girls School into living memory). Fulneck's economic organisation, based on the local wool textile industry, its round of religious 'opportunities', attitude to marriage and necessary discipline are amongst the many aspects of Fulneck which are explored. A word of warning! The unwary reader might well fall into the trap of assuming that all the tables apply solely to those living in the Fulneck Settlement. Yet those deriving from The Church Book (of new members, 1742-1783) and The Catalogue of Members (1790) cover not only the Place congregation at Fulneck but also the four other Yorkshire congregations of Pudsey, Wyke, Mirfield and Gomersal.

This is an extremely 'readable' book, full of human interest and enhanced with relevant illustrations. It provides a valuable insight into that unique essence of Moravianism which enabled its British Province to survive, 'against all odds', into the 21st century.

RUTH STRONG

Continuity and Change. A History of Kingswood School 1748-1998 by Gary Martin Best. (Kingswood School 1998) pp. 284. £15.99 from Kingswood School, Lansdown Road, Bath BA1 5RG.

Written by the current headmaster, Gary Best, an Oxford-trained historian, to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the foundation of Kingswood School, this is the first published full-length narrative of the school's history. It offers a lively account of the development of the school, warts and all, based upon a re-appraisal of earlier, more fragmentary, school histories and other sources such as school magazines and the reminiscences of former staff and students. Although the provenance of sources utilised is evident in most cases from the text, it is a matter of some regret that there is neither systematic referencing of sources, nor indeed of the numerous, well-chosen illustrations which enhance the text. However, the book is particularly good in setting events in their wider historical contexts, for example, the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival, when the school was founded in Bristol by John Wesley, 'an essentially lonely man whose outward charm masked an iron will'; the growing denominational rivalry by the mid-nineteenth century, when the school moved to a new site in Bath; and the impact of the twentieth-century economic and social changes, including world war, economic depression and the cultural revolution of the 1960s.

After 1922, when financial necessity obliged Hubert Wooton to request permission from the Wesleyan (not the Methodist) Conference to admit the 'sons of laymen', Kingswood no longer provided education exclusively for 'sons of the manse', and the school was further enlarged in 1951 by the admission of foreign students and in 1973 by the admission of girls. Wooton, described enigmatically in the opening paragraph on p.134 as 'a thirty-five year old Methodist' and later in the same paragraph as a committed

Christian but 'not a Methodist' is portrayed unsympathetically as a domineering personality and stern disciplinarian, in marked contrast to his humane and sensitive successor, A. B. Sackett, who established a liberal regime; which produced one of the school's most remarkable students, the historian and peace campaigner, E. P. Thompson. Best explains the contribution of the Laybourne Report of 1971 to the school's survival and, in a personal postscript, emphasizes some of the uncertainties during his own period of headship arising from economic recession, when applications reached a record low in the spring of 1991 and the school 'suffered dreadfully'. Indeed, recovery only came with the subsequent development of a preparatory feeder school on the Kingswood site.

JOHN A. HARGREAVES

George Whitefield's Works on CD-ROM. From Quinta Press, Meadow View, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, Shropshire, England SY10 7RN. Web-site <http://www.quintapress.com>. Price £60/\$100

In 1967 the present reviewer first encountered Whitefield's *Works* in 6 volumes at Wesley College, Bristol, and became captivated by them. Since then he knows of only three sets in personal libraries. There are, of course, more in public libraries, though often in poor condition.

Now these volumes, in facsimile, are available on CD-ROM through the industry and computer skills of Dr Digby L. James. A new era has arrived of the easy availability of Whitefield source material, previously difficult to access. This will be invaluable to enthusiasts and researchers. Whitefield's *Works* consist of 1465 letters (from 1734 to 1770), 57 sermons, and various tracts. To these are added the *Journals* which were never published with the *Works*.

There are also no less than five biographies of Whitefield - those by J. Gillies (1771); R. Philip (1842); J. R. Andrews (1879); L. Tyerman (1890) and J. P. Gledstone (1900). It is of particular value to have those by Gillies and Tyerman. John Gillies (1712 - 96) as a minister in Glasgow was Whitefield's personal friend and correspondent, and is, therefore, unique in his descriptions of his subject. Luke Tyerman, produced 2 volumes on the Life of Whitefield. This massive work, with particular reference to Whitefield's itinerating, is complemented, but not replaced by Arnold Dallimore's two volume work of more recent times.

Both letters and sermons are supplemented by smaller collections discovered since the *Works* were published. This saves the researcher much time and effort. The incompleteness of Whitefield's *Works* have always defeated comprehensiveness, but now Dr James has taken us much nearer completeness. He may yet produce a definitive collection of all extant documents.

For readers who may want an introductory impression of Whitefield's life and character, the CD-ROM includes *Anecdotes of Whitefield* by J. B. Wakeley (1879), with a short biographical sketch, then a collection of cameos of

Whitefield. There are also 124 photographs (using the latest photographic technology) of scenes and artifacts associated with Whitefield, from his origins in Gloucester to his burial place in Newburyport, Mass. USA.

This unique collection of material within a single CD-ROM brings source material of the eighteenth-century revival within easy reach of computer users. For British and American readers it is basic evangelical history, a treasure trove from which to enrich the 21st century.

The CD-ROM is fully indexed and quickly and easily used. It is very positive example of the technology put to excellent use.

PETER BRUMBY

Emily... The Relentless Nurse by Frank Godfrey. (Loughborough, Teamprint, 2000, pp.152 £5.75 post free. Available from 26 Swift Road, Abbeydale, Gloucester, GL4 4XQ. ISBN 1 871431 10 7)

This book has been written by the nephew of Emily Godfrey, who was 'one of the first four women deliberately chosen and trained to be sent out to the African Mission Field by the Primitive Methodist Church'. I found this book fascinating to read, and once started could not put it down. I soon realised that here was someone who not only knew my parents, but who was responsible for helping to save my mother's life. My mother and father were missionaries in Eastern Nigeria in 1924 and lived at N'doro which is mentioned in the book. My mother too kept records of her life there, and says 'Our one dread was we might be ill. That happened when I got food poisoning, and we were fifteen miles from the nearest nurse. We had to send a runner (a man who could jog trot all the way) to carry a note to Amachura. Later in the day two nurses came out in a ramshackle lorry which could go through thick bush or sand. They lifted me on to the lorry, bed and all. Not being a good traveller at the best of times you can guess how I felt'. One of those nurses was Emily Godfrey.

It is hard to comprehend the conditions under which those early missionaries lived and worked, and the story of Emily helps to paint a picture of life in those days. The experiences they had were not without humour, some of the mistakes and misunderstandings being made because of a lack of knowledge of the Ibo language, or of local customs. The difficulties and the humour of the travelling arrangements, the sad things that happened, and the feeling of frustration at not always being able to do what she wanted to do are all there in the story. The development of the work from the early days, relationships made both with colleagues and local people, the deputations she went on when home on furlough, all have a place. The illustrations too are pertinent!

Emily Godfrey lived until her nineties. We have an account too, of her early life, and her family connections with the early Primitive Methodists. She comes over as being someone with great dedication, determination and strength of purpose, yet with a sense of humour, and real interest in people. This book is very readable. and I recommend it to anyone interested in

Methodist history. It does what the author intended, for, as Frank Godfrey says in the Preface: 'This book chronicles her character and achievements and also records a little - before it is lost - of Primitive Methodist Church Missionary work in that period.'

JANET E. FIELD

Rival Jeruselems: The Geography of Victorian Religion by K.D.M. Snell and Paul S. Ell (Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. xvi, 499, £50.00. ISBN 0 521 77155 2)

This is by far the most comprehensive and detailed study of the Census of Religious Worship which, in its turn, is the most important single historical source for the study of the state of religion in mid-nineteenth-century England. It is the culmination of half a century of scholarly attention since the original returns became available at the Public Record Office in 1951 and will be the inescapable starting point for any future studies. The authors focus their attention on eleven English and four Welsh counties as providing an appropriate range of social and economic circumstances against which the religious scene may be examined.

Thanks to computerization, they have been able to examine the records in far greater detail than has previously been feasible and to correlate a whole range of data, mainly, but not exclusively, from the census returns. That they also draw on other sources, particularly in Part 2 of the book, is an acknowledgement and reminder that not every aspect of the religious life can be examined statistically. To take an obvious example, the figures for church attendance tell us little about motivation and perhaps still less about the kind or degree of belief or doubt that was being expressed. Nevertheless, the statistics can take us a long way, especially in determining the relative strength and weakness, or the geographical distribution, of each denomination. The book provides a framework in which denominational and local studies from now on can (and should) be placed, and their work represents a significant forward step in the debates which have hitherto been carried on with all too little firm basis in verifiable fact. Enriched with many statistical tables and figures, this is a substantial volume, attractively produced, and by present standards not expensive in comparison with many light-weight paperbacks.

JOHN A. VICKERS

NOTES & QUERIES

1545 THE BIBLE CHRISTIANS' 'RELIGIOUS STATISTICS' OF 1861

For thirty years I have been Archivist of the Plymouth and Exeter Methodist District, covering the very heartland of the Bible Christians but until recently I had never seen the BC printed item described below.

It is a black-printed form (415mm by 256mm) sent to each Bible Christian circuit in 1861 requesting information about its chapels. The peculiar interest of the form itself lies in its similarities with the Government's Ecclesiastical Census of 1851, a decade earlier, and the Wesleyans' Returns of Accommodation, first published in 1875 but relating to 1873. The much larger Wesleyan form asked for seating capacities at December 1 1873 but not attendances. The 1851 Census form was more similar in appearance and asked for details of attendances on March 30 1851 as well as seating.

The form is headed 'Religious Statistics 1861. Bible Christian Denomination. Schedule to be Returned by the Pastor of ["Tavistock" inserted] Circuit to W. Luke [Conference Secretary and Minister at Tiverton], on or before April 30 1861. (These Returns have been decided upon by the Connexional Committee. M. Robins, President)'. There are sixteen unnumbered columns for information about Name, Situation (Street, Town or Parish, County), Number of Sittings, Attendance on Sunday April 7 1861 (Morning, Afternoon and Evening), Date of Building, Sunday and Day Schools and Remarks. The form which was found in the Tavistock circuit in West Devon has been completed in black ink and signed 'W[illiam]. Dennis, Pastor'. There is no indication if it was a duplicate intended to be retained in the circuit. Few of the connexional records of the Bible Christians have survived and it is unlikely that a file of these returns exists. However, many forms must have been returned for the 'Chapel Fund Report', in the printed 1861 Conference Minutes, pp. 36-37, briefly summarises the number of the denomination's chapels and how many had been built since 1851. It makes no reference to gathering these statistics.

The information given by the Pastor at Tavistock about his 15 places adds significantly to local knowledge, especially his remarks and the attendance figures. He lists a schoolroom used as a chapel at the former Foggintor granite quarry on Dartmoor in Walkhampton parish. The site is now windswept and deserted, a mile down a moorland track near Princetown, but there were a hundred seats and 40 Sunday school children in 1861. Attendances were 65 in the afternoon, presumably including some children, and 25 at night. The 1851 Census returns for the extensive Walkhampton Parish included a BC 'Preaching Room' erected in 1847 with 45 seats. There are no more details of its location but it must be the same building as the more fully described 1861 Foggintor room. I am grateful to Mr Brian Giles of Tavistock for local information and for locating this form which will be deposited with the circuit's extensive records in the Devon Record Office.

ROGER THORNE

1546 PATTERN-BOOK PRIMITIVES?

The Chapels Society, which tries to advise those caring for non-Anglican places of worship, recently received a query more related to architecture than conservation. Mr Brockway of Redmile near Nottingham asked us whether it was usual among Primitive Methodists to follow a pattern-book when building chapels.

He has noticed that the former chapel he lives in (see drawing attached) is almost identical to another in Gotham, also near Nottingham. In neither case is the name of the architect known to him, but the two buildings look almost identical. To add weight to his suggestion that the PMs may have been using pattern-books, he knew a chapel at Bulwell, Commercial Street (demolished 1971) which looked very similar to one at Kimberley, both 3-storey buildings rather larger than the one he now lives in.

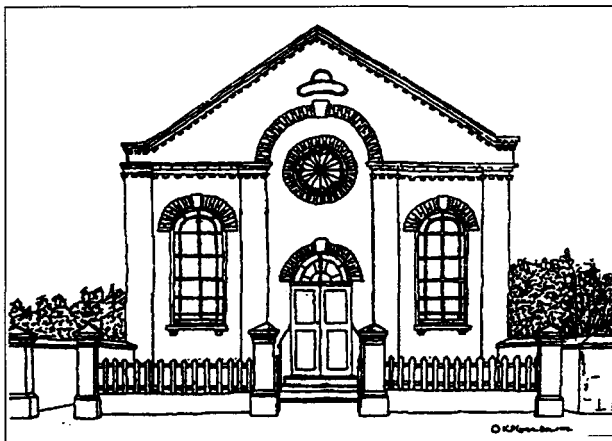
Clearly there were occasions when a congregation saving up to build a chapel would view other new chapels and decide to adopt an architect whose work they had seen and liked. This seems to have happened at the ex-Wesleyan church I attend myself, also near Nottingham, where the trustees engaged as architect Mr W J Morley of Bradford, who adapted the plans of a church he had already built in that town, still standing today but now used as a Sikh temple. Mr Brockway is interested to know not only who was the architect, but were his designs circulating as a pattern book among the Primitive Methodists, much as the landscape architects produced project books showing their possible clients what they could do.

If anyone can document this practice, I should be most interested to hear.

ROBIN PHILLIPS

(Hon Secretary of the Chapels Society)

1 Newcastle Avenue, Beeston, Notts. NG9 1BT



THE ANNUAL LECTURE

will be delivered in Bramford Road Methodist Church, Ipswich

on Monday, 25 June 2001 at 7.30pm

by The Rev. Dr. Ralph Waller BD MTh

'Converging and Diverging Lines: aspects of the relationship between Methodism and Rational Dissent'

Chairman: The Rev. Dr. Stuart J. Burgess MEd, MA

The lecture will be preceded by TEA* for members at 5pm
and the Annual Meeting at 6pm.

**Please book with the General Secretary by 11 June.*

Travel Directions

Bramford Road Church is situated in north west Ipswich on the B1067. Bus route A and AB from Tower Ramparts (town centre) to railway bridge bus stop. Church is on opposite side of the road.

By car. Travelling into Ipswich on the A12/A14, turn at traffic light junction with B1067 (Yarmouth Road). The church is 400 yards beyond, on the right hand side. There is on-site parking *via* Wesley Way, adjacent to the church.

Clerihew Corner

Joseph Agar Beet
Has his place in our élite.
They may be rather choosier
At the Parousia.

ANC