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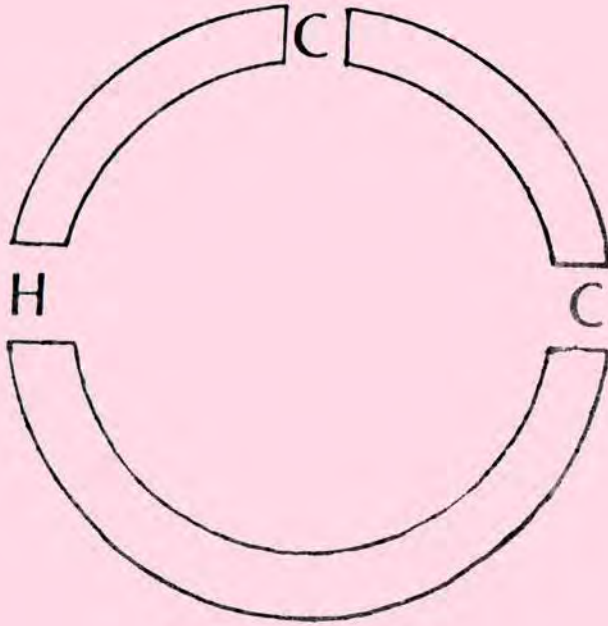
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A table of contents for the *Congregational History Society Magazine* can be found here:

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*The  
Congregational History Circle Magazine*

VOL .1.No.11.December 1983



THE CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY CIRCLE

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Vol. 1. No. 11. December 1983

CONTENTS:

		<u>Page No.</u>
<u>Editorial</u>	Rev. Trevor Watts	1.
From the Secretary	Mr. R.J. Bray	3.
Treasurers Report	Rev. D. Morrell	3.
Annual General Meeting 1984	Mr. R.J. Bray	4.
From the Postbag	The Secretary	5.
The Memorial Hall and Congregational Library, London	Mr. David Watson/ Rev. Alan Argent.	14.
Bookstall	Various	14.
The International Congregational Fellowship	Mr. David Watson	17.
Union Chapel, Islington, London	Mr. S.R. Forster	19.
Congregational College:		
An Interpretative Essay	Dr. Clyde Binfield	21.
A Brief History of Batheaston Congregational Church	Rev. Frank Harper	33.
Guyana Celebrates	Mr. David Watson	37.
Print of Job Orton with comments	Rev. Trevor Watts	
From our Contemporaries	The Secretary	40.
Late News	The Secretary	20.

EDITORIAL

We are very happy this time to have a valuable contribution by Dr. Clyde Binfield entitled 'Congregational College: An Interpretative Essay' first delivered at Manchester College. Members of the C.H.C. will remember the very interesting guided tour of Non-conformist churches in and around Sheffield which was arranged as part of our last Annual General Meeting & at which Dr. Binfield acted as our guide. This part of the proceedings concluded with a very pleasant tea at Dr. Binfield's own church in Sheffield, prior to our A.G.M. at the Y.M.C.A. in Sheffield on Friday 13th May 1983 before the Congregational Federation Assembly in Sheffield on the following day.

Rev. Frank Harper provides a brief history of Batheaston Con-

gregational Church. This reminds me that since our last magazine at least two of our members have changed pastorates. Our treasurer, Rev. David Morrell has joint pastorates in Devon at Torcross, Loddiswell and Torquay and Richard Cleaves who gained his Ph.D. (Wales) recently has settled in Salop and Norman Sedgeman has accepted the oversight of Swan Hill Congregational Church, Shrewsbury.

Centenaries have been the order of the day in Salop also. For example, Job Orton (see previous issues of the C.H.C. Magazine) died 200 years ago on July 19th 1783. To prove that we are not only interested in Cromwelliana and Congregationalism it may be worth noting that on the 700th Anniversary of the hanging, quartering and disembowelling of David III Prince of Wales, which took place in Shrewsbury on October 4th 1283, a brief ceremony was held at the scene of his death.

This year of course, special notice has been drawn to the Birth of Martin Luther, 1583 and I would like to draw attention to the special issue of the Free Church Chronicle, Autumn issue 1983, that contains a number of valuable lectures on the great Reformer. Copies of this are available from the Free Church Federal Council, 27 Tavistock Square, London W.C.1 9HH, price 30p plus postage extra. It is also in this excellent Free Church Chronicle that I read that one of our distinguished members, the Rev. Elsie Chamberlain has been appointed President of the Womens Movement of the Free Church Federal Council for 1984-85.

In connection with the 500th Anniversary celebrations special events have been held to mark the Birth of Martin Luther in both East and West Germany, which has done much to draw the two countries and their churches into closer fellowship. The Cold War has frosted even Church Fellowship and any thaw is welcome. In a letter to me from Uberkirchenrat Fritz of Dresden scene of many of the celebrations he writes of the great encouragement brought to them as over 100,000 visitors crossed the border to the Luther shrines and of the renewal of faith and hope to the divided country both East and West. Personally, I have spent ten days in hospital in the coronary care unit, so I will be out of action for a while. Having just got over Christmas our prayers must rise to the Lord of all in the hope that His peace may come to our troubled world.

Before closing I would like to draw CHC readers attention to the Sixty Years (1923-83) Anniversary of 'Y Cofiadur' the Historical Journal of the Welsh Independents. As one looks at the list of officers in the first issue one sighs for the days when there were giants in the land. Owing to gaps some 48 issues of 'Y Cofiadur' have actually appeared. The 1983 issue No. 48 contained a valuable lecture by the Rev. E. Stanley John of Bala Bangor College on the beginnings of Independency in and around Swansea (Abertawe) and Marmaduke Matthews, of Swansea who was exiled to Massachusetts from 1638-1654. The fund to finance 'Y Cofiadur' stands at £2,000 and it is printed by the Ty John Penry Press in Swansea. Copies of this magazine are available

price 50p for 36 pages from Rev.Dafydd William, Llwyn Llinos, Bodedern, Ynys Mon, Gwynedd.

Finally members of CHC will know of the new responsibilities accepted by the Rev. Elsie Chamberlain and Mr. John Wilcox at the Congregational Centre, Nottingham and may know that on Sunday 20th November a new Nottingham Congregational Church was constituted. Dr. Bill Ashley Smith, CHC's first editor and the national president of the Congregational Federation 1983-84, was with us on our guided tour at Sheffield and at the A.G.M. of the C.H.C. and we remember his challenging address at the last Assembly of the Federation in Sheffield. At the Nottingham Centre Rev. Charles Surman was still as busy as ever at work at the library at the Congregational Centre. I would like to think that I carry all our CHC Membership with us in wishing the Congregational Centre and its workers God's richest blessing in the coming year.

Trevor Watts.

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#### FROM THE SECRETARY

May I first apologise for the late appearance of this magazine. This has been partly due to the ill health of both the Editor and the Secretary and also to the fact that we have had to wait for some of the items of information to you on a number of the events recorded in this magazine. We very much hope that it will not spoil in any way your enjoyment of the magazine. It is hoped to get the next issue of the magazine out on schedule in time for the various May Assemblies in London of the Congregational denominational bodies.

Our best wishes go to Rev. Trevor Watts, our Editor, at this time who is now recovering from a stroke, and we hope that he will soon be back on his feet and fully operational again.

John Bray.

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#### FROM THE TREASURER

As we come to the end of another successful year I must report that as agreed by the Annual General Meeting of the Circle held at Sheffield in May 1983, our subscription rates for 1984 will have to be increased. With printing costs and postage continually rising and a need for the Circle to reduce its reliance on the very generous and appreciated grants that a number of organisations make to this magazine whilst still seeking to improve the magazine and the facilities that the History Circle can offer its members and to continue to operate at all in these very difficult financial times is by no means an easy task and we hope very much that you will bear with us in this latest increase. We try and keep our costs down to a bare minimum as far as is possible.

This will mean that this year (1984) we shall have to increase our membership subscriptions to £1.50 for British Isles Members

and £2.00 for Overseas Members. The previous reductions for Senior Citizens and Students will continue to apply (details on request). It is sincerely hoped that this will not discourage anyone from renewing their membership in 1984 as this still represents excellent value when similar magazines are taken into account, and that you will return the renewal form enclosed with this issue of the magazine to me at the very earliest.

When renewing your membership may I also suggest that you might consider recommending the magazine to a friend or colleague in the hope that they consider joining as well. Better still why not give the magazine as a Birthday Present during the year.

May I wish all members and friends of the Circle a very Happy New Year and as we go forward into 1984 that the Circle will continue to grow and to increase its activities and contacts. To do this we do need your support so we trust that you will renew your membership for 1984.

David Morrell.

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THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY CIRCLE  
TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY 11th MAY, 1984 IN LONDON

Provisional plans are already being made with regard to this meeting. It is anticipated that in the afternoon there will be a tour of some chapels and that this will include some of the chapels described by Cleal in his book 'Congregationalism in Surrey'. This 19th Century Book includes many chapels now included in greater London. The evening meeting will be held in London at a venue yet to be decided but full details of the meetings will be circulated to members as soon as they are finalised.

The Congregational Federation Ministers Spring School finishes in London on the morning of Friday 11th May and it is hoped very much that some of those participating in this will decide to come along to this in the afternoon and evening, together with any members and friends of the E.F.C.C. and unaffiliated churches who are also most welcome to participate.

It is hoped to make arrangements for accommodation of members and friends in the London area if at all possible for those attending the A.G.M. of the C.H.C. and the Congregational Federation Assembly on the Saturday 12th May 1984 and if you are likely to need this arranging for you it would be useful if you could let the secretary know at the earliest.

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From the Postbag

Details have now reached me of the following:-

1. The United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA) and the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa (PCSA) have both decided in principle at their Annual Assemblies to merge into a united church. These historic decisions were adopted by overwhelming majorities which were far beyond the expectations of many members of the two churches, who noted a significant change in attitudes and feelings as each Assembly reached the time for a firm decision to be taken. At first the PCSA Assembly was divided on the issue and two-thirds were in favour of postponing the whole question of union for three years. The greatest problem was that some 75% of the 80,000 PCSA members are white whilst some 95% of the 120,000 UCCSA are black. The change of heart took place at a joint session of both assemblies and as speakers came in turn from the floor to address the meeting they began to see each other as people and realising that the coloured people were as frightened of the whites as the white people were of the coloured people. A greater realisation resulted of what could be done together and what this could mean for the mission of the church.

The decision of both Assemblies have now to be sent to the respective regional bodies of the two churches and the target date for a final decision for Union is June 30th, 1984. For this Union to come about two-thirds of the 12 Presbyterians of the PCSA must say 'yes' whilst a 'yes' from all the regional councils of the UCCSA is needed.

2. The Council for the British Archaeology (Non-Conformist Working Party) are to hold further Day Schools and conference on the topic "Churches and Meeting Houses" during 1984. Those who attended the last one in Bristol will appreciate the value of these. These will be held as follows:-

(i) "Chapels and Meeting Houses in Norwich" will be held on Saturday 24th March 1984. The Morning session will be held at the Octagon Chapel and in the afternoon there will be a guided tour of selected buildings. For full details contact Mr. Malcolm Atkin, The Centre of East Anglian Studies, The University of East Anglia, Norwich, Norfolk, NR4 7TJ. Tel. 0603-56161.

(ii) A Residential Conference on the theme "Chapels and Meeting Houses in Manchester and its region, will be held in the Manchester area from 21st to 23rd September 1984. For full details contact Mr. Richard Morris, the Department of Archaeology The University of Leeds, Leeds, Yorkshire, LS2 9JT. I am asked to stress that although this is a residential conference day visitors will be most welcome.

There is a charge for both these events to cover costs but this is usually most reasonable.

3. The South Devon Group Committee of the Congregational Federation will again be holding its annual service at the site of the Ford Congregational Church, Near South Pool, Near Stokenham, Nr. Kingsbridge, Devon on Saturday 21st July 1984



commencing at 3.00p.m. with a service which is to be conducted by Rev. Cyril Short of the Ivybridge Group of Congregational Churches. After the service there will be a picnic tea. If you want the service will be held at Torcross Congregational Church. For full details contact the Secretary.

4. August 8th, 1983 marked the centenary of the death of Dr. Robert Moffat the pioneer missionary to Southern Africa. In 1820, he established a mission at Kuruman which became a centre for community sharing and development based on Moffat's strong ideals. This same mission still flourishes today receiving support from the Council for World Mission.

5. I have received a request from Mr. R.A. Harrison of "Arley", Dane Rise, Winsley, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire for help. He is at present researching the history of his family. It is probable that some of his family were baptised at Garden Street Congregational Church, Sheffield which joined the Congregational Union in 1865 but which had been an Independent Chapel at the site since at least 1806. The records of baptisms 1804-1836 are in the Public Records Office but the records post 1836 have not been traceable. They are not in the Sheffield Library and the Archivist of the Sheffield URC does not know of their whereabouts. It is not known when the chapel closed although it was still open in 1870. Anyone who might be able to help Mr. Harrison is asked to get in contact with him direct.

6. The Annual Congregational Studies Conference will be held at Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate, London W1E 6BS on Sat. 17th March 1984 under the chairmanship of Rev. Derek Swann, B.A., B.D. This will commence at 11.00a.m. with a talk "John Robinson 1575-1622" by Rev. E.S. Guest the secretary of the E.F.C.C. This will be followed by a talk "The Hymn Writers of English Congregationalism" by Rev. Gordon Booth, M.M., B.D. Minister of Leigh on Sea Congregational Church and finally there will be a talk by the Rev. Geraint Fielder, M.A., B.D. on "R.W. Dale and the Non-Conformist conscience". The whole event is expected to be finished by 5.00p.m. Each lecture will be followed by discussion. The lectures will be duplicated and the set of three can be obtained from the secretary of the Conference after the event, price 50p per set, including postage and packing. Lunches will be available at a cost of £2.00-hot meal plus a cup of tea or coffee and in the break, tea or coffee will be available price 5p per cup. Full details and booking forms, there is a booking fee of £2.00 for attendance at the Conference, are available from The Conference Secretary, Mr. Peter Collins, 4 Reddons Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 1LZ. Why not come along and have an enjoyable day?

7. In America the American Friends of Historic British Churches Inc. has been formed. This was organised fairly recently by a group of New Englanders who were concerned about the preservation and restoration problems which face so many historic churches and cathedrals in Great Britain, as well as about similar problems which face historic churches in America. Some of the members have visited Great Britain and from time to time they

receive fund-raising appeals from those churches that they visited. Because of the concern for the future of these buildings, A.F.H.B.C. has been organised, as a non-profit corporation under the general laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and an application is pending with the Federal Government to enable them to act as a tax-exempt organisation under the Internal Revenue Code.

Whilst it is expected that A.F.H.B.C. will be able to provide financial assistance to selected Church Preservation and restoration programs eventually, the initial thrust will be in the educational aspects of the program. It is planned to organise a program to inform interested Americans of the needs and merits of historic churches in Great Britain, in recognition of the tremendous spiritual and social contributions which these churches have made to the U.S.A. and to the society in general.

In order to establish a meaningful and effective program, they are asking for assistance. They are asking for information regarding existing or contemplated preservation/restoration programs as they plan to maintain a current file on such activities so that they might keep their contributors and others well informed by way of a resources library, as well as by the publication of a periodic newsletter. It is hoped that the efforts of A.F.H.B.C. will encourage people in the U.S.A. to assist in the cause of British Church Restoration and Preservation on an individual basis as well as through the organisation.

Besides informing them about projects of restoration and preservation the A.F.H.B.C. would welcome ideas on how they might be most effective in their support of the restoration and preservation efforts of British Churches and Cathedrals.

Fuller details of the organisation and project details can be forwarded to the Secretary, American Friends of Historic British Churches Inc., Post Office Box 1496, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A., 01202.

It is known that their secretary Mr. E.L. Kirk is hoping to visit Great Britain during 1984.

8. The attention of readers is drawn to the existence of the International Society for the study of Church Monuments. This society was born out of the Monumental Effigy Symposium held at the Tower of London in 1978. It believes that by combining the skills and interests of its members, the understanding of Church monuments can be vastly improved, and that a strong lobby can be formed to campaign for their conservation. Many monuments face destruction through ignorance, neglect or simple lack of money.

The societies official address is c/o The Armouries, H.M. Tower, London EC3N. 4AB. and it aims to promote the study, care and conservation of funerary monuments and related art of all periods and countries. This includes not only sculpture together with its architectural framework, but also flat memorials as well as both stained glass and wall painting associated with

burials. The society holds a symposium every two years, and a programme of visits and other events is arranged. Members are kept in touch with recent publications and research through the medium of a Bulletin which appears twice yearly. Material for inclusion is invited and should be sent direct to the editor, Mr. Nigel Ramsey, 15 Charlbury Road, Oxford, OX2.6UT. and fuller details of the society can be obtained from the Membership secretary, Miss M. Coghlan, 4 Cheyney Street, Pinner, Middlesex. Membership runs from June to May each year and costs £3.50 per year. Membership for those Under 18 is £2.00 and corporate members (institutions etc) pay £4.50.

The society is arranging a series of interesting day visits including on 17th March a day visit from London to include visits to Lullingstone; Maidstone; Hever, Tudeley and Lingfield; A Residential Weekend in Suffolk 18th-20th May based on Bury-St-Edmunds, a day visit to Cheshire commencing either from Macclesfield or Chester on 21st July 1984 and an International Symposium in London from 22nd-24th September which will include the societies A.C.M. These will be held at the Polytechnic of Central London, 35, Marylebone Road, (opposite Baker Street, tube station) commencing at 4.30p.m. on Saturday 22nd September 1984.

9. Mrs. Holland the assistant secretary of Chulmleigh Congregational Church in Mid-Devon has written an interesting letter which hopefully may give food for thought to our members and readers:-

"In 1983 it was the Chulmleigh Congregational Churches 350th Anniversary and it was decided to have a look at the old records. For many years they have been kept locked in a safe, with several bags of mothballs, when we removed them, they were all, apart from the present marriage Register in a sad state. Knowing that we could do nothing with them, it was even difficult to handle the pages as the paper was so thin, I rang up the archivist at Exeter Library - a most helpful lady. Records were then taken into the archivists department and they have promised to fumigate and restore them, at no charge. They are still being restored so I cannot tell you the result.

They have also suggested that we leave the records in their safe keeping, they will be stored in a suitable place at the correct temperature, and we will have assured access of them at any time. This is quite a load off our minds as after having them restored, where does a church keep them?

These important records of our church begin in 1810 and contain baptism and marriage details. They are the earliest records that we have, as although the church was established as a Meeting House in 1633 it was closed for a period of 17 years towards the end of the 18th Century. It was during this time that all the earliest records were lost".

10. Details of the Chulmleigh Congregational Church 350th Anniversary Celebrations have also been passed on and Mrs. Holland writes as follows:-

"Chulmleigh Congregational Churches 350th Anniversary

Celebrations took place from July 9th to the 16th 1983. A flower festival depicted "The Road to Unity" with the churches and organisations in Chulmleigh participating.

The festival was opened by the Rev. Elaine Marsh B.D., M.A., from Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, U.S.A. During the week of celebrations various activities took place in the church including the choir singing extracts from Handel's Messiah, a Youth Evening, when Crediton Congregational Church Pilots performed a play, and the choir from Chulmleigh school sang extracts from Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat.

Morning coffee and afternoon cream cakes were served daily. The week's celebrations ended with a rally of Congregational Churches - the speaker being Dr. Bill Ashley-Smith, President of the Congregational Federation. In all it was a happy and successful week of celebrations.

Prior to the Anniversary week much work was done - during the months of May and June the church was closed while major repairs re-wiring and painting took place. On July 3rd the Church was re-opened and re-dedicated by our minister then the Rev. Elsie Chamberlain."

11. A request for help has been received from a post-graduate student at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth who is studying for his M.A. degree in visual Art as follows:-

"As part of my degree I have undertaken to write a dissertation that will be concerned with understanding the attitudes of the Welsh Nonconformist towards the visual arts. As one means of discerning this, I am anticipating an investigation of certain visual artifacts situated in Welsh Chapels. These would include such things as Scripture texts and decorative stenciling painted on the walls; photographs and paintings of ministers; decorated organ cases and pipes; prints of biblical events; illustrated scripture tracts, posters, prints, family and pulpit bibles etc. Together with this I would like to examine specimens of Ceramic Craft such as commemorative plates and ornaments that had connections with Chapel life in Wales and which were used in a household context.

Anyone with knowledge of chapels that possessed any of this or similar sorts of artifacts and also if anyone has information on the history of the making and installation of these things; who also commissioned them and who made them or can help in answering the question "Has the subject of visual art and its use by Non-Conformists been addressed by notable congregational preachers or theologians" and if so, are such opinions recorded or who may have general advice or help related to the subject is asked to contact Mr. John Harvey, "Abergeldie House, Victoria Terrace, Aberystwyth, Dyfed, SY23.2DH urgently.

12. The 100th Anniversary of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children takes place during 1984. It may not be so well known that the founder of this very worthy cause was the Rev. Benjamin Waugh, who was born in the village of Settle, Yorkshire, in 1839. His father was a saddler of Scottish descent and his mother a Yorkshire woman who died when the young Benjamin was only 8 years of age. He became a Congregational

Minister after studying at the Theological College in Bradford where he was described by a fellow student as 'ready to battle with his professors as he was with his fellow students.' His first ministry was at Newbury but he very quickly moved to East Greenwich where his work took him to the worst slum areas. In later life he became editor of the 'Sunday Magazine' and later director of the N.S.P.C.C., finally dying in 1908 and was buried at Prittlewell in Essex. It is hoped to include a more detailed account of his life and work in our next magazine but in the meantime please remember that in 1983 the NSPCC investigated 19,684 cases involving some 47,034 children in England and Wales and Northern Ireland; helped over 6,000 parents or relatives who asked for assistance with child problems; provided skilled treatment through NSPCC Special Units for families in which children are considered to be at risk; provided care and stimulation for pre-school children from disturbed family backgrounds, in 65 NSPCC Playgroups; maintained a field-force of 240 professional Inspectors and spent £613,000 more than it received to meet the calls on its services to children. It is at present facing a financial crisis and is seeking to raise £250,000 at least in its centenary year. Costs of administration were kept down to just 4 pence in each pound received. If you feel that you can help either the NSPCC or its sister organisation in Scotland either through direct giving or by the Andrex toilet roll appeal going on at present this help would be appreciated. A comprehensive selection of leaflets, including one about Benjamin Waugh and the formation of the society has been produced for the centenary and can be obtained from the societies offices at 67, Saffron Hill, London, EC1N. 8RS or telephone London 01-242-1626.

13. Dr. Williams Trust is offering one bursary, tenable at the University of Glasgow, to a man or woman from South Britain (i.e. from England or Wales) who is an accredited Minister amongst Protestant Dissenters for a "refresher" course of one year as (1) a general course, or (2) a special study, or (3) in the case of a graduate of theology, a course leading to the degree of M.Th. Failing a suitable candidate of this kind, the Trustees would consider an applicant of mature years wishing to pursue a general course of theological study for one year, either preliminary to or following a course at college for training for the Ministry amongst Protestant Dissenters.

The normal value of the Bursary is £6,000. Applications by March 1st 1984 to the Secretary, from whom the forms of application and further details can be obtained. Write for details to Rev. James McClelland, M.A., Secretary, Dr. William's Trust, 14 Gordon Square, London WC1H 6AG.

14. From May 1984 until May 1985 the year has been designated as "Christian Heritage Year". The intention is to remind the public of men and women of faith who have profoundly influenced our history. It is hoped that the example of these people, who have enriched and transformed our society in the past, will also be an inspiration for the future. Christian Heritage though is not only concerned with celebration but also with rededication

to the ideals of a just and compassionate society which understands the relevance of Christianity for today. Christian Heritage was launched at Lambeth Palace on 1st February 1983 by the former Archbishop of York; Lord Tony Pandy, then the Speaker of the House of Commons; The Chairman of the British Tourist Authority; and Sir Arthur Bryant, the eminent historian. A video cassette of the audio-visual shown at Lambeth Palace is available for viewing.

The event is being launched at a National Service of Thanksgiving, Repentance and Dedication at Westminster Abbey on Wednesday 9th May, 1984; Audio-visual presentations will be open to the public in central London, at St. Mary-le-Strand Church, from 9th May; Churches throughout the land are invited to remember the ideals of the Christian Heritage Year and to support the Christian Aid Appeal which starts that Sunday at special services on Sunday 13th May and it is hoped that Church bells will be rung throughout the nation at 3.00p.m. on that date for 20 minutes. Many events are planned in almost every county and on the last weekend in May 1985 which falls on Pentecost beacons and bonfires will be lit throughout the country. Also the Post Office will be issuing a Christian Heritage Prestige Stamp Book in June 1984 and in addition the Christmas 1984 special stamps will celebrate Christian Heritage. Also special video presentations are being prepared for use in schools. There is also a friendship scheme. Full details of these events and many more besides are available from "Christian Heritage", 57, Duke Street, London W1M 5DH.

15. The Hollywood Congregational Center (for Study and Service) has served the Churches since January 1972 in the U.S.A. Now there is a new name and address which readers are asked to note: THE AMERICAN CONGREGATIONAL CENTER, 1515 Garfield Avenue, South Pasadena, California, 91030, U.S.A. This is thanks to the Oneonta Congregational Church. Hollywood Congregational Church took the initiative in establishing the Center and gave it unstinting support but the change of venue has been brought about by the unresolved question posed to the Hollywood Church by the city's earthquake engineers; \$150,000 would be needed to meet their requirements.

Besides the move of the centre moves are afoot (1) to find a fresh "cutting edge" thinking thrust as a Congregational contribution to christianity (2) to expand into the Pacific with a "Dean of Studies for the Pacific", the Rev. Faafouina Iofi, Ph.D. and (3) to sponsor a World Congregational Youth Assembly in 1985 in connection with the meeting of the International Congregational Fellowship near Boston, U.S.A. We await news of all these with interest.

16. A Day Conference is being organised by the Baptist Historical Society to mark the 150th Anniversary of C.H. Spurgeon's birth at Histon Baptist Church, Cambridge on Saturday, September 8th, 1984 commencing at 10.30 a.m.. Lecturers will include Mr. J.H.Y. Briggs, M.A., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. from the Department of History at Keele University; Rev. M.K. Nicholls, B.D., a tutor at Spurgeon's College and Rev. J.J. Brown, B.D., past president of the Baptist Union. It is hoped to arrange a visit to Isleham Ferry

where Spurgeon was baptised during the afternoon and the conference should finish by 8.p.m.. Overnight accommodation will be available with Histon Church Members if required. Full details available from Rev. Roger Hayden, M.A., B.D., Secretary of the Baptist Historical Society, 37 Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7BB.

17. In the last issue of the C.H.C. Magazine a query was raised about the future of the Welsh Presbyterian Chapel in Charing Cross Road, London which is a smaller example of Cubitts work in comparison with Union Chapel, Islington, London but none the less interesting and I have recently (Feb. '84) received a note from Dr. Christopher Stell of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) as follows:-

'I have just spoken to Matthew Saunders, Secretary of the Ancient Monuments Society, who knows the position best. It is a listed Grade II building as is the adjacent Sunday School. A major redevelopment is apparently in progress around it, the chapel is closed and seems to be quite inaccessible. It is not clear whether it is still the property of the Trustees or whether it may have been sold though no application for alteration or demolition has yet been made. The immediate danger is the total lack of maintenance which, even though it may be secure from vandalism, will soon be a source of trouble by encouraging dry rot which will then be very expensive to eradicate.' (The Brixton Congregational Church Friends understand that it is to be sold to a Chinese Christian Congregation) P.S. If anyone has any further information on this chapel the secretary will be pleased to pass this on.

18. A number of people have asked what the 1662 Society and the John Owen Societies are and I include here a brief explanation from the Rev. Alan Argent, B.Sc. (econ), M.Th., Ph.D., which may be of interest:-

"...The 1662 Society was founded in the 1960's as a forum for discussion for those denominations which originated, in some sense, from the clerical ejections of 1662 (i.e. the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists and perhaps also the Quakers). Speaker meetings and study groups have met and still meet to discuss issues of concern to Nonconformists. Now the 1662 Society welcomes people from all of the Christian traditions, and sometimes from none.

The John Owen Society was founded in 1983 to operate in a similar way to the 1662 Society, its parent body, in Oxford. The John Owen Society meets at Mansfield College, Oxford. The programme of meetings of the two societies are as follows:-

#### 1662 SOCIETY

March 5th, 1984 'The Story of Writing' Speaker Donald Jackson. To be held at Trinity Congregational Church, St. Matthews Road, London SW2. Meetings begin at 7.30 p.m.. Cold Supper, Tea and Coffee will be served from 7.p.m.. 'Phone 274 5541 for any further details. All welcome.

#### THE JOHN OWEN SOCIETY

May 26th 1984 "Christianity and Civilisation in the Punjab 1880-1920" Speaker Jeffrey Cox, Associate Professor, University

of Iowa,U.S.A., This lecture is preceded by the A.G.M.at 3.30 p.m. Tea at 4.15 p.m. and the talk at 5.00 p.m. All meetings are held in the Council Room,Mansfield College, Oxford. The cost of the tea and lecture is £1 per meeting or £2.50 for three meetings. All welcome. For further details telephone 01-274-5541.

Full details for both societies from Rev.Alan Argent,BSC.(Econ) M.Th., Ph.D.,Trinity Congregational Chapel,St.Matthews Road, London,SW2 1NF.

19. The service last year at John Owen's graveside in Bunhill Fields was held on St.Bartholemew's Day(August 24th) the 300th Anniversary of John Owens death. Rev.Stanley Guest(E.F.C.C.) led the service and gave a brief address. About thirty people attended including representatives of both the E.F.C.C. and the Congregational Federation.

Immediately after the John Owen service,several of the assembly made their way to the site of the Fleet Prison,outside Memorial Hall where a short service was led by Rev.Alan Argent.

On the following Saturday afternoon a memorial service was conducted again by Rev.Alan Argent at the Parish Church of St. Andrew by the Wardrobe in the City of London. This Church was built by Christopher Wren after the fire of London and replaces an earlier building on the same site. Rev Argents sermon concentrated on the life of the defiant Independent Preacher, Rev.Henry Burton. Burton gained the peculiar distinction of being imprisoned and ejected from his living in the 1630's by King Charles I. At the outbreak of the Civil War he was reinstated to his living at St.Matthew,Friday Street,a parish now incorporated into St.Andrew by the Wardrobe,but by 1645 he was again in trouble and was ousted by the then dominant Presbyterians in London. Burton was an absolutely irrepressible character and was undoubtedly a great hero with the City populace. The readings from scripture was read by David Watson and Pastor Roberts (of the E.F.C.C. Church at Woolwich).

FOR DETAILS OF THE 1984 SERVICES SEE UNDER "THE MEMORIAL HALL AND CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY, LONDON".

20. Oldham: Ebenezer (Pastures) Congregational Church, Lower Turf Lane, Scouthead, Oldham, Lancs. has unfortunately closed for worship but the Circle has received the following letter from Miss Farr the last Church Secretary giving some interesting details of the Church as follows:-

"The Church started in a cottage in Pastures, Scouthead in 1854 and in 1856 it carried on in the present building. We were 127 years old when we had to close.

Classrooms, vestry etc. were built on over the years, and in 1928 another room was added, we always referred to this as the 'New Room'.

The reason for closure was firstly the state of the building, which would have cost many thousands of pounds to put in order and an ageing congregation with no young people to follow on.

The building has been bought by a building contractor. The records will be sent to a record office in the Manchester area."

Miss V. Farr.



The Memorial Hall and Congregational Library, London.

"The agreement to let the whole of the Memorial Hall building, save one office, to the Post Office has been held up awaiting the approval of the Canada Life Assurances Head Office in Canada. This has now been given and the Post Office has taken occupation. The effect of the new agreement will be that, initially, there will be a slight fall in the Memorial Hall's income but that, following a rent review, a greatly increased income will flow from 1985 onwards. The decision to remove the library to the building adjacent to Dr. Williams' and to vacate the Hall and Meeting Rooms has, in my view, been of considerable benefit to the three bodies which together constitute the Trust. Congregationalism in the form of the Federation and the E.F.C.C. will have an assured income in the years to come to spend in accordance with the objectives of the Trust and it is, of course, the Trustees' intention to continue the Housing Scheme which is proving of such benefit to retired ministers, their wives and widows.

David Watson.

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Details of the 1984 Memorial Hall Stone Commemoration Services are now available and are as follows:- (These services are in commemoration of the ejections of 1662 and in the preceding years)-

FRIDAY AUGUST 24th 1984 ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY.

- 2.00 p.m. Memorial Hall, Fleet Lane, London EC4  
2.30 p.m. BUNHILL FIELDS, CITY ROAD, LONDON EC1  
3.15 p.m. VISIT TO WESLEY'S CHAPEL AND HOUSE, CITY ROAD, LONDON EC1.

SATURDAY AUGUST 25th 1984

- 3.00 p.m. ST. ANDREWS-BY-THE-WARDROBE, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, LONDON EC4. N.B. St. Andrews-by-the-Wardrobe is next door to The Bible Society's Headquarters.  
Sermon: Dr. Alan Argent, Chaplain to the John Owen Society. The service will be followed by tea.

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Bookstall

"A Short History of Chulmleigh Congregational Church, Devon 1633-1983" is an interesting and inexpensive little booklet produced for the 350th Anniversary of the Church. Copies are still available and can be obtained from Mrs. H. Holland, 2 Fourways Drive, Chulmleigh, Devon price 50 pence plus postage.

"The Organ Today," by Robert Norman and R. John Norman. 2nd edition. David and Charles 1980. 212pp. 20 plates. £8.95. This title under-estimates the content of this book, for this is a useful and comprehensive handbook, describing amongst other things historic types of organ action which nobody today would build, but which still exist and therefore demand attention. This second edition of a book some 20 years old has been brought up to date to keep it abreast of changing fashions and the substitution of a small modern tracker action organ on the dust jacket for the former picture of the west-end organ in Bradford Cathedral shows changing attitudes. The descriptions

of the types of action (illuminated by Mr. Herbert Norman's characteristically stylish drawings), of the principle of organ case design, of the placing of organs in churches, and of the considerations involved in buying an organ all hold good, and for the new edition it has only been necessary to make a few minor alterations to the text and to add a short chapter on developments in the last twenty years.

Five illustrations of recent organ cases have been added and one lesson that comes to light through these is the era of the detached console is now firmly over. The one weakness of the book is in the photographs which altogether now more widely spaced throughout the book do seem a little poor in places. The photographs of the console of Norwich Cathedral is now for instance seen through an autumnal mist. The whole book is better printed on a thicker paper than its predecessor and provides anyone seriously considering a new organ with a very useful reference work and guide.

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Attention of Churches is drawn to an excellent series of booklets and leaflets published by the Council for the Care of Churches, 83 London Wall, London EC2M 5NA. These range from a mere 10p to £2.50 and although primarily written for Anglican Churches can undoubtedly be of help to the free Churches and to anyone considering restoration and preservation of their Churches. Subjects covered include Bells and Bell Frames; Care and Maintenance of Church Clocks; Church Organs; Churchyards and Graves; Heating the Church; Lighting and Wiring; Insurance; Security and Theft; Monumental Brasses and Rubbings; New Buildings; Sound and Acoustics in Churches; Stained Glass; Wall-Painting; Wildlife Conservation in the Care of Churchyards and Monuments; Writing a Church Guide and Church Furnishings. A full list of the available range of leaflets can be obtained from the address above.

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A Short History of the Baptists in Scotland by Rev. W.J. (Jack) Seaton, who is the pastor of Inverness Reformed Baptist Church and commenced his ministry there in 1970. Pastor Seaton is widely known in the U.K. for his robust adherence to reformed biblical doctrine and his rejection of the modern ecumenical movement. The Reformed Baptist Church at Inverness meets in two adapted cottages, one is used for meetings and the other as a Christian book and tape library. This well produced book is the substance of a lecture given by Mr. Seaton at the Annual Meeting of the Strict Baptist Historical Society in 1982. Price not known but copies of this booklet (20 pages) are obtainable from the Strict Baptist Historical Society, 38 Frenchs Avenue, Dunstable, Beds. LU6 1BH.

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"My Road to Canterbury" is the title of Fred Riceman's autobiography published to celebrate the 21st anniversary of Riceman's department store in Canterbury. Fred Riceman is a U.R.C. Layman who has given considerable service to the church at many levels but supremely as a Governor of the Memorial Hall Trust

from 1961 and then its chairman. He took the lead in negotiating a deal which provided for a new building on the site of the former Congregational Union Office and an income for the Memorial Hall Trust which is considerable.

That only takes one chapter of the book however, whose main story is of Fred's apprenticeship and experiences in the retail distribution trade; his wartime experiences commanding air sea rescue launches around the coasts of Britain; his post-war struggles in going-it-alone in three Kent towns, and his final entry into Canterbury where he and his family established a large, and now flourishing, department store.

This book highlights the integrity, determination and imagination of a Christian person who has often served without counting the cost to himself.

My road to Canterbury by Fred Riceman is available from Riceman's (Canterbury) ppl99, at £5.95.

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To be a Pilgrim - A Memoir of Ernest A. Payne by W.M.A. West. Lutterworth Press. 1983 pp212. £4.95.

This memoir of the former president of the Baptist Historical Society by the present Vice-President is based on what the author describes as an "embarrassment of material". Dr. Payne left a journal of 200,000 words, written in his retirement from his own records and 27 travel diaries plus letters from his friend John Barrett, Baptist Union Report and Minutes, articles in the Baptist Times, plus the 70 contributions he made over the years to the Baptist Historical Societies own journal. Dr. West says in his preface: "This book does not pretend to be a critical biography of Ernest Payne" but rather "it may be best likened to a series of transparencies which recall for his contemporaries and illustrate for posterity, some at least of the achievements of his life and of the adventures of his journey". Various chapters cover his boyhood, and university years, the influence of his family and of his church (the Towns Chapel, Clapton); his settlement as General Secretary of the Baptist Union in 1951, his marriage, his service to the Baptist Missionary Society; his retirement and service to the World Council of Churches and his service to the Baptist Historical Society itself. Professor Gordon Rupp once described him at a Baptist Union Assembly as "this ecclesiastical inter-continental missile" yet Ernest Payne himself described himself as 'I am a shy person and don't really find public speaking very easy' (Baptist Times). If one reads the book, one will hopefully discover which is nearer the truth.

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#### REVIEW

Two very valuable books have been produced recently by the Baptist Historical Society. "The English Baptists of the 17th Century" written by Dr. B.R. White, Principal of Regents Park College, is the first of a series dealing with the Baptists of the 17th to the 20th Century, other volumes in the series are the work of Raymond Brown and J.H.Y. Briggs and K.W. Clements respectively.

The fourth volume on the Baptists of the 20th Century consists of a paper read at a summer school in July 1982, edited and contributed to by K.W.Clements of the Bristol Baptist College. Many aspects of Baptist Life and witness are touched upon, including Church Life in the 20th Century, attitudes to ecumenism politics, including pacifism since 1914, and architecture, the latter contribution is by Dr.Clyde Binfield. The second book to be produced by the Baptist Historical Society is a rather new venture in church history and is by the editor of their magazine and is entitled "A Question of Freedom, British Baptists and the German Church Struggle", in which the story is told of the Hitler foisted Reichsbishop Muller's clashes with the Protestant and Baptist Church in furthering Hitler's attempt to form an united Nazi orientated Church body. This rather neglected era of recent history is illuminated by quotations and articles from the Baptist Times of those days. The article takes us up to the War Years of 1939/40. The story of the struggle of the War Years within Germany and Europe would be a fascinating story. Copies of these two books are obtainable from the Baptist Historical Society, c/o Rev.Roger Hayden,M.A., B.D., 37 Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading,RG4.7BB. Prices not known.

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Rev.Trevor Watts.  
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"Garlicks Methodist Registry" published by B.Edsall & Co.Ltd., 124 Belgrave Road, London SW1V 2BL price £17.50 including postage. pp500 248mm x 184mm. This new addition to the records of Methodism edited by the Rev.Kenneth B.Garlick, whose interest in the history of Methodism, is well known provides a new and original work which for the first time collects a wealth of information together on Methodism all in one volume. The information contained in this book come partly from a questionnaire sent out to some 3,000 Methodist Ministers and from their replies. The book contains a brief historical survey of all significant Methodist denominations 1739-1932; an alphabetical record of nearly 3,000 Ministers and their appointments to the Methodist Conference of 1982, including biographical details; records of Presidents, Vice-Presidents and Secretaries of all the Conferences and Assemblies of every significant Methodist denomination from the beginning to the present day; a record of all the Connexional Departments and Committees from their inception; A Record of the Theological Colleges, Training Colleges, and Connexional Schools with details of the appointments of officers, tutors and chaplains from their inception to the present day and a detailed glossary. This detailed book is a valuable addition to the literature of Methodism, of equal value to Ministers and Members alike.

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The International Congregational Fellowship

"The plans for the conference at Beverly, Massachusetts in 1985 are now being actively progressed. The Americans are organising a Congregational World Assembly of Youth "C-Way" to run

concurrently with the Conference. They will pay the total cost (excluding the flight to and from Boston) of up to four delegates in the age group 17-24 from each member country to stay in the U.S.A. for 30 days and to participate in a programme that will take them to many different parts of the country and give them a comprehensive view of American life. Both the Congregational Federation and the U.W.I. are considering how best they can respond to this generous offer.

I am happy to report that we have negotiated a party rate for travel for all delegates going from this country to the conference and back. A plane will leave London, Gatwick on July 31st and, provided we are able to form a party of at least 50 the return fare to Boston will be £266. This will permit return from the United States on any date convenient to the individual members of the party within six months of the date of outward travel. In the normal course this fare would be subject to any increases resulting from inflation between now and the date of travel but the fare can be guaranteed for anyone who is prepared to make a firm booking and pay a non-returnable deposit of £50. Conference costs have not yet been estimated in detail but the latest information is that they should not exceed £20. per day and it is hoped that the cost of attendance at the conference, including full board and accommodation and a visit to Plymouth Plantation plus two additional nights in the Boston area should not exceed £150. We hope to give all participants who do not wish to return after the statutory minimum of seven days in the U.S.A. two options: Option 1: 7 days tour of the East Coast of America including Boston and New York. Option 2: a further 7 days tour visiting Philadelphia and Washington D.C. Arrangements for both of these options will be on the basis of providing transport (in self-drive hire cars) and modest overnight accommodation at motels, the total cost of which should not exceed £150 per week. Participants will be free to purchase their own meals, sightseeing tours, theatre bookings etc.

It is hoped to produce a printed brochure with firm details and costs by early summer and if you would like to receive a copy please advise D.S. Watson, at 61 Oakroyd Avenue, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 2EN. If however, you feel able to make a firm booking at this time, you are well advised to do so; a payment of £50 deposit will almost certainly ensure a substantial reduction in the costs of the trip.

As details of the Conference are being finalised, it is becoming apparent that it will be both challenging and absorbing. Interest has been shown by the media on both sides of the Atlantic and there is a possibility that television companies will combine to make a documentary to include the Conference proceedings.

Finally I am very happy to announce that the Congregational Federation has agreed to subsidise any minister or Pastor wishing to attend the Conference to the extent of £100 per person. It is hoped that Churches and Areas may feel able to add to this amount so that no minister or Pastor wishing to

attend is prevented from doing so on financial grounds. This grant of £100 is irrespective of the minister or Pastors denominational affiliation. The money will come from the Federations share of income of the Memorial Hall Trust. In 1981 the trust made a direct contribution towards such costs. This time, not unreasonably, the trust felt that of the three constituent bodies (Cong. Fed., the E.F.C.C. and the U.R.C.) only Federation ministers and pastors were likely to benefit from such grants. Accordingly, the Federation was asked to make such grants as it felt able from its own share of the income. The Finance Committee made its recommendation in the full knowledge that a large proportion of those grants would be going to Ministers/Pastors of the Union of Welsh Independents and are happy that this should be so. All the members of the I.C.F. Advisory Board in this country look forward to the pleasure of your company at Beverly.

David S. Watson (U.K. Regional Secretary)

P.S. The Secretary of the C.H.C. would be interested to hear from anyone who is considering going to this Conference and who might be willing to represent the C.H.C. at this event.

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#### UNION CHAPEL, ISLINGTON, LONDON

The friends of Union Chapel have reported to me the following:-

"The Historic Buildings Council has now agreed to give a grant towards the first stage of phase one of the plans drawn up by the Chapels Architects, Anthony Richardson and Partners. We now wait to know the amount of grant that the H.B.C. will allow us but it is hoped that work will start before the summer on stage one which consists of essential repairs to the roofs, stonework and roof trusses together with timber treatment and other works.

Meanwhile we are planning to create a new worship area under the rear gallery which will look out on to the main church auditorium through a sympathetically designed glass screen. This new area will also be an exhibition/circulating space to compliment any larger services and functions in the main church. Other phases in our long term plans over the next few years, are hoped to include conversion of the large halls complex at the rear of the church into offices, studios and possibly housing all with the aim to create income to finance further repairs and future maintenance of the chapel. The church would concentrate its vestry, offices and hall accommodation in the lecture hall block with refurbished and new additional facilities for its use.

It is hoped alongside this that increased use will be made of the main chapel auditorium for concerts and conferences etc. (and possibly Church Assemblies etc). It would still be first and foremost a church used for worship.

For a small fellowship to take on such a huge task is very brave but we are confident that with Gods help we can ensure that the future of Cubitts Great Cathedral is safe and in use to spread Christs Gospel, please pray for us in this work. S.R. Forster.

Friends are reminded of the organisation "Friends of Union Chapel" formed last year to support the restoration of the Union Chapel, Islington, London. Membership is just £1 per year and full details can be obtained from Mr. Stephen R. Forster, 13, Sydney Road, Wanstead, London E11 2JW. (Tel: 01-530-2332)

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Stop Press-LATE NEWS-Stop Press-LATE NEWS-Stop Press-LATE NEWS

On January 19th 1984 the Governors of Northern College (until recently the Congregational College, Manchester) agreed to enter a Federation with the other theological colleges in Manchester (Baptist, Methodist and Unitarian) and the Northern Ordination Course (Anglican). They also agreed to put the building in Whalley Range up for sale, with a view to transferring the work of the Federation to the Northern Baptist College site as soon as practically possible. The officers of this new Federation of the Colleges will include Principal Jack McKelvey (Northern College Principal) as President and with a Methodist Chairman of the Council and a Baptist as Secretary.

The Colleges have worked closely together for a number of years and many practical courses are run jointly and the premises at Whalley Range have become expensive to maintain. The Cambridge theological colleges have had a Federation for some time for instance, but all these have retained their own buildings.

If and when the sale of the Whalley Range building releases capital resources, the next target will be regional centres, which will bring together people in different areas of training: internship, auxiliary ministry and post-ordination. This will link the college more firmly with, for example, parts of the country which once had colleges of their own.

Since 1922 the college has been a hall of residence for students of Manchester University and this too will presumably now cease.

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Extra From The Postbag

21. The editor still has a considerable number of books of a Devotional nature and some others to give away free. Please send details of your needs to him. For address see Page 1, of this magazine.

22. Mrs. Jean Bower of 103 Ack Lane West, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 7EU. Tel: 061-485-1668 writes to enquire if anyone has any information on a Rev. Stoughton, who is said to have preached a brilliant sermon when her Great Great Grandfather, John Bird, astronomer, was buried at Clewes, Windsor in 1846.

Also she would appreciate information on Rev. Heliwell of Ebenezer Chapel, Bretherton and his family as one of his children appeared to have been adopted by a Rev. Conybell who was living in Australia in the mid 1820's. She has received a query from Australia on this and would appreciate any help that anyone can give.

CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE: AN INTERPRETATIVE ESSAY

Congregational College has been the subject of critical appraisal ever since it first appeared at Whalley Range. To Samuel Davidson, the newly appointed Professor of Old Testament Studies, who was certainly its most notorious and arguably its most noted Victorian Tutor, the trust deed was stifling and the drainage lethal: the former contributed to one of Congregationalism's few heresy hunts, the latter was believed to have caused the death of Davidson's sons, who slept above a hidden and unsuspected tank. Davidson came to Manchester from Belfast, an ex-Presbyterian innocent alike of Congregational ways and pastoral experience. As he put it, "A large structure placed in the midst of an undrained bog showed little practical wisdom in the originators. The climate of Manchester, cold and wet as it is, was not mitigated to the inmates of a house on which the rays of the sun seldom fell".<sup>1</sup> That was in 1843. Four years later Tholuck, the German theologian most admired by advanced Englishmen, stayed with the Davidsons, and voiced a different concern: "He expressed surprise at seeing the imposing Building erected by a Dissenting Body, thinking that an Established Church only could have afforded it."<sup>2</sup>

The undrained bog very quickly became a rich man's suburb, developed by a Congregational banker. There, two miles from the centre of the world's greatest industrial city, in an advanced architectural style, protected by trees, lawns, villas and wide roads, stood a fine college for "the Liberal Education of Pious and Talented Young Men". It stands there still, although today the rich man's suburb fringes the inner city (cottonopolis no more), the leafy protection has long been breached, and, as to its intention, one should now take only the piety and education for granted. This may seem to be a parable of what has happened to English Christianity in the two centuries since the Evangelical Revival and the Industrial Revolution. The buildings in Whalley Range, however, reflect only part of the complex and contradictory ancestry of Congregational College, and while buildings define activities and so form attitudes and thus mould futures, it cannot be stressed too strongly that Manchester and its College buildings now house attitudes - not just traditions - formed by the interaction of other men and other buildings in other parts of the country. There is no single "Congregational College tradition". With origins so diverse there can be no hope of charting from them a simple, logical path to the future. The past may offer guidance and an explanation, it can never provide a blueprint.

Each Annual Report of the College is prefaced by a table setting out its ancestry, as much perhaps to allay the jealous loyalties of old members as to demonstrate an apostolic succession, thus:-



The Congregational College, Manchester: its Ancestry 3\*

<u>Lancs.Independent College</u>	<u>Yorks.United Independent College</u>
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Roby's Academy 1803-08	Heckmondwike 1756-83
Leaf Square Academy 1811-43	Northowram 1783-95
Blackburn Academy 1816-43	Rotherham 1795-1888
Lancashire Independent College 1843-1958	Idle 1800-26
	Airedale 1826-88
	Yorkshire United Independent College 1888-1958

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The Northern Congregational College  
1958-1968

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THE CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE, MANCHESTER (Overdale College,  
Birmingham)

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<u>Paton Congregational College Nottingham</u>	<u>The Western College, Bristol</u>
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Cavendish College, Manchester 1960-63	Ottery St.Mary 1752-65
Nottingham Congregational Institute 1863-1920	Bridport 1765-80
Paton Congregational College 1920-68	Taunton 1780-1829
	Western College, Exeter 1829-45
	Plymouth 1845-1901
	Bristol Congregational Institute 1863-91
	The Western College, Bristol 1901-69

This complexity is equalled, if not exceeded, by the tangled origins of each of the religious traditions served by the College. Setting aside the informal links with the Moravian Churches and the now intimate connexion with the Churches of Christ (which in the near future must, formally, add a quite new dimension to the College), the College is bound to express the traditions of Congregationalists and of Presbyterians. Yet in what sense can one speak of Congregational or Presbyterian traditions?

The Presbyterian Church of England was quite new, rather small and largely urban. Nonetheless its members, elders and ministers, whether English, Irish or Scots, reflected a host of different Presbyterianisms, each differing slightly but significantly in the sort of people they attracted, the use they made of those people and the way in which they ordered themselves, there is no single point of reference.

Readers of Michael Watt's invaluable book, The Dissenters, 4\* will know that exactly the same applies to Congregationalists. Consider, for example, those churches - whether part of the United Reformed Church or continuing Congregational - which claim seventeenth-century origins. Some perhaps were Independent

from the beginning, believing in the autonomy of each local congregation, each one possessing all the necessary elements of the great Church catholic: each one a church. Some, however, were Separatist, believing not in the autonomy of each congregation so much as in the need for Christian congregations to separate themselves from harmful links with the State. Some, indeed, believed in the spiritual autonomy of each local congregation without seeing any reason for breaking their links with the State: for them at least a State Congregational Church need not be a contradiction in terms. All shared a similar, congregation-based, order, but they came together by different paths, bringing different perceptions, motivated by different social or political pressures.

As the seventeenth moved into the eighteenth century this Congregational confusion was worse compounded, for their congregations were joined by others, dissenting from necessity rather than conviction, which became Congregational less because they accepted the principle of the gathered church, meeting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as an indispensable part of their faith and order, than because there seemed to be no practicable alternative for them at that time. Still later, these churches were suddenly enlarged by numbers of total strangers, converted by revival, seeking spiritual refreshment and indifferent as to the niceties of previous generations. Sometimes complete congregations detached themselves from Methodism, or even from Evangelical Anglicanism, and in the case of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion a new little denomination came alongside in a curious and unsatisfactory relationship, rather as when Tanganyika and Zanzibar converged as Tanzania. This was the Congregationalism from which many of us were formed: there was little 'classic' about it, but from this interaction of stated origins, social and political pressures, and unfolding personalities, consciously and unconsciously guided by the Spirit, emerged a distinctive Christian denomination.

Our churches, whatever their origins, have needed ministers, men (women from 1917) ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament; that requirement was usually, although not invariably, presupposed a training: academies, colleges, or seminaries, to train men fit to minister to this interpretation of the Catholic Church, or to minister to starved souls and convert lost ones, or to exemplify educated Christian citizenship, or to serve overseas. The needs of long established and wealthy congregations had to be balanced with those of barely churching or newly churching areas. Rural Dissent had to be balanced with industrial. Intellectual rigour had to be maintained in a national climate which excluded Dissenters from the traditional centres of higher education; it had also to be balanced against the pressing needs of men whose social background had precluded them from any systematic education. If, by the end of the 19th century, English Nonconformity seemed disturbingly lower middle class, the facts remained that potential ministers came from a bewilderingly varied background, that the needs which the age perceived and which these ministers were to meet were no less

varied, and that this sanctified fitting of square pegs into round holes had to be carried out in the teeth of a society in perpetual transformation. What is remarkable is not that the church's training institutions were always a step behind society's needs, as that they were so varied and flexible: seminaries to bring the barely educated up to scratch; colleges with university links; institutes to train working men, or older men, to minister to working people. Each of them, however, bore witness to one common factor: the conscious response of Christian men and women to a call which transcended all constraints.

The United Reformed Church has three English theological colleges and a recent memory of a fourth. Each reflects the variety and interaction which I have described. Westminster College, Cambridge, most fully enshrines the Presbyterian tradition, but through the Cheshunt Foundation it also incorporates the traditions of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion and, via the Newport Pagnall Academy and the Cotton End Institute, it connects with the Evangelical world of the Bulls, Cowper and John Newton, and of missionary enterprise. Mansfield College, Oxford, expressing a most audacious breaking of barriers, and for many no doubt associated with a "Mansfield type", attractively catholic, nonetheless incorporates the Spring Hill, Birmingham, tradition of German Scholarship and civic engagement, the Carrs Lane spirit of R.W. Dale working through that of Fairbairn, Selbie, Micklem, Marsk and Caird. The Dissenting purist will regret that with New College, London, went a unique fusion of the classical and the evangelical, incorporating, via Coward and Wymondley Colleges, the Northampton Academy of Philip Doddridge. With New College gone, however, Congregational College Manchester remains as the most truly representative of all the strands (save the overtly Presbyterian) which compose the modern United Reformed and Congregational churches. The strand of the Dissenting Academy, to train men deprived of the rigorous intellectual education which had been their right, to serve congregations which expected such learning, is probably best traced through the Western College to Ottery St. Mary and Bridport; here, although the Academy at Ottery dates only from 1752, are the College's closest links with the men of 1662, and with the solid meeting houses of pre-industrial England.

The response to the Evangelical Revival is best traced through the Yorkshire and Lancashire Academies and Colleges. These were reactions to a variety of needs: those of men awakened to a call, those of congregations newly gathered but pastorless, those of old congregations revived to a lively sense of evangelical orthodoxy, those of areas as yet quite destitute of the means of grace. They were initiated by pious individuals or pious groups, some locally, some from London. Although their evangelical integrity was safeguarded - perhaps strait-jacketed - by strictly worded trust deeds, there was no central denominational connexion, partly because they had arisen to serve immediate and local needs, and partly because what denominational organisation there was existed purely as a matter of

sanctified expediency: such was the case with the County Congregational Unions and Associations, with the various national home and foreign missionary societies and, from 1831 to 1966, with the Congregational Union of England and Wales. The collegiate legacy of the Evangelical Revival is not, however, quite so simple a response to straightforward need. The interaction of the Revival and the Industrial Revolution has fascinated several recent historians. 5\* The salvation of souls was complicated - and defined - by unprecedented social change: new dimensions of spiritual and material destitution were accompanied by new levels of education, sophistication and awareness, the whole somehow contained by a political order carried over from the pre-industrial society which had consciously and naturally discriminated against Dissent. Yet the new industrial society was itself a grand expression of dissent. Inevitably the collegiate reflections of the new society's most distinctive expression demonstrated these tensions, the political confrontation, the polarisation of class inevitable with mounting industrialisation, the hardening of denominationalism natural to self-conscious Christians who are simultaneously marking out their own social and cultural boundaries, eventually retreating into a sub-cultural insularity. It is in this light that we need to see the building and rebuilding at Whalley Range in the 1830s and 1870's, at Rotherham in the 1870's, at Undercliffe and Emm Lane in the 1830's and 1870's, at Bristol in the 1900's with the ceaseless discussions over amalgamations (Rotherham with Airedale?, and Lancashire?) or sites (Leeds? Shipley? Derby? Leicester?) or accommodation (residential, as at Rotherham or Manchester or, eventually, Nottingham?. Or with the men boarding out in the locality, amidst "real life", as at Bradford or Bristol?). It is in this light too that we need to set the ambitious building schemes and educational pretensions against the equally conscious determination to recognise the call of the older man, or the unacademic, or the challenge of the inner city (even then) or the isolated village. Congregational College incorporates two such responses. One was the Bristol Institute (1863-91), the other was the Institute founded in Manchester in 1860 by that warmest of pulpit prima donnas, Joseph Parker, but moving to Nottingham three years later where it owed its form to the very different genius of J.B. Paton. 6\* Parker's aim was an "Operative College", (he quickly dropped the ambiguous adjective) to educate "young men for the public service of Christ's Church as Home, Town, Congregational and Colonial Missionaries, Evangelists and Pastors." It was to complement the established colleges, not to rival them. Paton, (with a stipend of £400 when 50 students had been enrolled: well over £8000 in present day values?) refined this. The refinement was at once inevitable and instructive. Parker, at Cavendish Chapel in the early 1860's, was imitating what William Roby had done at Cannon Street sixty years earlier, but the circumstances were really quite different. As Parker himself put it: "While the highest intellectual superiority will be assiduously cultivated, the students will be taught the dignity of LABOUR."

but the former became the Operative College's operative clause. An appeal letter signed by Paton stated the case clearly:

"...of our recognized Ministers, between one-fourth and one-third have never enjoyed any collegiate training. Is this a state of things at all creditable to a Denomination which aspires and even professes, to rank high in culture and intelligence?

Our conviction is that, as a rule, every young man should receive special training before entering upon the ministerial office. Now there are in our Churches many... whose educational advantages have been but few, but... who have the necessary qualifications of unquestionable piety, earnestness and zeal, and the power of effective public speech...

...(An) attempt to make scholars of them would be damaging to themselves and disappointing to their Tutors. They should be well-trained in the knowledge and use of the English language, their constant instrument and weapon. Enough Greek to read the New Testament in the original tongue should be acquired... The central place... should be occupied by sound and systematic Theological instruction. A course of Church History, practical lessons in Homiletics, with the elements of Logic and Rhetoric, are indispensable..."

The Nottingham Institute was founded at a time of immense growth and radical, indeed unequalled, change at all levels of English education. The general tendency of this explosion was to urge equality of opportunity as the best way of promoting individual excellence. Society favoured those who aspired to the best, although many social realists felt that it was more useful to educate people to know their place; to make the best, rather than to aspire to the best. The problem was especially acute for women; should women compete on men's terms, or fulfil themselves on their own terms? On the whole women decided to compete on men's terms, and so entered the new world, at once egalitarian and elitist, of examinations. The Nottingham Institute, which was perhaps the most interesting of Congregationalism's responses to the needs of theological education, tried to contain the dilemma: its students were to be encouraged both to aspire to fresh levels, and to make the best of their natural level. The experiment was not unsuccessful: Nottingham remained the college with the most flexible courses, and most sympathetic to candidates who for whatever reasons deviated from the normal requirements of the other colleges. Nonetheless it was a 'college' in fact long before it became one in name. Local pride was mixed with the enthusiasm and generosity of its patrons (inevitably Samuel Morley was Nottingham's fairy godfather, inevitably too the laymen's generosity alternated with financial crisis) and with J.B. Paton's infectious combination of vision, intellectual depth and administrative skills, to produce a very passable college indeed, red brick, bell-turreted and 14th century Gothic from 1868, full by 1876 ("The joy of training fifty men is incalculable. There are only fourteen at Airedale now")<sup>7\*</sup>, with growing links with Nottingham Univer-

sity College from 1881 (that was inevitable since Paton was one of the University College's fathers and founders), and with a residential hall from 1887 to 1906 (when it was discontinued as a matter of cost, not principle). It is tempting to see this insistent institutionalising as mere gentrification and perhaps the quaint if delicious interlude of the 1930s when the Institute (Paton College now) moved out to the Gothic turrets and pleasure grounds of Tollerton proves the point.

Tollerton was an aberration no doubt, but the point really to be made is that at Nottingham as with all the other colleges which now comprise Congregational College Manchester, a balance had to be struck. On the one hand, the call to Evangelical ministry, once perceived had next to be formed; its formation depended on the twin interactions of teachers and students - the 'college' - and of the 'college' with its constituency of churches and patrons, for these were its paymasters and customers. On the other hand, since preachers of the Gospel were also citizens, there had to be accommodation to contemporary social and educational standards. J.B. Paton was the most imaginative and fertile of all our Victorian college principals (and there were some outstanding men among them) but in the great age of the Nonconformist Conscience, when that Nonconformist Conscience was usually in political alliance with the natural party of government (surely Victorian England's most piquant paradox), there were sensible limits to experimentation. It requires some imagination to appreciate this. Theological colleges of all sorts multiplied throughout the 19th century. Their buildings contributed significantly to the townscape, their architectural styles, sometimes Classical, more often Gothic and Collegiate or Tudor and Manorial, reflected not just the pretensions of their builders but also the values to which they laid claim and from which they had too often been barred. Superficially these values, Gothic and Collegiate, or Tudor and Manorial, stood for what was not merely traditional, but established in society; in fact the men who built them, taught in them and were taught in them, were dedicated to the continuing presence of an alternative interpretation within those traditions and to that establishment: and this had political and social as well as religious and educational implications. Should matters ever reach their logical conclusion these men stood for the dissolution of the established order. Should matters merely jog along from day to day, these men still stood for such a widening of that order that the order itself must be changed, though not beyond recognition. This is the real significance of the rash of theological colleges rapidly rebuilding in big Victorian towns. Modish buildings in respectable suburbs, they did not merely ape the cloistered ways of Anglican gentlemen: they witnessed to social mobility and progress, even to culture and taste. They provided social forcing houses. They provided too a first focus for provincial higher education. Their tutors, from Nottingham Institute to Airedale or Rotherham (which, despite a carefully

tended inferiority complex and the assertion of a doughty early committee member that "Learning is no substitute for grace", in 81 years produced more professors and tutors than any other Congregational theological college, two fellows of the Royal Society among them 8\*), converted barely educated youths into strategically placed men who knew at least what a literary classical, scientific and theological syllabus ought to contain, and thus formed a core around which university extension could grow. Mark Firth, whose Firth College provided the nucleus of the University of Sheffield, had first built a Methodist New Connexion theological college; the sole woman to sit on the Rotherham School board, was a tutor's wife from Rotherham Congregational College. Above all the colleges provided a political focus. They were spearheads of Liberalism, even of Radicalism, professional communicators strategically placed within great new radical cities. Rotherham's Principal, Falding was the brother-in-law of one leading (and notorious) Radical M.P., and rode in the first election victory procession of another, while one of his tutors provided the hospitality for that same M.P., who subsequently became Vice President of the Committee of Council for Education and known as a powerful reforming educationalist 9\*. As the father and grandfather of future Liberal M.P.'s cried at the opening of Rotherham's new building in 1876, "They wanted theological Mr. Gladstones". 10\* In short, exclusive, contradictory, pretentious, divisive, our colleges contributed significantly to those social, political and educational forces which made for movement, even for progress in the world's first urban society.

It is hard not to concentrate on the 1860s and 1870s for they were bumper decades for theological education, years when the opportunity and the will for change appeared to coincide. Nonetheless there was a spectre at every college rebuilding and and stonelaying feast. The Free Church (the phrase, a Presbyterian importation, was gaining currency from the 1840s) Colleges were monuments to self help; but self help was called increasingly in question in the 1870s. In 1871 Henry Allon, the most accomplished Congregational ecclesiastic of his generation addressed the Congregational Union, urging upon the denomination as a whole, much of what Paton had been urging on his subscribers for some years. Allon's views are worth examining. 11\* He identified 16 Congregational colleges (in England and Wales), with 368 students, 38 professors and an income of £25,000. The numbers did not impress him: they suggested waste and inefficiency. In the average college, in courses, which ranged from two to six years, but which averaged four, two tutors were responsible for instilling classics, mathematics, philosophy, English Literature, exegesis, church history and theology into thirty men of varied attainments: sixteen hours a week, perhaps, per tutor, of teaching in all subjects. Yet as often as not modern languages escaped the net, Greek and Latin were restricted to a mere two hours a week, and churches would insist on capturing students before their college course was over. Nor was that all,

in 1870, out of 104 newly ordained ministers, only 63 had been trained; out of 2468 ministers listed in the Year Book, only 645 had been so trained. Not that the training was too much to go by. Like Parker and Paton, Allon worried over the sociology of it all: We shall, I trust, never be ashamed of a ministry of self made men...God help the Church whose pulpits are filled only by the scions of wealthy families, or by the literati of universities (at that very moment one of Allon's brightest young men, H.H.Asquith, was breaching every barrier at Balliol), who train only gentlemen to preach to gentlemen". But how was one to recognise the call of the pious artisan, illiterate at 20? Such a man must no more be turned away than he could be educated to appeal to an influential church (they had them still in 1871) in four years flat.

For Allon the answer was a grand rationalisation. He urged that each student should be expected to undergo a course in "arts" (in other words reach proficiency in secular subjects) and theology, and that no student should proceed to the theological part of the course until he had satisfied the requirements of the arts component. Since this would place an intolerable strain on existing teaching facilities, he urged that some colleges be devoted to arts, and others to theology. He even suggested an ideal progression, doubtless for the highflier: a preparation at, say, Mill Hill School in four years, followed by three years at University, followed by three years at a Congregational College devoted entirely to theology (an expensive ten years, to be paid for by a specially created society. He followed an American model.) Above all he urged, as others had urged for years, and as had already been triumphantly achieved at New College, London, an amalgamation of colleges; and since even that would leave too much waste and fragmentation, he dreamed aloud of Nonconformist Universities - five or six colleges grouping in London and Manchester, each college autonomous but each sharing the professional advantages of the University system. Who knew? Such a scheme might even lead to concerted action with the Baptists and the Methodists. This was not Allon's first such appeal to the May Assembly, any more than the conference which resulted from it was the first or last denominational attempt to grapple with the problems. 12\* The reality of the problem was shown most dramatically in Sept. 1878, when Lancashire Independent, already the grandest of the denomination's colleges, reopened after a reconstruction which left its ambitious facade intact but which at £20,000 (and nine bedrooms and a study 21'x14' for the Principal's lodge) cost as much as a new college, and at a time of severe industrial depression too. Caleb Scott, the Principal, had the grace to be uneasy, although he placed the blame on Yorkshire. "Our deep regret was, and is, that our friends in Yorkshire were so wedded to the traditions of the past that they could not see their way to entertain with us the splendid project of one thoroughly efficient theological hall for the North of England, open to those who had attained the required general education at our Universities (of the College's 53 students, 6



were already University graduates, 3 were currently away at Universities)...Instead of that we have two Colleges(Rotherham, and Airedale at Emm Lane) built within the last few years in one county, each with its own staff of professors to do precisely the same work". 13"

The opportunity missed in 1878 was taken in 1968; and it goes without saying that Henry Allon's dream remained a dream - or largely so. Because, in the untidy yet providential way inevitable to Congregationalism, more challenges were grasped than might be realised. Lancashire College's new architect was Alfred Waterhouse, whose Manchester Town Hall had barely been completed, and whose Balliol College dominated Oxford's Broad Street just as his Owens' College dominated Manchester's Oxford Road. That Lancashire College should be seen as part of this expansion, amidst the hopes and bombast common to all such enterprises ("we shall want an increased income; we shall want to pay the debt...and we shall want more men"), suggests the larger view to which Free Churchmen were becoming accustomed: they had a greater consciousness now of national needs, of challenges facing not only the churches, not only the north, but all men (and women) with minds, everywhere.

For a moment it looked as if the Congregational Colleges were at last a full part of that educational tide which their leaders had always been keen to ride. At Rotherham there were links to be developed with Firth College, opening in Sheffield; Airedale had strong links to foster with Scottish Universities; Lancashire Independent had its long standing special relationship with Owens' College. All the colleges, and not just those in London, had made use of London University's degree facilities. There remained the ancient universities. In October 1889 Spring Hill was reborn in Oxford as Mansfield College, architecturally the finest and intellectually the most distinguished of them all, while it was Cambridge's turn in 1913 when, 14 years after the Presbyterians had moved Westminster from London to the Madingley Road, Cheshunt College, taken unwillingly enough from Hertfordshire at last reappeared off Trumpington Road as a charmingly understated community, at once cloistered college and courtyarded country house. Its stonelaying, by the Lord Chancellor in the presence of the American Ambassador, whose first public engagement it was, took place on the last day of May week. It was opened in October 1915. In between, world war had been declared.

Cheshunt had moved twenty years too late, but it is the fate of a theological college to do everything too late, for it is doubly vulnerable, as much to the pressures of educational fashion as to the ceaseless demands of Christian mission. The more faithfully such an institution allows its buildings to reflect the best aspirations of the age, the more surely it is defining, indeed circumscribing, its options for the future. Save that the best aspirations of any age approximate to those of every age. The constraints which a good building imposes on the life within it may be tiresome, but they need not be wholly regrettable.

This essay has made little attempt to separate spiritual imperatives from social or even physical constraints. Buildings of their time contained men of their time straining to express the truths of all time; but even in theological colleges eternity can only be apprehended by men and women of the moment. What seems muddle is in fact interaction: it is thus that the historian, concerned solely with time, dares to contemplate eternity.

The comparison with the Victorian hey-day is not really perverse after all, the College's present buildings are the product of that heyday and they reflect accurately both the curious closeness and distance of those days. Distance, because most Non-conformists then believed that they were growing, and that their problem was one of expansion; closeness, because they too were faced by an educational transformation which required radical responses (and which got them though we might not like them very much); closeness too because they, like us, were responding to the Gospel call, and the need for mission, unlike its expression, is unchanging.

It is thus no surprise to see our predecessors agonise over the relationship of education to vocation, or between the merits of community life as against city lodgings and central teaching, or even the benefits of domestic study with a "working" minister. As to the lessons to be drawn, other than that our own solutions will be neither very new nor wholly adequate, three might suggest themselves.

The first is the unchanged need to combine evangelical faith (our students have no right to be here without a call) with academic sophistication: the two may not be divorced.

The second is the need to reflect a locality: although our colleges have always tended to draw widely, their strength has been in the affection, and support, which local churches and friends gave to them. The colleges were "us", rather than "them".

The third is that the colleges were at their best when they interacted most with contemporary Society. The Dissenting Academics provided a modern education not easily attained elsewhere; the Colleges of the Revival trained men who could make spiritual sense of a world changing almost beyond sense; the Colleges of Victorian England provided a focus for an alternative Christian Citizenship. If such conclusions are startlingly unoriginal, that is simply the historian's prerogative.

J.C.G. Binfield.

\*\*See 'Late News' Page 20 this issue.

#### NOTES

1. Anne Jane Davidson ed. The Autobiography and Diary of Samuel Davidson, DD., LL D., Edinburgh 1899, p.21.
2. Ibid, pp. 27-28.
3. The Congregational College Manchester, Eleventh Annual Report, 78-79. Manchester 1979 p.1.
4. M.R. Watts The Dissenters, From the Reformation to the French Revolution O.U.P. 1978.

5. Notably W.R.Ward, Religion and Society in England 1790-1850, 1972 and A.D.Gilbert, Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914, 1976.
6. For most of this information about Paton College and its predecessors I am indebted to a series of detailed type-Scripts by R.R.Turner, notably Joseph Parker and Ministerial Training, and Cavendish Theological College, passim.
7. J.L.Paton, John Brown Paton. A Biography, 1914, p.336.
8. K.W.Wadsworth, Yorkshire United Independent College, 1954, p.75. Opening of the New Building (reprinted from the Rotherham and Masbro' Advertiser Saturday 23 September, 1876) Rotherham 1876, pp.7, 27; (bound in Rotherham College Reports 1877-1889, Congregational College Archives, shortly to be transferred to Rylands Library).
9. Falding's brother in law was Samuel Plimsoll; the tutor was Elkanah Armitage, later of Bradford; Armitage's wife, Ella Sophia, was the Rotherham School Board lady. The M.P., Rotherham's first, was Arthur Acland.
10. This was Thomas Coote of St.Ives, whose son, Thomas Coote jr. was Liberal M.P. for Hunts, South, 1885-6, and whose Grandson, the late Sir Colin Coote (1893-1979), was Coalition-Liberal M.P. for the Isle of Ely 1918-1922.
11. Congregational Year Book, 1872. pp. 105 ff.
12. The story can be followed in A.Peel These Hundred Years, 1931, passim.
13. Memorial of the Opening of the New and Enlarged Buildings of Lancashire Independent College, Manchester 1878, passim, esp. pp. 39-40.

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2. Congregational: Of course, R.Tudur-Jones, Congregationalism in England 1662-1962, 1962. But vanity urges the claims of C.Binfield, So Down to Prayers, 1977, since this series of studies, covering 1780-1920, attempts to present sympathetically those parts of Congregationalism which might seem most alien to readers of Reform.
3. Colleges: a) New College and its predecessors: G.F.Nuttall, New College, London and Its Library: Two Lectures Dr.William's Trust, 1977.  
 b) Mansfield College: Mansfield College Oxford: Its Origin and Opening, 1890.  
 c) Cheshunt College: S.C.Orchard, Cheshunt College: A Record....., Cambridge, n.d.k.(1968).  
 d) Westminster College: R.Buick Knox, Westminster College Cambridge: Its Background and History, Cambridge, n.d., (1979)

W.A.L. Elmslie, Westminster College, Cambridge:  
An Account of Its History 1899-1949 n.d.(c.1949)  
e) The Dissenting Academy Irene Parker, Dissenting  
Academies in England, Cambridge, 1914

4. Congregation College: J. Thompson, Lancs. Independent College  
1843-1893: Jubilee Memorial Volume, Manchester 1893  
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(It is perhaps invidious to select this biography, when many other College Principals are commemorated no less faithfully: but Paton and Nottingham Institute were for years synonymous).

A.W. Sims, The Western College, Bristol: An Outline History, Bristol, n.d.(1952).

Finally I would draw your attention to innumerable Articles from Transactions Congl. Hist. Soc. and Journal URC Hist. Soc. - it may be that you have yet to become a member?

BATHEASTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH - A BRIEF HISTORY

For a number of years before 1868 a group of people in Bath-easton - a village to the east of Bath as its name implies - had met together regularly for worship in the Mission Hall. This hall, which still stands though considerably altered internally, on the main London Road overlooking the valley of the River Avon. This building is believed to have been used originally by the men who were building the Great Western Railway. It was this group of worshippers who, on March 13th, 1868, under the chairmanship of Rev. Robert Rew, resolved -

"That for the glory of God and for mutual edification and strength, we do form ourselves into a church and join ourselves to the Congregational Body of Christians." The Rev. Rew and twenty-five persons then signed their names - except Mary Woodman who made her mark X - after the resolution had been entered in the minute book by Rev. Charles Chapman M.A. Minister of Percy Chapel, Bath, on Monday March 30th, 1868. This service on the 30th. was for the purpose of publicly notifying the formation of the church, and it included the celebration of the Lord's Supper. At the Church Meeting on June 4th, the following Rules were proposed and unanimously adopted:

1. That no topic be brought before the Church without the previous knowledge and concurrence of the presiding minister.
2. That candidates for Church Membership be proposed only by the Minister.
3. That any member absenting himself or herself from the Lord's table during six successive months, without a reason satisfactory to the Pastor, shall cease to be a member of this Church.
4. That any member removing from Batheaston, and omitting to communicate with the Pastor during twelve successive months shall cease to be a member.
5. That each member will so act, at all times, by the grace of God, that love and peace may be promoted and the prosperity of the Church secured.

An interesting conversation then took place relating to the conduct of Members generally, and it was agreed by all present, that members of the churches of Christ should remember their calling and should seek to live by the grace of God at all times. In this manner 114 years ago Batheaston Congregational Church began. By the grace of God and the faithfulness of its members it has continued but not without its ups and down. Within nine months of its beginning we read, 'The attendance at these meetings (November & December) small. Nothing done beyond the usual devotional exercises.' On the other hand we find six months later 'Few members present owing to the garden and other outdoor employment. The event of the month has been the ordination of the Pastor - it is a day to be remembered - and one of blessing to us all. We have been cheered by the conversion of Isaac Bence - the Lord is very gracious.' and again in October 1869, 'This has been a blessed time. The power of Divine Grace has been displayed in the conversion of Henry Tiley and his wife, and is indeed wonderful. H. Tiley had lived to old age in open rebellion against God - and now he with his wife are at the feet of Jesus. To God be all the praise.'

Having formed a church the members very soon began to think of erecting a building more suitable and fitting for their worship, and on May 2nd. 1870 the foundation stone was laid. On April 25th, 1871 the new chapel was opened. It was a day never to be forgotten. The church which stands today is substantially the same building, standing towards the brow of the hill in the centre of Batheaston High Street, and accommodating originally 270 people. It has a high vaulted roof, attractive in appearance but expensive to heat. The pulpit originally stood in the centre of the chancel and was reached by three steps; now it stands to one side.

Church meetings were held regularly during the early years though often the business to be discussed was brief so, as several minutes say - 'the time was spent in prayer, singing and conversation in relation to the Lord's work in the place.'

The behaviour of individual members seems to have caused concern at times. In 1872 the Pastor reported 'that he had visited brother Rawlings of whom painful things had been said. It proved a painful visit, but it was undertaken in the spirit of the Master, and it is hoped the result will be good.'

The first seven deacons were elected in 1877; they were Mr. Matthew Combes (Treasurer), Mr. John Gray, Mr. W. W. Leader, Mr. T. Hall, Mr. White, Mr. Palmer and Mr. Scott (Secretary). When the Rev. Robinson was invited to be minister in 1887, the stipend offered was £40 per year plus use of the Mission House.

In 1907 a legacy of £50 was left to the chapel by Mr. James Bullock and of this £30 was devoted to the purchase of a piece of land at the back of the Chapel in Potts Close; and £10 for building a lavatory and boiler house. (The lavatory did not materialise until 1949)

There seems to be no indication of exactly how the church was heated when first built, but in October 1887 Mr. Leader suggested that the heating apparatus be lit earlier to give more comfort to the congregation. In 1898 it was resolved that the minister enquire the price of the Patent Gas Burner and, if not too

expensive, that one be tried as an experiment. Whether or not this was successful is uncertain, but gas radiators were installed in 1912. At one stage a hot water system was in use. (hence the boiler house) and in 1955 small fan heaters were fitted which the Electricity Board allowed the church to use at a cheap rate provided they were only switched on at certain times. More recently modern gas convector heaters have been installed and have proved efficient and economical to use.

One large addition to the church building was in 1949 when a kitchen and toilets were added at the rear of the church. Most of the money to pay for this came from the sale of the East Twerton Church in Bath. It was hoped that further land close to the church would become available and that classrooms might be erected there, but this never came to be. More recently the Mission Hall has been sold.

The celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of the Church in 1931 was also the opportunity to raise money for a new lighting scheme which was duly completed and switched on by Mr. Don Maddox in July of that year.

A memorable event occurred at one o'clock on Thursday, 29th May 1890. A fire was found to have broken out. An alarm was raised and in a few moments flames were issuing from the chancel end. Dr. Harper, Snr, and Mr. T. Hooper Esq., rendered good and immediate service, as did also Mr. Leader and Mr. Wiltshire with their wives and families. Much damage was done but it was confined to the Chancel. The Insurance Company paid us £21 which quite covered the cost of repairs.'

The church however has not been interested only in its own affairs. Members have been very much aware of the need to make a witness to the world outside the church walls. The Rev. Mills Robinson took up the cudgels on behalf of the Nonconformists when he wrote to the local paper about an advertisement which had appeared in the 'Times'. This had been inserted by the Royal United Hospital, Bath, and was for 'A lady Superintendent of Nursing; qualifications - age 28 to 40, member of the Church of England, unmarried etc.' Mr. Robinson, with other correspondents, expressed regret and dismay that such an advertisement was allowed to appear, when the hospital was supported as much by Free Churchmen as by the Church of England.

During 1899, in co-operation with the Methodists, a systematic visitation of the district was made though there is no record of the results. In 1906 three united meetings with the Wesleyan Church and Bathford Baptist Church were arranged for the Universal Week of Prayer. Two years later a series of prayer meetings were held in co-operation with the Methodists.

Just before the turn of the century members agreed to join the proposed Bath Free Church Council; and by 1905 the church affiliated to the Congregational Union. In 1909 members of the Adult School were given permission to hold meetings in the vestry on Sunday mornings (presumably not at service time) provided that they were responsible for any expenses incurred.

From 1916 to 1920 Rev. Brown Tucker was Pastor of the church and also of Larkhall Congregational Church on the outskirts of Bath. In 1921 a further link with the wider Congregational Church was

forged when it was unanimously agreed that the Church and Mission House property should be vested in the Wilts and East Somerset Congregational Union Incorporated. The deeds of the Mission Hall, had in fact been handed over to the Union by Miss Sophia Haywood, the previous owner, some eleven years earlier. For many years there was a Bath Congregational Board on which Bath-easton was represented and at which matters relating to the Congregational Churches in the Bath area were discussed. When the United Reformed Church came into being, Bath-easton was the only church in Bath to remain Congregational.

Returning to more domestic matters we find that the earliest recorded baptism was of James, son of Mr. & Mrs. George Scott of Odd Down, Bath, on 26th. February, 1880. In 1950 the deacons agreed along the lines of Congregational practice that baptisms should take place during a church service. Work among children and young people has always been a part of the church's witness, though numbers have declined over recent years. One early Sunday School Anniversary is described thus - 'The congregations on Sunday were very good and on Monday the children were joined by those of the Wesleyan and Bathford Baptist Schools. A procession was formed, headed by the Union Brass Band with banners, and marched through the village, thence to a field where a very pleasant afternoon was spent.' A few years later the 'Treat and Outing' was to Kingsdown Common when 150 were present. 'An excellent tea (was) provided by the young ladies of the congregation, (the) company of children all sitting on the grass. Some six hours were spent in games and swings and walks, and all reached home safely at 9.30.' Meetings for young people have flourished from time to time, though the suggested content of such a meeting might not appeal to our young people today. The pastor thought that 'if a harmonium could be secured, and singing, readings, recitations with very short addresses be given, it may be of real good.' Older members of the church were, for many years, catered for by a Bible Class and a Prayer Meeting. Today there is a Women's Pleasant Hour, which meets one afternoon a week and provides an opportunity for worship and fellowship among any of the villagers who wish to come. For a time during the 40's and 50's a monthly Social Hour was held after evening worship. A more recent revival is the Harvest Supper; as is also the Carols by Candlelight service just before Christmas. We join with our Methodist friends for worship on Good Friday and Christmas morning. Worship has been the backbone of the church's life and apart from interruption due to war or weather has continued regularly. The worship has been led by the ministers and pastors listed below, but increasingly by lay-preachers whose names would make a list far too long to be given here. Our numbers at present are not very great, but the spirit is, and we trust God to use us and bless us in all that we do in His Name.

#### MINISTERS AND PASTORS

Rev. Robert REW	1868-1881
Rev. B. RHODES	1882-1887
Rev. Mills ROBINSON	1887-1894
Rev. Joseph SMITH	1895-1901

Rev. E. H. CADOUX	1902-1911
Rev. Thomas JOHNSON	1913-1915
(joint with Colerne)	
Rev. W. BROWN-TUCKER	1916-1920
(joint with Larkhall)	
Mr. W. D. PORTER	1923-1935
Mr. J. E. J. KINGSTON	1935-1947
Mr. A. Frank COATES	1947-1953
Mr. Lance EXON	1953-1954
Mr. C. H. B. LONGMAN	1955-1960
Mr. Frank HARPER	1960-

Frank Harper

GUYANA CELEBRATES! (but not without difficulty)

The year 1807 saw the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire (but not the abolition of the slave trade itself for which civilisation had to wait a further 27 years). In the same year, in the colony of British Guiana, a Christian planter of Dutch origin, named Hermanus Post, appalled at the mental and spiritual condition of his slaves, wrote to the London Missionary Society. The following year, Rev. John Wray a Congregationalist arrived with a commission to preach the Gospel and to educate slaves.

The Christian church in the form of the Anglican communion had, of course, had a presence in the Colony for many years but their's were the churches of the white planters and more than one treatise had been written maintaining that the African was little better than the beast of the fields and in no condition to hear, let alone understand, or receive, the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In consequence, John Wray and his successors were subject to considerable opposition from the White Establishment led by successive Governors of the Colony. Nevertheless, they steadfastly continued their work establishing large congregations amongst the slave population, starting the first schools offering education to children of negro origin, and quietly working for the slaves' full emancipation.

In 1823, Rev. John Smith was arrested and tried by court martial for, allegedly, having prior knowledge of a slave rebellion to be led by two of his deacons and failing to pass that information on to the authorities. John Smith was sentenced to death by hanging but the London Missionary Society, hearing of the verdict, petitioned Parliament. The House of Commons decided that John Smith should be returned home to stand a fair trial in British Courts. However, three days before the order reached the Governor of the Colony, John Smith died in a Georgetown Prison.

In the early years, the work depended very heavily upon the missionaries sent out by the L.M.S. but as the years went by, the local churches produced their own leaders and in 1883, on the recommendation of the L.M.S., the Guyana Congregational Union was formed. Subsequently, the London Liaison with the



Union was taken over by the Colonial (later Commonwealth) Missionary Society which body, along with the L.M.S., finally merged into the Council for World Mission.

1983, therefore, saw the celebration both of the 175th anniversary of the arrival of the first missionary in British Guiana and the centenary of the formation of the Guyana Congregational Union. The planned programme nearly had to be abandoned owing to one of Guyana's periodical petrol shortages which had motorists queuing up to five hours to secure a gallon of petrol! If the people in the local churches were not to be disappointed, then the petrol had to be found somehow - and it was!

Highlights of the celebrations were two public meetings - one addressed by the Prime Minister, Dr. P.A. Reid; two great services in the Smith Memorial Church, Georgetown, and in the Mission Chapel, New Amsterdam; processions to the Tombs of Hermanus Post and John Wray; and a "whistle-stop" tour of some 30 churches in just two and a half days.

Overseas visitors included representatives of the International Congregational Fellowship (in the person of myself), the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Council for World Mission and the United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman. Leadership came from the indefatigable Rev. Una Matthews, widow of Rev. Pat Matthews - a former Personal Member of the Federation. There were many difficulties to be overcome. Shortages arising from the country's difficult economic position, include not only petrol but also imported foodstuffs, piped water and electric power. The party travelled fourteen hours a day, crossing two mighty rivers - the Demerara River (by floating bridge) in one direction and the Berbice (by ferry boat) in the other. At each of the little churches we visited, there was a loyal band of worshippers waiting to greet us with simple refreshments and fervent singing and praying. One of us overseas visitors would deliver a brief message, Una Matthews would say a word of encouragement and then we were on our way perhaps 30 miles to the next stop. But the joy of the local congregations at receiving their Union's guests and of being able to participate in the Centenary celebrations was very evident. As our programme inevitably got further and further behind schedule, the longer these folk had to wait in patient expectation; but wait they did; and the delight at our coming, and the enthusiasm with which they celebrated, was evidence that all had been worthwhile.

The 200-strong party who gathered round the tomb of John Wray, the first missionary, were forced to flee when attacked by a swarm of wild bees of a strain known to kill cattle and to pursue their victims for up to three miles. Some worshippers were badly stung - one disabled woman, unable to escape, subsequently spent a week in hospital; others regrouped some 200 yards away to continue their act of worship. The officers of the Union and the overseas guests had a fifty minute audience of the Prime Minister and a two hour long conversation with the members of the Guyana Council of Churches.

In the face of limited exports, and hence a shortage of foreign exchange, the policy of the Government is one of self-sufficiency - the country has to learn to live on what it produces. The Council of Churches was concerned about the malnutrition evident amongst children and deprivation suffered by pregnant and nursing mothers. The Government has been reluctant to agree to overseas aid which they view as a sign to the world of their evident failure to meet the needs of their people. However, they would agree to one shipment, provided they had a 'major share' in its distribution. The Council hesitates, wondering just what this would mean. As it is, a consignment of duplicating paper donated by the Jamaican churches remains on the quayside at Georgetown because the Government insists that all paper arriving in the country from whatever source must be distributed according to their priorities.

So Guyana's Congregationalists share with the other Christian churches the problems of maintaining the witness of the Gospel to a people already feeling the effects of deprivation. But they have special difficulties in that the Union has an acute shortage of full-time ministers. Understandably, they feel that their people should be led, if not by Guyanans, at least by trained ministers from the Caribbean community, but in recent years not many have answered this particular call. Our own Ruby Prasad - who is of course Guyanese - is hoping to offer for service with the Guyana Congregational Union when she returns home towards the end of 1984.

The word "Guyana" means 'Land of Many Waters'. It is the land of three great rivers - the Demerara, the Essequibo and the Berbice. The terrain falls into three parts: the Highlands, virtually impenetrable and little populated, the Savannah grasslands and the coastal plain on which 80% of the people live. 52% of the people are of Indian origin, 45% African, with the remainder Chinese, British, Portuguese and Ameri-Indians (the original inhabitants of the country). The Africans' forebears were brought as slaves, the Indians and Chinese came as indentured labourers, whilst the Portuguese infiltrated over the border from Venezuela. Over 50% are nominally Christian, although a much smaller percentage are church-attenders, 30% are Hindu and 9% Moslem. The Constitution guarantees not only the freedom of religion, but also the right to evangelise. However, as indicated by the Council of Churches, the Christian Church faces considerable difficulties in its relations with the Leninist-Marxist government.

Thus we have in the Guyana Congregational Union, a grouping which originated as gathered churches of slaves who had responded to the Gospel and today continues as gathered churches of the ordinary working folk of this independent nation. They are churches that are very aware of their Congregational heritage and are determined to continue to stay within that tradition. They ask for our prayers and for our continued support through C.W.M. and the International Congregational Fellowship.

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David Watson  
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FROM OUR CONTEMPORARIES

THE UNITARIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society Vol. XVIII No. 1. April 1983. This edition contains articles on Joseph Priestley: Priestley and Wales by D. Elwyn J. Davies; Priestley and the Gentleman's Magazine by Alan Ruston; The Enigma of the Priestley Memorial Tablet by H. J. McLachlan; A Brief Account of the Life and Ministry of William Turner of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne by Helen M. Nicholson; West Ham Lane Unitarian Christian Church, Stratford (1857-1891) by R. E. Goddard; Further additions and corrections to the Location List of Records of Unitarian Congregations in Great Britain; The New Meeting Society's Reaction to Priestley's Death plus reviews.

THE BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Baptist Quarterly, Vol. XXX No. 1. January 1983. This edition contains articles on Robert Browne and Education by H. Foreman; A Section of News and Notes; How Far ought the Church be politicised by P. H. Ballard; Baptists and Independents in Olney to the time of John Newton by G. F. Nuttall; In the Study and some accounts of local church history books.

The Baptist Quarterly, Vol. XXX No. 2. April 1983. This edition contains articles on Seventy-Five Years of Service-The story of the Baptist Historical Society by Thornton Elwyn; Victorian Sunday Schools in Birmingham by Christopher James; The Work of the Hertfordshire Baptist Union by David Watts; and God and History by Paul S. Fiddes as well as In the Study and notes on the archives of the Devonshire Square Particular Baptist Church and its amalgamated churches now deposited at the Guildhall Library, Aldermanbury, London EC2P 2EJ.

Although a little late we congratulate the Baptist Historical Society on reaching its seventy-fifth anniversary and trust that it will continue to flourish.

The Baptist Quarterly, Vol. XXX No. 3. July 1983. This edition contains articles on The World Council of Churches: a worm's eye view by D. S. Russell; Some Seventeenth Century Baptist Educational Textbooks by H. Foreman; The Industrial Revolution: Effects upon the Baptist Community in Barnoldswick and the resulting "split" in the Baptist Church by Keith G. Jones plus a tribute to Mr. Alan Calder and an interesting note on the opening of the London Mennonite Centre.

The Baptist Quarterly, Vol. XXX No. 4. October 1983. This edition contains articles on The Teaching of Martin Luther by A. G. Dickens; Luther and Anabaptists by John S. Oyer; Bridges which are not too short: Baptists and Lutherans in the German Democratic Republic by Jorg Swoboda and Lutheran Bonhoeffer and the Guilty Nation by K. W. Clements.

The Baptist Quarterly, Vol. XXX No. 5. January 1984. This edition contains articles on The place of the Resurrected Christ in the

Writings of John Smyth by Douglas Shantz; Steam Leads the Way: The Story of Thomas Newcomen by D.A. Richards; Bloomsbury Chapel and the Mercantile Morality: the case of Sir Morton Brian and Faith Bowers; Isaac Backus and the English Baptist Tradition by Stanley J. Grenz; In the Study and notes on the records of Asterby and Donnington-on-Bain Baptist Churches.

#### THE WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Proceedings of Vol. XLIII Part 5 September 1982 contains articles on "Methodist Union" by John C. Bowmer; Robert Featherstone Wearmouth (1882-1963): Methodist Historian by J. Munsey Turner; Sir Isaac Holden Bart. (1807-97): His place in the Wesleyan Connexion by Elizabeth Jennings; Scottish Methodism in the Early Victorian period by A.N. Cass and details of the Annual Meeting and Lecture of the Society held at Wesley Chapel, Saltash, Cornwall.

Proceedings of Vol. XLIII Part 6 (i) December 1982 contains articles on The Mantle of Elijah: Nineteenth Century Primitive Methodism and Twentieth Century Pentecostalism by John E. Minor; Sir Isaac Holden, Bart. (1807-97): His place in the Wesleyan Connexion (continued) by Elizabeth Jennings, Down Lambeth Way by Leslie G. Farmer and A Canadian Bible Christian Service-Book by John C. Bowmer.

Proceedings of Vol. XLIII Part 6(ii) contains articles on William Griffiths (1806-83) The Hercules of the Reform Movement by David A. Barton; Primitive Wesleyan Methodism: Some further aspects by Norman W. Taggart; A Psychological Study of John Wesley by Richard P. Heitzenrater; Book Notices as well as a very comprehensive index for the volume.

Proceedings of Vol. XLIV Part 1 May 1983 contains an interesting article on 'Joyful News' (1883-1963) the first Methodist newspaper and a Bibliography of Methodist Historical Literature, 1981.

#### THE STRICT BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Annual Report and Bulletin No. 10. This edition contains an article on 'Seeking the Good of the Church' about the Northamptonshire Baptist Association; A Letter to the Northamptonshire Baptist Association from the Church at Carlton and The Church Covenant of the Baptised Congregation meeting at Olney, Buckinghamshire.

#### THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY

An index to Volume 2 of the Journal 1978-1982 gives a comprehensive list of the many subjects covered in this period.

Vol. 3. No. 1 May 1983 of the Journal of, contains articles on The Congregational Ministry in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century a preliminary Survey by Kenneth D. Brown, M.A., Ph.D.; A Nestor of Nonconformist Heretics: A.J. Scott (1805-1866) by Phillip Newell, B.A., B.D., Ph.D. and a tribute to Erik R. Routley, 31st October 1917-8th October 1982 by T. Caryl Micklem, M.A.

Vol. 3. No. 2. October 1983 of the Journal of, contains articles on British Evangelism and Hungary, 1800-1852 by John V. Eibner; A Letter from China: May 1938 by F.G. Healey, M.A.; and a review article on

Thomas Chalmers by R.Buick Knox,M.A.,Ph.D.,D.D..

THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON'S CONNEXION AND SIERRA LEONE MISSION

'Voice' Issue No.282 January-March 1983 contains news of many of the Churches of the Connexion in England and Sierra Leone as well as details of a Service of Thanksgiving arranged by the Connexions Trustees for the long years of service rendered by Quinton and Doris DeAth.

'Voice' Issue No.283 April-June 1983 contains many of the Churches of the Connexion and also a brief resume of the Incoming President-1983/84 of the Connexion the Rev.Kenneth J.Green.

'Voice' Issue No.284 July-September 1983 gives details of the death and funeral at Turners Hill,Sussex of Mr.Quinton DeAth;of the various churches of the Connexion and a report on the Youth Conference 1983 held at Hailsham in Sussex.

'Voice' Issue No.285 October-December 1983 contains news of Sierra Leone as well of the Connexion Churches in England.

THE UNION OF WELSH INDEPENDENTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

'Y Cofiadur' - May 1983. Y.Cofiadur Journal of the Union of Welsh Independents Historical Society Issue No.48 (see Editorial column for details).



To mark the 200th anniversary of his death I include this copy of the print preserved at Swan Hill. The name of engraver is now shown but the following is a note from a Volume of Letters to a Young Clergyman Volume II, in letter from Rev. Dr. James Stonhouse to the Rev. Thomas Stedman, letter 14, P124. "I wrote very pressingly to Mr. Orton to sit to Russell for his picture." His answer was "You talk of my picture: Russell would have ten guineas for taking it: which would help ten or twenty poor families and the cui bono (ei, who will benefit) always sounds in my ears when I think of it. So there is an end of that". Job Orton died on the 19th July 1783 and was buried in Old St Chads, Shrewsbury. For an account of Orton see D.N.B. and my article in this series No. 4 May 1980. pp6-12. For John Russell 1745-1806 see D.N.B. Popular Portrait painter. Selina the Countess of Huntington, George Whitfield, John Wesley and many others sat for him. Had 332 exhibitions and painted 700-800 portraits.

### The Congregational History Circle

The Circle was founded in 1978 to encourage an interest in all forms of Congregational History. It holds an Annual General Meeting in May every year and these meetings are generally held in different parts of the country. Plans are in hand to link a study weekend to this each year and we are actively working on plans to regionalise our activities. We are steadily building up our archives with material being received from a number of countries of the world. We are actively represented and involved with the International Congregational Fellowship Conference which was held at Bangor, North Wales in July 1981 and which will be held in 1985 near Boston in the U.S.A. We have fought to keep the Memorial Hall and the associated Congregational Library in London and in this we have achieved an acceptable compromise. The Congregational History Circle is accepted by all three branches of the Continuing Congregational Churches and two of these are represented on its committee. Circle Members receive a magazine in May and December each year. The Annual subscription for 1984 will be for U.K. Members £1.50 and for Overseas Members £2.00 Subscriptions are due on January 1st each year.

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### THE CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY CIRCLE MAGAZINE

Editor: Rev. Trevor Watts, 16 Shelton Road, Shrewsbury, Salop.  
Backnumbers (Issues of Editions 1-11 available) contact the Secretary.

Published twice yearly by the Congregational History Circle to record the History of all branches of Congregationalism at Home and Abroad. Our intention is to produce a balanced, informative and interesting publication and the Editor welcomes original articles, drawings, and photographs for possible publication. Articles should preferably be typed. The editor appreciates a stamped addressed envelope if a reply is required. A complete range of back numbers is available from the Secretary of the Congregational History Circle if required.

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