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**THE  
CONGREGATIONAL  
HISTORY  
SOCIETY  
MAGAZINE**

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**Volume 6 No 2 Autumn 2010**

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## EDITORIAL

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Readers of these pages will not be surprised to discover William McNaughton's name, among our contributors. His industry and interest in matters of Scottish Congregational history are second to none. Given that in 2012 we shall hear much of the 350th anniversary of the ejections of 1662, it seemed right to give some space this year to the impact of the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 on the churches.

Jonathan Morgan's paper is a report of a conference which he attended recently. Sadly on the day after that report was received by the editor, Jonathan suffered a very severe set of injuries in a road accident in east London. He died eleven days later on 30 October 2010, one day after his 67th birthday, in the intensive care unit of the Royal London Hospital and so his paper is the last he will write for the CHS. Jonathan's contribution to the development of this magazine has been of great importance, if largely unsung. He will be missed—at Dr Williams's Library where he was the archivist, at his Gospel Standard Strict Baptist chapel in Rye, East Sussex, at the many historical conferences which he attended in this country and throughout Europe, and by his many friends in this society and beyond. The book reviews in this number of our magazine are the result of his initiative. All future enquiries relating to book reviews should for the time being be sent to the editor.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

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### **The Methodist Heritage**

Some of our readers and CHS members may have seen that The Methodist Church has recently produced a handsome, beautifully illustrated 77 page handbook, entitled *Methodist Heritage Handbook 2010*. Not only is this guide impressive, if not quite exhaustive, it is free of charge! As a Baptist friend has wondered, in a rhetorical question which perhaps expected the answer "No", "Would it be possible to produce such a guide for other Dissenters?"

The Methodist handbook's subtitle makes clear that it aims to provide "Information for visitors to historic Methodist places in Britain". This does not mean that only Methodist chapels are included. Under London, for instance, is found The Museum of London, Samuel Annesley's house (Annesley was the father of Susannah Wesley, the very capable mother of John and Charles Wesley), several parish churches in the City of London with strong Methodist links,

Charterhouse where John Wesley went to school, the National Portrait Gallery, and Westminster Abbey, as well as Bunhill Fields Burial Ground, Wesley's Chapel, in City Road and other more familiar sites of importance to Methodists and others, among them Congregationalists.

To counter any false impression that I may have so far given, this handbook is not anchored in London. Rather it ranges wide across the United Kingdom, although Ireland, both north and south, is omitted. In south west England, among other places of interest, the visitor is encouraged to visit Charles Wesley's Georgian townhouse in Bristol, Hanham Mount (where John Wesley and George Whitefield preached), Billy Bray's 'Three Eyes' Kerley Downs Chapel, at Baldhu, in Cornwall, and the famous Gwennap Pit. In central England Forge Mill Farm and Oak House Museum, both in West Bromwich, are listed, as is Bishop Asbury Cottage, in Sandwell (Francis Asbury was the founding father of Methodism in America). Weardale Museum, Bishop Auckland, in north east England is listed, with High House Chapel, physically located next to the museum. In the north west, the non-Wesleyan traditions are recalled at Englesea Brook Museum of Primitive Methodism, near Crewe, and the Independent Methodist churches at their Resource Centre, at Pemberton, Wigan. Wales includes both the Howell Harris Museum, at Coleg Trefeca, alongside several churches and chapels, but Scotland disappointingly has only three sites listed—Nicolson Square Methodist Church, Edinburgh, Arbroath Octagonal Chapel, and Dunbar Methodist Church.

Although I am sure that Methodists in different parts of the country will wonder why some of their favourites have been omitted, indeed Scots readers may especially feel hard done by, the handbook will nevertheless prove a boon to casual and committed visitors alike, that is all those wishing to explore the rich Methodist heritage of Britain. Yet to respond to my Baptist friend's question, I do believe that it would be a benefit to Congregationalists and other Christians for a similar guide, of sites linked to Old Dissent, to be compiled. From the top of my head, I should list Norwich Old Meeting, Bunyan Meeting, Bedford, Gainsborough Old Hall, the Savoy in London, and Milton's Cottage, Chalfont St Giles. Having recently visited it, I should definitely include the early twentieth century Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church (founded in 1910 as a 'union' church of Baptists and Congregationalists). What would you include? Send in your nominations.

I might not know whether I should include the recently closed United Reformed Church (formerly Congregational) at Ravenstonedale, so closely associated with Philip, the 'good Lord Wharton', famous for the distribution of bibles, and, in the twentieth century, with Bernard Lord Manning and his family. There the graveyard alone is of interest. Again I should want to include favourite Quaker sites, like Jordans and the Mayflower Barn, and the meeting house at Brigflatts, outside Sedbergh, also in Cumbria, linked to George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, and to the twentieth century poet, Basil Bunting, but a strong

case could be made for the Friends to have a separate handbook (and they are good at providing such guides to sites of Quaker interest).

These handbooks have obvious educational benefits, passing knowledge onto children and adults, loyal adherents and outsiders, in the least formal and most easily absorbed of ways. None of us, however seemingly well versed, knows all the places associated with our traditions, as well as we might. Of course, if such a project were to go ahead, then it would probably need a co-ordinator, backed by a committee of regional consultants/correspondents. Are there any volunteers?

## **The Congregational Lecture**

Prof. John H Y Briggs is to give the Congregational Lecture at Dr Williams's Library, 14 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0AR, on Thursday, 18th November 2010. He is to speak on the subject Baptist/Congregational Relationships in the Twentieth Century. The Friends of the Congregational Library will hold their annual general meeting at 4.30 pm, followed by tea at 5 pm. The lecture itself is due to begin at 5.30 pm. All are welcome.

The 2011 lecture is to be given by Revd Dr Janet Wootton who will speak on a subject related to hymns.

## **1662 Commemorations**

In 2012 a number of events are expected across the country to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the ejections of English and Welsh Nonconformists in 1662. The modern day descendants of these Nonconformists are to be found in the United Reformed Church, the Union of Welsh Independents, the Congregational Federation, the Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches, Baptist churches, Unitarian churches and in the Society of Friends. Their impact on society in this land and also in America has been of incalculable significance. You and your own church—which may boast a 1662, or earlier, foundation—may already be committed to involvement in such commemorations but, if not, I urge you to support these ventures, local and national, and to mark the anniversary in some way.

## **The John Bunyan Museum**

We congratulate the John Bunyan Museum and Library, housed in rooms adjoining Bunyan Meeting, Bedford, on its receiving a renewal of its official accreditation from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. Accreditation by the MLA means that the Bunyan Museum has attained the nationally agreed standards set by the MLA for all UK museums. This is a significant achievement for a museum which is staffed entirely by volunteers, as Sir Andrew Motion, the former poet laureate and chair of the MLA, recognised.

## CORRESPONDENCE TO THE EDITOR

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Sir —

Your readers may remember an article on the Surman Online Index in your Autumn 2009 issue. I wonder if they are aware that the Congregational Library's copy of the Index—the one which Charles Surman worked on and was adding to up to the time of his death—is now in the Congregational History Society's Library in Bunyan Meeting, Bedford. We have reason to believe that this may be the most complete version: there is a note by Charles Surman written in 1962 stating that at least one of the sections "... is considerably more complete than the comparable one at Dr Williams's Library, which was typed some five years ago when the copying of that series was begun". For example, your correspondent in the same issue of the CHS Magazine points out the omission of an entry for James Baldwin Brown and some problem with the card in Dr Williams's Library. We have in Bedford Surman's original card with full biographical details, including references, for Baldwin Brown.

On my "to do" list I have:

- a) checking our cards against the cards in Dr Williams's Library,
- b) checking the Online Index against the cards,
- c) bringing it up to date (it has not been materially added to since the 1980s).

Yet these are obviously tasks for the future. In the meantime, should anyone be unsure of any biographical information, if they contact me on pathurry@fsmail.net or 01234 212478, I shall be happy to check it against the cards here.

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*Patricia Hurry*  
*Librarian & Research Secretary, Congregational History Society*

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# 1660–2010: THE RESTORATION OF 1660 AND THE CHURCHES

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## The Restoration

The return of King Charles II from exile in 1660 was greeted with widespread celebration. Maypoles were erected on village greens, after years of disapproval, loyal toasts were proposed and immoderate amounts of alcohol were quaffed, followed by predictable drunken misconduct, especially on the route taken by Charles from Dover to Whitehall. The king's entourage consisted of some 20,000 men on horse and foot, while the streets along the way were "straw'd with flowers" and hung with tapestries. At Blackheath perhaps 120,000 men, women and children assembled "to see his Majestie's princely march towards London". When he arrived in the City, Charles was met by 12 Presbyterian ministers in Genevan gowns who presented him with a Bible, to which the king responded that it would be the rule of his life. The noise was deafening; "trumpets sounded from the windows and balconies" and, one observer stated, that there was "such shouting as the oldest man alive never heard the like". The royal party, "a gorgeous procession of soldiers, militiamen and gentry", took seven hours in all to pass through the City and the day's festivities ended with the burning of effigies of Oliver Cromwell and his wife at Westminster. London remained in festival for three days after the king's entry while the merry-making in Norwich, a town once noted for its radical religion and its opposition to the court, lasted for almost a week. Even in Boston, Lincolnshire, also with a fine Puritan tradition, the young men took down the State's coat of arms, dragged it through the streets, had the beadles whip it, and then defaced it with human excrement, before tossing it onto the bonfire.<sup>1</sup> While the Stuarts were lauded, in contrast Cromwell and his friends were derided. The Restoration of the Stuart monarchy represented the triumph of the Royalist party, at long last, over its enemies, namely those who had fought and won the civil war, and in particular the smaller more radical group who had executed Charles I, and who had wielded power during the inter-regnum of the 1650s. Oliver Cromwell's death on 3 September, 1658 had brought nearer to its end the attempt to bring about an ideal state in which a form of Puritan Christianity was promoted. Yet this experiment had signally failed to find a broad

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<sup>1</sup> R Hutton *The Restoration. A Political and Religious History of England and Wales 1658–1667* (Oxford 1985) 125–6, T Harris *Restoration. Charles II and his Kingdoms, 1660–1685* (2005) 1–5, 44, R W Dale *History of English Congregationalism* (1907) 355.



basis of support and, with Oliver's death, the group who had ruled with him gradually fell apart. Richard Cromwell, Oliver's son and successor as Protector, indicated that he would favour Presbyterians rather than Independents with the replacing of John Owen as vice-chancellor of Oxford University, on 9 October 1658, by the Presbyterian John Conant. The divisions between Independents (or Congregationalists, the terms were used more or less as synonyms) and Presbyterians grew wider and the Independents themselves could not agree in their attitudes toward Richard's government. The collapse of Richard's short lived Protectorate was evident in April and May, and he abdicated on May 25, 1659. Richard Baxter was to maintain that the responsibility for undermining Richard Cromwell lay with "Dr Owen and his assistants".<sup>2</sup>

### The Situation in late 1659

In August 1659 Sir George Booth, a Presbyterian (the term Presbyterian in popular usage meant one ready to accept a modified and reduced episcopacy and politically favouring the king's return), led an armed uprising which was put down at Winwick Bridge, Cheshire, by the parliamentary forces, commanded by John Lambert who then proceeded to recapture Chester and Chirk Castle. The Congregational churches of London had raised three regiments for the army and the leading Congregational minister, John Owen, so prominent at the Savoy conference a year earlier, had raised a troop of cavalry in Oxford to defend the university. Lambert's victory rendered him a hero to the Congregationalists, to Quakers, and to many in the sects but not to the majority in the country. In London again, Lambert's obvious ambition led to conflict with many MPs who feared his growing power.

In this situation Parliament, long keen to assert its control over the army, in October 1659 cashiered certain prominent commanders, including Lambert, who responded by marching on Westminster and posting his troops to prevent MPs from taking their seats. The army seemed to be imposing its will on the country which proved the spur for General George Monck (1608–70) to march his troops south from Scotland, for he was appalled at the prospect of military rule. At this point the London Congregationalists, guided by Owen, sent a petition to Monck on 31 October, requesting him to receive Lieutenant General Whalley, Major General Goffe, both members of gathered churches and both regicides (having signed Charles I's death warrant), and the ministers, Joseph Caryl and Matthew Barker, to discuss the situation. They met Monck at Holyrood and begged him not to intervene and thus to preserve the unity of the Puritans. Monck justified his intervention, by stating that it was not he but Lambert and his allies who threatened stability, and that he could not stand by

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<sup>2</sup> M Sylvester *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (1696) I, 101. For Owen see ODNB.

while “a few ambitious persons” enslaved the laws and consciences of the people. In essence Monck believed, unlike Lambert, that the army must be subject to the civil power.

In late December 1659 Monck again replied to the Congregational pastors of the City. Unlike them, he was unconvinced by the protestations of the army in England that it would convene a parliament. If its leaders were sincere, he argued, then why did they not permit the present parliament to sit?<sup>3</sup> As Monck advanced south, Lambert’s forces began to disintegrate and large sections of the army in England, including the troops in London, sided with Monck in declaring for parliament. The country as a whole wanted order.

Although the majority supported Monck’s desire to restore the monarchy, others, like the London Congregationalists, were unwilling to forego their religious freedoms while some, like Lambert, resisted the handing back of military and political authority to the country’s traditional rulers—the king, the Anglican bishops and priests, and the gentry. Yet these differing radicals lacked a common cause and a leader to unite them.<sup>4</sup> In contrast Charles II’s restoration occurred at least in part because moderate Puritans, who had opposed Charles I in the 1640s but had consistently refused to support his trial and execution, had joined the Royalists in calling for his son’s return. This return had become possible because Monck had responded to popular pressure by marching his soldiers south from Scotland, and by restoring order.

## In London

The army from Scotland entered London on 3 February, 1660, and there Monck readmitted those MPs purged from parliament in 1648, on condition that they call a general election. Finding support among the City Presbyterians who were in the ascendant at this time, he asked Parliament to support a Presbyterian church settlement, at least temporarily, which would grant toleration to separatist churches, so as to assuage the radicals.

Meanwhile Lambert, who had earlier been detained, escaped from the Tower of London in April 1660 and attempted to rally his supporters at Edgehill. Only four troops of horse gathered and in late April he and his small company surrendered to the parliamentary forces near Daventry, without firing a shot. As Tudur Jones wrote, “It was a pathetic end to the political power of the Independents”. He judged John Owen’s behaviour, and that of “his friends both ministers and laymen”, in these months, to have been “inexcusable”, for they had placed their own political advantage before the interests of the nation. Indeed

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<sup>3</sup> R T Jones *Congregationalism in England 1662–1962* (1963) 44, R Hutton op cit 24. For Whalley, Goffe, Caryl and Barker see *ODNB*.

<sup>4</sup> R L Greaves *Deliver Us From Evil. The Radical Underground in Britain, 1660–1663* (Oxford 1986) 3. For Lambert see *ODNB*.

their conduct in 1659 suggested that they had “lost all contact with public opinion and put their trust in men who had become drunk with military power”. To seek to preserve “the power of the Independents under the shadow of military despotism” could not be justified.<sup>5</sup>

Following the election, and in line with Monck’s wishes, both houses of the newly returned Convention Parliament on 1 May voted for the restoration of the monarchy, leading to Charles’s landing at Dover 24 days later and his entry into London on his thirtieth birthday, 29 May. Monck’s policy throughout had been to bring order to the country by persuading the moderates on all sides to unite behind him.<sup>6</sup>

However the Convention Parliament of 1660, although containing many Presbyterian sympathisers (broadly supporting the king but wanting limits on the powers of king and bishops), and even more so the Cavalier Parliament which followed it in 1661, did not favour Monck’s preferred moderation and conciliation. He would probably have opted for a compromise settlement of the Church of England which would have accommodated both Presbyterians and episcopalians, as is suggested by his participating in the Worcester House conference of October 1660 which, as an interim measure, offered concessions to the Presbyterians. Certainly it was clear to all parties that the overthrow of the old order in church and state, which had occurred during the upheavals of the 1640s and 50s, meant that the restoration of the monarchy must be followed, without much delay, by a settlement of the church.<sup>7</sup>

If then the return of the king ensured the restoration of the bishops, the Church of England would no longer go unchallenged. In 1644 the dissenting brethren at the Westminster Assembly had questioned the consensus of coercing all to conform to the established Church. That challenge did not vanish with the Restoration but would continue because England had become “a remarkably pluralistic religious culture”.<sup>8</sup>

## Charles II and Tender Consciences

In a declaration issued at Breda, in the Netherlands, on 4 April, 1660, Charles had offered an olive branch to those smarting from wounds inflicted by the civil wars. He had extended “a free and general Pardon” to supporters of the English Republic of the 1650s (apart from those later specifically named by Parliament as deserving punishment) and also “a Liberty to tender Consciences”, so that none should be “disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matters of religion” which did not disturb the peace of the kingdom. Religious

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<sup>5</sup> Jones op cit 45.

<sup>6</sup> For Monck see *ODNB*.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>8</sup> J Coffey *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England 1558–1689* (2000) 160.

toleration, probably “the most explosive issue”, was then promised to “all peaceful Christians” with the expectation that Parliament would confirm it “after mature deliberation”.

Yet, although the majority favoured his restoration as the only viable way out of the threatening anarchy, when Charles II landed at Dover he inherited a troubled “legacy of political and religious division” and his undoubted popularity could not, of itself, lead to reconciliation. The declaration issued from Breda was Charles’ attempt to be “all things to all men”.<sup>9</sup> Tact and political acumen of a high order were needed to unite the country.

### **Anti-Stuart Feeling**

Allowing for the general welcome given to the Restoration, some radical diehards still breathed fire against the returned king. Cuthbert Studholme of Carlisle set out for London, declaring his intent to run through Charles Stuart with his sword at his earliest opportunity. He was arrested in June 1660. A former Commonwealth justice of the peace, Thomas Baskerville of Eardisley, in Herefordshire, listed the names of those who lit bonfires to greet the king’s return and threatened them with punishment. In Westminster in May 1660 Edward and Alice Jones, a shoemaker and his wife, accepted that it was Charles’s “time now to raigne” but maintained that “it was upon sufferance for a little time, and it would be theirs agine before itt be long”. Others in London, probably disaffected soldiers, boasted that, given the chance, they would use their weapons on the king. The Puritan preacher, John Botts, foresaw, in a sermon at Darfield church, in Yorkshire, on 13 May, that Charles “would bring in superstition and Popery” and he encouraged his hearers to “feare the King of heaven and worship Him, and bee not so desirous of an earthly King, which will tend to the imbroileing of us againe in blood”. Numerous plots against the king were reported in the first years of the new regime but few of these amounted to more than boasting and hot air. In effect the republican cause died in 1660.<sup>10</sup>

However the government remained fearful that supporters of the former Cromwellian structures might mount an armed uprising and this fear informed its attitude towards religious nonconformity, because most political radicals were nonconformists. Indeed many wanted greater religious liberty, even if they did so whilst accepting the monarchy as the best means of governing the country then.

### **Ecclesiastical Affairs**

The king’s chief minister, Sir Edward Hyde (1609–74), from 1661 the Earl of Clarendon, aimed to re-establish the Church of England and its bishops.

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<sup>9</sup> Harris op cit 44–5, Hutton op cit 108.

<sup>10</sup> Harris, *ibid* 48–9, Greaves op cit 24.

However he believed that the king needed to retain the confidence of Presbyterians in the Convention Parliament at this early stage in his reign. This led to Hyde's deferring a final decision on the Church. In the interim Charles II appointed some ten or twelve eminent Presbyterian ministers to be among his royal chaplains, including Edmund Calamy, Simeon Ashe, William Spurstow, Edward Reynolds, William Bates and Richard Baxter, the last of whom properly speaking was not a Presbyterian (he called himself a "meer Catholic", a position which many in the country would probably have settled for) but joined with them in favouring moderate reforms of the Church of England.<sup>11</sup>

In June 1660 the new chaplains were presented to the king and, on that occasion, with others of that number, Baxter gave a long speech, in which he stated that, although he had opposed Cromwell, he had to acknowledge that Oliver had sought to place godly ministers in parish livings. He prayed that the king would do the same. Probably irritated by the tedium of such orations, Charles yet replied graciously that he was pleased that the ministers hoped for reconciliation with the episcopalian clergy. He expected concessions to be made on both sides. At this Ashe, overcome with emotion, burst into tears of joy. However Baxter the realist later noted that only four of these chaplains were asked to preach at court and none of the four preached a second time. He continued, "I suppose never a man of them all ever received or expected a penny for the salary of their places".<sup>12</sup>

## Moderate Proposals

In response to the king's request, the Presbyterian chaplains drew up a set of proposals for a scheme of church government. These were at one with traditional Puritan demands and were, in R W Dale's judgment, "moderate and conciliatory".<sup>13</sup> Seeking to encourage godliness, they wanted a "learned, orthodox, and godly" minister resident in every parish, none to be admitted to the Lord's Supper without a competent understanding of the Christian faith, and only after having made a profession of that faith, and measures taken to ensure the Lord's Day remained holy. They were ready to accept the form of modified episcopacy, outlined by Archbishop Ussher in 1640–41, and also the lawfulness of a printed liturgy, provided it was not rigorously enforced and made due allowance for the use of extempore prayers by clergy. They hoped for a new prayer book or, at least, a revision of the existing one.

In addition, they were critical of what they called "ceremonies", and objected to kneeling at the Lord's Supper and the keeping of holy days—which they saw

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<sup>11</sup> M Sylvester *Reliquae Baxterianae* (1696) i, (2), 88.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid* i, 88–91.

<sup>13</sup> R W Dale *op cit* 394.

as of human institution. They wanted bowing at the name of Jesus, the use of the cross in baptism, and the wearing of the surplice to be abolished. They felt that the erection of altars and bowing towards them were unwarrantable innovations. The issue for these moderate Puritans and others was that, although the sign of the cross in baptism may appear relatively insignificant, ordinary folk may easily come to believe that the sign was necessary to the efficacy of the sacrament, and that it had some real but mysterious effect (such as driving away evil spirits). Such practices, the ministers maintained, encouraged superstition and these Restoration Presbyterians, like others before and after, believed that the Church should regard superstition with dismay. Unwilling to compromise, the bishops refused even to meet these chaplains. Rather they defended the surplice, the sign of the cross in baptism, and bowing at the name of Jesus.<sup>14</sup>

### **The Worcester House Conference**

Charles II and Hyde, following the interviews with leading Presbyterians, resolved to settle some issues and confirmed existing incumbents in their parishes in September. The Presbyterians still hoped for a moderate episcopacy, encouraged by sympathizers in Parliament and by the conference at Worcester House, Hyde's London residence, of 22–25 October. The declaration arising from the conference was seen as a temporary expedient until a more complete settlement could be agreed.

At Worcester House, once the declaration had been dealt with, Hyde stated that the king had been petitioned also by “the Independents and Anabaptists” and Hyde then read a paper to the clergy and others assembled there. He read, as an addition to the declaration, that “others also be permitted to meet for Religious Worship, so be it, they do it not to the disturbance of the Peace: and that no Justice of [the] Peace or Officer disturb them”. The immediate response was silence from all parties present and, Baxter wrote, the Presbyterians all perceived that, although it gave leeway to the Independents, it would also “secure the liberty of the Papists”. Eventually Baxter broke the silence, which he felt might be taken for consent, if it were prolonged. He stated that the Royalist Dr Peter Gunning (1614–84), who was also present, had himself spoken against the sects, explicitly mentioning “the Papists and the Socinians” and Baxter continued, “For our parts, we desired not favour to ourselves alone, and rigorous Severity we desired against none”. He pointed to the distinction between the “tolerable Parties” and the “intolerable” and claimed leniency only for the former.

At the close of the conference, Baxter was dejected, believing that any declaration, likely to emerge from Worcester House, would not be one he could

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid i, (2), 92–3, 96, 100, 242–7, R W Dale *ibid* 393–396.

in conscience endorse. Three days later he bought a copy of the declaration, when it was first issued, and was astonished to discover that most of the Presbyterian demands had been included. He was then convinced that he and his friends would be able to conform to the Church of England, if constituted on the basis of the declaration. The additional clause put forward by Hyde had been excluded from the final draft. Rather the document presented a church broad enough to accommodate those Presbyterians who were willing to accept a modified episcopacy, yet who wanted discipline in the Church and sought an end to the suspect “ceremonies”.<sup>15</sup> Toleration for the Independents and others was not mentioned.

### **The Worcester House Declaration**

The declaration accepted the Presbyterian demand that no one would be compelled to kneel to receive the Lord’s Supper, or bow at the name of Jesus, or make the sign of the cross in baptism. Nor was the wearing of a surplice made compulsory in leading worship in the parishes. A royal commission, to consist of episcopalians and Presbyterians in equal numbers, was to revise the prayer book and make any necessary alterations. Bishops were to ordain and exercise church law, only with the advice and assistance of the presbytery. None might be confirmed without the consent of the minister of the parish where he lived and none were to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper without first making a profession of faith.

Had the Restoration settlement of the Church of England been founded on these principles, the majority of the Presbyterian clergy would have conformed and correspondingly the numbers of Nonconformists would have been greatly reduced. At this juncture Edward Reynolds was offered and accepted the bishopric of Norwich. Baxter himself declined the see of Hereford and Worcester, opting first to wait until the declaration was enacted by parliament. Calamy was offered the see of Lichfield and other preferments were held out to William Bates (who refused the deanery of Lichfield), Thomas Manton and Edward Bowles.<sup>16</sup>

On November 9, Parliament thanked the king for his efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement of the Church and, one week later, the ministers of London presented a loyal address to his majesty. Now, when all seemed set fair, Sir Matthew Hale’s bill in Parliament to turn the Worcester House declaration into law was defeated. This reversal for the Presbyterians may have accorded with the king’s wishes. Certainly Charles II wanted to allow Roman Catholics toleration (given that his mother and wife were Catholics and he had been sheltered by

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<sup>15</sup> Sylvester *ibid* i (2), 110–114. For Gunning see *ODNB*.

<sup>16</sup> A G Matthews *Calamy Revised* (1934) 35–6, 67–8, 338.

Catholics in exile), yet the response by the Presbyterians at Worcester House to the clause, concerning the worship of the Independents, Anabaptists, and by extension Roman Catholics, revealed their unwillingness to allow any toleration which might accommodate Catholicism.<sup>17</sup>

## **Congregational Ministers and the Restoration**

Although many Presbyterians, like Reynolds, hoped to be able to conform to the restored Church of England, few, if any, Congregational ministers expected to do so. Indeed many Congregational leaders in 1660 did not hold a parish living so that, for them, the question of removal did not arise. John Owen, Philip Nye, Samuel Lee, Samuel Eaton, Increase Mather, Jeremiah White and John Collins were all in this category. Two Congregational ministers were ejected from their livings in Ireland.<sup>18</sup> Those who continued to occupy positions in the state Church after the Restoration depended on developments beyond their control.

In general Congregationalists, like Baptists and Quakers, were ready to make their peace with the restored king. They hoped, at best, that parliament would allow them the liberty of conscience which Charles had promised in his declaration from Breda.

## **Loyalist Clergy restored to the Parishes**

One urgent grievance, arising from the confused ecclesiastical situation, was addressed by the Convention Parliament in 1660. The ejected loyalist clergy, following the king's restoration, had demanded and expected to be returned to their parishes. Where possible, they had revived the use of the Book of Common Prayer in public worship. Some 606 petitions were presented by such ousted incumbents desperate to be restored to their former livings. Yet only 14 Congregationalists were caught up in these troubles and, of these, only one refused to vacate his parish. That exception was Isaac Chauncey, who sent a counter-petition to the House of Lords in July 1660, arguing without success against restoring the tithes to the sequestered rector of Woodborough, in Wiltshire.<sup>19</sup>

Some Anglicans indeed had taken the law into their own hands by acting prematurely and forcing their way back, although Charles II condemned and forbade this in a royal proclamation of 29 May, 1660. Others who had not been deprived also had claims, based on their appointments by the legal patrons to the parish livings, but they had been inhibited from taking up their posts during the

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<sup>17</sup> Dale op cit 398–402, Sylvester op cit i (2), 118–127.

<sup>18</sup> Matthews op cit 127–8, 178, 321, 343–4, 376–7, 524–5.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid 112, R T Jones op cit 47.



inter-regnum. In addition, some in this latter group could claim to have been ordained by the bishops in secret.

The Congregationalists who left their parishes after the Restoration did so with resignation and quiet dignity. This is perhaps to be expected of men, like William Bartlet of Bideford, Devon, Thomas Brooks of St Margaret's, New Fish Street, London, and John Durant of Canterbury, who had gathered churches alongside the parishes. This group of Congregational ministers numbered 49 in all, of whom 16 left their parish livings so that the sequestered Anglican could return.<sup>20</sup>

In order to quieten such local disputes for the time being the House of Lords decided, on 22 June 1660, that where the title to a living was unsettled the churchwardens or overseers of the poor (of the parish in question) should retain the tithes, until the matter had been determined finally at law. On 29 December, 1660 the king gave his assent to an Act for Confirming and Restoring of Ministers, which provided for the restoration of sequestered clergy to the livings from which they had been removed during the civil war and inter-regnum. All those presented by the legitimate patrons, but who had been prevented by the Cromwellian authorities from taking possession, were to be admitted to the parishes. Again those presented under the Great Seal between 1 May and 9 September, 1660, and those presented by "noble patrons" were granted admission.<sup>21</sup>

This meant that some ministers, who had 'intruded' in the 1640s and 50s, were removed from the parishes, but all others appointed since January 1642 were confirmed in their livings. The only exceptions to this rule were those clerics who had petitioned for the trial of Charles I, those who had opposed Charles II's restoration, and those who had declared their doctrinal views against the baptism of infants. Therefore the only theological principle involved in this ecclesiastical settlement of 1660, an interim measure, was that Baptists were not to occupy parish pulpits. The local justices of the peace were to enforce this statute.<sup>22</sup>

This decision of parliament ensured that all legal claimants to the parish livings, who had been ousted, sometimes violently, during the civil war and inter-regnum and who were still living, were restored. This required the Puritan clerics, often styled "intruders" on the lists of past incumbents in parish churches today, or omitted altogether from such lists, having to make way for those who had once been silenced. Such parish reinstatements in 1660 could be accompanied by recrimination and bad feeling. As Dale wrote, some "saintly men" had been ejected for their loyalty to the king and the prayer book, in the previous twenty years, but many had been removed for their alleged immorality,

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<sup>20</sup> Matthews op cit 32-3, 79, 173, R T Jones op cit 47-8.

<sup>21</sup> Matthews *ibid* xi.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*.

incompetence and lack of religion. Nevertheless, “good and bad were restored together in 1660”.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the king’s apparent personal inclination to toleration, as evidenced in his Declaration at Breda, any initiative to permit a “liberty for tender consciences”, through their comprehension in a broadly based national Church, or more likely in a toleration of politically inactive sects, was set aside. Many of those gaining power, in 1660, had no mind to tolerate others.

## The Church restored

In December 1660 the Convention Parliament was dissolved and the elections for a new parliament in March and April 1661 swept away Presbyterians from positions of political influence. In October 1660 the first consecration of new bishops had occurred and the hierarchy of the Church of England had begun to be reconstructed. The Laudian character of these bishops reflected more accurately the government’s policy towards the Church than the Worcester House discussions.<sup>24</sup>

The Restoration settlement of the Church was not achieved in 1660. That settlement was more properly the work of the Cavalier parliament and was brought about in 1662. In that year parliament put an end to the century old “Puritan dream of reforming the Church of England from within” which “in effect destroyed Puritanism itself”.<sup>25</sup> However, if 1660 ended with the dissolution of the Convention Parliament, 1661 began with “menacing storm” in London when, on January 6, Thomas Venner, a leading Fifth Monarchist, raised an insurrection of some 50 fanatics against the king. This ineffective rising merely fuelled the government’s fears of all those who stood aside from an episcopal Church and led to repressive measures.

The tiny minority before 1640 which had gathered for worship outside the parish churches had, in the 1640s and 50s, gained confidence and strength. Religious persecution, after 1662, would not eradicate them. The English Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Quakers came to regard the Puritan Revolution of the 1640s and 50s as the period when they grew to maturity. Oliver Cromwell in effect had practised a form of religious toleration which resulted in the undermining of the monopoly of the Church of England.<sup>26</sup> The Nonconformists, like the Jews, had tasted toleration and were here to stay.

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*Alan Argent*

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<sup>23</sup> Dale op cit 403–4.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, J R Jones *Country and Court. England 1658–1714* (1978) 137.

<sup>25</sup> M Watts *The Dissenters* vol 1 (1978) 219.

<sup>26</sup> J Coffey op cit 160.

## HIGHLAND COLLEGE

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In 1937, the *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society* carried a paper by R F G Calder entitled “Robert Haldane’s Theological Seminary”<sup>1</sup> and seventy or so years later this magazine carried another paper concerning the Glasgow Theological Academy, successor to Haldane’s seminary, entitled “The Trials and Tribulations of Establishing a Theological Seminary”.<sup>2</sup> The metamorphose of the Glasgow Theological Academy over the years resulted in the Scottish United Reformed and Congregational College, and in observing the process it is easy to overlook another short lived Congregational educational institution born out of concern for Gaelic speakers, namely the Highland College.



*Sannox Congregational Church, Isle of Arran*

With the death of Alexander McKay<sup>3</sup> in 1856, Sannox Congregational Church was without a stated ministry until the Gaelic speaking John Blacklock,<sup>4</sup> a native of Kingairloch, Argyllshire, and student in the Theological Hall of Congregational Churches in Scotland, was ordained on 11th May, 1860. Blacklock’s ministry was appreciated and in 1865 “A few summer visitors from

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<sup>1</sup> R F G Calder *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society* Vol XIII No 1 (September 1937) 59ff.

<sup>2</sup> W D McNaughton *Congregational History Society Magazine* Vol 5 No 5 (Spring 2009) 289–304.

<sup>3</sup> For Alexander McKay (1780–1856) see W D McNaughton *The Scottish Congregational Ministry 1794–1993* (hereafter *TSCM*) (Glasgow 1993) 92.

<sup>4</sup> For John Blacklock (1821–1885) see *ibid* 14.

Glasgow, profiting greatly from his ministry ... had it impressed on them, that the labours of the young minister, in his itinerating tours to his various preaching stations, would be greatly facilitated and eased by his journey being made on horseback. A subscription was begun. Friends from various parts of the country residing on the island during vacation time generously responded; others spoken to heartily entered into the matter, and soon money enough was collected to purchase a fine young pony and handsome saddle gear, along with nine sovereigns for the pony's keep during the winter".<sup>5</sup>

Blacklock had received tangible evidence of appreciation of his ministry but it did not temper his desire to reach out to others, especially his fellow Gaels. Twenty-four years before, an article entitled "Missions in the Highlands and Islands",<sup>6</sup> stated:

considered in relation to the efforts of other denominations on the same field, we have no reason to be ashamed; but, considered relatively to our advantages and resources, they have not been what they ought to be. The experience of half-a-century should teach many useful practical lessons, and lead to the adoption of many improvements. The freshness of our first zeal has not been sustained, and the amount of our agency has for several years been stationary, and, according to present appearances, likely soon to diminish. Nearly one-half of the annual resources of the Congregational Union are expended upon this most interesting field of labour, and twenty agents are more or less constantly employed. The results have been, in many respects, cheering, and sufficient encouragement afforded to persevere with increased zeal. The amount of visible fruit, however, has not been so great as might be expected; nor does it appear in the *form* which is most likely to be conducive to permanent and increasing results. May not this, in some measure, be owing to the kind of exertion we put forth, as well as to its defective amount? and may we not, from the past, infer the desirableness of some improvement in the direction of our missionary efforts for the future? ... Such, we know, are the views of many of those who walk hundreds and some of them thousands of miles annually, in proclaiming the gospel through our remote glens and mountains.

The writer then proceeded to consider how suitable men might be recruited for service, especially in the light of the fact that "the present labourers in the field are, for the most part, in the decline of life, and others are not coming forward to supply their places"; concluding that, besides "a higher standard of maintenance", there must be a return to a modified form of the plan originally adopted by the churches to secure qualified labourers.

From the present character of our Theological Academy ... it is unsuitable for training up such men as would be willing to consecrate themselves to the service of Christ in the Highlands and Islands. Young men well-versed in their native languages and possessed of natural gifts that would fit them for eminent usefulness

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<sup>5</sup> *Scottish Congregational Magazine* (1865) 31.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid* (1841) 365-369.

are found but very imperfectly acquainted with the English language, and, from the limited educational advantages they have enjoyed, are unfit to enter with advantage upon the course of study pursued at the University and Theological Academy. That course supposes a degree of previous attainment which they do not possess, and which even a year of previous hard study could not, in many instances, adequately furnish. And besides, that course, we have no hesitation in saying, is of a higher cast than is essential in the field of labour they are to occupy ... we are impressed with the necessity of having *another institution*,—an institution in which, during the period of two or more years, the elements of a thorough English education might be imparted, with systematic theology, mental philosophy, ecclesiastical history, and the rudiments of the Greek language. The advantages to be derived from such an institution are obvious, and most important. The services of a class of men would be made available, who, by the present plan, are either wholly excluded from the benefits of the Academy, or, enjoying these benefits, profit comparatively little by them.

The subject was revisited by ‘Melankome’ [John Blacklock?] in the March 1864 issue of the Scottish Congregational Magazine.<sup>7</sup>

I refer to our denominational position and usefulness in the Highlands of Scotland. As Congregationalists we have few representatives there now. We have little hold of the Gaelic-speaking population of the country—we are of little service to them as regards their *eternal welfare*. Now this is a serious matter ... how are we to do our work in the Highlands? The plan which has approved itself to your correspondent is this,—That some brother in the ministry who knows the Gaelic language, be entrusted with the training of young men for the ministry. These young men must be Highlanders, and shall be entirely designed to labour among the Gaelic-speaking population. The training thus provided should be sufficiently elementary, (at the commencement of their curriculum at least,) to be fully comprehended by young men already possessed of an ordinary education. Especially must they be trained to expound the Word in their native tongue. This training in the class-room must be accompanied by practice in addressing small meetings, from the very first of their career. They should follow a simple course in systematic Theology. Next they should acquire a certain knowledge of the original languages of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, together with some training in mental philosophy. Other departments may be opened up to them as circumstances justify and demand. The great desideratum, however, is a thorough mastery of the English and Gaelic languages.

Say that the curriculum shall extend over four years. After that, should it be thought desirable, they may be sent for a session or two to our Theological Hall. Again, if each session were to last for eight months in the year, then, during the other four months, they should be sent out for evangelistic purposes to their native country—under the superintendence, however, of the pastors already settled there.

A special Highland mission committee must be formed. This committee will look out such young Highlanders as may be found able and willing for the work of the Lord.

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<sup>7</sup> *ibid* (1864) 88–89.

Shortly after, Blacklock addressed the Annual Meeting of the Congregational Union:

[He] spoke of the spiritual necessitous condition of the Western Highlands, suggesting a plan by which some brethren in the ministry, who knew the Gaelic language well, and who were considered capable in some measure otherwise of instructing young men from the Highlands, should be set apart for the purpose of preaching and devoting their lives to the Gaelic speaking population. Some objections might be urged against this plan. It might be said, for example, that the Highlands were well enough supplied by other denominations already, and that there was less need for their making any efforts in that direction. Now he did not think this, he did not think the Highlands were over well supplied with the preaching of the Gospel, and because he did not think it he did not believe it, and therefore would not acknowledge it.<sup>8</sup>

Blacklock's brethren do not appear to have shared his concern to the same degree and it took a further nine years before his plan began to materialise.

The following appeared in 1878:

THE HIGHLAND COLLEGE—Quietly nestled with a background of wood, full in front of all the wildest grandeur of Glen Sannox, and lapped by the bright green sea on the left ... lies one of the most interesting and beautiful scenes in all Arran ... Here fifty-five years ago was built a little sanctuary, with a manse attached ... Time would fail to tell the story of that little Church ... Suffice to say that, for more than seventeen years it has been blest by the labours of a minister whose heart is aflame with love to Christ ... But it is only to one division of Mr Blacklock's work that this notice seeks to draw attention—that of training Gaelic-speaking young men to enter upon the work of evangelists, and by-and-bye the pastoral office; or, with certain modifications devised by Mr Blacklock to meet the present close system of professional training, to prepare cheaply and well a band of earnest, godly young men, thoroughly grounded in all the literary qualifications necessary to pass the examination previous to entering our Universities, where their strictly professional training may be carried on and perfected. Five years ago Mr Blacklock, seeing that some of his young converts were youths of “pregnant pairs,” conceived the idea of training these up under his own eye. He commenced with four students, his own son being one of them, and has carried them and others who have joined his class from time to time through a regular, systematic, literary, and philosophical course, and also the seniors through a thorough divinity course, including all the branches taught in a fully equipped hall. Two of his students have already entered on the work of evangelists—one in Appin, and another among the Gaelic-speaking population of Greenock—and have met with good success, and in due time congregations will be formed and regularly organised under them as pastors. Mr Blacklock being an Independent, naturally began with students from that body of Christians, then he added a number of Baptist young men, and is ready to receive ... from all the truly Christian denominations. This year he had eleven students under his training. Mr Blacklock devotes on an average 20 hours a week to his students, and the sessions last nine months, other three months being devoted to evangelistic

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid* 189–190.

work by the more advanced students in some Gaelic speaking district, under Mr Blacklock's personal superintendence. His work is regularly inspected and tested by the examiners appointed by the Congregational Churches to examine the students in their own Theological Hall. Last year, Rev. James Troup, M.A.,<sup>9</sup> who examined the young men, reported most favourably of their progress. He was assisted by James Bonnar, Esq., M.A., Snell Scholar, Balliol College, Oxford, who spent the greater part of two days with Mr Troup; and an extract from his report on one department of the work will serve to show the kind of result produced by Mr Blacklock's intensity and power:—

“Not only from the answers, but from the whole appearance of the six gentlemen who were examined, I am convinced that they are all of them earnest and industrious students, anxious to make progress, really making progress, and displaying in many cases an aptness and intelligence that is very promising. Mr Blacklock has taught them the elements of Greek and Hebrew grammar with great success. The examination on the Philosophy of Socrates, on the elements of psychology and ethics, and on logic, brought out an encouraging interest on the subject, as well as in one or two cases a special ability to handle it.”

There are three stipulations which Mr Blacklock insists upon before taking any young man in hand: 1st. That he is a truly converted man ... and forwards a certificate from his minister and office-bearers testifying to his whole Christian character and “aptness to teach.” 2d. That the young man be subjected to a month's trial in the class for testing his aptitude and fitness. 3d. That one or more individuals guarantee the payment during the young man's course of a sum of £30 per annum for his maintenance. This money is ... administered through regular treasurers—that for the Independent students being George Thomson, Esq., Glasgow; and that for the Baptist students being Mr Peter McNicoll, Glasgow ... Arrangements have also been made for providing a supply of class-books for the students free. These they get with them when they leave. The allowance to the students is paid monthly through Mr Blacklock ... The students make their own arrangements about lodgings throughout the village ... One may ask how can Mr Blacklock do all this work, maintaining such a style of pulpit ministration as to form an attraction so great that educated gentlemen walk miles, Sabbath after Sabbath, to hear him; carrying on a weekly prayer meeting; and doing all the pastoral visitation of his flock, and others ... and as a relaxation spend three months in evangelistic work among his Gaelic-speaking fellow-countrymen. Yet the work is done, and done well ...<sup>10</sup>

An earlier article had noted the above examination held in October 1877, “at which were present Messrs Troup, Helensburgh; Flett,<sup>11</sup> Paisley; and Tulloch,<sup>12</sup> Secretary of the Baptist Union of Scotland. Nine young men, four of them belonging to the Baptist denomination, have been attending the classes during

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<sup>9</sup> For James Troup (1829–1897), see *TSCM* 162.

<sup>10</sup> *Monthly News of the Churches* Issued by the Committee of the Congregational Union of Scotland, (June 1878) 3–4.

<sup>11</sup> Rev Dr Oliver Flett, Baptist

<sup>12</sup> William Tulloch (1821–1898)

the summer. They were examined chiefly in three branches of study, in Church History, till the time of Constantine, in the Structure and History of the English Language, and in Systematic Theology (the History of the Atonement). ... All the examiners expressed great gratification with the progress which the students, even the youngest of them, had made. ... Two of the young men have been appointed to interesting fields of labour, Mr McMillan,<sup>13</sup> as Missionary in Appin, Argyllshire, and Mr McDougall<sup>14</sup> as Missionary to the Gaelic speaking population in a district in Greenock.”<sup>15</sup>

Nearly fifty years later, McDougall recalled that the College “had the sanction of the Union”, the examiners were James Troup and John Milne Jarvie,<sup>16</sup> Secretary of the Theological Hall of Congregational Churches in Scotland, and at the outset “the number of students was three, but it soon increased to thirteen. I was one of the number”.<sup>17</sup> He also stated that he had the benefit of some of Dr R. W. Dale’s<sup>18</sup> lectures as a student and it is interesting to note that the meeting in 1878 which issued the call to McDougall to become minister of the Sannox Church was presided over by Dale, who in those days was an attached and interested “holiday member” of the little Arran Church.”<sup>19</sup>

In the midst of his taxing ministry, Blacklock received and declined a call from the Oban church, but on the call being renewed later in the year he accepted. For its part, the Union proposed he should still continue as pastor of the Sannox Church “and be among them as frequently as possible”; the Sannox Church “agreeing to be content with an assistant during the rest of the year”. Thereafter, Donald McKinnon,<sup>20</sup> a native of Tiree and one of Blacklock’s students, was elected as assistant minister at the beginning of February 1878<sup>21</sup> and three months later, Blacklock was inducted as pastor of the Oban church on 3rd May.<sup>22</sup>

Immediately prior to his induction it was stated that arrangements were in hand by which, it was hoped, Blacklock could, “while making Oban his headquarters, be able to assist the Church in Arran, and also to arrange for services being held in Lismore and Easdale, conducted by himself and his

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<sup>13</sup> William MacMillan (1851–1926) see *TSCM* 100. Missionary, Appin, Argyllshire, around March 1877–79.

<sup>14</sup> Allan Cameron McDougall (1847–1940), see *TSCM* 88. Missionary to the Gaelic speaking community, George Square Congregational Church, Greenock, April 1877.

<sup>15</sup> *Scottish Congregational Magazine* (1877) 364.

<sup>16</sup> For John Milne Jarvie (1821–1899), see *TSCM* 73.

<sup>17</sup> *The Scottish Congregationalist* (July 1925) 3.

<sup>18</sup> Robert William Dale (1829–1895).

<sup>19</sup> *Scottish Congregationalist* (January 1923) 9.

<sup>20</sup> For Donald McKinnon, see *TSCM* 96.

<sup>21</sup> *Annual Report of the Congregational Union of Scotland* (1878) 23–24.

<sup>22</sup> *Scottish Congregational Magazine* (1878) 167.



students”.<sup>23</sup> The Union also expressed the hope that Blacklock’s “important work of training young men for the ministry” would benefit from the change of location.<sup>24</sup> Then some months later, around October 1878, Blacklock resigned the pastorate of the Sannox Church, which he had held for some months in conjunction with Oban Congregational Church.<sup>25</sup>

The Highland College appears to have ceased to exist soon after Blacklock’s removal to Oban. He resigned his Oban charge around June 1879 in order to be admitted to the Free Church and one of his students, William McMillan, who had been acting as missionary in Appin, also made application for admission into that body.<sup>26</sup> Another of his students John McNeil,<sup>27</sup> who succeeded him at Oban in October 1879,<sup>28</sup> later resigned his charge in May 1882 in order to be admitted to the Free Church.<sup>29</sup> McNeil’s successor was not a Gaelic speaker.<sup>30</sup> David Munn,<sup>31</sup> who is said to have received his training in the Congregational College, finishing his course under Blacklock, commenced labouring as missionary in Appin in July 1879, while Donald McKinnon left Arran and began ministering to his fellow countrymen in Manilla, Ontario, around a year earlier.<sup>32</sup> Allan McDougall, for his part, was ordained and inducted to the Sannox Church on 6th November 1878.<sup>33</sup>

Why did the Highland College have such a brief existence when early Congregational Independency had set great store on Gaelic speaking preachers from the outset and over the years expended the lion’s share of its income on mission to the Highlands?<sup>34</sup>

In a sense Blacklock is something of a Canute like figure ordained a month after a conference on Congregationalism held April 1860 to afford “an opportunity for free and frank discussion of matters affecting the progress of Congregationalism, and the general welfare of the denomination ... [where it] was found that of the churches which had become extinct within the last few years, several, especially from the Highland districts, had emigrated along with

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<sup>23</sup> *Monthly News of the Churches*: Issued by the Committee of the Congregational Union of Scotland, (March 1878) 2–3.

<sup>24</sup> *Annual Report of the Congregational Union of Scotland* (1878) 24.

<sup>25</sup> *Scottish Congregational Magazine* (1878) 330.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid* (1879) 178–179.

<sup>27</sup> For John McNeil (d.1821), see *TSCM* 101.

<sup>28</sup> *Scottish Congregational Magazine* (1879) 379–380.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid* (1882) 128.

<sup>30</sup> James McLean (1828–1914), see *TSCM* 98.

<sup>31</sup> For David Munn (1847–1936), see *TSCM* 115.

<sup>32</sup> *Scottish Congregational Magazine* (1878) 245.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid* 396.

<sup>34</sup> cf. W D McNaughton *Early Congregational Independency in the Highlands and Islands and the North-East of Scotland* (Tiree 2003) 109–127.

their pastors, and were really existing, though in other lands, while others had declined through diminution of population, occasioned by emigration and other causes".<sup>35</sup> Four years later, Blacklock presented his plan for educating Gaelic preachers to the Annual Meeting of the Union in the midst of a sea change in the perceived priorities of the denomination. For example, there were those who believed of itinerancy, the hallmark of early Congregationalism, "If the practice is not obsolete the need for it at least is not urgent"; whereas evangelistic effort in order to establish "new churches in our large towns" was.<sup>36</sup>

Statistically speaking it would appear that Blacklock was seeking to hold back the tide. Of twenty-four or so Highland fellowships associated with Congregational Independency between 1800 and 1812 around fifty per cent had ceased to exist as such by the latter date. Of at least thirty-two fellowships formed between 1800 and 1878, only Tiree, Aberfeldy, Arran (Sannox), Clachan (possibly as a branch of Arran), Oban with branch churches Appin and Lismore, were extant in 1878.<sup>37</sup>

But perhaps like the Highland itinerants of yester year in whose steps he trod Blacklock was not interested in forming fellowships or promoting a particular form of church polity, seeking rather to simply reach out with the Gospel to his Gaelic speaking brethren; a noble aspiration, if not pragmatic in the eyes of his brethren.

## Postscript

Allan Cameron McDougall, the Gaelic speaking native of Ross of Mull who studied at Glasgow University and the Highland College and succeeded Blacklock in Arran, never courted publicity, yet he fulfilled a ministry whose influence went far beyond the confines of his church. Arran had been a favourite holiday resort long before McDougall's arrival but it became increasingly so during his ministry. In the summer months visitors of many different denominations from all over the United Kingdom attended the little white-washed church standing on the point at Sannox. McDougall preached year after year, almost, to well-known scholars and preachers, some of them world-famous; to eminent doctors, ministers, and men and women distinguished in science, art, letters and law, For example, George Adam Smith [1856–1942], Principal of the University of Aberdeen, worshipped and preached there; Dr Christopher Newman Hall [1816–1902]; R. W. Dale; Stanley Rogers [b.1853] and Dr John Henry Jowett [1863–1923].<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> *Scottish Congregational Magazine* (1860) 146.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid* (1867) 182–183.

<sup>37</sup> cf. *TSCM, passim* & W D McNaughton *Early Congregational Independency in Lowland Scotland*, Volume II, Appendix A.

<sup>38</sup> *Scottish Congregationalist* (July 1925) 4.

Quiet and unassuming, McDougall was possessed of the characteristic Celtic gifts of humour, courtesy and capacity for friendship, but to a considerable degree it was in English that this former student of the Highland College reached out to others in the course of his fifty-four year long Sannox ministry.

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*W D McNaughton*

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## THE REGICIDES

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A study day, entitled *Notorious delinquents: a reappraisal of the regicides*, was held by the Cromwell Association on 16 October, 2010 at The City Temple, in Holborn. The Association considered that, although the trial of King Charles I in 1649 had been reappraised in recent years, those of the regicides, many of which had taken place almost exactly 350 years ago, were still neglected and had not been given the same rigorous analysis. The commonly accepted popular view was still that propagated by the restored Stuart regime that the regicides were dangerous radicals, representing the excesses of religious independency and of army tyranny, people who merited the harsh treatment they received. This view also was also still present in much academic thought, today and the aim of his study day was, therefore, ‘to bring together leading historians of the period to consider different aspects of what happened in 1660–1661’. The pervading feeling from the day was that a need exists for a more nuanced interpretation. Who were the regicides and how was a regicide defined? Not all those tried had signed the death warrant or were commissioners, who sat as judges, for included in the trials were Hugh Peter(s), who had been chaplain to Cromwell and to the Council of State and was loathed by the Stuarts, together with Col. Daniel Axtell and Col. Francis Hacker, the commanders of the guards in Westminster Hall. All three died as regicides, though they had not signed the death warrant, whilst an attempt was even made to identify the executioner to try him, but, although his identity was suspected, it was never conclusively discovered. The positions of John Lambert and of Sir Henry Vane the Younger were ambiguous, as neither signed the death warrant, but both were tried for high treason in 1662. Were they technically regarded as regicides? Clearly what occurred was more than the trial of regicides and the concept was, probably deliberately, kept vague.

The first speaker, Geoffrey Robertson, Q.C., argued that the trials were kangaroo courts, for which the laws of treason and evidence were distorted, and the outcome of which, in opposition to that of Charles I, was predetermined, whilst a number of those tried were misled into surrender under the provision of the Act of Oblivion. They were acts of vengeance against anybody who could be associated with the death of the King, with little regard for legal niceties.

The second speaker, Jason Peacey of University College, London, highlighted another problem. He examined evidence from the trials to see how much could be learnt of the motives of the regicides in 1649 and concluded that these could be very different. Some, for example, stated that they had not anticipated that the king would be executed, and, from an examination of the evidence for the 1649

trial, there was probably some truth in this pleading. Others stated that they were reluctant commissioners, again probably with some truth. They were certainly not a monolithic group and he argued that the picture was more complex than the one usually presented.

The third speaker, Lloyd Bowen of the University of Cardiff, examined the extent of Royalist propaganda during the Interregnum and the early Restoration and its effect on popular culture. In the early Restoration period this popular culture shaped the political culture and blackened the reputation of the 'king killers', as they were often called, and provided a backlash against republican rule.

The last speaker, Patrick Little of the History of Parliament Trust, examined Cromwell's relationship with three of those tried, Thomas Harrison, John Okey and Sir Henry Vane the Younger, linked to the interpretation of the term 'The Good Old Cause', which he argued was a slogan rather than a definite programme. All three had been friends or close colleagues of Cromwell in the 1640s and early 1650s, but had eventually opposed him during the rifts of the later 1650s. Despite this change and despite some of them having been imprisoned for short periods, usually reluctantly by Cromwell, they all felt that their differences were matters for negotiation and not confrontation. Many of those tried between 1660 and 1662 said they still upheld the "Good Old Cause", that brought the monarchy to an end and established the Commonwealth and, although this was also the reason that they later opposed Cromwell, when he became Lord Protector, it was a rift between colleagues. After the Restoration they were all united with the posthumous persecution by the Royalists, of three of the most notorious rebels, Cromwell himself, Sir Henry Ireton, one of the sons-in-law of Cromwell and Lord Deputy of Ireland, and the particularly loathed John Bradshaw, Chairman of the Court in 1649, and later of the Council of State in the early 1650s, a prominent supporter of political and religious radicals. Col. Pride was also posthumously tried and convicted, but in his case the sentence was never carried out.

What is the relevance of this to the readers of this Magazine? To Congregationalists, the Civil War and the Interregnum should surely be of interest as a stage in the development of their church order and their emergence as a distinctly identifiable group of churches. This study day was of value in looking at how much misinformation is still about and at present how little research is devoted to the subject. Many of the ideas about it in general, and about the regicides in particular, need nuancing and the issues are more complex than they seem. Mark Noble's damning 18th century indictment of the regicides, *The lives of the English regicides: and other commissioners of the pretended High Court of Justice, appointed to sit in judgment upon their sovereign*, still holds the field in popular culture and seems pervasive amongst historians—even ecclesiastical historians. Readers of the Magazine may, perhaps, be inclined to undertake their

own research, in an attempt to understand more about these fascinating issues. The papers will probably be published in next year's issue of *Cromwelliana*, the journal of the Cromwell Association, but there is no need to wait that long before looking at the important topics, raised by this study day.

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*Jonathan Morgan*

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## Books for Congregationalists

**Manual of Congregational Principles** by RW Dale,

**The Atonement** by RW Dale,

**Visible Saints: The Congregational Way 1640–1660** by Geoffrey F Nuttall

**Studies in English Dissent** by Geoffrey F Nuttall

**Christian Fellowship or The Church Member's Guide** by John Angell James

**The Anxious Inquirer** by John Angell James

Quinta Press, Meadow View, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 7RN 01691 778659

E-mail [info@quintapress.com](mailto:info@quintapress.com); web-site: [www.quintapress.com](http://www.quintapress.com)

Readers of this journal will be interested in some of the draft books being worked on. If you visit the web-site and click on the PDF Books link you will find draft versions of many books by important Congregationalists of the past, including John Cotton, Richard Mather, William Jay, John Angell James, RW Dale and PT Forsyth.

Also Edmund Calamy's 1702, 1713 and 1727 volumes of Richard Baxter's *Life and Times* detailing the ministers ejected in 1662 (these 5 volumes were the basis of AG Matthew *Calamy Revised*).

Click on the Whitefield link and there are further links to sermons of George Whitefield never yet reprinted and a new edition of his Journals that is more complete than that currently available.

There are many other titles too numerous to mention.

## REVIEWS

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***The Reformation and Robert Barnes: History, theology and polemic in Early Modern England.* By Korey D Maas. Pp xii + 250. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2010. £60.00 hardback. ISBN 978-1-84383-534-9.**

Robert Barnes was one of the most colourful of the evangelical activists of Henry VIII's reign, and a significant figure in the European as well as the early English reformation. A flamboyant and often recklessly outspoken activist, Barnes nevertheless led a charmed life till the fall of his patron, Thomas Cromwell. Repeatedly in trouble with the ecclesiastical authorities, and strongly disliked by Henry himself, Barnes nevertheless survived the roller-coaster of Henrician religious politics till his burning in 1540, at one point evading arrest for heresy by staging a Lord Lucan-like fake suicide by drowning, and escaping to Wittenberg.

An Augustinian friar based in Cambridge, and a pillar of orthodoxy in the early 1520s, Barnes embraced reforming opinions by 1525, possibly under the influence of Thomas Bilney, but more likely through reading samizdat copies of Luther's works then infiltrating the University. In that year, a fiery Cambridge sermon against clerical corruption landed Barnes before Wolsey's Legatine court in London, as the campaign in the capital intensified against heretical books and opinions. Barnes' 1526 trial never established his real opinions: he maintained that he had preached moral not doctrinal reform. But in any case he was protected by the good will of an influential Cambridge clerical Mafia: fellow Cantabs like Stephen Gardiner deplored Barnes' views but were willing to give the benefit of the doubt to a talented and charming fellow alumnus. Nevertheless, he was not allowed to return to the University, and spent the next two years under lax house arrest in the London house of his order. Any doubts about Barnes' evangelical opinions disappeared in 1528 when it was discovered that he had turned the London Friary into a distribution-point for Tyndale's banned translation of the New Testament. Staging a fake suicide to throw Bishop Tunstall's officers off his scent, Barnes fled abroad to Wittenberg, where he was befriended by Luther, Melancthon and Bugenhagen, in whose house he settled. These friendships would stand him in good stead: as Henry sought German support for his divorce and subsequent break with Rome, Barnes would be summoned back to England under safe conduct (to the fury of Thomas More) to help with negotiations, and would be deployed in Germany as a diplomat. But Barnes's fortunes were firmly hitched to Thomas Cromwell's domination of Henrician politics, and there was to be a terrible price: as Cromwell's protege, Barnes attracted the unrelenting hostility of Cromwell's rival, his erstwhile protector Stephen Gardiner, and when Cromwell fell, Barnes' condemnation as a relapsed heretic was inevitable. He was burned, without trial, two days after Cromwell's execution.

Maas offers a useful resume of Barnes' career, which is not however as firmly contextualised as it might be. His account of Barnes' 1526 trial would have benefited, for example, from a fuller use of Craig D'Alton's work on the wider London campaign against heresy of which it formed a part. Maas's translations from Barnes' vigorous Latin are sometimes opaque. He has surprisingly little to say about Thomas More's controversial writings against Barnes, though More devoted an entire book of his *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer* to a sparkling satirical attack on "frere Barons" and his theology.

But Maas's intention is not to write a biography, but to elucidate Barnes' own theological writings. From Germany, Barnes issued a succession of anti-papal writings designed both to ingratiate himself with Henry VIII, and to promote the protestant cause more generally. These writings have been often ignored, or dismissed as mere hackwork. Barnes was a compiler rather than an original writer: his most characteristic works, the *Sententiae ex Doctoribus Collectae* of 1530, and the *Vitae Romanorum Pontificum* of 1536, were essentially annotated catenae of extracts from other writers designed to establish the antiquity of protestant teachings and to illustrate the corruptions of the papacy. The allegedly "scissors and paste" method of these writings, Maas argues, has led to Barnes' being unfairly dismissed as an unoriginal hack, whose main significance lay in the colourful circumstances of his arrests, escape and eventual martyrdom for the protestant cause. Maas maintains by contrast that these works represent a distinctive intellectual achievement, which was taken seriously by Barnes' contemporaries, both catholic and protestant, and which exercised a shaping influence on sixteenth century polemic. His case is particularly persuasive for the *Vitae Pontificum*, which he shows to have been quarried by a succession of protestant writers from Luther himself onwards, and Barnes' account of the liturgical and doctrinal innovations of the popes became a tried and tested weapon in the armoury of protestant controversialists all over Europe.

Though some of his reading of Barnes' theology will be contested, Maas has given us the fullest and most illuminating picture of Barnes's thought to date. His book sometimes betrays its origin as a PhD dissertation, but this is a valuable and welcome study of one of the few early Tudor reformers to have made as significant a contribution to European reformed polemic as to the establishment of evangelical opinions in England.

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*Eamon Duffy, University of Cambridge*

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***The Pastor of Fish Street: The Journals of the Rev. George Lambert, Congregational Minister.* Edited by John Markham. (East Yorkshire Local History Series No. 57.) Pp 231. East Yorkshire Local History Society, Beverley, 2008. £10. ISBN 978-0-90034-957-7.**

I remember that, in the 1960s, my father was trying to put together a set of the publications of the East Yorkshire Local History Society, of which the present volume is number 57. In those days they came in uniform green wrappers, a drab



guise of the type then adopted by all publications with any pretensions to scholarship. And their contents tended less to the doings of recent centuries than to matters mediaeval, monastic and manorial. But in the 1960s the town and county of Kingston-upon-Hull scarcely needed reminding of its nonconformist heritage. Its presence was still felt, not least in a certain type of elderly female who frequently visited the family home: bright-eyed, kindly, cheerful women, who as teachers and other bulwarks of the community had done their best to give generations of Hull children (sometimes miserably poor children) a decent start in life. They were different from their younger successors, in their shunning of the meretricious arts of make-up, and in the horror they expressed of alcohol and gambling, should these things happen to come into the conversation. More likely Methodist than Congregational (for the East Riding was one of those areas where the Old Dissent was comparatively weak, and the New comparatively strong), collectively they stood for something, something that was fading away but had not yet vanished.

The 1980s altered everything. People suddenly felt cut off from the past, even the recent past, as from a country whose language they only dimly understood. In local history, there was a considerable widening of the boundaries of the subject, and an enormous upsurge of commercial publication, associated in the East Riding with the Hutton and Highgate Presses. Nor were the staid old history societies unwilling to take a hint from the glossier offerings of their commercial rivals. And thus we come to a publication such as the present, issued by the EYLHS, but looking for all the world like a Hutton or Highgate publication, printed by Highgate Print, and edited by John Markham, an author intimately associated with the Highgate enterprise.

As a young minister, George Lambert (1742–1816) prayed that God would not send him to Hull. But to Hull he came, and stayed until his death 47 years later. At the Independent church (formed by secession) whose pastor he became, he saw the numbers of his congregation rise from some 20 or so to at least 1000. A grand new edifice, Fish Street Chapel, was erected in 1782 to accommodate the burgeoning throng. Lambert's ministry gave the chapel a unique place in local sentiment, which it never lost, even after being closed in 1899 and replaced (in a new location) by Fish Street Memorial Chapel. Twelve volumes of Lambert's diary survive, six volumes each being currently owned by two branches of his family, and apparently there were earlier journals that have disappeared. John Markham has selected the most interesting gobbets, and has added copious and detailed notes, appendixes of necessary matter, and a sympathetic introduction. He understands that his choice of extracts, leaning more towards the human than the divine, would have seemed "trifling" to Lambert, but he is shrewd in his assessment of the worldliness that was forced on even so determinedly other-worldly a person as the diarist: "The total commitment to every tenet of his faith which he demanded of himself was not easy to achieve and the realisation that his livelihood and the support of his large family depended on the public expression of that faith was never far from his mind."

Lambert never spared himself, nor (in the privacy of his diary) did he spare others: “Yesterday evening the Missionary meeting for prayer was held at my place. Mr Clarke of Brigg prayed. Mr Richards spoke from Isaiah 40.34. He was trifling and tedious to an extreme and detained near an hour and a half of the time to himself. Mr Crackerroad concluded with prayer, but there was so much compliments paid to the pride or folly of some ministers, particularly the zeal of Mr Richards and the abilities and usefulness of myself as was to me quite fulsome and disagreeable.” (5 Nov 1799, p. 147.)

The text is regularised in its spelling and punctuation, but Appendix C gives Lambert’s own spellings of place names. We can thus guess that Hesse, which he writes “Hessel”, was pronounced by him to rhyme with “vessel”, rather than “embezzle”, which in living memory has been the common Hull pronunciation. And we can see that Ferriby was written by him as “Ferraby”, with no implications for pronunciation, but bringing it into line with the surname of the industrious Hull printer John Ferraby, who printed at least one of Lambert’s sermons.

It is not to be expected that Markham should probe the deeper and more difficult question: why was the Christian faith in its protestant-nonconformist and Congregational form so important to the pastor, his flock, and the busy town in which they lived? Others must do this, but in the meantime he has lifted the veil of oblivion which now threatens to obscure the fact that it was indeed so.

The book is attractively designed and printed, but (in my copy, at any rate) a certain fuzziness afflicts the top line of many of the odd-numbered pages. In his Acknowledgements, Markham apologizes to those who have helped him but whose names he has forgotten. Your reviewer is one of the small fry who have slipped through the net, but it is pleasant to record that at least one Leviathan of helpfulness, “Jonathan Morgan, Archivist of Dr Williams’s Library, London”, has been well and truly caught, and is exhibited with due impressiveness.

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*David Powell, Congregational Library*

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***Worsted to Westminster: The Extraordinary Life of the Rev. Dr Charles Leach MP. By J B Williams. Pp vi + 322. Darcy Press, [No place] 2009. £8.99 paperback. ISBN 978-0-9562523-0-2.***

Charles Leach, a Congregational minister of the late Victorian and Edwardian years who went on to enter the House of Commons in 1910, well deserves a biography. His great-great-grandson, whose readable style was previously nurtured in writing works of fiction, has supplied a thorough and instructive one. Leach left no papers, but detective work in archives and newspapers, and especially in chapel records, has yielded a great deal of information about this energetic figure. Leach had extremely humble origins, being born in 1847 as the son of illiterate parents in the West Riding of Yorkshire. His father sold pots around Halifax; his mother died when Charles was five. The boy began work in

a worsted spinning mill at eight, gaining his chance of higher attainments through half-time education. Becoming a master clogmaker, he developed a business in Elland, employing six people by the time he was twenty-four. His future life was moulded by Methodist New Connexion chapels, first Salem in Halifax, where he became a local preacher, and then Bethesda in Elland, where he was appointed a class leader. He evidently proved to be a soul-winner, for in 1871 his class had the huge number of thirty-one members on trial. That achievement singled him out as a candidate for the ministry, and so he was sent for rudimentary training at the denomination's Ranmoor College in Sheffield before being appointed in 1875 to serve two mission chapels in Ladywood, Birmingham. There he began what was to become a trade mark, afternoon lectures to working men. He generated a stream of popular publications, listed at the end of the biography, that included the *Factory Girl* magazine and eventually *Shall we Know our Friends in Heaven?* (1902), the most widely read of his writings.

In Birmingham, almost inevitably, he was drawn into Liberal politics. That proved the avenue into Congregationalism, for when, in 1879, most of the members of Highbury Congregational Church left for the suburbs, some of his Liberal acquaintances decided to buy the building and to install Leach as its minister. He set about drumming up a fresh congregation and proved remarkably successful. His ministry, however, could not survive the division of Birmingham Liberalism, for he took the side of Gladstone against Joseph Chamberlain in the Home Rule split of 1886 and was abandoned by several of his chief supporters. Leach determined to move on, serving as the first minister of an outreach cause in Queen's Park, Harrow Road, London. His struggles, often against Andrew Mearns of the London Congregational Union, to build up a congregation and erect a church and institute form a particularly telling cameo of the times. In 1897 he moved on to Cavendish Street, Manchester, a once proud but decaying church, and then in 1904 to Harecourt Chapel, Canonbury, London, another cause that had fallen on hard times. In both cases he managed to turn round their fortunes. Leach was a remarkably effective church leader.

His political career developed more erratically. A strong egalitarian strand in his thinking put him towards the radical edge of Liberalism. In 1894, having reconsidered an earlier passage of arms at the Congregational Union with Keir Hardie, he flirted with the Independent Labour Party, actually resigning his Liberal Party membership. He stood for his local vestry as an ILP candidate, but his Queen's Park deacons persuaded him to withdraw and drop his new allegiance. He abandoned politics, though not the moral causes beloved of his generation, until he moved to Manchester, where he threw himself with redoubled vigour into the party fray as a Liberal. He was chosen president of the Manchester Passive Resistance League, becoming one of the first seven to receive a summons for non-payment of the rate that would go towards paying for Anglican and Roman Catholic education. When, in 1908, he retired from Harecourt, he was a natural choice of the Liberals of the Colne Valley constituency to retrieve its parliamentary representation from the socialist Victor Grayson. Hence in January 1910 Leach arrived in the Commons in the same

intake as Silvester Horne. He was characteristically active, putting as many as fifty-one parliamentary questions during 1913. Wartime made him volunteer for service as a chaplain to Congregational and Baptist soldiers in London hospitals, and the strain of trying to combine this demanding work with parliamentary service brought about a collapse of his health in 1915 and committal to a lunatic asylum. In the following year he was removed from the Commons, the only MP ever to have been excluded for insanity. He remained in the asylum until his death in 1919.

This biography is well done. It does not always capture the precise detail of Nonconformist ways: Methodists were not all as strongly committed to temperance by around 1880 as the author suggests (p 80), partisans of non-sectarian education at Birmingham cannot be equated with Nonconformists (p 90) and so on. Some will be troubled by the use of the phrase 'the Congregational Church' (p 2). Yet the degree of mastery of the material is remarkable, perhaps partly because the writer has a debt to Clyde Binfield. It is a pity the publications by Leach are not more fully analysed; and the presentation of the critical apparatus is not quite up to standard. Yet, as befits a study by a descendant, the volume covers Leach's family life as well as his public career. He lost four of his six children and, intriguingly, the wife of this MP probably never learned to write. This book is something rare, a full and illuminating modern account of a Nonconformist minister of the generation when religion and politics were most closely intertwined.

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*D W Bebbington, School of History and Politics, University of Stirling*

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***This is Our Song: Women's Hymn Writing.* By Janet Wootton.**

**Pp 380. Epworth Press, 2010. £35.00 paperback. ISBN**

**978-0-716-20655-2**

Janet Wootton has truly given us our song in this wonderfully accessible and yet scholarly book. She gives us an amazing vision, one that has been obscured for many centuries, that of the contribution of women in the world of writing and hymnody. As she so rightly comments, the entire corpus of Greek and Latin scholarship presents us with males (p3) but of course this does not mean that women were absent, simply obscured. Wootton pulls back the veil from these pre-Christian times and then goes on to show the same silencing in various ways in the early Christian tradition. In doing so, she enables us to see these women and their contributions and allows us the rage that is so needed when we realise that Christianity, a religion that claims universal salvation, has only really had half a voice and therefore half a story of salvation.

What she also so graphically illustrates is how women have been creative and found space for themselves, even if their contribution has not always been appreciated. The full range of their involvement in things from evangelism to political and social revolution is truly amazing, and a history that women perhaps need to re-engage with, in order to truly appreciate the valuable contributions

that our silenced sisters have indeed made. Along with the valuable contribution to the historical story, we also have in this book the voices of contemporary hymn writers and this is a wonderful touch. Having given voice to those who have been silenced, Janet has no wish to take the voice from those who are still amongst us and she gives them the floor—they tell us how and why they came to write hymns and what they have to say about it. The range and the intentions are incredibly diverse which fills this reader with joy—we have women amongst us who are taking an active role in shaping our traditions through the hymns they put in the mouths of modern congregations.

Janet Wootton has written an incredibly valuable book and one that offers a passionate engagement with the passions and concerns of women over many centuries of Christian history. This is an incredible artistry of scholarship weaving together many diverse sources into a clear and brilliant tapestry— it is academic writing at its best. However, in addition to an outstanding academic work, Janet has given us back the passion of generations of women, along with her own, for expanding the love of God through the songs and hymns we sing. This book will inform and change the reader.

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*Lisa Isherwood,, Director of Theological Partnerships, University of Winchester*

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***Serving the Saints: A History of the Congregational Federation's Training Board, 1979–2010.* By Alan Argent. Pp. 122. The Congregational Federation, Nottingham, 2010. £7.50 inc p&p. ISBN 978-1-904-62393-9.**

This short book does exactly what it says on the cover, highlighting the history of the Congregational Federation's Training Board from its inception in 1979. At times the narrative concentrates on summarising the deliberations of the Board, something which could have benefitted from a little more contextualisation in order to help the uninitiated. Nevertheless, of relevance and wider interest is the way in which this particular story offers insight into the development of training—especially for forms of Christian ministry—over the period in question as the Congregational Federation (alongside other Christian denominations) has sought to deal with a dwindling number of ordinands (especially those able to be resident at a theological college), the professionalization of training and the need for recognised qualifications (usually through University validation), the regionalisation and the need for students to be trained 'locally', and the changing educational emphases from the acquisition of knowledge to the development of skills. This reviewer was particularly amused to read (on p 33) that Graham M. Adams was advising, in the autumn of 1988, that 'ministerial training should follow trends in higher education in general, by moving from imparting knowledge to an emphasis on skills development', only to find (on p 58) that by July 1996 Janet Wootton 'wondered if more theory, history and theology should be added to the sessions, rather than concentrating on practical skills alone'. At the very least this should remind us that, especially in

training for Christian service and ministry, skills are not required or developed in a vacuum, but in fact depend entirely upon a theological context in order for them to be ‘skills’ at all.

Alongside the history of the Board’s discussion and working, the reader is introduced to a number of characters, all intensely committed to learning and education as well as the specifics of the Congregational way. It would, perhaps, have been difficult to include more biographical information for many of those named, though this would have added to the book’s interest.

Having said all this, Dr Argent fulfils what he set out to do in what is clearly a labour of love, having committed himself over many years to educational activities within the Federation and indeed to the working of the Training Board. He demonstrates effectively how a small band of committed people can provide a quality product which in turn has enhanced the life and service of individual Christians throughout the country, as well as the witness of the churches they serve. The book is worth reading just for that.

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*Robert Pope, University of Wales Trinity St David*

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***Wales and the Word. Historical Perspectives on Welsh Identity and Religion.* By D Densil Morgan. Pp xii + 262, 4 illus. University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2008. £50 hardback. ISBN 978-0-7083-2121-8.**

Densil Morgan, recently appointed Professor of Theology and Head of the School of Theology, Religious and Islamic Studies at the newly created University of Wales Trinity St David—the result of an amalgamation of University of Wales, Lampeter and Trinity University College, Carmarthen—is one of the most respected scholars in his chosen fields of theology and church history currently working in Wales. Described by the Archbishop of Canterbury as “Wales’s leading historian of modern Christianity”, Professor Morgan is also one of the most prolific, equally at ease writing in either Welsh or English. His 1999 study of the history of Christianity in Wales from the outbreak of the First World War until the end of the millennium, *The Span of the Cross*, for example, was widely praised for its distillation of a hugely diverse mass of source material in both languages, its penetrating insights and authoritative and informed judgments. He is just as much at home in the world of biography, from his 1991 essay (in Welsh) on the great evangelical preacher Christmas Evans to studies of Lewis Edwards (2009), widely regarded in his nineteenth century lifetime as one of Wales’s foremost intellectuals, and (2003) the original if not idiosyncratic theologian Pennar Davies. In the wider theological world, Morgan has contributed to our understanding of Karl Barth, both in his SPCK introduction to that world-renowned scholar’s thought and also, most recently, in his *Barth Reception in Britain*.

In *Wales and the Word*, Morgan has collected together papers which originated in lectures and essays written in the last decade or so. Many in earlier

versions have been published before in journals or multi-author volumes, but they are presented here in a slightly revised form. Morgan's stated aim for selecting these particular papers is "to show how religion and faith have informed Welsh national identity from the seventeenth century to the present". Some are more successful in achieving this aim than others. The more general essays, often encompassing a wide sweep of history, would have been a delight to listen to as lectures—this reviewer can say from personal experience that Morgan is a stimulating and engaging public speaker—but they do not transfer well to the printed page. The exception here is "Twentieth Century historians of Welsh Protestant Nonconformity" with its insightful pen-portraits of Thomas Richards and R T Jenkins in particular; portraits enlivened with shrewd and often very humorous judgments on their respective abilities and prose styles.

Morgan is arguably at his best when engaging with the thought of many of the personalities highlighted in this collection—Owen Thomas, Llewelyn Ioan Evans, Gwenallt Jones—and the controversies in which several of them engaged. He has valuable things to say on the mid-nineteenth century liberal "Lampeter Theology" associated with Rowland Williams, and the conservative stance of Princeton Seminary in the face of the rising tide of biblical criticism. His paper on the role played by Welsh scholars of the calibre of J D Vernon Lewis, J E Daniel and Ivor Oswy Davies in the early reception of Karl Barth's theology in Britain, and especially its impact upon Welsh protestantism, is perhaps the essay which remains longest in the memory.

Overall this volume, another in the distinguished series published for the Centre for the Advanced Study of Religion in Wales, long associated with Bangor University where Morgan taught for more than twenty years, does succeed in its principal aims of highlighting and re-emphasising the long-enduring link between the Christian faith and Welsh national identity. It also reminds us of the often overlooked contribution of Welsh scholars to trends and movements in protestant theology, sometimes far outside the geographical boundaries of Wales itself, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

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**Oraclau/Oracles. By Geoffrey Hill. Pp 56. Clutag Press, Thame, OX9 3RQ, 2010. £15.00 hardback. ISBN 978-0-9553476-9-6.**

Geoffrey Hill, professor emeritus of English literature and religion of Boston, Massachusetts, and since June 2010 the professor of poetry at Oxford, is one of the most distinguished poets writing in English today. He is a harsh moralist and his work makes free play with history, especially in its allusions to the morally ambiguous and violent scenes of British and European history. He also makes frequent use of Christian themes, as in his *Mercian Hymns* (1971), "The Pentecost Castle" included in *Tenebrae* (1978), and *Canaan* (1997). Among his many admirers is the present Archbishop of Canterbury, himself a Welsh speaker.

Hill's first collection of poems was published in 1952, when he was just 20 years old. Born in Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, and having explored in verse the Mercia of Offa, and having turned to *Scenes from Comus* (Comus was first performed for Milton in Ludlow Castle in the Welsh marches), he moves in this series of 144 poems west across Offa's Dyke to the poetic traditions of Cymru. Hill is passionate about the landscape of England, of Mercia, and here of Wales,

Sometimes it is like changing gear  
 With effort; at times a flaccid landscape;  
 Estuary, blind cwm, slack air;  
 Fields weft by complainant curlew and snipe.

even mentioning the distinctive obsession of Welshmen with the weather.

The rain passes, briefly the flags are lit  
 Blue-grey wimpling in the stolid puddles;  
 And one's mind meddles and muddles  
 Briefly also for joy of it.

This collection begins with quotations from the modern Welsh Congregational minister, nationalist and poet, Pennar Davies, and from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Hill summons his readers to

Salute the bards—the prized effoliate  
 Atavisms—who yet recite  
 Pieties through contentious sleep.

Hill populates this sequence of poems with figures from Welsh history like Ann Griffiths, T H Parry-Williams, R Williams Parry, Thomas Vaughan, Crawshay the iron king, Saunders Lewis, and Lloyd George; even the Puritan saints, Morgan Llwyd and Vavasour Powell, and the fifth monarchists make appearances, as does the community at Trefeca in 1752 and T S Eliot in Swansea in 1944.

Those who love Wales and admire Hill's poetry, as I do, will be drawn to this book. Yet it is not a comforting read.

Meant to honour Morgan Llwyd  
 For the last haul, right as to Heavensgate  
 Where matter is neither fluid,  
 Claggy, nor adamant in redeemed state.

Chemical-yellow the chapel glass  
 Works to acclimatize the Holy City:  
 The pitch-pine pews are buffed dirty,  
 Deacons succeed in the Welsh hiss;  
 Much else given over  
 To silicosis, fatal childbed fever;  
 The sinner's hope faithed in the final river.

On a bleak, wet afternoon in autumn, Hill took me back to Wales. I have met those deacons, the fatal fever, the silicosis and the sinner's faith—as may have you.

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Alan Argent



***Tin Tabernacles: Postcard Album.* By Ian Smith. Pp 154. Camrose Media, Pembroke, 2010. £12.99 paperback. ISBN 978-0-9566132-0-2.**

This is a follow-up to the author's *Tin Tabernacles: Corrugated Iron Mission Halls, Churches and Chapels of Britain*. This book opens with a short introduction describing the design and marketing of these buildings, including facsimiles of manufacturers' illustrated adverts. The main body of the book consists of reproductions of mainly black and white postcards, mostly full-size and two to a page.

The term "tin tabernacle", initially a term of abuse or scorn, conjures up an impression of a relatively small building in church or chapel terms containing a nonconformist congregation or mission. Looking through the book we find that many are Anglican churches and quite a number are of substantial size. An example of both would be the, now Grade II listed, Garrison Church at Deepcut Barracks, Aldershot which has a capacity for a congregation of several hundred.

The basic combination of a wooden frame with roof and exterior walls made of corrugated iron allows for a wide variety of possible sizes. Their chief advantage was the speedy construction possible on a prepared foundation. This enabled churches to be started quickly at a time of rapid population expansion. Most were probably intended as temporary constructions pending the finance for a grander brick or stone edifice but a number still survive. Some of the postcards are of a subsequent masonry building with the corrugated iron one relegated to a subsidiary purpose but still visible.

A number of the postcards are of Congregational churches and the author gives this summary on p. 57: "Congregationalists are protestants who govern their own churches at a local independent level rather than adhering to the hierarchical structure of the 'mainstream' churches". Clearly we might wish to tweak this sentence for style but we should commend the author for its being substantially correct. Perhaps this reflects knowledge gained through living in Wales. The author is keen to hear from anyone about tin tabernacles they know of in their area. This fascinating book is well worth a look.

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*Peter Young*

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