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**THE  
CONGREGATIONAL  
HISTORY  
SOCIETY  
MAGAZINE**

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**Volume 7 No 3 Spring 2014**

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## EDITORIAL

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This issue sees Gordon Campbell return to our pages but not, as in the past, to consider developments in the churches of north Britain. Rather his attention is fixed on the west, with his examination of the history of Congregationalism on the Isle of Man.

We welcome to our pages also Meegan Griffin who has made a study of women and temperance in Birmingham, specifically drawing on the extant records of Carr's Lane Congregational Church during the ministry of J H Jowett from 1895 onwards. She provides an important insight into a church at the peak of its influence and to a minister who had the intimidating task of succeeding the formidable R W Dale there and who was dubbed by the press only a few years later 'the greatest living preacher'. Curiously Jowett has been overlooked by recent historians.

In addition to these, Trudy Kinloch has written an account of the EFCC studies conference and our usual features are included.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

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### **Silvester Horne (1865–1914)**

Charles Silvester Horne who died unexpectedly a century ago on 2 May, 1914, aged 49 years, was one of the most active and attractive personalities in the nonconformist churches of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was a son of the manse in that his father, Charles, who had trained for the ministry at Spring Hill College, Birmingham, had served Congregational churches at Castle Hill, Northampton, Odiham, Hampshire and Cuckfield, Sussex. Then Charles Horne had moved into journalism, becoming the editor of the *Newport and Market Drayton Advertiser* in Shropshire.

Silvester Horne sought to follow his father into the Congregational ministry but was also consistently to express a concern for social and political issues, alongside his interests in theology and church history. Silvester opted to study as an undergraduate at Glasgow University where he came to know at first hand the churches of the Evangelical Union. From Glasgow he moved to Oxford, becoming one of the first six students (and the youngest of them) at the newly founded Mansfield College where he met his lifelong friend, and later his biographer, W B Selbie, who was to be the second principal of Mansfield.

Horne was invited, before he had finished his course of studies at Oxford, to

become the minister of Kensington Chapel, Allen Street, where he was 1889–1903 and there, at the heart of fashionable west London, this young man from the country made his name. He married in 1892 Katherine Cozens-Hardy, the daughter of the future Master of the Rolls. However, as indicated, Horne had a social conscience and he decided to move to the then bustling area of Tottenham Court Road to be the minister of Whitefield's Central Mission (Tabernacle). Amid the rooming houses, full of shop assistants and clerks, which proliferated in the side streets, at Whitefield's he set up an institutional church, providing an endless round of activities and services which would have exhausted most ordinary individuals. In addition, he wrote his *Popular History of the Free Churches* (1903); he opposed and campaigned up and down the country against the South African War and the Conservative government's Education Act of 1902, and he gave tireless support to the Brotherhood movement.

Silvester Horne had been courted by the Liberal Party to stand for parliament on several occasions and in 1910 he was returned as MP for an Ipswich constituency. He held this seat until his death while simultaneously acting as minister of Whitefield's. Unwisely, in retrospect, in addition to his crippling work load, he had accepted an invitation to give a series of lectures at Yale University in early 1914. Having delivered these (later published as *The Romance of Preaching*) he was with his wife on board a ship, crossing from the USA to Toronto, in Canada, when he simply fell dead upon the deck.

The news shocked the churches at home and Congregationalists and others rose as one in his memory at the assembly of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. The young Geoffrey F Nuttall, aged only three in 1914, kept a photograph of Silvester Horne, the fallen hero, at his bedside, as he grew into early manhood, and Albert Peel, like many others of his generation, never really overcame the loss of Horne. In 1931 Peel wrote of Horne as "a passionate lover of freedom" who "wore himself out ... in the service of his fellows and in striving incessantly for truth and righteousness". Peel continued "Never so happy as when leading a charge against oppression and injustice, he could move great audiences and inspire young people to consecrated endeavour in a way given to few".

Given that Peel's language is dated and reflects his own emotional involvement with his hero, we may yet feel his, and perhaps a generation's sense of overwhelming loss and frustrated hope. Coming so close to the outbreak of World War One, with the passage of years, Horne's death seemed to have presaged a greater loss of influence for Congregationalism and for nonconformity in general.

Horne's body was returned to this country to be buried in the small cemetery in Church Stretton, in Shropshire, where he owned a house and where the town institute to this day bears his name. Indeed, just inside the front

entrance of the institute is a copy of the same photograph which the young Nuttall knew and admired. Horne's son, Kenneth (1907–69), was to become the witty and urbane radio comedian whose programmes, among them *Much Binding in the Marsh*, *Beyond Our Ken* and *Round the Horne*, ran from the 1940s to the 60s.

Had Silvester Horne lived and survived World War One, how different might subsequent Congregationalism have been? Such a question is impossible to answer but that such a powerful personality and much loved orator would have made a difference is impossible to deny.

## CORRESPONDENCE

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### Pastor and Minister

The editor has received the following communication, on the subject of pastor and minister, as used in Congregational churches in the early 20th century, in response to the remarks of Prof Clyde Binfield aired in our last issue.

Dear Alan,

As a follow up to the recent correspondence in the Congregational History Society Magazine on the pastor/minister issue, I feel that I ought to make a contribution to the debate since I suspect that I was the unwitting trigger of Professor Clyde Binfield's initial intervention.

I must admit that until the matter was aired I did tend to make extensive use of the term pastor, as is evident from the titles of a number of my papers which have been published in past issues of the *Congregational History Society Magazine*. This was not done either unthinkingly or indiscriminately. Rather I sought to be faithful to my source material on Congregationalism in Edwardian Hampshire, which includes not simply newspaper reports but also a wide variety of church records. However, on closer inspection it would appear that during the Edwardian era there was, in certain quarters, a change from 'pastor' to 'minister'. Taking Havant Congregational Church as an example, Revd Richard Wells (1882–1905), who went on to become secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, referred to himself as 'Your Affectionate Friend and Pastor' when writing to his congregation. By contrast, one of his successors, Edward Kirby (1910–23), used the phrase 'Your Friend and Minister'.

I get the impression that with regard to this issue a number of factors were at work. One of these was custom and practice, with a shift from 'pastor' to 'minister' occurring as the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth.

Here I think there are parallels to be drawn with the later changes in clerical dress to which you draw attention in *The Transformation of Congregationalism*. Another factor was status, with the terms being used to distinguish between those on the Congregational Union's List A, 'ministers', and on List B, 'pastors'. In

addition, there was perhaps the question of priorities with those who favoured the term 'pastor' attaching greater importance to pastoral work than preaching, which I would certainly not regard as the 'soft option'. Nonetheless, what this episode has taught me is that I need to be more circumspect in future and to avoid being overly wedded to either 'pastor' or 'minister'. I wonder if there are any other terms where a note of caution is in order.

Yours,

Roger Ottewill.

On this subject, the Editor writes—

At present I am carefully working through some of my own church's records from the early 20th century. These relate specifically to the Young Men's Bible Class for the years 1910–13 which seems to have consisted of perhaps 30 or more men at the time. However, throughout that period, the then minister was consistently referred to as the pastor. He did not seem to be offended by this in the least and, I suspect, that the use of the title in this way was widespread among Congregational churches then.

Would the coming of provinces and moderators, in part motivated by the desire to raise the standards of the Congregational ministry in general, have played a role in changing attitudes and in promoting the greater use of the term minister? Perhaps others would send in their contributions on this change which does represent a shift in the understanding of Congregational ministers of their own role and purpose.

Peter Young has also written

On the subject of pastor v minister, I noted recently when reading A G Matthews' foreword to his edition of *The Savoy Declaration of Faith and Order, 1658* (1959) that in it he thanks his "former pastor" at Oxted, Daniel Jenkins.

## **HELP NEEDED—THE ANGELS' VOICE**

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Alan Argent is preparing for publication a critical edition of the magazines mentioned above. These were entitled 'The Angels' Voice' and, as stated, they emerged from the pre-World War I Young Men's Bible Class at Trinity Congregational Church, Brixton. Only one or two of these magazines were in circulation at any time and his church still has most of those that were produced.

These magazines are a treasure trove of information about growing up in south London, a century ago. They include items on socialism, cycling, football, ladies' hockey, holidays in the Channel Islands, Belgium and Italy, day trips to Boulogne, rambles in Surrey, members working in the Canary Islands, India and

Zurich, as well as teasing ‘poems’, photographs and postcards. They also include criticism of the London Missionary Society and of the Bible study guide which they were following as a class together.

However he needs help with the following matters.

1. Do any more of the magazines survive, unknown to the present church members at Brixton?
2. We know something of those members of the Bible Class who died in World War I but we are less informed on those who survived. If you are related to any of Trinity’s young people who served and/or survived during that war, please contact Alan Argent. His contact details are on the back of this *Congregational History Society Magazine*.
3. Trinity’s minister before and during World War I was Mathias *Lansdown* (1858–1932). His son, (Mathias) Harry, was a footballer and a lively member of the Bible Class. In the war he became Captain Lansdown. If you know any details of his later life, please contact Alan Argent. Mathias Lansdown’s brother, Francis (d 1926), and his nephew, Arnold Paton Lansdown (d 1983) both became ministers. Arnold had two daughters, Sheila and Doreen.
4. The leader of the Young Men’s Bible Class was Daniel C *Messent* and the treasurer was his brother, Will, while Mrs Dan Messent ran the Young Women’s Bible Class. Lewis Messent was a regular member of the Young Men’s football team. Indeed the Messent family were among the leading families at Trinity 100 years ago, as shown, active with work among the young men and women especially. If you can help to throw light on their later activities, and the whereabouts of the family now, then again please contact Alan Argent.
5. Notable names, with brothers and sisters in the church at Brixton in those years, include the *Snoswell*, *Bedwell*, *Rowe*, *Butcher* and *Godden* families, as well as that of Frank and Harry *Jones*; some of whom were still active at Trinity in the 1950s. More unusual names also appear such as *von Rittershausen*, *Stripp*, *Fouracre*, *Eagle*, *Coomber*, *Cramp*, *Boud* and *Osland*. Other names include *Crosley*, *Handy*, *Carpenter*, *Calloway*, *Lynch* and *Morse*. Frank *Perkins*, who is also one of the pre-1914 young men and suffered at times from their teasing, was known to Alan Argent in the 1960s, as was his wife, Mary. However if you are a descendant of any of these individuals or know anything of their later history, Alan Argent would be pleased to hear from you. Not only artefacts and photographs can recall an era but also personal memories. Indeed any further clues would be welcome to Alan Argent, as he seeks to learn more of these young people, their homes, backgrounds and later lives.

## TONY BENN (1925–2014)

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The prominent left wing politician and campaigner, Tony Benn (Anthony Neil Wedgwood Benn, as he was known until the mid 1970s), who died on 14 March 2014, was proud of his descent from a long time Congregational family which, in spite of its more recent involvement with the Labour party, also had had long and deep links with political Liberalism.

Benn's family enjoyed a colourful history. His grandfather, John Williams Benn MP, founded the family publishing house and became the leader of the London County Council. Tony's great-uncle, the Rev Julius Benn, was murdered with a chamber pot by his son, who was subsequently confined in Broadmoor Hospital and, after his release, fathered the distinguished actress Margaret Rutherford who became notable for her convincing depiction of some eccentric roles.

Tony Benn's own father, William Wedgwood Benn, as a young Liberal politician, was among the followers of H H Asquith, and was opposed to the unprincipled ambitions of Lloyd George which ultimately proved so divisive to Liberal politics. Personally courageous, William saw active service as a pilot in World War I and, although over age, enlisted in the RAF and managed to fly again on missions against enemy targets in World War II.

Moving his allegiance to the growing Labour party, William had served under Ramsay MacDonald between the wars and, after 1945, was Prime Minister Clement Attlee's Secretary for Air. However Attlee had earlier decided that Labour needed a stronger representation in the upper house and, as a result, William Wedgwood Benn was ennobled in 1941. This was necessarily an hereditary peerage because a life peerage was not then an option.

Although William regarded himself as a Congregationalist, he was not clearly a regular worshipper. On the other hand, Tony Benn's mother, Margaret, was a keen student of theology and had met Elsie Chamberlain (later ordained as a Congregational minister) in the 1930s when they were both students at King's College, London. Margaret was then a lay member of the Church of England but she shared with Elsie a passion for women's ministry and for greater recognition of the equality of women in society in general. Eventually Margaret became a convert to Congregationalism, frustrated especially by the bishops' refusal to countenance a role for women above the secondary and the inferior.

Tony himself was born on 3 April 1925 into a happy, if privileged, household. William, Viscount Stansgate, and Margaret, enjoyed a contented, busy and religiously pious life, with three sons (a fourth was stillborn). The title name, Stansgate, derived from their country home in Essex, close to the estuary of the River Blackwater. Tony was the second son and grew up at 40 Millbank,



Westminster, which was bombed in the war. As a child of 5 years he had met Ramsay MacDonald at 10 Downing Street and that same year he also met Mahatma Gandhi. Their Westminster neighbours were the outstanding Fabian Socialists who were among the founders of the London School of Economics, Beatrice and Sidney Webb (later Lord Passfield).

Tony was a day boy at Westminster School until it was evacuated during the war, when he became a boarder. His undergraduate studies at New College, Oxford, where he read philosophy, politics and economics, were interrupted by service in the RAF. Indeed his elder brother died in World War II. His father's death, aged 83, in 1960 caused Benn, then an MP who preferred to stay in the Commons, to campaign for the right to renounce such an inheritance and in 1963 the Peerage Act was passed, enabling peers to renounce their inherited titles. This privilege even Conservatives, like Sir Alec Douglas-Home, with a decidedly 'grousemoor' image, availed themselves of. The family's involvement in politics continues with his son, Hilary, who is MP for Leeds West, and who has described his father as having "an endless curiosity about the world".

Tony's almost religious moral fervour and radical socialism had their origins, not in classic Marxism, but rather in his mother's Christian devotion and her informed teaching to her children of the Bible, especially of the challenges to the political and social order of their day by the prophets and by Jesus himself. Tony Benn was consistently critical of Anglican privilege and vehemently argued in favour of the disestablishment of the Church of England.

Margaret's firm allegiance to Congregationalism meant that, in the late 1960s and throughout the 70s, she opposed the United Reformed Church and its champions. She, above all others, prevailed on Elsie Chamberlain to join the Congregational Federation and she also provided her son in 1972 with the ammunition to question the URC's form of ecumenism during debates in the House of Commons. In addition, Margaret's passion for the rights of women was evident in Tony's very early advocacy for more women candidates for Parliament and for more women ministers in the government. He even mischievously installed a plaque, in memory of Emily Davidson, the suffragist, in a broom cupboard in the Palace of Westminster and was later interviewed about this for a Radio 4 programme.

His contributions to television and radio news and current affairs programmes allowed him to assume a preacher's mantle, and invariably he defended trades unionists in dispute with their employers. He saw himself through such media as directly communicating with people in their homes.

Retiring from parliament in 2011, having been a Labour MP for 50 years and having seen his political career as nothing less than his calling, Benn in the last 20 or 30 years of his life became the elder statesman of all those opposed to American interventionism and to an independent British nuclear deterrent. That

he consistently rejoiced in his nonconformist conscience, and that he saw himself as a puritan and a modern equivalent of the 17th century Levellers, gave his socialism a peculiarly dated quality, although coming from a position of personal faith it also had for him a sense of unassailable truth.

Although he became the leading voice of political dissent in this country, he remained a likeable, friendly, always polite gentleman, often seen with his pipe and a mug of tea. He was well known for his willingness to reply to any correspondent who wrote in, asking for his views on almost any matter of public interest. He would dash off replies, scribbling sometimes in his bold hand diagonally across the paper, as he waited to vote in the Commons. In addition, he was almost an obsessive diarist and published nine volumes of his diaries.

Curiously the *Sunday* programme on Radio 4, broadcast on 16 March, decided to interview the Methodist minister, Lord Griffith, about Tony Benn, having first acknowledged Benn's and his family's associations with Congregationalism. Tony Benn's funeral was held on Thursday, 27 March, 2014. His body was taken from the chapel of the Palace of Westminster to St Margaret's Church where his sons and grandsons carried the coffin into the church. Hundreds of mourners lined the streets and, as it passed, the coffin was greeted with applause by the crowds whose banners, representing miners' associations and anti-war causes, reflected some of the interests which he had championed. During the service, the Labour Party leader, Ed Miliband, read extracts from John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

## NOTES FROM THE CHS SECRETARY

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### **A Church History is the History of its People**

I have grown up with the mantra that 'a church is not a building, it's people'. And yet when it comes to digging into the history of a church it is hard to access the story of its people.

I have been the minister of Highbury Congregational Church in Cheltenham for twenty-two years. In some years I have conducted twenty-five funerals and in other years ten. I have probably averaged between fifteen and twenty funerals per year. That's getting on for four hundred funerals in all. Of those, getting on for a half have resulted from some personal connection with Highbury and probably a quarter to a third of the funerals have been of people who have belonged to Highbury.

I hope in each funeral which I have taken that the heart of the Christian faith and the gospel has come across in the readings we have shared, the hymns

we have sung and in comments I have made in my address. The bulk of each address, however, has told the story of the person who has died.

Sometimes it has been a story that I have known myself; often it has been a story that I had been unaware of until members of the family and close friends recounted it to me in the days, after the death of their loved one, of one of those who makes up our church.

For the first years of my ministry I would hand over the script of my address to Diana Adams, the editor of 'Highbury News', our church magazine. More recently I have emailed her a copy immediately after the service. Diana has then re-worked my address into an obituary which has been published in the church magazine. Thanks to the wonder of archiving electronic material, and a remarkable amount of dedication delving further back into her paper records, Diana has now put together a compendium of all those obituaries.

Her collection has built up into a wonderful record of people who have made up Highbury Congregational Church in the last half century and more. In one sense it is a wonderful resource for someone turning their hand to write the history of our church. In another sense it is a substantial part of the history of our church in that period. After all, the church is not a building and not the sum total of the minute books of its meetings. Rather the church is people and the history of a church is the history of its people.

Think again about the funeral addresses that have been and are delivered in your church and consider how you might archive them in some way, as a record of those who in glory are part of the story of your church still. They are a resource for future historians who will wish to understand who and what your church was.

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*Richard Cleaves*

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## **THE EFCC CONGREGATIONAL STUDIES CONFERENCE 2014**

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The annual conference was held this year on March 15 at Wesley's Chapel, an appropriate venue, well-placed for visiting nearby Bunhill Fields during the lunch recess. This being the tercentenary of George Whitefield's birth, the conference chairman, Dr Digby L. James, gave the Alan Tovey Memorial lecture on the subject of George Whitefield and his influence on Congregationalism. After a brief sketch of Whitefield's life and ministry, his influence on Congregationalism was considered. Although a life-long member of the Church of England, he was often more accepted by nonconformists, like Philip Doddridge and Isaac Watts, than by the establishment of his day. The constant

theme of Whitefield's preaching 'you must be born again' had a major influence on Congregationalists, in helping preserve them from Unitarianism. Although not an organiser and church planter like Wesley, many churches were founded as a result of his preaching, a considerable number of which in time became Congregational.

An opportunity followed this lecture for tribute to be paid to two Congregational stalwarts who have been 'promoted to glory' in this past year, the Revs Stan Guest and Gordon Booth.

There followed three brief papers on the Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches logo, "Gospel Truth, Gospel Independence, Gospel Fellowship". The EFCC general secretary, Mike Plant, based his scholarly exposition of gospel truth on The Savoy Declaration of 1658. This was followed by Jonathan Hunt, the pastor of Morton Baptist Church, Thornbury. In addressing the theme of gospel independence, he framed his paper around a question which he had been asked by a local market trader. 'If your church is Independent then who is your boss?'. After surveying the historical and Biblical case for independence, Jonathan answered his question by demonstrating that true Congregationalism is not a democracy; rather the church is ruled by an absolute monarch—Christ the King of his church.

Finally Bill Calder of Thornton Heath, south London, gave a warm hearted treatment of gospel fellowship, 'being an outward expression of the unity that already exists in Christ'.

The papers are due to be published shortly and both they and the recordings will be available from the EFCC office ([www.efcc.org.uk](http://www.efcc.org.uk))

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*Trudy Kinloch*

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# CONGREGATIONALISM IN THE ISLE OF MAN

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## Introduction

The Congregational Federation has no Isle of Man churches in fellowship. There are two congregations of the United Reformed Church on the island—both with their roots firmly in the expatriate Scots community. St. Andrew's in Douglas (the island capital) was formerly part of the Lancashire Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of England.<sup>1</sup> Trinity in Ramsey (in the north of the island) started under the auspices of the United Secession Church of Scotland.<sup>2</sup>

Through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Church of England and the Methodists dominated religious life on the Island, each claiming the adherence of half or so of the population.<sup>3</sup>

However in former times, there were several Congregational churches on the island. Indeed the first Manx dissenting ordination was in an Independent Chapel.

Tourism now accounts for just a fraction of the island's economy—but at its peak, in 1919, the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company was running up to 17 boats with passenger arrivals, peaking at 634,512.<sup>4</sup> Tourists enjoyed promenades and beaches, horse drawn trams, steam and electric railways, and all the charms of the island.

Samuel Haining would go on to write one of the first guidebooks to the island<sup>5</sup>—but his first visit to Man predated not just the tourist industry, but also (by over a quarter of a century) the formation of the Steam Packet Company.<sup>6</sup> Haining was about 25 years old when he visited Man in 1804. A native of Kirkcudbrightshire in south-west Scotland, Haining was then a student at the University of Edinburgh. He spent a few weeks preaching around the island—

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<sup>1</sup> J Davidson et al *The First Century of Presbyterianism in Douglas, Isle of Man, 1825–1925* (Douglas 1925).

<sup>2</sup> W Cunningham *Notes on the History of Trinity Presbyterian Church of England, Ramsey, Isle of Man* (1962).

<sup>3</sup> J Kewley *Churches of Man: Isle of Man Churches, Chapels and Keills Explored in Words, Pictures and Music* (Ramsey 2009) 19.

<sup>4</sup> D Winterbottom *Governors of the Isle of Man since 1765* (Douglas 1999) 140.

<sup>5</sup> S Haining *A Historical and Descriptive View of the Isle of Man* (Douglas 1822) followed by *The Visitor's Guide for the Isle of Man* (Liverpool 1830).

<sup>6</sup> Holiday visitors did not arrive in any great numbers until the introduction of regular steamer communication.

and then returned to Edinburgh to complete his studies. Clearly his preaching made a lasting impression, for he was invited to return to the island to minister. In due course he responded to that invitation, and his island ministry ended only with his death in 1846.

## Douglas—the first Independent Church

Initially, Haining conducted services in a room in Fort Street in Douglas. The Independent Church in the island's capital was formed with just 8 members. The regular meeting-place (despite being fitted with pews for 200) was too small for the service of ordination, which was held in a Methodist chapel on 15 August 1808. Rev E White of Chester delivered the introductory discourse and examined Haining, Rev Mr Lewis of Wrexham led the ordination prayer; Rev Mr Ely of Bury delivered the charge to the new minister (based on 1 Timothy 4:16), and Rev Mr Wilson exhorted the people to encourage him (Deuteronomy 1:38).<sup>7</sup>

Later in that first year, Haining would record 15 members—Manx, English, Irish and Scots (including his wife, Jane).

At this time, Haining was also preaching regularly mid-week at Peel, Castletown and Ramsey. A contemporary report states that at each of these locations:

he commonly meets with a very favourable reception ... At one of those places he preaches in a room belonging to an inn; and it might be mentioned, to the credit of the landlady, that her house, during the time of worship, is as free from noise as any private residence. She requires any company she may have at the time, either to attend divine service, to be silent, or to withdraw.<sup>8</sup>

After Fort Street, worship would be held in a further four<sup>9</sup> locations before the building of a new chapel started in 1811 in Athol Street. This new church opened in January 1813. Initially, a “genteel street”<sup>10</sup> of private houses, Athol Street would become (on account of the Court House moving here):

the legal centre, the Lincoln's Inn or the Temple (on a very small scale, of course) of Douglas.<sup>11</sup>

Within months of the new chapel opening, a Sunday School started.<sup>12</sup>

In April 1816, ten years after its formation,<sup>13</sup> the Lancashire Congregational Union noted that:

<sup>7</sup> *Evangelical Magazine Vol XVI* (London November 1808).

<sup>8</sup> *Evangelical Magazine Vol XVI* (London November 1808).

<sup>9</sup> *Isle of Man Times and General Advertiser* (Sat 11 Dec 1875) 5.

<sup>10</sup> *Kneale's Guide to the Isle of Man* (Douglas c1860).

<sup>11</sup> *Ward and Lock's Descriptive and Pictorial Guide to the Isle of Man* (London 1883) 34.

<sup>12</sup> *Manx Advertiser* (Douglas 1 May 1813).

<sup>13</sup> B Nightingale *The Story of the Lancashire Congregational Union 1806–1906* (Manchester 1906).

our faithful brother Mr. Haining has laboured for eleven years<sup>14</sup> with considerable success, amidst great opposition. Driven by persecution from one building to another, his congregation were at last compelled to build for themselves. This has, however, occasioned a debt which presses so heavy upon them, that their minister has been obliged to keep a school for his support, and has thus been prevented from itinerating, the necessity of which is felt by all there.<sup>15</sup>

The committee granted £25. At their next meeting, the committee was pleased to report:

At the last annual meeting Mr. Haining was taken under the wing of the Union, as an itinerant in this long neglected Island; and he has laboured abundantly, in not less than twelve different towns and villages; some of them distant ten, fifteen, or even twenty miles from his residence ... He is in the habit of preaching five times in the week, besides the labours of the Sabbath. In his own congregation at Douglas, he has been more successful than in any former year, having been enabled to give himself wholly to the ministry ... Thus has the sum of £25 enabled a faithful minister to carry the glad tidings of great joy to hundreds who were perishing for lack of knowledge.<sup>16</sup>

At a meeting held at Athol Street on 27 May 1822, ‘The Isle of Man Congregational Itinerant Society’ was formed—with the aim of spreading the gospel throughout the island by means of preaching and of schools. Mr W Kelly was appointed president, and the Rev T F Winslow<sup>17</sup> secretary. It was proposed, as soon as possible, to procure ministers to preach to the inhabitants in Manx—but this proposal does not seem to have been implemented—Congregationalism remained very much English-language based.

Haining was said to be “a fine Hebrew scholar ... (who) yielded the pen of a ready writer”.<sup>18</sup> A Baptist minister, less enthusiastically, described him as “a Scotchman of considerable erudition, and a preacher of dull, dry, long sermons”.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The timescale is unclear. Haining’s gravestone records that he “came to this island in 1804, as a Minister of the Gospel of Christ and was Pastor of the Church and Congregation which met in the Independent Chapel, Athol Street, in this town from its erection in 1813”. The independent church was formed in 1808. It is not clear how quickly Haining returned to Man after his first visit in 1804—and whether he was itinerating prior to 1808.

<sup>15</sup> B Nightingale *Lancashire Nonconformity, or Sketches, Historical & Descriptive, of the Congregational and Old Presbyterian Churches in the County Vol VI The Churches of Southport, Liverpool and the Isle of Man* (Manchester 1893) 254.

<sup>16</sup> Nightingale *Lancashire Nonconformity* 255.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Forbes Winslow was born in Islington, Middlesex, in 1795. He studied at Glasgow University and Glasgow Theological Academy (from 1819) and moved to Man in 1822. He died in London in 1852.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Recollections of the Rev D Inglis’ in *Manx Quarterly Vol VI* (Douglas January 1921) 65 (hereafter MQ).

<sup>19</sup> W S Caine *H Stowell Brown: A Memorial Volume* (London 1888) 16–21.

He was one of the founders of the Lancasterian School in Douglas, and also helped to establish the Manx auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

From 1832, the Rev Dr William Carpenter was priest at St. Barnabas' Church. An Irish evangelical, his church was said to have the largest attendance in Douglas. For a time, this church had no evening service, and Carpenter's family had seats in the Athol Street Church. Though Carpenter did not attend, his wife and children were regularly in their places under Haining's evening ministry.<sup>20</sup>

The Hainings had 11 children—including two sets of twins. Haining's wife Jane died in 1843, aged 60. Apparently, Mrs Haining was reading a newspaper, sent by a son in America, when:

her head-dress accidentally caught fire. She was not much burnt, but the fright she received had a fatal effect, and she died on the Monday following.<sup>21</sup>

Haining himself died in 1846, aged 68.

## Douglas—Presbyterian Separation

It is hardly surprising that:

the tie of nationality and mode of worship attracted a number of Presbyterians to Mr. Haining's ministry.<sup>22</sup>

Amongst them was James McCrone, a Glaswegian, who came to the Isle of Man in 1817 as Crown Agent and also Commissioner for the Duke of Atholl. In 1825:

trouble arose in the congregation, the source of which is doubtful, but Mr. McCrone left, taking with him the most, if not all, of his fellow Presbyterians and others as well. They met in apostolic fashion in an upper room in Fort Street.<sup>23</sup>

In 1829 David Barclay Mellis started ministering to the Presbyterian congregation. He was ordained in 1830<sup>24</sup> and a new church on Finch Road was opened in April 1832.

## Douglas—Breakaway and Reunion

Haining's successor, Mr Harrison (educated at Rotherham College), did not

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<sup>20</sup> MQ

<sup>21</sup> *Liverpool Mercury Issue 1655* (Liverpool 27 January 1843).

<sup>22</sup> Davidson *First century of Presbyterian*.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Mellis was a pupil at Perth Grammar School and a student at the University of Edinburgh. After his Manx ministry (during which he also founded a savings bank), Mellis was presented to the Crown living of Tealing in the County of Angus. The current writer served as a student and later non-stipendiary minister in that parish (then united with Murroes and linked with Auchterhouse—and now also united with Monikie and Newbigging).



have a long island ministry—being “obliged to leave” in 1849.<sup>25</sup> (Harrison later transferred to the Church of England.) Athol Street Church was then closed for 18 months.

John S. Jackson, manager of the Bank of Mona, had been a member of the Athol Street Chapel. He certainly left Athol Street following Haining’s death—but the previous year (1845), he started a new Independent Church in Douglas.

The benevolent proprietor, actuated by a sincere desire to promote the spiritual interests of his neighbours, who are nearly a mile away from any place of worship, aided by a few friends opened this sanctuary for the service of Almighty God in 1845; and since that time, to the present, the Gospel has been faithfully preached, irrespective of sect or party.<sup>26</sup>

Jackson lived in a mansion called Falcon Cliff—perched high above Douglas Bay. The new chapel stood on the shore and was described as being small and neat with the same castellated style of architecture as the big house above.

The first minister in this chapel was William Carey Stallybrass,<sup>27</sup> who was born in Selenginsk in Siberia in 1820 (where his father<sup>28</sup> was a missionary). Stallybrass studied at Silcoates School<sup>29</sup> (from 1834), the University of Glasgow (from 1838), the Glasgow Theological Academy, and at Homerton Academy<sup>30</sup>—and was ordained in Southampton in 1843. He came to the island to tutor Johnson’s family—but went on to minister at Falcon Cliff from 1846 to 1850. Then he was called by the Athol Street Church!

A local paper recorded:

the re-opening of the Independent, or Congregational Chapel, Athol Street, where for the future the Rev. W.C. Stallybrass has made arrangements to supply the services of this place of worship. The closing of this chapel for some time past has been felt as a great inconvenience by many persons in this town; and now the above rev. gentleman has consented to become its pastor, we feel assured it will be respectably filled under his ministration; and we indulge the hope on this re-opening occasion, that the friends of religious liberty will not be backward in their support of a branch of that church, to whose unwearied efforts and zealous perseverance the Dissenters of England are deeply indebted for many of their most valuable privileges.<sup>31</sup>

Stallybrass stayed for 8 years—moving then to Wavertree, Liverpool

<sup>25</sup> *Isle of Man Times and General Advertiser* (Douglas Sat 11 Dec 1875) 5.

<sup>26</sup> *Mona’s Herald* (Douglas 27 November 1850).

<sup>27</sup> M P Stallybrass *The Stallybrass Family and Their Medieval Ancestors* (Unpublished, Georgia 2012).

<sup>28</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>29</sup> In Wakefield, Yorkshire—It was founded in 1820 as the Northern Congregational School at Silcoates House, for the board and education of the sons of nonconformist clergy.

<sup>30</sup> A dissenting academy, once just outside London.

<sup>31</sup> *Mona’s Herald* (Douglas 18 July 1850).

(apparently because of his wife's health) and ministering later in Italy and in London.

The new minister at the Falcon Cliff Chapel was the Rev. John Hill. Hill was born in Dundee, and studied at the University of Glasgow and at the Glasgow Theological Academy. He had been a member of Kirriemuir Congregational Church, and ministered in Alloa, Kilmarmock, and Staffordshire before coming to Douglas,<sup>32</sup> apparently for the benefit of his health. In 1851, Hill noted that the chapel had 120 seats:

with an average attendance of 60 at the morning service and 70 at the evening service.<sup>33</sup>

A Sunday School started in November 1850, with 65 students and 8 teachers.

The seats are all free,—the rich and poor alike welcome,—the cloven foot of bigotry has never crossed the threshold,—harmony and love pervade the little company of disciples,—tracts are circulated by them ... the Heathen in foreign lands are sympathised with, and the attention of the young directed to the Cross of Christ!

Rev. Robert Chamberlain followed Hill at Falcon Cliff. He had been educated at Hoxton Academy, and had held pastorates in Durham, Sussex and Dorset before moving to the Isle of Man in 1852. On his departure, the Falcon Cliff Chapel closed. It had lasted less than a decade—and Independency reunited again under Stallybrass at Athol Street. Following closure, the Falcon Cliff Chapel was transformed into an entrance to Falcon Cliff Hotel grounds.

## **Douglas—Two new churches rise and fall**

Rev John Chater came to Douglas from Cheshunt College—and ministered at Athol Street from 20 February 1859 until May 1863, when he moved to Southport.<sup>34</sup>

During his ministry, William Anderson Smith came on the recommendation of the London Home Mission to act as a missionary in Douglas. Smith was a native of New Pitsligo, Aberdeen<sup>35</sup>—and had ministered in Groton, New York, before coming to Man. Initially, Smith visited from home to home, conducting prayer meetings in homes and in the open air. After a while, rooms were hired for meetings—but in time he was encouraged to embark on a more adventurous project. A plot of land was secured and building work started on a new, large chapel.

The Circular Road Chapel was erected in 1866, with seating for about 600

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<sup>32</sup> W D McNaughton *The Scottish Congregational Ministry 1794–1993* (Glasgow 1993) 65/66.

<sup>33</sup> Religious Census (1851).

<sup>34</sup> *Liverpool Mercury Issue 4735* (14 April 1863).

<sup>35</sup> Surman Index of Congregational ministers.

people. For several years, large congregations were gathered by Smith's ministry; but in 1872 he resigned (and moved to Middlesex), being followed in the same year by the Rev W H Hyatt, who had been trained for the Wesleyan ministry. Hyatt moved to Yorkshire in 1874 (and later to Lancashire). His successor was the Rev J S Kent, who held the pastorate from 1877 to 1879. Rev Thomas Ridley Quayle became the minister in 1880. When he emigrated to the USA in 1883 (where he ministered in Minnesota and Illinois) no successor was appointed.

The Circular Road church building was used as a Unitarian Church from 1884 to 1896. Then it was used as a Seamen's Mission. There had been some reservations about the Mission building being so far from the Harbour, but the building (renamed Bethel Chapel) was used as such until the 1950s. Brief use by the Salvation Army followed—before conversion to a car showroom (and the removal of the tower and façade). Finally, it was demolished in the early 1960s.

The Circular Road Church did receive considerable help from the Lancashire Congregation Union in the 17 years of its Congregational existence. For a time it also had a preaching station at Laxey, which could accommodate about 100 people.

Back at Athol Street, Chater's successor was the Rev Anthony Thompson.<sup>36</sup> Born at Alnwick, and educated at Spring Hill College, Birmingham, he settled at Douglas in 1863, on completion of his college career. He was ordained in April 1864. The congregation at this time was fundraising for a new chapel and schools, and it was noted that:

The movements of the Congregational body in Douglas are exciting a good deal of interest.<sup>37</sup>

Thompson's promising ministry was cut short by his death aged just 31.

On 23 November 1866, William Dalrymple<sup>38</sup> laid the foundation stone of the Finch Hill Congregational Church, and on the same day the Rev John Williamson, a native of Banff who had studied at Aberdeen University and Lancashire College, was recognised as pastor. Like the Circular Road Chapel, the Finch Hill building could accommodate 600 people. In 1875 the membership stood at 78—but with an average attendance in the middle of winter of 180 Sunday School scholars.<sup>39</sup>

The old chapel in Athol Street was sold and transformed into shops, the upper part serving for a time as the Douglas Public Library. The building was then used as a garage and as offices before being demolished in 1999.

Williamson moved to Lincoln in 1878. He was succeeded by the Rev David

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<sup>36</sup> *Liverpool Mercury Issue 4789* (Liverpool 16 June 1863)

<sup>37</sup> *Liverpool Mercury Issue 5031* (Liverpool 24 March 1864)

<sup>38</sup> Proprietor of Union Mills—and son of the Rev James Dalrymple—of whom more later.

<sup>39</sup> *Isle of Man Times and General Advertiser* (Douglas Sat 11 Dec 1875) 5.

Inglis. Inglis was born in Dalsersf near Hamilton, and studied at Paton Congregational College (Nottingham) and the Lancashire Independent College. He had ministered in Lancashire for 3 years before he moved to Douglas. His wife was a grand-daughter of Haining, the first minister. With the exception of Haining's, Inglis's ministry (32 years) was the longest which the church had enjoyed. A debt of £1,400 was removed, and class rooms were erected at a cost of about £250. The church was also "beautified". Membership, which stood at about 83 when Inglis came, increased to 130. He ministered again in Lancashire from 1911 until 1920—and died in 1929 in Palmers Green.

The Finch Hill congregation became part of the United Reformed Church (formed in 1972 by the Union of Presbyterians and Congregationalists). In 1986, a minister was appointed to serve both Finch Hill and St. Andrew's Churches—with the view to a possible merger. In the end, this did not take place. Finch Hill eventually dissolved as a congregation—with members dispersing to St. Andrew's, a nearby Methodist Church, or congregations nearer home (Finch Hill being a gathered church drawing members from a wide geographical area).<sup>40</sup>

After failed attempts to list the building, the Finch Hill Church was demolished in 1997. Stained glass windows were transferred to St Matthew's, Douglas (Anglican) and to St Columba's, Port Erin (Roman Catholic).<sup>41</sup>

## Ramsey—developments in the north

Ramsey is some 16 miles from Douglas. Haining was preaching here occasionally from about 1805. Regular services started around 1809 with the appointment of James Taylor. A congregation was formed in 1810—becoming the second Independent Church on the island. On 23 September 1810, Taylor was ordained and inducted. Mr D Lewis of Llanbrynmair, and Mr D Jones of Holywell assisted Haining in the conduct of worship, when:

the congregation was large, remarkably attentive, and apparently much affected.<sup>42</sup>

In 1820, despite:

several additions to the church at Ramsey [it had to] ... deplore the loss of its principal friend.<sup>43</sup>

In 1821 the Home Missionary Society sent the Rev William Richard Baker

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<sup>40</sup> With grateful thanks to Mrs Pauline Richardson of St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Douglas for her email of 30 August 2013 answering my questions about this period.

<sup>41</sup> Kewley *Churches of Man* 114.

<sup>42</sup> *Evangelical Magazine* (London 1811).

<sup>43</sup> Nightingale *Lancashire Nonconformity* 256.

to take charge. He is said to have laboured with “great promise of success”,<sup>44</sup> yet in 1829, “Vacant from Removal” is written against the church. Shortly afterwards, it appears to have died out.

### Castletown—the old Island Capital

Miles Leah is recorded as the new independent preacher at Castletown in 1817<sup>45</sup> but his Congregational ministry was brief. He was preaching with the Primitive Methodists from at least 1824, whilst also working as a druggist.<sup>46</sup>

In 1833 a Mr. Morss “not yet ordained” is noted as minister. He died, aged 37, in 1835—by which time he was ordained.

The Union report for the year ending April 1837 notes:

The Rev. Mr. Berry states, that during the past year the interest at this place has proved a source of "animation, depression, and perplexity." Full one third of the original congregation, including several of their most active and valuable coadjutors, have been removed to England. In the midst of these discouragements, however, he considers that the cause has substantially advanced in public estimation, and the people seem to be united, and deeply concerned for the welfare of the place.... The congregation at Castletown has varied from thirty to sixty. There are at present seventeen members in the Church; there are forty children in the Sunday School. Mr. Berry considers the village congregations as very encouraging; usually they are about forty. At the Strand in particular, the place is always full, and the congregation remarkably serious and devout.

In 1837, the Independent Chapel is listed with an address of Market buildings<sup>47</sup>—which may indicate that services were held above the market hall at the corner of the Parade.

In the autumn of 1837, Berry resigned, and left the Island. During the winter the place of worship was closed—but it was re-opened the following spring. In March 1838 it was reported that:

On Sunday last the Independent Chapel of Castletown having been shut up for a considerable time was re-opened for divine service when two sermons were delivered by the Rev. Mr. Saxton of Nottingham to a very full and respectable congregation.<sup>48</sup>

Saxton had been a student at Rotherham College. The church remained in existence only a few years longer.

### Peel

Two memorials to Independency in Peel are worth mentioning. On St Patrick's

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44 *ibid.*

45 *The Manks Gazette* (Douglas 27 February 1817).

46 *Pigot and Co's Directory and Topography of the Isle of Man* (1827).

47 *Pigot's Directory and Topography of the Isle of Man* (1837).

48 *The Manx Liberal* (Douglas 17 March 1838).

Isle is a memorial stone to the Rev Edmund Violet, minister of the Independent Church of St John's, Newfoundland, who died en route to Liverpool in 1810, and whose body was brought ashore at Peel Harbour.<sup>49</sup>

Corrin Tower was built in 1806 by Thomas Corrin on land he owned, following the death of his wife Alice (aged 33) and her unborn child. Ninety feet from the Tower lies a dissenting burial ground—where Thomas, Alice, and two of their children are buried. Corrin is not numbered amongst the original members of the Fort Street congregation—but was one of the group who built the Athol Street Church. He was also a teacher in Haining's Sunday School. Corrin suspected that his son Robert (an Anglican) would not countenance burial in non-consecrated ground. This, in fact, proved to be the case. Corrin was not buried until the Bishop had consecrated the Dissenting Burial Ground!

The Manx Advertiser 20 June 1822 reports the opening of an independent chapel at Peel—which may have met in former barracks.

## Union Mills

James Dalrymple was born in 1777. He emigrated to America whilst young, but seems to have returned to Scotland fairly quickly. A member of Kirkintilloch Congregational Church, he was probably a student at Robert Haldanes's Theological Academy.<sup>50</sup>

Dalrymple moved to Man with his wife Agnes and their two children in 1822. The story goes that on a return journey from Liverpool his ship was forced by bad weather to put in at Douglas. On the following Sunday, no minister being present, he was invited to preach—and so impressed the congregation that they asked him to return as minister. History, however, does not seem to record either the date or location of this alleged incident!

From 1825, the Dalrymples leased Ballastole Farm at Braddan. Dalrymple was not ordained, though he had some theological training. He is sometimes referred to as “pastor” at Kirk Michael—but there is no record of a Congregational Church ever existing there.<sup>51</sup> He may have been a schoolmaster there—and probably preached at Kirk Michael on occasion. The Manx Independent ministers may have ministered to gathered congregations—but took itinerating very seriously. The Congregational Church was at Union Mills—and there Dalrymple preached, until his death in December 1861:

in a very humble meeting house, the Gospel he so dearly loved.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Mick Smith, Joyce Davidson et al *Emotion, Place and Culture* (Surrey 2009) 43.

<sup>50</sup> W D McNaughton *The Scottish Congregational Ministry 1794–1993* (Glasgow 1993)

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<sup>51</sup> Nightingale *Lancashire Nonconformity* 261.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid* 261.

In 1826 it is recorded that the Bishop had attempted to suppress an academy and Sunday School started by Dalrymple in his own home, claiming:

this power under some old Act of Tynwald, passed in 1705—and (saying) ... that the Toleration Laws had no operation in the Isle of Man!<sup>53</sup>

At one service, candles (for lighting rather than liturgical use!) set fire to Dalrymple's gown, and he is said to have declared that for once he was:

a burning and a shining light.<sup>54</sup>

Following his death, the Dalrymple Memorial Chapel was built by public subscription, with sitting accommodation for 150. The church was designed by local architect John Robinson, and built by his brother Henry. The foundation stone was laid on 25 June 1862, and the building was opened for worship on 29 April 1863.<sup>55</sup> A Memorial Hall opened in 1904.<sup>56</sup> The church closed in 1873—apparently due to difficulties in arranging suitable pulpit supply.

In September 1890, the Finch Hill Church undertook to reopen the church. The County Union granted £25 annually to support its work—and the Rev Frederick Richard Roberts, late of East Boldon, and formerly a student of Lancashire College, took charge for twelve months. He was followed from September 1891 to May 1892 by the Rev William Carey Lee, late of St Annes-on-the-Sea.

There seem to have been significant problems in supporting a pastor—and the chapel finally closed in 1930. Though no longer in use as a church, this is the only Congregational Church building on the island still standing.<sup>57</sup>

## Conclusion

Douglas Independent Church offered an alternative to the Anglican establishment. Some were attracted by evangelical theology or non-liturgical worship—rather than a principled commitment to Congregationalism. It is not surprising that, over time, there should have been moves to create Presbyterian churches. Later, Baptist and other denominational patterns would emerge.

It is striking in the telling of this story that, even in the latter stages, the number of members in the Congregational Churches was relatively modest. There is a certain boldness in a membership of 78 constructing a building for 600 (as happened at Finch Hill). Yet what is striking too is the large number of children served by the Sunday Schools. It has to be remembered also that Man

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<sup>53</sup> 'Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty' in *The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature Vol XXI* (London 1826) 374.

<sup>54</sup> Nightingale *Lancashire Nonconformity* 262.

<sup>55</sup> *Illustrated London News* (London 16 May 1863).

<sup>56</sup> *Manx Millennium 2000 AD Part 8* (Douglas 1999) 22.

<sup>57</sup> *Kewley Churches of Man* 151.

became a hugely popular holiday destination—whose summer population dwarfed its permanent residents.

The relative weakness of Congregationalism must also be attributed in part to the strength of Methodism—in both its Wesleyan and Primitive varieties.

The movement Haining started appears to have died out—yet some of Congregational persuasion have found a spiritual home in the two congregations of the United Reformed Church (which is, of course, at national level, a union of Congregational and Presbyterian traditions).

Yet Haining's prime motivation was evangelism of his adopted island home. Independency was a means to an end—not an end in itself. No doubt he would be intrigued by the range of expressions of Christianity present today—including some (such as Baptists and Independent Methodists) continuing to maintain Independent principles—though they would never label themselves as Congregationalists.

The site of the ruined Cistercian Rushen Abbey used to be a pleasure garden. In the pretty gardens amidst the picturesque ruins, visitors could partake of strawberries, and dance. Rushen Abbey is now in the care of Manx National Heritage—and imaginative displays tell something of the Christian heritage of the island, as well as the history of the abbey. One panel speaks of fresh expressions of church—with a congregation taking worship to a public house. The founder of Manx Congregationalism would be entitled to smile. Over 200 years ago he was doing exactly the same thing.

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Gordon A Campbell

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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

**Thomas Barnes of Farnworth and the Quinta: A Chronicle of a Life** by Jennifer Barnes

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)

PDF versions of many Congregational works (John Cotton, Richard Mather, William Jay, John Angell James, RW Dale and PT Forsyth) can be viewed by clicking on the PDF Books links on the website.

Also Calamy's 1702, 1713 and 1727 volumes of Richard Baxter's *Life and Times* detailing the ministers ejected in 1662.

Click on the Whitefield link and there are further links to sermons and Journals .

There are many other titles too numerous to mention.



## WOMEN AND TEMPERANCE

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Carr's Lane Congregational Church during the nineteenth century was a large, flourishing, important centre of nonconformist activity in Birmingham. It might be expected to find amongst the church records, held at Birmingham Central Library, evidence of temperance societies within the framework of this church activity. Yet, it was not until the arrival of a new minister at Carr's Lane in 1896, the Rev John Henry Jowett (1863–1923), that a new organisational approach to church record-keeping appears to have begun there. The existence of any previous records cannot be determined, but Carr's Lane was not alone in that whilst temperance was advocated by most denominations, there is very little surviving evidence of separate temperance meetings within the churches of Birmingham. Carr's Lane Congregational Church records, however, hold quite a unique document in the surviving Women's Branch Minute Book of Carr's Lane Temperance Association 1896–1911.<sup>1</sup> Of greatest significance is that this was an association whose main concern was dealing only with temperance issues that affected women and young girls. This was a Ladies Temperance Association, and as such their aims were directed at the moral education and reform of women and young girls for the benefit of family life and society in general. This minute book shows not only the involvement of a particular group of women in the temperance cause but, more importantly, the role they played in the wider temperance movement both locally and nationally.

Most philanthropic societies in the early nineteenth century were instigated and run by men. In Birmingham the temperance cause was taken up in August 1830 by two Quakers, John Cadbury and Thomas Southall,<sup>2</sup> who established a temperance society which was run by men for the benefit of men, with participation by women very much behind the scenes. The involvement of women began much later with the establishing of women's auxiliaries attached to societies run by men, leading eventually to the formation of women's only societies. So who were these women at Carr's Lane who identified with the temperance cause, and what attracted them to choose it as an outlet for their endeavours? These committee members were not from the urban elite, like many of the wealthy, mainly Quaker upper middle-class women who were very much a leading force in the temperance movement in Birmingham, and whose work is therefore more widely chronicled. They were drawn from families

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<sup>1</sup> Birmingham City Archives, Central Library, 'The Women's Branch Minute Book of Carr's Lane Temperance Association 1896–1911', ref. C.C.1.129, (hereafter Women's Minute Book). For J H Jowett see ODNB.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, ref. MS466/255, *Watchword*, The Good Templars, 4th March 1901.

whose occupations included doctors, merchants, small manufacturers, and employers in trades such as printing and decorating. Identification of individual committee members of the Carr's Lane Branch of the Women's Temperance Association presents a daunting task. Victorian middle-class ladies used their first name only if widowed or single, but it has been possible to identify certain committee members, and look more closely at their individual contributions and involvement. None of the women who were identifiable on census returns were shown as having any employment, and all had at least one domestic servant in their home.<sup>3</sup> Freed from domestic responsibilities, many such middle class women throughout the nineteenth century engaged in philanthropic activity. It was one of the few acceptable means by which leisured middle-class women could seek and find self-expression in what was, essentially, a man's world.

Temperance differed from other philanthropic ventures, such as those concerned with educational or medical needs, because, as a moral issue, it was most often incorporated into established institutions. It was therefore easier for women to undertake work that operated within and was sanctioned by their church. As members of Carr's Lane, they were already involved in a network of church activity that united them in fellowship with other like-minded women. As Nonconformists, their religious viewpoint retained aspects of Puritanism which imposed rigid codes of personal behaviour. They valued independence, thrift, and self-help as a way of life, and saw drink as an obstacle to individual improvement and social progress.<sup>4</sup> Their own lives were suffused with considerations of a religious conscience that gave rise to the term 'Nonconformist conscience', which in practical terms they applied to their philanthropic activities.<sup>5</sup> The women of Carr's Lane were thus attracted to philanthropic work, not only because they had the time but also because of their religious convictions, which were based on a theology of individualism. As Christians, they were called upon to be charitable, and therefore they 'had a rightful and important place in the charitable world'.<sup>6</sup>

## Taking the pledge

Carr's Lane Church like other Congregational churches in the nineteenth century was an autonomous institution, with the denomination itself described by Hugh McCleod as at the extreme of decentralisation.<sup>7</sup> It financed its own operations, hired and fired its own ministers, and established its own rules and

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<sup>3</sup> Census Returns, RG 12, RG 13.

<sup>4</sup> R Helmstadter, 'The Nonconformist Conscience', in G Parsons (ed) *Religion in Victorian Britain Vol 1 Interpretations* (Manchester 1988) 81.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid 61.

<sup>6</sup> F K Prochaska *Women and Philanthropy in 19th Century England* (Oxford 1980) 17.

<sup>7</sup> H McCleod *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914* (1996) 168.

regulations.<sup>8</sup> It would appear, therefore, that the women's temperance committee had total freedom as to the extent of its involvement in the cause. Yet, affiliation to the association within the Birmingham Ladies Temperance Union, for which they were required to pay a fee of 15 shillings,<sup>9</sup> would automatically have placed demands on them. They were required to support the policies of the Union as well as give practical help, but without records there is no way of evaluating their performance in relation to other branches. Having a responsibility to a central organisation not only meant maintaining a certain standard, but also initiated a degree of co-operation with others. Mrs Maria Bassett, the widow of John Bassett, a doctor and surgeon,<sup>10</sup> seems to have been a prime mover in setting up the branch, as she was already treasurer and honorary secretary of the Birmingham Temperance Union. With her daughter also being a secretary of the Union,<sup>11</sup> the committee already had established organisational ability within its ranks. The Union was determined that each of its branches should perform to its utmost, and held meetings to discuss organisational methods, which included lectures on such matters as the art of conducting meetings.<sup>12</sup> It was a matter of personal pride in the associations that they should be seen to be making every available effort, as illustrated by Miss Breakspear when she asked the Carr's Lane committee 'How can we make our Branch of more practical use?'<sup>13</sup> It was such questioning that reveals a growing professionalism by women towards work at the end of the nineteenth century, a professionalism that philanthropy instigated, and which signalled the acceptance of women's changing role in society.

Early temperance reformers used their religious evangelism to appeal to the conscience of the individual drinker, a method known as *moral suasion*. The aim of these so called 'moderationists' was to discourage drunkenness rather than social drinking, and to this end they organised public meetings with eminent speakers, and distributed leaflets and tracts to disseminate their message. This practice was continued by the committee women of Carr's Lane, who undertook to deliver leaflets on behalf of the Birmingham Ladies Union, as well as their own association.<sup>14</sup> However, there was a growing awareness throughout the nineteenth century that these measures were not enough to curb the problem of excessive drinking, and recognition of this situation gave rise to the notion of a total abstinence pledge and the birth of the teetotal movement. As a

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<sup>8</sup> Helmstadter 'The Nonconformist Conscience' 78.

<sup>9</sup> Women's Minute Book, 14th January 1987.

<sup>10</sup> Census Return, RG 12/2661, p44, and RG 13/2814, p41.

<sup>11</sup> *Birmingham Daily Post* 24th January 1894.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 14th November 1894.

<sup>13</sup> Women's Minute Book, 13th November 1896.

<sup>14</sup> Women's Minute Book, 4th November 1897.

total abstinence society, the signing of the pledge for the women of Carr's Lane was an essential part of their work. It was a serious commitment and not undertaken lightly, and acknowledged by the committee, with the issue of pledge cards and a reward badge for those who attended 12 meetings and kept the pledge.<sup>15</sup> It has to be remembered that medicinal medication was not available as it is today, and many doctors used alcohol as an antiseptic, painkiller and anaesthetic, as well as prescribing it as a general tonic. For many women undergoing stress and particularly those experiencing childbirth, taking the pledge could be a difficult decision to make, and even harder to keep. With this in mind the committee had a policy of visiting newly pledged women.<sup>16</sup> Visitation was also undertaken to give on-going moral support to those in need, but was not intended to provide material help, though frequently visitors acted as agents in getting other forms of relief. A more extreme measure described in the Minute Book concerns a Mrs Henderson taking a Mrs Zambra into her home with the hope of reforming her.<sup>17</sup> Such was the dedication of some temperance workers.

The advent of teetotalism not only imposed a degree of abstention, but also signalled a change in attitude towards the drunkard. Whereas moderationists thought that drunks deserved denunciation because they lacked will power, teetotalists thought they deserved sympathy because their will power had been paralysed by the effects of alcohol. Teetotalists also recognised that a different approach was needed if they wanted to keep drunkards out of drinking places, and for this change they had to create a new pattern of life. They realised that the public house had to be substituted by means of a support system that would provide companionship as well as shield abstainers from ridicule. Within the framework of the diverse array of clubs and societies set up at Carr's lane to achieve this, the main vehicle for support to women at Carr's Lane was attained by establishing a Pleasant Monday Evening Club for women. It was run for the benefit of working class women, and from the minutes it seems as if it was run in conjunction with the Women's Temperance Association. The gatherings were both educational and recreational, and in 1896 Miss Grace Michell even established a Ladies Choir.

Women's drinking habits are believed to have become more of a problem with the issuing of licences in 1861 which allowed the selling of drink by grocers. Intended as a measure to keep public house attendance down, it proved a retrogressive step for women who could now purchase drink under the pretext of groceries.<sup>18</sup> As a Total Abstinence Society it was inevitable that the women's

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<sup>15</sup> Women's Minute Book, 25th August 1898.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 17th January 1898.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 21st October 1896.

<sup>18</sup> L L Shiman *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England* (1988) 50.

committee of Carr's Lane should support legislative prohibition as a solution to the problems of drink. They were prepared to lobby on licensing issues but, as expected, they confined their actions to those involving women and children only. As part of the Birmingham Union, they helped to collect evidence to submit to the Licensing Justices concerning the serving of drink to children. They participated in a pub watch on Sunday 10 June 1898, organised to monitor the number of children entering public houses who had been sent by their parents to collect drink on their behalf.<sup>19</sup> A survey conducted the following year revealed that 2,437 children under the age of thirteen had been counted coming out of 126 public houses carrying jugs and bottles. This represented an average of 19 per house but was considered by the chairman of the bench to be an improvement on the previous year, so no action was taken.<sup>20</sup> Disappointment does not appear to have discouraged the women, however, as the level of their activism in the temperance ideal is shown at the same constant high level throughout the minute book. The intensity of their work was such that it is doubtful whether they could have done any more.

Financial support was essential to the work of temperance societies as they needed money to pay Union fees, the expenses of speakers, provision of teas, badges, and numerous sundries, as well as pay for leaflets, books and magazines. The women of Carr's Lane were also expected to help support the activities of other local temperance societies as the National British Women's Temperance Association. In addition to fund raising for their own, local, and national organisations, they were constantly being asked to support other philanthropic temperance ventures. The Home for Inebriate Women at Duxhurst in Surrey, established in 1895 by Lady Henry Somerset, was such a venture supported enthusiastically by the membership at Carr's Lane. Additionally, they took it upon themselves to organise and collect for specific items required there, such as cots for the attached 'Bird's Nest' children's home. Yet it has to be remembered that most of the women on the committee as well as ordinary members had no personal income. An emergent ideology throughout the nineteenth century had been that men and women inhabited 'separate spheres', a concept that a woman's role was within the home and a man's was in the public world of the market place. The male and female philanthropic worlds therefore remained substantively different,<sup>21</sup> particularly in terms of institutional philanthropy which initially required financial investment, as women had been deprived of personal income until the Married Women's Property Act of 1881.

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<sup>19</sup> Women's Minute Book, 25th August 1898.

<sup>20</sup> *Birmingham Daily Post*, 18th January 1900.

<sup>21</sup> L Davidoff and C Hall *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (1987) 434.

## Conclusion

The Women's Branch of the Carr's Lane Temperance Association was a highly organised and efficient society, with its members active and open to new thinking for the cause. In practical terms their role in the temperance movement in Birmingham was huge, and their work associated with their own church as well as that of the Birmingham Ladies Temperance Union cut through both the class and religious divide. How effective they were is difficult to evaluate, but they most certainly cannot be derided for their dedication and perseverance. The First World War is commonly acknowledged as bringing about a decline in temperance activity from which the movement was never able to recover. However, the work of the women at Carr's Lane Branch of the Women's Temperance Association from 1896 to 1911 shows the importance of women's role in the temperance movement.

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*Meegan Griffin*

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## REVIEWS

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***The King James Bible of 1611: The Making of a Classic Translation.* By Alister E McGrath. Friends of Dr Williams's Library Sixty-Fifth Lecture. Dr Williams's Trust, 2013. Pp 18. ISSN 0305-3692. ISBN 978-0-85217-079-3.**

Given to celebrate the 2011 anniversary, this is an unusually short lecture. Generally such lectures are expected to last an hour, and the published lecture includes additional material which would not easily fit into the allotted time. However, as printed, this lecture cannot have lasted more than 45 minutes. Nevertheless it is an accessible study for those looking for a brief introduction to the subject. The author, an academic theologian, has written widely and published a book on this subject in 2001, although much of his popular writing concerns the controversy between Christianity and atheism. For readers who want to know more he recommends a more recent work: *Bible: The story of the King James Version 1611-2011* (2010) by Gordon Campbell. Indeed the lecturer's own work is modestly not referenced at all.

Along with many of his hearers and readers, McGrath admits that he would prefer to use the name "Authorised Version". He concedes that "the American way ... has achieved cultural dominance". The lecture divides roughly in two halves, the first part dealing with how the translation was decided upon and was undertaken. In addition there is a short discussion of the development of the English language commencing with Henry VIII's break with Rome. The later part concerns itself mostly with the weaknesses of the resulting translation, both those inherent in the methods adopted by the translators, and those for the 20th century reader resulting from four (or five) centuries of language change. Included in this are a couple of paragraphs considering how the translation achieved the status of a classic.

As he states, it was not an instant success, coming only to prominence after the restoration of Charles II in 1660. Another result of the restoration was, of course, the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* which had a similar longevity. The Prayer Book was compulsory, and has been, as McGrath relates, credited with giving England some religious stability. He suggests that the 1611 translation, with its royal connection, was adopted at this time as a result of a desire for stability, following the "political and social chaos of the final years of the Puritan Commonwealth".

Given the shortness of the lecture, it could easily have included a description of how we moved from the Bibles printed in the 17th century, with marginal notes and many and varied misprints, to the standardised text with modernised spelling and without footnotes that we see today. McGrath tells us that the

translators would not have expected their work to remain in use for so long. Yet he speculates how things might have differed had they adopted the contemporary language of their time. Would their work have remained in universal usage among English speakers even longer? Despite his own admission that earlier translators achieved better work, McGrath is still keen, quite properly in my view, to celebrate the achievement of 1611.

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*Peter Young*

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***Dissent and the Bible in Britain, c. 1650–1950.* Edited by Scott Mandelbrote and Michael Ledger-Lomas. Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp x + 323. Hardback £65. ISBN 978-0-19-960841-6.**

This volume of ten essays by twelve scholars had its origins in a conference on The Bible and Dissent, organized by the Dr Williams’s Centre for Dissenting Studies, Queen Mary College, London. The book is concerned with the adherence of Protestant Dissenters to the authority of the Bible, by which scripture was seen as the “Christian’s only rule of faith and practice”, as the Baptist John Evans put it in 1795. Given that the Bible was uniquely “crucial” for Dissenters—more so than for Anglicans and Roman Catholics where tradition and church hierarchy had and have greater place than for Dissenters—the scholars in this volume examine the impact and influence of that adherence.

The editors recognise that Dissent is at times “an unhelpful but unavoidable collective noun”, in that very many different groupings, divided by theology and ecclesiology, find themselves lumped awkwardly together. This factor is reinforced by the complexities which must follow from the inclusion of the term Britain in the volume’s title. Contributors must deal with Welsh Dissent (as Eryn White does here c1750–1850), with Irish Presbyterians (Andrew R Holmes discusses Samuel Davidson and Biblical Criticism c1800–65) and with Scots Presbyterian Dissent (Colin Kidd and Valerie Wallace address Biblical Criticism in the age of Robertson Smith, 1846–94).

The term Dissent became somewhat broader, of course, in the 18th and 19th centuries, with the emergence of Methodism in its various forms and with other forms of evangelical religion. However the works of Matthew Henry (1662–1714), Matthew Poole (1624–79) and Philip Doddridge (1702–51), reinforcing ‘family religion’, were as much read and appreciated by Anglican clergymen as by Dissenters. Bibles were distributed alike by Philip, Lord Wharton, from the late 17th century, whose Dissenting sympathies were well known, by the Church of England’s Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, and far more comprehensively by the British and Foreign Bible Society (founded 1801).

Perhaps because of their historical origins, Dissenters have shown a remarkable attachment and loyalty to the Authorised Version of 1611 and many evangelicals, not least among them American conservatives, have granted inspired status to its translation. Indeed the rise of evangelicalism, with its focus on scriptural authority, has undercut denominational boundaries with some



Dissenters joining forces with like-minded Anglicans to defend an irrefutable Bible. In the late 19th century Dissenters were included among those revisers of the Old and New Testaments, although Roman Catholics were excluded. However just as the Bible in truth is no monolith, no more is Dissent.

As readers of this magazine will surely know, Matthew Henry's expositions of scripture are deservedly famous and still repay reading and Matthew was the son of the notable nonconforming minister, Philip Henry. In a striking chapter, Scott Mandelbrote writes on the Henry family's readings of the Bible 1650–1750. Reflecting the puritan traditions from which they developed, early Methodists were encouraged to study scripture diligently and to test their conversion experiences against its teaching. Phyllis Mack and David Wilson outline the ministry of Mary Bosanquet Fletcher (1739–1815), a Methodist preacher and Bible expositor who founded and managed an orphanage and home for poor women—first in Leytonstone, Essex, and later in Batley near Leeds. Simon Mills turns to Unitarianism with a study of scripture and heresy in the teachings of Nathaniel Lardner, Joseph Priestley and Thomas Belsham, all of whom began as Independents. After Eryn White's discussion of Welsh Dissent and the Bible, Ian J Shaw examines the interpretation of scripture among English High Calvinists, c 1780s–1850.

Tim Larsen turns his attention to three outstanding social reformers, all women, namely Elizabeth Fry, the Quaker minister, Mary Carpenter, the Unitarian educational reformer, and Catherine Booth, a co-founder of the Salvation Army. In his chapter he reveals their strong commitment to the Bible and the influences of scripture on their differing Dissenting traditions. Michael Ledger-Lomas in his 'Conder and Sons: Dissent and the Oriental Bible in Nineteenth-Century Britain' draws the attention of his readers to the engagement of evangelical nonconformists with the Orientalising study of the Bible in the first half of the 19th century. He suggests that the liberal political enthusiasms of nonconformity immunised Congregationalists, in particular, against the anti-intellectual element which scholars have detected among Anglican evangelicals of the period. He concentrates on Congregationalists who replaced the Unitarians in acting as nonconformity's political leaders. Congregationalists, he avers, accepted Biblical orientalism but did not react negatively. Finally S J D Green treats with 'A People Beyond the Book? Seeböhm Rowntree, the Decline of Popular Biblicism and the Fate of Protestant England, c1900–50'. Rowntree the social investigator had reported that by 1950 the English had effectively abandoned belief in "the Biblical story". Green himself concludes by pointing to the noticeboard of St James's Church, Piccadilly, which had advertised five lectures for Lent 2011, each to be delivered by an ordained Church of England cleric. Their collective title was 'What's the point of reading the Bible?' They continued, 'How is a collection of books written over the course of thousands of years in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek relevant for life in 21st century London?' Green concludes, by asking with Rowntree: what point indeed?

This book offers a collection of thorough, serious essays on subjects close to

the heart of this reviewer. They are often fascinating, never less than stimulating and informative, and at times challenging and provocative. It is handsomely produced, has a bibliography of 34 pages and a detailed index.

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*F J Morley*

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***T&T Clark Companion to Nonconformity. Edited by Robert Pope. Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013. Pp x + 751. Hardback £100. ISBN 978-0-567-50526-2***

This weighty tome commands respect, not least for its sheer size but also for the breadth of vision which has brought it to life. Robert Pope, as editor, has achieved much in persuading 21 busy scholars, his main contributors, to produce their 23 chapters (Part I of the book). In addition he has recruited another set of writers (only a few of whom overlap with those who contributed one of the chapters in Part I) who have between them provided the text for his Part II, an ABC of Nonconformity. Drawing all these sources together must have been difficult and frustrating at times; the editor is to be congratulated for his patience and persistence in bringing the whole enterprise to a successful conclusion.

This volume belongs in a series aimed at the level of postgraduate research and beyond. Certainly it is a serious work of reference and it is unlikely that many individuals will buy it. Rather libraries and institutions are the probable purchasers.

Part I (over 530 pages) deals with Historical and Theological Topics and consists of chapters by John Briggs on 'The Changing Shape of Nonconformity', Denis Morgan on 'Nonconformity in Wales', John Coffey on 'The Emergence of Dissent 1550-1750', Keith Robbins on 'Nonconformity and the State ca 1750-2012', David Thompson on 'Nonconformists and Polity' and by John Gwynfor Jones on 'Nonconformists and the Bible, ca 1559-1804'. That is various topics are dealt with as much as possible chronologically and the main themes are identified and described. Others who contribute, on aspects of Nonconformist thought, to Part I include John Tudno Williams on 'Nonconformists and Biblical Scholarship', Alan Sell on 'Nonconformists and the Person of Christ', Peter Morden on 'Nonconformists and the Work of Christ: A Study in Particular Baptist Thought', Robert Pope himself on 'Nonconformists and the Holy Spirit', and later on 'The Nonconformist Conscience'. Known specialists also contribute with Ian Bradley writing on 'Nonconformist Hymnody', Clyde Binfield on 'Nonconformist Architecture', Stephen Orchard on 'Nonconformists and Education' and the American scholar Tim Whelan on 'Nonconformity and Culture'. Again, as far as I can tell, these specialists have written eruditely and lucidly. I particularly appreciated Whelan's denial of Matthew Arnold's claim that Nonconformists prior to 1869 despised "the beautiful and artistic" and his praising of their "creative achievements in poetry, fiction, painting, engraving, pottery and numerous other artistic and cultural endeavours".

In addition, Stephen R. Holmes treats with that traditional strength of dissent, i.e. 'Nonconformist Preaching and Liturgy', while Karen Smith addresses 'Nonconformists, the Home and Family Life' (hopefully not restricting the sole woman contributor to the home). Mission concerns are tackled by David Ceri Jones on 'Nonconformists and Home Mission', and by Ian Randall on 'Nonconformists and Overseas Mission', and, in a revealing chapter David Jeremy discusses the theme of 'Nonconformist Business Leaders, ca 1880–1940'.

Two contributions almost bring Part I to an end—Peter Catterall discusses 'Nonconformity and the Labour Movement' and Noel Davies treats with 'Nonconformity and Ecumenical Relationships'. Davies allows that his chapter is not "comprehensive" but I, for one, should have welcomed some reference to the long courtship (albeit frustrated) between the Baptists and the Congregationalists between 1870 and 1930. I wondered also why the Friends of Reunion and its long time secretary, the Baptist Hugh Martin (who was created a Companion of Honour in 1955), might not have warranted a mention. Finally Clive Field brings his expertise to bear on the topic of 'Sources for Protestant Nonconformity in England and Wales since 1663: A Structured Bibliography' and this chapter must prove useful for all serious students.

All these contributions have their obvious merits. As the editor states, the contributors are "experts in their various fields and their contributions draw on an enormous store of critical knowledge". I particularly enjoyed those chapters by Densil Morgan, John Coffey, Tim Whelan and David Jeremy, although I learned much from reading the others. Yet I did notice considerable variation in the number of end notes with Tudno Williams' chapter having 158, Randall's a robust 146, David Ceri Jones 135, and Binfield 130, while Coffey has 95, Morgan 73, Whelan 69 and Thompson 47. Somewhat at the thinner end of the scale, Davies has 39 end notes, Bradley 36, Orchard 31, Briggs 28 and Robbins a mere 18. The pieces are necessarily of differing length but, one hopes, the disparity in the number of references does not indicate any lowering of scholarly standards. Readers must have confidence in the papers they consult and references, where given, can be checked.

In addition, I do wonder if, in the early 21st century, we might have had a chapter which dealt specifically with Nonconformity and the Role and Contribution of Women. I should also have liked some detailed analysis of the gradual loss of members from Nonconformity to the Church of England, to Roman Catholicism and/or to the world.

Part II offers over 270 pages of brief articles, listed alphabetically, on subjects as varied as Elsie Chamberlain, Constance Coltman, Oliver Cromwell, the Council for World Mission, Congregationalism, the Congregational Federation, the Westminster Assembly and Confession, and George Whitefield. Some of these brief notes are by the editor of this *CHS Magazine*, although I did not spot the names of any other (continuing) Congregational contributors. The biographical articles here seem to tread the same territory for Congregationalists and members of the United Reformed Church as the recent work, edited by Taylor and Binfield, *Who They Were* and, of course by the *Oxford Dictionary of*

*National Biography*. Despite these reservations, my conclusion is that this volume is a marvellous acquisition and I shall turn to it often. I recommend it to *CHS Magazine* readers.

However, any reviewer nowadays must note that almost all the contributors are male, with the clear but solitary exception of Karen E Smith, and, with respect, the majority of them are rather mature in years! This gives the *Companion* a somewhat dated feel, although a kinder judgement might suggest that this renders the work a level of wisdom, culled from lengthy and widespread experience. Nevertheless the contributors are, on the whole, an aged bunch of the usual suspects, mostly well-known with well-known views. Therefore, little room is given to younger scholars and ministers and to women. Reflecting also perhaps the interests of the editor, almost half of the contributors to Part I are Welsh or have been closely associated with Wales and its institutions. However, I do note that, unlike some of those who now concern themselves with the study of Protestant dissent, the contributors to this *Companion* are mostly drawn from within the various churches. That is, they are writing about what they believe and what they know critically from within Nonconformity. That gives their comments an authority and a sympathy which are welcome indeed.

This book is not cheap but nor is it over-priced at £100. Rather its 751 pages represent a sound investment for all those interested in the history, theology and practice of English and Welsh Nonconformity.

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Mary Barnes.

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***A Biographical Dictionary of Tutors at the Dissenters' Private Academies, 1660–1729.* By Mark Burden. Dr Williams's Centre for Dissenting Studies, 2013. Pp 543. On line at [www.english.qmul.ac.uk/drwilliams/pubs/dictionary.html](http://www.english.qmul.ac.uk/drwilliams/pubs/dictionary.html)**

When Samuel Benion (1673–1708) was unable to find a single course book for the thirty students in his academy he did what many a tutor has done ever since. He wrote his own. It was not intended to replace the scholarly works available to his students in his own library and in other libraries locally. In the words of Matthew Henry it 'presented the young Travellers with a general Map of the Country they were to survey'.

What a wonderful description of the tutor's task in writing module notes to accompany a course of study today!

It is no coincidence that I should find myself making that connection as I dip into Mark Burden's *A Biographical Dictionary of Tutors at the Dissenters' Private Academies, 1660–1729* (Dr Williams's Centre for Dissenting Studies, 2013). It is the first detailed study of the dissenting academies since the publication in 1954 of JW Ashley Smith's *The Birth of Modern Education. The Contribution of the Dissenting Academies, 1660–1800* (London, 1954). In that book our former editor, Bill Ashley Smith, had developed the thesis that the dissenting academies had

helped shape modern education. Bill Ashley Smith went on to be the first secretary to the Congregational Federation's Training Board, which I at the time chaired, and drew on his understanding of those academies in shaping what has become The Congregational Institute of Practical Theology which has recently launched an honours degree focusing particularly on Dissent. In my thirty-five years of teaching on that course, I have always felt myself to be in the tradition of those dissenting academies.

It is the detail of Mark Burden's Biographical Dictionary that is its great strength and makes it a magnificent contribution not only to the study of those 'Private Academies' as he rightly chooses to call them, but also to the roots of modern education.

Having spent eight years ministering and teaching just outside Shrewsbury, I was drawn to his article on Samuel Benion. Mark Burden makes extensive use of Matthew Henry's funeral oration of 1709, published in the *Works of the Late Rev Mr Matthew Henry* (1726), pages 585–633. In addition, Burden draws on no fewer than 29 references to secondary works, 18 archival sources and one published work.

That enables Burden to bring the story of Samuel Benion to life, from his birth in Whixall in Shropshire, through his studies at Glasgow University, where 'he sometimes studied for 16 hours a day', to his ordination in 1699 when 'he began to minister to dissenters at Doddington, Whitchurch, in Shropshire.' At the death of Richard Frankland, another tutor whose story is told by Burden, in 1698 Benion was prevailed upon by Frankland's students to 'undertake the tuition of Young Men'. Initially the number of his students was small, but 'by the end of his life he had above Thirty under his Charge'. There was 'Majesty and Mildness, Gravity and Sweetness' in the way he taught, and he had a 'clear and commanding, and very humble voice'. In his teaching he drew on ancient and modern learning. He followed, in Matthew Henry's words, a 'scheme of his own making,' which enabled him to lead his pupils through their studies.

Modelling his approach to study on his own experiences at Glasgow University, Benion taught through the medium of English, as well as Latin, and framed the day's tuition with prayer and the singing of psalms. While in preparing his students often for ministry, 'the Bible was the System he read', he was typical of the tutors of these academies in the range of his studies. Mathematics, Benion viewed, as 'for the Improvement of the Reasoning Faculty', while in Natural Philosophy he acquainted himself with 'the Modern Discoveries and Improvements'.

It was in this context that Benion found himself penning his own introduction to some of those wider studies. Written in Latin, Matthew Henry summarised his 'Schematismus' as 'containing gnostologia and praecognita, logic, metaphysics, physics, mathematics, and ethics'. What gives Mark Burden's account authority is the realisation that he has compared Matthew Henry's assessment of Benion's Schematicus with a surviving copy in the Bristol Baptist College and come to the conclusion 'that it fits with the extant copy'.

Before the 91 biographical entries, Mark Burden's helpful Introduction offers

a brief history of the dissenters' early academies, 1660–1729, and an insight into what studying was like at those academies.

'The purpose of this *Biographical Dictionary of Tutors* is to set out, as far as is currently possible, the lives of every known tutor at the dissenters' earliest academies, from the Restoration of Charles II and the episcopal Church of England in 1660, to the opening of Philip Doddridge's academy in 1729.'

The study of the academies gives an insight into the nature of ministry in those dissenting churches. 'The earliest recorded ordinations of dissenting ministerial candidates took place in 1678, 1680, and 1681. However, it took many years to train a dissenting minister. An extensive grammar school education was, in theory at least, to be followed by five years at an academy, a probationary period as a ministerial assistant, and then an ordination ceremony.'

Ker's course at the academy at Bethnal Green was not untypical in the regime it followed, encouraging 'the study of philosophy in the morning, with philology in the afternoons and divinity two days a week, across at least four years.' There was an emphasis on prayer and reading the Bible in the original languages and as was the custom of the day classes were taught in Latin as well as in English.

It was not uncommon for students, as at the Shrewsbury Academy, 'to read works of logic, metaphysics, geometry, astronomy, chronology, ecclesiastical history, theology and physics.'

There is something very heart-warming to discover from Daniel Defoe that a tutor at one of these academies had a love of 'improvisatory teaching methods' that 'extended to the use of his maid's mop to demonstrate planetary motion'! So, now we know where Brian Cox got his inspiration from!

'Daily life at the academies was carefully structured to ensure a combination of learning and religious observance. It was usual to begin and end the day in prayer, hold formal lectures in the mornings, and provide opportunities for private study or student discussion in the afternoons.'

The third section of the introduction gives a fascinating account of the way attitudes have changed towards those dissenting academies from 1702 to 2013. The paucity of detailed study of the academies in the 60 years since J W Ashley Smith's work highlights the need for this present publication.

The very nature of its publication emphasises the connection between the dissenters' academies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and modern education. Had this major 543 page dictionary been published in book form it would have cost the earth, and it would have been available to a tiny number of scholars in a limited number of university libraries. The decision to publish online and in the public domain means that this volume is accessible to anyone. It will be of interest to local historians and to people wanting to research the history of their own church as much as to students of dissent. As an electronic publication it is possible to search on any word and so it lends itself to people researching local church histories, or wanting to dig into the influences on great figures'.

The numbers of people who will be indebted to Mark Burden, for the

breadth of his knowledge and the depth of his research, will be very much more thanks to the visionary thinking of Centre for Dissenting Studies at Dr Williams's Library in publishing this magisterial work online at <http://www.english.qmul.ac.uk/drwilliams/pubs/dictionary.html>

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*Richard Cleaves*

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***“The Spirit of Cromwell”: Nonconformist Chaplains’ War Ministry and Experience (1914–1918). By Neil E Allison. The Congregational Lecture 2013. The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust (1978) Ltd. Pp 38. £3. ISSN 0963-181X***

At the moment, interest in the First World War is increasing as we approach the 100th anniversary of its outbreak in August and we nonconformists must wonder how we, our fellow church members and ministers would have responded to the events of 1914 to 1918. The title of Neil Allison’s lecture clearly links the experience of nonconformist chaplains at that time to “The Spirit of Cromwell”. Allison tells us that it was the first time since the English Civil War that such nonconformist chaplains had been officially recognised by the armed forces and adds, using a quotation, that nonconformists were called to “join the armies that are fighting for the Kingdom of God as surely did the Puritans in Cromwell’s day”. However, the bulk of the lecture is based firmly in the early 20th century and deals with a war between nations rather than a civil war in which religious faith played an important part.

The struggle for the commissioning of nonconformist ministers to work with soldiers who were not satisfied with the military restraint and restrictions of Church of England chaplains is described and the function of the chaplain, regardless of denomination, is explained. It is interesting to note that many soldiers and chaplains much preferred voluntary services with their free choice of hymns and lack of restriction on preaching topics to compulsory military worship. Allison speaks of the bravery of the chaplains who lived with the soldiers in the trenches and went into ‘no man’s land’ to minister to the wounded and dying. Some were even awarded the MC. Later he mentions the social outreach done by chaplains in the Hut ministry, clubs and institutions.

Although the lecture is focused on nonconformist chaplains, it becomes clear that during the course of the war denominational ties became unimportant at times due to the urgent needs of dying men. The example of Frederick J H Humphrey, a Baptist chaplain, is given. One night he was woken twice to minister to dying soldiers, the first was Church of England and the second Roman Catholic. Next day the Church of England and Roman Catholic chaplains both thanked him for what he had done. This story is told towards the end of the lecture where Allison gives more attention to the work of four individual chaplains including Humphrey and two who ministered to West Indian forces and worked to improve the conditions in which they lived.

There is certainly much that can be said about the work of commissioned

nonconformist chaplains one hundred years ago and a general lecture such as this can only begin to deal with the subject. Allison mentions several different aspects of the topic, but the title seems to be a little misleading as I would have expected more reference to this “Spirit of Cromwell” later in the lecture and certainly in the conclusion. The printed lecture is worth reading as an introduction but more work needs to be done on how the “Spirit of Cromwell” relates to chaplains and their ministry from 1914–1918.

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*Lesley Dean*

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***Enlightened Evangelicalism: The Life and Thought of John Erskine.* By Jonathan M Yeager. Oxford University Press, New York, 2011. Pp xii + 321. Hardback, £52. ISBN 978-0-19977-255-1**

John Erskine (1721–1803) came from a privileged background and would in time inherit his own estate. His family expected him to follow in his father’s footsteps as a lawyer. However, whilst studying at Edinburgh University to that purpose, he witnessed the revivals at Kilsyth and Cambuslang and subsequently became committed to train for the ministry. Initially he made contact with Philip Doddridge, hoping to study under him at Northampton, but eventually after attending divinity lectures for only a year, rather than the usual six, he passed the examination enabling him to be licensed as a minister of the Church of Scotland.

A Calvinist of decided views, he was to clash with John Wesley, condemning the latter’s Arminianism. He enjoyed some popularity as a preacher and writer. Even the novelist, Sir Walter Scott, who attended Erskine’s church as a child held him in some respect and wrote well of him. Erskine was an influential figure in the Scottish churches of his day and also in north America. He was a regular correspondent of Jonathan Edwards in New England and encouraged other writers. Erskine was keen to disseminate, at the popular level, Christian theology and in this was prolific.

Jonathan Yeager has produced a lengthy and critical study, having consulted original material in several libraries in Scotland, the Netherlands and many throughout the United States of America. Unfortunately his publishers have produced a dour and disconcerting portrait of Erskine to adorn the book’s cover. This might put readers off what otherwise is a welcome addition to Scottish church history.

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*Ian Black*

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***G Lindsay Lockley: A Daughter’s View.* By Barbara Merefield. Boolarong Press, Queensland, Australia, 2012. Pp [iv] + 199. ISBN 978-1-92210-902-6**

The author states that she has written the book for her children and



grandchildren. However this is no mere collection of family reminiscences. Barbara Merefield has used not only her father's private papers, but also has consulted the minute books and other records of the various churches and organisations for which her father worked. Each of the 15 short chapters begins with a literary quotation and there is both index and bibliography provided. A number of illustrations appear throughout the book and it is sprinkled with quotations from the sermons and letters of (Geoffrey) Lindsay Lockley (1909–91). He had a distinguished career, serving three pastorates, before becoming Secretary-Moderator of the Congregational Union of South Australia. Later he became a college principal, twice founding new institutions, and finally he became Australia and New Zealand secretary of the Congregational Council for World Mission (formed in 1966 out of the amalgamation of the London and the Commonwealth Missionary Societies).

This lively biography succeeds in fulfilling its author's aims, in providing the account for her family of a remarkable father's career. However, in making his story available to a wider public, she has in addition provided a valuable source for all those interested in Australian Congregationalism in the 20th century. I commend this book to the readers of this magazine.

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*Peter Young*

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