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**THE  
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SOCIETY  
MAGAZINE**

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**Volume 7 No 5 Spring 2014**

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## EDITORIAL

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This issue seems rooted in the twentieth century, especially its first twenty years. Among the articles included, Meegan Griffin brings to our attention the preaching of John Henry Jowett, a prince of the pulpit in his day; Roger Ottewill returns to Edwardian and pre-World War I Hampshire; and Phillip Dunn presents an assessment of Charles Silvester Horne, delayed from last year, the centenary of Horne's death. Breaking with this period, Mark Tinker recalls his schooldays at Mill Hill 1964–69. Both Phillip Dunn and Mark Tinker are new contributors to the CHS Magazine and we welcome their interest and involvement.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

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### **Appeal for Congregational Federation Archives, Minutes of Meetings etc.**

Our treasurer, Revd Chris Damp, has stated that the recent appeal for minutes of past CF committee, board and council meetings has yielded little.

He has written to the editor.

‘The items we have received for the CHS library in Bedford are books and some pamphlets, chapel histories and the like. There was no response to the appeal for papers. We do not have Federation papers as such in terms of minutes, apart from one file which is in my office waiting to be copied (and this only consists of odd copies of Council minutes, not a full run). My intention is to send a copy of what we have in this file to the Congregational Library in London. Perhaps another appeal would generate some material, or might we even think about writing to certain individuals who we know have served on Council and the various committees? There was really no response to the last appeal for Federation papers.’

As readers of this magazine may know, this appeal concerns the urgent need to compile and maintain a detailed record of the activities and decision making processes of the Congregational Federation since its beginnings in 1972. Those of our readers who may be able to supply *any material* of this nature or copies of any relevant material (as specified in the letter above) please contact Chris Damp or the editor. Their details are on the back cover of this magazine.

## Correspondence

Roger Ottewill has written:

In his fascinating article about Sarah Vyrnwy Morgan, published in the last edition of the CHS Magazine, Gerard Charmley makes the point that the early 1890s ‘was a crucial time for the ministry of women among Congregationalists.’ In support of this claim, he mentions Ella Sophia Armitage delivering her first sermon in April 1891. I would suggest that, at least of equal importance, was the contribution of Frances Hallowes, the wife of Revd John Francis Tooke Hallowes, a Congregational minister who was to become principal of Cliff College. In the autumn of 1890 she wrote a letter to the newly launched Congregational weekly, *The Independent*, headed ‘Why are Women ignored by the Congregational Union? A woman’s well grounded protest,’ in it she argued that women needed to be not just seen but also heard (October 17, 1890). This initiative prompted a large number of, mainly supportive, follow up ‘letters from ladies’ and led to her being invited to give a paper on the subject at the autumn assembly of the Union in 1891. Entitled, ‘The Place & Service of Women in Our Churches,’ she took as her starting point the view that:

There can be no question of rivalry between the sexes in God’s work but, ‘helpers in Christ Jesus,’ they partake equally of spiritual gifts. If women are debarred from the exercise of the gift of the Holy Ghost in speaking or praying then the Church must suffer, for it is guilty of quenching the Spirit.

In making the Biblical case for a higher profile for women, she quoted from the Creation account in Genesis arguing that in this ‘equality is clearly indicated’ and referred to the critical roles which women, such as Mary and Lydia, played at key moments in New Testament narratives. Moreover, for Hallowes, Paul’s injunction ‘“Let your women keep silence in the church, for it is a shame for women to speak,” had merely a local application’ and the Biblical emphasis on the equality of men and women took precedence. She went on to argue that: ‘When two-thirds of those present [at services] are women, it cannot but be helpful that the truth should occasionally be presented through the medium of a woman’s mind’. However, although she argued for women to be given ‘a part in the diaconate,’ she did not go as far as challenging the principle of an all male pastorate. Her paper resulted in further supportive letters to *The Independent* and the holding of women’s meetings at subsequent autumnal assemblies. Moreover, some Congregational leaders, such as J Guinness Rogers, expressed their support for the participation of women in services and even ordination, while a number of women were co-opted onto the Council of the Union. However, after this auspicious start the vigour of the campaign at national level

appears to have waned and, to the best of my knowledge, it had relatively little effect at local level at least within Hampshire, part of the country I know best.

That said, as I contended in my article on ministers' wives, published in the Autumn 2012 edition of the *CHS Magazine*, many churches greatly benefited from their ministry. While it is undoubtedly right to celebrate the trailblazing activities of Morgan, Hallowes and a few other 'big names' they were the tip of a very large iceberg and, I would argue, equal acknowledgement should be given to the contributions of those 'below the water line'. The term 'help-meet', used by Gerard Charmley, embraced a wide range of responsibilities, public as well as private. While preaching and lecturing were important aspects of ministry they were by no means the only ones and ministers' wives often excelled in spheres, such as pastoral work and fund raising, which were as vital to the well-being of churches. The services of these unsung heroines also deserve recognition.

## **The Secretary's Reflections on the Re-burial of Richard III**

Leicester is a city at ease with the multiplicity of its faith communities. Or so it seemed as the body of Richard III departed from the University of Leicester and arrived at the Cathedral to rest in repose until its burial. While the services seemed to bring together Anglican and Roman Catholic, the streets were lined with people of every faith community and none. And there was a little noticed walk-on role for our Congregational heritage too.

That Richard III should have been laid to rest in Leicester I have no doubt at all. Not just because I grew up in Leicester. First, it is within a couple of hundred yards of where his body was interred five hundred and more years ago. Second, it will provide a significant boost to the economy of Leicester in what had until the discovery been a run-down and neglected area of the inner city. Third, and to my mind most significant, it is a celebration of the remarkable achievements of the University of Leicester.

This is where our 'Congregational' contribution comes in. A college granting University of London degrees, it was given its Royal Charter in person by the Queen in 1957. In the 1950s and 1960s it pioneered the study of Local History as a distinct branch of historical studies, under the influence of W.G. Hoskins. Out of that came its world-renowned Archaeology department which played a significant role in the discovery of the skeleton of the king.

In the early 1970s a medical school was added to the University and its Engineering and Science faculties went from strength to strength. It is home to Britain's Space Science centre and, most importantly of all in the context of the verification of the identity of the bones in the car park, it pioneered the use of DNA in identification, now taken for granted the world over in forensic science.

A leader in Social Sciences, there is an omission in the range of subjects offered at Leicester. There has never been any Theology faculty, though in the context of the humanities and social sciences the study of religion has played a small part.

As the coffin was covered in its beautifully embroidered pall, and a crown placed at its head, Dr Stephen Foster, of the University's chaplaincy team, placed a copy of the Bible on the coffin. At the time of Richard III, printing was in its infancy and no Bible had yet been printed in England. Printed Bibles were arriving from the continent. This particular Vulgate had been "printed by Johannes Amerbach, a Swiss humanist and art collector, at his printing house in Basel. It was printed in 1481, and was a reprint of his 1479 edition, which had sold out."<sup>1</sup>

Why should the University of Leicester be in possession of such a rare Bible? It is a surprise to many to discover that the University Library has one of the country's largest and most significant collections of early printed Bibles and other mediaeval, Renaissance and Reformation works. Indeed the earliest of those printed books is a Bible printed by a student of Gutenberg dating back to 1466. How they came to be in the possession of the University of Leicester is the point at which our Congregational forebears come in.

The 1662 Congregational church in Narborough, near Leicester, has a hall beside it called The Robjohns Hall. It was named after a minister who had helped develop the church in the late nineteenth century. James Nelson Robjohns (1824–1897) was minister at Narborough 1860–91, having trained for the ministry at Coton End Academy in Bedfordshire.<sup>2</sup>

His son, Caleb, (c 1857–1927), a hosiery manufacturer, had a passion for collecting books. Robert Lacey, in his account of the treasures in Leicester University library, describes how his "quite roomy house came to be filled with [books] and naturally the time came when the Housekeeper struck. Thereafter Mr R dared not be seen bringing books into the house. When he bought some, he threw them over the garden wall and collected them when the Housekeeper was not looking."<sup>3</sup> At his death Caleb Robjohns bequeathed his collection to the library of the then Leicester College. It included 500 printed Bibles, among them, some early English Bibles, "a 1538 Coverdale; the Great Bible of 1540;

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1 From Leicester University Library website <http://www2.le.ac.uk/news/blog/2015-archive-1/march/bible-from-the-era-of-richard-iii-to-mark-reinterment-ceremony> accessed 23 March 2015

2 The Surman Index, <http://surman.english.qmul.ac.uk/main.php?personid=23285&parameter=surmanSurname&alpha=R> accessed 24 March 2015

3 A Lacey 'Unexpected treasures? An introduction to the special collections in the Library, University of Leicester' *Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries* Vol 10 No 1 (March 2003) 3 <http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/abtapl/10-01.pdf> accessed 24th March 2015

a first edition of the Geneva Bible of 1560 and a first edition of the Authorized Version of 1611.”<sup>4</sup> From father to son the interest in dissent and nonconformist history was passed on and the collection in Leicester University library includes several first editions of Bunyan’s works, a facsimile of the founding documents of Bunyan Meeting and many tracts and pamphlets from the Civil War.

This story prompts two reflections. First, how interesting it is to discover the story behind a Bible, which may not have been told. Could that be a way into writing the history of a particular church? We at Highbury Congregational Church in Cheltenham have a room named after our longest serving minister in the mid-nineteenth century. Social reformer, one-time chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, Andrew Morton Brown presented a Bible to the church on the opening of a new building in the centre of Cheltenham. That Bible remains on a communion table that came from that church and now stands in that room.

Another Bible stands open on the communion table in the church itself. Presented in memory of her parents by Gwen Clarke, one of our older members, it is a reminder of the arrival of many in Cheltenham in the post-war years when those who had worked on the Enigma code at Bletchley Park were re-located to Cheltenham to become GCHQ. Our lectern Bible was presented by Arthur Berry in memory of his wife – they had been among a small group from Highbury who planted a church in what was then a new housing estate in Cheltenham. Arthur became our honorary life deacon. One more Bible is of interest too. It is a facsimile of the first edition of Luther’s German Bible, given to the church by Norman O’Brien who was treasurer and had, in those post-war years, built up a friendship through his Radio Amateur passion with an enthusiast in Germany. What stories do the Bibles in your church tell?

My other reflection takes me back to Richard III. One wonders what Caleb Robjohns would have made of one of his Bibles finding its way on to the coffin of King Richard III in a twenty-first century ceremony. Maybe it’s another mark of the importance of building bridges across divides that have separated previous generations, in order to be at ease with the different faith communities found not only in Leicester, but across the country too.

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*Richard Cleaves*

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## A PULPIT PRINCE

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*Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given,  
To preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ—Ephesians 3: 8.*

**T**he role of the Nonconformist minister in the nineteenth century was, as Clyde Binfield suggested, ‘a most complex position that was in the world’s eye defined by the pulpit’.<sup>5</sup> There were those who were dogmatic theologians, those who were more like politicians and those like John Henry Jowett, pastor of Carr’s Lane Congregational Church, Birmingham, whose individuality was defined by the manner in which they conveyed their spirituality. In 1907 the *British Weekly* conducted a survey to discover England’s most appealing preacher in which Jowett was ranked first.<sup>6</sup> It was as a preacher that he became distinguished and it was the rewards from preaching and publishing that support the acclaim of his being referred to as a ‘Pulpit Prince’. This descriptive term acknowledged not only the preacher’s skill of rhetoric, but also the populist appeal and the inevitable financial gains that could be made from it. It is unfortunate that it has now assumed pejorative connotations which associate such men with egotism, for Jowett’s personality was never egotistical. He was neither flamboyant nor gregarious, but a gentle man whose demeanour allowed him the upward mobility that Nonconformity offered young men at the time, what Binfield refers to as ‘a side entrance to gentility’.<sup>7</sup>

Jowett’s reputation as a good preacher was established long before he accepted the pastorate of Carr’s Lane Congregational Church. It was perhaps one of the reasons that prompted R W Dale in his final years to recommend Jowett as a possible successor. Yet following Dale’s death, the deacons at Carr’s Lane were not to be hurried in making any presumptuous appointment. Dale had long been acknowledged as one of the country’s best preachers so his were difficult shoes to fill. Representatives of the deacons paid several visits to hear Jowett and to interview him at his pastorate of St James’s Congregational Church, Newcastle, before offering him the vacancy.<sup>8</sup> He had, however, already preached twice at Carr’s Lane, so the church members knew his skills as an orator and became markedly enthusiastic about the prospect of him being

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5 J C G Binfield *So Down to Prayers - studies in English Nonconformity, 1780–1920* (1977) 189.

6 <http://www.preaching.com/resources/pastmasters11654464>, *Preaching*.

7 Binfield *So Down to Prayers* 190.

8 Carr’s Lane Deacons Meeting Minutes Book 1895–1903, 17 June 1895, Birmingham City Archives C.C.1/25.

their pastor.<sup>9</sup> Carr's Lane had been privileged to have a preacher like Dale, who had established for them a tradition of scholarly preaching and secured for their church a history of influence and authority within Congregationalism. However, financially independent churches like Carr's Lane were effectively in the market-place, and the deacons would be well aware that its continuing reputation within Congregationalism needed a strong leader, and preferably one with good oratorical and communication skills.

In his first sermon preached at Carr's Lane on 6 October 1895, Jowett paid tribute to Dale by acknowledging that he was following a man 'who moved with rare and reverent intimacy among the greatest truths of the Christian religion'<sup>10</sup>. He was very much aware of the doctrinal import of Dale's sermons, something that the congregation of Carr's Lane had been used to for many years. When Dale was admonished by a friend that the congregation at Carr's Lane would not 'stand' the length and doctrinal composition of his sermons, he had replied that 'They will have to stand it'.<sup>11</sup> However, Jowett had a very different preaching style, one by his own admission to a friend that was in danger of 'prettiness'.<sup>12</sup> He was certainly reminded of his shortcomings by a reporter of the *Newcastle Weekly Courant* who reported that Jowett's replacement at St James's had preached on matters that were 'intellectually higher'.<sup>13</sup> One can only assume that this report was hiding the disappointment and regret of losing Jowett by trying to justify their new minister's appointment. St James's was a city church with a large congregation, reportedly a very wealthy congregation according to a journalist who visited in 1881, when he described the chapel as 'suggestive of a large jewel box'.<sup>14</sup> The 'prettiness' of Jowett's sermons may well have inadvertently been the consequential influence of this fashionable congregation of St James's, who would have appreciated an erudite style of poetic presentation. Jowett later acknowledged that following on the good work of Dale at Carr's Lane had been his deliverance from this 'prettiness'.<sup>15</sup>

Dale and Jowett did not preach extempore but read their sermons from the pulpit. The reading of sermons became an issue that divided evangelicals who linked extemporaneous preaching with the earnestness of early evangelism rather than manuscript reading which was seen by later evangelical preachers

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9 A Porritt *John Henry Jowett* (1924) 65.

10 Ibid 73.

11 Ibid 72.

12 Ibid.

13 *Newcastle Weekly Courant* (6 June 1896).

14 S Thorne *Congregational Missions and The Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth Century England* (Cambridge 1999) 139.

15 Porritt *Jowett* 72.

as more professional.<sup>16</sup> It would seem that Dale, however, had advised his students that extemporaneous was best but feared he would easily digress and never stop talking.<sup>17</sup> Whereas Jowett, who was a graduate of Airedale College and Edinburgh University, adopted what he considered the more intellectual approach. Although they read their sermons for different reasons, both Dale and Jowett shunned the dramatic hell, fire and brimstone approach reminiscent of enthusiastic revivalist preachers. From the pulpit their appearance was quite different, and neither assumed any formal mode of clerical dress. Dale was described as having a 'swarthy complexion, crisp curly black hair, big bushy beard and moustache'<sup>18</sup> whereas Jowett was 'tall, lean, balding with a full moustache, and always dressed fastidiously'.<sup>19</sup>

Whilst Dale and Jowett carefully prepared their sermons, their style of presentation and content was different. Jowett's preaching style was always illustrative, and this perhaps is what appealed to his listeners. The impact of Dale's sermons was, according to Hugh McLeod, achieved by his commanding presence, his forceful manner, compelling earnestness and power of argument,<sup>20</sup> a sharp contrast to the timorous yet impressive style of delivery by Jowett 'almost peculiar to himself'.<sup>21</sup> Yet it would appear that Jowett quickly won over the congregation by this dissimilarity, displaying a characteristic which he often described as 'wooing'.<sup>22</sup> This concept, he explained in the address he gave to the Congregational Union in 1901, was to be achieved by 'tenderness in our speech, the tones of love and of sensitive yearning', that would 'Constrain them to come in'.<sup>23</sup> There can be no doubt that 'endowed with a superlatively fine voice'<sup>24</sup>Jowett had acquired oratorical skills not normally associated with someone who is mostly described as a quiet, modest and gentle man. The gift of good rhetoric is often associated with theatrical performances and, as Clyde Binfield suggests, preachers are comparable to actors when presenting their sermons.<sup>25</sup> Yet with Jowett it would appear that the attraction was not in the visual presentation, but in the listening. His distinctive resonant voice, together with his personal conviction of ardent faith, allowed him to convey authority

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16 D A Johnson *The Changing Shape of English Nonconformity, 1825-1925* (Oxford 1999) 94.

17 *Ibid* 95.

18 H McLeod 'The Power of the Pulpit' in C Binfield (ed) *The Cross And The City* Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society, vol 6 supplement no 2 (1999) 47.

19 *ODNB*.

20 McLeod 'The Power of the Pulpit' 45.

21 *The Quiver* Issue 137 p1187.

22 J H Jowett 'Address to Free Church Congress, Cardiff, Wales, March 1901' in *Apostolic Optimism and other Sermons* (1901).

23 Jowett 'Address to Free Church Congress'.

24 *Congregational Year Book* (1925) 152.

25 Binfield *So Down To Prayers* 189.

and inspiration that accentuated the evangelical message of his sermons. One particular auditor described his performance thus;

At intervals he will proceed in deep and measured tones as if desirous of implanting his words in the minds of his hearers, then without the slightest indication he will raise his voice to clarion notes and almost electrify his audience by the quenchless fire and passion of his nature.<sup>26</sup>

Such eloquence and the masterly use of language were therefore not only a source of spiritual delight to the listener, but also gave Jowett power as a preacher.

The care which Jowett took in preparing his sermons is revealed in his lectures given at Yale University in 1912, on *The Preacher, His Life and Work*, when he stated

I have a conviction that no sermon is ready for preaching, not even for writing out, until we can express its theme in a short, pregnant sentence as clear as crystal.<sup>27</sup>

It was well known that he began writing his Sunday sermons on the Tuesday before they were to be given, and so they were very measured in their content. His manner of expression was certainly one that translated easily into print, and he was able to take advantage of this by having collections of his sermons published. His greatest output was undoubtedly whilst he was at Carr's Lane. His early writing style was poetic and might even be considered flowery or romantic by modern opinion, Jowett's own admitted 'prettiness'. Yet he was able to maintain interest by introducing anecdotal items often taken from his own life, and by associating the text with everyday actions. His aim was always to reach out to the individual, a conversional hope which he stressed by practising what he preached,

Our messages must be related to life, to lives, and we must make everybody feel that our key fits the lock of his own private door'.<sup>28</sup>

Jowett addressed many different audiences not only among the Congregationalists but also those of other Nonconformist denominations. It was a specific pre-condition of his acceptance of the pastorate at Carr's Lane that the deacons would allow him to continue his custom of exchanging pulpits once a month with some other minister.<sup>29</sup> These were not necessarily from around

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<sup>26</sup> *The Quiver* Issue 137 p1187.

<sup>27</sup> J H Jowett 'The Preacher in His Study' Lecture IV in *The Preacher, His Life and Work* Yale Lectures (New York 1912) 133.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Carr's Lane Church Minute Book 1890-99, 11 July 1895, Birmingham City Archives, C.C.1/13.

Birmingham, as there are many reports of his visits to other areas in regional newspapers which reveal his popularity and renown as a preacher. According to his biographer, it was not unusual for Jowett to receive up to thirty requests a day inviting him to preach.<sup>30</sup> A sermon given at Nether Chapel in Sheffield was described as

delivered with the impressive solemnity of subdued earnestness which is so irresistible from a cultured preacher. His pictures were not overdrawn, his language was simple, but his sentences well turned and his metaphors refined.<sup>31</sup>

Some members of the congregation took the themes of his sermons very seriously and even made notes as they listened. Others however were not so attentive to what Jowett had to say. A Northern newspaper reported with pride that church-goers of the North were better listeners than those of the Midlands, because Jowett had printed in his local magazine: -

Will the two ladies who sit in a rather conspicuous part of the chapel, and who so frequently engage in conversation during public worship, kindly remember that their conduct is a source of much annoyance to members of the congregation!<sup>32</sup>

Jowett's seemingly humble and unassuming manner belied his fervent evangelical conviction. His firm beliefs endowed him with an optimistic confidence which was revealed in his style of preaching. In his efforts to encourage and convert his listeners, he placed emphasis on the gospel and adopted a conversational tone that stressed the love of God. He focussed his message not on the future but on the benefits of belief in the here and now. In effect he preached practical religion. The importance of this is that it defined his preaching style as one that, according to Alan Sell, marked the trend at the end of the nineteenth century from one that stressed salvation from eternal damnation to one that promoted the love and grace of the Fatherhood of God.<sup>33</sup> Jowett was therefore advocating a contemporary theology which offered reassurance rather than purported to guarantee salvation. It was a theology that Jowett admitted in his first lecture at Yale University in 1912 was his driving force,

I have had but one passion, and I have lived for it – the absorbingly arduous

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30 Porritt *Jowett* 77.

31 *The Sheffield & Rotherham Independent* (24 February 1896) 5.

32 *The North-Eastern Daily Gazette* (11 July 1896).

33 A P F Sell *Nonconformist Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Carlisle 2006) 8, 9.

yet glorious work of proclaiming the grace and love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.<sup>34</sup>

This was his *raison d'être*, and from his youth it had fashioned who he was and what he was to become. In his address to the Free Church Council Congress in 1901, he asked his audience ‘*What is a Preacher?*’, and then perhaps unknowingly described himself exactly when he stated that an ideal preacher was a ‘herald’, an ‘evangelist’, a ‘logician’, and a ‘conversationalist’. His passion for preaching was expressed in his reference to 1 Corinthians 13,

If men can feel that we know their very breathing, and that we thrill to the deepest and most secretive movements of their spirit, they will permit us to be their guides and friends<sup>35</sup>

Fine words, however, were not enough for any preacher to gain the accolade of ‘Pulpit Prince’. In this respect Jowett was very conscious of his role as a preacher, which he saw as instructive as well as evangelistic. He repeatedly advocated the primacy of scripture in his sermons and gave particular consideration to other aspects of the church service, particularly the hymnody, and advised other ministers to do likewise. He wanted to ensure that his congregation understood why the Protestantism practised at Carr’s Lane was different from that of The Church of England.<sup>36</sup> There are some issues we know he did not preach from the pulpit, even though they would have interested him greatly. Outside of the pulpit he did comment on various topical issues, such as those of peace and war, education, licensing laws, even vivisection. Yet, as his biographer pointed out,

Though keenly alive to all the hectic stirrings of thought in his time, Jowett very rarely digressed from his life work as a preacher.<sup>37</sup>

The financial rewards were an inevitable consequence of his appeal, though he remained modest throughout. His salary on his call to the USA in 1911 was reportedly the highest ever offered to a pastor by an American church, but Jowett insisted that his salary would remain the same £1000 per annum as he was receiving from Carr’s Lane.<sup>38</sup> He recognised that preaching was his *forte* and devoted his whole life’s work to the evangelical cause.

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*Meegan Griffin*

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34 Jowett ‘The Call to be a Preacher’ Lecture 1 in *The Preacher, His Life and Work* 9.

35 Jowett ‘The Secrets of Effective Preaching—Sin and Sympathy’ in *Apostolic Optimism*.

36 *Carr’s Lane Chronicle* vol 1 no 1 (January 1903).

37 Porritt *Jowett* 294.

38 *Ibid* 293.

# ‘A UNANIMITY OF FEELING’: LYMINGTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN THE EDWARDIAN ERA 1901–14

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## Introduction

In its review of the year 1902, the *Lymington Chronicle* felt moved to make the following observations concerning the position of Nonconformity in the town:

Conspicuous amongst the details of the [Coronation] celebration was the official recognition of the Free Churches. The State attendance of the Mayor, Corporation, Vicar, public bodies, etc., at divine service held at the Congregational Church on the afternoon of August 10th was a red letter day for Nonconformity at Lymington, and the catholicity of good feeling brought about through the diplomacy of our worthy Mayor will ever serve to mark this year of office with special distinction.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from the positive comments about Nonconformity in general, it was a considerable accolade for the Congregationalists of Lymington to have their church selected as the venue for the Free Church service to celebrate the coronation of Edward VII.

The choice was indicative of the fact that by the opening of the twentieth century Congregationalism was highly regarded in Lymington. The Congregational cause in the town dated its foundation to 1700 and thus, by the time of Edward VII's coronation, it had a lengthy pedigree. Moreover, as the press report suggested, the relationship between, on the one hand, Congregationalism and Nonconformity more generally and, on the other, the Established Church was exceedingly harmonious. As will be mentioned later, there was an excellent rapport between the Congregational minister and the vicar of Lymington. While this was not unknown elsewhere in Hampshire, there were some localities where relations were far less cordial.

Lymington's Edwardian Congregationalists had a well apportioned place of worship which had been built, as Jude James recorded, 'in 1847 at the cost of £4,000, of which £1,000 was donated by Robert Lillington Rice, a wealthy Lymington businessman.'<sup>2</sup> This was conveniently situated on the High

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1 *Lymington Chronicle* (hereafter LC) 1 January 1903.

2 J James *Lymington: An Illustrated history* (Wimborne Minster 2007) 130.

Street and survives to this day.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of the twentieth century, Lymington Congregational Church also had responsibility for evangelistic stations in the villages of East End and Pilley. The chapel at East End had been erected in 1810 and the one at Pilley had been started in 1857 and completed in 1858. They jointly became one branch church in 1913.

In this assessment of Lymington Congregational Church, covering the period from the accession of Edward VII in 1901 to the outbreak of the World War I in 1914, particular attention is given to the statistical record; the ministers and deacons; aspects of church life; and relations with the wider community, both ecclesiastical and secular. For primary source material, considerable reliance has been placed on reports from the *Lymington Chronicle* and *Hampshire Independent* supplemented with the minutes of church meetings and other church records which are now lodged with the Hampshire Record Office (hereafter HRO) in Winchester. What is clearly apparent from these sources is that during the Edwardian era a noteworthy and greatly valued feature of Lymington Congregational Church was the prevailing 'spirit of unity'.<sup>4</sup> As it was put in a report of the annual meeting of the church in 1908: 'The proceedings were marked with an enthusiasm and unanimity of a feeling characteristic of a church whose several organisations are all working wholeheartedly under the happy auspices of a much beloved pastor.'<sup>5</sup>

## The Statistical Record

A hallmark of late Victorian and Edwardian Congregationalism was the assiduous collection of statistics. Each year, Lymington Congregational Church was required to submit data relating to various features of church life, specifically the number of members and of Sunday school scholars and teachers, to the Hampshire Congregational Union (hereafter HCU), to which it was affiliated. These in turn were published in the annual reports of the HCU and the yearbooks of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. For historians, such data afford a means of reviewing the fortunes of churches both individually and collectively. Aggregate data relating to Lymington, East End and Pilley for the years 1901 to 1914 inclusive are collated in Table 1.

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3 Since 1972 it has been home to Lymington United Reformed Church.

4 LC 30 March 1905.

5 LC 6 February 1908.



**Table 1: Membership and Related Data for Lymington Congregational Church 1901–1914**

Year	Members		Sunday School	
	No	3 Year Average	Scholars	Teachers
1901	130	133	171	20
1902	140	137	178	24
1903	140	137	178	24
1904	130	133	201	27
1905	130	134	201	27
1906	141	140	150	18
1907	148	144	150	22
1908	143	145	140	21
1909	145	145	128	19
1910	146	146	158	21
1911	148	142	132	16
1912	133	133	129	28
1913	117	120	151	27
1914	111	113	151	27

**Notes**

a. Most of the data in this table have been taken from the Annual Reports of the HCU. HRO: 127M54/62/46 to 59.

b. The three year moving average has been calculated to even out sudden changes in the figures for individual years.

c. It seems probable that returns for 1903 and 1905 were not submitted with the figures for the preceding year being repeated.

d. Separate figures are given for the number of Sunday school scholars at East End and Pilley but not for church members. It has been assumed that these are included in the total for Lymington. The Sunday school figures for East End were 1901, 44; 1902, 42; 1903, 42; 1904, 38; 1905, 38; 1906, 30; 1907, 36; 1908, 40; 1909, 53; 1910, not recorded (n.r.); 1911, 70; 1912, 50; 1913, 74; and 1914, 74. For Pilley they were 1901, 78; 1902, 76; 1903, 76; 1904, 61; 1905, 61; 1906, 54; 1907, 60; 1908, 67; 1909, 57; 1910, n.r.; 1911, 50; 1912, 48; 1913, n.r.; and 1914, n.r.

As can be seen, membership peaked at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. The subsequent rapid decline may have been due simply to greater rigour in ensuring the accuracy of membership records. Marked variations and similarities in the number of Sunday school scholars for certain years could have been the result of the vagaries of record keeping. If taken at

face value, the figures for the Sunday school suggest that there was a modest revival just prior to the World War I.

These figures, of course, only show net increases and decreases. They do not record the flow of members or Sunday school scholars into and out of the church. If findings from other churches were replicated in Lymington then it is probable that the church lost a considerable number of members through death; transfers to other churches when members moved away from the town; and striking off due to non-attendance. At least some of these losses would have been offset by gains arising from transfers and new members making a 'profession of faith'. Reference was made to the gain and loss of members by the minister at a meeting to celebrate the 202nd anniversary of the church in 1902.

... during the last eight years 140 members had joined the church, and of those 70 had left the town, which would give their friends who did not know Lymington, some idea of the constant waste going on in that declining town. Thirty had died during those eight years so the net gain was 40.<sup>6</sup>

This highlights the challenge the church faced in sustaining its membership against a background of an increasingly mobile population.

Having said that, it is very likely that the numbers attending services and of those attached to church sponsored organisations would have far exceeded the membership. Although a census of church attendance was not undertaken in Lymington in the early years of the twentieth century, as happened in a number of other places, results from elsewhere in Hampshire suggest that congregations for regular services were about double the size of church memberships.<sup>7</sup>

While the statistical record affords some insights into Congregationalism in Edwardian Lymington it by no means provides the full picture. In other words, it needs to be enhanced and embellished with qualitative material. This is particularly the case when it comes to evaluating the leadership of Lymington Congregational Church.

## Ministers

At the opening of the Edwardian era, Lymington's Congregational minister was the Revd Joseph Cliffe. He had held the post since 1894 and all the evidence suggests that he was highly respected and had made a considerable impression on the town. In 1903, after serving for over eight years, Cliffe left for a church in Natal. As reported at the time:

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6 LC 6 November 1902.

7 Censuses of churchgoing were carried out in Basingstoke, Portsmouth and Whitchurch in 1902/3.

... [his] valedictory service ... was a very memorable one, and the deep affection of the members of his church and the sincere regard of the town generally, irrespective of creed or politics, was strikingly evidenced, bearing eloquent testimony to the fact that earnest labour, carried on quietly and unostentatiously, coupled with high ideals exemplified in the preacher's own life, is appreciated at its proper value.

Later at this event, Cliffe was praised for being 'a preacher of no mean order ... a sincere man, a manly man, a modest man, and a clever man.'<sup>8</sup> It was also striking that in attendance were representatives from all the churches in the neighbourhood. These included the long serving vicar of Lymington, Canon Benjamin Maturin, who presented him with a travelling clock, a clear indication of the respect and high regard he and his congregation had for Cliffe. In his response, after indicating 'how deeply touched he was by the affection and generosity of his own people,' he went on especially to 'thank his brother, Canon Maturin, and the Mayor, and other representatives of the Church of England for that beautiful expression of their love.'<sup>9</sup>

Clearly Cliffe's successor was going to be faced with the daunting task of demonstrating similar qualities of leadership. In the event, the members selected the Revd Willie Lawrence, who proved to be a sound choice. He had gained his initial ministerial experience as a missionary in India. This was followed by three years as assistant to the celebrated Congregational minister, Revd Silvester Home, at the renowned Kensington Chapel before commencing his pastorate in Lymington. At Lawrence's public recognition meeting, the church secretary indicated that he had been a unanimous choice of the members and that 'he was already winning a way into their hearts.' One of his friends, Mr D Wellby, commented that Lawrence was:

... a true man, believed in what he taught, and in his life did his best to live up to what he preached (applause). He was unselfish and sympathetic, thorough and earnest in all his work; and whilst a student, not a recluse. Young and old would find in him a true helper, from his catholicity of view on church organisation, and whilst of firm convictions, he would be found no time server (applause).<sup>10</sup>

Even allowing for a touch of hyperbole on these occasions, Lawrence's reputation appears well deserved. In addition, it should not be overlooked that Lawrence's wife was also seen as a considerable asset to the church. She was

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8 *Hampshire Independent* (hereafter *HI*) 4 April 1903.

9 *HI* 4 April 1903.

10 *LC* 5 November 1903.

described as a ‘most able helper’ who would ‘help them forward in their spiritual life.’<sup>11</sup>

The expectations aroused by the arrival of Revd and Mrs Lawrence appear to have been fully realised during the six years they spent in Lymington. In Lawrence’s resignation letter, following his acceptance of a call to Hendon Congregational Church in the summer of 1909, the prevailing themes of unanimity and mutuality were again to the fore:

Our relationships have been and are such as I shall remember with great affection, we have worked together in the greatest harmony and mutual confidence and I believe God’s blessing has been upon us in the success of our endeavours.

It was also recorded that he had ‘won the esteem, not only of his own people but of all classes in the town’. Among his attributes were those of ‘an able and cultured preacher, an admirable platform speaker, and a charming talker on books and their authors’, while as minister he had been ‘strong, but tactful.’<sup>12</sup> In addition, the value of his wife’s contribution can be seen in remarks made at the annual tea of the Congregational Mother’s Meeting, held just prior to the Lawrences’ departure. ‘Mrs Lawrence had ever been a kind and true friend to the Mother’s Meeting and her many kindly ministries would be always lovingly remembered.’<sup>13</sup> It is clear from the gifts that both were given by the various church organisations that they had made their mark and were deeply touched by the kindness shown.

The mutual respect engendered by the Lawrences was also reflected in the observations of the church secretary, at the recognition meeting for his successor. They had, he commented, ‘not forgotten Mr Lawrence’s untiring labours or his very inspiring sermons, and they also fully recognised the work of Mrs Lawrence in their midst (applause).’<sup>14</sup> According to his official obituary, Lawrence had been ‘well equipped for his work. His varied knowledge of literature, deep religious feeling and sympathetic nature made him an effective and helpful preacher, and he was universally loved.’<sup>15</sup> In addition to his Lymington pastorate, Lawrence was secretary of the HCU, taking over from the redoubtable Richard Wells in 1906. In this capacity he demonstrated ‘his

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11 LC 5 November 1903. For a full discussion of the role of ministers’ wives see R Ottewill ‘The Woman of the Manse: Recognising the Contribution of the Wives of Congregational Pastors in Edwardian Hampshire’ *Congregational History Society Magazine* vol 6 no 6 (2012) 309–18.

12 HI 19 June 1909. Lawrence preached his valedictory sermon in early September. HI 11 September 1909.

13 LC 2 September 1909.

14 LC 5 November 1910.

15 *Congregational Year Book* (hereafter *CYB*) (1929) 221.

business and administrative acumen in a marked degree'. Given his undoubted talents, 'it was hardly to be expected' that, as it was put in the *Hampshire Independent*, 'the rev. gentleman would remain a fixture in Lymington.'<sup>16</sup>

Lawrence's replacement was the Revd Walter Vine, who came from Forest Green, Nailsworth, in Gloucestershire, where 'his ministry was characterised as "six years of spiritual help and blessing."<sup>17</sup> Speaking at Vine's recognition meeting, the Revd Robert Nott, the chairman of Gloucester County Congregational Union, testified to 'his geniality, energy, zealous devotion, hearty and infectious laugh, perseverance, bright happy spirit, and consecrated zeal.'<sup>18</sup> It was also noted that he held 'very progressive views on theology'.<sup>19</sup> The members of Lymington Congregational Church, however, do not seem to have regarded this as a deterrent.

Vine began his ministry in September 1910 and at his first services 'there were large congregations, and ... [he] made an excellent impression, delivered powerfully impressive addresses, and met with an exceedingly hearty welcome.' In the course of what he had to say:

... he invited the co-operation and confidence of the members of the church and congregation in the great work that laid before minister and people for accomplishment; in an endeavour to attain the height of spiritual aspirations; the length of intellectual knowledge; and the breadth of loving self-sacrifice in following Him, who was the Way, the Truth, and the Light—thus making a real living church—not a mere preaching station.<sup>20</sup>

First impressions were undoubtedly vindicated and a few weeks later, at Vine's recognition meeting, the church secretary was able to claim that he 'had captured all their hearts.'<sup>21</sup> He remained at Lymington until 1917. In his official obituary there is a quotation from 'one who knew him well' to the effect that 'Mr Vine was a man who combined great intellect with sound common sense, was a charming personality and the kindest of hearts.'<sup>22</sup> Such attributes appear to have been much valued during his time in Lymington.

As Vine indicated at the commencement of his pastorate, the effectiveness of his ministry depended upon the co-operation and support of church members and others who looked to Lymington Congregational Church as their spiritual home. Not least, a good rapport between the minister and the deacons was crucial.

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16 *HI* 19 June 1909.

17 *LC* 8 September 1910.

18 *LC* 5 November 1910.

19 D A Douglass *The Story of Lymington United Reformed Church* (Lymington c. 1983).

20 *LC* 8 September 1910.

21 *LC* 5 November 1910.

22 *CYB* (1947) 477.

## Deacons

Until 1903 the deacons were elected *en bloc* on an annual basis. Thereafter, a system of partial renewal was used, with deacons serving for terms of three years. Each year one third of their number retired. Those retiring were entitled to stand for re-election.

The composition of the diaconate in 1902 when the number of deacons was increased from four to six is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Lymington Congregational Church Deacons in 1902**

Name	Age	Occupation	Address	Ser <sup>2</sup>
Malcolm Baskett	73	Carpenter, joiner & undertaker	Queen Street	0
Frederick Cox	38	Draper's assistant	Emsworth Road	0
Charles Dearlove	43	Florist	Nursery, Gosport Street	0
William Giles	26	Flour Miller & Engine Driver	Quay Street (Boarder)	0
John Read	65	Bath Attendant	Bath Road	0
Frederic Schreiber <sup>1</sup>	41	Watchmaker	33, High Street	0

## Notes

1. Church Secretary 2. Number of live-in servants

Source: 1901 Census Returns and Kellys Directories

As can be seen, amongst the deacons there was a good mix of ages and backgrounds. Although none were of sufficiently high status to employ live-in servants, a number were self-employed small businessmen, one of whom, Frederic Schreiber, held the key post of church secretary.

Interestingly, and in a notable departure from the norm, the church treasurer was Miss Edith Lucy Sharp who also occupied the post of Sunday school superintendent.<sup>23</sup> As a woman, and as convention dictated, Miss Sharp could not at that time formally serve as a deacon. However, in her capacity as church treasurer she attended deacons' meetings and to all intents and purposes was a *de facto* deacon.

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<sup>23</sup> Edith Sharp was born in 1854. The daughter of a solicitor, she was a native of Lymington. See also R Ottewill 'Edith Lucy Sharp 1853–1930: Lymington's proto-feminist?' *Hampshire Field Club Newsletter* 61 (2014) 1–5.

Of the deacons serving in 1902, three were still in post ten years later, thereby providing a degree of continuity. Of the others, William Giles appears to have moved away from the area. John Read died in 1908. In the church minutes it was recorded that: ‘He was beloved by us all, he was honoured for his simple faith & for his truly Christian character.’<sup>24</sup> Two years later in late 1910, Malcolm Baskett died. ‘From his upright life and character [he] was deservedly held in high esteem by all his fellow townsmen throughout a long and useful career ... [he] was a very earnest Christian and whole-hearted and enthusiastic in all he undertook.’<sup>25</sup> In an enlightened move and one in keeping, perhaps, with Vine’s progressive views, the church members formalised Edith Sharp’s position by unanimously electing her to fill the vacancy arising from Baskett’s death. This meant that she was almost certainly the first female Congregational church deacon in Hampshire and one of the first in the country as a whole. In taking this step Lyminster Congregational Church was undoubtedly ahead of its time, but it foreshadowed moves towards greater recognition of the contribution of women to the life of the Church as the century progressed.

Details of the deacons serving in 1911 are provided in Table 3.

**Table 3: Lyminster Congregational Church Deacons in 1911**

Name	Age	Occupation	Address	Ser <sup>3</sup>
Frederick Cox	47	Outfitter	Liskeard	0
Charles Dearlove	52	Nurseryman and florist	42, Gosport Street	0
Frank Doman	36	Linen Draper (dealer)	11, High Street	1
Frederick W House	48	Upholsterer and undertaker	33, St Thomas Street	0
Frederic Schreiber <sup>1</sup>	52	Watchmaker (dealer)	33, High Street	1
Miss Edith Sharp <sup>2</sup>	57	Private means	53, High Street	n.k.

**Notes**

1. church secretary 2. church treasurer. 3. Number of live-in servants

Source: 1911 Census Returns and Kelly’s Directories<sup>26</sup>

24 Lyminster Congregational Church Meeting Record Book (hereafter LCC Ch Mtg) 1902–1955. HRO: 12M83/2.

25 LC 20 January 1910.

26 At the time of the 1911 census Edith Sharp was visiting Revd Willie Lawrence in Hendon.

As previously, the local business community was well represented, with deacons bringing to the role entrepreneurial and organisational skills honed in the secular realm.<sup>27</sup> Thus, the church had at its disposal not only men of faith but also those who made their mark through their contribution to the economic life of the town. How far they reflected Christian values in the conduct of their businesses is not known, but it can be assumed that they aspired to be worthy ambassadors of their church.

Unlike the position in many other communities, none of the deacons served on the local council. However, Edith Sharp was a member of the Board of Guardians thereby giving expression to what was known as the civic gospel, a blending of public service with Christian commitment.

## **Church Life and Organisations**

By the Edwardian era, most Congregational churches catered for not only the spiritual but also the social, educational and recreational needs of their congregations. The institutional principle, as it was known, can be said to have reached its apogee in the years leading up the World War I and was reflected in the plethora of church affiliated organisations. Of these the one with the greatest reach was usually the Sunday school. In Lymington at least one in five children aged between 5 and 17 attended the Congregational Sunday school, thereby affording the church contact with many families, however tenuous, that they did not have by other means. Closely linked to the Sunday school was a branch of the Band of Hope, instilling in young people the value of total abstinence.

Serving as a bridge between the Sunday school and full church membership there was a Christian Endeavour Society. In 1905 this was superseded by a Young People's Union (YPU), possibly because the former was deemed to be overly spiritual in its aims. Some idea of the range of activities provided by the YPU can be gained from what was planned for 1910. Described as 'a full and varied programme for the winter months ... [it included] lantern lectures, addresses by the minister and others, progressive games, impromptu speeches, spelling bees, a temperance entertainment, a missionary meeting, a united prayer meeting, and several "socials".'<sup>28</sup> In addition, the YPU raised funds for the London Missionary Society and organised an oriental evening for this purpose in 1908.<sup>29</sup> Later, in 1913, Walter Vine expressed the 'need for some society where the young could be trained in preparation for Church Membership & suggested the formation of a class to be called the Associate

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<sup>27</sup> For further information about Frederick House and his business interests see B J Down *Lymington—A Pictorial Past* (Southampton 1991).

<sup>28</sup> LC 6 October 1910.

<sup>29</sup> LC 26 March 1908.



Members Class'.<sup>30</sup> His proposal was favourably received and a class was duly established. Such initiatives were a response to a problem faced by most, if not all, Congregational churches, namely their failure to convert more than handful of young people, who had belonged to their Sunday schools, into church members.

Adults were able to pursue their intellectual interests through membership of the Lymington Congregational Literary and Debating Society. This received considerable coverage in the press and it provided a forum for hearing papers on, and discussing, issues of the day. Some typical subjects from 1908 and 1909 were women's suffrage; war and Christianity; unemployment; tariff reform versus free trade; and the province of the press. Fittingly, the meeting devoted to women's suffrage 'aroused the keenest interest, it being the first occasion in the history of the society that a debate had been opened by a lady speaker', Miss Wheeler.<sup>31</sup> In 1911 it was announced that the Literary and Debating Society 'had resolved itself into a "Social Study Circle" ' which was to meet on alternate Friday evenings.<sup>32</sup>

As had become a feature of many Nonconformist churches, regular Pleasant Sunday Afternoon (also known as Men's Own Brotherhood) meetings were also held, an initiative which dated from the pastorate of Joseph Cliffe. These were intended to be 'brief, bright and brotherly.' In 1906 it was reported that, although 'nominally undenominational ... [they were] practically exclusively worked by members of the [Congregational] church and congregation ... [who] maintained ... [their] prosperous condition.'<sup>33</sup> That said, at some point, probably during 1907/8, these meetings came to an end.

However, in late 1911 it was reported in the church minutes that Men's Own Brotherhood meetings were to start on the following Sunday.<sup>34</sup> This was not really surprising since the new minister, Walter Vine, was an enthusiastic supporter of the Brotherhood Movement. The inaugural meeting was attended by the Mayor and many members of the borough council. In his address Vine reiterated that the Brotherhood Movement was 'not sectarian, and certainly not political'. Interestingly, given the temperance orientation of the Brotherhood, he also thanked the 'landlords of licensed houses for their splendid help. Every licensed house in the town had shown the Brotherhood card, and several licensed victuallers were with them that day'.<sup>35</sup>

Vine's commitment to the Brotherhood Movement was reflected in a

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30 LCC Ch Mtg 1902-1955.

31 LC 12 March 1908.

32 LC 26 October 1911.

33 LC 22 March 1906.

34 LCC Ch Mtg 1902-1955.

35 HI 9 December 1911.

valedictory statement which appeared in the yearbook of the Wilts, Hants, Dorset and Isle of Wight Federation when he was elected to the presidency for the year 1914:

In 1910 he accepted the pastorate of Lymington and a year later founded the Lymington Brotherhood in a town where it was universally felt such a meeting could never be successfully formed [this is an odd comment, given the earlier PSA meetings]. In this Brotherhood Mr Vine has had the assistance of leading members of the municipality of both shades of political opinion, which has done a great deal towards advancing the true ideals of the movement. He is a brother who enjoys life to the full. He is no pessimist, he finds the world a lively place to live in, and full of delightful company, and he only wants to do his full share towards making it more lovely and delightful still. He feels himself, at times, a very poor worker, but is trying to win some small portion of it, for his Saviour, brother and friend, the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

However, it was a challenging task to sustain the Movement in Lymington, as elsewhere, especially following the outbreak of the World War I. As it was put in a report of the third anniversary meeting held in November 1914:

The President [Walter Vine] ... spoke of the many changes which had taken place since the inauguration of the Brotherhood ... and the difficulties in keeping it going, especially now that when so many of the men were away at the Front; therefore they wanted all who could rally round and help them in this hour of National Crisis. Speaking of the objects of the Brotherhood movement, he showed how many of its members had responded to the call of duty, while those left behind many were helping in various ways ...<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding the challenges it faced, the Men's Own Brotherhood was one of the undoubted, albeit unsung, success stories of the Edwardian era.<sup>3</sup> Although primarily targeted at men, it was common practice to hold, from time to time, open meetings to which women were invited.

Specifically for women, Lymington Congregational Church sponsored, in addition to the previously mentioned Mother's Meeting, a Ladies' Sewing Circle, which made an invaluable contribution to the production of items that could be sold to raise money. These provided opportunities not only for fellowship but also for women to demonstrate their organisational skills and indispensability to the well-being of the church. Women would have

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1 LC 12 March 1914.

2 LC 17 December 1914.

3 For further details of the Brotherhood Movement, see D Killingray 'The Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Movement: Revival in the West Midlands, 1875-90?' in K Cooper and J Gregory (eds) *Studies in Church History 44: Revival and Resurgence in Christian History* (Woodbridge 2008) 262-274.

constituted about two-thirds of the membership and without their willingness to get involved it would have been substantially the poorer in every sense of the word. In this respect, Edith Sharp can be said to have personified the potential for women to play a critical role in church affairs at the local level.

Of the events that were intended for everyone, one of the most eagerly anticipated was the annual celebration of the anniversary of the foundation of the church. This consisted of special services on the designated Sunday and on the following Wednesday a service during the afternoon followed by a public tea and meeting. As elsewhere, the latter was an opportunity for the officers of the church to review the preceding year and for talks by guest speakers. In 1901, for example, Alderman George Lawson, the Mayor of Bournemouth and a deacon of East Cliff Congregational Church, 'spoke of the battle of Nonconformity and the need for more united action amongst the Free Churches ... especially in regard to insidious attacks being made upon the Sabbath day and particularly in regard to sport'.<sup>4</sup> A few years later, in 1905, the church was privileged to have as its anniversary speaker, Silvester Horne.<sup>5</sup> In his address, he expressed the overly optimistic belief that 'a great spiritual revival was coming'. To prepare for this 'they must have all their forces marshalled, and let the forces of evil know they were awake and ready for the fray (applause)'.<sup>6</sup>

To enable such meetings to be held and to facilitate the operation of satellite organisations as well as the conduct of services, it was necessary to ensure that the premises in which Lyminster's Congregationalists met and worshipped remained fit for purpose. This meant that from time to time improvements were required. In 1905, for example, the church undertook what was described as 'a thorough renovation, re-seating, decoration, improvement of the ventilation, and the introduction of an improved system of heating'.<sup>7</sup> Such enhancements, of course, cost money, £400 in this case, which meant that a regular feature of church life was fund raising. This often meant appeals to the wider community to supplement the generosity of Congregationalists themselves.

## Wider Community

During the Edwardian era, Congregational churches were, in the main, not only *in* but also *of* the community in which they were located and Lyminster was no exception in this respect. It reached out to the local population in a variety of ways. These included the provision of activities considered in the

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4 LC 31 October 1901.

5 This was almost certainly due to the fact that Willie Lawrence had previously been his assistant.

6 LC 30 March 1905.

7 LC 29 June 1905.

previous section; fund raising events, such as bazaars and sales of work; and the fostering of warm relations with other churches.

With respect to the last of these, it is worthy of note that at the time of Canon Maturin's death in 1905 it was recorded in the church minutes that:

We the members of the Congregational Church in Church Meeting assembled desire to convey to Mrs Maturin & her family our sincere sympathy with them in their irreparable loss ... We recall with great appreciation the friendly relations which Canon Maturin cultivated with this church & its pastors ...

And we wish to bear our testimony to the respect in which his Christian Character was held by us all.<sup>8</sup>

It was also agreed to send a floral tribute and a deputation to the Canon's funeral, thereby underlining the good relations which had been exhibited at the time of Joseph Cliffe's departure.

An ecumenical spirit was also evident at a bazaar held in 1907 'in the beautiful grounds of Holme Mead,' situated on Lymington High Street. As reported, 'it was gratifying to notice that the audience included many well known members of the Church of England, as well as numbers of friends from the Wesleyan and Baptist Churches ... [and] from Free Churches in the district.'<sup>9</sup> Reference was also made to the ecumenical mood at the close of the evening concert by Miss Truman, the daughter of General Truman of Efford Park:

I have an additional satisfaction in contributing to your entertainment, in the knowledge that by so doing I am helping to bridge over ... denominational differences, and proving my belief that in the doing of good there should be no dividing line ... We belong to the Church Catholic, The Church Universal, and so long as we set the Master's teachings before us we are equal in his sight ... we, in our way, can do something to assuage the bitterness of sectarian feeling by joining hands as we have to-day in the name of charity.

As far as can be judged, such sentiments appear to have been widespread in Edwardian Lymington, with Congregationalists being in the vanguard of ecumenical enterprise.

With respect to the community more broadly, the earlier references to the celebrations to mark the coronation of Edward VII and the interest taken in the Men's Own Brotherhood by the mayor and councillors are indicative of the close association of the Church with the civic life of the town. In symbolic terms, its prominent position on the High Street undoubtedly helped to keep

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8 LCC Ch Mtg 1902-1909, November 2, 1905. HRO Ref 12M83/3.

9 LC 13 June 1907.

the church in the public eye. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, in pursuing their business interests the deacons made their mark on the economic life of the town.

It is unlikely that any resident of Lymington would have been unaware of the Congregational church during the Edwardian era. Even if they never attended services there or indeed any other church, it would have impinged on their consciousness in the ways indicated and through the considerable coverage its activities received in the *Lymington Chronicle*. Moreover, it is not unreasonable to claim that the church, through its embrace of the institutional principle and philanthropic activities, would have generated a considerable amount of goodwill within the community at large. Moreover, this extended to outlying villages, specifically through its support for the evangelistic stations at East End and Pilley.

## East End and Pilley

During the Edwardian era the work at East End and Pilley was led by an evangelist, for whom financial support was received from the HCU. From 1899 to 1906 this was Major (his Christian name, not a title) Smith; 1908 to 1912, Bentley Neal; and 1912 to 1916, Noah Brewer. The last was described in his official obituary as having a 'strong faith and undaunted spirit.'<sup>10</sup>

Some idea of the vicissitudes experienced by such rural causes is revealed by the annual reports they were required to submit to the HCU as a condition of receiving financial aid. Extracts from the reports for a number of years are provided in the Appendix. On a positive note, these highlight good attendances at services; the contribution of social welfare initiatives, such as slate and coal clubs; building and renovation projects, associated fund raising and enhanced collaboration which this stimulated; and the commitment of the evangelists. More negatively, there are references to depleted congregations and memberships due to illness and removals. Overall, however, the work seems to have progressed more effectively than in some other parts of the county. In 1914, what were described as 'a commodious School and Class Rooms and a new kitchen' were opened at East End. The cost was £278.<sup>11</sup> On the eve of the World War I, both causes appear to have been thriving.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> CYB (1949) 510.

<sup>11</sup> *Annual Report of the Hampshire Congregational Union* (1914) HRO 127M54/59.

<sup>12</sup> For additional information about the origins and subsequent history of Pilley Congregational Chapel, see Down, *Lymington*, 82.

## Conclusion

Reg Ward refers to the Edwardian era as Congregationalism's 'golden age'.<sup>13</sup> Similarly Alan Argent, from the perspective of 1918, claims that:

The Edwardian years had been full of hope for Congregationalists who had never before enjoyed such power and prestige. The political party which most supported, the Liberals, had been returned in triumph, and churches and chapels were full to overflowing.<sup>14</sup>

While it might be going too far to apply these assessments, without qualification, to the experiences of the Congregationalists of Edwardian Lymington, given the decline in membership after 1911, nevertheless some very positive contrary features can be identified. Relations within the church appear to have been exceptionally harmonious. Moreover, it is perhaps indicative of a church at ease with itself that it was prepared to allow a woman, Edith Sharp, to have such a high profile, at a time when this was almost unheard of elsewhere in the Congregational world. Such accord also extended to dealings with other churches and the community more generally. As indicated, throughout the period, the church received favourable coverage in the *Lymington Chronicle* and appears to have enjoyed a great deal of respect. Thus, in the years leading up to the World War I Lymington Congregational Church exemplified some of the strengths of the denomination. At the same time, with respect to Edith Sharp, it anticipated developments that were to occur later in the century within Congregationalism more broadly.

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<sup>13</sup> R Ward 'Professor Clyde Binfield: A Critical Appreciation' in D Bebbington and T Larsen (eds) *Modern Christianity and Cultural Aspirations* (2003) 16.

<sup>14</sup> A Argent *The Transformation of Congregationalism 1900–2000* (Nottingham 2013) 79–80.

## Appendix: Extracts from the Annual Reports for East End and Pilley

Year	Extract
1901	‘The attendance has suffered somewhat through removals, but good work has been done and steady progress made in both the village stations’
1902	‘Mr. Smith labours with earnestness and acceptance, and his visits to the homes of the people are helpful and encouraging.’
1903	‘The work at both villages, East End and Pilley, has been well sustained. Mr Smith is very energetic, and in addition to the ordinary services, he supervises the Temperance work and the Slate and Coal Clubs.’
1905	‘There are many indications of the increasing usefulness of the work in these places. The Sunday Congregations are better, and some small developments of social work have been much appreciated.’
1906	At East End, ‘A considerable amount of sickness that has prevailed during the year, and removals, are largely responsible for a falling off in attendance ... At Pilley, many hopeful signs are manifest, and a renovation Scheme which is being carried out there is giving opportunity for a good deal of effort, which has the additional result that it brings closely together those who take part and strengthens their interest in the work of the Church.’
1907	‘The chief thing to report at East End has been the large number of young men that have been attending the Evening Service during the past ten months. Sometimes a third of the congregation is formed of these ... Many of our people are working for a Sale of work, the proceeds ... will go to renovate our Chapel, which is great need of repair. The Congregation has steadily increased in numbers, and a good spirit is evident in the meetings, and we are beginning to realise that the Gospel of Christ is reaching the hearts of the people. We have had much to encourage us at Pilley. The Chapel has been well renovated and the cost defrayed ... The services are better attended and we are hopeful, but the neighbourhood is a difficult one to work in.’
1908	‘The services on Sunday record an increase in both places; the general work is very prosperous, and the new organisations are doing excellent service.’

1909	'Much needed renovation has been carried out at East End at a cost of £60'
1910	'The work at both East End and Pilley is being well maintained ... the Sunday School reports an increase in Scholars and Teachers.'
1911	'A year of spiritual and financial progress is reported ... A Manse ... has been built adjoining the [East End] Chapel ... A marked increase has taken place in the Sunday School. At Pilley also the work is very hopeful.'
1912	'Evidences of God's blessings abound, and a spirit of unity and enthusiasm prevails. A noticeable feature of the congregations at all services at East End is the proportion of men who attend and take a great interest in the work.'
1913	'The work at East End has made great advance - in church attendance, Sunday School Membership, and the weekly offering. At Pilley, the work is full of hope.'

Source: *Annual Reports of the Hampshire Congregational Union*, various years. HRO 127M54/62/46 to 59.

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Roger Ottewill

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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); website: [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 link 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 for further links to his sermons and Journals.

There are many other titles too numerous to mention.



# C SILVESTER HORNE: WHITEFIELD'S CHAPEL, CONGREGATIONALISM, AND THE FREE CHURCHES

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## Introduction

Among the bright stars of the Congregational churches was Charles Silvester Horne (1865–1914).<sup>1</sup> He was one of the most beloved Congregational ministers of his generation and was hailed as one of its most important leaders at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> He embodied the heart and soul of Congregationalism with a charm and personality that captured the very best of Free Church ideals in a magnetic way.

He became the pastor of the prominent Kensington Chapel, Allen Street, upon his graduation from Mansfield College, Oxford in 1889 and served there as pastor until 1903. Allen Street provided a fruitful season of ministry for the young minister. He celebrated the Allen Street's centennial anniversary and wrote a historical overview for their celebration.<sup>3</sup> He also married Katherine, the oldest daughter of Herbert Cozens-Hardy, who would later become Master of the Rolls. It was at Allen Street where Horne began his family life. He also gained a reputation for his preaching abilities and contributed much to the Free Churches through his writing during this time. His growing influence and successes at Allen Street did not go without notice. It is said that upon R W Dale's failing health that he spoke of Horne serving with him at Carr's Lane, if he would agree to it.<sup>4</sup> Yet, it seemed as if Horne's heart was restless despite all the blessings at Allen Street. The re-opening of Whitefield's Chapel in 1899 appealed to the optimism and vision of Horne for an institutional church.

He assumed the pastorate of Whitefield's in 1903 and continued his service there until January, 1914.<sup>5</sup> Among the speakers at Horne's inaugural services were R J Campbell, John Clifford, and J H Jowett.<sup>6</sup>

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1 For a biography of Horne see W B Selbie *The Life of Charles Silvester Horne* (1920).

2 R T Jones *Congregationalism in England* (1962) 325.

3 This work was published as *A Century of Christian Service: Kensington Congregational Church 1793–1893* (1893).

4 W R Nicoll *Princes of the Church* (1921) 279.

5 Whitefield's Chapel, also known as Whitefield's Tabernacle, had originally been built for George Whitefield (1714–70).

6 *London Congregational Union. Central Mission Whitefield's (Tottenham Court Road). Programme of inaugural services Sept. 20th & 22nd, 1903* (1903). Inside the programme for the inaugural services reads 'Rev. C. Silvester Horne, M.A., Superintendent.' This title is presumably used as he had been

Horne's transition from Allen Street to Whitefield's was marked with some surprise. T H Darlow asked, 'How many popular preachers have deliberately given up wealthy congregations in order that they may spend themselves among Christ's poor?'<sup>7</sup> The very notion of his desire to move to Tottenham Court Road reveals something admirable about his character, as well as his view of an all-encompassing ministry that did not avail itself in Kensington. The mass of working people in Tottenham Court Road represented vastly different social needs to that of affluent Kensington. These real challenges of ministry to the community from without were compounded with the difficulties of the new church from within. Whitefield's had significant financial debt which was further complicated by its declining membership. Selbie went on even to suggest that *Ichabod* was written across the doors.<sup>8</sup> Horne seemed destined for such an assignment and accepted his new position.

He eagerly took on his new pastorate, despite these clear challenges, with a bold vision for Whitefield's to become a model for other Congregational and Free Churches.

This paper will focus on three of the significant contributions that Horne made to Congregationalism and to the Free Churches through his ministry at Whitefield's Chapel: Preaching, the Institutional Church, and his political involvement.

## Preaching

Congregationalism was known for its great preaching and therefore for its popular preachers. Among its notable preachers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were R W Dale, J D Jones, J H Jowett, P T Forsyth, and G Campbell Morgan. Horne did not gain the lasting prominence of his notable contemporaries, but he was no less capable as a preacher. His oratorical capabilities were well known and even unmatched, as some suggested, when at the height of his preaching ministry.<sup>9</sup>

There was something more, however, to Horne's effectiveness, than his rhetorical capabilities. Of particular significance to understanding Horne was his theology of preaching. Horne delivered two series of lectures on preaching: one

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appointed from outside to superintend the mission which was not constituted in the usual way as a Congregational church. His office differed from the regional leadership role of a Methodist or (later) Baptist superintendent.

7 T H Darlow 'Charles Silvester Horne' *Congregational Year Book* (1915) 155.

8 Selbie *Life of Horne* 178.

9 A Gammie *Preachers I Have Heard* (1945) 68–70. It is said that Kenneth, Horne's youngest son, once described Winston Churchill as a great orator to an old friend. His friend looked at him and said, 'Yes, but then you never heard your father speak, did you?' See B Johnston *Round Mr Horne: The Life of Kenneth Horne* (2007) 1.

in Britain and another in America. The one in Britain was delivered at Regent's Park Baptist College in London in 1907 and the one in America was delivered at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut in 1914.<sup>10</sup> Both lecture series were delivered when Horne was the pastor of Whitefield's Chapel. He had not only gained notoriety for his preaching ability, but he had also written in detail on preaching during his Whitefield's ministry.

Horne was confident in the ministry of the Word. He was convinced of his responsibility to preach the Word in a way that ministered to his congregation's needs. His sermons communicated a sense of optimism and possibilities that were available through Christ. He described Scripture as containing a *timeless* word and *timely* word.<sup>11</sup> He was thoroughly evangelistic in his preaching and called for a clear response to the gospel. He emphasized the value of knowing language and was himself a great wordsmith. Horne did not ask whether Scripture was relevant, but rather does the congregation see its relevance to their lives?<sup>12</sup> The preacher was part of a 'majestic fraternity' in which no other profession or activity on earth could share in its magnificence.<sup>13</sup> The preacher was to possess a 'soul of flame' in exercising his call to preach.<sup>14</sup> Horne understood the call to preach to be a spirit-led assignment and a spirit-empowered endeavour.

If Horne's confidence in Scripture was one reason for his tremendous preaching ministry, then his understanding of people was another. He preached in such a way as to make the truths of Scripture become clear to those who heard him. He was both the exegete of Scripture and of culture.

Horne told how he sought to get a feel for his new church in Tottenham Court Road by staying up all night to walk the streets of London. He walked around throughout the night until five in the morning so that he could see first hand the drunkenness and lasciviousness of the night. That experience stirred his heart.<sup>15</sup> Horne understood the demographic make-up of Tottenham Court Road that included young people, ethnic diversity, a working-class, and an artistic population and this affected his preaching.<sup>16</sup> His compassion and concern to know those to whom he was preaching helped create a congregation who gladly heard him.

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<sup>10</sup> These lectures were published as *The Ministry of the Modern Church* (1907) and *The Romance of Preaching* (1914) respectively.

<sup>11</sup> Horne *Romance of Preaching* 155.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid* 43–44.

<sup>15</sup> C S Horne *Pulpit, Platform, and Parliament* (1913; reprint, Delhi: SSM Books International 2009) 53.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid* 14.

Horne captured well the poignancy of the sermon moment when he described its scene by saying, ‘The preacher looks across the faces of his audience and knows that for a breathless thirty minutes eternity will hang upon the issue of his speech.’<sup>17</sup> Though preaching was certainly not all he did in his ministry, it was primary to all that he did as a minister. His evangelistic zeal saw nothing less than life and death at stake.

His custom at Whitefield’s was to preach three times on Sunday: a message in the morning, a message to the Brotherhood Movement in the afternoon, and a message in the evening. Horne’s addresses to the Brotherhood were more political in nature.<sup>18</sup> His evening sermons were evangelistic in focus.<sup>19</sup> It is important to know that Horne’s commitment to the preaching of the gospel anchored all the outreach of the church in a clear gospel presentation.<sup>20</sup> Horne saw the natural extension of the gospel as meeting the needs of those in the city.

This paper will now look at how Horne sought to meet the needs of the city through the institutional church.

## The Institutional Church

Horne believed that the practical outworking of the gospel should compel the church to meet the needs of its community. He was concerned about the lack of evangelistic zeal in Congregationalism, the decline in numbers, and stagnation in missionary endeavours and the institutional church was offered as a solution to those problems.<sup>21</sup>

During Horne’s ministry at Whitefield’s Chapel he was able to develop the concept of an institutional church. In 1906/1907 Horne published a work on the social expression of the church that would help churches minister to the community around them. His work would serve as a model to other Free Churches under the title *The Institutional Church*.

He advocated, among other things, a greater emphasis on the use of music in worship. He suggested that the facilities of the church be open to community

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17 Horne *Ministry of the Modern Church* 100.

18 Although Horne stated that he did not customarily preach politics, his messages on political themes are nonetheless acknowledged. How can one explain the seemingly conflicting reports? Perhaps Horne saw his pulpit ministry limited to the Sunday morning and evening services. His afternoon messages would have been tailored to the Brotherhood Movement and represented something outside the customary worship of the church. See also Alan Argent *The Transformation of Congregationalism 1900–2000* (Nottingham 2013) 38. Selbie pointed to the difference between Horne’s more reserved preaching style and that of his less constrained public (platform) speeches. Selbie *Life of Horne* 263, Horne *Romance of Preaching* 291.

19 Selbie *Life of Horne* 175.

20 Ibid. Selbie remarked that the Sunday services ‘set the tone’ for the mission throughout the week.

21 Ibid 72–74.

events during the week. He even took a chapter in his book to describe possible architectural drawings and sketches of an Institute with the potential costs of the respective building plan. The church as an institute, Horne envisioned, would be used for recitals, a reading room, kitchen, gyms, shops, and even billiards.<sup>22</sup>

All these efforts to establish a successful institutional church came at a cost. One can sense the resolve of Horne in a fundraising letter written to his congregation. After carefully laying down his objectives and the projected costs he stated, 'And we are ambitious to present to all the churches the example of a Mission that is not afraid to use every wise means to attract and hold the people: but where the central motive will ever be found in the love of God incarnate in Christ Jesus for the redemption of mankind.'<sup>23</sup> Both the practical work of the institutional church is communicated in this letter as well as the clear love of Christ who redeems mankind.

Horne sought to meet the social needs of his day with a bold Christian worldview. His work with the Brotherhood Movement is another example of how both social and spiritual applications were made. Selbie stated, 'They aimed at an institutional church but had no intention of sacrificing the institution which centred round it.'<sup>24</sup>

Any description of Horne's social consciousness without addressing his zeal for the gospel above all things is incomplete. Horne's Institutional Church was not a substitute for his gospel ministry, but a part of it. At this point one must recall the cultural and political milieu to which Congregationalism was responding, among them socialism and the rise of the Labour Party.

W C R Hancock has recently addressed the response of the Free Churches to socialism and the Labour Party at the turn of the twentieth century. In recognising how the Congregational churches emphasised brotherhood, Hancock referred to a quote by Horne from H J S Guntrip's *Smith and Wrigley of Leeds*.<sup>25</sup> Hancock's specific reference did not include all Horne's original statement in that text. The way in which he cites Horne's statement may leave one with an imbalanced view of his theology and ministry. He correctly quoted Horne, according to Guntrip, that the purpose of the Institutional Church was in part to 'reconstruct human society on the basis of brotherhood' and 'it was

22 C S Horne *The Institutional Church ... With plans and designs by P. Morley Horder* (nd) 43. Chapter six is devoted to what a model institute could look like.

23 C S Horne *Letter* Congregational Library (nd). Additionally, the letter lists the following objectives: to build a place for house workers, a new organ, excavations of the new Institute, and paying the church's debt.

24 Selbie *Life of Horne* 175.

25 H J S Guntrip *Smith and Wrigley of Leeds* (1944) 96. See W C R Hancock 'English Nonconformity and the Rise of Labour Politics: 1893-1914' *Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society* vol 6 no 9 (October 2001) 682-99.

more urgent to reconstruct society than to reconstruct theology.<sup>26</sup> The rest of Horne's original quote, however, between those two statements was, 'It was a church for bringing the influence of Jesus Christ to bear on every side of a man's life, so as to transform him.' Horne is not suggesting that theology should be minimized, but that good theology should find its rightful expression towards one's fellow man, thus the concept of brotherhood. To say it another way, Horne's emphasis on brotherhood was not to undermine his belief in sonship.

Horne clearly understood the gospel as centring on salvation in Christ. He also passionately believed that the gospel, in combating the ills of society, should be demonstrated by the church. J M Gibbon stated of Horne's advocacy of the Institutional Church: '... he never for a moment lost sight of the fact that the new methods could be anything but subordinate and ancillary to the real and only means of saving me, which was and is the Grace of God that came by Jesus Christ.'<sup>27</sup>

Horne believed that the gospel should have tangible influences on the needs of its neighbourhood. It was this conviction that compelled him to seek wider office for the interests of Congregationalism and the Free churches at large.

The final focus of Horne's ministry at Whitefield's deals with his work as a Member of Parliament.

## Political Involvement

During the last four years of his tenure as pastor of Whitefield's Horne was a Member of Parliament. He was elected a Liberal MP for Ipswich in 1910.<sup>28</sup> He stated on his election, 'But since the days of Praise-God Barebones I question whether any minister in charge of a Church had been returned as a Member of Parliament.'<sup>29</sup>

Horne's most concise thoughts on the distinction between preaching and politics can perhaps be found in his *Pulpit, Platform, and Parliament*.<sup>30</sup> He saw no natural chasm between the truths he espoused in the pulpit and the advocacy

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26 Hancock 'English Nonconformity' 685. For the rest of Horne's original statement see Guntrip *Smith and Wrigley* 96.

27 J M Gibbon *Stamford Hill Pulpit* (1914).

28 Horne had a lifelong interest in politics. He had stood as a candidate for the London County Council in 1907. His campaign for parliament was not a surprise, albeit ill advised because of his health. Indeed, many encouraged him to run for Parliament. See Horne *Pulpit, Platform, and Parliament* 171.

29 Ibid 191.

30 Ibid 69. Horne stated, 'It seemed to me then, and it seems to me now, to be at least as much a part of my business as a democrat and a social reformer to seek to perfect the machinery through which the national conscience can express itself, as to endeavour to educate and stimulate that conscience.'

of those beliefs in the public square as an elected official. Ironically, Horne did not make political sermons a customary part of his preaching ministry. He once stated, 'I can count the political sermons I have preached in twenty-five years on the fingers of one hand.'<sup>31</sup> To read into Horne a highly complex political theory is probably to misunderstand him.<sup>32</sup> In the great tradition of Puritan beliefs, he simply sought ways to let his faith change society and the public forum of politics was a place that could rightly be exercised to that end.

Surely he saw himself in the tradition of Cromwell as he took upon this mantle of leadership.<sup>33</sup> Horne was a prophet and visionary thinker for Free Churchmen. He conceived of something like a Federal Church Council in which a Christian witness could be secured in the political arena.<sup>34</sup> One cannot be certain how Horne would have responded to the beginning of World War I on 14 August 1914, but all Free Churchmen knew they had lost a prophetic voice to help guide them during those turbulent times. In so many ways Horne became the face of the political influence of the Free Churches before 1914 and the point of critique for those who look back on Congregationalism's successes and weaknesses in that era.

Horne had on multiple occasions in his ministry been forced to withdraw from service for the sake of his health. When Horne was in his forty-ninth year he had pastored for a total of 25 years, wrote prolifically, lectured abroad, preached at revivals, travelled extensively, and served as chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales (1910) and president of the National Brotherhood Council (1913). During the latter years of Horne's pastorate at Whitefield's his health began to suffer under the workload. The recognition of his physical vulnerability led to his resignation from Whitefield's in January 1914, though he continued in Parliament.<sup>35</sup> It seems as though Horne was contemplating different scenarios for how he would continue in ministry, with the possibility of resigning from Parliament as well and returning to a quiet pastorate at some point.<sup>36</sup> The decision to resign from Whitefield's weighed heavily upon him.<sup>37</sup>

His commitment to deliver the Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching

31 Horne *Romance of Preaching* 291.

32 F R Webber *A History of Preaching in Britain and America* vol 1 (Milwaukee 1952) 704. Webber suggested that Horne's view of church and state was not something that Horne came clearly to grasp.

33 Horne *Pulpit, Platform, and Parliament* 215–16.

34 *Ibid* 213–16.

35 Selbie *Life of Horne* 209.

36 For different accounts of Horne's proposed plans see Selbie *Life of Horne* 262, J D Jones *Three Score Years and Ten* (1940) 306 and A Porritt *C Silvester Horne in Memoriam: April 15, 1865, May 2 1914* (1914) 13.

37 Jones *Three Score Years and Ten* 306.

at Yale required much preparation and yet another trip across the seas to the United States. It was three days after Horne delivered these lectures that he fell dead onboard a steamer headed to an engagement in Toronto on 2 May, 1914. His sudden departure shocked his family and friends and added to the mystique of his final lectures themselves.

## Conclusion

Horne led Whitefield's Chapel into a successful season of ministry and his successes at Whitefield's were also successes for Congregationalism.<sup>38</sup> He was a pre-eminent preacher who sought to apply the principles of the gospel in an institutional church. His leadership in politics culminated with the height of Free Church respectability and participation in political issues. Horne became an important voice for Congregationalists, a hero of sorts, for both his work in the pulpit and the platform.

His star burned brightly, and though his life seemed to be cut short, these contributions were significant in shaping our understanding of Congregationalism and the Free Churches in the early twentieth century. Horne's friend, James Morgan Gibbon, delivered the following remarks at Horne's funeral service. He said in part:

Giving himself, he found himself. His life was immensely happy. It was rounded and complete, and his death was strangely, dramatically felicitous. He died as he had lived, en route; on the way to an engagement he fell at his wife's feet, like one who, suddenly summoned to other and greater matters, flings his outer garment aside because the King's business required haste.<sup>39</sup>

He was indeed a 'happy warrior' to the finish and his work is remembered in 2014, the centennial year of his death.<sup>40</sup>

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*Phillip Dunn*

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<sup>38</sup> Selbie *Life of Horne* 175.

<sup>39</sup> Gibbon *Stamford Hill Pulpit* (1914). This was part of Horne's memorial service on May 10th, 1914.

<sup>40</sup> Selbie *Life of Horne* 303. This is the phrase that P T Forsyth used to describe Horne at the service in Church Stretton, Shropshire, when Horne was buried.



## MILL HILL SCHOOL IN THE SIXTIES

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For those of you looking for a short synopsis, I would offer you this one little cameo. Our deputy housemaster, Mr Franklin, was more generally known as “Masher”, or else as “DooMF”, from his somewhat unfortunate initials. No doubt a kind man, and almost certainly in possession of a degree, his principal roles at the school were to organize the proliferation of rugby fifteens, rugby being compulsory for us in the autumn term, and also to dress up as an RAF officer on a Thursday afternoon, both these roles giving some clue as to the flavour of the school, which, much like most public schools of the day, held both sports and military training high on the list of priorities. “Masher” did also have a teaching role, as crafts and woodwork teacher, and most lovingly remembered is his remark to a poor confused pupil, “... don’t waste so much wood, it doesn’t grow on trees you know ...”

I arrived at Mill Hill in 1965, my elder brother two years earlier. In my brother’s first year, the “fagging” system was still in existence, with junior boys acting as servants to senior boys, but that was the last year of that system. Still, in my own time, senior boys had the right to exact corporal punishment on junior boys, the combined cadet force’s “swagger stick” being the fiercest of the implements used. “Lines” of course were freely administered by prefects on errant junior boys. There was a rigid year system, with petty “privileges” being set according to year ranking. In the first year, all three buttons on the school jacket had to be kept buttoned: in the second year, one only was to be buttoned, and by the third year the school jacket could be left unbuttoned. Grey socks only were to be worn until the sixth form, when coloured socks might be worn (or was it prefects only, I forget now?). School prefects, one step up from house prefects, could wear their own pullovers beneath the school jacket. Monitors, who were, in Mill Hill’s case, the highest in the prefect hierarchy, could wear their own clothes.

One of the first hurdles to be overcome for the new boy was a written test, the colours test, set by the prefects of each house, where all these rules and privileges had to be learned, along with the colours of each and every tie awarded for sports honours, of which there were many: “...thick chocolate, thick white, thin yellow, thin blue, thin white, thin red, thin yellow, thin blue...” springs to mind, quite possibly the Old Mill Hillians’ Country Tie. Straw boaters were worn in the summer, and I have mine still. Grey suit jacket and matching scratchy trousers to be worn on Sundays to chapel. It was a world of hierarchy, of rules, highly traditional, and self-perpetuating. This aspect of

school life, at best robust, at worst verging on the barbaric, finds no mention in the official history of the school written by Roderick Braithwaite. To my mind this is not so much an omission, as a whitewash.

When it came to sixth form choices for A levels, there were rigid divisions between the sciences, modern languages, classics, and other arts subjects: even with a certain relaxation by the time I came to choose, although I wanted to study art, hoping to become an architect, that was not possible, and I was obliged to choose Latin instead. Well art, of course, that was for “thicko’s”.

But it was the Sixties, and Mill Hill was finally dragged into the modern age, a key factor being the appointment of Michael Hart as head, in 1967, succeeding the far more traditional, and more aloof, Roy Moore. Michael Hart was an enlightened, highly intelligent man, I believe the best by far of all my teachers there, encouraging independent thought and initiative, both in academic work and in personal conduct. Under him, an option to undertake more socially useful activities became an alternative to the cadet force “quad bashing”, even if that only involved visits to old folks, or to the local mental hospital. A school council was introduced, with representation from teachers and pupils, to discuss significant school issues. Formal lunches on a house by house basis, were replaced with a self service cafeteria system, where the whole school, masters and boys from all houses, mixed together informally. By the time I left, in 1969, the school was a radically different place from when I arrived.

If in many ways the Mill Hill I arrived at was a traditional and conventional public school, it would be unfair to characterise it as entirely grim. Its setting and its location give it a distinctive and interesting character. Set right at the edge of London, bordering the near countryside of Totteridge, and with grounds where the botanist Peter Collinson had much earlier planted magnificent trees, it was and is a lovely environment.<sup>1</sup> As a day boy, I walked to school across fields and footpaths: the downside to being a dayboy being the rather unlovely cramped prefab hut we used as our “house”.<sup>2</sup> And the school’s location, near to Golders Green and Hampstead, gave it a strong ethnic and religious mix, of the more affluent of course, with a significant Jewish contingent, and with black and Asian boys as well as white. The conventional emphasis on sport and cadet force was balanced with intellectual stimulus, notably “Froggy” Brown’s introductions to Sartre and Existentialism: and I owe a great deal to my musical education, Stanley Barlow being an inspired musician, and choirmaster, with

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1 Editor’s note: for Collinson, a Quaker, see *ODNB*.

2 In my time, there were around 400 boys at the school, the majority being boarders, with 50–60 in the single day house, Murray House: today the position is reversed, and I believe the school, co-ed now of course, though still relatively small, has around 640 pupils, girls and boys, of whom only around 25% are boarders.

annual mega choral productions, including *Aida*, the *Messiah*, and Borodin, although I gather that his career at the school was brought to a rather unhappy and abrupt end. Booze, not boys, his downfall. Of my contemporaries who went on to great things, I think not of any captains of industry, but of David James the countertenor, of Hilliard Ensemble fame, and of Chaz Jankel, keyboard player with Ian Dury and the Blockheads. Chaz couldn't then read music, and I showed him how to play a piano piece for one particular school competition: I'm pretty sure he went on to win it. To my surprise, I have discovered more recently that Keith Levene of the original Clash line up, and then part of Public Image with John Lydon, is also an OM: he would have been a contemporary of my little brother.<sup>3</sup>

One year, my father was asked to give the speech at Foundation Day, when prizes were distributed to the successful<sup>4</sup>. I remember him saying in that speech that while the years at school were supposed to be the best of one's life, that was not the case for him: he had been at Taunton, another great Congregationalist foundation. My four years at Mill Hill equally were not the best of my life: while I had success at school, ending up as senior monitor (as in head boy) and gaining a scholarship to Sidney Sussex College Cambridge, ultimately my feeling is that I have spent the rest of my life trying to reverse the person Mill Hill made me, competitive, intent on success, with the accent, values, confidence and social snobbery of the affluent classes. I am convinced that one of the worst features of modern day Britain is that class is still such a significant factor: public school education must surely be a primary component in that class system, with the sons and daughters of the great and powerful going on inevitably to be the next generation of great and powerful. As we know full well, half the current cabinet are from public schools.

Later on in life I have become a keen and competent swimmer: I never learned to swim at Mill Hill or perhaps more accurately, I was never taught. In our first year we had to pass a test of swimming a length of the school pool, which I achieved by floating on my back and using my arms as sculls. But I never received any swimming tuition of any kind, and it has led me to speculate on the nature of teaching at Mill Hill in those days. I'm not entirely clear that many of those teaching, whether teaching physical or intellectual activities, had ever received much in the way of training as teachers. Those boys who

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3 My younger brother was Lt David Tinker RN, one of thirteen killed on board HMS Glamorgan in the last days of the Falklands War in 1982, and commemorated in the book *A Message from the Falklands* (1983).

4 My father was Professor Hugh Tinker (1921–2000), writer and academic, author of many books on the politics of South East Asia, Director of the Institute of Race Relations from 1970 to 1972, previously professor at the School of Oriental and African Studies, and subsequently professor at the University of Lancaster. Editor's note: see *ODNB*.



## REVIEWS

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***The Fifteen Confederates.* By Johann Eberlin von Gunzburg. Translated and edited by Geoffrey Dipple. James Clarke & Co, 2014. Pp 206. Paperback £17.50. ISBN 978-0-22717-479-1**

Reading Geoffrey Dipple's lively translation of pamphlets, printed and circulated in the heady days immediately after the Diet of Worms and Martin Luther's disappearance, took me back forty years to time spent in the company of Luther and the Reformers. In the intervening years I have not kept up my reading on the Reformation and so I came to this book with trepidation. In many ways I found it an exciting read as it took me into the controversies and debates of the early Reformation. And yet something troubled me, just as it had forty years ago. In a detailed and lively introduction Dipple tells the story behind this collection of pamphlets. They purport to be written by fifteen laymen who have associated together as 'the Fifteen Confederates'. Each has written a pamphlet or tract and the fifteen pamphlets have been brought together into a single volume.

They stirred up controversy straightaway, being taken by Johannes Eck (Luther's opponent at the Leipzig Disputation) to Rome. The fascination they have for the historian of the Reformation is the glimpse they give of the pamphlet war that raged with the widespread availability of the printing press, still less than 70 years old. It wasn't long before the single writer of all the pamphlets claimed authorship. Dipple reflects on the way Johann Eberlin was regarded by many as a second Martin Luther and provides a brief biography of one who became a Franciscan in part motivated by concern for the plight of the Poor Clares in the Tubingen Priory. Through contact with humanists like Konrad Pellikan he encountered some of Luther's early key writings and at Ulm became more open in his commitment to Luther's cause.

At this point he wrote the pamphlets grouped together in this volume. Dipple suggests numbers 7,2,3 and 4 were the first to be written, dealing with 'issues of concern to inhabitants of monasteries': these included the hours of prayer, the observation of Lent and the relationship with parish clergy. Eberlin advocated reform of the monastic life. The style of writing, especially in 3 and 4, 'retain elements of what could have been lists of theses'. There is a yearning in these early pamphlets for reform from within.

1,5 and 8 are the next to be written, the first is an appeal to Emperor Charles V to support Luther, the fifth broadens the appeal to secular authorities

throughout Germany. With an emphasis on Biblical preaching, the eighth confederate focuses on the importance of the use of the vernacular language.

With the help of Dipple's introduction, as one turns to the pamphlets themselves, one senses the development of the Reformers' thinking—from reform from within, towards root and branch reform that would be founded on Biblical preaching and the vernacular Bible. Eberlin is still influenced by the humanism of Erasmus and Hutten but is moving towards more far-reaching reform. From Ulm Eberlin moves to Switzerland and writes four more pamphlets, the 13th appeals to the Swiss for support and the 9th to the authorities of Germany to turn against the evils perpetrated by those in monastic orders. In the 6th and the 14th pamphlets Eberlin draws heavily on Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* and castigates the preaching of the mendicant orders and the abuses associated with the veneration of the saints.

In the 10th, 11th and 12th pamphlets Eberlin outlines his vision for a new Germany. Dipple likens this to Thomas More's *Utopia* as they contain 'respectively the ecclesiastical and secular statutes of the imaginary land of Wellfaria brought to Germany by Psittacus (the parrot or 'ear-blower')'. The 12th pamphlet offers monks and nuns a comprehensive reform of their monastic life. In this pamphlet Eberlin is explicit for the first time about the theological themes being developed in Wittenberg by Luther.

After exploring the individual pamphlets, Dipple goes on to outline the impact of the collected edition of *The Fifteen Confederates* and the later impact of Eberlin too as he left Wittenberg and toured south Germany and Switzerland in a pamphlet war against the Franciscans. "By any account," writes Dipple, "Eberlin's was an important voice in the early years of the Reformation. As such, it provides us with valuable information about the Reformation's message as it passed through the medium of popular pamphlets." He reflects on the gradual way the themes of the Reformation emerge in these pamphlets and the indebtedness Eberlin has to his time at Wittenberg and exposure to Luther's theology.

Citing Christian Peters' biography of Eberlin, Dipple 'identifies Eberlin as a Franciscan reformer, humanist and conservative reformer'. Using Dipple's introduction as a guide to reading the pamphlets in the order in which he surmises they were written, one is taken into the middle of the debates in the early years of the Reformation in a way that captures the imagination. After all, we would all do well to heed the words of the sixth Confederate.

"You, simple layman, you should be more diligent about how the good, wholesome teaching is proclaimed to you than you are about your bread and wine; for without this wholesome teaching, all your work is for naught. Therefore, pray to God faithfully every day for a wholesome preacher and

message, and don't believe immediately what someone says, even if he has a holy appearance."

Yet something troubles me. All too often the story of the Reformation has been told through its pamphleteers. Forty years ago, what drew me into this world was a fascination with the way in which the Bible was being read and interpreted at this time. Studying the biblical exegesis of Luther, Calvin and also Tommaso de Vio, Cardinal Cajetan, it becomes apparent that behind what can often feel like the bombast of a pamphlet war, more considered discussions were going on. The story of the Reformation must not only be told through its pamphleteers.

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*Richard Cleaves*

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***Christendom Destroyed: Europe 1517–1648.* By Mark Greengrass. Allen Lane, 2014. Pp xxix + 722. Hardback £30.00. ISBN 978-0-71399-086-7**

This latest addition to the Penguin History of Europe series provides a fascinating overview of European history at a time of tremendous upheaval, extending from Luther's nailing of his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenberg in 1517 to the end of the Thirty Years' War, with the peace of Westphalia in 1648. That sustained upheaval, physical, political, ideological, spiritual and intellectual, was accompanied at every turn by conflict and war. These forces transformed Europe.

Of course, we can dispute the relevance of the dates in the book's title, given that several elements which contributed to the demise of Christendom were at work before 1500, and that the Dutch war for independence continued after 1648. At this point, we might recall that 1517 also marked the Ottoman conquest of Egypt and Syria. We may then wonder at the term 'Christendom' itself, for Ambrose's dream of an error-free Christian Europe, united by beliefs and aspirations, had been challenged continuously before and throughout the middle ages, notably by the Lollards, Albigensians, Waldensians and the rest of the so called heretics. And Roman Catholicism had made little headway in the Eastern Orthodox states (providing 2 forms of organized Christianity, at least since 1054) while a resurgent Islam, following the fall of Constantinople in 1453, threatened the west, besieging Vienna in 1529 and continuing its advances across the Mediterranean, until checked, but not halted long term, at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. Indeed Suleiman the Magnificent had ambitions 'to light the lamp of Islam' in all the continents, including America. In addition, there were always the Jews whose existence on the margins of western Europe raised questions about the very notion of Christendom.

Nevertheless, in the early sixteenth century, the Holy Roman Empire and

the Papacy were the twin pillars of Christendom and both popes and princes expected their powers in the west to remain unchallenged from within. With the mounting challenge Greengrass poses the question that, if Christendom was destroyed, 'what, if anything, was to take its place?' It transpired that the unity of western Christendom, a millennium in the making, was swept away in moves which were both 'rapid and total'.

British historians have tended to tell this story from the detached geographical, denominational and cultural standpoint of English Protestantism. Mark Greengrass, rising above the apparent limitations of his English academic roots, and now emeritus professor of Sheffield University, has written a history from a European perspective. Indeed he wrote this work mostly in Freiburg im Breisgau and, given his expertise on France and the Reformation, he now lives in Paris, bringing a wide understanding to his European studies. The subject of this book is, in his words, the 'eclipse of the older notion of "Christendom" by "Europe" in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and the extraordinary changes that went with it'.

Clearly the Renaissance had begun the demolition of old certainties and the Protestant Reformation, with Luther at its forefront, 'opened the door to the decay of the united belief-community' at the heart of Christendom. Yet curiously, as Greengrass points out, both 'the champions of Reformation and the defenders of the old order believed, in fundamental ways, that they were protecting Christendom from destruction'. The violence of the century and a half covered by this volume reflects the breakdown in trust between rulers and subjects which characterized the fall of Christendom which, of course, had never been a political unity.

Greengrass is to be congratulated on producing a work of erudition and originality. I have long regarded the early modern period as one of unusual creativity when Christianity was renewed, in which peoples were released from feudal shackles tying them to hierarchy, priestly rule and Rome and thus were enabled to achieve their diverse, singular callings. Instead Greengrass demonstrates that a valuable unity was ferociously torn down, leaving suspicion and enmity to inherit the earth. His five sections lead the reader 'From the Silver Age to the Iron Century' to 'Grasping the World'. Treating then with the age of Charles V in his 'Christendom Afflicted', he moves to 'Christian Commonwealths in Contention' and closes with 'Christian States in Disarray'. His conclusion, 'Europe's Paroxysm', informs the reader that by the mid-seventeenth century all that was left was 'the yearning for a vanished unity, a Paradise Lost'. Unwittingly he corrects my misreading of history, by stating that 'Europe's weakening social and cultural cohesion'—urban, rural, economic, and intellectual—'contributed to the intensity of contemporary perceptions of anxiety'.



The 38 illustrations are well chosen, from Lucas Cranach the Elder's *The Close of the Silver Age* (c1530) to Wenceslaus Hollar's illustration for Henry Peacham's *The World is Ruled & Govern'd by Opinion* (1641). I particularly appreciated the four maps, although perhaps even more could have been provided, especially a map of Europe in the early sixteenth century.

I am left to wonder whether the overthrown Christendom was really so bad after all. For that, I must thank Greengrass and his weighty book. This is a history which deserves to be read carefully and which raises issues, not only with relevance to times past, but to our own age when we must again consider the costs and benefits of European unity.

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*Alan Argent*

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***Killers of the King. The Men who Dared to Execute Charles I.* By Charles Spencer. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014. Pp [xii] + 339. Hardback £20.00. ISBN 978-1-40885-170-8**

This is a handsomely produced and sumptuously illustrated book which deals with the unpleasant, but all too contemporary, subject of vengeance, exacted violently in the 1660s by a powerful, authoritarian monarchy on those who had dared to overthrow that institution, eleven years earlier. The writing is clear and lucid throughout and the story is told episodically in 15 chapters which move from the king who must die, 'the man of blood' and his trial, through the republic to the Restoration and the retribution meted out to the regicides. Of the original 80 regicides, which adds to the 59 signatories to the king's death warrant the lawyers who had tried the case and those on the scaffold who had administered the execution, over a quarter were already dead in 1660. Yet vengeance would be exacted, with bodies exhumed and displayed and their estates seized and denied to their families. By October of that year ten more were dispatched.

Certainly at the Restoration a public clamour for death fuelled the cry for revenge against Cromwell's 'trustworthy henchmen'. Spencer writes, 'bitterness towards the regicides mounted, and the thirst for reprisals grew'. Describing the arrival of the first 29 prisoners at Newgate, he pictures their pathetic condition—'a shuffling column of elderly men in chains, hobbling towards their destiny'. These old men were often bewildered by the process unfolding before them which inexorably led to their public humiliations and deaths, with being hanged, drawn and quartered the prescribed form of execution for high treason. However, they reasoned, if their old comrade, General Monck, could be forgiven and elevated to the House of Lords why should they not trust the

reassurances given? After all, the royal declaration seemed to promise that all who surrendered would be spared capital punishment.

The first to die was the defiant Major-General Thomas Harrison who, as Pepys, an eye witness, confided to his diary, 'he looking as cheerful as any man could do in that condition'. His pious bravery drew admiration from the crowds and was emulated by others, though some died wracked with fear. Thomas Scott was not allowed to give his prepared speech on the scaffold, lest it be received with sympathy by the onlookers. Sir John Bouchier, having surrendered to the king, had resisted his family's pleas to admit his guilt, which admission they hoped would secure his estate for them. Yet unwell and at home, suddenly he rose to his feet and declared, 'it was a just act! God and all men will own it'. He sat back and soon after died. Colonel Hutchinson, through his Royalist relations, had at first been permitted his freedom but unrepentant he was arrested and kept in appalling conditions until he died in captivity in 1664.

Escape appeared an option—Edmund Ludlow fled to Geneva (eventually dying in Swiss exile in 1692), John Barkstead to the Netherlands, and others to Germany. Exile brought little comfort for these Englishmen. Some were arrested by Charles II's agents. John Lisle was shot dead by a Stuart assassin in Vevey, Switzerland in 1664. Yet evasion was possible and Edward Whalley and William Goffe fled to New England where for a time they even found shelter in the wilderness. There Whalley died in 1675 in which year, legend suggests, the elderly Goffe played a major role in repelling a concerted native American attack on the frontier town of Hadley. The details of his death remain uncertain, although he may have survived until the late 1670s or 1680. Certainly John Dixwell lasted undetected in New Haven until 1689.

Throughout Spencer merely recounts the narrative and makes little attempt at analysis. Nevertheless his own sympathies are clear, in spite of his aristocratic heritage. He sees Charles I in his final years as 'an execrable ruler' and the regicides as 'extremely brave men who put a defeated and distrusted king on trial'. The scaffold then produced 'a succession of sympathetic martyrs'.

The book's alliterative and somewhat sensational title suggests that, despite its appearance, this is not really an academic work. Spencer makes some errors, writing of Hugh 'Peter's priestly status', a description which Peters himself and most contemporaries would have decried, although the solicitor-general did call Peters 'this miserable priest' at his trial. Yet Spencer's concern here is not with correct ecclesiastical details. Rather this is a story of dashed political hopes, of the last defenders of 'the good old cause'. He tells that tale entertainingly enough.

**'Settling the Peace of the Church' 1662 Revisited. Edited by N H Keeble. Oxford University Press, 2014. Hardback £60.00. ISBN 978-0-19968-853-1**

This collection of nine essays from the Dr Williams's Centre for Dissenting Studies reminds its readers that the 350th anniversary of the Act of Uniformity of 1662 fell in 2012. The essays began life as papers delivered at a one-day conference held that year. The book's title begs the question whether the church was more settled and peaceful during the interregnum than it was under the later Stuarts. In hindsight we may ask if it was possible to settle the peace of the Church, though contemporaries thought that it was. The editor, Neil Keeble, introduces the book with a helpful summary of the situation in the 1660s in his 'Attempting Uniformity' and later, with that attempt having manifestly failed, contributes 'The Nonconformist Narrative of the Bartholomeans' which, given his expertise on all things to do with Richard Baxter whose own writings so inform that narrative, he is well equipped to do.

Jacqueline Rose explores further the question of authority and the settlement of religion, giving specific emphasis to 'matters indifferent' or adiaphora. The latter might include the time, place, ceremonies, rites, gestures, and vestments of worship, as well as kneeling for communion, the cross in baptism, the ring in marriage, the wearing of surplices by ministers or not. These superficially minor matters split the Church. Paul Seaward engages with the policy of the king's chief minister and his, ie Clarendon's, willingness to make small, temporary concessions to those who wanted a more comprehensive national Church, although he would not concede a 'tolerance of variety'. At the opposite extreme, Michael Davies treats with John Bunyan and his independent gathered church in 1662, asking what Bunyan had in common with the expelled ministers, given his burning indignation at the imposition of the Book of Common Prayer.

Yet the Restoration settlement had implications outside England. Robert Armstrong considers the bishops and the Presbyterians of Ireland while Alasdair Raffe deals with the restoration of bishops in Scotland and Presbyterian politics there. Turning to the churches beyond these islands, Cory Cotter examines social and intellectual life beyond 1662 for those English ministers who went to the Netherlands, especially Leiden, and Owen Stanwood looks at the 'enormous consequences' of the Restoration ecclesiastical settlement in New England. After Keeble's narrative of the Bartholomeans, Mark Burden's essay takes the reader well past 1662 to the early eighteenth century where he encounters the Anglican polemicist John Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy* and his reaction to Edmund Calamy's *Abridgement* of Baxter's autobiography.

This is a valuable and wide ranging collection. The essays are well chosen, reflect original research and are of a high standard throughout.

***Politics and Religion in Restoration Cockermonth.* By Michael A. Mullett. Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society Tract series XXIV, 2014. Pp 90. Paperback £10.00. ISBN 978-1-87312-464-2.**

Professor Mullett has written a number of valuable essays on religious dissent and local politics under Charles II and James II, with detailed studies of Liverpool, Preston, Lancaster, Clitheroe, and Wigan, and an account of Bedford for the same period involving the deciphering of Bunyan's allegory of the 'Holy War'. He also edited an excellent occasional paper *Early Lancaster Friends*. This new study is a substantial pamphlet of about 40,000 words including footnotes, and sets out to provide an account of the political and religious history of the Borough of Cockermonth between the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 and the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Perhaps surprisingly this latest study is in many ways an old fashioned local account of politics and religion in Cockermonth. Equally surprising Mullett does not draw on his earlier work. There is little discussion of comparable studies, and the volume has as a consequence an antiquarian feel about it. Nevertheless, what makes this pamphlet of interest to the historian of dissent is the use made of Wordsworth's recent edition of the Cockermonth Church Book, with its account of the Independent congregation which assembled in Cockermonth and the surrounding area. Kept for this period by George Larkham, the first pastor, and written up retrospectively, it is perhaps the most detailed near-contemporary account of a Nonconformist church under the penal laws. The historian of dissent in Cumbria is particularly fortunate in the quality of the existing published works. Besides Wordsworth's edition, there is Bernard Nightingale's *The Ejected of 1662 in Cumberland and Westmorland* (1911), and Francis Nicholson and Ernest Axon, *The Older Nonconformity in Kendal* (1915). Mullett makes use of these sources.

Mullett's pamphlet, after a survey of the economic, political, and social life of the town, in the chapters that follow provides a narrative history of the parliamentary representation of Cockermonth, with an account of the elections for parliament and the Exclusion Crisis in a later chapter, a description of the Restoration religious settlement in the borough, a lengthy consideration of dissent and its impact upon Restoration politics, and of persecution and toleration, ending with the political and religious uncertainty of James II's reign. Cockermonth was the region's most important economic centre, at least until the rise of Whitehaven. Controlled at the beginning of the period by the earl of Northumberland, interest in the borough grew as the right to return two members to parliament became more significant with the development of party interest nationally. Mullett sees local rather than national factors influencing the return of members during the Exclusion crisis, with Cockermonth returning two loyalists against the national trend. There is an interesting analysis of voting

patterns. Even before the Act of Uniformity local magistrates were quick to indict puritan ministers at petty sessions for not reading the Book of Common Prayer. By the early 1660s Larkham's church had to adopt new strategies to ensure its continuation, such as holding meetings of less than five to evade the terms of the Conventicle Act. Following the second Conventicle Act 'the church brake up their publike manner of meeting together' (*Cockermouth Congregational Church Book*, ed Wordsworth, p 33). Nevertheless, as Mullett points out persecution was never sufficiently sustained or intense to destroy dissent, though there were local enemies such as Sir Daniel Fleming and Robert Rickerby, who caused great difficulties and even anguish. Rickerby fortunately died in 1679. The church was aware of the wider world of the godly, with prayers for 'the churches of Christ in New England upon the account of the natives setting upon them' (*ibid*, p. 62). The church's reaction to James II's overtures, in particular his Declarations of Indulgence, was unambiguous. In May 1687 'the church kept a solemne day of thanksgiving upon the account of the King's declaration for liberty' (p. 92). The chapter on religion relies heavily on Wordsworth's edition, examining the Cockermouth church's reaction to political events and persecution. Yet there is not enough discussion of the evidence. Was Larkham's experience of fines and imprisonment typical? How did the members respond to persecution; by renewed commitment or backsliding? The reliance on the Church Book as a source also means there is little about Quakers (despite the available sources and Mullett's previous studies) or other dissenters. There are a few slips, including a reference to Edmund Calamy's *Nonconformist Memorial*, which makes the common error of confusing the title of Samuel Palmer's late eighteenth century bowdlerised edition with the title of Calamy's original. Mullett's study will mainly appeal to local historians interested in the history of Cumberland and Cockermouth, but other readers may find the account of the Cockermouth church of value.

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*David L. Wykes, Dr Williams's Library, London*

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***City Mission: the story of London's Welsh chapels.* By Huw Edwards. Y Lofa, Talybont, 2014. Pp 368. Hardback £24.95. ISBN 978-1-84771-905-8**

Huw Edwards, the eminent BBC news reporter and broadcaster, is a faithful Christian believer who prefers to worship in his native Welsh. This book is the result of his research over 5 years among many sources, many of them written in the Welsh language. Having consulted not only the archives, but also several academics and worshippers, he has produced a work which sums up the significant contribution of Welsh Christians to London.

Over sixteen chapters he charts the journey of Welsh migrants since Tudor times, enlarging his story, in particular, from Howell Harris in the eighteenth century who made 24 visits to London between 1739 and 1767. Edwards knows that 'Religious Nonconformity redefined Wales and Welshness' because his fellow countrymen and women rejected the English established church and, in so doing, built a new identity for themselves. By the coming of World War II there were 31 Welsh speaking chapels and churches, in London, some with over 1000 members, with an additional 6 Sunday School vestries. Even in the 1950s, with the large number of Welsh teachers working in London, Welsh chapels there had increased their memberships. Yet by 2014 the number of active chapels in the metropolis had fallen to 7. These figures do not include Welsh causes outside the capital like those in Slough, Luton, Croydon, Guildford and Kingston which lie beyond Edwards' study.

Here are Baptists, Independents, Calvinistic Methodists, and Wesleyans and here also are their dances, concerts, dinners, talks, excursions and sporting fixtures. Here also the 'cymanfaoedd canu' or singing festivals, the literary societies, the dramatic and debating clubs without which no self-respecting Welsh community could exist. This is vibrant and vital stuff, the signs of a distinctive immigrant presence, settled and content in the big city but nonetheless re-creating the characteristics of the homeland which these migrants, for a variety of reasons, had to leave. The book is written so as to give each meeting its own history. Therefore the larger chapels of Jewin, King's Cross, Chapel Charing Cross and the Welsh Baptists in Eastcastle Street (which Lloyd George attended) have a chapter each. Smaller chapels are grouped together. Lastly Edwards devotes one chapter to the little known story of the Welsh speaking Anglican churches of London, reminding me of one Sunday evening many years ago when, to my surprise, emerging out of the City murk I happened upon some groups animatedly chatting in Welsh, having just left Wren's still magnificent St Benet's, Paul's Wharf. Incidentally Edwards does not indulge in name-dropping, which would have been a temptation to lesser (perhaps English) souls.

This is a good book, carrying many fine illustrations, and is therefore not over-priced, and I am happy to recommend it and not just to those of Welsh descent. However I wish that the publishers had not chosen to print it on such heavy, china clay paper which, if wetted, becomes almost unusable.

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*Sian Evans*

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***Protestant Nonconformity and Christian Missions.* Edited by Martin Wellings. Studies in Christian History and Thought. Paternoster, Milton Keynes, 2014. Pp [x] + 152. Paperback £29.99. ISBN 978-1-84227-798-0.**

This slim work emerges from a 2010 commemoration and reappraisal of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of a century earlier. The centenary commemoration was held under the auspices of the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries (ADHSCL) and a selection of the conference papers, plus some additional essays, has been brought together in this volume. Martin Wellings, in his editorial introduction, recognizes that the confident prediction of 1910 that Christianity was the ‘crown’ of the ‘advanced’ religions has been supplanted by a preoccupation with secularization in Britain and with unforeseen church growth in Africa. He points to the flourishing churches in this country among Nigerians, Ghanaians, Zimbabweans and Koreans which promise a different retrospective a century hence. In this context he might have included, alongside these others, Filipino Protestants and South American evangelicals who are also active in Britain today and whose influence on the mainstream churches will be significant, even if at this juncture it remains incalculable.

In this book are 9 chapters, ranging from John Gwynfor Jones on Welsh Nonconformists sending missionaries abroad, Derek Tidball examining Baptists in England and their ‘home missions’ 1797–1865, Margaret Jones on women and Wesleyan Methodist missions 1813–1858, and Tim Grass on Brethren in Spain. So then the collection offers an extraordinarily diverse picture, extending far and wide, and interpreting the imperative to mission in markedly different ways.

John Handby Thompson provides a study of the Wesleyan mission to the military and, staying with the Methodists, John Pritchard looks at the impact of the 1857 Indian rebellion (or India’s first war of independence) on the Wesleyan mission there. John Darch turns to the darker side, with his important exploration of the use of violence by Victorian missionaries in the Tropics. The last 2 essays are of more immediate concern to Congregationalists. Clyde Binfield, in his inimitable style, considers the London Missionary Society and the work of father and daughter, Thomas Thompson and Jemima Luke, and Geoffrey Roper deals with the transformation of 4 British mission bodies into the Council for World Mission.

All these contributors are experts in their field and, although the reader will necessarily make his/her selection of the essays, a careful reading of all yields rewards. Nevertheless perhaps we have too much emphasis on the Wesleyans. What of the missionary concerns of the other Methodist bodies? Again the inclusion of home mission work is welcome but the book overall has

a traditional feel, with most essays touching on overseas mission. In this respect Thompson's study offers a different approach.

The absence of an index of any kind severely detracts from the book's usefulness and serious readers will need to compile their own. Yet this is a valuable collection and is presented by the publishers in a convenient format, rendering it easy to read, for instance on the bus or train. I commend it to *CHS Magazine* readers.

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Eleanor Hughes

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***Catalogue of the Congregational History Society Library. Compiled by Patricia Hurry. 2014. Spiral bound £15.00 plus £4.70 postage. Available from Miss P Hurry, Bunyan Meeting, Bedford (see order form enclosed).***

In the 'Structured Bibliography' of sources for the study of Protestant Nonconformity in England and Wales since 1662 that concludes the recent *T&T Clark Companion to Nonconformity* (2013), Clive D. Field, highlighting the importance of the Congregational Library, formed in 1831 and now co-located with Dr Williams's Library in London, comments that the Congregational Library 'should not be confused with the small Congregational History Society Library stored at Bunyan Meeting, Bedford' (p 502). This brief reference to the 'small' Congregational History Society Library may give the impression—no doubt unintentionally—that it is of little or no significance to historians of Congregationalism. Nothing could be further from the truth, as Patricia Hurry's splendid *Catalogue* now reveals.

Before saying more about the *Catalogue*, it is worth outlining how the society came into being, and how its library eventually arrived at its present home in Bedford. The formation of a 'Congregational Historical Society' was first proposed by Charles Silvester Horne in 1899, and was duly established the following year at a meeting held in the Congregational Memorial Hall in Farringdon Street, Blackfriars. The Society flourished for many years, and among the editors of its *Transactions* were such eminent scholars as the Revd Thomas George Crippen, Dr Albert Peel and Dr Geoffrey Nuttall. In 1972, however, as a consequence of the merger of the Congregational Church in England and Wales and the Presbyterian Church of England, to form the United Reformed Church, the Society ceased to exist as a separate body and joined with the Presbyterian Historical Society to become the United Reformed Church History Society.

As readers of the present Magazine will be well aware, a significant number of Congregational churches chose not to join the new United Reformed



Church, and many of these churches went on to establish the Congregational Federation, with offices in Nottingham. In 1979 a group of Congregationalists including Bill Ashley Smith, John Bray and Trevor Watts decided to start a Historical Society, independent of the URC. To begin with, it was named the Congregational History Circle, and it produced a magazine with that title until 2007, when the name was changed to the Congregational History Society. A library was established at Nottingham, made up of books donated by individuals and by institutions such as Mansfield College, Oxford, and some books and other items (including a collection of about fifty portraits of Congregational ministers, the property of the Congregational Memorial Hall Trust) were taken to Nottingham when the Congregational Library was being moved out of Memorial Hall, London. Unfortunately, space at the Nottingham offices was limited, and the books ended up languishing in a musty cellar where they rapidly began to deteriorate. In about 2009 or 2010, the Revd Chris Damp arranged their removal (with the collection of portraits and other memorabilia) to more suitable accommodation at Bunyan Meeting, Bedford.

It is this 'rescued' collection that Patricia Hurry has now catalogued, and in doing so has provided scholars with an invaluable research tool for the study of Congregationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The *Catalogue* groups contents under seventeen subject headings: Biography; Catalogues; The life of the church; Church records; Churches; Conferences; Congregationalism; Doctrine; Education and training; Events; History; Mission; Music, hymn books etc.; Addresses, lectures, sermons; The American connection; Miscellaneous; Journals & newsletters. There are about 1,200 separate items in total, the 3 largest categories being Churches (162 items), History (196 items), and Mission (131 items). Over 70 titles of journals and newsletters are included for which details of specific numbers of each are not given. Most of the published items are from the twentieth century, but over 130 are from the nineteenth century, and some of these are quite rare publications. For example, there is a collection in 7 volumes of the St Bartholomew Bicentenary Papers, bringing together speeches, lectures and addresses given to mark the 200th anniversary of the Great Ejection. Each of the 260 or so individual items, with its author and date of first publication, is identified in the *Catalogue*. Also worth noting is the fact that well over half of the 66 works listed in the section on Hymn books date from the nineteenth century. Although most were published in London, others were very local productions, such as the *Selection of Hymns Intended for the Use of the Congregational Dissenters in Bridport*, printed by John Prince in Bridport in 1840.

Perhaps of more significance, however, are the manuscript items held in the Library. In the 'Church Records' section of the *Catalogue*, nearly 40 documents are listed, of which all but three are in manuscript. These include substantial runs

of minutes of the Executive and Finance Committee of Paton Congregational College (from 1933 to 1960); the Nottinghamshire Congregational Union (1945 to 1966); the Castlegate Sisterhood (1934 to 1971); the Nottingham Federation of Congregational Women (1958 to 1984); the Reading Auxiliary of the London Missionary Society (1839 to 1972); Shrewsbury District Congregational Churches (1935 to 1965); and Shropshire Congregational Union (1948 to the 1970s). Church records such as these are increasingly being recognized as precious and irreplaceable historical sources, with much to tell us about the operation, activities and development of church life, including support for missionary work. Alongside these manuscript sources, the Library also has lengthy runs of printed yearbooks, records of proceedings and annual reports. These include the annual reports of national and local bodies such as the London Congregational Union (1939 to 1972), the Congregational Federation Assembly (1972 to 2000), the London Missionary Society (1795 to 1965), the Dorset Congregational Association (1917 to 1971), Bond Street Congregational Church, Leicester (1880 to 1932), and the Yorkshire Congregational Union (1949 to 1973).

The examples I have cited here may perhaps give some flavour of the range and interest of the material making up the Congregational History Society Library. The *Catalogue* is a very easy-to-use and convenient reference work, and will be a boon to anyone coming to Bedford to work on the collection. As well as the main Index (running to twenty-four pages), there are separate indexes of illustrators, places, publishers and translators. No scholar of the history of Congregationalism will want to be without this wonderful resource. Copies are very reasonably priced and can be obtained from Patricia Hurry, Librarian and Research Secretary, Congregational History Society, Bunyan Meeting, Mill Street, Bedford MK40 3EU, UK.

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*W R Owens, University of Bedfordshire*

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***The Clash of Empires 1914–1939.* By Neil E Allison. *The Official History of the United Board, revised, Volume One. United Navy, Army and Air Force Board, 2014.* Pp 180. ISBN 978–0–99302–228–9**

This book was originally issued in 2008. Neil Allison believes it much improved and has made corrections and included additional material resulting from his further studies. The work describes how, from 1914, the British forces began to appoint Free Church chaplains. The United Navy, Army and Air Force Board (as it later came to be called) originally comprised Baptists, Congregationalists and non-Wesleyan Methodists and was largely the brainchild of the Baptist J H Shakespeare who was assisted by his Congregational counterpart, R J

Wells. The board undoubtedly has done much good, being especially useful during World War I when so many men from the Nonconformist churches volunteered from 1914 to serve in the armed forces and, from 1916, were 'called up'. This caused great pastoral problems for their home churches, trying to serve them still, and raised the fears that without some extraordinary measures they would be served by Anglican chaplains and would be somehow drawn into the Church of England.

This work therefore covers the 25 years of the Board's beginning and its establishment as a fixed part of the chaplaincy provision for British servicemen. Certainly many chaplains behaved selflessly, even heroically, and theirs is an often unknown story which deserves to be told. The Board incidentally helped to make the Nonconformist churches more socially accepted, with all the accompanying elements, good and bad, that come with such respectability.

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*Nigel Fletcher*

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**Secretary:**

Rev. Dr Richard Cleaves  
17 Carlton Street  
Cheltenham  
GL52 6AG  
richard.cleaves@blueyonder.co.uk

**Editor and Reviews Editor:**

Dr A Argent  
125 Sudbourne Road  
London  
SW2 5AF  
alan.argent1@btopenworld.com

**Treasurer:**

Rev. C J Damp  
Bunyan Meeting  
Mill Street  
Bedford  
MK40 3EU

**Librarian**

Patricia Hurry  
Bunyan Meeting  
Mill Street  
Bedford  
MK40 3EU  
pathurry@fsmail.net

**Membership secretary:**

Peter I Young  
24 Daisy Dormer Court  
Trinity Gardens  
London  
SW9 8DW  
piy@live.co.uk

Contributions to the *Magazine* should be addressed to the Editor.  
Please note that the views expressed are those of the contributors and  
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