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Congregational History Society

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THE CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY SOCIETY MAGAZINE

Volume 8 No 1 Spring 2016

Contents

EDITORIAL

This issue takes the reader, led by Gordon Campbell, back to Scotland, namely Perth, then to the Scottish borders, and south to North Shields and County Durham before heading back to Scotland. In so doing we may learn that the churches in England and Scotland, and the Holy Spirit, were not too concerned about the border and its apparent divisions. For our second article, Meegan Griffin returns to R W Dale, to Carrs Lane, Birmingham and to the English west midlands where she examines the life of a woman doctor, an American whose life and career span two countries. Thus we discover two interesting individuals and through their lives and witness gain insights into 18th and 19th century Congregationalism, north and south of the border, and on both sides of the Atlantic.

In addition we have outlines of three important lives who in different ways have made remarkable contributions to British society in recent years, namely Elaine Kaye, Lord Roper and Prof Alan P F Sell, all of them influenced powerfully by Congregationalism. We also include a rather more fulsome 'news and views' section than usual, some correspondence, the secretary's notes, and the book reviews. I trust the mix is to your liking.

If you are so moved, write and tell the editor what you think and what you would like more or less of.

Elaine Kaye (1930–2015)

The death of Elaine Kaye on 21 October 2015 removes another stalwart lay historian of Congregationalism from our ranks. She was the daughter of Harold Sutcliffe Kaye who had trained for the Congregational ministry at Yorkshire United Independent College, Bradford, and who served at Whitby and at Sutton Coldfield but died prematurely aged 42 years. Elaine went to the Congregational school for girls, Milton Mount, and then to read history at St Anne's, Oxford where she joined the Congregational Society and came under the influence of Nathaniel Micklem, then principal of Mansfield College. Later she taught at Queen's College, Harley Street, in London and attended the King's Weigh House (Congregational church), in the West End, becoming its treasurer. She wrote a history of the Weigh House (1968) and later, with Ross Mackenzie, a study of its eccentric minister, W E Orchard (1990). At the Weigh House she was befriended by Daniel Jenkins and his family and the friendship remained lifelong.

Elaine Kaye was headmistress of Oxford High School from 1973 until 1982

and, after retirement, continued to live in Oxford, worshipping at Summertown URC and lecturing part-time in history at Mansfield College. She was awarded the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for her work in founding, with Geoffrey Beck, the Adam von Trott Memorial Appeal Project which funds a scholarship for a German student to come to Mansfield College every two years to study for a Masters' degree in politics. Von Trott had been a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, studying at Mansfield College in 1929 and Balliol College in 1931–33. As an undergraduate Geoffrey Nuttall recalled meeting von Trott at W B Selbie's principal's lodge at Mansfield and walking along the river with him. Von Trott was later hanged by the Nazis for his part in the July 1944 plot against Hitler.

Elaine Kaye wrote other works—*C J Cadoux: Theologian, Scholar and Pacifist* (Edinburgh 1988), *Mansfield College, Oxford: Its Origin, History, and Significance* (Oxford 1996) and *For the work of ministry: Northern College and its predecessors* (Edinburgh 1999)—and with Janet Lees and Kirsty Thorpe she co-wrote *Daughters of Dissent* (2004). Hers was a busy, industrious and productive life for which we may be grateful.

Lord Roper of Thorney Island (1935–2016)

The death of John Roper is a reminder of Congregationalism's links with politics which were once more evident. The son and brother of Congregational ministers (his younger brother Geoffrey is a former general secretary of the Free Churches Council and a minister in the United Reformed Church), Lord Roper was a Labour front-bencher who moved to the Social Democratic Party, eventually becoming the Liberal Democrat chief whip in the House of Lords.

John Francis Hodgess Roper was born in Norwich on 10 September, 1935, the son of the Rev Frederick Roper, a Congregational minister, and the former Ellen Brockway, the half-sister of Fenner Brockway, the veteran Labour peer and pacifist. From his parents, Roper developed a sense of social responsibility and a desire for moral justice. After studying at William Hulme's Grammar School, Manchester, and at Reading School, Roper spent his national service as a midshipman on *HMS Undaunted*, whose history he was asked to write.

In 1956 he became an undergraduate at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he read politics, philosophy and economics. In Oxford he was president of the United Nations Student Association and co-chairman of the university's Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. He then studied for two years at the University of Chicago, before in 1961 joining the economics department of Manchester University as a lecturer. Having met her at Oxford, he married Hope Edwards, the daughter of John Edwards, a former Labour minister under

Clement Attlee (she died in 2003). His career in politics began through his involvement in the Co-Operative movement.

In 1964 he fought High Peak for Labour, and was subsequently elected for the safe seat of Farnworth, in Lancashire in 1970. In 1972 Roper was among those MPs who supported the passage of the United Reformed Church Bill, seconding the motion. With Labour in power from 1974, Roper who had abandoned his youthful unilateralism, chaired the pro-Nato British-Atlantic Group of Young Politicians and the Labour Committee for Europe. In opposition after 1979, James Callaghan made him a defence spokesman under Bill Rodgers at a time when the party was moving to the left. As treasurer of the Fabian Society, he understood profoundly the arguments that beset individuals about whether to stay or leave the Labour party.

Roper's link with Rodgers led to contacts with the "Gang of Four"—Roy Jenkins, David Owen, Shirley Williams and Bill Rodgers himself—who would break with Labour. Having told his constituency party that he would not be a Labour candidate at the general election, he became the whip for the 12 MPs who had left the Labour party and in the SDP was both chief whip and higher education spokesman.

Contesting the Worsley constituency in 1983, Roper lost, with only six of his colleagues returned. Like Bill Rodgers, in 1987 he joined the combined Liberal Democrats, thus separating from David Owen. After 1983 he was head of Chatham House's International Security Programme and later its director of studies. He led the first British-East German round table in East Berlin, in 1986, and hired as a researcher Edgar Uher who, when the files of the Stasi were published in 2003, was outed as a Communist agent. The historian Anthony Glees deduced that Roper must also have been a person of interest for the Stasi. Roper denied this allegation and cold-war historians were unconvinced by Glees, as were the Foreign Office also.

In 1990, on his appointment as head of the Western European Union Institute for Security Studies, he moved home to Paris. In 1995, he became visiting professor at the College of Europe in Bruges and in 1999 honorary professor in German studies at Birmingham University. He was created a life peer in 2000 and a privy counsellor in 2005 in which year he resigned as Liberal Democrat chief whip in the Lords.

John Roper wrote several books on the subject of European defence. He was chair of the Council on Christian Approaches to Defence and Disarmament in the 1980s. For almost ten years he was vice-chairman of the Anglo-German Parliamentary Group and 1993–95 sat on the International Committee on the Balkans.

Unlike many politicians John Roper did not strive after the glare of publicity but rather he shunned the limelight. "You don't have to be on the front page"

was his advice to a younger politician. His considerable public service was conducted with little publicity, although his life reveals the involvement of one Christian in politics in the modern age.

Alan P F Sell (1935–2016)

The recent death of Alan Philip Frederick Sell (7 February 2016) calls for a notice of his life and works. He was both minister and academic and maintained his many interests throughout his life, still commendably preaching his carefully-worked and thoughtful sermons in his later years. His scholarly output was considerable and, although he was primarily a philosopher and theologian, his output of historical works was impressive.

He trained for the ministry at Manchester and remained loyal to Lancashire, despite his origins in the south of England. He entered the ministry in 1959, serving at Sedbergh and Dent on the north Yorkshire/Cumbria borders to which he liked to return at least once a year. He moved to Angel Street, Worcester serving also churches at Hallow and Ombersley and taught theology in the West Midlands College of Higher Education. Then he went to Geneva, as the Theological Secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, after which he was professor of Christian Thought at the University of Calgary. From Canada, he moved to the Chair of Christian Doctrine and Philosophy of Religion at The United Theological College, within the Aberystwyth and Lampeter School of Theology of the University of Wales.

In 1972 he was initially critical of the scheme of union between the Congregationalists and Presbyterians but, like others, was persuaded by John Huxtable of the virtues of the fledgling URC to which he remained fiercely loyal.

In Aberystwyth, he resisted learning Welsh although he was fond of Wales and recalled his time there with affection, labelling one former student as very mischievous. Students there sometimes found him not as approachable as they would have liked.

He was the chief creator of the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries (often abbreviated to ADHSCL). His idea was to set up a friendly meeting place for all those denomination history societies outside the Church of England to consult about specific ventures and to enable joint projects and conferences to develop and occur. This notion was in Alan Sell's mind before his return to this country in 1992 from his university post in Canada.

By 1993 the ADHSCL had come into being with Alan Sell as its first convenor. He arranged for meetings to be held in London every year and occasional conferences at different locations. The first was held in Birmingham,

in Selly Oak near Geoffrey Nuttall's retirement home, in which building Sell's elderly mother also lived. Indeed Sell would often call on Nuttall when he was visiting his mother.

Sell's historical interests were to the fore in his editing of the 4 volumes of *Protestant Nonconformist Texts* (2007). He recruited 11 other scholars (including Tudur Jones, David Thompson, David Bebbington and others of our readers) to join him in this work, aiming to encompass the whole range of religious dissent with extracts from key texts, illustrating each age as well as possible. He was the editor of volume 2, covering the 18th century. The mark of Alan's persistence was revealed in his overcoming the great handicap of having two academic publishers fold up, after they had accepted the proposal. Eventually a contract was signed with Ashgate, at which point Sell had to collect all outstanding material from his contributors. As series editor, he did not let go of his responsibilities but rather secured a new agreement with an American publisher (Wipf and Stock) which resulted in the books appearing in paperback.

Given his wide interests, Alan Sell's scholarly output was substantial (as a glance at his entry in Charles Surman's index of Congregational ministers reveals) and he might be accurately described as having rescued from obscurity some dissenting teachers whose work had been unfairly overlooked. In retirement in Milton Keynes he still expected to publish two books a year, which tied him to a demanding work schedule! In total, he wrote over 30 books. Unsurprisingly he was disciplined and organised and, on his regular visits to Dr Williams's Library, he invariably consulted the current historical journals and cast his eye over new additions to the shelves. He was a keen member of the Friends of the Congregational Library to which institution he has left many books and manuscripts.

In 2007 a festschrift in his honour was published—Anna M Robbins (ed) *Ecumenical and Eclectic: The Unity of the Church in the Contemporary World: Essays in Honour of Alan P. F. Sell* (Wipf & Stock Publishers). He had been ill for some time but was quietly appreciative of the medical treatment which he had received. Principally he saw himself as a minister of Christ's gospel.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Geoffrey Nuttall—a biographical memoir

Clyde Binfield's estimable twenty-four page memoir of G F Nuttall (1911–2007) for the *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the British Academy* vol XIV has now been published. Geoffrey Nuttall's many friends and admirers will certainly

wish to read and re-read this at their leisure. Here we have formative influences on the youth, his schooldays and Balliol College, Oxford, ministerial training at Mansfield College and ministry at Warminster, Nuttall's years at Woodbrooke (the Quaker settlement in Birmingham), and his long service at New College, London. In 1977 Geoffrey Nuttall formally retired but the next thirty years were as productive as any in his long life, both in his writing, teaching and publishing but also in his making new friends so that to trace the path to his door was to make a pilgrimage, taken by an extraordinarily broad group of followers. In retirement, his mind remained sharp, although his body grew progressively frailer.

Clyde Binfield has admirably summarised Nuttall's life although, as he would admit, encapsulating this awkward, cross-grained saint and 'essential Congregationalist' is almost impossible. Nuttall, with his fine intelligence and his penetrating assessment of individuals' characters, alongside a friendship generously given, touched so many lives profoundly, challenging, teasing, provoking, encouraging that his memory and his work will long live on. Scholarship now redounds with his continuing influence and perhaps even the churches, especially those with Congregationalism in their souls, somewhere show the effects of this man's critical faith and voice.

The Angel's Voice

Between 1910 and 1913 the Young Men's Bible Class of Trinity Congregational Church, Brixton, produced a magazine of surprising quality and interest. Successive ministers and church members since then have realised something of its exceptional nature and now this has been recognised by the London Record Society which, in conjunction with Boydell and Brewer, is publishing almost a complete run of *The Angel's Voice* in June this year.

As a whole the magazine offers a unique snapshot of innocent London youths (and their sisters) just before the carnage of the First World War which would transform their lives and result in many of their deaths—as Trinity's war memorial clearly shows. Here we have cartoons, 'poems', accounts of rambles in the Surrey hills, football matches, ladies hockey matches, roller skating, holidays in Jersey, in Italy, day trips to Boulogne, a motorcycle time trial from Edinburgh to London, flights in a biplane, a correspondent writing from the Canary Islands, and much more.

London a century ago, and one southern suburb in particular, and at its heart the faith and witness of one representative Congregational church, are captured in this magazine. To read it is to understand better the making of our grandparents and great-grandparents.

Overshadowing Bunhill Fields

Some readers may have noticed the threat to the skyline around the historic nonconformist graveyard of Bunhill Fields, in the City of London. There are buried John Bunyan, John Owen, William Blake, Isaac Watts, Daniel Williams and a host of other dissenting luminaries who any city in the world would be pleased to call their own. The graveyard is immediately opposite Wesley's Chapel in City Road, also well worth a visit with the Museum of Methodism and Wesley's House. In brief this is a very interesting part of London for anyone, let alone those who hold serious Christian faith, like nonconformists.

Now the Mayor of London has given approval to a proposal for a high rise development which would overshadow Bunhill Fields and cast it into almost permanent shadow. Many CHS members will want to object to this threat to our heritage. If you wish to support the campaign then here is the link. https://secure.avaaz.org/en/petition/Boris_Johnson_We_ask_you_to_halt_the_development_of_towerblocks_by_Bunhill_Fields/

Under the Portico—a surprising discovery at Trinity Chapel, Brixton!

Over the late summer and autumn of 2015 my church, Trinity Congregational Church, Brixton, had builders working on the exterior of our chapel. As you may know, Brixton in general is undergoing a transformation at present, with new buildings, often high rise, being erected and a marked change in the local population (lots of younger professionals and families moving in). It seemed opportune, and our church members agreed, to provide Trinity with a similar facelift (stonework replaced, windows and brickwork repaired, a ramp for wheelchairs etc). On Wednesday, 14 October, 2015 the worn stone floor of the classical portico at the chapel entrance was being lifted for the first time, perhaps ever, and the builders spotted that in the hollow beneath the stone was a small, neat coffin, perhaps 3 feet in length. The architect who was on site at the time was alerted and he telephoned me, although I was inside the adjoining church hall at the time. Naturally I went to see for myself and the predictable jokes were made about discovering gold coins inside, although to all appearances it looked like a child's coffin, probably dating from the early 19th century, given that the chapel opened for worship in 1828 and had been largely left untouched, outside at least, leading to its being listed grade two. The stoneworkers placed a plank of wood over the gap through which we had first seen the chest and, being late in the afternoon, they went home.

I was at first unsure what to do. I could leave the coffin where it was, as

some of the builders had suggested, and have the new stone laid, according to the original plans, or instead I could contact the coroner.

After an attempt to contact someone with the appropriate knowledge at the local council but learning that all I spoke to had no idea what to do, I rang the police. They too were initially dumbfounded but fairly soon two uniformed officers arrived. They were friendly but had never dealt with anything like this before. Ten minutes later, an inspector and two sergeants appeared. They also proved amiable but had little of substance to contribute and their visit may have owed more to curiosity than to any other motive. All this caused some passing neighbours to take an interest and I told one or two as best I could what had happened. Like me, they were shocked and questioning. Finally late that afternoon we had a visit from two CID officers who took details—my name, the church's full address, the best explanation we could offer etc. It was decided that as this was a potential, albeit unlikely, crime scene, two uniformed constables had to keep watch all night, sitting in their van outside the chapel.

I took tea out to the officers about 7 am only to discover that they had been replaced by two others in blue. My wife then came and took some photographs of the hole beneath the portico and the coffin. Three women police officers also paid us a call and then a specialist from the forensic unit came. He donned his one piece overall and, with four men having lifted the stone, descended into the hollow. He confirmed that there was a name plate which bore the inscription Emma Carther White, died July 1836, aged 8 months. At this point two more officers from CID came and, having telephoned the Museum of London for advice on the coffin, and also the coroner, they announced that the coffin was to be claimed pro tem by the coroner and should not be moved. However the continued presence of police officers at the scene was no longer required.

From a study of the photographs submitted to The Museum of London, the resident coffin expert at the museum made the following comment:

> "This interment is typical of 19th century triple shelled coffin types. It is highly likely that the body is within a wooden coffin, which is then sealed in a lead shell, which was then placed in the wooden outer, which is what is visible. This is most likely to have been constructed from elm. The coffin would originally have been covered in fabric, which was held in place with the coffin studs which can be seen in the photograph around the edges of the sides and lid. The breastplate was manufactured in lead, as most probably were the small decorative escutcheons which can also be seen on the lid. It is not possible from the photograph to determine the design of the breastplate. The sides are split into panels with coffin studs, with iron handles (properly known as grips) within the panels."

By Thursday morning, 15 October 2015, Trinity had acquired a curious

allure, prompting some 15 officers to pay a call. Later that day I was required to make a formal statement at the police station. Yet the mystery lay unsolved and several questions were unanswered. Who was Emma? What caused her death? Had Trinity, at some point in its past, been a place for burials?

The surname White was not one with which we were familiar from our knowledge of Trinity's early history, but notes written by a church member in 1882 revealed that one of the original trustees soon after the chapel was built was William White. He was later mentioned as having been appointed the church treasurer. Was there a link? A William White married Elizabeth Harriet Williams at St Matthew's Church of England, Brixton, on 2 June 1829 and St Matthew's was then a very new parish. There may be no connection but the coroner found little new beyond these details to throw further light on the proceedings. On reading some earlier church meeting minutes, we found some references to internment fees, but no mention of actual burials at the chapel. Perhaps there were more burials but, after two world wars and considerable bombing in this district, and the compulsory purchase of some of the church's garden in the 1950s, the evidence is hard to find.

Subsequently the coroner's office gave permission for the child's coffin to remain undisturbed beneath Trinity's portico and for the replacement stone slabs to be laid. If they didn't know it before, worshippers on entering our chapel pass over the resting place of a small part of London's history. There lies one short lived member of a family grief stricken by sudden, merciless death, and who, like so many of our forebears similarly wounded, found comfort and purpose in their Christian faith.

Congregational Historical Society—Roll of Members 1950

I have recently received from Revd Tony Tucker some notes found in the papers of the late Elaine Kaye. Among them is the roll of members of our predecessor society from February 1950. They make for interesting reading. Then the presidency was vacant due to the death of Dr Albert Peel but handwritten over this was the name Revd A G Matthews. The secretaries were Revd Charles E Surman and Revd Harry Sellers (of Ilford). The treasurer was R H Muddiman of Queen St, London while the editor of the society's *Transactions* was G F Nuttall. Underneath the editor's name was handwritten the name of an associate editor Robert S Paul of Leatherhead.

The corporate members included 34 local churches, Penge CC and North Street CC, Taunton among them, 2 county unions of Congregational churches, namely Devon and Leicestershire and Rutland, 9 colleges, only 8 of them Congregational, the ninth being Manchester College, Oxford, which is

Unitarian in foundation, 13 libraries in the UK, including 5 public libraries, and 9 libraries in the USA, including the Library of Congress, Yale Divinity School and Huntington Library, California, alongside the Congregational Library in Boston. It is all rather humbling and causes one to wonder whether now we should be more expansive in sending out copies of our publications. If we do not communicate with more colleges, libraries and local churches, how will they know of our activities and are we being fair to our contributors in failing to secure the widest possible readership for their articles?

The society in 1950 did not have a huge personal membership, approximately 250, which was nevertheless pleasingly well stocked with lay folk (among them a sprinkling of knights) as well as ministers. By contrast, our own Congregational History Society has about 150 members. In addition, although the existing CHS does not have a corporate membership scheme, we do have a small distribution list of libraries and colleges and a few local churches in the Congregational Federation. Like our earlier counterpart, we exchange copies with our fellow denominational historical societies.

Among the members in 1950 were the up and coming John Marsh, John Huxtable, and Alec Whitehouse, although Nathaniel Micklem, Daniel Jenkins and Elaine Kaye herself (then only 20 years old) were apparently not members. Our own former editor, J W Ashley Smith, was listed on the membership roll as living in West Hartlepool, Durham, although neither the Welsh historian Tudur Jones nor the convinced Congregationalist Reginald Cleaves appeared as members. The society had two members in China, one in Shanghai (probably about to be ejected, given the civil war then being waged, and being won by the Communists) and one in Hong Kong. Two members lived in Southport, New South Wales, Australia. The society in 1950 had some 16 life members who included Sidney Berry, the secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales 1923–48.

Alan Argent

Forthcoming Events

Dr Williams's Trust celebrates its 300th anniversary this year, in that its founder Dr Daniel Williams died in January 1716. A conference is being held on 21 May at Dr Williams's Library, 14 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0AR on the theme of Dissent and Philanthropy. It is open to all but for further details please email conference@dwlib.co.uk or telephone Dr Williams's Library 020 7387 3727.

In addition the trustees have asked Dr Alan Argent to prepare a new history of the trust and library. Dr Argent is also giving the annual lecture of the

Friends of Dr Williams's Library on Tuesday 25 October 2016 to which all are welcome. His title for this is *Dr Williams's Library 1729–1793—"a good library, under the direction of the dissenters"*. Please support this if you are able.

In 2017, the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's nailing of his 95 theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg, and the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, Prof Diarmaid MacCulloch of the University of Oxford has agreed to give the Friends of Dr Williams's Library lecture. For that the library staff anticipate a bumper turn out!

Correspondence

In my letter about Charles Silvester Horne and Hampshire, which was published in last edition of the *CHS Magazine*, I inadvertently attributed the wrong first name to the minister of Ripley Congregational Church. It should have been Robert, not George, Howarth. He was one of a number of energetic and devoted ministers who served Hampshire's rural churches, often following a secular career and for relatively long periods. In the words of Revd John Daniel Jones they were 'the Victoria Cross men of the Congregational ministry' (*Hants and Berks Gazette*, October 2, 1909). Robert had previously been a schoolmaster and he was Ripley's minister from 1901 until his retirement, due to ill-health, in 1939. Not surprisingly, given his initial career, he took a particular interest in his Church's work amongst children and young people and in the local school. Inspired, in part, by his dedication, I have researched and written an article about Robert and his Church, focussing particularly on the years 1901–1914. This is being published in two parts in *The Journal of the Christchurch History Society* and will be posted in due course to my page on the *Academia* web site. I would be pleased to hear from anyone who has a particular interest in Congregational ministers with similar backgrounds to Revd Robert Howarth.

Roger Ottewill

SECRETARY'S NOTES

2016—the 500th Anniversary of the Birth of the Reformation

In a ceremony that recognised Martin Luther as a teacher, a doctor of the church, he was presented with a closed Bible that was then opened. The Bible was not in his own language: it had yet to be translated. It was not even in

the original languages as such a Bible had yet to be printed. It was a Latin translation. His first task at the new university in Wittenberg was to lecture on the book of Psalms. With the excitement of a newly qualified teacher he now had the opportunity to get his hands on the very latest in information technology. He arranged for the local printers in Wittenberg to print the Latin text of the Book of Psalms on separate sheets that were considerably larger than A4. The text occupied one third of the page and was printed with gaps between the lines. Luther gave the handouts to his students at the start of each lecture and proceeded to dictate a set of detailed comments on the text that was to go between the lines and a more discursive gloss on the text that was to be written in the large white space beside and beneath the text.

The lectures on Psalms completed, he turned his attention to the Letter of Paul to the Romans in 1515 and produced the same kind of handouts. His lectures on the Latin text of Romans were not intended to be published. Indeed, they were not published until the early nineteenth century when a number of sets of his students' notes were discovered. His students had faithfully taken down Luther's interpretation of the text at dictation speed and carefully recoded his interlinear comments and his marginal glosses.

Five hundred years ago this year when Luther was two thirds of the way through Romans, great excitement swept through the corridors of Wittenberg university. A dispatch rider had arrived with a copy of what really did become the book that changed the world.

Hundreds of miles to the west Desiderius Erasmus had been involved in a race to publish the very first printed Greek New Testament. In the forty years since the invention of the printing press many classical texts had been published … but not the text of the Greek New Testament. It was a labour of love. A tome that was more than A3 in size, it contained a Greek text that Erasmus had painstakingly researched based on the oldest manuscripts available to him, dating to the tenth century. Alongside the Greek text he printed his own modern Latin translation and at the bottom of the page extensive annotations. In the introduction Erasmus dreamed a dream: that one day before long his Greek New Testament would be used by people all over Europe to translate the Bible into the everyday language of the ploughboy.

The day Erasmus's Greek New Testament arrived in Wittenberg Luther could not contain his excitement. For the first time in his lectures on Romans he quoted from the Greek text. Within six years he found himself at the centre of a storm that was sweeping through the church and in the seclusion of the Wartburg castle he set about using Erasmus's Greek New Testament, together with his modern Latin translation and annotations to produce the first printed German language New Testament.

Meanwhile Erasmus had crossed the channel to Cambridge where his

thinking was to take root and shape a generation of scholarship. One of those touched by Erasmus's Greek New Testament and his vision to make the Bible available in the everyday language of people across Europe was the young William Tyndale. Fleeing the harsh regime in England he sought out Martin Luther and put Erasmus's Greek New Testament to good use producing the very first printed English New Testament, translated from the original Greek.

Going underground the state authorities of Henry VIII eventually caught up with Tyndale and he was burned at the stake. But as copies of that English New Testament arrived in England in wool sacks and packing cases something was changing for good. By 1527 Erasmus had been prevailed on to include Jerome's Vulgate translation alongside his own Latin translation and he had been persuaded to reinstate 1 John 5:6–8, the Trinitarian verse that was not to be found in the earliest manuscripts he had drawn on. Adopted by Robert Estienne and coming to be known as the Textus Receptus, it became the basis of the Greek text behind the Geneva Bible and subsequently the Greek text behind the King James Version.

Many will celebrate 2017 as the 500th anniversary of the birthday of the Reformation. They may have missed the boat. It was the publication of the Greek New Testament by Erasmus in 1516 that sealed the flow towards reform throughout the whole of the Western church as much in what came to be described as the Roman Catholic Church as in what became the Protestant churches.

It is no coincidence that within a generation, as the Bible became readily accessible in translation, our forebears were determined to shape church life in a way that was rooted in the Bible they could now read for themselves. Among the scholars who shaped our churches John Robinson, pastor of the church in Scrooby and later in Leiden, had studied in a Cambridge, itself shaped by Erasmus.

In the parting sermon he preached to the pilgrims as they embarked on their journey from Leiden, immortalised in the hymn, he was more than a little indebted to Erasmus and the publication in 1516 of the Greek New Testament. We too are indebted to Erasmus as we share that conviction that the Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth from his holy word.

Richard Cleaves

A SECOND CHANCE
THE STORY OF REV JAMES COLQUHOUN

Introduction

It might be pleasing if church history recorded continued, harmonious progress—with new church buildings being established simply to meet the demands of an increasing population. Religious history is, however, turbulent. People have lost homes and homeland, livelihoods and sometimes lives, defending their religious beliefs.

Nobody lost their life in the struggles associated with James Colquhoun's ministry—though a manse (not his) was torched by angry parishioners. Reputations were, however, lost (and found). Undoubtedly, hope, faith and truth would often have been casualties.

Church of Scotland

James Colquhoun was brought up in the Church of Scotland—and studied for its ministry, probably in Glasgow. Details of his early life are sketchy. Colquhoun does appear, in 1793, as a subscriber to a history of Rutherglen, which suggests that he had some earlier connection with that part of south Lanarkshire.[1] After completing his theological studies, he joined the Relief Church, and was recognised as a Licentiate of the Relief Presbytery of Glasgow.[2]

Relief Church

The Relief Church, or the Presbytery of Relief, was formed in 1761 by three Church of Scotland ministers, deposed for refusing to take part in the appointment of ministers unacceptable to their parishioners. Unusually for this time, the Relief Church issued a formal declaration allowing occasional communion with those of an Episcopalian or Independent persuasion.[3]

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1 D Ure *The History of Rutherglen and East-Kilbride* (Glasgow 1793) 339.

2 W Mackelvie *Annals and Statistics of the United Presbyterian Church* (Edinburgh 1873) 382.

3 Rev Thomas Gillespie, one of the founders, had actually been ordained by English Congregationalists—so his empathy is understandable. Gillespie had been studying in Edinburgh—but in his final year, his mother had withdrawn from the Church of Scotland and joined the Original Secession. Gillespie went to Perth to study under Mr Wilson, who had recently been appointed a professor for the Seceders. His sojourn in Perth lasted all of ten days. It appeared that

When the parish minister of Campsie died, the Crown had presented Rev James Lapslie[4] in 1784. Lapslie was a native of the parish, but:

> the majority of the inhabitants were greatly offended by this appointment, being dissatisfied with the doctrine and behaviour of the presentee.[5]

Unhappy at having a minister imposed upon them, many members attempted to have a new Chapel of Ease established, with the right to call a minister of their choosing. These attempts were unsuccessful. Accordingly, application was made to the Relief Presbytery of Glasgow—which took Campsie under its jurisdiction in 1784. A church building was built in the same year, at a cost of £600.

Colquhoun was ordained on 3 May 1786, and ministered at Campsie Relief Church, as its first minister.[6] For almost a decade, all seems to have gone smoothly. (We do know that Colquhoun declined an invitation to be minister of the East Relief Church in Perth in 1787.[7]) On 5 October 1796, however, Colquhoun fell out of connection with the Relief Church. On that date he demitted (or resigned), and:

> openly and candidly confessed what was publicly known—that he had disgraced himself at Balloch Fair—a short term before.[8]

Balloch was the first point at which a relatively safe crossing could be made of Loch Lomond—and as such, was for long an important connection between

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he was: "influenced more by a desire to comply with the wishes of a fond and pious mother, than by personal attachment to the peculiarities of the Secession. R Thomson *A Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen* Vol II (1870) 110.

Gillespie then studied in Northampton, being licensed in October 1740, and ordained in January 1741 by a number of English dissenting ministers, with Philip Doddridge presiding as the moderator. He then returned to Scotland and was inducted to a Church of Scotland parish.

4 Lapslie would serve Campsie for over 40 years. His story need not concern us here—but it is worth noting that he achieved unenviable notoriety, and never prospered, after his betrayal of Thomas Muir. Lapslie had been an intimate friend of the Muir family—but when the Government instituted a political prosecution against Muir (who was agitating for political reform), Lapslie went to great lengths to furnish the Crown with evidence. The manse was set on fire in 1797, though the Lapslies were out at the time. Lapslie died suddenly in 1824—and his funeral was interrupted by debtors who would not allow the burial to continue until his father-in-law paid up!

5 Mackelvie *Annals* 341.

6 The largest town in the Campsie parish was originally called Newtown-of-Campsie, but from around the 1790s it was known as Lennoxtown. Lennoxtown lies some 9 miles north of Glasgow. Today it lies in East Dunbartonshire, but formerly (prior to 1975) it was in the County of Stirling.

7 Mackelvie *Annals* 341.

8 R Small *History of the Congregations of the United Presbyterian Church from 1733 to 1900* (Edinburgh 1904) Vol II 156.

the Highlands and central Scotland. The Balloch Horse Fair was one of the most important in the country from the Middle Ages until the beginning of the 20th century. It was held each year on 15 September.[9] In the late 19th century, there was an associated fun-fair—but even in the 18th century there would probably have been a variety of side-shows, stalls of all kinds, and refreshment tents for food and drink.

> There a net had been spread for his feet, and after being ensnared, he had been made the talk of the whole country. In deep penitence he submitted himself to the judgement of his brethren, and was suspended til they should see their way to restore him. But at the next meeting he declined their authority, and was declared out of connection with the Relief Body.[10]

The course of history might have turned out rather differently, had Colquhoun accepted that he was accountable to the Relief Church, and subject to their discipline. It is pointless to speculate. Colquhoun walked out—and when later he tried to return, he found the door firmly shut in his face.

Perth

Colquhoun then moved to Perth in 1796. His ministry was not over—here he would get a second chance. His sphere of service was not, of course, the East Relief Church. Instead he ministered to the Independents—to Union Chapel, which, in time, would become known as Perth Congregational Church. Colquhoun was in Perth for five years—but his exact status is unclear.

Around 1789, differences within the Anti-Burgher Seceders (about the dispensing of the Lord's Supper) led to a breakaway group building a chapel in Thimblerow, near Paul Street. The breakaway congregation did not thrive, and in 1793 it was dissolved. The minister joined the Relief Church, and the building was sold to "Independent Missionaries".

> Whether this is an accurate description of the purchasers, however, is open to question. At this time, even individuals such as Robert and James Haldane[11], regarded as being the founding fathers of Scottish Congregationalism, had no idea of quitting the Established Church; seeking rather a revival of religion, not separation.[12]

James Garie was:

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9 D Semple *Saint Mirin: An Historical Account of Old Houses, Old Families, and Olden Times in Paisley* (Paisley 1872) 37.

10 Small *History of UP Church* 156.

11 *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

12 W D McNaughton *Early Congregational Independency in the Highlands and Islands and North-East of Scotland* (Edinburgh 2003) 151.

> asked to supply the Paul Street Chapel for one month … (and his) preaching was so acceptable that at the end of the month a unanimous call was extended to him, which he accepted.[13]

Garie started as minister of the Chapel in October 1794—but stood down around May 1796.[14] As it was hoped that the Chapel would be recognised by the Church of Scotland, Garie did not want to do anything to upset the sensitive negotiations. Accordingly, he did not celebrate the sacraments. The proprietors:

> stirred up by some impatient persons, came to the resolution of dismissing their minister, unless he would immediately form a church.[15]

It makes sense that Colquhoun picked up in late 1796 where Garie had left off.

In 1798, writing to a newly formed Congregational Church in Aberdeen, Colquhoun wrote:

> It is now two years since we organised on the liberal English congregational plan … We endeavour, as you do, to steer clear of the Scotch dissenter, and Scotch Independents, where it is but too evident that the … love of party too much abounds.[16]

Colquhoun was not the first minister of Perth Union Chapel—but he does seem to have been the first once it became clear that its future lay as an Independent Chapel. He laid foundations for what was to follow.

What is confusing is a record in 1798 of the purchase of Paul's Chapel for the use of, "Mr Garie and a congregation of Christian people". Immediately prior to this, Garie seems to have been preaching for two months in a hall belonging to the Incorporation of Glovers.[17] (Later the congregation moved to a Tabernacle erected in the South Street by Robert Haldane.) What was Colquhoun doing in Perth when Garie returned? Garie died suddenly on 24 January 1801.[18] It certainly appears that Colquhoun was not associated with the congregation at this time. The Haldane brothers reacted to Garie's death by moving quickly to secure the services of Ralph Wardlaw—initially for "two or three Sabbaths" from the middle of February 1801, but extended eventually

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13 H Escott *A History of Scottish Congregationalism* (Glasgow 1960) 277.

14 R Kinniburgh *Fathers of Independency in Scotland; or Biographical Sketches of Early Scottish Congregational Ministers* (Edinburgh 1851) 5.

15 W Gardiner *Memoir of the late Rev James Garie* (Edinburgh 1801) 28.

16 McNaughton *Highlands, Islands and NE* 158.

17 Escott *History* 277.

18 *The Missionary Magazine* Vol VI (Edinburgh 1801) 71.

(with short interruptions) until the middle of October.[19] Had Colquhoun been assisting Garie at this time, this would have been unneccessary.

North Shields

Colquhoun moved next to a dissenting Presbyterian congregation in North Shields.

Archibald Nelson was the lay pastor of a Presbyterian chapel at Swalwell, Durham.[20]

> In consequence of his superior talents, a general revival took place in the congregation, so much so, that the chapel was on all occasions crowded to excess.[21]

Nelson, however, preached not just in Swalwell, but in surrounding settlements also. He preached in North Shields as part of this circuit of preaching—and so many people wished to attend, that services were held in a former theatre.[22] The playhouse was procured and fitted as a Tabernacle, capable of holding upwards of 1000 people. It was opened on 4 August 1798, when opening services were held in the morning, afternoon and evening.[23] On 9 June 1800, Nelson was ordained as a minister, and admitted to the pastoral charge of the new dissenting congregation. What is interesting to our story is that we find Colquhoun[24] preaching—asking the usual questions, receiving the confession of faith, and giving charges to both minister and congregation.[25] Just the next year, in 1801, Nelson moved to Aberdeen—to be replaced by Colquhoun!

One colourful incident from Colquhoun's North Shields' days concerns the 93rd regiment of Sutherland fencibles, who were coming back to Scotland from Guernsey. Their ship was forced into Shields by the weather—declared by the captain to be the worst he had ever felt at sea. Seventy of the soldiers and non-commissioned officers collected three pounds and ten shillings, and vowed to present it to the first Scots Presbyterian congregation they found if they reached dry land. A deputation of five presented the money to one of the

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19 W L Alexander *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Ralph Wardlaw DD* (1856) 50/51.

20 The Swalwell Presbyterian Chapel was one of the few buildings in Tyneside where John Wesley preached.

21 D Newton *The Swalwell Story, William Bourne's History of Swalwell, Written in 1893* (Swalwell 2014) 15.

22 J Bailie *An Impartial History of the Town and County of Newcastle upon Tyne and its Vicinity* (Newcastle 1801) 571.

23 *The Evangelical Magazine* Vol VII (1799) 437-438.

24 Clearly noted at that time as being of Perth.

25 *The Evangelical Magazine* Vol IX (1801) 130.

elders, requesting that the congregation (which was currently meeting) should join them in thanksgiving prayer for their unexpected deliverance. The next morning the soldiers set out for Sutherland—by land![26]

Lillieslief

When Rev William Campbell died in 1806, there were many who hoped that his son John would succeed him in the parish of Lillieslief in the Scottish Borders. The Duke of Roxburghe (patron of the parish) had, however, promised the first vacant charge in his gift to Rev James Stalker (Chaplain to the Royal Forces at Fort George). Mr Stalker was inducted to Lillieslief on 8 May 1805. People took time to "test their new minister's gifts" but a year later, seventy families withdrew from the Church of Scotland. The Relief Presbytery of Kelso accepted their request to come under their jurisdiction.in 1806.[27]

In 1808, Colquhoun accepted a call from this congregation. He then petitioned the Relief Presbytery of Edinburgh to be readmitted. The Edinburgh Presbytery wrote to the Glasgow Relief Presbytery, asking that the suspension on Colquhoun be lifted. This request was refused.

The Lillieslief congregation then took matters into their own hands—confirming Colquhuoun as their minister. This then led to the Relief Synod cutting the church off from its fellowship.[28]. Once again, Colquhoun must have used his experience to guide and nurture a new church fellowship. This was becoming a trend! The congregation did build a new church (with seating for 400) in 1809, and Colquhoun remained in Lillieslief until 1815. The Lillieslief Church applied to and was accepted by the Burgher Presbytery of Selkirk. Colquhoun then returned to England to "prosecute a secular calling".[29]

Conclusion

Chroniclers of the Church of Scotland of the past would be appalled at each breakaway from the establishment. In contrast Congregational observers of the present should rejoice at the spiritual freedom of God's people in a locality, not just to call their own minister, but to follow (without outside interference) God's leading. Did others, unnoticed by outsiders and unrecorded by historians, act similarly in a Congregational way?

Gordon A Campbell

26 *Edinburgh Magazine or Literary Miscellany* Vol 20 (Edinburgh 1802) 234.

27 Mackelvie *Annals* 522.

28 Small *History of UP Church* 271.

29 J Tait *Two Centuries of Border Church Life* (1891) 271.

WHAT'S IN A NAME? ALMIRA LEE FOWLER-ORMSBEE-BREAKSPEAR, 1826–1899

Member of Carrs Lane Congregational Church, Birmingham, 1884–99

Researchers are generally agreed that it is difficult to recover from history the lives of married women, particularly in the nineteenth century when they assumed the forename and surname of their husbands in their address. This was most certainly the case when looking at documents concerning Women's Temperance associations in Birmingham in late Victorian times. The Women's Branch Minute Book of Carrs Lane Temperance Society 1896–1911 was such a document, but it has proved possible to identify certain committee members in senior positions who occasionally used their full name and were prominent in other church activities. The inaugural meeting of the Society was held at the home of Mrs E Breakspear.[1] a name which evoked particular interest when I learned, from the 1891 census, that she was an American, married to an English businessman, but also listed as a doctor of medicine.[2] Her name was to be found in other Minute Books which revealed she was a Deaconess of Carrs Lane Church, and on the church committees for Schools and the Ladies Town Mission. How was it then that in Victorian times an elderly American lady was amongst the leading members of Carrs Lane Congregational Church in Birmingham? Fortunately Mrs. E. Breakspear had a more unusual Christian name, Almira, which facilitated easier identification on tracing her origins. What followed was a story that revealed she was no ordinary housewife but part of an American family who mixed in the eclectic circles of the rich and famous, and embraced a variety of lifestyles which brought each of them recognition in their chosen fields.

Almira Breakspear was born Almira Lee Fowler the daughter of Horace Fowler, whose first American ancestor, William Fowler, had migrated from Lincoln, England in 1676.[3] Her father moved to Cohocton, Steuben County,

1 'The Women's Branch Minute Book of Carrs Lane Temperance Society, 1896-1911' Birmingham City Archives Central Library, (hereafter BCA) C.C.C.1/129.

2 Census Return 1891, RG12/2358.

3 M Sauerbier 'Horace Fowler's Family' *The Crooked Lake Review*, (October 1988) http://www.crookedlakereview.com/articles/1_33/70ct1988/7sauerbier.html accessed 24/08/2008.

New York State in 1806 and in 1807 married a devout churchgoer Martha Howe. Their small log cabin became the meeting place for many Sunday worship services. Horace donated land for a Congregational church to be built which was dedicated on February 3, 1830, but which later was to become a First Presbyterian Church. There were three children of this marriage, Orson Squire, born October 11, 1809, Lorenzo Niles, born June 23, 1811, followed by a sister Charlotte, born August 14, 1814. Martha died on August 13, 1819, and Horace then married Mary Taylor of Massachusetts, who was a well-educated school teacher. Three more children were also born in Cohocton, Samuel Theron in 1821, Almira Lee on March 4, 1826, and Edward Payson in November 1834. Mary died in May 1835, and in October Horace married Susan Howe, the sister of his first wife.

Following the death of her mother when Almira was only nine years old, the family moved to Jackson, Michigan, where her education was furthered by private tutors. Whilst her father Horace had received very little formal education, his six children were given an education that was the very best of its time. The older children of the family had already moved on to higher education, with Orson and Lorenzo both attending Amherst Seminary, with a view to entering the ministry. It was during his time there that Orson befriended Henry Ward Beecher, the brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe the abolitionist and author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The two friends attended a lecture in Boston on phrenology given by the Austrian Dr Johann Spurzheim, and became interested in the subject as an instrument of individual and social reform. After their graduation in 1834, Henry Ward Beecher followed in the steps of his father Lyman Beecher and went into the ministry, but Orson continued his interest in phrenology and began travelling through New York and New England, lecturing and '*reading*' heads. It was to change the lives of the whole family, with Lorenzo and Charlotte both actively joining Orson in the enterprise, and the younger family members assisting wherever they could. The business expanded, so they opened an office in New York, and in 1844 when Charlotte married Samuel R Wells they immediately formed the publishing house of Fowler and Wells. They became the foremost exponents of phrenology in America, and had many supporters including Horace Mann, Walt Whitman and Ralph W Emerson.[4]

It is impossible to know what effect, if any, the associates of Orson, Lorenzo and Charlotte had upon the life of Almira and the two younger brothers other than in family conversation. However, the lifestyle they adopted as teetotallers and vegetarians, advocating deep breathing and hydrotherapy, homoeopathy, temperance and not smoking, as well as social reform causes like anti-slavery,

4 Sauerbier 'Fowler's Family'.

sex education and women's rights, suggests that the whole family was open to the many new reforms and causes of their time. In particular amongst their friends were the foremost women activists in America, Amelia Bloomer, Lucretia Mott (cousin of Lydia Folger), Susan B Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Clara Barton, the founder of the American Red Cross.[5] Perhaps one of the greatest influences on Almira however, was the fact that in 1844 her brother Lorenzo married Lydia Folger, who in 1850 was the second woman in America after Elizabeth Blackwell to receive a medical degree, and the first American-born woman to do so. She was the first woman professor in an American College, and in 1852 established a medical practice in New York, specializing in women's and children's health, hygiene, nutrition and child rearing.[6]

Almira also decided to study medicine and in 1851 entered the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania and graduated in Philadelphia in 1853. She was by all accounts an exceptional talent, and was appointed Demonstrator of Anatomy and Chemistry for the succeeding year. She later declined several invitations to take a professorship there or in other colleges, and in 1858 went to reside on Orange Mountain, New Jersey, two and a half miles from the city of Orange. She apparently moved to supervise the improvement of some property she had purchased there, and was not expecting to pursue her profession. She must have had considerable means to make such an investment and as a single woman to support herself. Yet her retirement expectations were not to be realised as she was soon called upon to practice medicine again and, six years later, had a considerable practice of around 300 families, many of whom were amongst the wealthiest in the area.[7] Around 1866 she opened a practice in the city of Orange, and according to taxation figures for that year was earning around $1,138 dollars a year.[8] This put her in a reasonably wealthy position, and in 1870 she was living with her step-mother Susan aged 76, together with 3 other younger Fowler family members, and a housekeeper, 2 Irish servant girls and a mulatto coachman from Maryland.[9]

On the 18th October 1871, at 45 years of age, Almira was married by the Revd Henry Ward Beecher to Mr J Holden Ormsbee.[10] Her husband

5 All these women have prominent profiles in American history, and information about them is available on a variety of internet websites.

6 P M Baker 'The "First Family" of Phrenology' Pilgrim Hall Museum, http://pilgrimhallmuseum.org/pdf/Phrenology.pdf accessed 01/09/2008.

7 E Cleave 'Fowler-Ormsbee A L' in *Cleave's Biographical Cyclopaedia of Homoeopathic Physicians and Surgeons* presented by S Cazalet http://www.homeoint.org/history/cleave/f/fowleroal.htm accessed 05/11/2015.

8 US.IRS Tax List 1866, District 5, Division 2. (modern equivalent value around £50,000).

9 US Federal Census 1870, 482 p52.

10 *New York Evening Post* 19 Oct 1871.

reportedly was a New York merchant, described as a gentleman, intelligent, of prepossessing appearance, sterling integrity and an open manner.[11] Further identification from American sources has proved difficult and unfortunately this is the only available information about him at present. Sadly Almira was widowed in 1876,[12] and in 1880 was still living in New Jersey with her step-mother, four nieces and the same number of servants.[13] Almira was seemingly content with the life she had in West Orange and never courted the high profile activism of causes adopted by other members of her family. Her sister Charlotte was a member of the Board that founded the New York Medical College and Hospital for Women in April 1863. Meanwhile, her brother Lorenzo had moved to England with his family in 1863 where he set up an office in Fleet Street to continue his phrenological work. His wife Lydia was not allowed to practice medicine under the 1858 Medical Act, so she devoted her time to lecturing and writing. She became involved with temperance work and was honorary secretary of the British Women's Temperance Association. Lorenzo and Lydia became members of The City Temple, at High Holborn, where Lydia is recorded as one of that Congregational church's district visitors. Following Lydia's death on 26th January 1879 at their London home, 62 St. Augustine's Road, Camden Square, the youngest of their three daughters, Jessie Allen Fowler, took over as honorary secretary of the Women's Temperance Association.[14]

It is not known when Almira Fowler made the acquaintance of her second husband, the Englishman Edward Breakspear. He was a 59 year old widower from Birmingham, and ran a house painting and decorating business, employing 50 men and 6 boys[15]. Whilst he may have met Almira in the United States of America, it is more probable that they met in London when Almira was visiting her brother and family. Edward may well have had an interest in phrenology, as her brother Lorenzo Fowler was well known on the lecture circuit. They were married at St. Pancras in 1884, and Almira gave her London address as that of Lorenzo's home. Perhaps, it was their keen observance of temperance which brought them together. Edward Breakspear was a member of the Independent Order of Rechabites, 21 District of Salford Unity, a society which advocated total abstinence from alcohol.[16] He was also a deacon of Carrs Lane Congregational Church, Birmingham.

The 1891 census shows that the household of Edward and Almira which

11 *History of Homoeopathy*, see above.
12 *New York Tribune* 2 Jan 1900.
13 US Federal Census 1880, 113, p.150.
14 M Clement 'Fowler, Lydia Folger' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.
15 Census return 1881, RG11/3082.
16 *Birmingham Daily Post* 24 April 1883.

had a housekeeper and servant, also included an unmarried niece of Edward's called Maria Breakspear aged 41years. Maria was the daughter of Harriet Haynes, who was the sister of Edward's first wife. From sequential census returns it appears that Maria lived with her uncle and aunt from an early age and in later years adopted the name Breakspear. Maria seems to have had an interest in homoeopathy, as in 1881 she was in Matlock, at the residence of a homoeopathist and his family, along with 36 other visitors from all over England who were seemingly there for some convention or instruction. Maria's mother and father, Harriet and John Haynes, were also stated in census returns as herbalists.[17] It is obvious that Almira and Maria got on very well together. They were both committed to the temperance cause, and their names frequently appear together in the Women's Temperance Association Minute Book. They give the impression of being a formidable duo, yet the description we have of Almira states that she was kind and sympathetic, a wise and faithful friend, with a great love of children. She was also described as having good judgement and having achieved a huge amount by hard work, determination and forward planning.

Almira became a deaconess of Carrs Lane Church when it was under the pastorate of R W Dale. The role of deacon and deaconess were not comparable at this time. Whilst deacons constituted the elected management of the church and had full authority, deaconesses were effectively appointed to do what was considered women's work. It appears that Carrs Lane first appointed women in 1878 to undertake and oversee the visitation of 9 areas of the town. They supervised relief to women, the distribution of clothing to the poor, fund raising, church Dorcas work, and the behaviour of women church members.[18] At the same time Almira continued her medical interests, shown by her attendance at the Ingleby lectures given by Lawson Tait, the president of the British Gynaecological Society, and a surgeon at Birmingham Women's hospital.[19] Records show that she gave medical consultations to women in the church vestry.[20] She was also named as a Governor of the Birmingham and Midland Homoeopathic Hospital.[21] The minute book alludes to her having written a book on alcohol, but no details have yet been found. Whilst she no doubt had the greatest regard for Dr Dale, he was foremost a theologian and a

17 Census Return 1871,RG10/2989.

18 'Carrs Lane Deaconess Minutes 1878-1899' BCA, C.C.1/18. Dorcas is the name of a woman mentioned in Acts 9:36 which reads "In Joppa there was a disciple named … Dorcas [who] was always doing good and helping the poor". Hence a Dorcas Society was a ladies' association in a church for the purpose of making and providing clothes for the poor. *Oxford English Dictionary*.

19 *Birmingham Daily Post* 18 June 1886.

20 'Church Manual' for 1887, BCA, C.C.1/140.

21 *Birmingham Daily Post* 16 March 1894.

historian. After Dale's death, the arrival of J H Jowett as pastor in 1895, a like-minded supporter of temperance and modern thinking, must have raised her spirits. She was able to see the setting up of the Ladies Temperance Association at the church, the establishment of the Pleasant Monday Evening meetings for women, and the introduction of non-fermented wine for the Lord's Supper, all within the first months of Jowett's pastorate.[22]

Maria is known to have travelled to America with Almira in April 1897, and following the death of Edward Breakspear on 17th September 1898, again in May 1899. [23] It is not known if Almira ever returned to England, but her obituary states that in 1899 she had taken up residence once again in Orange County. This move may well have been as much emotional as of practical consideration. Her brother Lorenzo had died in 1896 and her remaining family was now all in America. Although Edward left an estate of some £4,304 16s 8d, the house she had lived in at 15 Clarendon Road, Edgbaston, was not owned by him, so she would probably have needed to move anyway. On 31st December 1899, Almira died at her sister Charlotte's home in New Jersey, aged 73. She had no children and left her estate in England, some £1,164 5s 4d, to Maria Breakspear Haynes. Her American estate was beset with difficulties, as it was contested, due to the fact that it was made in England and superseded ones made earlier in America. It was further complicated by the death of her niece Charlotte Fowler Howe in 1901 to whom she had left everything, and then the death of her sister (one of the contestants) also in 1901. It was not finalised until 1912.

It is astonishing that a name in a church minute book some 120 years ago should reveal such an interesting family history. Unfortunately, without anecdotal information it can only provide a historic time-line of someone who came from a unique family. However, this paper—'what's in a name'—shows the recovery from history of the life of a member of Carrs Lane Congregational Church, Almira Lee Fowler-Ormsbee-Breakspear 1826–1899. Hers is a singular story but it indicates that Congregational churches on either side of the Atlantic were not so isolated before the twentieth century as the casual observer might think. We may conclude that not only individuals but attitudes and ideas of churchmanship and Christian behaviour crossed the ocean too.

Meegan Griffin

22 'Church Minute Book, 1890-1899' BCA, C.C.1/13.

23 New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957, Ancestry.co.uk.

REVIEWS

***O Sing Unto the Lord: A History of English Church Music*. By Andrew Gant. Profile Books, London, 2015. Pp x + 454. Hardback £20. Ebook £16.99. ISBN 978 1 78125 247 5.**

Having written *Christmas Carols: From Village Green to Church Choir*, Andrew Gant has now turned his attention to the history of English church music. Gant himself is a composer, choirmaster and lecturer at St Peter's College, Oxford. He begins his work with a reference to a football chant where the crowd abuse the referee but use a hymn tune to do so. Gant does not think that the crowd members were all secretly Welsh, although they know 'Cwm Rhondda'. He is simply pointing out that church music has an influence beyond our usual understanding. His beginning takes the reader from the possibility of Jesus setting foot on England's mountains green, which both Shakespeare and Blake allude to, through the Celtic monks and the liturgies of the early medieval period. He makes clear that, for much of its history, English church music was an all-male pursuit although musical monasticism applied to both sexes. Indeed plainchant was as much a part of the daily life of the nunnery, as it was of the monastery.

The 15th century boasts considerable collections of sacred music. The Old Hall manuscript dates from 1420 and derives from Old Hall Green in Hertfordshire where it was hidden until after the Reformation. It contains 1483 pieces and probably represents compositional activity over twenty years before it was compiled. Gant considers this in some detail. Also visually breathtaking is the Eton Choirbook which was put together in the early 16th century. It represents the height of musical art during the thirty years before the pieces were collected. He gives appropriate consideration to John Tavener, Thomas Tallis, William Byrd, and to the more familiar Watts, Wesley, and the 18th and 19th centuries. I learned of Edmund Rubbra, brought up a Congregationalist, who converted to Catholicism in middle age and became a lecturer in Oxford University and a fellow of Worcester College in 1947.

Gant maintains that during the English Reformation a division came into being between music for professionals and music for the people at large. He argues that this division resulted from doctrine and it survives into the present age. He notes that Samuel Pepys often wrote in his diary of psalm singing at home with friends and that Victorian hymns entered deeply into the soul of the English.

This is a handsome, authoritative book, well written, and well put together. The ten page bibliography is curiously named "further investigations", although Gant tells his readers that he has "at some stage, sung, played, conducted, edited, produced and/or taught all the pieces named in the text". Obviously he is a practitioner and writes from his experience and knowledge. The end notes and index are full and useful. Both author and publisher are to be congratulated. The book is also cheap at this price!

Martin Chisholm

***Harmless Freedom John Biddle, John Knowles and the Reception of Polish Socinian Defences of Toleration, c 1650–1665*. By Justin Champion. Friends of Dr Williams's Library Sixty-Seventh Lecture. Dr Williams's Trust, 2015. Available from https://fodwllectures.wordpress.com Paperback Pp 30. ISBN 978–0–85217–085–4.**

Justin Champion is a noted scholar of the history of ideas, especially in the late 17th century. In this 2013 lecture, he tackled the concept of toleration, an elusive ideal which our own age, let alone the 17th century, has not been able to bring into being sufficiently. We must not therefore be too sniffy about an earlier age and its suspicion of the threat which toleration appears to involve. Champion quotes the Polish knight, Samuel Przypkowski, who called toleration 'harmless freedom' because such belief caused no suffering to any individual,

nor to institutions, nor to God. Freedom was based on God's relationship with human reason which demanded understanding as the groundwork for eternal salvation.

This radical position was the basis for ideas promoted by the 'English Socinians' of the English revolution. Most contemporaries disputed this claim for toleration. In his lecture Champion explored the links between the theology of the Polish Brethren and the arguments for toleration in England through the trials of John Biddle, and his Gloucestershire friend John Knowles. Both these men held heterodox views of the Trinity, defended free enquiry by the laity into scripture and questioned the authority of ordained clergy. Both were imprisoned and suffered considerably.

This is a lucid account of a little known episode in the development of intellectual freedom in this country. All those interested in the history of ideas, especially those Christians who argue that Christ suffered for his defiance of the religious establishment, will benefit from reading this paper. Christians might also reflect, as I suspect that Biddle and Knowles did, on Christ's teaching in John 8: 31–32, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free". Champion has brought to light an attack on clericalism, so central to reformation thinking, and a challenge to false interpretations of scripture. This is a good read.

Elaine Smith

***Richard Davis (1658–1714) and Revival in Northamptonshire*. By Stephen Pickles. The James Bourne Society, Ashford, Kent 2015. Pp 286. Hardback ISBN 978–1–1901716–06–1.**

The Independent minister, Richard Davis, probably came from Cardiganshire and aged 18 moved to London to teach. Having experienced a profound conversion, he sought the advice of John Owen. He then became a member of the Independent church at Silver Street, London, pastored by Thomas Cole. In February 1690 he was called by the church at Rothwell, Northamptonshire, to be their minister. As a strict Independent he offended some local ministers by denying them a share in his ordination and by his busy itinerant preaching. He used and encouraged lay preachers and his energetic proclamation of high Calvinist doctrines led to further friction and animosity.

This book represents the substance of the third annual lecture of The James Bourne Society given in September 2014, the tercentenary of Richard Davis's death. The lecture has been significantly expanded into a book.

Undoubtedly Davis is a figure of some importance and does repay further investigation. He unsettled Northamptonshire and its neighbouring counties

by his vehement advocacy of Calvinism and, although he at first co-operated with the united ministers of London who investigated the complaints against him, by 1692 he had refused to answer any more charges. His actions proved to be disastrous for the future of the 'happy union', whereby Independents and Presbyterians worked together.

Davis was accused of being an antinomian, a serious doctrinal error, by which an individual claims to be free from the prohibitions of the law. Clearly Stephen Pickles regards Davis as having been falsely charged. Davis's fellow Independents rallied to his support and opposed the attempts to discipline him. In protest they withdrew from the union.

Yet we must allow that Davis was not merely a divisive figure. Rather he was instrumental in founding new churches at Wellingborough in 1691, at Burwell, Cambridgeshire, in 1692, at Kimbolton, Huntingtonshire, in 1693 and at Ringstead, Northamptonshire, in 1714. He also encouraged others to found churches.

We may feel that the happy union was worth preserving. On the other hand we may conclude that, even without Davis, it would not have survived the doctrinal divisions that were to come in the 18th century. This book is well illustrated, has an index and a bibliography. Its conservative argument will not please everyone but it offers an easy, if somewhat one-sided, introduction to a difficult figure.

Colin Anderson

***The Dissenters, Volume III, The Crisis and Conscience of Nonconformity.* By Michael R Watts, with the assistance of Chris Wrigley, and an introductory note by David Bebbington. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2015. Pp xviii + 493. Hardback £85. ISBN 978 0 19 822969 8.**

Michael Watts' death in 2011 means that this book, the third in his series on the history of nonconformity in England and Wales, will be the last. That is he will not bring the story and the analysis which began with the Protestant Reformation and its antecedents, and continued from 1789 to the mid-Victorian age, down to the 21st century. This volume carries the narrative from 1860 to the political triumph of the Liberal party in 1906. His first volume first appeared 37 years ago and the second as long as 20 years ago.

In this volume, he divided his account into three parts, dealing with the Crisis of Dissent, the Liberalisation of Dissent, and the Conscience of Dissent, and he gave most space and attention to the central section on liberalisation. These three parts comprise 33 chapters in all in which some topics inevitably are better covered than others. I should have liked more on the contribution

of women across the denominations, although I recognise that often the data is not available. Yet women's guilds and Dorcas societies abounded in local fellowships at that time. That is women clearly played a huge part in Victorian nonconformity, even if that part was in the shadows. As David Bebbington states in his introductory note, Watts might have chosen to give more treatment to the internal life of the chapels. Theology was not Watts' expertise and yet, as he noticed, theological change and variety was part and parcel of late Victorian religion and the intellectual crisis of nonconformity is tackled in his first section. The book's ending in 1906 reinforces the link between the nonconformists and politics, especially the Liberal party which is to stress a break which, from our vantage point, we can see but which was unseen by contemporaries. Indeed Watts did not supply a proper conclusion to this book, probably expecting to take the story further into another volume. He was also not able to consider fully the findings of more recent historians.

In addition to his text, he devoted over 100 pages to his appendix, in which are set out various tables detailing figures of church membership for the denominations, estimates of church and chapel attendance in London and 20 of its districts, and also in selected towns and village clusters (49 in all), according to the 1851 religious census and, from 1881, according to figures gleaned from local newspapers. Other tables of statistics break down the occupations of male dissenters in percentages by denomination. This latter set of tables is strikingly original.

Watts was always more at home in the 19th century than in the earlier periods, although he made a good job of those in his older volumes. This is a formidably learned book in which Watts shows a masterly knowledge of his subject. Congregationalists are here in numbers, as are the other denominations—Baptists, Quakers, Wesleyans, Primitive Methodists, and all, although Watts deals thematically rather than denominationally with his subjects. None need feel short changed in this treatment and all will find food for further thought. Yet the book would have benefitted from a bibliography, apart from the works cited in the footnotes.

I recommend this work but expect that many CHS members may, at first, choose to consult it in libraries, before committing themselves to a purchase. If this for many will be a reference work, it is one which will not attract too much dust because it will be used. We must thank Watts for his great industry and hope that another scholar will pick up the baton and write the next volume, bringing the story down to the present day.

Clare Thomas

***Freedom and the Powers. Perspectives from Baptist History Marking the 400th Anniversary of Thomas Helwys' The Mystery of Iniquity*. Edited by Anthony R Cross and John H Y Briggs. Baptist Historical Society, 2014. Pp xiii + 222. Paperback ISBN 978–0–903166–42–3.**

The papers in this collection were first given at an international conference sponsored by the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage and the Baptist Historical Society at Regent's Park College, Oxford, in July 2012. They explore Baptist contributions to issues of freedom and 'the powers', through the printed and proclaimed word, and also through direct and sometimes even sacrificial action. Thomas Helwys, the pioneering early 17th century English Baptist, made clear in his *A Short Declaration of the mistery of iniquity* (1612) the distinction between the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of God which is the starting point of this collective exploration. These essays consider the ways dissenters in general and Baptists in particular have witnessed since the 17th century, when they suffered persecution, to the 20th century when they endured suspicion and misunderstanding and worse in both fascist and communist societies. The contributors examine how Baptists have related to the power of the state, and also to the different pressures of imperialism, capitalism and emergent industrialisation.

These 14 essays are divided between 5 sections, dealing with 'Principles Established and a Hostile World', 'Responses to Industrial Society and Global Warfare', 'Baptists and the Communist State', 'Power and Race' and lastly 'A Christian Nation? An Historiographical Reflection'. Several contributors discuss the way in which war and conflict have affected the churches and how political regimes have sought to influence religious belief. From experience they note that social and cultural divisions have impacted on the churches as well as on society at large. Anthony Cross tackles Baptist attitudes to monarchy, country and magistracy 1609–1644. Malcolm Yarnell III discusses political theology in the early 17th century, especially in the life of Leonard Busher, and Brian R Talbot looks at Baptists in Scotland before 1765. John Briggs offers a study of Richard Heath 1831–1912, and his emergence as a radical. Gordon L Heath looks at Canadian and New Zealand Baptists in the Great War, tracing their legacy from the Boer War while Paul Spanring, in a fascinating study, highlights the story of Arnold Cöster, a Baptist minister in Nazi Vienna.

Other noteworthy studies take the reader from Russia, revisiting the Reform Baptists (Michael Bordeaux), to Czechoslovakia and the 1950s political trials of Baptist ministers (Lydie Kucova), and to Soviet Estonia where Baptist leaders confronted atheistic powers (Toivo Pilli). Imperial themes are tackled by S Aremola Ajayi in Nigeria in 1888, and by David Killingray who discusses the Baptist missionary Revd Dr Theophilus Edward Samuel Scholes 1856-c1940. Finally and bringing the analysis up to date, Andy Goodliff treats with David

Cameron's speech of December 2011 where he commemorated the King James Bible.

The Baptist Historical Society has made available in this book a collection of varied quality. What it does show clearly is that Baptists are capable of critical reflection on their own history and that they have made an immense contribution to Christian thought and culture in this country and worldwide.

Robert K Wilson

***Memories of Queensland Congregationalism*. By J F T Short, edited by John Wheeler. Queensland Congregational Fellowship, Brisbane 2015. Available from PO Box 122, Everton Park 4043. Pp 99. Paperback ISBN 978–0–646–94083–0.**

This book comprises the reminiscences of a remarkable and unassuming Congregational minister, John Frank Turpin Short (1885–1961) who was active in Queensland. Frank Short and his brother, also a minister, despite their surname, were 6ft 4ins tall. Frank's ministry began with his work as a travelling agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society which took him from one end of Queensland to the other, carrying the scriptures and commending them to men and women in outback towns and lonely stations. As a result he preached and conducted services wherever he found an opportunity.

John Wheeler has put together this collection of Frank Short's writings which first appeared in the magazine *Contact* , the monthly publication of the Queensland Congregational Youth Fellowship 1954–61. They convey effortlessly the mood of an earlier age. Here is the horse-drawn "Bible Van", sent out by the British and Foreign Bible Society, which Frank Short drove for its first 5000 miles, and descriptions from 1910 of memorable encounters with swagmen. On steep tracks the van was emptied of all its contents and driven to the summit. Then the contents were recovered and carried over several trips by the armload to re-join the van. He describes meeting old men who publicly decried God and the scriptures but asked Frank for a Bible and fell to studying it with great intent! We read of a fugitive from the law following a fight between two teams after a cricket match in 1911. These were wild colonial boys indeed!

For British historians who like to see what their favoured sons and daughters were doing away from home, Frank Short gives walk on parts to David Livingstone, to A G Sleep "the very wide-awake" secretary of the Colonial Missionary Society, to Alec Glassey, to R W Thompson, and to the urbane and irreplaceable Sidney Berry. The stories in this book are priceless and John Wheeler is to be congratulated for rescuing them for a wider readership. Frank Short's own story enables many who will never know the Australia of his youth

to glimpse into it. For Frank Short's ministry, and his ability to reflect upon it and record it, we are merely grateful.

Let's end this review with his thoughts on loneliness and death which he met many times.

> Death comes with a crawl or comes with a pounce,
> But whether he's slow or spry,
> It isn't the fact that you're dead that counts,
> But how did you live, and why?

Alan Argent

***Bunyan Meeting History: Padre W. J. Coates Letters from the Front*. Editing, commentary and notes by Nicola A Sherhod and Neil E Allison. Bunyan Meeting, Bedford 2015. Pp 122. Hardback ISBN 978–0–9932415–2–9.**

William John Coates was in his second pastorate at Bunyan Meeting, Bedford 1912–17, having previously served at Skinner Street Congregational Church, Poole. He volunteered for a tour of France as a temporary army chaplain during the early years of the Great War (as other ministers had done and were to do) and in 1919 he received the 1914–15 Star in recognition of his service at the front. He also was awarded the War medal and a Victory medal.

After a brief introduction outlining the history of Bunyan Meeting, the editors summarise that church's role in the war—a soldiers' canteen which ran for 5 years, contributions to the Red Cross, knitting socks and mufflers and other items—and 266 men from its fellowship in uniform, of whom 65 died. Then follows a brief biography of John Bunyan (surely misplaced in this order in the book, if necessary at all) and a description of the United Navy and Army Board. The letters from Coates form the heart of the book. He wrote every month to the church, revealing an eloquent insight into the war and his pastoral concern for the folk at Bunyan.

By June 1915 Coates was in a training camp on Salisbury Plain. He noted the friendliness of the senior chaplain, an Anglican, and described learning how to fight trench warfare and how responsive the men were to his ministry. His next letter came from the British Expeditionary Force somewhere in France. He was then attached to a field ambulance unit. He found hope in small informal services where between 12 and 20 hymns were sung, to the accompaniment of mouth organs or bagpipes, and where a short conversational address was delivered. He wrote of devastated towns and villages, and of men dying of their wounds, yet he found the average Tommy was happy and ready to face the necessary tasks. He went out to No Man's Land, and on another

occasion conversed with a Gurkha. He was told that three-fourths of the men were praying, although they would not readily admit it. By August 1916 Coates was back among his Bedford people, having spent a full year of service abroad.

This is a worthwhile read amid the great number of commemorative publications, issued to mark the centenary of World War One. It relates the involvement of one man and of his church and brings home the heroism and sacrifice amid the ordinariness of war. His letters also call into question the assertion that the war was a secularizing experience for those who fought it. Yet many ministers felt the call to serve the men who fought the war and Coates is in some ways a representative figure. This book provides a telling insight into the mind set of his age.

Alan Argent

***Revisiting Religion and the British Soldier in the First World War*. By Michael Snape. Friends of Dr Williams's Library Sixty-Eighth Lecture. Dr Williams's Trust, 2015. Available from https://fodwllectures.wordpress.com Pp 42. Paperback ISBN 978–0–85217–083–0.**

Michael Snape of the University of Durham gave this lecture in November 2014. He is a historian of Christianity and war in the modern age from 1700 to 1950 and has written much on the subject. In his lecture he reflected on the critical reception given a decade earlier to his book *God and the British Soldier: Religion and the British Army in the First and Second World Wars* (2005) at a time of war, and on the significance of this in understanding the attitudes of a century ago. He found that his book's conclusion that war could sustain and even strengthen religion fell on stony ground. Rather his critics took for granted that the presumed religious decline associated with the First World War was unchallengeable. Certainly this latter view has proved tenacious, although Snape repeatedly found evidence from front line soldiers that prayer was a great strength to them. Indeed he cites the truism that 'there are no atheists in foxholes', drawing on the experience of American soldiers from the Second World War which mirrored the British pattern of a generation earlier.

Indeed Snape pointed out that levels of church membership throughout the First World War proved resilient, and even witnessed a revival during the early 1920s. He noted that after the First War British Protestant churches changed, becoming 'more informal, more ecumenical, more socio-politically engaged, and more progressive in outlook'. Change continued in the 1930s, 40s and 50s and Snape identified the wireless and its religious services as contributory to the decline in church attendance.

In brief then Snape's contention is that the common assumption that the First World War led to an "irrecoverable" loss of Christian faith is not supported by the data. In fact he states that this crisis of faith "never happened" and that the truth is rather that British infantrymen were "highly susceptible to religion".

To my satisfaction, Snape makes his point convincingly. The 'scepticism and … hostility' which greeted his book seem mere prejudice. Yet Snape was surely a little self-indulgent in using this lecture to answer his critics rather than to advance a new piece of scholarship, as his title *Revisiting Religion and the British Soldier in the First World War* only confirms.

Adrian Webster

***Dublin Congregationalism: The Rise and Demise of a Dissenting Tradition.* By Peter C Humphreys. The Congregational Lecture 2015. The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust (1978) Ltd. Available from the Congregational Library, 14 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0AR. Pp 43. Paperback £3. ISSN 0963–181X.**

Peter Humphreys is well qualified for this subject. He has lived in Dublin for several years, has held office in and been a trustee of Kilmainham Congregational Church there and is a church historian. In preparation he has consulted the archives of Northern Ireland and of the Republic. He is also a former Roman Catholic who has become a Congregationalist, giving him a unique insight into his subject.

He sees the failure of Dublin Congregationalism as a result of its association with British imperialism and with the Protestant Reformation, even though it itself emerged from 18th century evangelicalism. Often Congregational churches in the city in the past had benefitted from the nearby presence of a British barracks or hospital. Once the British left the churches declined. The Irish governments of the 1920s and 30s tended to reduce Protestant Dissenters in the south to feeling like 'strangers in their own land'. Congregationalism's attempt to survive by keeping a low profile meant that it failed to establish sufficiently deep roots with native Dubliners. Of course, underlining all these difficulties was the requirement that the children of 'mixed marriages' were to be brought up as Catholics.

Kilmainham Congregational Church was the last surviving Congregational church in Dublin city and county. It closed in 1999. Yet in 1900 there had been 7 Congregational churches in Dublin and 15 more in the 26 counties of what became the Irish Free State. Now only one remains at Raphoe, in Donegal, close to the border with Northern Ireland. Peter Humphreys demonstrates

that the Roman Catholic Church exercised a de facto monopoly of influence on almost every field of life in the early days of the Free State. He quotes the collation of stories of Protestants and Dissenters in the south of Ireland, told by Murphy and Adair—"What chance had a small, distinctive and democratic faith, such as Congregationalism, of surviving, never mind flourishing in such a climate".

This is a short pamphlet of some 36 pages, 7 of which are given over to a list of books for further reading. I recommend it to all those who wish to know more about a little researched but significant topic. I appreciated the photographs too.

Stuart Dunn

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