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TRANSACTIONS

THE CONGREGATIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Editorial

This May it will be proposed at a Special Meeting of this Society that we and the Presbyterian Historical Society in England unite to form the United Reformed Church History Society. The move has the support of our committee and the Presbyterians' Council, and the blessing of the Joint Committee of the two denominations charged with making arrangements for the union of the Churches to form the U.R.C., on 5 October next.

Fears have naturally been expressed by some members whilst even more have wondered whether it was necessary. It is necessary because of the special relationship the P.H.S. has with the P.C.E., whereby the Society undertakes certain responsibilities, *e.g.* preserving the records and relics, for the Church, a function that cannot be left in a void, and it would be embarrassing for the Society to continue to do this alone in the new Church. But beyond this, and the economic argument for uniting the two Societies, there is a feeling among many that this is the logical and amicable arrangement at this historic moment. Our legal advisors have assured us that in fact the Presbyterian Society is independent though linked with the Church, and the new Constitution continues both the independence and the link. The Presbyterians claim that their Society is a learned society, as we do for ours, and this is explicitly set out in the Constitution for the first time.

Two further points: the new Society will welcome all interested

in the history of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism; whether they are members of the U.R.C., or not is irrelevant. Lastly, we assure all who have paid subscriptions in advance, both ordinary and life members, that their money will be carried forward into the new Society.

The Royal Commission on Historic Buildings is at present engaged upon a survey of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting Houses, particularly those erected before 1800. Mr. C. F. Stell, who initiated the work and is carrying it out, aims to publish the survey in two years. He is anxious that the work should be complete and no building left out. Already he has seen over 400 of some 600 old buildings on his list. This is not counting chapels of the last century of which he has 'seen something,' he says, of around 2,000. Many photographs have been taken and drawings made of the most interesting specimens and these are available for callers to inspect at the Commission's offices at Fielden House, 10 College Street, Westminster. If any reader is not sure whether Mr. Stell knows of a particular building, perhaps now in disuse, please drop a brief note to him at the Commission's address given above.

Communion Plate and old furnishings also interest Mr. Stell, who is concerned that so much is lost track of, and too often gets into dealers' hands. Anything over 100 years old he will be glad to know about from readers.

When the survey is complete we must be prepared for some unpleasant shocks. In a time when increasing care is being taken of old buildings and antiques of every imaginable kind it appears that Nonconformists are lax. We have made very little effort to preserve the best of the past and sometimes every effort to destroy it. In a visit to the well-known Castle Museum at York one could not help noticing that among that magnificent collection, admirably displayed, and workshops, homes and farms, not to mention the brilliant array of military uniforms, the Church had hardly a mention, and Nonconformity never to have existed. Even the old prison chapel has become a musical museum. Obviously a collection cannot embrace everything, but it would be interesting to know where Nonconformist relics are on display in an equally attractive setting.

Another aspect of preservation is being examined by Dr. Williams's Library which has called a meeting of bodies interested in Nonconformity to see what can be done to prevent twentieth century records vanishing. We are waking up to the fact that a number of influential men have died and left next to nothing behind. Their papers, one supposes, went off on the dust-cart. The problem for biographers and historians is increased in this century because fewer people keep diaries and write personal letters commenting on events—they get on the telephone. So we wish the meeting success and will do what we can to make known its suggestions.

IN DEFENCE OF DISSENT: THE INDEPENDENT DIVINES ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT. 1641-1646

During the Puritan Revolution the Independent divines, inconsiderable as they were in number,[1] played an important role in shaping the course of public opinion on religion. The Puritans, as we know, differed in their views of church polity, and as the Revolution proceeded, their differences emerged and hardened. Conflicting forces tended to pull religious policy either toward a new form of conformity under an authoritarian church government or toward a turbulent destruction of the existing national ministry. 'In the Midst of all the high waves on both sides dashing on us', as the Independent divines themselves put it, they maintained 'that very Middle-way',[2] resisting, on the one hand, the tide of ecclesiastical authoritarianism and, on the other, arresting the forces of religious anarchy. In the years between 1641 and 1646, the independent divines were primarily concerned with the reconstruction of the church. When the shadow of a new ecclesiastical authoritarianism loomed large, they dissented and ably defended their right to dissent.

As early as September 1641, Jeremiah Burroughes, one of the future Dissenting Brethren in the Westminster Assembly of Divines, was invited to preach to the House of Commons and delivered a sermon entitled *Sions Joy*.[3] With the Scottish War and the summoning of the Long Parliament, Burroughes said, 'God indeed opened a door of Hope'. The hope was the establishment of a new Jerusalem in England, and Burroughes described it as *'a type of the Church'* which would constitute the true worship of God. He told the House:

> Many are affected with the *peace*, the good of the *State*, who little mind *Jerusalem*, they are good States men, wise, judicious, faithful in their kinde, but care little what becomes of *Jerusalem*, of the true worship of God.[4]

Earlier than Burroughes, probably sometime late in March or early in April 1641, William Bridge, another of the future Dissenting Brethren, had preached to a group of members of the House. The sermon was apparently not in response to an official invitation of the House, and, because it was far more militant in tone than Burroughes,

[1] Robert Baylie, *A Dissvasive from the Errours of the Time* (London, 1645), p. 53: 'Independency the smallest of all the Sects of the time for number'.
[2] Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye, 'To the Reader', in John Cotton, *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven* (London, 1644).
[3] Jeremiah Burroughes, *Sions Joy. A Sermon Preached to the House of Commons . . . September 7, 1641* (London, 1641).
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 5 and 25.

Bridge afterwards had 'difficulty and pains' in getting it published.[5] In this sermon Bridge rejected both the English and the Scottish forms of church government and, instead, called for the establishment of 'God's form'.[6] Like Burroughes, Bridge looked forward to the founding of Sion in England. 'The sword is now drawne', he wrote in his epistle to the reader, 'whose anger shall not be pacified till *Babylon* be downe, and Sion rais'd.'[7]

It is, of course, unhistorical to suggest that there was a political Independent faction in the House of Commons as early as 1641. Yet the fact that there was a particular group in the House to whom Bridge preached separately at that time is rather arresting.[8] In any case the threat of an authoritarian Presbyterian church government had not arisen and, indeed, Burroughes in 1641 could speak approvingly of Thomas Brightman's comparison of the Church of Scotland with the 'Church of Philadelphia'.[9] What is important, however, is that even at the very beginning of their appearance in Puritan politics, the Independent divines were not without their own conviction about the conditions of the church required for the true worship of God. This conviction was further demonstrated by Thomas Goodwin, again one of the future Dissenting Brethren, in a sermon to the Commons early in the following year.[10]

Goodwin's sermon to the House in April 1642 provided the embryo of the Independent divines' position with reference to church government, which the Dissenting Brethren in the Westminster Assembly afterwards spelled out in their famous *Apologeticall Narration*. First of all, Goodwin advised the House to reform religion to its perfection. 'Let no Church, therefore', said Goodwin, 'think it selfe perfect and needing nothing.'[11] He made it clear that he was speaking not so much of matters of faith or doctrine in the reformed churches as of things concerning worship and discipline. It was the power and authority over the consciences of individual men in the future church government that Goodwin had in mind when he appealed to the House of Commons

[5] William Bridge, *Babylons Downfall* (London, 1641). The date on which the sermon was preached is unknown, but the licence for its publication was given on April 6, 1641.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

[7] *Ibid.*, 'To the Reader'.

[8] Cf. Baylie, *A Dissvasive*, p. 53: '. . . for they have been so wise as to engage to their party some of chief note, in both Houses of Parliament, in the Assembly of Divines, in the Army, in the City and Countrey-Committees'. Of course, Baylie wrote in 1645; yet their inclusion among the divines summoned by Parliament to the Westminster Assembly indicates their relationship with a certain number of parliamentary members in earlier years. See also *ibid.*, p. 93.

[9] Burroughes, *Sions Joy*, p. 25.

[10] Thomas Goodwin, *Zervbbabels Encouragement to Finish the Temple* (London, 1642).

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

to 'establish nothing but what you have full, cleare, and generall light for' and to 'condemn nothing, and suffer nothing to stand condemned, in which you in your consciences are doubtful, there may be a truth'.[12]

In the first two years of the Civil War between the King and Parliament, the main anxiety of the Puritan divines was the possibility of a political settlement without further reformation in religion. In March 1643, for instance, Joseph Caryl preached against such a 'false peace' before the Lord Mayor of London, Isaac Pennington, and the City's Aldermen.[13] 'Now at this day', Caryl said, 'there is a great cry for Peace', and 'who weeps not to see the wounds of this Nation?' Yet, he stressed, unless religion was reformed, the *casus belli* would continue to exist.[14] A month later, in April, another Independent divine, William Greenhill, preached to the House of Commons on the same theme. 'Peace is a desirable thing', Greenhill told the House, 'yet only such a peace 'we desire as will keep the God of peace with us'.[15] He advised the House to make a distinction between those who were for Christ and those who were neutral or against him. The godly, who were the real strength of the Parliament, must be preserved, and peace could be achieved only after a 'thorough reformation of all evills in the kingdome, but especially in the worship of God; partiall reformation makes way for future desolation'.[16] In July we find Sidrach Simpson preaching to the House once more on the same theme. 'There are but two things', Simpson said in this sermon, 'that are the *desire* of all good men in these times, the *Reformation* of *Religion*, and the *safety* and *preservation* of it.' And like his Independent brethren, Simpson strongly opposed subordinating religion to political expediency.[17] In November the same theme was again stressed in another sermon by Bridge to the Commons. 'State-hypocrites desire truth for peace sake', he wrote in his dedicatory epistle, 'godly States-men desire peace for truths sake; warre is for peace, but peace is for truth.' And he exhorted the 'worthy Patriots' to be willing 'to lose and be lost for Christ'.[18]

It was undoubtedly this anxiety about a possible political settlement that might compromise a real reformation in the church which led to the Independent divines' commitment to the Solemn League and Covenant with the Scottish Presbyterians. Philip Nye, perhaps the most politically-minded of the Dissenting Brethren, went to Scotland with Stephen Marshall in July 1643; and the alliance, when completed, was advocated by Nye, Burroughes and Caryl respectively in the House of

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 35 [i.e., p. 43].
[13] It is to be noted that Isaac Pennington was one of the leading political Independents in the City of London. He was a member of John Goodwin's congregation. See *D. N. B.*, s. v.
[14] Joseph Caryl, *Davids Prayer for Solomon* (London, 1643), pp. 24–25.
[15] William Greenhill, *The Axe at the Root* (London, 1643), p. 33.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[17] Sidrach Simpson, *Reformation's Preservation* (London, 1643), pp. 1 and 23.
[18] William Bridge, *A Sermon* (London, 1643), 'The Epistle Dedicatory'.

Commons, in the Common Council of the City of London, and in a public gathering of the Londoners.[19] It was clear, however, that for the Independent divines, the alliance was not to bind them to the Scottish church government, but to keep open the door of hope for further reformation. As Burroughes explained in his speech at the London Council:

> You have to deal not only with his Majesty, but with a Popish party that are about him, and what security you can ever have of your peace . . . except the Scottish Nation comes in to fasten it, it is easie for any one to judge.[20]

And Nye's words in the House of Commons made it clear beyond doubt that an authoritarian Presbyterian church government was not understood as the condition of the Coventant. He said:

> What doe we covenant? What doe we vow? Is it not the preservation of Religion, where it is reformed, and the Reformation of Religion, where it needs? Is it not the Reformation of three Kingdomes, and a Reformation universall, Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship, in whatever the Word shall discover unto us? [21]

The adoption of the Solemn League and Covenant and the coming of the Scottish divines soon led to the beginning of the unending debate in the Westminster Assembly over the controversial subject of church government. At the same time, a clerical Presbyterian faction began to emerge, and an open war against the Independents was launched. In November 1643 the Presbyterians in the Assembly called to the attention of the House of Commons 'the multitude of churches gathered in the City and country', and some London ministers, in turn, petitioned the Assembly against the gathering of churches. Later in the year, Alexander Henderson, the leading Scottish divine, preached to the House of Commons and pleaded for a speedy establishment of a church government. 'Unlesse by the goodnesse of God a timeous and powerfull remedie be provided', Henderson told the Commons, 'the multitude of Sects and Sectaries will become ere it be long, the reproach of this Nation.' [22] Confronted with such a concerted action of the Presbyterians in the Assembly and the City of London, the Independent divines felt

[19] See *A Letter from Mr. Marshall, and Mr. Nye appointed Assistants to the Commissioners of Scotland* (London, 1643); *Two Speeches delivered before the subscribing of the Covenant* (Edinburgh, 1643); *Four Speeches Delivered in Guild-Hall on Friday the Sixth of October 1643* (London, 1646); Joseph Caryl, *The Nature, Solemnity, Ground, Property and Benefits of a Sacred Covenant* (London, 1643). For an analysis of the political context of the Solemn League and Covenant, see Larence Kaplan, 'Presbyterians and Independents in 1643', *The English Historical Review*, LXXXIV (April, 1969), 244–256.

[20] *Four Speeches*, p. 36.

[21] *Two Speeches*, pp. 3–4.

[22] S. W. Carruthers, *The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly* (Philadelphia, 1943), pp. 7–8, 91; Alexander Henderson, *A Sermon* (London, 1644), p. 28.

obliged to make a public declaration on their position with reference to church government.[23]

The publication of the *Apologeticall Narration* marked the beginning of the end of a precarious alliance in Puritan politics between the Presbyterians and the Independents. The final rupture of the alliance still lay in the future. It is significant to note that, shortly before the appearance of the *Apologeticall Narration*, the Independent divines in the Assembly had joined a group of their Presbyterian colleagues in publishing *Certaine Considerations to Disswade Men from Fvther Gathering Churches*.[24] They appealed to the common people to remain within the framework of the national ministry while the Parliament and the Assembly of Divines were considering the future settlement of church government. Although the *Certaine Considerations* was drafted by Stephen Marshall as a means of reconciliation and the Independent divines only very reluctantly consented to its publication, it shows, nevertheless, that the Independents were willing to see the national ministry preserved.[25]

Perhaps the Independent divines had never designed, and never would, a forcible destruction of the existing national ministry with external means. The Congregational way was not a way of conquest. Indeed, the Dissenting Brethren came to their conviction about church order when they were in exile, and with no idea of establishing this as a form of national church government. The following passages, which explain the way they came to their conviction when they were in a foreign country, are very revealing:

> This being our condition, we were cast upon a farther necessity of enquiring into viewing the *light part*, the positive part of *Church-worship* and Government; and to that end to search out what were the first Apostolique directions, pattern and examples of those Primitive Churches recorded in the New Testament, as that sacred pillar of fire to guide us. And in this enquirie, we lookt upon the word of Christ as impartially and unprejudicedly, as men made of flesh and blood are like to doe in any juncture of time that may fall out. . . . We had no new Commonwealths to rear, to frame Church-government unto, whereof any one piece might stand in the others light, to cause the least variation by us from the Primitive pattern; We had no State-ends or Political interests to comply with; No

[23] Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Sidrach Simpson, Jeremiah Burroughes, and William Bridge, *An Apologeticall Narration. Submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament* (London, 1643).

[24] (London, [1643]). Signatories include William Twiss, Thomas Goodwin, John White, Oliver Bowles, Stephen Marshall, Philip Nye, Charles Herle, Anthony Tuckney, John Arrowsmith, William Bridge, Thomas Young, William Carter, Herbert Palmer, Sidrach Simpson, William Greenhill, Jeremiah Burroughes, Richard Heyrick, Joseph Caryl, Thomas Hill, Thomas Wilson, and Jeremiah Whitaker.

[25] See Carruthers, *The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly*, p. 93.

> Kingdomes in our eye to subdue unto our mould; (which yet will be co-existent with the peace of any form of Civil Government on earth). No preferment or worldly respects to shape our opinions for: We had nothing else to doe but simply and singly to consider how to worship God acceptably, and so most according to his word.[26]

Apologetical as these words were, they did clearly describe the Independent divines' attitude. Perhaps this explains why the Independent divines resolved to maintain the existing national ministry in the 1650's when they were in power, thereby arousing great indignation among their more militant followers.[27] None the less, it would be a mistake to ignore the basic difference between the Independents and the Presbyterians. After all, Independent congregations were societies of visible saints drawn together through a covenant out of the parochial framework, while the Presbyterians remained within the parish system under an ecclesiastical hierarchy. Therefore, when the Presbyterians increased their pressure late in 1643, the Dissenting Brethren voiced their opposition:

> And wee did then, and doe here publiquely professe, we believe the truth to lye and consist in a *middle* way betwixt that which is falsely charged on us, *Brownisme ;* and that which is the contention of these times, the *authoritative Presbyteriall Government* in all the subordinations and proceedings of it.[28]

The *Apologeticall Narration* was followed by the publication of John Cotton's *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven*, edited with a long preface by Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye.[29] According to Robert Bailie,[30] Cotton had been the fountain of inspiration for the Independents, and there is little doubt that the *Keyes* was published to provide further doctrinal support for their brief manifesto of the previous year. Goodwin and Nye, however, were careful enough to point out that they did differ from Cotton's views in the treatise on points such as lay preaching and the power and function of the synod or, as they preferred to call it, the assembly of elders. Needless to say, Goodwin and Nye took this opportunity further to elaborate their position with reference to church government. As in political realms, Goodwin and Nye said, the fundamental maxim was 'the due bounds and limits' of power and liberties of the rulers and the ruled, so, they continued, there should be 'a due and proportioned' division of power

[26] *An Apologeticall Narration*, pp. 3–4.
[27] I have dealt with the conflict between the Independents and their more radical followers in the 1650's in my dissertation 'Saints in Power: A Study of the Barebones Parliament' (Indiana University, 1969; unpublished).
[28] *An Apologeticall Narration*, p. 24.
[29] A synopsis of the *Keyes* has been published by Hugh R. Dolphin in Vol. XIV, No. 4 (May, 1944), of the *Transactions* of Congregational Historical Society, pp. 205–212.
[30] Baylie, *A Dissvasive*, p. 54.

in the church.[31] We may imagine that this argument must have had a special appeal to the Parliament, who were, after all, seeking the same thing in the King's government.

In spite of the opposition of the Independents, the Presbyterians in the Westminster Assembly resolved upon their scheme of church government late in 1645 and passed their resolution to Parliament. The danger of a new conformity was now imminent. On 26 November, Burroughes appeared in the House of Lords and preached against the Presbyterian scheme. He prayed the Lords not to bring the saints into another bondage no lighter than the old one but under a new name. He said:

> Let not violence be used to force people to things spirituall that they know not. . . . The Votes of Parliament are to be honoured, and the judgement of the Assembly of godly and learned men is not to be slighted; but that which must subject mens consciences in matters concerning Christ and his worship, must be light from the Word. Let not the greatnesse of your power be exercised upon those who do what they can to know the mind of Jesus Christ. . . . Suffer not your power to be abused to serve mens designs.[32]

After all, he continued, the Presbyterian scheme of church government was 'presented to your Lordships only, that it may be; is it established by you, as that which ought to be *Jure Divino*?'[33]

Early in 1646 the Independents' cause won its defence, perhaps unexpectedly, from one of the most influential divines in the coming years of the Puritan Revolution. John Owen, the future leader of the Independents during the Commonwealth and Protectorate, seemed to have changed his once-held moderate Presbyterian position and inclined now towards Independency. Without identifying himself as an Independent, Owen preached, so to speak, his dissenting sermon against the Presbyterian scheme of church government in the House of Commons on 29 April. The sermon was a plea for further propagation of the Gospel, though 'thorow innumerable *varieties*, and a world of *contingencies*', rather than a suppression of differences in religion and the imposition of a new conformity. 'And let none', Owen said, 'seek to extenuate this mercy, by Catalogues of errours still among us, there is *more* danger of an *apostacy* against Christ, and *rebellion* against truth, in one Babylonish Errour, owned by men, pretending to *power* and *jurisdiction* over others.'[34]

To be sure, the sermon was to arouse strong reactions in the Presbyterian circles. Owen published it with two essays appended: *A Short Defensative about Church Government, Toleration and Petition about*

[31] Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye, 'To the Reader', in Cotton, *The Keyes*.
[32] Jeremiah Burroughes, *A Sermon* (London, 1646), p. 44.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[34] John Owen, *A Vision of Vnchangeable free mercy* (London, 1646), pp. 2 and 25.

these things and *A Countrey Essay for the practice of church-Government there.* The *Short Defensative* is a brilliant treatise for toleration. 'Once more', Owen wrote, '*conformity* is grown the touch-stone. . . . Dissent is the onely *crime*.' He questioned the validity of people's attributing to the lack of church government the evils of the time, and doubted the desirability of suppressing such evils with external means by the church. Of course, a church government had indeed been established by the Parliament. 'Yet', Owen continued, 'though I have learned to obey as farre as lawfully I may, my judgement is exceedingly farre from being enslaved."[35] More interesting is Owen's criticism of the use, or rather abuse, of the word 'sectaries' in contemporary polemical literature. Sectaries, he said, are commonly those who are oppressed: 'Nothing was ever persecuted under an esteemed name.' Indeed, in the wider world, what Protestant was not a sectary?[36]

The *Countrey Essay* is important for an understanding of Owen's view of church polity in this particular period. The parish ministry was to be preserved, and elders to be elected in accordance with the Ordinance of Parliament. Over the parish churches, however, Owen would have only a voluntary gathering in small areas of 'Professors (visible Saints, men and women, of good knowledge, and upright conversation, so holding forth their Communion with Christ) . . . uniting themselves, by vertue of some promissory ingagement, or otherwise, to perform all mutuall duties, to walk in love and peace'.[37] This voluntary association of visible saints over the parish churches, it may be interesting to observe, comes closer to a meeting of messengers of neighboring Congregational churches than to anything like a Classical Presbytery. There might be still a short step for Owen to take, as he soon did, to embrace the Congregational way; yet his position about church government was undoubtedly in agreement with that of the Dissenting Brethren.

Almost at the same time, in answer to the charge of Thomas Edwards that no one knew what the Independents would have, Jeremiah Burroughes published the three specific conditions they had stated in the Assembly and in the parliamentary committee for accommodation. Since these points are the most specific ones the Independent divines ever produced in opposition to the establishment of an authoritarian Presbyterian church government, they justify full citation:

> 1. We would have the ruling Power of Ministers not to extend further than their pastorall Charges over their People for the feeding of them by the Word & Sacraments. 2. We would have the Saints separated from the world, not in a negative way only, but in some positive arguments of some work of God upon their hearts that accompanies Salvation, so far as men may be able to judge; and

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 47, 50–51.
[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 52–53.
[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 57–60.

that they freely joyn in Spirituall Communion, yet so as the rule of edification be observed amongst others, that there be a cohabitation in those that joyn, that all that are fit to be members that doe cohabit doe joyn as much as may be. 3. We would have no coactive violence used against such men who carry themselves religiously and peacefully in their differences from others, in such things onely as godly and peaceable men may and doe differ in.[38]

These conditions clearly demonstrate the incompatibility between the Independents and the Presbyterians with reference to church government. It is true that the Independents did not intend to destroy the existing national ministry by any means other than proselytising; yet Independent congregations were societies of saints to be separated from the parish framework. Above all, the Congregational churches were not to submit themselves to any ruling power of an ecclesiastical hierarchy. Therefore, in spite of great pressures from the Presbyterians for conformity and, which was more to the credit of the Dissenting Brethren, probably alluring benefices in the country offered them, the Independent divines maintained their dissent.[39]

The significance of the Independent divines in this period meant, however, far more than merely the defence of their own opinions about church government. They became the spokesmen for religious toleration and defenders of the liberty of conscience of individual men. To be sure, by the Independent divines toleration was not understood, as Owen stressed, 'an *universall uncontrolled license*'; nevertheless, Owen warned, 'the specious name of *unity* may be a cloak for tyranny'. Owen, for one, strongly objected to imprisonment, banishment, and, particularly, capital punishment to be imposed upon any man 'otherwise *upright*, *honest*, and peaceable in the State, meerly because he misbelieveth any point of *Christian* faith'.[40]

To see the Independent divines in Puritan politics from a longer historical perspective, it may not be far from the truth to say that the meaning of their struggle against conformity transcends the age in which they lived. In his essays on the English Revolution, Professor H. R. Trevor-Roper interprets the whole struggle as one of the country against centralization of power in the state. There were, indeed, parallel demands in the English Revolution for the decentralization of power

[38] Jeremiah Burroughes, *A Vindication of Mr. Burroughes. . . . Concluding with a Brief Declaration What the Independents would have* (London, 1646), pp. 29–30.

[39] Baylie, *A Dissvasive*, p. 105: 'And when it was propounded that they might take charge in some of the best Reformed Congregations of England; with a full assurance of a personall dispensation to them for their whole life, if they would leave but that one intolerable tenet of Separation. . . .'

[40] Owen, *A Vision of Vnchangeable free mercy*, pp. 63–77.

in government, in law, in education, in religion.[41] The fundamental concern of the Independent divines, as we have seen in this essay, was the proper division of power in the church. Owen's use of the word 'country' in the title of his treatise on church government is especially interesting in this respect. In the light of this interpretation, the Independent divines' struggle against ecclesiastical authoritarianism and conformity reflects a perennial dilemma in modern history, namely, the individual's confrontation with the growing centralization of modern society. The trends of modern society toward centralization lie beyond the control of the individual, and conformity has almost become his destiny in the twentieth century. Yet, the Independent divines in their battle against authoritarian church government and against religious conformity contributed to the establishment of one significant tradition for modern man: the tradition of dissent. And their sermons and treatises are still, and will remain, a source of inspiration for individuals in their Sisyphean struggle against oppression and conformity. To quote Burroughes again:

> But while men think there is no way for peace but by forcing all to be of the same minde, while they thinke the Civill Sword is an ordinance appointed by God to determine all Controversies in Divinity, and that men must needs be chained together by fines and imprisonments, or else there can be no peace; that except all men be of the same minde themselves are of, all will come to confusion: while these Principles prevaile with men, either there must be a base subjection of mens consciences to slavery, a suppression of much truth whilst they seek to suppresse error, or else exceeding disturbance in the Christian world. Happy those men, their memories shall be blessed.[42]

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[41] H. R. Trevor-Roper, *Historical Essays* (New York, 1957), pp. 179–188, 195–205; *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change* (London, 1967), pp. 46–89, 237–293, 345–391.

[42] Burroughes, *A Vindication*, p. 30.

ROWLAND HILL AND THE RODBOROUGH CONNEXION, 1771-1833

That the Evangelical Revival should take firm hold in Gloucestershire is not surprising. From the days of William Tyndale (if not before) Gloucestershire has shown itself friendly to radical Christianity: it plays a notable part, in different ways, in the early history of Independents, Baptists, Socinians alike. In the eighteenth century Wales was quickly touched by the Revival, and (till the Severn Bridge was built) the roads of Gloucestershire were in constant use by those travelling from Wales to London and back. It is interesting to follow the routes taken by Howel Harris on his frequent visits to the metropolis, and to note the places where he 'baited' (or spent the night); Frogmill,[1] near Andoversford, for instance, a house which still stands, was a very early meeting-place of a 'society' (or group of converts).[2] Wales also provided at no great distance, in the Independent Academy at Abergavenny from 1755, and from 1768 in Lady Huntingdon's College at Trevecca as well, a source of preachers.[3]

There are also more particular reasons why the county welcomed evangelical preachers. George Whitefield's home was in Gloucester; for two months in 1737, before his first departure for America, he acted as curate at Stonehouse to Sampson Harris,[4] son of his old friend Gabriel Harris, mayor of Gloucester [5]; and whenever he returned to this country it was natural that he should visit his native parts.[6] As early as 1739 his preaching on Minchinhampton Common converted a young last-maker, Thomas Adams,[7] who became an accepted leader in the Revival

[1] Cf. *Howell Harris, Reformer and Soldier (1714–1773)*, ed. T. Beynon, Caernarvon 1958, p. 56; *Howell Harris's Visits to London*, ed. T. Beynon, Aberystwyth 1960, pp. 115, 246. Cf. also R. T. Jenkins, *Yng Nghysgod Trefeca*, Caernarvon 1968, p. 89 and p. 94, n. 17.

[2] John Knight, 'Report' of 1844, printed by C. E. Watson in TRANSACTIONS.
x. 277, as Frigg's Mill. Extracts from this 'Report' were printed earlier in *Memorial of Nonconformity, elicited by the centenary services of the Rodborough Tabernacle, Gloucestershire* [1867].

[3] At Dursley, e.g., James May and David Ralph came from Trevecca (cf. my 'The Students of Trevecca College 1768–1791', in Cymmrodorion Society *Transactions*, 1967, pp. 274–5) and John Lewis came from Abergavenny (cf. *Album Aberhonddu*, ed. T. Stephens, Merthyr Tydvil 1898, p. 38).

[4] Cf. *George Whitefield's Journals*, Banner of Truth Press edn. 1960, pp. 83–4.

[5] Gabriel Harris was also on friendly terms with Howel Harris: cf. *Howell Harris, Reformer and Soldier*, p. 74.

[6] For a description of his last visit to Gloucestershire, in 1769, when he preached at Rodborough with the tears running down his cheeks, see 'Report', p. 279.

[7] For Thomas Adams, see 'Report', p. 278, n. 2.

as a whole. Howel Harris often mentions Adams in his Journals and Letters and records attending Association meetings with him at Morton Hill Farm in 1747, and again in 1748[8]; and in 1767 Whitefield writes in his letters that 'Lady H[untingdo]n and her company . . . lay at Rodborough house . . . they honoured dear Mr A[dam]s's house with their presence'.[9] In 1750 Adams built a Tabernacle at Rodborough, which, though remaining his property during his lifetime, he left 'on trust by Will to the Cause of Christ for ever'.[10] The Rodborough Tabernacle thus preceded the Chapel erected for Whitefield in Tottenham Court Road, for this was not built till 1756. Because of its seniority Rodborough naturally assumed a measure of oversight over the work of the Revival in Gloucestershire (and, indeed, beyond), and in time gave its name to the Gloucestershire Association of churches whose ministers met on the first Wednesday of the month[12] (later the first Thursday)[13] for prayer and consultation and to plan their continuing labours as itinerant preachers.

At one time or another almost all the leading Evangelical ministers visited Rodborough.[14] In particular, Torial Joss, a convert of Whitefield's and one who carried on Whitefield's work in London, 'used to visit Gloucestershire nearly every summer, spending a month or six weeks at Rodboro', preaching at Wotton, Dursley, Frampton, Painswick, Stroud, Stonehouse, Ebley, and many other places, while making Rodboro' his home'.[15] In 1772 Joss wrote to Rowland Hill: 'I have been cruising in the latitude of Gloucestershire for fourteen days, and have met with some pretty smart engagements at Wotton, Dursley, and Rodborough, in particular'.[16] It was, in fact, at Rodborough that Joss was ordained.[17] Several of the places mentioned above were causes raised by preachers sent out from Rodborough. At Painswick an older congregation had as its minister another of Whitefield's converts, Cornelius Winter. Even before his removal to Painswick from Wiltshire,

[8] Cf. *Howell Harris's Visit to London*, pp. 138–9, 181–2. Hill Farm, Painswick, still stands; the earliest reference to it noted in *The Place-Names of Gloucestershire*, i. (English Place-Name Society, vol. xxxviii, Cambridge, 1964), p. 135, is 1830, but it is mentioned in William Jay's *Memoirs of . . . Cornelius Winter*, Bath 1808.

[9] George Whitefield, *Works* (1777), iii. 346–7.

[10] 'Report', p. 278.

[11] The Moorfields Tabernacle was erected in 1741, the original Tabernacle at Dursley in about 1764.

[12] Cf. William Jay, *Memoirs of . . . Cornelius Winter*, p. 165.

[13] Cf. 'Report', p. 281.

[14] Cf. 'Report', p. 284.

[15] 'Report', p. 282.

[16] Edwin Sidney, *Life of . . . Rowland Hill*, 1833, p. 70.

[17] Cf. 'Report', p. 282. For Joss, see further *Evangelical Magazine*, 1797, 397–407.

where he was ordained by Joss and others[18] to the charge of three 'societies' in that county, 'it was designed', Winter writes, 'that I should continue my visits to the congregations in Gloucestershire'. 'At Rodborough, Dursley, Wotton-underedge, and Frampton, in Gloucestershire', he adds, 'my visits were acceptable and useful'.[19]

Another of Whitefield's converts was at Wotton-under-Edge. This was Rowland Hill, whom Stoughton considered 'the most remarkable of Whitefield's disciples'.[20] Because of his ministry in London at the Surrey Chapel, Hill is far better known than Winter; but Winter claimed the honour of introducing Hill to the Bristol Tabernacle in April 1771.[21] In that year Hill records in his diary his first visit to Rodborough, Painswick, Dursley and Wotton.[22] Thomas Adams (as well as Whitefield) had died in 1770—Torial Joss preached his funeral sermon, *The Saint Entered into Peace*—and Rowland Hill stepped into the gap, an answer to prayer, as some believed.[23] From Wotton-under-Edge, where, adjoining the Tabernacle which he erected, he also built a dwelling-house,[24] at which he spent part of every year, he would itinerate among the Gloucestershire churches. This has been known.[25] It has not been realized, however, that he assumed superintendence of the Rodborough Connexion, including the recommendation and approval of its ministers. That this was so now appears from fourteen autograph letters by him in the possession of the late Mr. J. Rider Smith, of Christ Church and Upton Chapel, Kennington Road, S.E.29 (the successor of the Surrey Chapel), to whom they were given by the late Rev. H. Clapham, then vicar of St. Thomas's, Westminster Bridge Road. The letters are addressed to O. P. Wathen, Esq., of Woodchester, near Stroud (one is to Mrs. Wathen). A few of them, with acknowledgements to Wathen, were printed in 1834, in Edwin Sidney's *Life of Rowland Hill*; but the passages relating to Gloucestershire were often omitted and, where they are included, surnames are left blank. What follows is printed by kind permission of the late Mr. Rider Smith.

In a letter not dated but perhaps of 1807, Hill writes that he plans to preach at Painswick; 'my good old friend Mr Winter will be much grievd should I leave the country [county] without giving him a call'. Rodborough was evidently passing through difficulties. At present Hill cannot go there. This is not because he has taken offence that the

[18] For this, and identification of the other ministers ordaining Winter, see my *Significance of Trevecca College 1768–91*. 1969, p. 28, n. 102.
[19] William Jay, *Memoirs of . . . Cornelius Winter*, pp. 163–4.
[20] John Stoughton, *History of Religion in England*, 1881 edn., vi. 245.
[21] William Jay, *Memoirs of . . . Cornelius Winter*, p. 148.
[22] Edwin Sidney, *Life of . . . Rowland Hill*, p. 63.
[23] Cf. 'Report', p. 283.
[24] Both buildings are shown in the frontispiece to Williams Jones, *Memoirs of . . . Rowland Hill*, 1834.
[25] Cf. TRANSACTIONS, viii, 171–80, 237–45.

present minister, Mr Jeary,[26] was invited without consulting him. Both Jeary's predecessor's, Anlezark[27] and Heath,[28] were invited without his knowledge and consent, and with them he had fellowship.[29] The reason why he cannot go to Rodborough is that Jeary's character is not pure; just as he could not go to Ebley when the minister there was carnal and impure, or to Dursley when Lewis[30] was there. On 15 February 1808 Hill writes lamenting Winter's death, and also that of John Newton.[31] In this letter he refers regretfully to 'that low narrow minded set who unhappily have the management of Rodb^ro^ Tab:'. 'As matters are', he writes, 'I feel much more inclined to a union with Ebley and to forget what is past as it respects Mr Hogg'.[32]

By June 1812 bygones were bygones. On Wednesday he was to preach at Rodborough, on Thursday at Ebley, at Painswick on Friday, and on Saturday at Cheltenham.[33] In a letter not dated but probably of 1814, soon after John Rees,[34] later of Crown Street, Soho, had become pastor at Rodborough, Hill writes, 'I am happy Mr Rees and the people of Rodborough are comfortable with each other . . . I shall be happy to make an exchange with him'; and on 15 December 1814 he sends 'Love to Mr Reece. I know his service will be acceptable at Wotton and I hope Mr Potters will prove the same at Rodborough'. Rees left Rodborough in 1823. In an undated letter, written perhaps a little later, Hill expresses his fears that it might be intrusive for him to preach at Rodborough, as Mr Cox is a new broom; but he is willing. He has promised to preach at Mr Higgs's room at Nailsworth on his way to visit Mr Wathen at Woodchester, and might preach at Ebley too. He hopes to be at Gloucester for the Bible Society meeting. On 23 August 1830 he writes mourning the death of his wife[35]; but the

[26] For Orlando Jeary, see *Evangelical Magazine*, 1818, pp. 45, 60.
[27] For Robert Anlezark, who after a period at Stockport conformed, see William Urwick, *Historical Sketches of Nonconformity in the County Palatine of Chester*, 1864, p. 303.
[28] For Robert Heath, see *Evangelical Magazine*, 1801, p. 161. I owe these references to the biographical directory compiled by the Rev. C. E. Surman and deposited at Dr. Williams' Library.
[29] Heath's predecessor, Jehoiada Brewer, Hill *had* recommended, 'if I mistake not': 'Report', p. 284. For Brewer, see *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*.
[30] John Lewis seems to have been only an itinerant and occasional preacher at Dursley: see *Another Milestone: a souvenir of the Dursley Tabernacle Centenary*, 1908, and *Milestones on the Pilgrim Way of Dursley Tabernacle Congregational Church*, 1958. After Whitefield's death Hill had become a trustee.
[31] Winter died on 17 January 1808, Newton on 21 December 1807.
[32] For James Hogg, see Levi Criddle, *Story of Ebley Chapel* [1947?], p.l. He is to be distinguished from the better known William Hogg of Painswick, who on Thomas Adams' death 'became senior preacher in the connexion' (William Jay, *Memoirs of . . . Cornelius Winter*, p. 147).
[33] Cf. Edwin Sidney, *Life of . . . Rowland Hill*, p. 240.
[34] For John Rees, see *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*.
[35] Mrs. Hill died on 17 August 1830.

indefatigable old evangelist—it was his eighty-sixth birthday[36]—says that he is to be at Dursley next sabbath and would be glad to be at Rodborough on another.

There are several references to the new cause at Cheltenham in these letters. In his letter of 15 February 1806 Hill tells of his design 'to build a large chapel at Cheltenham upon the plan of ours at Surry Chapel, the Church service to be adopted and the pulpit open to evangelical ministers of all denominations'.[37] In an undated letter he writes that 'things at Cheltenham do not wear a promising aspect'; and on 15 December 1814, 'I dare say Mr Wells and the rest of the Cheltenham trustees had reason enough for dismissing Mr Church. . . . Mr Wells . . . mentions nothing about my attempts to help in seeking for another tho my best efforts will always be at his service for the good of the cause'. On 6 March he writes of the debt on the Cheltenham Chapel, where 'the people . . . are very willing to be helped by others provided they are saved from the trouble of helping themselves'. Earlier loans by him of £50 and £10 had turned into gifts, and 'I have other causes to help besides Cheltenham'. Another Cheltenham minister, Mr Brown,[38] no more satisfied Rowland Hill than Jeary and others had done. In a letter of 2 March 1826 he writes that Brown 'is now playing off a new game with Lady Huntingdon's connexion'. 'They are well aware what manner of spirit he is of.' Hill hopes 'Mr Capper[39] and two or three more resident in Cheltenham known to Mr Barfield' will agree to fill up the trust. 'O poor Glocestershire and Poor Wotton. The Lloyds[40] ruined. Others are moving from us.'

Other letters tell of Hill's arrangements to leave the Surrey Chapel in the hands of properly appointed trustees after his wife's death and his own; of his wife's last illness and death; and of his own failing health. But in the main they express his unfailing concern for the churches in Gloucestershire. Even though their dating is sometimes uncertain, it is fortunate that these letters have been preserved. Without them we would not know how much, at what for some was a precarious moment in their history, the churches of the Rodborough Connexion, several of which are still in existence as Congregational churches, owe to Hill's oversight and advice.

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL

[36] For a description of Hill in the pulpit as an old man, see Edwin Sidney, *Life of . . . Rowland Hill*, pp. 209–10; and for an impressionable youth's memory of him at about the same time, see John Stoughton, *History of Religion in England*, vii. 295.

[37] Cf. Edwin Sidney, *Life of . . . Rowland Hill*, p. 230; and 'Account of Cheltenham Chapel', in *Home Missionary Magazine* i. (1821), 3–7.

[38] For John Brown, who was of Ebley before he went to Cheltenham, see *C.Y.B.*, 1846, p. 173 (another reference I owe to Mr. Surman).

[39] For Robert Capper, who in 1816 built the Portland Chapel and presented it to the Countess of Huntingdon, see [A. C. H. Seymour], *Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon*, 1840, i. 440, n. *.

[40] Perhaps Samuel and William Lloyd, trustees of Surrey Chapel (cf. Edwin Sidney, *Life of . . . Rowland Hill*, p. 143, n. 1).

THE COUNTESS *VERSUS* METHODISM *VERSUS* INDEPENDENCY

A curious situation arose about 1783 in the Parish of Briston in North Norfolk. In 1777 Elizabeth Franklin, a spinster, built there a chapel with a small Manse, both still in use, and a burial ground adjoining. She settled the property upon rather unusual trusts. She soon afterwards married William Grieves. Under the Trust document the foundress was to receive all rents and payments voluntarily made by people attending divine worship in the chapel on account of their pews and their seats in the gallery, she keeping the property in good repair. After her death, if she left a husband surviving, which she did, he was to have £8 per annum, doing repairs and the overplus was to go to the Minister, preacher or teacher of the said chapel the better to encourage him in the work of the ministry. Following the deaths of the foundress and her husband her heirs were to have the £8, doing repairs and giving 40/- annually to such godly poor persons, as the trustees should nominate.

The Trust document provided that the trustee should permit "Thomas Mendham of Briston, the present minister or teacher of the people called Methodists assembling in the chapel, to exercise the office of minister or teacher in the chapel upon Lord's days or working days for his life without molestation and after his death upon condition that the Trustees and a majority of the Methodist congregation and other pious people constantly attending divine worship in the said chapel do proceed to the election [this was the 'independent' flavour of the Trust] of some other godly minister in the connection of the Right Hon. Selina Countess of Huntingdon." The document declared that 'the said chapel may remain and be a place set apart for the religious worship of Almighty God by the people of the Denomination of Methodists'.

My g.g grandmother, Mary Hardy of Letheringsett, kept a diary from 1773 to 1809. She was an inveterate sermon taster and if any clergyman or minister was a 'gospel preacher' she would be frequently found among the congregation. On 31 July 1791 she wrote:

> All went to our church [at Letheringsett] forenoon. Mr. Hardy & I in large cart Robert and R. Raven in Mr. Raven's chaise and Wm. on his new mare rid to Briston aft. Heard Mr. Mendham preach a Funeral sermon for the Countess of Huntingdon. Drank tea with Mr. Mendham and came home ev. 8.

Everything was apparently in order but something was happening behind the scenes. At Guestwick eight miles distant there was an Independent Chapel with a manse founded in 1652, of which the Rev. John Sykes was minister from 1766 to 1824. He also ran a chapel of

ease at Hunworth (2 miles from Briston) which was in low water and which in a document of 1703 was called the 'Independant Barne.' Of this small cause Sykes wrote 'when I came here [Guestwick] (about the year 1766 or 1767 I think) it was in a ruinous state. I opened it and preached there a few years on Lords Day mornings but it gave me the ague in winter and the people were so poor we could not repair it. So poor Hunworth is no more.

This small cause is mentioned in the next quotation. Apparently there existed a friendship between the foundress and her husband with the Rev. John Sykes. In the Guestwick Church Book there is the following note above the signature of Sykes.

> It may be proper here to take notice of an affair which took place at Briston. Mr. & Mrs. Grieves desired me to preach at their Meeting House instead of at Hunworth, which I refused to do, unless it were agreeable to the conditions upon which Mrs. Grieves (then Miss Franklin) had committed it into the hands of the Trustees. I examined the writings and asked the advice of an Attorney at Law. He told me that agreeable to those writings, the people who then constantly met together in the House might justly invite me into the pulpit. I then told Mr. & Mrs. Grieves that if they would give it up to the Independent Church at Guestwick to be wholly in their power and altogether the same as the Meeting House at Guestwick I would come into it and on no other conditions. They both told me it was their sincere and united desire so to do. Then as in the presence of the all-seeing God Mr. & Mrs. Grieves solemnly and finally gave it unto the Independants to be one with Guestwick. Only Mr. G. reserved the liberty of teaching School in it.
>
> N.B. This was a private transaction in the year of our Lord 1783 in which Transaction there was an Appeal to God of which he is witness.

This note suggests that Sykes was not altogether happy about the propriety of his action. The advent of the formidable Countess had no doubt disturbed denominational peace in her mixture of Methodist and Independent church policies, but Sykes may in the unusual circumstances have been wise. No doubt when the secret arrangement became public, Thomas Mendham, already mentioned, and the local Methodists showed some concern. The difficulty was overcome thus: Mendham owned ¼ acre of land nearby on which was a schoolroom erected about 1782 and this became the Methodist meeting. It was rebuilt in 1814 and has remained the Methodist Chapel ever since, continuing 'Old Wesleyan' during and after the disruption of the Fifties. The existence of two Meetings in Briston is shown by an entry in my forebear's diary for 5 May 1805:

> I and sister Raven went to Briston Meeting, Wm. went to Sykes Meeting.

After all these problems and probably ill feeling, it was discovered that the document of trust of 1778 was void, as the attorney failed to enrol it in Chancery within a year as provided by the Charitable Uses Act 1735. After the death of the foundress the property was vested in her heirs, who settled it upon Congregational trusts.

It is noteworthy that Browne in his 'History of Congregationalism in Norfolk and Suffolk' published about 1877 omits any reference to Briston. This was probably because some memories of the problems of the past still lingered on.

It may be mentioned that the home missionary efforts of the foundress, Miss Franklin, were not confined to Briston. At Wells-next-the-Sea 13 miles distant I find it recorded that on 30 October 1781 John Wesley preached 'in a small, neat preaching house, where a Miss Franklin had established Methodism by preaching abroad, though at the peril of her life'. The site of this building was probably in Chapel Yard in Wells.

BASIL COZENS-HARDY

A NOTE ON THE CONDER FAMILY

Richard Conder, junior, of Croydon-cum-Clopton in Cambridgeshire, who in about 1690 wrote the only detailed contemporary account of the life of Francis Holcroft which we have, has become a familiar figure to readers of this journal through the work of Gordon Tibbutt.[1] Richard Conder was pastor of the Independent church of Croydon-cum-Clopton after the death of Holcroft, and his second son, Jabez, continued his ministry in due season. After the end of Jabez Conder's pastorate, the church removed to Great Gransden in Huntingdonshire, and became strict Baptist. Therefore the first Church Book of Great Gransden Baptist Church begins with the life of Holcroft by Richard Conder, contains the minutes of the Croydon church and is inscribed 'Richard Conder, his book.' The Conder family tradition was not broken with the death of Jabez. His only son, John, born in 1714 and baptized 'with tears' by his grandfather Richard, became in his turn, a most notable pastor in Cambridge.[2]

Not only did the Conder tradition continue onwards through the eighteenth century. It seems to have begun with the conversion of Richard Conder, senior, the father of the author of Francis Holcroft's Life, who suffered such qualms of conscience over football-playing that the reading of the Book of Sports, which actively encouraged such pastimes, repelled him and finally caused him to give it up. He himself dated his conversion from that time, and is reported to have said that he 'adore[d] the grace of God, in making that to be an ordinance for my salvation, which the devil and wicked governors laid as a trap for my destruction.'[3] When his son wrote the account of Francis Holcroft's ministry at the beginning of the Gransden Church Book, he described his father as an 'anchent professor.'

A nineteenth century memoir of another member of the family adds a few facts and some mythology on the origins of the family.[4] According to it, two brothers came to Cambridgeshire from near Leeds at the end of James I's reign. This suggestion, does not entirely fit with the account of old Richard Conder's conversion through the reading of the Book of Sports, which was first issued in 1618, and re-issued in 1633. However, it is quite true that no Conders were living in Croydon-cum-Clopton in the first part of the seventeenth

[1] 'Francis Holcroft,' *Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc.* XX (1969), pp. 295-301. Mr. Tibbutt printed Conder's life of Holcroft here; some additional information is included in the notes to his transcript of *The First Church Book of Great Gransden*, deposited in the County Record Office, Bedford, and Dr. William's Library.

[2] 'Memoir of the late Rev. John Conder, D.D.,' *The Evangelical Magazine* 1795), pp. 393-405.

[3] *Art. cit.*, p. 394.

[4] E. R. Conder, *Josiah Conder: A Memoir* (1850).

century, for no members of the family were married, had children baptised there, or died in the parish before 1630.[5] The origins of the family are therefore something of a mystery.

By pure chance, I came across a clue when I was looking at a visitation of the diocese. A Richard Conder acted as inquisitor, to aid the churchwardens in their presentation of moral and other offences to the bishop and his officials, at Kingston in Cambridgeshire in 1637.[6]. Moreover, in 1640, a certain Richard Conder painfully signed the puritanical petition against the 'Tyranicall courses and Administrations of Dr. Wrenn, Bishop of Ely' which demanded 'that a government according to the Holie Scripture maie be established in this Kingdome.'[7] The signature came in a group which were probably made in Kingston. The surname was not a common one, and it seems almost certain that this man, of puritanical views, was the Richard Conder who was described by his son as an 'ancient professer' later in the century. Young Richard Conder also hints at a recent removal to the Croydon area, for he says that after Holcroft began his work in Bassinbroum, near Croydon in 1655, 'my father . . . *being feri son in this contri,* heard of his meting.[8]

A search of the transcripts of the parish registers of Kingston reveals that Edward and Marjorie Conder had a son, Edward in 1605 (d. 1615), and it is likely that the baby baptized as Richard Conder on 13 September 1607, was their son also, although the relationship is not explicitly stated.[9] Richard Conder married Mary Bywaters in 1632. He acted as sidesman in the same year. His conversion the next year must have been brought about by the re-issue of the Book of Sports. That year he started a family, and four children, including a son, John, were born to him and his wife between 1633 and 1638. There is, however, no record of the birth of Richard, the biographer of Holcroft. This is not surprising. He was born in 1648 or 1649, and the Kingston register transcripts are, naturally, very defective from 1642 to 1660.[10] It sounds as if the Conder family removal from Kingston followed soon after the beginning of Holcroft's ministry in the 1650's, so Richard was probably born at Kingston, but no record of his birth survives.

We know therefore that old Richard Conder, who was a dominating influence on his son, was born at Kingston in Cambridgeshire in 1607, and that he signed the Cambridgeshire petition against

[5]According to the bishop's parish register transcripts, Cambridge University Library, Ely Diocesan Records (E.D.R.). H.3.
[6]E.D.R. B/2/50 f. 6v.
[7]B. M. Egerton Ms. 1048.
[8]H. G. Tibbutt, *art. cit.*, p. 297. My italics.
[9]E.D.R. H.3.
[10]In the 'Memoir of the late Rev John Conder, D.D.' *The Evangelical Magazine* (1795), p. 395, it is stated that he was 69 years old when he died in 1918.

episcopal government. Although he was not as easily persuaded into separatism and Independency as his wife[11] Mary, he already, in 1640, desired the abolition of episcopal government, and the establishment of government 'according to the Holie Scripture.' We still do not know whether his father, Edward, really came from Yorkshire, as later family tradition had it.[12] But the family pedigree both literally, and of dissent, has been pushed back another generation. Dissent as a family phenomenon, transmitted through the family, deserves more attention. The history of the Conder family, who produced four successive generations first of puritans, and then of Independent pastors between 1607 and 1781, illustrates the way this phenomenon could work.

MARGARET SPUFFORD

[11]H. G. Tibbutt, *art. cit.*, p. 298.
[12]It may well have been there. The will of a John Conder, clothworker, of Leeds, was proved in the prerogative court of Canterbury in 1658.

REVIEWS

The Lord's Supper in Early English Dissent, by Stephen Mayor (Epworth Press, £3.00).

'. . . the early Dissenters gave a smaller place to the Eucharist than many Christians have done. . . . Many of the Dissenters' descendants today would probably give it more emphasis. But many will still incline to agree with them in regarding it as important but not central,' (pp. 158-9).

Dr. Mayor's comment illustrates the somewhat uncertain place of the sacrament in Free Church thought and practice. We are grateful to him for his careful analysis and appraisal of the situation among our forefathers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for this is a field that has not been explored very fully by other writers.

He begins with an examination of 'Elizabethan Puritanism,' clearly bringing out the debt owed to Calvin and the European Reformation. Then follows an account of the place of the sacrament in the life and thought of 'The Separatists.' The two succeeding chapters deal respectively with 'The Early Seventeenth Century' and 'The Westminster Assembly.' Here Dr. Mayor analyses and describes the disputes that arose in connection with the actual placing of the table in the church, the mode of reception of the elements (kneeling, standing or sitting) and the worthiness of would-be recipients. Whole chapters are devoted to the sacramental thought of 'John Owen' and Richard Baxter' (a somewhat disproportionate amount of space?).

In his 'Summary and Conclusion' Dr. Mayor recognises that to the question 'whether there was a "Nonconformist" doctrine of the Lord's Supper embracing all types of early Dissenters, from conformist Puritans to Separatists, there is a sense in which the answer is no.' (p. 151). He further concludes that 'Ultimately the early Dissenters gave up their attempt to create a liturgy, and the service was handed on to historic Nonconformity extemporary in form except for the words and actions of Christ himself.' (p. 157).

This is a useful book, setting out the facts clearly and providing a careful assessment of them.

W.W.B.

Worship and Theology in England: From Cranmer to Hooker, 1534–1603, by Horton Davies (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, and Oxford University Press, London, 1971, pp. 496, £5.00).

This is the fourth volume in a series which Professor Davies is engaged upon, only it happens to be volume I in fact for the previous three covered 1690 to 1965. Doubtless the remaining arch in this

ecclesiastical history bridge will soon be completed; it will deal with the troubled years of the Stuarts and the Civil Wars and Restoration.

The pattern of the volumes varies and this one is divided into three parts. The first, pp. 120, is an historical introduction, paying particular attention to theology; the second and largest part covers worship and preaching among Catholics, Anglicans, Puritans and Separatists; and the third has three chapters, one on architecture and art, one on church music and one on spirituality. This last chapter proved one of the most interesting in the book.

Inevitably Anglican worship and preaching in the period must take up the major space whilst Catholic worship has much less, and the Separatists less still—they were few and extreme—in fact, they get twenty pages. However, the reader is given a fair account of the Separatists' beliefs and practices, though Robert Brown, whom the founders of our Society tended to idolize and whom people today tend to brush off, gets less than two pages against Henry Barrow's close on nine. Nor did Brown neglect the Lord's Supper, which the author seems to imply. He was explicit on the subject: nos: 59–61 in *A Booke which sheweth the life and manners of all true Christians.* Brown emphasizes the necessity of preaching in the context of the sacrament. 'How is the supper rightlie ministered?' he asks, and replies, 'The worde must be duelie preached. And the signe or sacrament must be rightlie applied thereto.' Such a quotation is worth mentioning because it draws attention to the integration of Word and Sacraments characteristic of the Reformed churches. It is something the author does not seem to bring out very plainly in his book.

A good deal of the fascination of the book comes from the variety within its pages. We find how people dealt with the problem of adapting churches for Anglican worship and Roman Catholic chalices into communion cups for parishioners to use; there is even room for a squib by a wit which begins,

> Sterndale and Hopkins had great Qualms,
> When they translated David's Psalms.

The illustrations, eleven in number, are good reproductions of portraits or pictures in Foxe and two in Daye's *Booke of Christian Prayers.* There is a large bibliography and two indices.

Professor Davies has, it seems to me, the sort of mind that would prepare an encyclopædia with relish. His gift seems to be to collect and display information attractively.

John a Lasco, 1499–1560: A Pole in Reformation England, by Basil Hall (Dr. Williams's Trust, London, 1971, pp. 36, 30 pence).

This paper read at Dr. Williams's Library last autumn, the twenty-fifth lecture of the Friends of the Library, fills in the background one needs to understand Jan Laski's influential, privileged position in England from 1550–1553, when as Superintendent of the Churches of the Strangers, he had a free hand in preaching, teaching, worship and discipline. The lecturer traces Laski's career from its modest beginnings under the powerful influence of his uncle who was Primate of Poland, through his 'conversion' period at Basel, where he seems to have relieved somewhat Erasmus's financial straits in return for the humanist's tutorial care and inspiration—hardly surprising that Erasmus eulogized him as 'a true pearl'—to his arrival at Lambeth. It is in his Emden superintendency that we see his ideas of the reformation of the Church developing: images go from the churches, laymen are appointed to assist with discipline, and he sets up the Coetus of clergy; but his quasi episcopal status is never in question.

J.H.T.

ALSO RECEIVED:

The Pilgrim Way by Robert M. Bartlett (Pilgrim Press, Philadelphia, 1971, $12); *Association Records of the Particular Baptists of England, Wales and Ireland to 1660* by B. R. White (Ed.) (B.H.S., 75p).