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EDITORIAL

Four of our six contributors are new to the *Journal*. Niels Eriksen is a postgraduate at the University of Copenhagen; Alison Hoppen teaches History at the University of Hull; Alberta Doodson is secretary of Rankin United Reformed Church, Liverpool; Barry Doyle is currently a research and teaching fellow in Modern History at the University of St. Andrews.

John Taylor's "Tale of Taylors" was the society's annual lecture, delivered during the 1994 Autumn Weekend School held at Holland House, Crophorne. He began by deprecating genealogical history but he ended by hoping that his family tale might encourage others to explore their family history as a vital part

of church history. Those who listened in the characterful surroundings of a rambling family house designed by an architect called Drinkwater Butt needed little encouragement. John Taylor is perhaps more plausibly related to the older Taylors of Above Bar than Stephen Orchard is to W.E. Orchard, but W.E. Orchard's career (whose origins are for the first time clarified here) related Presbyterianism and Congregationalism, and these are explored in Norwich, Hull and Liverpool as well as in Southampton. In this issue an urban culture is suggested, analysed, described, perhaps explained.

A TALE OF TAYLORS A FAMILY AND THEIR CHURCH: ABOVE BAR, SOUTHAMPTON

I am not going to be genealogical. Genealogy is like Bridge, an activity which either attracts or repels and my experience of it does the latter. I am too much of a feminist – or should I say biologist? – to believe in it. Happily I have two family trees to help me, not that I rely on them too much. Never take those beautifully neat and tidy family trees at their face value. One of mine has a boy born on the very day of his parents' wedding. An excusable slip perhaps, but both my trees have a whole generation missing, which is a larger mistake. You will perceive that I have had a few head-aches in preparing this study. Both family and church records are woefully inadequate. What I have produced is patchy in the extreme. It is like a flight in an aircraft which for much of the way is over thick cloud but here and there gives glimpses of the ground and now and then a splendid vista.

Our first clear sighting is one of the church constituting and organising itself as the Above Bar Congregational Church of Christ and the date is 24 August 1688, four months after the Declaration of Indulgence. Yet the fact is that this church was already well-established. It already had its meeting house on the site where it was always to stand, just above the Bar Gate. On that important day the thirty-five men and thirty-five women members chose two elders and four deacons, two of these for each of the meeting places, the one in Southampton and the other in Romsey (pronounced Rumsey in those days).¹ This was the fruit of the long labours of a minister, ejected from All Saints parish only a little way down the main road into the town. Nathaniel Robinson had been over forty years ministering in Southampton and had been a popular town lecturer during the Commonwealth. He was a man of learning and influence, a family friend of the Cromwells and a sturdy Independent though a man of toleration, for it was to him that a group of Dissenters with Presbyterian leanings turned when their leader, Giles Say, left the town. He had suffered ejection from St. Michael's at the bottom of the town.² Perhaps we should pronounce his name *Gilles*, for his parents were Huguenot refugees and hence his Presbyterianism. This little

1. Church Books, Archives Office, Civic Centre, Southampton.
2. Lyon Turner, *Original Records*.

group of his parishioners is important to our story because of two families of friends which were to play leading roles at Above Bar in days to come, the Taylors and, more important, the Wattses. Isaac Watts, the father of the hymn-writer, was to be the senior deacon for nearly fifty years. He suffered in the town gaol and was banished from the town like Robinson himself.³ But his greatest contribution was to provide a meeting place for the congregation when Robinson's house became too small. Moreover he had the foresight and the means to procure a prime site for the congregation just outside the old walls in the fashionable development, the Above Bar.⁴

Tradition has it that Watts was a school-master with a few boarders in his house. What the evidence for this is I do not know but when the time came that the church could afford to purchase the property from Watts the deed describes him as a clothier, which may explain his substance. John Taylor on the other hand, was in the carpentry trade with his son Walter who did repairs and renovations for the church. His is the first name on the 1688 list of members and Walter is ninth, while his wife and daughter, Martha, appear on the women's list.⁵ His fortunes were probably improving for John was asked to look after and invest a gift of £20 from a widow to the church.

The activity of the church before 1688 had to be obscure yet active it was. Watts, as church secretary, wrote in the Church Book, as an appendix, a list of infants baptised in the 1670s.⁶ It embraces his own eight, with Isaac first, but there are no dates given. "Those were troubled times", he remarks, and no one could recall the dates.

When John died is not known but Walter died in unusual circumstances. He was engaged to demolish Netley Abbey when he had a fearful dream in which a monk warned him not to proceed or something evil would befall him. He tried to forget it but dreamed again and this time a large stone fell from the arch of the east window and killed him. So perturbed was he that he consulted the old, trusted friend of the family, the deacon Isaac Watts. Watts counselled him not to go on with the work: the dreams were a warning from heaven. But Walter did not want to break a contract, let alone look superstitious, and he did not take Watts's advice. The work continued without further trouble until they tackled the east wall when the keystone of the arch fell and killed him. Rumour had it that it was not the stone that killed him but the surgeon who treated him.⁷

The last reference to the Watts family and the Taylors occurs just after Isaac Watts's (senior) death in 1737 when Joseph Taylor, a son of Walter, now calling himself a builder, bought old Isaac's pew from the Revd. Isaac Watts. It is strange to come across this quasi-legal document because the church meeting a

3. S. Stainer, *History of the Above Bar Congregational Church, 1662-1908*, pp. 10 ff.

4. Church Books.

5. Church Books.

6. Church Books.

7. *Visitant's Guide to Southampton* (1839); Stainer pp. 30ff.

few years before had ruled that such transactions were contrary to Congregational practice. Apparently they could not stop it.⁸

The next Taylor we are interested in is the most interesting of us all, the only one to be a sailor, the most eccentric and exciting. Family historians have supposed that he was the son of the first Walter but they had not seen an odd entry in the church book which states that Walter (the sailor) was received into membership on 5 May 1728 and that Walter Taylor senior was admitted on 9 January the next year. So father was not dead: the sailor Taylor must have been grandson of the first Walter. Carpentry and joinery were too tame for him but he had done his apprenticeship and took to the sea and sailed, we gather, chiefly in the Mediterranean. In 1746 he had the misfortune to be taken prisoner by a French man o' war and taken to Rouen. Here a convent adjoining his prison caught fire and Walter led a group of English prisoners up a ladder into the building and brought down the nuns to safety. The abbess proved difficult, being heavily built, but they got her out just before the building collapsed. They were treated as heroes by the city and given parole and Walter found himself in demand demonstrating how electricity can be made by rotating an ostrich egg in silk. Upon returning to Southampton he made one or two such machines using glass bowls and demonstrated them in Bristol and other places, selling one to a fairman for £100. The building industry still held no interest for him; invention was his calling. With his son Walter, an apprenticed shipwright, he carried out experiments at premises by the West Gate where the Institution of Mechanical Engineers put up a plaque to the two Taylors in 1955. It begins:- "In a cellar near this place Walter Taylor (died 1759) and his son Walter (1734-1803) developed inventions of great importance to the Royal Navy..."

It was in 1955 that first H.W. Dickinson, a past President of the Newcomen Society, read a paper about the Taylors' inventions and then J.P.M. Pannell, a friend of my father, gave an address on the Taylors of Southampton to the Institution of Mechanical Engineers when they met at Southampton. Naturally these papers go into technical details which are not appropriate here. Nevertheless, what lay people do in daily life is not unimportant. Walter Taylor the sailor had observed with some alarm how dangerous it was when ropes for lowering sails jammed in their pulley-blocks, for no two hand-made blocks were alike. Moreover, another serious trouble was emptying the bilges; the pumps in use were inefficient and required many hands to work them. With a view to saving lives he set about designing and producing precision, easy-running blocks and efficient pumps. But the Taylors did not get far with production until young Walter invented a circular saw. The Taylors also invented a boring machine, milling machines, precision carriage wheels; blocks, however, proved the most profitable. As the frightening screams of saws rent the air, neighbours became bothered as to what was going on and questioned all the secrecy. Their fears were overcome, however, when the Duke of York came to visit the workshops.

8. This document I saw in the 1950s in a box at Mr. Harwood's house in Southampton but what became of it I do not know.

Walter the sailor never could stay at home for long. Now he travelled the length and breadth of Britain looking at water-mills and machinery and then he stayed some time persuading Thames ships' captains and owners to invest in his new blocks and pumps. Legend has it that one night his son Walter had a dream and this concerned his father whom he found dead in a building strange to him. He rode to Deptford where he recognised an inn as the building in the dream, went in and there lay his father, dead. At twenty-five, then, he was on the threshold of a great career in engineering and the founding of a considerable fortune.⁹

Elizabeth, his mother, patented in 1762 a sophisticated sawing machine which would cut wood with precision. For some years the machinery was powered by horses in a treadmill but when this became inadequate the solution was found in water power using a very large pond, Miller's Pond at Weston to the east of Southampton, and when the stream there proved inadequate, Walter built Woodmill at the point where the canalised Itchen spills out into the head of the tidal river. Here was a force of water sufficient to keep over a hundred men at work. This was 1781. Soon afterwards he built himself a fine house "Portswood Lodge", between Woodmill and the town. The scale of the block-making operation can be judged by the fact that 100,000 a year were being produced by 1800.¹⁰

The scale of the Taylors' commitment to Above Bar in the first half of the eighteenth century is something that we cannot tell. Walter the sailor paid a pew rent of 6s a quarter and Joseph, his uncle, the builder, 5s. Joseph became a deacon but against his name is the unhappy comment "suspended" - what for we shall never know. Eighteen Taylors became church members during the century and fifty-seven baby Taylors were christened, according to the records, between 1732 and 1810 - the majority of them from our family. And there were many funerals but by no means are all the decades recorded.¹¹

But now comes the most fascinating phase and the best view from our aircraft. It really begins with the arrival of a twenty-year-old minister of evangelical persuasion, William Kingsbury, in 1764. He stayed for forty-five years. Walter and he became brothers-in-law, marrying daughters of a distinguished Dissenting minister, Mordecai Andrews. Walter became an enthusiastic evangelical, promoting village itinerancy, building a chapel at Redbridge (Rumbridge, in those days), a village at the Southampton Water end of the proposed Reading canal, a founding member of the Hampshire Association (later Union) and one of the first Directors of the London Missionary Society, as well as a deacon of Above Bar. His hospitality was renowned and among those we know who stayed at Portswood Lodge were John Newton, William Cowper,

9. *Hampshire Repository*, Vol. 2., pp. 73f.

10. J.P.M. Pannell, *The Taylors of Southampton: Pioneers in Mechanical Engineering* (IME 1955) and *Old Southampton Shores*, chap. 4; H.W. Dickinson, *The Taylors of Southampton; Their Ship's Blocks, Circular Saw and Ship's Pumps* (Newcomen Soc. 1955); John Bullar, *A Companion in a Tour Round Southampton* (1809).

11. Church Books.

William Jay, William Romaine, Thomas Haweis and John Howard.¹² Not that evangelicals were the only visitors for we know that Mungo Park, the explorer, stayed there. Nor were men the only recipients: Newton's wife and he "loved to wander in the woods" and explore the riverside. His niece, Eliza Cunningham, went to Portswood when the doctor had ordered her sea bathing.

As a widower Newton frequently went to Portswood. He preached at Above Bar – remember he was Anglican – and says he was "much wanted at his Portswood living". Here he is referring to the dual purpose building Taylor had built at Portswood which served both as a school and a chapel, complete with organ.¹³

The building is depicted in a painting by Maria Spilsbury now in the possession of the Heritage Department of the City of Southampton. It shows a tea-party being held for the workers' children. Central is Walter Taylor in conversation with John Newton. Who the other adults are we do not know – probably members of the family – save for one, a negro servant. He is Anthony Desource who appears in the Above Bar records. In the days of agitation against the slave trade it was fashionable to employ freed slaves. There must have been a great deal of discussion about the slave trade at Portswood when Newton, the converted slave ship captain, was present.

Newton also relates that one day he and Thomas Haweis were smoking in the hall at Portswood Lodge and the younger children were romping on the landing when Rebecca fell from the balcony into the hall. She was taken up concussed and Newton goes on to say, "Poor dear, the Lord saw her fall, and therefore she was not killed, nor a bone broken." She was not to live beyond her sixteenth year, however.

Dr. Haweis's *Journal* also throws interesting light on events at the time of the LMS pioneering ship, *The Duff*, sailing for the South Seas.¹⁴ Walter Taylor had promised to fit the ship with his blocks when she reached Portsmouth. Haweis sailed round from London in her but when she reached Portsmouth no blocks were to be found. So he and John Eyre took the ferry up Southampton Water only to find out in conversation with the skipper that the blocks were in the hold but no one had appeared to collect them. News of Haweis's arrival at Southampton somehow got to the ears of William Kingsbury who organised a meeting for that evening where Haweis could speak. The next morning they returned to Portsmouth and fitted up *The Duff*.

In the 1790s the Sunday School and charity school were to the fore. Taylor and Kingsbury were on the town committee promoting these causes. No details are available but of the school Walter's wife Sarah helped to found and manage we have abundant information. Her influence may be judged from the fact that the charity school, launched in 1792, folded up soon after Sarah's death in 1819. The

12. Stainer pp. 87f; Kingsbury, Funeral Sermon for Walter Taylor (8 May 1803); London Missionary Soc. archives.
13. B. Martin, *John Newton* (1950), pp. 335f.
14. LMS archives (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London).

school belonged to Above Bar and the managing ladies went around the congregation for subscriptions. Mrs. Taylor used to get between £15-£16 each year. Managers nominated girls and fitted them out with their uniforms plus a Bible. The clothes comprised bonnets, cloaks, shawls, gowns and pinafores. In those days a shawl cost 3s-3d and a gown 1s-6d. There were normally between twelve and fifteen children between nine and fourteen years and they had one teacher who earned 4s. a week. The school met daily from nine to twelve in the morning and from two to five (four in winter) in the afternoon and marched to service morning and afternoon on Sundays.

The girls did reading and spelling, knitting and plain sewing; arithmetic is not mentioned. The minister catechised them and they learnt to sing hymns and psalms. I note that they knelt for prayer. Once every six weeks they had their hair cut at school. The managers took turns to visit the school and at least two visits were made each week, which were reported to the committee. Fifty-seven girls went to the school during its existence and only four or five, we hear, were expelled; one for being "a notorious liar."¹⁵

By now you will surely appreciate that Walter and his family were operating on a big scale. This was also true of his domestic life. Three times married, he had fourteen children, though a few died young. The eldest, called, of course, Walter, was thirty-three when George, the youngest, was born. Walter had consumption, as tuberculosis used to be called, and died in 1791 at Montpellier, where he had been sent for a cure, accompanied by Joseph Mounsher; Walter senior and he were the two deacons of Above Bar. He had married Martha Taylor, one of Walter's daughters, in 1788, but the following year at the time the French Revolution broke out, she died.¹⁶ Mounsher seems to have lived at Portswood thereafter and acted as a lay-pastor at the church. At the turn of the century Walter felt it was time he retired so he passed the firm over to the oldest of his sons, Samuel Silver Taylor (his mother was Elizabeth Silver), and to Thomas Fox who had married the oldest daughter, Elizabeth, though he was now a widower. As time went on, the rest of the older boys became partners.¹⁷

Walter died on 23 April 1803. Many tributes were paid him and two Funeral Sermons were printed. One was by the Above Bar minister, Kingsbury, his brother-in-law, but the incumbent of the local parish church at South Stoneham, near Woodmill, was the preacher of the other. The tributes dwelt on two aspects of Walter's life: his contribution to the Royal Navy, making its ships more manoeuvrable and seaworthy, and his munificence.¹⁸ The City of Southampton has in its possession a portrait of Walter Taylor, circular saw in hand, attributed to Gainsborough Dupont.

15. Church Books.

16. Kingsbury, Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Martha Mounsher (25 Oct. 1789).

17. J.W.A. Taylor's notes provided by Ruth Young (Archives, Southampton).

18. Kingsbury, Funeral Sermon; Bullar *op.cit.* The portrait of Walter Taylor with a circular saw in his hand is by Gainsborough Dupont and is in possession of the City of Southampton (Heritage Dept.).

I wonder how Walter viewed the future as he handed the firm on to the younger generation? Was he hopeful or had he misgivings? Did he discuss his affairs with John Newton? What future was there for the firm with its mill near Portswood and its two outposts at Deptford and Walton-on-Thames? Doubtless, Walter was proud of Samuel Silver, Captain of the Portswood Volunteers, who drilled in the grounds of Portswood Lodge,¹⁹ and was raising a fine family, but he was no inventor and it was questionable whether his heart lay in manufacturing. The other boys had rebelled against evangelical Dissent and were more interested in cricket and cards, dancing and drinking. Perhaps they would settle down.

The long and short of it was that Fox and Taylor went bankrupt in 1810. For a time Thomas Ebenezer and John tried to keep things going at Deptford but failed. John was the only one still at Above Bar, save for his mother. He had married a local girl, Maria Spilsbury, the artist of the tea party, who was to gain a considerable reputation and clientèle in court circles. John and Maria eventually settled in Dublin. To their son Augustus we owe a brief history of the family written mid-century; his son, Theodore, an architect, adopted the name Chapman-Taylor, and in 1886 emigrated to New Zealand; there are now over a hundred Chapman-Taylors out there. Walter's youngest child, George, went into the Indian Army and got himself seriously in debt in Persia. Theophilus died young and dissolute. The older brothers, William and Ebenezer (or Thomas), lived beyond their means and died leaving their families in poverty. Drink and gambling were the chief ills. While Samuel Silver was upright and sober, indeed he was a magistrate, his life-style was extravagant. He bought a handsome manor house, Hockley, on the road between Winchester and Petersfield (it is still there) where he set himself up as Lord of the Manor. His family's gravestones lean against the walls of Cheriton churchyard and local people will show visitors the family pew in a commanding position.²⁰

The fact is that Walter's family was brought up in a very different Southampton from that of his youth. The town was aspiring to become a spa like Brighton. Not many yards from the Taylors' old workshop at the West Gate there now stood a pier for bathing together with a long room for music and dancing. Moreover at the Dolphin Hotel balls were held on Tuesdays and Saturdays (the hotel is still there) and in French Street, where the Wattses had lived, there was a theatre. Indeed, up the High Street for a time lived the great actress Sarah Siddons, until she had a fine house overlooking the Water built at Freemantle, a couple of miles out of the town. London was not far away now. Between five and six o'clock in the morning four coaches left for the capital each week-day, arriving in the early afternoon. The Taylor youths, with money in their pockets, could hardly resist being swept into the Regency's glamorous fashions.²¹

19. *Hampshire Repository*, Vol. 2, p. 22, 4 June 1799. Miss Taylor presented a pair of colours to the Portswood volunteers, commanded by Captain Taylor. P. 82 includes Walter Taylor on the list of Magistrates.

20. J.W.A. Taylor.

21. Pannell, *Old Southampton Shores*, pp. 37ff.

The firm did not go bankrupt because the four partners, Samuel, William, Thomas and John, took out of it more than they put in. It failed for want of wisdom and foresight. Brunel's name is well-known. However, it is the railway engineer's father, Marc Isambard, to whom we refer. He had been commissioned to install new machinery for block-making in Portsmouth Dockyard. He planned to use metal sheaves instead of wood and he sent to Taylors his plans inviting them to experiment with them. But on 5 March 1801 Samuel replied to Brunel turning down the proposals on the ground that their material was wood and their father had designed excellent machinery that could not be bettered. In the next few years the firm lost its naval contract and the end came in sight. Taylors had no hope of continuing successfully at either Southampton or Deptford for these places were too far from iron foundries and from coal as power.²²

While this decline was going on, so was another at Above Bar. William Kingsbury, without his brother-in-law, having lost his own wife, physically deteriorating, looked about for an assistant. Thomas Raffles would not touch it but a young man, George Clayton, who was to have a fine ministry at Walworth, in South London, came to be Kingsbury's assistant; but he only stayed about two years, wisely, I think, for when he preached the chapel was full to overflowing, whilst the senior minister's congregation was falling away. Rifts and squabbles set in and, as is often the case, financial troubles fired the unrest. Kingsbury became more indisposed and was frequently away and people were relieved when at last in 1809 he sent in his resignation. Walter's widow was still in membership and children were still being baptised there but after their uncle left, the younger generation deserted Above Bar.²³

The Tale of Taylors does not come to an end at this point, however, because the building branch of the family founded by Joseph (the deacon who got suspended) was represented by two brothers and they were members of the band that pulled Above Bar round a difficult corner and into the nineteenth century. The first task was to put the church on a sound financial basis in order to support the new minister, Thomas Adkins. There was a debt of £183-9s-2d to be cleared. The wretched church treasurer had been for years advancing funds and was owed £69-9s-0d, a situation which the special committee of investigation said was "a pecuniary sacrifice on his part...that the congregation ought neither to expect nor to permit." Pew rents were raised and the problem resolved by more generous giving. Then part of the chapel ceiling fell down and a lot of repairs became urgent but at the church meeting the members rejected the

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22. Pannell; Wilkinson; also notes Paul Clements, *Marc Isambard Brunel* (1970):- "While Samuel Taylor reflected complacently on the perfection of his methods, the Inspector General of Navy Works sought more productive and economical machinery." (p. 28) "Ten unskilled hands at Portsmouth became as productive as 110 craftsmen at Southampton... In 1803 Samuel Taylor's contract was renewed on a specifically short-term basis, and on the 24th March 1805, six months before Trafalgar, he paid a heavy price for doubting 'anything ever better being discovered' for on that day blockmaking by contractors was discontinued." (p. 34).
23. Church Books.

resolution to repair the building and instead resolved to enlarge and refurbish it, fitting it with 300 new free sittings. It was at this point that Richard Taylor came to the fore. He was what we would now call a building surveyor and he set about the work with enthusiasm and vigour; his committee met on site every Friday afternoon at four o'clock. He designed vaults for burials at the rear of the chapel and the manse was improved and modernised. Heating was installed in the chapel in the shape of a large stove. A stained glass window was put in costing £25. The pulpit was lowered a few inches and decorated with Satin and Tulip. The Taylors laid the drive for £50. To raise money and celebrate the opening, dinners and suppers (3s-6d and 1s-9d) were held at The Blue Pig in East Street (later called The Blue Boar). Those were the last days before the advent of the temperance movement. (How did the Above Bar members, approximately fifty in number in the eighteenth century, regularly consume four quarts of wine at every Communion Service?) The building finished, Richard Taylor took up the wearisome task of clearing the debt; he became secretary/treasurer of the Building Debt Committee. It proved too much for him; he died within two years and then his brother John took it over but he did not last long either.²⁴

Now we fly over thick cloud and we sight nothing until 1870 when my great grand-father's reception into the church is recorded, his wife Elizabeth following soon afterwards. Of course, they must have been attending Above Bar before that and John used to say that he played the violin in the church orchestra before they had an organ. Unhappily, we do not know when they had an organ. John's great passion was temperance and he was a well-known figure standing on a soap-box in the market-place condemning drink and gambling. Was not his father a tailor and he himself a tailor turned greengrocer, all because his grandfather had pauperised his family, drinking and gambling? His remembrance ties up with Augustus Taylor's remarks about Walter Taylor's sons frittering away their inheritance. What annoyed my father when he was researching the family history was that he did not ask John what his grandfather's Christian name was. But Father was nine when John died and one would hardly expect a child of nine to take that interest. Although my father hunted high and low, searching every place with records, he never found out who the grandfather was. The family tree is once again faulty. Yet it would be most strange for a family to relate such tales and generation after generation to keep calling their offspring Walters, Williams and Johns if it were not true.

The Above Bar which John and Elizabeth, their son William, his wife Emma, and family, all attended, was incredibly different from that of 1827 when John was born. He died in a road accident in 1904 and the changes in church life which occurred in that man's lifetime are astonishing. The town, of course, was growing fast; bigger and bigger steam-ships came up Southampton Water; great docks were built; and the church grew too.²⁵ In the 1840s the old, confined idea

24. Church Books.

25. The population of Southampton grew from 13,353 in 1821 to 104,911 in 1901 (Stainer, p. 113).

of church membership was abandoned and by 1860 nearly 500 people were in membership. Mann's Census of 1851 recorded 1,264 at worship on that Sunday morning and 960 in the evening. Later in the century pew rents were replaced by collections and the two life-deacons by seven elected annually. There were a Sisterhood and a Brotherhood; innumerable societies and clubs; a Choir singing oratorios; there were outings (one up to London); and Bazaars with exotic decor. Over the 1819 vaults was built The Watts Memorial Hall in 1875 to house the activities, and in 1889 the church was enlarged and modernised.

My father, Leonard (alas - no more Walters or Williams), was one of four children and all, save the eldest, found their partners through Above Bar. Mabel was the odd one: she married a Baptist minister. Herbert became a pillar of Wembley Park Congregational Church. Elsie and her husband ran Above Bar's down-town mission for years before the Second World War. They went to Flitwick and became Baptists. I was baptised at Above Bar but we moved to Bitterne Park and its Congregational Church in the outskirts - it was one of many Above Bar off-shoots - and there my parents did a lot of church work until they retired to Lymington. Something familiar was happening: Above Bar was becoming a down-town church.




In the spring of 1941 at the Hampshire Union meeting at Above Bar I was received as a candidate for the ministry. That was the last time I went there. On 11 November Above Bar was destroyed and burnt by enemy action. Most of the records were lost; a few in the safe escaped. One record to go was the Roll of Honour for the Great War executed by my father. The congregation was to merge with St. Andrew's, known as the Scots Church. The Taylors had one further connection with the old church. Maxwell Janes, the minister, took over the ground floor of our house for church activities for the duration. It served the east of the town. My parents had gone after the big ships to the Clyde. And there my tale must close.²⁶

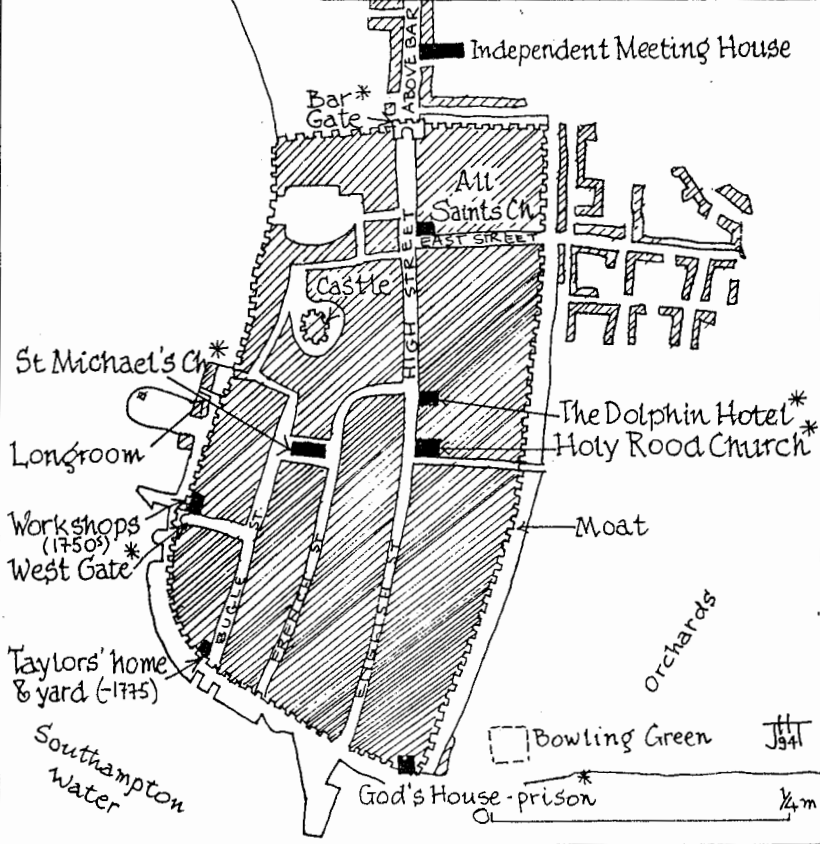
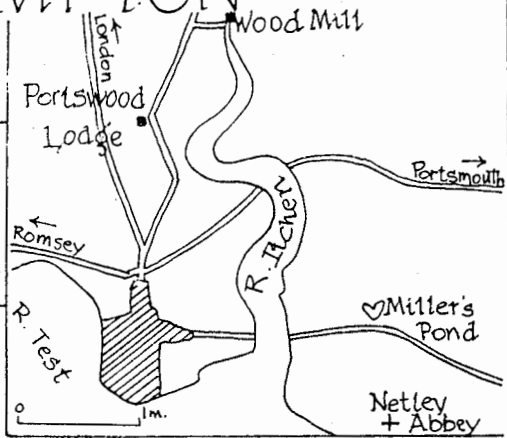
JOHN H. TAYLOR

26. In addition to my debt to my father's notes on the family history, I am indebted to J.P.M. Pannell, G.F. Nuttall and Edwin Welch.

SOUTHAMPTON

1802

-  Built-up area
-  Town walls S&W extant
-  Building extant



GENDER, CLASS AND CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE IN EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY NORWICH

For it has often occurred to me that these Congregational Churches, with their polished, eloquent ministers, their spruce and up-to-date houses of worship, their stained glass windows, their balanced services, form an acceptable middle way between the extremes of sacerdotalism and the raw conventicles. Congregationalism, perhaps the most worldly section of the Free Churches...having a quality which seems to possess a great attraction for keen business men of the workaday world - appears to owe much of its success to its placid adoption of the convenient middle way. In its services one may have much of the grace of Church of England practice with few or none of its claims, and all the freedom of the Free Churches without the feeling that one is called upon to be strenuously religious, as some other branches of Nonconformity.¹

Congregationalism was a creed peculiarly well suited to the aims and ideals of the urban middle class of nineteenth-century England, but one which many see facing a crisis as the country entered the twentieth century. Both contemporaries and historians have suggested that this crisis of the middle class resulted in their withdrawal from the cities they had created to the introspection of the suburbs.² In the process they abandoned all attempts at inter-class relations, gave up their leadership of voluntary organisations and often left the chapel for the conformity of the parish church.³ In the wake of this rejection of urbanism came decline for the denomination and for Liberalism, the political creed it had done so much to promote.⁴ Yet, while generalisation about the crisis of middle-class Dissent is common, very few writers have looked in any real detail at the culture of urban Congregationalism in the first thirty years of the twentieth century, and

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1. "The Pagan", "Peeps at Pulpiteers. Norwich Churches Visited. No. 10 Chapel-in-the-Field." *Eastern Evening Mercury*, 13 Jan. 1920.
 2. M. Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organisation of Political Parties* (1902), C.F.G. Masterman, *The Condition of England*, (1909), K. Chorley, *Manchester Made Them* (1950), C. Binfield, *So Down to Prayers: Studies in English Nonconformity, 1780-1920* (1977), D.W. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics, 1870-1914* (1982), D.W. Bebbington, "Nonconformity and Electoral Sociology, 1867-1918", *Historical Journal* 27 (1984), and S. Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis*, (1976).
 3. J. Glaser, "English Nonconformity and the Decline of Liberalism", *American Historical Review* 63 (1958).
 4. See for example, S. Koss, *Nonconformity in Modern British Politics* (Hampden Connecticut, 1975).

our knowledge of the aims, ambitions and milieu of the membership remains limited.⁵

The aim of this paper is to address some of these problems through a study of the development of Congregationalism in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Norwich. In particular, it will shed light on some of the assertions made by "The Pagan" concerning the quality of ministers, chapels, services and the denomination's appeal to the solid middle class. It will investigate the organisational structure of Norwich Congregationalism, the extent to which it was a "voluntary organisation in crisis", and assess the degree to which the social leaders of Norwich Dissent were withdrawing from the early twentieth-century city. In the course of this analysis it will reveal the part played by women in the denomination and the way in which this changed over the first three decades of the century. Overall it will attempt to give a flavour of the urban Congregational culture which Clyde Binfield has brought to life in *So Down to Prayers*, but with a more optimistic conclusion.

Church Growth 1819-1929

For nearly four hundred years Norwich played a key role in the development of English Congregationalism, whilst Congregationalism, especially between the 1850s and the 1930s, was a major force in the history of Norwich. Although a congregation settled permanently in Old Meeting in 1693,⁶ it was not until 1819, when a new Independent church was opened in Princes Street under the ministry of John Alexander, that the denomination really began to grow.⁷ By the 1851 Religious Census the three Congregational chapels accommodated almost 3,000 people on the day. The total number of sittings was 2,246, of which no fewer than 1,866 were appropriated (a larger figure than for any other free church and almost as many as the Anglicans had in their forty-one churches)⁸ indicating, even at this early stage, the denomination's superior social status. However, it also revealed part of its weakness - insufficient accommodation for the non-wealthy - and in the sixty years following the Census Norwich Congregationalism attempted to come to terms with the city's growing working-class population.

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5. The obvious exceptions are Binfield, *Down to Prayers*, Binfield, "Business Paternalism and the Congregational Ideal: A Preliminary Reconnoitre," in D.J. Jeremy (ed.), *Business and Religion in Britain* (Aldershot, 1988), Binfield, "An Excursion into Architectural Cousinhood: The East Anglian Connexion" in N. Virgoe and T. Williamson (Eds.), *Religious Dissent in East Anglia* (Norwich, 1993) and Jeffrey Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth, 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1982).
 6. C.T. Rae, "The Free Churches of Norwich" in E. Felce (Ed.), *Norwich: Civic, Industrial, Historical*. (Norwich, 1935).
 7. R.W. Hale, "Nonconformity in Nineteenth-Century Norwich" in C.J. Barringer (ed.), *Norwich in the Nineteenth Century* (Norwich, 1984) and H.C. Colman, *Princes Street Congregational Church: Norwich, 1819-1919*. (Norwich, 1919).
 8. See the Norwich Table from H. Mann, *Report on 1851 Census* reproduced in Hale, "Nonconformity" p. 177.

In 1858 an 850 seat church was opened at Chapel-in-the-Field, on the western edge of the city. The new chapel was built at a cost of £6,500 and included extensive Sunday-school accommodation completed in 1862 in commemoration of the Ejectment.⁹ In 1869, under the direction of architect and chapel deacon, Edward Boardman, Princes Street was rebuilt to seat over a thousand. Ten years later it was further enhanced, again to plans by Boardman, by a new lecture hall and school rooms capable of accommodating 1,600 children for Sunday School and providing a venue for social, political and religious activities.¹⁰

Princes Street and Chapel-in-the-Field served all classes, but churches solely for the working-class developed more slowly. Missions were formed in the slum area of Bar Street, the workers' colony of Lakenham, and the rural-industrial village of Trowse (a church opening in the latter in 1872), all three in the south of the city around Colman's Carrow works. Expansion into the northern suburbs commenced in the 1880s, initially in a joint mission with the Baptists. A temporary building, known as the "tin tabernacle", was employed from 1893 and ten years later an 800 seat church was opened on Magdalen Road with the financial assistance and managerial direction of Princes Street and Chapel-in-the-Field.¹¹ In sixty years Congregationalists spent more than £25,000 on building, all from voluntary sources, especially the wealthy members at Princes Street and Chapel-in-the-Field who contributed extensively to church building in city and county.¹²

This building activity created a distribution of chapels which differed from the typical picture of ever increasing provision for a *lifting* middle-class congregation within their own discrete suburban environment.¹³ In 1908 the Revd. J.J. Brooker of Old Meeting observed that "In many cities of the size of Norwich, down-town churches like ours have had to close their doors and transfer themselves into some suburb..."¹⁴ Yet city centre worship remained normal for the Norwich middle class – so much so that in 1903 the Secretary of the County Union had to urge church extension into the middle-class Unthank

9. *Norwich Mercury* 2 Oct. 1858, *Eastern Evening News* 30 Dec. 1966 and *Eastern Daily Press*, 25 Feb. 1972.
10. William White Ltd., *History and Directory of Norfolk 1890* Facsimile edition of the Norwich section, (Kings Lynn, 1988), p. 34-37; Kellys Ltd., *Kelly's Directory of Norfolk, 1912* (1912), p. 288 and R. Salt, *Plans For a Free City*, (Norwich, 1989).
11. Colman, *Princes Street*, p. 28-29, 59-60 and 86, *Magdalen Road Congregational Church Magazine*, November 1960 and September 1903.
12. Chapel-in-the-Field contributed £200 towards the building of Magdalen Road, plus £35 plus per annum to help with the minister's salary. Princes Street was consistently the largest donor to the Church Aid Society. *Eastern Daily Press* 25 Feb. 1972, Norfolk Congregational Union, *Report Presented to the Annual Assembly Held in the Princes Street Congregational Church Norwich 1909* (Kings Lynn, 1909) p. 14-17.
13. See for example Binfield, *Down to Prayers*, p. 202. For a successful city centre Congregational church see C. Binfield "The Building of a Town Centre Church: St. James's Congregational Church, Newcastle upon Tyne", *Northern History* xviii (1982). I am grateful to Dr. Binfield for this reference.
14. J.J. Brooker, "After Three Years", *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine* Vol. II No. 16 (April 1908).

Road district,¹⁵ home to no fewer than five of the Princes Street Deacons. In the inter-war period the Unthank Road area got its church and with the building of Jessop Road, Norwich Congregationalism finally succumbed to suburbanisation.¹⁶

The building and rebuilding of the later nineteenth century reflected a numerical, if not a "real", increase in membership and a distinct raising of the social position of the congregations. The Edwardian period saw Nonconformity's numerical peak, Norwich having an active Dissenting *membership* of around 5,000 in 1910, equivalent to approximately 6.5% of the 1901 population over fifteen years of age.¹⁷ On the basis of Gilbert's figures, Norwich had a higher than average Dissenting community, with the Congregationalists most over represented at 2.25% of the adult population,¹⁸ or in real numbers around 1,800 members in seven churches (Table 1).

Table 1
Congregational Membership, 1909

	Date Formed	Members 1909	Seats 1912
Chapel-in-the-Field	1858	374	850
Magdalen Road	1893 ¹	400	900
Princes Street	1819 ²	776	1000
Old Meeting	1693	122	560
Trowse (Mission)	1828 ³	120	300
Mariners Lane (Mission Church)	1829	19	200
Eaton (Village)	1905	21	150

1. The original tin chapel was replaced by a permanent structure in 1903.
2. The building was almost entirely rebuilt in 1869.
3. Church Opened 1872.

Sources: Membership Congregational County Union *Annual Report*, 1909; Seating *Kelly's Directory of Norfolk*, 1912.

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15. "The Secretary's Report", *Annual Report of the Norfolk Congregational Union*. (Norwich, 1903), p. 20.
 16. Rac, *Free Churches* p. 86, *Eastern Daily Press* 25 Feb. 1972.
 17. For the sources used to calculate these figures see B.M. Doyle, "Middle Class Realignment and Party Politics in Norwich, 1900-1932" (University of East Anglia Ph.D Thesis, 1990), p. 38.
 18. Gilbert calculates the national Nonconformist average at 5.5% and the Congregational average as 1.2%. A.D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914* (1976) Table 2.2, p. 39.

When war broke out in August 1914, Congregationalists responded positively: Princes Street sent 252 men into the Forces, forty of whom lost their lives, including "many to whom the church had hoped to entrust a large share of its work in the future."¹⁹ The overall impact of the Great War on membership is not known, but details of inter-war church rolls are available for Princes Street and its junior churches and Old Meeting. At the end of the war the number on the roll was 561 at Princes Street and 147 in the branch churches,²⁰ both totals down on 1913. Although Princes Street had risen to 637 by 1929, the branches were further reduced²¹ whilst Old Meeting's ageing membership had fallen to less than a hundred.²²

Much of the success of Norwich Congregationalism can be traced to the calibre of its ministers, above all those at Princes Street. In its first 130 years the church had only four pastors, John Alexander (minister 1819-65), George S. Barrett (1866-1911), W. Griffiths Jenkins (1912-1924) and C.T. Rae (1926-40), and though no other chapel had a minister of Barrett's stature, they attracted some significant figures, notably J.J. Brooker of Old Meeting (1904-1926).

Barrett, son of a missionary, was born in Jamaica in 1839. He was educated at University College, London and Lancashire Independent College before Princes Street invited him to replace Alexander. In the words of the *Evangelical Magazine*, "to ask a student without experience to fill so commanding and responsible a position on his first leaving college was a bold step on the part of the church, which has, however, been amply justified by its immediate and permanent success."²³ In the course of his forty-five year Norwich career he received invitations from many other churches and an offer of the Secretaryship of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, but he chose to stay at Princes Street, to make it "one of the largest and most enterprising churches of our order in England"²⁴ In 1894 he was Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, when in the course of two presidential sermons, *The Secularisation of the Pulpit* and *The Secularisation of the Church*,²⁵ he attacked the declining piety of adherents and the increasing intrusion of secular leisure into the lives of middle-class members. Thirteen years later he criticised The New Theology, suggesting "it is not the evangelical faith, nor is it the teaching of Christ and of His apostles."²⁶ For Barrett Congregationalism was about sin,

19. Colman, *Princes Street*, p. 90. Those who lost their lives included Sydney Durrant Page, a leading activist in the YMCA and the Boys' Brigade. *Boys' Brigade Gazette* XXV 10 (June 1917), p. 119, B.M. Doyle, "Religion, Politics and Remembrance: A Free Church Community and its Great War Dead" (Forthcoming).

20. Colman, *Princes Street*, p. 72.

21. *Princes Street Yearbook 1929*, (Norwich, 1929).

22. *Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine* Feb. 1929.

23. T. Robinson, "Rev. George S. Barrett", *The Evangelical Magazine* Jan. 1894, p. 1.

24. Robinson, *Barrett* p. 2.

25. G.S. Barrett, *The Secularisation of the Pulpit* (1894) and *The Secularisation of the Church* (1894).

26. G.S. Barrett, *The New Theology: A Sermon Preached in Prince's Street Congregational Church, Norwich, January 27th, 1907*. (1907), p. 5.

redemption, the Cross and the truth inherent in the New Testament.

Those ideas made their way into many volumes of collected sermons and – though his lasting monument was *The Congregational Hymnal* – it was as a preacher that he shone. As Thomas Robinson explained in the *Evangelical Magazine*,

It is in the pulpit . . . that the secret of his career lies. . . . When the sermon is over we have no time to ask whether we have been listening to a great intellectual performance. . . . Our impulse just then is to go home, and in quiet think out the questions between God and our soul which he has raised.²⁷

Although Robinson described Barrett as “strongly Evangelical”, Helen Colman has suggested that he was rather “high” and that “his inclination was always towards a more elaborate service than the majority of the church was disposed to sanction. Indeed his friends used to tell him that had he belonged to the Church of England he would have identified with the Ritualistic section.”²⁸ Yet his preaching and tone must have appealed to his congregation, for it remained the largest and most socially exclusive Dissenting gathering in the city. Furthermore, as a Gladstonian Liberal in politics, his continuing support for the party possibly helped the rest of his congregation to remain true to that faith.

Princes Street did not suffer unduly from Barrett’s retirement. There was no real pressure to build a church in the middle-class suburbs, no loss of direction and no falling off in membership. Jenkins and Rae were successful and highly respected ministers who maintained much of the church’s prestige, and when Jessop Road opened it was Chapel-in-the-Field, not Princes Street, that suffered the loss of members.²⁹

Whilst Barrett’s experience at Prince’s Street was one of growth and prestige, J.J. Brooker was continually fighting against the tide of secularisation, slum clearance and demographic change. Appointed pastor at Old Meeting in 1904, when the membership was already beginning to be affected by the opening of Magdalen Road, he served for twenty-two years, leaving Norwich in 1926. Reviewing his pastorate after three years, he noted that the congregation of 120 were “in a peculiarly difficult position” caused by the over-supply of chapels in the Colegate Street area, “with St. Mary’s and Prince’s Street within hail.”³⁰ and it is a tribute to Brooker’s work that the church roll still numbered nearly one hundred in 1929.

His success would seem to have been based on a similar theological approach to Barrett’s:- reprimanding his members for not devoting enough time to the church and asserting that, “whilst I yield to no one in my admiration of much in

27. Robinson, *Barrett* p. 3.

28. Colman, *Princes Street*, p. 54.

29. *Eastern Daily Press* 25 Feb. 1972.

30. *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine* Vol. II, No. 16 (April 1908).

Episcopalianism, I am nevertheless a conscientious Nonconformist. I dabble in no 'new theology', but claim the right of perfect freedom to express my thoughts in a perfectly frank way. . ."³¹ Among the ways he expressed these thoughts was in an open and active commitment to the Liberal party. The last of Norwich Congregationalism's radical divines, he stood for the Board of Guardians in 1913 and was elected in 1919 for the Colman dominated working-class ward of Lakenham, losing to a Labour candidate three years later. Brooker kept Old Meeting afloat by playing on its heritage, effectively utilising the resources and goodwill of key laymen, and by representing the essential values of Congregationalism as they had developed in later nineteenth-century Norwich – flexible theology and a deep and public commitment to the Liberal party.

The impressive development of the Magdalen Road congregation in the Edwardian period owed something to similar qualities in its two ministers, Henry Kenward (1899-1906) and Thomas Sinclair Phillips (1906-1913). Kenward was not just a brilliant evangelist, he was also a deeply political minister, his sermons invariably carrying some radical message.³² He was one of the most active Congregationalists in the Passive Resistance campaign of 1903-14, holding a position on the Committee of the local Citizens League.³³ His big achievement was the building of the permanent church. It was Phillips who presided over the clearing of the debt that project had amassed. Although none of the other ministers was as significant as these men, most left some mark on their congregations. Many came from the Celtic fringe, all via the denominational college system and, once in Norwich, all took an active part in the secular as well as the religious life of the city. Active Liberals even after the War, many used their pulpits and their church magazines to promote the ideology, if not the party political propaganda, of Liberalism.³⁴ But it was in holding together or developing their congregations that they played the biggest part, and in achieving this they relied heavily on the many and varied organisations which involved members and non-members alike in the structures of the church.

The Social Impact of Congregationalism

Through education, philanthropy, and leisure activities, Congregationalism influenced the lives of many who were never church members. Numerically the most important of these extensions was the Sunday School. In 1910 Hawkins estimated the total number of Sunday scholars in Norwich at 16,000, or 44% of all children under fifteen,³⁵ with no fewer than 2,444 attending the seven

31. *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine* Vol. II, No. 24 (Dec. 1908).

32. See for example "The Christian as a Citizen", *Magdalen Road Congregational Church Magazine*, November 1900, p. 14.

33. "Minutes of the Citizens League to Combat the 1902 Education Act, 1902-14" *Norfolk Records Office FC13/60*.

34. For biographies of other Congregational ministers see *Citizens of No Mean City* (Norwich 1910).

35. C.B. Hawkins, *Norwich: A Social Study*, (1910), p. 294.

Congregational schools (Table 2). The movement's missionary element was clearly demonstrated by the size of the Magdalen Road School, the largest in Norfolk and an important precursor to the northward development of Congregationalism in the city. In addition to a Band of Hope, with 200 members in 1909,³⁶ Magdalen Road operated a Boys' Brigade battalion, a Girls' Sewing Class and a monthly Children's Service, whilst at Chapel-in-the-Field the Sunday School met morning and afternoon, with temperance work organised through the Junior Temple of the Good Templars.³⁷

Table 2
Sunday School Membership, 1909

	Members	Teachers
Chapel-in-the-Field	324	42
Magdalen Road	750	70
Old Meeting	245	20
Princes Street	743	57
Trowse	163	30
Eaton	80	3
Mariners Lane	139	30

Source: Congregational County Union *Annual Report*, 1909, p. 5.

Beyond their religious teaching, Sunday Schools were influential in three ways: as an opportunity to inculcate social and civic responsibility, as a significant conduit for the distribution of charity and as a useful focus for cross-class sociability. In addition to the thrift clubs associated with the schools, many opportunities arose to provide charity to the children, especially in the form of the Annual Tea or Outing. Special Band of Hope Services saw the children treated to buns and orange squash, Annual Teas often had over 100 sitting down to eat, whilst Sunday School summer excursions to places like Sheringham – free to scholars and teachers – usually included a strawberry tea or similar at the resort.³⁸ Not surprisingly there are suggestions that Sunday School attendance rose remarkably just before the summer outing and the Annual Tea. Although these youth organisations were not particularly effective as evangelising structures – no religious commitment was demanded of the children enrolled and most left without becoming church members – attendance kept channels open between the classes and engendered a tendency for former pupils to think “chapel”.

36. *Norfolk Congregational Union Annual Report*, 1909, p. 13.

37. *Magdalen Road Congregational Church Magazine*, November 1900, Chapel-in-the-Field Congregational Church, *Monthly Record* (July 1904).

38. *Magdalen Road Congregational Church Magazine* IV (September 1903), *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine* Vol. II, No. 16 (April 1908), Chapel-in-the-Field Congregational Church, *Monthly Record* (July 1904).

This transition from Sunday School to full church membership was the most difficult to accomplish, and by the Edwardian period a variety of structures had been developed to ease the move, most significantly Christian Endeavour. "C.E.s" met weekly in all the churches from the early 1900s, although as early as 1908 complaints were made that "the addresses and papers [were] excellent and worthy of better audiences."³⁹ At Magdalen Road, Kenward developed a Young Men's Debating Society which held socials, instructive lectures of the "Some Wonders of the Insect World" type and debates such as "Is there a Declining Interest in Religion?"⁴⁰ But these were organisations for young men – the full acceptance of women would have to wait until after the First World War.

The emphasis on education, self improvement and separate spheres continued in the adult organisations. Combatting adult illiteracy was the main aim of the First Day School run by Chapel-in-the-Field on Sunday mornings. For the Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, begun in the 1890s, the aim was Christian citizenship, with the hope that members might also join the church. A monthly open service accompanied lectures and debates on religious and social subjects, such as "Individual Responsibility", with both ministers and laymen chairing the proceedings. Self-help and self-improvement were encouraged by the operation of thrift clubs and the awarding of prizes of "useful and instructive books" like General Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out*.⁴¹

The vast majority of women members, on the other hand, fulfilled duties appropriate to their sphere – singing at services, arranging flowers for the church, and providing refreshments whenever they were required. Edwardian Congregational churches contemplated, but did not yet permit, women pastors and women deacons were rare.⁴² In most churches female members were offered little in the way of literary, civic or political education, only sewing classes and the Women's Pleasant Evening "a meeting for women, to which they can bring their needlework and spend a pleasant hour in a friendly and informal way. The end to be sought is the glory of God, the welfare of the Church, and a desire to help each other."⁴³ Middle-class women were involved more directly in the church through social and philanthropic organisations such as the Dorcas

39. *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine*, Vol. II, No. 17 (May 1908).

40. *Magdalen Road Congregational Church Magazine* (November 1900), p. 12.

41. *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine*, Vol. II, No. 16 (April 1908), Chapel-in-the-Field Congregational Church, *Monthly Record* (July 1904), *Prince's Street P.S.A. Magazine*, 4 (Oct. 1896), *Magdalen Road Congregational Church Magazine* (September 1903), *Magdalen Road P.S.A. Almanac* (1908). A copy of Booth, awarded to Princes Street P.S.A. member Henry Raynor, is in the possession of the author.

42. A woman pastor was inducted in Sheffield in 1918, whilst woman deacons were appointed in 1912 at the same church. Elsewhere in the country the question of both women deacons and pastors were discussed from the 1880s with women such as the Spicers playing a leading role in some congregations as early as the 1890s. I am grateful to Dr. Binfield for this information. For religion in Sheffield see C. Binfield "Religion in Sheffield" in C. Binfield *et al.* (Eds.), *The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993. Volume II. Society* (Sheffield, 1993).

43. *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine* Vol. II, No. 16 (April 1908).

Help Society, the Home Mission Committee and the Women's Auxiliary of the London Missionary Society which encouraged them to visit the sick and needy, knit or collect clothing for foreign missionaries, and staff the stalls at innumerable bazaars, usually under the direction of the minister's wife. Although a socially powerful woman, such as Helen Colman, might slip through into the man's world, this was exceptional⁴⁴ and in general women were excluded or patronised, their participation restricted to a frivolous "Ladies Evening" as an end of year social.

On a day to day level individual churches provided important secular services such as the medical offered provided by the District Nursing Association. In 1900 the Association employed a nurse to visit the sick and in November of that year the Magdalen Road *Magazine* urged members to join the Association as:

With the winter season coming on, when there is of necessity more sickness in consequence of the climatic conditions, those of our friends who have not already joined will be wise to become members, and thus avail themselves of the great advantages of nursing and attendance which this Society places at the disposal of its members at a comparatively trifling cost.⁴⁵

In addition the churches attempted to satisfy the more commercial leisure demands of the membership, leading to organisations such as the Magdalen Road Wheelers, a cycling club which arranged many "favourable outings" including the obligatory end of season picnic.⁴⁶

These structures obviously reached the wider constituency than the Sunday service, and the three largest churches probably each influenced the lives of some 2,000 people.⁴⁷ But the avowed aim of increased church membership was not accomplished and by August 1914 changes were taking place which undermined this world as education and social services increasingly became the province of the state. The War accelerated these trends and further weakened the extended Congregational community.

From the limited evidence available it is apparent that, although church membership remained stable, the main effect of the War was on those who were

44. Miss Colman gave a paper on "The Life and Work of Mr. Sheppard of the Scottish Presbyterian Church in India" to a united meeting of the Chapel-in-the-Field and Old Meeting Guilds in November 1908. *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine*, Vol. II, No. 24 (Dec. 1908).
45. *Magdalen Road Congregational Church Magazine* (November 1900). Similar organisations were operated by working-class churches in Preston at that time. M. Savage, "Urban History and Social Class: Two Paradigms" *Urban History* 20 (April 1993), p. 74 and note 41.
46. For the commercialisation of religion and irreligion in the Edwardian period see Yeo, *Voluntary Organisations* and D.S. Nash, *Secularism, Art and Freedom*, (Leicester 1992), chapter 6.
47. For the suggestion of 2,000 touched by a big city centre church (St. Mary's Baptist) see C.B. Jewson, *The Baptists In Norfolk* (1957), p. 140.

peripherally associated with the churches through these organisations, many of whom chose not to return in the changed circumstances of the 1920s.⁴⁸ Decline was apparent in the Sunday Schools: hence the adoption of such novel methods as the graded system. The much dated Bands of Hope were wound up and replaced by Junior Christian Endeavour meetings, whilst the Boys' and Girls' Brigades saw some expansion. But this growth was insignificant in comparison to the pre-war period and it is obvious that the churches were losing the battle for the hearts and minds of young people. The churches faced a similar problem with their adult organisations. Their character changed almost as soon as the war ended, as the P.S.A. and other societies concentrated on the religious at the expense of the political. Although most inter-war churches maintained a wide ranging menu of educational, social and devotional activities, as with the Sunday Schools, the old and new societies were failing to attract members to the same degree as before the war, and their object and scope were diminished by the more purely spiritual nature of religious activity between the wars.

The most striking change, however, was in the position of women. By 1929 Princes Street had appointed a female Visitor and elected two women to the Diaconate (Miss Ethel Colman and Mrs. Southwell). Furthermore, in addition to a Women's Guild and a Women's P.S.A. Class, the P.S.A. had six female members on its Executive Committee whilst a majority of the office bearers of the Christian Endeavour Societies were women. These organisations complemented the traditional female spheres associated with the Needlework Guild, Dorcas Society and Women's Auxiliary of the L.M.S.⁴⁹ and more accurately reflected the importance and numbers of women within the denomination.

Status, Gender and Social Leadership

It is apparent that the chapels of Norwich Congregationalism were ordered in a strict social hierarchy headed by Princes Street, with Chapel-in-the-Field some way behind, whilst Old Meeting and Magdalen Road served the needs of predominantly working-class congregations. Why, despite its location at the top of Elm Hill, one of the most notorious slums in Norwich, did the city's commercial and professional *élite* continue to make the journey from their suburban homes every Sunday to meet in Barrett's church? Crucial to the social performance of Princes Street was the transfer of J.J. Colman's family from St. Mary's Baptist Church in 1870.⁵⁰ The attendance of the city's leading bourgeois

48. This point is particularly important when considering the political implication of the effects of the War on Nonconformity. Wilson, for example, cites the decline in membership of the Stockport branch of the National Brotherhood as evidence of Nonconformist loss, not any longer term fall in church membership. T. Wilson, *The Downfall of the Liberal Party, 1914-1935* (Fontana pb. 1968), p. 25-26.

49. *Princes Street Yearbook* (Norwich 1929), p. 1 and p. 52-55.

50. Jewson, *Baptists* p. 122.

family made Princes Street *the* place to go and did much to cement the tight-knit and highly middle-class community which gathered there in the Edwardian period.

Table 3
Membership of Church and Congregation
of Princes Street by District and Gender, 1913

District	Women	Men	Total	% Women
North, Central & South-East	150	60	210	71
East	86	57	143	60
West	92	68	160	57.5
South-West	101	73	184	58
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Total	429	258	697	61.5

Source: Princes Street *Yearbook*, 1913 p. 11-27.

Some observations on the geographical distribution of the members in 1913 will serve to highlight the social exclusivity of the church. The church and congregation were divided into six districts (Table 3); the two districts covering the eligible suburb of Eaton,⁵¹ West and South-West, provided 48.5% of the entire membership (and nine of the thirteen deacons) whilst the North, Central and South-East districts, covering the city centre and the main working-class suburbs, together accounted for less than a third of the congregation and included only one of the deacons.⁵² These city-centre districts were dominated by women while the middle-class areas of East (including the suburb of Thorpe), West and South-West, had a substantial number of families in membership, as well as men, single or married, who attended the church alone. These included socially prominent individuals like solicitor and Liberal councillor, Lawrence English, and accountant Herbert Gowen, a Liberal councillor, Sheriff and Lord Mayor. These members were joined by a group who were not members but went with their wives. It is arguable that these men chose Princes Street at least in part because it was socially, politically, even economically expedient to do so, and as long as most leading Congregationalists continued to think this, the social superiority of the chapel would not be challenged, either by Chapel-in-the-Field or by calls to build a church in the Eaton district.

51. For the development of Norwich housing in the nineteenth-century see S. Muthesius, "Nineteenth Century Norwich Housing" in Barringer (Ed.), *Nineteenth Century Norwich*.

52. Bracondale, a mid-nineteenth-century street of villas leading to Colman's Carrow Works, formed a small concentration of middle-class housing within this predominantly working-class area. Among Princes Street's Edwardian members resident in this area were Colman's three daughters, his son Russell, his brother-in-law Sydney Cozens-Hardy, two of his cousins, two of his senior managers and Dr. Barrett.

Thus Princes Street continued to attract the cream of Norwich Dissent. Chapel-in-the-Field, despite the advantage of a location close to Eaton, simply did not attract the same class of members. Its congregation could best be described as comfortable and, although it included Henry J. Copeman, head of a regional wholesale company, co-director of the *Eastern Daily Press* and Liberal member of the Council for forty years, the vast majority of its members were solid citizens, not social leaders.⁵³ Of the rest, the small chapel in Trowse seems to have been designed to meet the needs of the skilled and white-collar workers at Carrow, whilst the membership of Old Meeting was more typical of a city-centre chapel in an industrial part of town. About one third of the latter's congregation lived in the surrounding slums, a disproportionate number of whom were single or widowed women, the group most often in need of charity in the years before state benefits. Most of the members, however, lived in the new working-class areas around Magdalen Road or in the better-class terraced streets to the west of the city.⁵⁴ Although there are no comparable records for Magdalen Road Church, it is likely the bulk of its 400 members lived in the rapidly expanding terraced estates of north Norwich, with a small number coming from Pockthorpe, an early nineteenth-century extra-mural slum.⁵⁵

How involved were these members, especially the social leaders? Were the latter rejecting their civic and religious responsibilities and allowing leadership of the voluntary sector to pass out of their hands?⁵⁶ There were certainly some cases where this occurred. Russell Colman, son of the mustard manufacturer, withdrew from the church around 1910, at the same time severing his connection with local Liberalism and moving out of Norwich to take up permanent residence at Crown Point, the Victorian mansion overlooking Carrow, which his father had bought in the 1870s. Edward Thomas Boardman, Russell's brother-in-law, also took little part in the weekly work of the church and by the early 1920s had resigned his seat on the council and was also living on an estate outside Norwich. But this is the full extent of notable withdrawals. Not only did most of the prominent members of the church remain members, they also remained active and, for younger members in particular, involvement in church organisations was both a duty and a useful method of social and political advancement.

The layman who gave the most to Norwich Congregationalism was Sydney Cozens-Hardy, whose family connections included a sister who married J.J. Colman, a brother who was a Liberal M.P. and Master of the Rolls, and a

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53. Chapel-in-the-Field Congregational Church, Norwich, *List of Members of the Church and Congregation, with their Residences* (Norwich 1900).
 54. See "Names and Addresses of Members of Church and Congregation", *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine*, Vol. II, No. 16 & 17 (April & May 1908).
 55. There is an excellent description of the culture of late Victorian Pockthorpe in N. MacMaster, "The Battle for Mousehold Heath 1857-1884: 'Popular Politics' and the Victorian Public Park" *Past and Present* 127 (1989).
 56. Yeo, *Voluntary Organisations*, Savage, *Urban History*, R. Trainor, "Urban Elites in Victorian Britain" *Urban History Yearbook* (1985).

nephew who edited the *Eastern Daily Press* from 1897 to 1937.⁵⁷ Born in North Norfolk in 1850, he was educated at Ebenezer West's Amersham Hall School before moving to Norwich where he trained to be a solicitor. In addition to acting as clerk to the Norwich School Board and the Consolidated Charities, he was a Liberal agent, Sheriff of Norwich in 1900 and a J.P. from 1909.⁵⁸ His son Basil attended Rugby and Trinity, Oxford, joined the family firm, served in the Great War, was a Liberal councillor for five years, a deacon of Princes Street and served as Sheriff in 1936 (although this may have been as a Conservative). Sydney was clearly a social leader and yet his record of service to Congregationalism is second to none.

He joined Princes Street in 1874, at the age of twenty-four, and was appointed to the diaconate in 1880, a position he finally retired from sixty-four years later. For forty-five of those years he was church treasurer, whilst on most Sundays he was to be found giving out the hymns and notices and frequently reading the lesson. Furthermore, in 1919 he retired after fifty years as teacher, superintendent and secretary of the non-denominational Carrow Sunday School. On a personal level he was a sabbatarian and teetotaler who adopted young the habit of voluntary tithing, devoting ten to fifteen per cent of his income to charity each year from 1875 until his death.

Sydney Cozens-Hardy may have been exceptional in his devotion to the faith, but other Congregationalists continued to give a substantial proportion of their time and money to religious and charitable causes. Among the membership of Princes Street a picture of considerable civic and social leadership emerges, with almost forty members of the church actively involved as representatives of the Liberal party between 1895 and 1939, no fewer than thirteen holding high civic office (Mayor/Lord Mayor, Sheriff and/or Alderman).⁵⁹ Among this latter group were the pre-War deacons Edward Boardman, the timber merchant J.A. Porter and the flour miller R.J. Read, whilst Ethel Colman served as the city's first woman Lord Mayor⁶⁰ and possibly the first woman deacon at Princes Street. However, they were also actively involved in the church in other ways. Porter was treasurer of Princes Street Sunday School as late as 1929 and very involved with Magdalen Road in the Edwardian period; Read was treasurer of the small church at Eaton whilst Tom Glover (Lord Mayor in 1926) was chairman of Norwich YMCA in the 1920s.

57. H.C. Colman, *Sydney Cozens-Hardy: A Memoir* (Norwich 1944). For his family see B. Cozens-Hardy, *The History of Letheringsett in the County of Norfolk* (Norwich 1957), L.E. Stuart, *In Memoriam: Caroline Colman* (Norwich 1896), Binfield, *Down to Prayers* chapter 6.

58. This and the next paragraph are based on Colman, *Cozens-Hardy*.

59. For the involvement of Congregationalists in Norwich politics see Doyle, *Thesis* chapter 5. For Norwich politics and Nonconformity generally see B.M. Doyle, "Business Liberalism and Dissent in Norwich 1900-1930" *Baptist Quarterly* xxxv No. 5 (1994).

60. For the mayors see P. Palgrave-Moore, *The Mayors and Lord Mayors of Norwich, 1836-1974* (Norwich 1978).

Joseph de Carle Smith and Laura Stuart, who both served as city councillors, should also be defined as social leaders. Mrs. Stuart, daughter of J.J. Colman and wife of a Liberal M.P., was a prominent individual in her own right; she held the distinction of being the first woman in Norwich to fill virtually every post open to women after 1918. De Carle Smith, a manufacturing chemist, belonged to an important local family and was a close connection of the Colmans. He served on the Council in the early Edwardian period when he also acted as treasurer for the new church at Magdalen Road and was still a member of both the Liberal party and Princes Street into the 1930s. The 1913 diaconate also included the Eaton ward Councillors W.B. Rutland and H.J. Pond, who both had over 100 employees in their wholesale and retail shoe manufacturing businesses. In addition to his responsibilities as a deacon, Rutland was superintendent of Princes Street Sunday School and regarded "as his recreations boys brigade work and the boy scout movement."⁶¹ Other representatives actively involved in the church came from the lower reaches of the middle class – school teachers, builders, small shopkeepers and administrators – but they had always played their part in both the denomination and the party and their influence did not grow markedly before the late 1920s.

There were also those who were active in the church but took no part in politics beyond membership of the Liberal party. This list would include at least nine members of the diaconate between 1900 and 1929, men such as James Porter senior, the retailers, Frank Garland and Napier Livock, and John and Edgar Tomkins, deacons in 1929. The Tomkinses were active in the church: Edgar was a Sunday School teacher and superintendent whilst John, editor of the Princes Street magazine, and a Magdalen Road pioneer, served as the church's first Secretary.⁶²

Many of the other Congregational churches in the city could provide this level of civic activism. Chapel-in-the-Field had – as has been seen – Henry Copeman, deacon and treasurer for over twenty-five years, who was the most politically active Congregationalist in twentieth-century Norwich, serving as a member of the council for twenty-eight years (1889-1937), Sheriff in 1902, Mayor in 1912 and one of the Liberal candidates in the 1923 general election. But he was exceptional and other active members of the church were drawn from the lower-middle class of small retailer, builders and white collar workers. At Old Meeting the congregation was kept afloat for much of the early twentieth century by the generosity of one man, Charles Watling. He had started a carrying firm during the First World War with one horse and cart, which became remarkably successful.⁶³ He was elected to the Council in 1922 and held the middle-class Town Close ward for the Liberals for the next sixteen years, becoming an Alderman in 1938 and serving as Sheriff in 1929 and Mayor in 1938. Despite his

61. See his obituary in Norwich Local Studies Library, Newscutting collection.

62. For other members of the Tomkins family see Binfield, *Down to Prayers*, chapter 10.

63. Palgrave-Moore, *Lord Mayors*.

business and political success, he did not forget his church and, on his nomination as Sheriff, the Magazine noted that he had always been a "generous supporter" of Old Meeting, paying off accumulated debts and helping to arrange subscriptions.⁶⁴

Magdalen Road, on the other hand, was dominated in the early years by members from Princes Street operating in the true spirit of the Forward Movement.⁶⁵ Joseph de Carle Smith, his brother Richard, and his brother-in-law J.S. Tomkins were respectively treasurer, magazine editor and secretary. James A. Porter was a deacon and frequent participant in church activities whilst William Mase, a director of the leading shoe manufacturers, Howlett and White, "spent much time and money. . . found[ing] a junior department in connection with the Magdalen Road Congregational Church First Day School."⁶⁶ The motives of these men were varied. As the Forward Movement made more sense if the parent church were in the city centre rather than some distant middle-class suburb, it seems to have been taken more seriously in Norwich than elsewhere.⁶⁷ Civic activism and the obligation to be useful were both taken seriously by the Norwich middle class well into the twentieth century, whilst the opportunity to foster cross-class understanding and possibly exert an element of social control may also have encouraged these social leaders to take an interest in the new church. The businesses of Smith, Porter, and Mase were located in the northern part of the old city, whilst most of their workers had migrated to terraced houses in the region of Magdalen Road, away from the direct influence of Princes Street or Old Meeting. In order to maintain some control, but also important contacts with the skilled workers and their families, these men possibly decided that it was worth promoting the new church and spending time on its organisations. In a social and political culture in which inter-class relations had not broken down entirely, such investments made sense.⁶⁸

Although this does not prove that all prominent Congregationalists were continuing to provide leadership to the voluntary sector, it is clear that a number of men and women were maintaining a high level of public and religious service well into the 1920s. Furthermore, the rejection of the political and religious culture of the father by the son did not mean the end of the family connection. Russell Colman certainly turned his back on Norwich Congregationalism and

64. *The Old Meeting Congregational Church Magazine* Vol. XXIV (Nov. 1929).

65. For some of the problems with the movement see Binfield, *Down to Prayers*, p. 203.

66. F.W. Weldon, *A Norvic Century and the Men Who Made It, 1846-1946* (Norwich 1946), p. 65.

67. The nearby Baptist church at Silver Road, which opened in 1910, attracted the support of a number of the leading members of St. Mary's, including Dr. E.E. Blyth, the city's first Lord Mayor and Richard Jewson, Lord Mayor in 1918. Anon, *1910/1960: Fifty Years of Baptist Witness. The Story of Silver Road* (Norwich 1960).

68. Referring to his involvement with the First Day School junior department, Mase recalled that "Many of the lads I had with me then are still my friends, a number of them being engaged in the Norvic Works". Wheldon, *Norvic Century* p. 65.

Liberalism, but his sisters continued to play a very active role in both and to direct substantial amounts of money and effort towards good causes in the city. In the Edwardian period, civic, religious and social leadership remained normal for men such as Sydney Cozens-Hardy, whilst a small group of younger members were willing to invest considerable amounts of time and money in developing Congregationalism among the skilled working class. Although this tactic was largely abandoned by the 1920s, city-centre worship at Princes Street, along with involvement in its outside organisations, especially by prominent female members, remained normal for many middle-class Congregationalists.

This enduring Congregational culture was held together by a wide ranging and intricate marriage network centred on the Colmans, Boardmans and de Carle Smiths. Clyde Binfield has shown the importance of both social solidarity and economic necessity in the marriage patterns of the Boardman family,⁶⁹ and these factors were replicated in the connections forged by many of the City's leading Congregational families. It is also apparent that inter-marriage was crucial to the survival of the Liberal Party in Norwich and that Congregationalists were at the heart of that marriage network.⁷⁰ From the early nineteenth century through to 1930, inter-marriage connected no fewer than thirty of Norwich Liberalism's leading families, and twenty-one of those connections were made between 1850 and 1918. Furthermore, sixteen of the families were Congregationalists at some time in the hundred-year period (four were Baptist, five Anglican, three Unitarian, one Methodist and one Plymouth Brethren) with Congregationalists predominantly marrying other Congregationalists.

The web was centred on the massive family of Robert Colman (1749-1807) which, in the first half of the nineteenth century, linked the Colmans to the Fielding, Harmer, Theobald (in turn related to Boardman), Willis and Cozens families.⁷¹ Although these families belonged to a range of denominations and lived in both city and county, by 1870 all had important branches settled in Norwich and all except the Willises were Congregationalists, mostly worshipping at Princes Street. After 1850 the focus switched to the children of Edward Boardman (1833-1910) and Henry Colman (1816-1895). Boardman had six children, four of whom married in Norwich. Edward Thomas, the eldest son, married the daughter of J.J. Colman M.P.,⁷² whilst his daughters married W.W. Rix Spelman, Joseph de Carle Smith and Percy Jewson, a member of the most important Baptist family in the city. Henry Colman's children linked his line to

69. Binfield, *Architectural Cousinhood*, p. 102-106.

70. Doyle, *Thesis*, p. 192-204 especially Figure 6.1.

71. See family tree in H.C. Colman, *Jeremiah James Colman By One of His Daughters* (London 1905).

72. Colman had six children, two sons and four daughters. Alan died at the age of thirty without marrying, Ethel and Helen also remained single, whilst Laura married James Stuart, an academic and Liberal M.P., Florence married Boardman and Russell married the daughter of a Welsh Liberal M.P. James Stuart, *Reminiscences* (1912), L.E. Stuart, *In Memoriam: Alan Cozens-Hardy Colman* (Norwich 1898), J. Mardle, *R.J. Colman 1861-1946: Some Sketches for a Family Portrait* (Norwich 1954).

the flour milling Reads and the Tomkins family, his daughter marrying Edgar. The large Tomkins family included connections to the Copemans (Elizabeth Tomkins marrying Charles Copeman, Henry's cousin), and, through John's marriage, to the de Carle Smiths. The de Carle Smiths were in turn linked to the Plymouth Brethren Southalls whose connections included a number of prominent Anglican and Unitarian families. Finally in this period, the Copemans linked up with the family of the Revd. H. Monement. Monement had three daughters, Mary who remained unmarried, Harriet who married Henry J. Copeman and Margaret who married the Princes Street deacon, Edward Livock. This last connection permits the inclusion of a small group formed in the post-war years centred on the Livocks and drawing together five politically and religiously active families including the Porters.

This network served a number of dynastic functions – religious, economic, social and political – and the extent to which it was based on what might be termed romantic love⁷³ must be questionable, particularly before 1900. Yet it is not always clear that economic motives were at the centre of the liaisons. Politics, local and national, appear to be behind the marriages of J.J. Colman's children, business was the guiding principle for Edward Boardman, social climbing for the de Carle Smiths, whilst most others seems to have been defined by membership of Princes Street – for most the only suitable field for the selection of marriage partners. However, the overall effect was to give dynastic support to the Congregational/Liberal world which came under increasing pressure in the years after 1900.⁷⁴ The paucity of political or religious defections is testament to the strength of the Dissenting world which these marriages formed, and helps to correct the image of a crumbling middle-class Liberalism and Congregationalism in the early twentieth century.

Conclusion

Edwardian Norwich was one of the strongholds of English Congregationalism, with a substantial active membership, massed ranks of Sunday scholars, and innumerable organisations providing everything from Bible study to bicycle rides. Furthermore, this was a Congregationalism rooted firmly in the city it had helped to create, with suburban churches serving working-class, not middle-class congregations. Admittedly, by 1930 the picture was changing: the associated organisations were not primarily for the use of members, the Sunday School child-minders for mothers who had few opportunities to be free of their offspring, the members more interested in retrenchment than reform as religion and politics went their separate ways. But these changes were not as dramatic as

73. E. Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (1972).

74. For the social trends which led to the breakdown of this marriage system in the post-World War I period see B.M. Doyle, "Urban Liberalism and the 'Lost Generation': Middle Class Culture and Norwich Politics, 1900-1935" *Historical Journal* (Forthcoming, 1995).

we have been led to expect and this study has highlighted a number of areas in which the image of decline may have been rather more powerful than the reality.

In particular, it has shown how issues in gender and class have clouded our understanding of religious and political changes in the early twentieth century. For example, the deleterious effects of the First World War on the membership of organisations for working-class men, such as the P.S.A., was considerable, but church membership, which was never particularly dependent upon men or the working class, had returned to around pre-war figures by the mid-twenties. Furthermore, the concentration on the activities of male members, particularly those deemed social leaders, has meant that the power and influence of women in the church and the community at large, has been greatly underestimated. This in turn may have led historians to exaggerate the voluntary sector's leadership crisis – and even the decline of middle-class Liberalism in the inter-war years – by emphasising the withdrawal of men such as Russell Colman, whilst ignoring the important work of women like his sisters, Ethel, Helen Caroline, and Laura. Finally there was Princes Street, a successful city centre chapel for the middle-class. Moving the place of worship out of the city was not inevitable for Congregationalists, and the concentration by historians on the relocation of big city congregations to distant suburbs⁷⁵ may have affected our understanding of this phenomenon.

The sensible, middle way continued to appeal to bourgeois Norwich, reinforced by a kinship network which remained Liberal and Dissenting and by the recent memory of a cross-class sociability which had been ended by war and state interference, rather than conscious withdrawal. Norwich could, of course, have been exceptional, but it seems likely that detailed study of middle-class life in other medium sized industrial towns will reveal a more enduring Congregational culture, based on kinship and civic pride, than a reading of the current literature would suggest. What is clear is that Norwich Congregationalism, centred on urban Princes Street, remained healthy into the 1920s and continued to provide the cultural support for a successful middle-class Liberalism.

BARRY M. DOYLE

75. Binfield, *Down to Prayers* chapter 8 which deals with the Manchester suburb of Bowdon in Cheshire or Cox, *Secular Society* which has analysed the London suburb of Lambeth.

PRESBYTERIANS IN VICTORIAN HULL: THE PROFILE OF A CONGREGATION

A.D. Gilbert neatly sums up the position of the Presbyterian churches in Victorian England: the new English Presbyterianism of the nineteenth century "was not an indigenous English religious culture" and therefore "it never fitted easily into any of the traditional categories of Protestant Dissent."¹ Not only were the Presbyterians very largely immigrants from Scotland and Ireland, but they also formed one of the smaller Dissenting groups accounting for a mere 80,510, or 1.56 per cent, of the 5,169,727 attendances by Protestant Dissenters recorded in the 1851 Religious Census.² Although membership grew as the century progressed, the denomination remained small and the Presbyterian churches in England were estimated to have a communicant membership of 10,000 in 1840, 38,000 in 1870, 46,540 in 1876 (when most congregations united to form the Presbyterian Church of England) and 76,071 in 1900.³ At this last date the Congregationalists recorded 257,435 members, while the Methodists (Wesleyans, New Connexion, Bible Christians, Primitives, and United Methodist Free Churches) totalled 728,200.⁴ It is understandable therefore that Presbyterians in nineteenth-century England have been subject to less close scrutiny than other Nonconformist denominations. However a detailed examination of the structure of an individual congregation can help to clarify the extent to which they formed a distinct group within the English Dissenting community.

In large parts of the country there were virtually no Presbyterians; elsewhere, particularly in Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, and Westmorland, significant numbers of long-established congregations flourished.⁵ The spread of new congregations mirrored the migration of Scots and Irish.⁶ On coming

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1. A.D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914* (London, 1976), p. 41.
 2. Gilbert, p. 42; A.H. Drysdale, *History of the Presbyterians in England: their Rise, Decline and Revival* (London, 1889), pp. 605-8; H. Mann, *Report of the Census of Religious Worship, 1851, Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1852-3, LXXXIX*. Mann produced a (now discredited) formula which attempted to translate attendance figures for the morning, afternoon and evening services into actual numbers of separate worshippers. He calculated that 3,007,348 individuals attended one or more Nonconformist services in England, 60,131 (or 2 per cent) of whom were Presbyterians - see H. Mann, "On the Statistical Position of Religious Bodies in England and Wales", *Journal of the Statistical Society*, XVIII (1855), 141-59, and W.S. Pickering, "The 1851 Religious Census - a useless experiment?", *British Journal of Sociology*, XVIII (1967), 382-407.
 3. R. Currie, A. Gilbert and L. Horsley, *Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles since 1700* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 132-3.
 4. Currie and others, *Churches and Churchgoers*, pp. 142 and 149.
 5. J.D. Gay, *The Geography of Religion in England* (London, 1971), pp. 129-30.
 6. Currie and others, *Churches and Churchgoers*, pp. 47-8; E.G. Ravenstein, in "The Laws of Migration", *Journal of the Statistical Society*, XLVIII (1885), 165-235, states that between 1841 and 1881 the percentage of Scots-born in England rose from 0.6 to 0.98 (pp. 178-9).

south the former encountered a very different denominational structure from that found in Scotland where the various Presbyterian churches far outnumbered other denominations.⁷ In the course of the eighteenth century the indigenous English Presbyterian church had gradually died out as all but a few congregations declared themselves either Unitarian or Independent.⁸ It was the desire of the exiled Scots to establish a familiar church in strange surroundings that was the driving force behind the foundation of Presbyterian churches in Victorian England. By the end of the century four such churches had been set up in Hull: Dagger Lane (later to become Spring Bank) in 1838, Prospect Street in 1866, Holderness Road in 1872, and Newington in 1894.⁹ It is the earliest foundation, Dagger Lane/Spring Bank, which forms the basis of this study.

Early in 1838 a group of worshippers described as "attached to the doctrine and worship of the United Associate Synod of Scotland" was established under the aegis of the Newcastle presbytery of the Secession Church.¹⁰ The congregation organised itself according to the accepted Presbyterian pattern. Elders were elected to assist the minister in the pastoral oversight of the members and a Board of Management was elected to attend to such matters as finance and the care of property. After two and a half years the congregation considered itself in a position to take a five-year lease on a chapel in Dagger Lane in the centre of Hull's Old Town, and subsequently the building was purchased from its owner, Mr. Hill, a Swedenborgian minister.¹¹ The declining population of the Old Town, which fell in the twenty years after 1861 from 17,000 to 11,000, and the establishment within a mile of the chapel of two other Presbyterian congregations (Prospect Street and Holderness Road) undoubtedly encouraged the move in 1875 from Dagger Lane to newly built premises on

7. Currie and others, *Churches and Churchgoers*, p. 219; D.M. Thompson, "The Religious Census of 1851" in *The Census and Social Structure: an Interpretive Guide to Nineteenth-century Censuses for England and Wales*, ed. R. Lawton (London, 1978), 241-86, at p. 285.
8. Drysdale, *Presbyterians*, pp. 526-42.
9. These are illustrated in D. Neave, *Lost Churches and Chapels of Hull* (Hull, 1991), pp. 10, 21, 39, 45 and 60.
10. With the coming together of the United Secession Church and the Relief Church in Scotland in 1847 to form the United Presbyterian Church, Dagger Lane became one of the fifty or so United Presbyterian congregations in England: Drysdale, *Presbyterians*, pp. 607-8; K.M. Black, *The Scots Churches in England* (Edinburgh and London, 1906), p. 359; Board of Management Minutes, 1838-50, of the Dagger Lane Church, EUR 3/20, 8 April 1838. The records of the Dagger Lane/Spring Bank (EUR 3), Prospect Street (EUR 2), and Newington (EUR 4) Presbyterian Churches are now deposited in the Humberside County Record Office, Beverley. Those of the Holderness Road Church are in the possession of Holderness Road United Reformed Church, Hull.
11. EUR 3/20, 18 November 1840 and 30 March 1848.

Spring Bank, a rapidly expanding inner suburban area.¹² The union of the English United Presbyterian congregations and the Presbyterian Church in England in 1876 brought these three local churches together as sister congregations in the Presbyterian Church of England, a fully autonomous body which had cut direct institutional dependence upon Scottish parents. At the end of the century there were some 1,100 members on the rolls of the four Presbyterian churches in Hull. Prospect Street was easily the largest with 519, Holderness Road had 213, Newington 238, and Spring Bank 142.¹³ Although records for all four survive, those for the last are notably more detailed (as regards the occupation and geographical origin of members and so forth) and have thus made it possible to undertake an unusually wide-ranging study of an urban Presbyterian congregation throughout the Victorian period.

From the original thirty-two members the Dagger Lane/Spring Bank congregation grew slowly, but not altogether steadily, reaching a peak membership of 142 in 1899 (see Table 1).¹⁴

The decline in membership in mid-century was partly attributable to the uneasy relationship between the Revd. James Rome and his flock. Rome was a striking figure with bright red hair, given to unconventional and obsessive behaviour. He habitually imposed himself uninvited on one church family for his Sunday evening meal and, if it were raining, would stay the night. He was passionately interested in geology, contributing to the debate on the age of mankind. None of this endeared him to his congregation.¹⁵ In turn, however, Rome also had cause for complaint as his stipend was in perpetual arrears; indeed throughout the century the financial position of the church was

12. L.M. Brown, "Modern Hull" in *The Victoria History of the Counties of England, A History of the County of York: East Riding*, vol. 1, *The City of Kingston upon Hull*, ed. K.J. Allison (London, 1969), 215-86, at p. 231. The Presbyterian Church in England and the English Synod of the United Presbyterian Church united in 1876 to form the Presbyterian Church of England.
13. Communicants' Roll Book, 1900-1921, EUR 2/6 (Prospect Street); Communicants' Roll Book, 1898-1908, Holderness Road; Communicants' Roll Book, 1894-1913, EUR 4/4 (Newington); Communicants' Roll Book, 1891-1903, EUR 3/4 (Dagger Lane).
14. The names of all full members were entered on the Communicants' Rolls. Members joined either for the first time by profession of faith, or were transferred from another church roll on production of a disjunction certificate which testified as to their good standing. In later years the rolls of the Spring Bank church were revised biennially (from 1882 to 1890) and then annually. For the early years a cumulative roll was maintained with updated lists purged of those who had left or lapsed, drawn up only from time to time (i.e. Session Minutes, EUR 3/9, 25 November 1838, 20 December 1840, and 22 August 1845; Communicants' Roll, 1847-84, EUR 3/2, 26 March 1847, December 1852, July 1869, 11 April 1871, and 2 July 1878), normally when a new minister was called.
15. J.L. Rome, *The Abbeville Jaw: an Episode in the Great Controversy, being a paper read to the Hull Literary and Philosophical Society, March 15, 1864* (London and Hull, 1864); S.V. Wood and J.L. Rome, "On the Glacial and Post-glacial structure of Lincolnshire and south-east Yorkshire", *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London*, XXIV (1868), 146-84.

Table 1
Communicant Members on the Membership Roll at various dates

	Male		Female		Total
	N	%	N	%	N
1838	20	62.5	12	37.5	32
1840	23	48.9	24	51.1	47
1845	39	51.3	37	48.7	76
1847	33	47.1	37	52.9	70
1852	34	48.6	36	51.4	70
1869	23	49.0	24	51.0	47
1871	31	48.4	33	51.6	64
1878	54	40.0	81	60.0	135
1882	47	38.2	76	61.8	123
1884	46	36.8	79	63.2	125
1886	48	41.0	69	59.0	117
1888	46	39.3	71	60.7	117
1890	49	39.2	76	60.8	125
1891	51	39.8	77	60.2	128
1892	47	37.6	78	62.4	125
1893	47	38.5	75	61.5	122
1894	47	38.8	74	61.2	121
1895	46	38.3	74	61.7	120
1896	49	39.5	75	60.5	124
1897	49	38.6	78	61.4	127
1898	55	40.4	81	59.6	136
1899	58	40.8	84	59.2	142

Sources: see footnote 13.

precarious.¹⁶ Following an exceptionally low attendance of twenty-two communicants (including the minister and three elders) the opinions of the members were canvassed and many complained that they were “not comfortable under the Rev. Rome.”¹⁷ By the time he resigned in 1869 the roll had shrunk to forty-seven, from seventy in 1852.¹⁸ The location of the church, stranded in the old centre of the town as the more prosperous inhabitants moved out, was also cited as a reason for declining numbers and income.¹⁹ Some of those who left defected to the new Presbyterian church in Prospect Street and many familiar names appear in its Seat Rent Book though not all committed themselves to

16. Board of Management Minutes, 1850-60, 1860-69, and 1869-78, EUR 3/21, 22, and 23, *passim*.

17. Session Minutes, 1855-73, EUR 3/10 *passim*, and EUR 3/21, 9 February 1859.

18. EUR 3/2, December 1852 and July 1869.

19. EUR 3/10, 14 January and 27 February 1859.

formal membership.²⁰ When Prospect Street opened a mission station in Naylors Row (just east of the River Hull) in 1872 several East Hull families switched their allegiance to this more convenient church. And the relocation of Spring Bank in 1875 encouraged further movement to the East Hull congregation which had been raised to full church status in 1873 and had moved to Holderness Road. So the figures for the growth of the Spring Bank congregation should be viewed in the context of the proliferation of Presbyterian churches in Hull as a whole. Prospect Street's membership grew from forty-four in 1868 to 408 in 1894; Holderness Road's increased from nineteen in 1872 to 234 in 1875 and then fluctuated between 200 and 220; Newington, starting as a mission hall about 1880 and gaining full status in 1893, had 238 members by 1900.²¹ In the later decades of the century there was a good deal of movement between the four churches, often, but by no means always, coinciding with a change of address. Although the opening of the Spring Bank premises had the desired effect of boosting numbers, the resulting increase was steady rather than spectacular.

In the last two decades of the century the female members of the congregation outnumbered the male by about three to two, whereas earlier the proportion of men had been higher, three-fifths in 1832 and around half in the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s. By the end of 1849 equal numbers of men and women had joined, but thereafter the cumulative total of women draws steadily away so that of the 1,009 individuals who committed themselves to full membership in the course of the century 560 were women and 449 men (see Table 2).

Table 2
Numbers of Members Joining, 1838-99

	Males		Females		Total
	N	%	N	%	N
1838-49	106	50.0	106	50.0	212
1850-59	55	39.3	85	60.7	140
1860-69	64	50.0	64	50.0	128
1870-79	90	42.9	120	57.1	210
1880-89	68	40.5	100	59.5	168
1890-99	66	43.7	85	56.3	151
Total	449		560		1009

Source: see footnote 13.

20. Seat Rent Accounts Book, EUR 2/29, 1867-69; Members' Roll Book, 1867-1970, EUR 2/4.

21. EUR 4/4.

This preponderance of women has been observed across a wide spectrum of church congregations. In 1874 the Church of Scotland recorded that 57 per cent of communicants were female.²² A survey conducted by the *Daily News* in Inner London in 1902-3 found the highest percentage of women, 65.7, among Anglican worshippers, followed by Roman Catholics, at 64.2, but with the major Nonconforming churches not far behind, ranging from over 59 per cent among Baptists and Presbyterians to 56.8 for the Salvationists, with only the Primitive Methodists returning a percentage (53.9) below that of the proportion of females of fifteen and over in the local population as a whole.²³

The membership rolls do not, however, tell the full story about the wider church community, because many attended regularly without committing themselves to membership. In February 1844 the elders reported an attendance of seventy-seven members and seventy-three adherents and estimated that an average of 115 worshipped each Sunday. By 1850, with a membership of eighty, some 140 persons were attending services, and these figures are broadly in line with the census returns of 1851, which (using Horace Mann's formula) translate into 147 individual worshippers.²⁴ During the 1850s membership remained static, hovering around seventy whereas total worshippers fell from 100 in 1853 to about eighty-five at the end of the decade, a decline, in part at least, attributable to the eccentric character of Mr. Rome.²⁵ The number of those renting seats was initially well in excess of the official membership, but this was only to be expected as seats were reserved for children as well as adults. The elders reckoned that the church in Dagger Lane had about 500 sittings, of which 144 were let in 1842, 113 in 1844, and 130 in 1854. Thereafter the decline reflected the drop in the attendance averages, with lettings remaining well under 100, dipping to fifty-seven in 1862, but recovering to about eighty in subsequent years.²⁶ While the financial commitment may have deterred some would-be members, many adherents were prepared to rent seats, whereas some members failed to do so, even though it was expected that they should.²⁷

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22. C.G. Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (London, 1987), p. 251.
 23. H. McLeod, *Class and Religion in the late Victorian City* (London, 1974), p. 308. Similar figures are recorded for York (E. Royle, *Nonconformity in Nineteenth-century York* (York, 1985), p. 20). See also R. Mudie-Smith, *The Religious Life of London* (London, 1904), pp. 442-3, and D. Bebbington, *Victorian Nonconformity* (Bangor, 1992), p. 33.
 24. Session Minutes, 1838-55, EUR 3/9, 2 February 1844 and 15 April 1850. For Mann's formula see note 2 above.
 25. EUR 3/10, 14 January 1859.
 26. EUR 3/9, 2 February 1844; EUR 3/10, 26 January 1859; EUR 3/20, 9 February 1842; EUR 3/21, 31 October 1857, 23 January and 5 October 1858, 9 April and 18 October 1859; EUR 3/22, *passim*.
 27. On 2 February 1844 eighteen members were reported as failing to rent (EUR 3/9) although it was expected of them (EUR 3/9, 7 September 1848). The managers of the Charlotte Street United Presbyterian Church in Aberdeen, in 1842, were not prepared to tolerate such dereliction of duty and put pressure on non-renters (A. MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class: the Disruption years in Aberdeen* (London, 1974), p. 133).

As the century wore on, however, attitudes changed. In particular, the opening of a new building provoked a debate on the issue of seat rents.²⁸ When the congregation moved to Spring Bank the elders and managers decided to abandon the practice, strongly supported by the minister, John Forrest, who declared that he had long believed there was no theoretical justification for imposing rents.²⁹ Charging for sittings had been a contentious issue in wider church circles for many years, and Horace Mann in his report on the 1851 Religious Census had identified the practice as likely to deter working men. Since 1866 the Incorporated Free and Open Church Association had been pressing the Church of England to forgo this source of income and by the 1890s there were clear signs that this campaign was having an effect.³⁰ Among Nonconformists the issue began to be more widely discussed in the last quarter of the century. But while seat rents might clearly have exercised a broadly deterrent effect, they could hardly be directly related to the widely-deplored absence of men from congregations of all kinds.

The Presbyterians, however, appear to have been among the more successful Nonconformist denominations in attracting male members. Bebbington suggests that this may be explained by their close ethnic ties, as well as the higher social profile of the congregations, because it was working-class men in particular who were missing from churches.³¹ Men were more likely than women to attach themselves to congregations as adherents but demur at assuming full membership. Perhaps some were deterred by the financial burden that such a step entailed, though others supported the church as either managers or trustees, or through financial contributions while remaining adherents.³² A few such men eventually came into full membership, but many never took this step.

The personal motives that lay behind the decision of any individual to become a fully professed member cannot be known, but the church records reveal that it was often the birth of a child which prompted action. As was the

28. K.S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England* (London, 1963), pp. 96 and 107.
29. EUR 3/23, 13 July 1874. As late as 1894 a delegation from the Synod and Presbytery suggested that seat rents should be charged but the managers took no action on the proposal (Board of Management Minutes, 1894-98, EUR 3/26, 15 February 1894).
30. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes*, pp. 48-55, 96-7, and 106-08; N. Yates, "The Religious Life of Victorian Leeds" in *A History of Modern Leeds*, ed. D. Fraser (Manchester, 1980), pp. 250-69, at p. 259. For the situation in Scotland, see C.G. Brown, *Social History of Religion*, pp. 153, 155-7, and 161.
31. Bebbington, *Victorian Nonconformity*, p. 33.
32. MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class*, pp. 132-3; P. Hillis "Presbyterianism and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Glasgow: a Study of Nine Churches", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XXXII (1981), 47-64, at pp. 56-7.

case in Scotland, only the children of members were eligible for baptism.³³ The usual practice was for both parents to be admitted but in a number of cases only one joined. Some were merely transferring membership (perhaps as newcomers to the area) but others were admitted by profession of faith. Over the years more than 350 babies and a sprinkling of adults were baptised, but very few of these, perhaps a dozen, are known to have become members by 1900.³⁴ In part this was no more than a reflection of the transient nature of the congregation. Few families remained in contact for the eighteen or so years which would normally elapse between baptism and full membership. But while such mobility whisked away potential members who had been baptised as infants, it also ensured a steady flow of new blood.

The transitory condition of the membership did no more than reflect the nature of the local Scottish community. Although at times the church showed unease about its predominantly Scottish identity (and on this account decided in 1853 to remove the word "Scotch" from the noticeboard in Dagger Lane) in popular parlance it was known as the "Scotch Church" and by 1860 the original wording had indeed been restored.³⁵ The degree of the congregation's Scottishness can be gauged in various ways. Many members can be identified as either migrants from Scotland or of Scottish extraction. The members' records contain many distinctively Scottish names and, because of the Presbyterians' use of disjunction certificates to prove the good-standing of an individual wishing to transfer membership, they also frequently indicate the provenance of incomers and the destination of leavers.³⁶ Of the thirty-two persons who founded the church in 1838, eighteen had Scottish connections. In subsequent years a much higher proportion of Scots was normal among new members (see Table 3).

As the number joining in any one year was often low, too much weight cannot be put on figures for individual years. Nonetheless, after 1874 there was a distinct decline in the proportion of Scots.

Over the Victorian period as a whole, however, the church clearly depended on a steady influx of Scots to maintain its strength. Although the number of

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33. EUR 3/10, 17 December 1872. This is also confirmed by the Baptismal Register, 1838-1975 (in the possession of St. Ninian's and St. Andrew's United Reformed Church, Chanterlands Avenue, Hull) which records the baptism of only five infants in the nineteenth century neither of whose parents were members. See also Hillis, "Presbyterianism and Social Class", p. 49.
 34. Because of a gap in the baptismal records between 1859 and 1871 exact figures cannot be given.
 35. EUR 3/21, 5 November 1853; EUR 3/23, 4 August 1860.
 36. Members are deemed to have Scottish connections if their names were distinctively Scottish, if they had either come from or left for Scotland, or if they were known to be Scots-born from the census returns. The census returns for 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891 (available on microfilm in the Local Studies Library, Humberside County Libraries, Hull) were examined for some individuals for whom more information was required but a complete survey of all members was not attempted.

Table 3
Numbers of those Joining with known Scottish Connections, 1838-99

	Members with known Scottish connections			% of membership with Scottish connections		
	M	F	T	M	F	T
1839-49	68	67	135	64.2	63.2	63.7
1850-59	31	52	83	56.4	61.2	59.9
1869-69	46	45	91	71.9	70.3	71.1
1870-79	64	75	139	71.1	62.5	66.2
1880-89	37	46	83	54.4	46.0	49.4
1890-99	33	50	83	50.0	58.8	55.0
Total	279	335	614	62.1	59.8	60.9

Sources: see footnotes 13 and 36.

those born in Scotland and residing in Hull grew in the course of the century, as a proportion of the total population of the city the Scottish element declined. Thus, while numbers had risen from 855 in 1841 to 2177 by 1901, the percentage of Scots-born inhabitants fell from 1.3 to 0.9. However, because census figures take account only of birth place, they become steadily less reliable as a measure of those who considered themselves as having cultural links with Scotland. What the church records reveal is the mobile character of the local Scots population, both within Hull itself and beyond. Many members joined for a year or two before setting off, either back to Scotland or to another northern seaport such as Liverpool, Birkenhead or Hartlepool. Even many of those who remained longer in Hull changed house frequently, often moving down the road or into the next street, as was of course common at almost all levels of Victorian society.

However, the church also recruited from local young adults as well as from its Scottish constituency. Some of these entrants had ties of kinship with the congregation and can be described as "young persons disposed to membership through the influence of their families."³⁷ Daughters were more susceptible to "family influences" than sons: whereas sixty-nine daughters became members, only nineteen sons did so. It is possible that sons followed the pattern observed by Bebbington in attaching themselves as adherents rather than members, though this would hardly explain so wide a discrepancy.³⁸ In all, eighty-eight of

37. Currie and others, *Churches and Churchgoers*, p. 46; Hillis, "Presbyterianism and Social Class", pp. 54-5.

38. Bebbington, *Victorian Nonconformity*, pp. 32-3.

the new members who are identified as joining by profession of faith were children of members (see Table 4).³⁹

Wives would appear to have exerted more pressure than parents: twenty-one husbands of members joined by profession of faith – and twelve women were brought into the church by their husbands. Other young people may have had connections through the Sunday school which flourished from the early days of the church.⁴⁰ The Sunday school movement is known to have drawn into the orbit of the churches many children of non-members but it appears that only a small proportion of these ever chose to become members themselves.⁴¹ The Dagger Lane/Spring Bank church also served as a centre for various social activities, such as the Band of Hope, a library, a sewing circle, and a Mutual Improvement Society, all of which may have attracted outsiders into the circle of adherents.⁴²

In total 110 persons who had no apparent Scottish links and no family associations with the church chose to become members by profession of faith. Not all of these were young, but many were in their late-teens or early-twenties. The church was therefore attracting local people from beyond the immediate family/Scottish constituency and to some extent was functioning as a “normal” Nonconformist church and not simply as a haven for the Scottish diaspora.

Once the central site in Dagger Lane had been abandoned the new church in Spring Bank assumed more of the nature of a neighbourhood church. Formerly members had converged from various sectors of the city – the old town, the streets immediately to the north and west, and Drypool to the east of the river – now they were heavily concentrated in the Spring Bank/Beverley Road area. It is noticeable that those with no obvious Scottish connection lived close by. But while proximity was important in determining membership, family ties also played their part, so that although Alexander and Margaret Gemmell (1861-79) lived within quarter of a mile of Holderness Road Church, they retained an association with Spring Bank, nearly two miles away, until 1879. Another Drypool resident, William Hume, remained a member for thirty-nine years, from 1860 until 1899 and his daughter Helen attended from 1871 to 1893 although his wife moved to the Holderness Road Church in 1882. The Prospect Street Church enjoyed a less clearly defined catchment area than the other

39. The church records before 1847 are unreliable as to the method of joining. From the arrival of Mr. Renton onwards it was the usual practice to state whether the individual was joining by profession of faith or transfer but the method of joining is not recorded for 145 of the 868 joining from 1847 onwards.

40. EUR 3/20, 6 April 1842 is the first mention of a Sunday school which then had eighty children, but in 1844 (EUR 3/9, 2 February) the numbers are given as fifty-five to sixty children.

41. Currie and others, *Churches and Churchgoers*, pp. 86-8.

42. EUR 3/21, 30 June 1855; EUR 3/22, 23 October 1874; Session Minutes, 1873-89, EUR 3/11, 27 March 1881; Board of Management Minutes, 1885-94, EUR 3/25, 15 February 1894; EUR 3/26, 13 February 1895, 30 October 1895, and 3 February 1897; Board of Management Minutes, 1898-1910, EUR 3/27, 26 January 1898, and 5 June 1899.

Table 4
Method of Joining, 1847 to 1899

	Unknown	By transfer	By profession of faith
1847-49	11	34	26
1850-59	25	63	52
1860-69	24	59	45
1870-79	25	95	90
1880-89	51	64	53
1890-99	9	73	69

Sources: see note 13. Before 1847 information is not given on the method of joining.

three. Under its first minister, Dr. William McKay (1868-85), an active evangelist in Hull and beyond, the church proved particularly dynamic, and established off-shoots not only in Holderness Road and Newington but also in distant York and Grimsby.⁴³ McKay was one of the stars of the Presbyterian ministry and acted as a magnet drawing large congregations. Located in the city centre, Prospect Street attracted Scots from all parts of the city and suburbs and had less of the character of a "local" church than Spring Bank.

Within the Dagger Lane/Spring Bank congregation, however, the leaders were predominantly from north of the border. All six ministers were Scots and only Peter Paterson, who attended the Presbyterian College in Queen's Square, London, had been trained in England.⁴⁴ Four of the ministers remained for less than six years - James White (1840-5), Alexander Renton (1847-51), John Forrest (1871-7), and Peter Paterson (1878-81). But James Rome served for a turbulent fifteen years from 1853 to 1868 and at the end of the century Peter Duncan's ministry of thirty-five years (1882-1917) encompassed a serious dispute among the elders and managers.⁴⁵ As good relations between the minister and the office-bearers were essential for the well-being of the congregation, ministers had to tread delicately, especially when dealing with men whose association with the local church went back many years. Elders who assisted the minister in the pastoral care of the members often long outlasted ministers, while

43. Anonymous, *Thirty Years Work in connection with the Prospect Street Church Hull, 1868-1898* (Hull, 1898), pp. 16, 20 and 22; F.H. Legg, *The Story of St. Columba's Church, York, 1873-1973* (York, 1973), p. 6.

44. The information on the careers of the ministers is taken from the files kept in the Library of the United Reformed Church History Society, 86 Tavistock Place, London. The educational standard of the Presbyterian clergy in England was generally of a higher level than that of other Nonconformist ministers. See K.D. Brown, *A Social History of the Nonconformist Ministry in England and Wales, 1800-1930* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 56-80.

45. EUR 3/11, 11 November 1883, and 7 January 1884; Board of Management Minutes, 1878-85, EUR 3/24, 13 March 1884.

managers, although initially elected for a three-year term, were frequently re-elected. Indeed many men held both offices simultaneously.⁴⁶

One elder, George Wallace, served under six ministers. He was a founder-member in 1838, one of the three original elders, and remained a loyal member until his death in 1882. In addition to thirty-nine years as an elder he also served for eighteen years as a manager and for over twenty as a property trustee. So long a connection with the church was unusual. Of the 867 individuals whose membership fell wholly within the period 1838-1900, 228 (26.3 per cent) stayed for less than two years and nearly two-thirds stayed for less than five. Only 118 (13.6 per cent) remained for ten years, and twenty-five (2.9 per cent) for twenty or more. Apart from George Wallace only one person, Elizabeth Moran (1853-95), was a church member for over forty years (see Table 5).

Table 5
Duration of Membership, 1838 to 1899

Years	1838-49	1850-59	1860-69	1870-79	1880-89	1890-99
Up to 2	96	44	59	74	76	45
5	51	55	18	66	34	10
10	35	19	30	33	21	13
15	17	8	9	10	8	0
20	10	3	6	6	0	0
25	3	5	1	5	0	0
30	3	2	0	1	0	0
35	0	1	1	0	0	0
40	0	0	0	0	0	0
Over 40	1	1	0	0	0	0
Member in 1900	0	0	2	12	32	88

Sources: see footnote 13.

The numbers do not tally with the totals of members because some members left and rejoined.

Even among the elders there was considerable mobility. Of the forty men whose eldership fell entirely within the nineteenth century, fourteen were elders for one year or less, with the quickest turnover taking place between 1870 and 1889. (See Table 6). The most common reason for resignation after so short a time was departure from the area.

46. Between 6 January 1881 (EUR 3/25) and 4 December 1893 (EUR 3/26) the managers were replaced by deacons who performed the same duties but were not subject to regular re-election. I have used the term "manager" throughout.

Table 6
Length of Elders' Service, 1838 to 1899

Years	1838-49	1850-59	1860-69	1870-79	1880-89	1890-99
Up to 2	2	1	1	6	4	2
5	3	1	3	0	2	3 + 2c
10	2	2	0	0	2	0
15	0	0	1	1	1	0
20	1	0	0	0	0 + 1c	0
Over 20	1	0	0	0	0	0

Sources: Elders' minutes, EUR 3/9, 10, 11, 12.
c indicates a continuing elder in 1900.

The elders' meeting (or Session as it was termed) was a select group: in the early years it usually comprised three or four men, rising to five or six in the final decade of the century. Stability was provided by a few long-serving elders – George Wallace, John Lumsden (1838-44 and 1847-54), Alexander McCrorie (1842-59), and John Mackie (1884-1905). In a small congregation there was no large pool of men from whom office-bearers could be chosen. Indeed, of the 449 nineteenth-century male members 155 held office of some sort. In the early years all the elders were also managers, and this was again the case after 1895 when it was decided that all elders should be *ex officio* members of the management committee.⁴⁷ Elevation to the eldership could be swift: over a quarter of elders were members for less than a year before election. However, once the congregation had become well established only those new members who had already been ordained as elders in another church were catapulted straight into the Session. There was no set pattern of progression from manager to elder: election as an elder could often come from appointment to the Board of Management, and several men declined the eldership while remaining managers. It is clear that the level of commitment dissuaded some from accepting posts. Office-bearers frequently gave substantial financial support to the church and also undertook time-consuming duties. Elders were allocated pastoral oversight of districts and would be expected to visit members in their area every six months.⁴⁸

Membership of the Session and Board of Management was open to male members and decided by polls of all members. In the elections for which we have figures there was a high level of participation.⁴⁹ There is no evidence that

47. EUR 3/26, 25 February 1895.

48. EUR 3/9, 13 November 1841, 6 May 1843, October 1847, and 19 September 1854; EUR 3/10, January 1870, October 1871, and 9 June 1872; EUR 3/11, 30 March 1874, 7 June 1875, and 19 September 1883; Session Minutes, 1889-1906, 15 June 1897.

49. EUR 3/10, 27 June 1858; EUR 3/11, 7 December 1880, 13 November 1882, and 5 April 1883. See A. MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class*, pp. 121-3 on the election of elders in Aberdeen.

candidates were pre-selected by an "appointments' committee" and it would appear that consent was not required before nomination. On many occasions men declined office, for in Hull election as an elder or manager entailed the assumption of duties and responsibilities without any of the compensating social status which went with positions of this kind in Scottish Presbyterianism.⁵⁰

In so far as there can be said to have been a hierarchy of Presbyterian churches in late-nineteenth-century Hull, Prospect Street appears to have enjoyed the highest standing. Not, however, that things were ever as clear-cut as in that other northern port, Liverpool, where the middle and working classes lived in well-defined and geographically separated areas, with the working classes in Kirkdale to the north and professional and business families clustered in the Mount Pleasant and Princes Park areas to the south.⁵¹ If any of the Hull churches could be described as "working-class" it was Holderness Road, whose elders themselves claimed that "not a few of our members are among the poorest of the poor" when appealing for assistance in 1884.⁵²

Some twenty-five years earlier the Dagger Lane elders had made a similar claim when explaining the increasing financial troubles of their church.⁵³ Was this true? The occupations of many members are known from the church's own records, commercial directories or census returns,⁵⁴ and can be categorised in various ways: according to the Registrar General's classifications or modifications of his scheme, or by allocation to specific interests, such as, retailing, shipbuilding, sea-faring. The Registrar General's scheme outlined in the *Classification of Occupations 1950* (HMSO, 1951) is often taken as the basis for division into social class. However, its five occupational sections: I – professional, II – intermediate, III – skilled, IV – partly skilled, and V – unskilled, are not entirely satisfactory. In particular group III is too wide, since it includes both manual and non-manual workers, and (at Armstrong's suggestion) shopkeepers of all sorts.⁵⁵ Under this scheme most of the men who joined the church fell into group III, although the upward drift in social status at the end of

50. EUR 3/9, EUR 3/10 and EUR 3/11 *passim* for men declining to serve; MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class*, pp. 121-6; Hillis, "Presbyterianism and Social Class", pp. 52-3.

51. C.G. Pooley, "The Residential Segregation of Migrant Communities in mid-Victorian Liverpool", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, n.s. II (1977), 364-82, at p. 370; R. Dennis, *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century: a Social Geography* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 214, 217, and 223.

52. Session Minutes, 1873-87, Holderness Road, 19 November 1884.

53. EUR 3/10, 14 January 1859; EUR 3/21, 19 February 1859.

54. Occupations can be found in the Baptismal Register and on the Communicants' Rolls; also various commercial directories for the years 1834 to 1910 and census returns from 1841 to 1891 were consulted in the Local Studies Library, Albion Street, Hull. Of the 449 men who joined between 1838 and 1899, the occupations of 352 have been traced.

55. W.A. Armstrong, "The Use of Information about Occupation" in *Nineteenth-century Society: Essays about the Use of Quantitative Methods for the Study of Social Data*, ed. E.A. Wrigley (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 191-310, at pp. 209-9; E. Royle, *Modern Britain: a Social History, 1750-1985* (London, 1987), pp. 86-8.

the century can be seen in the decline of classes IV and V and the increase in the members belonging to groups I and II from 10.2 per cent between 1860 and 1869 to 46.5 per cent in the final decade (see Table 7).

Table 7
Social Class of Men Joining, 1838-98

	1838-49		1850-59		1860-69		1870-79		1880-89		1890-99	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I	2	2.1	1	2.2	4	8.0	7	9.8	4	8.0	5	11.6
II	21	22.6	8	17.4	1	2.0	19	26.8	16	32.0	15	34.9
III	60	64.6	29	63.0	36	72.0	44	62.0	28	56.0	22	51.2
IV	2	2.1	2	4.4	4	8.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.3
V	8	8.6	6	13.0	5	10.0	1	1.4	2	4.0	0	0.0
Total	93		46		50		71		50		43	
III												
a	1	1.1	1	2.2	1	2.0	5	7.1	9	18.0	4	9.3
b	19	20.5	17	37.0	4	8.0	14	19.7	11	22.0	7	16.3
c	40	43.0	11	23.8	31	62.0	25	35.2	8	16.0	11	25.6

a - clerks, b - shopkeepers, c - artisans

Sources: Members' rolls, commercial directories and census returns; see footnote 54.

Whatever way the occupations of the male members are analysed a consistent picture is painted: a community dependent on shopkeeping, the sea and shipbuilding for its employment with a leavening of professional and business men (see Table 8).

Over the whole period the largest group was that concerned with shipyards where the development of steam-powered iron ships demanded the skills of engineers, boilermakers, engine-fitters, riveters, and carpenters. Most of those employed in these new trades came from outside the area, many from Scottish yards. In all sixty-eight men in the congregation can be identified as craftsmen in the shipbuilding and engineering industries, and of these fifty had links with Scotland. Shipbuilding towns all around England saw this influx of Scots, often Clyde-trained, drawn by the demand for skills which could not be supplied by local workers. The naval dockyards at Plymouth and Woolwich prompted the founding of Presbyterian churches and the ocean liner trade at Southampton

attracted many Scottish engineers.⁵⁶ The same was true of Merseyside, another great shipbuilding area. Although in size the Scots immigrant community in Liverpool never rivalled that of the Irish, it amounted to 3.7 per cent of the population in 1851 and 4.1 in 1871, significantly higher proportions than were found in either Manchester (1.6 and 1.9 per cent) or Birmingham (0.4 and 0.7 per cent).⁵⁷ As in Hull, large numbers of the Liverpool Scots were employed in dockside metal manufacture and shipbuilding and several Presbyterian churches were founded. Indeed, even in the North East (which had a strong Presbyterian tradition) new churches were founded in response to the influx of Scottish engineers.⁵⁸

Table 8
Occupations of Men Joining, 1838-99

	1838-49		1850-9		1860-9		1870-9		1880-9		1890-9	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total with known occupation	93		46		50		71		50		43	
Ship construction	18	19.4	2	4.3	25	50.0	23	32.4	3	6.0	8	18.6
Employed on ships	7	7.5	4	8.7	1	2.0	8	11.3	5	10.0	2	4.7
Services to ships	14	15.1	5	10.9	0	0.0	2	2.8	4	8.0	4	9.4
Clerks/commercial	4	4.3	2	4.3	1	2.0	12	16.9	16	32.0	10	23.3
Other craft	11	11.8	3	6.5	8	16.0	7	9.9	5	10.0	5	11.6
Retailing	19	20.5	16	34.8	4	8.0	11	15.5	8	16.0	5	11.6
Professional*	3	3.2	1	2.2	2	4.0	3	4.2	2	4.0	3	6.9
Labourers	11	11.8	8	17.4	7	14.0	1	1.4	2	4.0	1	2.3
Others	6	6.4	5	10.9	2	4.0	4	5.6	5	10.0	5	11.6

* Professional includes ministers, teachers, doctors, solicitors and army officers.

Sources: see Table 7.

The number of engineers employed in Hull rose from fewer than 1,000 in 1851 to over 2,000 in 1864 and reached over 3,000 by 1891. In 1851 623 men were recorded as specifically employed in shipbuilding under the general classification of "metal traders", and by late 1880 C. and W. Earle, the largest shipbuilder in Hull, alone employed some 3,000 men. The industry was, however, notoriously cyclical as Earle's output figures demonstrate. The number of men employed fluctuated in step with the work in hand. Thus when business improved after the

56. E. Welch, "Presbyterianism and the Rise of Marine Engineering", *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England*, XIV (1968-72), 141-51; J.M. Bellamy, "Some Aspects of the Economy of Hull in the Nineteenth Century with Special Reference to Business History", 2 vols. University of Hull Ph.D. Thesis (1965), I, 115; Black, *Scots Churches*, p. 239.

57. Pooley, "Residential Segregation", p. 380.

58. Black, *Scots Churches*, pp. 307-12, 323-4, 326, 335, and 338-43.

severe depression of the late 1870s, Earle's workforce grew from 700 in October 1879 to 3,000 in December.⁵⁹

This rise in shipbuilding employment during the later decades was not reflected in the Spring Bank membership. Whereas in the 1860s over half the men joining the church whose occupation is known worked in ship building, only six engineers were admitted in the 1880s and 1890s along with five ship surveyors and naval architects. It would appear that the Holderness Road church, which was sited close to their homes and workplaces, now attracted the Scottish artisans, while the ship surveyors and architects preferred to live in the more expensive Avenues and Pearson Park district which lay in the Spring Bank catchment area. Indeed, in 1884 forty of the seventy-five men on the Holderness Road roll were engineers or ships' carpenters and another thirty were labourers, but only five were shopkeepers. Because of the recession in the shipbuilding industry at the time, many of these men and their families were suffering severe hardship and "not a few" of the members, particularly the labourers, were described as amongst the poorest in the town.⁶⁰ After the opening of the Holderness Road church only one new member at Spring Bank, John Lang (joined 1875), was a manual worker employed in the shipyards.

As well as those employed in building ships, sailors and men who provided services for shipping formed a considerable proportion of the membership of Spring Bank. The sea-going men tended to be officers rather than ordinary seamen: ten captains and fourteen engineers, with only three listed simply as "sailors". As the volume of goods passing through the port increased, various associated occupations, such as customs officers, ship-chandlers and shipping agents, flourished. Over the years at least twenty families with customs service connections joined the church. Fourteen officers themselves joined, eight before 1858 and six after, and wives, daughters and sons were also among the members.

These customs families tended to move on after a year or two as the officers changed postings regularly. However one of the long-time members, Elizabeth Moran, remained in Hull after the death of her husband Patrick who had been a tide surveyor. Her six daughters and her son became members, as did two sons-in-law and two grandchildren. The maritime connections of the family were maintained through the marriage of four daughters, Jemima (who joined in 1856 and was still a member in 1890), Helen (1870 until well into the twentieth century), Jane (1870-84) and Anne (1871-78), to sea captains. Her son William also had shipping interests and became a principal in the firm of Moran and Sanderson, later William Moran and Company, ship owners and brokers.

Another well-known ship owner, John Lumsden of Brownlow Lumsden and Company, described himself as a "general agent" in the Dagger Lane Baptismal Register for 1838, but by the mid-1850s, when he resigned from the church, he was already giving his occupation as ship owner and he appears on the Prospect

59. Bellamy, "Economy of Hull", I, 226; II, 18; II, Appendix VIIB, 4, and 17-18.

60. Session Minutes, 1873-87, Holderness Road, 19 November 1884.

Street roll under this designation.⁶¹ By the 1860s Lumsden was a prominent member of the local community: in 1861 and 1862 he was President of the Chamber of Shipping and Commerce and the following year he served as Chief Magistrate. It was unusual for a member, or former member of the congregation, to reach such a position, although Edward Robson (a member from 1884 to 1898, having transferred from Holderness Road), the owner of the substantial brewing firm of Moors' and Robson's, also became a Justice of the Peace, Sheriff in 1889, and Mayor in 1891.⁶²

Most of the business men associated with the church were engaged in more modest enterprises. Andrew Black (1876-96) progressed from clerk (1878), through manager (1882), to company owner: A. Black and Company, Brass Founders, Coppersmiths, Plumbers and Gasfitters of Castle Street. By 1890 the company described itself as having a large staff and wide connections with engineers and ship-fitters throughout the north of England.⁶³ Also involved with the shipbuilding industry was the firm of Alexander Thomson (a member from 1887 to 1895), Engineers and Boilermakers, St. Andrews Dock. Andrew (1871-84) and William (1872-84) Connell ran one of the smaller seed-crushing mills in the town, Connell Brothers of Oxford Street. Robert Innes (1894-95) was a partner in Innes and Jackson, soap manufacturers in Great Thornton Street, and other occupations represented among the membership included chandlers, an oilcloth manufacturer, a wood merchant, and a wool broker.

However, the overwhelming majority of those engaged in trade were retailers on a small scale. Altogether fifty-two men have been identified as shopkeepers or dealers, and most of them were either drapers (sixteen) or tea dealers or grocers (fourteen). In the early years such traders sometimes gave their occupation as "travelling" draper or tea dealer although they were not consistent in describing themselves as such. Perhaps as incomers they found this end of the market easier to penetrate; but it would be wrong to assume that they were men of no substance or merely transient immigrants.⁶⁴ In fact, such shopkeeping families formed the core of the congregation, especially in the 1840s and 1850s, and many of their menfolk served as elders and managers. Of the eighteen retailers who joined before 1850 only three were members for less than two years, and ten remained over ten years, of whom seven were itinerant tea dealers and one was a travelling draper. In the mid-century period travelling drapers predominated with eight joining between 1851 and 1874, two of whom, John Geddes (1853-86) and Nathan McKinna (1865-96), were not only members for over thirty years but successful in persuading their children to join the

61. Dagger Lane Baptismal Roll; EUR 2/4, 14 March 1869.

62. J. Sheahan, *A History of Hull* (Hull, 1864); p. 302; Bellamy, "Economy of Hull", I, 326.

63. *Bulmer's History and Directory of East Yorkshire* (Preston, 1892); Bellamy, "Economy of Hull", I, 315.

64. As might be suggested by G. Shaw and M.T. Wild, "Retail patterns in the Victorian City", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, n.s. IV (1979), 279-91, at p. 280.

church. The respectability of such men is also shown by the number registered as electors at a time when property qualifications were all important: twelve out of fifteen "travelling" retailers of the 1840s, '50s and '60s were voters.⁶⁵

By the 1880s fewer shopkeepers were becoming members, although in the suburbs where the Spring Bank church was located the number of shops was increasing faster than the growth in population.⁶⁶ In their place more clerks and men engaged in financial activities were joining so that the general complexion of the congregation was becoming distinctly more "white-collar". Whereas only five clerks joined in the thirty years up to 1869, five (described variously as bookkeeper, clerk, banker's clerk, and merchant's clerk) were admitted in the 1870s, twelve in the 1880s and five in the 1890s. Indeed, the proportion of male "white-collar" employees (civil service, local government, school teachers, commercial clerks, bank clerks, law clerks, railway officials, commercial travellers) in the congregation in 1891 - 34.7 per cent - greatly exceeded that in the population of Hull in general - 7.3 per cent.⁶⁷

At the same time the congregation's professional and managerial base was expanding. Before 1870 the ministers stood out as men with formal academic training (although George Wallace [1838-82] the proprietor of the Brook Street Academy was also an ordained minister). The only other nineteenth-century members *known* to have possessed university degrees were David Alexander M.D., L.R.C.P. (1875-9) and Thomas Cameron M.B., C.M. (1895-1902). However, some of those listed in the closing decades as naval architects and managing engineers may also have been graduates.⁶⁸ As the century progressed the interests of such members covered a wide field. From the 1870s various men described as "managers" joined - of the Gas Company, the Hull Tramway Company, the Scottish Legal Life Assurance Office. These, together with managers and professionals in the shipbuilding sphere, raised the proportion of the members who could be regarded as high-status. Thus the congregation matched the general pattern of Nonconformist churches in big English towns in having skilled manual workers as the largest single group in the early Victorian years, and then experiencing a distinct movement towards increasing numbers of clerical workers.⁶⁹

65. The poll books for the following years were consulted in the Local Studies Library, Albion Street, Hull: 1837, 1852, 1857, 1859, 1865, and 1868. For further details see J. Sims, ed. *A Handlist of British Parliamentary Poll Books* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 247-8.
66. G. Shaw, *Process and Pattern in the Geography of Retail Change with special reference to Kingston upon Hull, 1880-1950*, University of Hull Occasional Papers in Geography, XXIV (Hull, 1978), p. 95.
67. G. Crossick, "The Emergence of the Lower Middle Class in Britain" in *The Lower Middle Class in Britain, 1870-1914*, ed. G. Crossick (London, 1977), pp. 11-60, at p. 19.
68. S. Pollard and P. Robertson, *The British Shipbuilding Industry: 1870-1914* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1979), pp. 140-6.
69. Bebbington, *Victorian Nonconformity*, pp. 29-30.

From McLeod's study of church-going in London it would seem that immigrants brought their church attendance habits with them as they migrated.⁷⁰ Within Scotland the social composition of the different Presbyterian churches varied: the established Church of Scotland congregations had somewhat more working-class members than those of either the Free Church or the United Presbyterian Church, while the non-established churches (apart from the Free Church) attracted larger lower-middle-class groups (in which clerks and school teachers were included).⁷¹ However, Scotsmen in Hull until 1866 had no choice as to which Presbyterian church to support. After the founding of Prospect Street as an off-shoot of the Free Church there seems to have been a tendency for those of higher status to become members there, while at the same time Holderness Road absorbed the workers from the shipyards.

Because the Presbyterians were to a large extent ministering to a transient population, comparison with other non-established English denominations is difficult. The large number of shopkeepers and tradesmen echoes the social composition of the Congregationalists, while the proportion of skilled artisans and labourers was lower than that found in Baptist and Primitive Methodist chapels.⁷²

Within the chapel itself there is evidence of men climbing up the social scale, such as John Lumsden or William Moran. By the time Lumsden became Chief Magistrate he had ceased to be a member of Dagger Lane, having left in 1855, but he renewed his Presbyterian affiliation in 1867 by joining Prospect Street and was inducted as an elder there in 1875.⁷³ But for many their membership was too short for any social betterment to take place. And while families moved on to look for work elsewhere and there was a small degree of movement in and out of other Nonconformist denominations, there is no positive evidence of rising social status leading to any leakage to the Anglican establishment.

An analysis of the occupations of the elders shows, as in the studies by MacLaren, Hillis and Gray, that such men were drawn from the higher social strata within the congregation.⁷⁴ (See Table 9).

70. H. McLeod, "Class, Community and Region: the Religious Geography of Nineteenth-century England", in *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain*, VI, ed. M. Hill (London, 1973), pp. 29-72, at pp. 38-41; G.C. Cameron, *The Scots Kirk in London* (Oxford, 1979), p. 78.

71. Hillis, "Presbyterianism and Social Class", p. 54.

72. Currie and others, *Churches and Churchgoers*, p. 56; G. Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain, 1851-75* (London, 1971), p. 408; C.D. Field, "The Social Structure of English Methodism: Eighteenth-Twentieth Centuries", *British Journal of Sociology*, XXVIII (1977), 199-225, at pp. 206-8.

73. EUR 2/4.

74. MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class*, p. 118; Hillis, "Presbyterianism and Social Class", p. 50; R.Q. Gray, "Religion, Culture and Social Class in Edinburgh", in *The Lower Middle Class in Britain* ed. G. Crossick, pp. 134-58, at p. 138.

Table 9
Social Class of Elders, 1838-99

	1838-49	1850-59	1860-69	1870-79	1880-89	1890-99
I	0	0	0	0	1	2
II	4	1	1	3	6	2
IIIa	2	0	1	0	0	0
b	3	3	0	2	0	2
c	0	0	3	1	2	0
IV	0	0	0	1	1	0
V	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	9	4	5	7	10	7

Sources: see Table 7.

All but one elder fall into the Registrar General's Categories I, II, or III, with the upper two groups considerably over-represented. When the group III elders are divided between clerks, shopkeepers and artisans, the shopkeepers outnumber the other groups by two to one. This might reflect the greater mobility of the artisan members, particularly those employed in shipbuilding, although it was by no means necessary to be a member of long-standing before election to the eldership. Nor was there a clear distinction in social standing between those office-bearers who became elders and those who did not. It would seem that in exile and within a small ever-changing community the distinctions observed by Hillis in Glasgow simply broke down.⁷⁵ However the church managers constituted a far larger group than the elders: in the course of the nineteenth century 132 men served as managers, thirty-three of whom were also elders at the same time. Overall more shopkeepers and artisans were to be found among the managers than the elders and among those managers who never became elders the percentage was even higher. (See Tables 10 and 11).

75. Hillis, "Presbyterianism and Social Class", p. 53.

Table 10
Social Class of Managers, 1838-99

	Date of First Appointment											
	1838-49		1850-59		1860-69		1870-79		1880-89		1890-99	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	27.3	3	15.0	0	0.0	3	13.6
II	13	37.1	4	19.0	0	0.0	6	30.0	3	30.0	9	40.9
IIIa	2	5.7	1	4.8	1	9.1	1	5.0	3	30.0	2	9.1
b	7	20.0	14	66.7	2	18.2	2	10.0	2	20.0	3	13.6
c	12	34.3	2	9.5	5	45.4	7	35.0	1	10.0	4	18.2
IV	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.0	0	0.0	1	4.6
V	1	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	10.0	0	0.0
Total	35		21		11		20		10		22	
Unknown	4		3		4		0		0		2	

Sources: see Table 7.

Table 11
Social Classes of Managers who were not also Elders, 1838-99

	Date of First Appointment											
	1838-49		1850-59		1860-69		1870-79		1880-89		1890-99	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	33.3	1	10.0	0	0.0		6.7
II	10	40.0	3	16.7	0	0.0	2	20.0	2	22.2	6	40.0
IIIa	1	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	33.4	2	13.3
b	3	12.0	12	66.7	2	22.2	2	20.0	2	22.2	1	6.7
c	10	40.0	3	16.7	4	44.5	5	50.0	1	11.1	4	26.6
IV	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	6.7
V	1	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0
Total	25		18		9		10		9		15	
Unknown	4		3		4		0		0		2	

Sources: see Table 7.

In so far as craftsmen employed in shipbuilding served as office-bearers it was as managers. At the other end of the church's social scale were those such as Charles Stewart (1845-60) a wood merchant, John Ramsey (1865-70) an army officer, William Moran (1872-8) a ship owner, James Bowring (1880-92) a wool merchant, and Thomas Cameron (1895-1902) a doctor, who all served as managers but not elders, probably by choice.

Many of the elders and managers were also elected to a further office, that of trustee. Trustees were the legal guardians of the property and were elected from time to time. As there was no fixed term of office and no need to resign on ceasing to be a church member, it is difficult to know how many were active at any one time. Between 1838 and 1900 forty-five individuals served in this capacity, three of whom were never members (two of these, James Hopwood and Thomas Smith, had been inherited with the purchase of the Dagger Lane premises). The other non-member was Patrick Bruce, the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce who was associated with the church through the membership of his daughters, Clara (1856-79), Alice (1861 until after 1900) and Helen (1871-79). Apart from William Hume (1860-99) all the trustees held other positions as well. Indeed, sixteen men held office as elders, managers, and trustees, not necessarily simultaneously. As might be expected, many of those appointed as trustees were experienced businessmen whose social profile was even higher than that of the elders: 60 per cent in social classes I and II and 40 per cent in Class III, as compared to 37 and 60 per cent for the elders.⁷⁶

A further indication that the trustees were drawn from the more prosperous and settled members of the congregation is the high proportion entitled to vote before the 1867 Reform Act rendered property qualifications less important.⁷⁷ Of those trustees who were members before 1868, over three-quarters were voters. This is far higher than the percentage in the congregation at large (20 per cent) or among the elders (53 per cent) or managers (34 per cent). None of the Dagger Lane voters qualified under the freeman franchise, which was to be expected given the "foreign" nature of the community. Until the changes in the franchise before the 1868 election, the majority were shopkeepers who satisfied the £10 householder qualification. In this respect the congregation echoed the pattern of electors observed by Nossiter in the industrial towns of the North East.⁷⁸ Of the members identified as voters in the years between 1852 and 1865 only one was employed in the shipbuilding trades, whereas seventeen were shopkeepers. However, fourteen of the twenty-one members on the first post-Reform Act electoral roll in 1868 were designated "new householders" and eleven of these were employed in the shipyards while the four shopkeeper electors were all "old householders". The presence of nine non-office-holders among those labelled "new householders" is further evidence of the way in which the Act of 1867 extended the urban franchise to less substantial householders than had been the case under the old £10 property qualification, a minimum amount which in Hull would have represented a dwelling of some size.

76. These figures can be compared to those of Field ("Social Structure of English Methodism", p. 214) for Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist Trustees. The Presbyterians had significantly more trustees from group III, and fewer from IV and V.

77. The information on voters is taken from printed poll books - see footnote 65.

78. T.J. Nossiter, *Influence, Opinion and Political Idioms in Reformed England: Case Studies from the North East, 1832-1874* (Hassocks, 1975), pp. 148-51, and 166-7.

The political complexion of the congregation comes as no surprise given the strong support enjoyed by the Liberals in mid-Victorian Scotland and the preference of most English Nonconformists, especially the Congregationalists, for the same party.⁷⁹ In the seven elections for which poll books survive, 115 votes were cast by Dagger Lane/Spring Bank members for Liberal candidates, seven for Liberal Conservatives and twenty-six for Conservatives (see Table 12).

Table 12
How Individuals Cast their Votes, 1837-68

	1837	1852	1854*	1857	1859*	1859† Apr	1865‡ Aug	1868
N enfranchised	2	15	12	12	13	13	10	21
2 Lib votes	2	9	5	2	10	0	2	15
1 Lib vote	0	0	0	0	0	9	1	0
1 Lib/1 LC vote	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
1 LC vote	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
1 Lib/1 Con vote	0	2	0	6	0	0	1	0
2 Con votes	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
1 Con vote	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	1
Did not vote	0	3	6	1	1	2	3	0

Lib = Liberal; Con = Conservative; LC = Liberal Conservative

At general elections voters in a two-seat constituency like Hull would cast either two votes or one.

* In 1854 and April 1859 two Liberals but only one Conservative stood.

† In the August 1859 by-election voters had only one vote rather than the usual two. Only two candidates stood, a Liberal and a Liberal Conservative.

‡ In 1865 two Liberals, one Liberal Conservative and one Conservative stood.

Sources: see footnote 65.

Although the Conservative vote reached its highest level in 1868, the new householders, including all the shipyard workers and the minister, were strong Liberal supporters, with only two, a plumber and a foreman, voting for Conservative candidates. With the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872 the voting patterns of the congregation in later elections cannot be scrutinised to see whether the Spring Bank church's changing social structure brought about any

79. D.W. Bebbington, "Nonconformity and Electoral Sociology, 1867-1918", *The Historical Journal*, XXVII (1984), 633-56, at pp. 634-6; Nossiter, *Influence, Opinion and Political Idioms*, pp. 18-19, and 174-6.

shift in political affiliations. However, the strong Liberal bias of the enfranchised members did not deter the congregation from inviting the Conservative MP Charles Wilson to lay the foundation stone of its new building in April 1874. And twelve years later Arthur Wilson, Charles's brother, although an active Anglican, assisted in paying off the debts incurred in constructing the new premises.⁸⁰

At the end of the nineteenth century the congregation was maintaining a stable membership of about 140. It had cleared the debt on the Spring Bank church and enjoyed the services of a well-established minister who was for many years the secretary of the Yorkshire Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of England. The Presbyterian presence in Hull had grown from 0.5 per cent of the church attendances recorded in 1851 to 3.0 per cent in 1881 and the sittings had multiplied from 1.6 to 3.5 per cent of those available.⁸¹ In the latter half of the century the Presbyterians in England resolved the dilemma which had earlier led to uncertainty as to their mission and identity: was it their primary function to resurrect the old Presbyterian church in England or to minister to the exiled, and often transient, Scots?⁸² The creation of the Presbyterian Church of England in 1876 marked a general acceptance "that the bridge across the Tweed had been broken" and that the "church must inevitably drift farther and farther from the Scottish connection".⁸³ An examination of the Dagger Lane/Spring Bank congregation shows how this metamorphosis was handled at the local level. And, indeed, by the end of the century that congregation was clearly finding it possible to perform two tasks which in the mid-century had appeared incompatible: providing a haven for migrant Scots and functioning as a church ministering to a local community.

The Presbyterian churches in Hull were never merely Scottish institutions transported to English soil. The doctrinal and denominational divisions of the motherland were irrelevant in Hull: for many years there was no choice for the Scot wishing to worship in a Presbyterian church and after 1876 only the Presbyterian Church of England was available. The union may be viewed as an attempt to strengthen the basis of a migrant sub-culture. But it was also an acceptance by the Presbyterians that they were English Dissenters, as can be seen in Spring Bank's agreement in 1892 to help form a Nonconformist Council in Hull.⁸⁴ As Yeo points out in his study of Reading, "an organization which is

80. EUR 3/23, 19 March 1874; G.M. Attwood, *The Wilsons of Tranby Croft* (Hutton Press, Cherry Burton, Beverley, 1988), p. 83.
81. *Eastern Counties Herald*, local census, 8 December 1881, and 1851 Religious Census; N. Yates, "Urban Church Attendance and the Use of Statistical Evidence, 1850-1900" in *The Church in Town and Countryside*, ed. D. Baker (Oxford, 1979), pp. 389-400, at p. 399.
82. D. Cornick, "'Catch a Scotchman becoming an Englishman!' Nationalism, Theology and Eucumenism in the Presbyterian Church in England 1845-1876", *Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society*, III, (1985), 202-15, at p. 27.
83. *Ibid.*, quoting the *United Presbyterian Magazine*, (November 1874), 511-14.
84. EUR 3/12, 18 October 1892.

small is not always doing worse than one which is big". Apart from corner shops and public houses, churches were "the most local, universally available and accessible voluntary organizations in the society"; and differing churches appealed to different constituencies.⁸⁵ As such an organization the Dagger Lane/Spring Bank church adapted to the challenge of change in the city. If the relocation to Spring Bank denied it the opportunity of recruiting shipyard workers, it was now well-placed to attract the more middle-class inhabitants of the neighbouring streets, who were also better able to sustain the costs incurred in the move. Although the congregation retained a strong Scottish character, the institution and its members had become fully integrated into the Nonconformist life of late-nineteenth-century Hull.

ALISON HOPPEN

85. S. Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis* (London, 1976), pp. 69 and 52.

THE PRESBYTERIANS IN LIVERPOOL. PART I: A SURVEY 1800 - 1876

The Early 1800s

Towards the end of the eighteenth century there were no churches in Liverpool suitable for Presbyterians who had moved from Scotland because of the rapid expansion of the town. (In 1700, its estimated population was 5,714; in 1756, 18,500; in 1777, 34,107; and in 1790, 55,732). Those churches which were Presbyterian in name, such as Paradise Street Church or Benn's Gardens, were Unitarian in reality. So most Scots attended Newington Independent Chapel; some, indeed, attended the Church of England.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in 1793 a group of seven people set up a congregation in connection with the Church of Scotland. This was Oldham Street Church.

Within a few years, in typically Scottish fashion, some of the members of Oldham Street who wanted a more evangelical ministry and felt they could no longer stay with an easy mind in a congregation that had patrons, and was a member congregation of the Church of Scotland, seceded, and founded a congregation in association with the Scotch Associate Burgher Synod in 1807. It was known first of all as Gloucester Street Chapel, then, after its move to a large new church in Mount Pleasant in 1827, as the "Scotch United Presbyterian Church, Mount Pleasant".

In 1823, there was another secession from Oldham Street. This owed its origin to a difference of opinion over the appointment of a minister. Most seatholders wanted David Thom, but the proprietary (or patrons: the shareholders in whom the election of a minister was vested by the terms of Oldham Street's constitution), wanted a different minister and when he was elected Thom's

supporters decided to form a congregation in connection with the Church of Scotland. They then called Thom to be their minister. Within eighteen months a new church in Rodney Street was built. But even before this was completed, questions were asked about Thom's orthodoxy. He was suspected of heresy, and when the charges were submitted to the Presbytery of Glasgow in June 1825, they decided against him. He left Rodney Street to found his own denomination, the "Universalists".

But the church in Mount Pleasant was not without its problems. Trouble arose over their hymns. They had used Watts's Psalms and Hymns and "Scotch" Psalms, which suggests that most of the original members had come from Newington Independent Chapel rather than from Paradise Street, (now Unitarian), or Oldham Street, (Church of Scotland). When new elders were appointed in 1831, some of them wanted only the "Scotch" Psalms and feelings ran so high that a rupture took place and, having secured recognition from the Presbytery of Lancashire, the seceders formed a congregation in Russell Street. However, this congregation soon disintegrated and many of the members returned to their old fellowship.

Liverpool was growing rapidly: from over 55,000 in 1790, to 286,487 in 1841. It has been said that by 1792 Liverpool had over half Britain's slave trade and in the early 1800s most of England's supplies of raw cotton passed through the port. Scottish newcomers were naturally drawn to the growing Presbyterian churches, perhaps adding to their tendency to secession and certainly influenced by events in Scotland as much as if their new town had been in Scotland. This can be seen during the nineteenth century, particularly in the effects of the Disruption of 1843.

The Effects of the Disruption

In 1843 there were five Presbyterian churches in Liverpool and one in Birkenhead. The Liverpool congregations were Oldham Street (Church of Scotland), Rodney Street (Church of Scotland), Mount Pleasant (originally Associate Burgher Synod, now United Secession, but to become United Presbyterian in 1847 when the Scotch Secession and Relief Churches united to form the United Presbyterian Church) the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland (later to build a church in Shaw Street), and St. Peter's (Church of Scotland). The church in Birkenhead was St. Andrew's, Conway Street. In 1843, Islington Presbyterian Church, known as the "Irish Church", was founded as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, so neither Islington nor the Reformed Presbyterian Church was affected by the Disruption. The Disruption, however, had far-reaching effects on the others.

Oldham Street had ordained a new minister, J.R. Welsh, in November 1842. He had not shown himself conspicuous in the conflict which was raging in Scotland, before he came to Liverpool. The patrons thought, no doubt, that a young and unassuming probationer could do little harm, so had allowed him to preach as a candidate. The congregation liked him, but the patrons chose

another candidate. However, the man of their choice declined the call and, after considerable delay, Welsh was elected. But when he was settled in Oldham Street Welsh showed that he was in full sympathy with the Disruption. He invited ministers of the new Free Church to use his pulpit to explain why they had withdrawn from the Established Church, and to preach. This gravely offended some of the patrons who took legal steps to ensure that Oldham Street should only be used in connection with the Established Church of Scotland. There was a court case and the decision went against Welsh, whose supporters resolved to leave Oldham Street. The congregation worshipped together for the last time on 27 October, 1844, then Welsh, with ten of his elders and most of the congregation, moved into temporary accommodation until their new church was built in Canning Street. Only a small remnant remained in Oldham Street.

Rodney Street, too, lost most of its congregation because of the Disruption. Those who left were led by Dr. John McCulloch who had also led the secession from Oldham Street which founded Rodney Street. The new church was St. George's, Myrtle Street. The move to Myrtle Street was nearly disastrous for the Rodney Street remnant who sold their building to the Wesleyan Methodists but had to withdraw the sale as the land could only be used for a church in connection with the Established Church of Scotland.

The Disruption had disastrous effects for St. Peter's too. This congregation in connection with the Established Church of Scotland had been started at the north end of the town for the people living in the new property there. Unfortunately, St. Peter's, Scotland Road, was opened on 21 May 1843 – and the Disruption occurred a few days later. Immediately the congregation felt the results of it. Their minister, John Ferries, accepted one of the many vacant livings in Scotland and left Liverpool. He left a divided congregation, many with Free Church sympathies. If this had been all, probably matters could have been smoothed over, but a serious legal difficulty arose. The land on which the new church stood had not been conveyed and was only held on contract with Lord Derby covenanting that a church and schools in connection with the Church of Scotland should be built there. Because the Trustees were divided no arrangements could be arrived at. For a time, Free Church worship was tried and the Trustees had to pay the cost of erecting the building. This was £7,000, but they had received only £3,000.

The church remained vacant, for no minister could be called under the circumstances and though the congregation was allowed to worship in the building it was in the presence of bailiffs, who might close the door at any time. In 1845 a call was sent to a minister but the trustees were threatened with prosecution if they allowed a man to be called who was not from the Church of Scotland. As they decided to call one who was not so connected, the church was closed and its congregation moved to Carpenters Hall. But as there was dissension in the congregation he did not stay long.

In the meantime, Lord Derby had conveyed the ground to the Trustees on behalf of the Church of Scotland which soon sold the church by auction, while the surviving congregation built a new church in Silvester Street.

The fourth church to be greatly affected by the Disruption was St. Andrew's, Conway Street, in the "new town" of Birkenhead. Although a congregation had been founded by Mount Pleasant United Secession Church as a preaching station at Woodside, most of those attending the services were members of the Established Church of Scotland. They, in turn, branched off and founded a preaching station of their own, and some three years before the Disruption William Laird built a church, St. Andrew's, for them in Conway Street.

However, unlike the Established Church of Scotland churches in Liverpool, at the Disruption St. Andrew's became Free Church, and although the Church of Scotland tried by litigation to get it back, they failed.

By 1847 there were thus four Presbyterian denominations in the town: the Established Church of Scotland with congregations in Oldham Street and Rodney Street (these now pass out of the scope of this paper); the United Secession Church, which became the United Presbyterian Church in 1847, with a congregation in Mount Pleasant; the seceding Free Church, which became Presbyterian Church in England, with congregations in Canning Street, Myrtle Street, Islington, (founded recently in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Ireland), and St. Peter's (soon to build a church in Great Oxford Street/Silvester Street); and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland, with a congregation which had no settled home at this time, but after being admitted to the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1857, built a church in Shaw Street. In the space of a few years, there had grown eight Presbyterian congregations in Liverpool; it shows something of the increase in population that they could all be viable.

Across in Birkenhead two of these denominations were represented: the Presbyterian Church in England by St. Andrew's, Conway Street, and the United Presbyterians by the revived Woodside Preaching Station which became in 1847 Woodside Secession Church, then the "First United Presbyterian Church, Birkenhead", with a new building in Grange Road in 1848. Birkenhead was expanding phenomenally. In 1841 the population was 8,223; in ten years it had grown to 24,285. The town, whose sole Presbyterian preaching station had led such a precarious existence only ten years before, could now support two Presbyterian churches.

1850-1876

What is outstanding in the next fifty years is the number of new Presbyterian congregations founded in both towns, in new housing areas. Between 1851 and 1901 the population of Liverpool grew from 376,065 to 684,947 and that of Birkenhead from 35,929 to 110,615. The Presbyterians ensured that all newcomers from Scotland and Ireland were within reach of the sort of church they were used to. Indeed the Presbyterian Church in England and the United Presbyterians frequently founded flourishing churches a stone's throw from each other. Again this testifies to the *Presbyterian* immigration to Merseyside.

Most were started either by people who, attending a Presbyterian church in another district, now wished for one nearer to where they lived or by those who, finding no Presbyterian church in their neighbourhood, petitioned the Presbytery to start one for them. It is much rarer in this period to find a new church started by a secession born of disagreement.

Between 1850 and the formation of the Presbyterian Church of England in 1876 fourteen new churches were founded in this period of church extension. The Presbyterian Church in England founded eight: Trinity, Belvidere Road (Prince's Park), (1854); Rock Ferry, (1855); Moorfields Mission, later Vauxhall Road, (1861); Everton Valley, (1882); Fairfield, (1863); Prince's Road, (1864); Hamilton Memorial, (1866); and Waterloo, (1873).

Trinity, Belvidere Road was founded by members of Canning Street and Myrtle Street; Rock Ferry was an offshoot of St. Andrew's, Birkenhead; Vauxhall Road was started by Canning Street; Everton Valley by St. Peter's; and Fairfield was helped by Canning Street. The Fairfield area was a high-class residential district where many leading merchants and shipowners built their houses.

The United Presbyterians founded six churches: Derby Road (Bootle), (1855); St. Paul's, Birkenhead (1858); Egremont, (1859); Queen's Road, (1861); Seacombe, (1862); and Trinity, Claughton, (1863).

Grange Road founded both St. Paul's and Trinity, Claughton, because they believed that there was room for one Presbyterian church in the Tranmere area and another in the Claughton area, where many prosperous merchants lived. Derby Road was the result of a suggestion by a group of men taken up by the Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Lancashire and largely supported by Mount Pleasant Church. Although the church was intended to serve Bootle, it was just within the Liverpool town boundary. It was built in this area because as new docks were built further north and the "Works and Steam Ships of the British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company" had moved from the "South End" to the new Huskisson Dock, many Scots had come to live nearby. Queen's Road was founded by members of Mount Pleasant who had moved into the new houses built in Everton. Egremont was founded in a developing area of Wallasey: it is interesting to note that they founded the Seacombe congregation as one of their missions while they were building their own first church and had less than a hundred members.

A secession from Shaw Street Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1869 over the title deeds for the building led to a cause allied with the remnant Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland. This built a church in Hall Lane but the congregation disappeared during the Second World War.

The first thing a new congregation tried to do was to buy a site and build a church. By 1990 only two of those fourteen congregations were still worshipping in the same building on the same site. Some, like Derby Road, Egremont, Seacombe, and Hamilton Memorial, were on different sites; the rest had closed and their members dispersed to other churches. Of the congregations already in existence before 1850, Mount Pleasant and Canning Street went to Allerton, Shaw Street Reformed Presbyterian became Rankin Memorial, Norris Green,

and Myrtle Street moved to Maghull, all in the 1930s, by which time they had become down-town churches.

To return to 1850. Liverpool was an important port. Many people passed through it on their way abroad, and the churches had an important pastoral function for these travellers. Churches with good preachers were often full. Thus Islington prospered under the ministry of Dr. Verner White and the building was often crowded, with people sitting on the pulpit steps and sitting or standing along the aisles. There were 950 seats, all of them let, yet there was a waiting list for sittings which could not be met.

It is during this time that we find in church minutes references to their wish to have instrumental music in Public Worship. This was forbidden by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of England until 1870. However, in Canning Street in 1858 a choir was suggested, but a paid choir was turned down by the Session and the "Conductor" was asked to form a choir from the members and adherents. Derby Road started a choir in 1862, and this made a great improvement to the singing of the congregation. But it was Myrtle Street that figured mainly in the controversy over instrumental music which occupied two Synods and long continued in Scotland. It was the first Presbyterian Church in Liverpool to use an organ.

Most of the churches reported (and minuted) a renewed interest in the spiritual life as a result of the work of Moody and Sankey and other evangelists.

Almost all were in prosperous areas, but there were a few, like Vauxhall Road, in working-class ones. They were usually helped by the wealthier churches, particularly those without missions of their own, such as Waterloo. But these were few and far between. Most had missions in the poorer, and often older, areas near them. All had Sunday Schools, ("Sabbath Schools", they called them), and several had day schools too. These were relatively short-lived and most ceased with the Education Act of 1870. However, the day school of St. Andrew's, Birkenhead, in Higher Tranmere, known as St. Andrew's Higher Grade School, Tranmere, continued until the turn of the century, when it was taken over by the Local Authority. For some years Derby Road ran a "Free Evening School" - known locally as the "Ragged School".

All had a full programme of weeknight activities: Literary Societies, Young Men's Clubs, Women's Meetings, Bible Classes, Dorcas Societies, Debating Clubs, Bands of Hope, Missionary Committees. Some of these were not so much religious clubs as mutual improvement societies, for there was no universal education, churches during the middle years of the nineteenth century fulfilled not only the religious needs of their members and adherents and their children, but their educational, social and entertainment needs as well. The educational element decreased with the advent of compulsory education but the other elements continued well into the twentieth century.

The Dorcas Societies made clothes for the poor of the mission belonging to the church and usually the Bible woman or missionary would be responsible for

their distribution. If the congregation had no mission, the clothes would be sent to the mission of a neighbouring Presbyterian church.

The missionaries and Bible women worked hard, daily visiting many houses of the poor associated with the mission. In each year they reported visits to an enormous number. They also reported the distress, poverty, drunkenness and vice in their districts, and the starvation too. In Bootle, for instance, some were too poorly clad even to go to the mission hall, so the Bible women held cottage meetings for them in various houses, and the church members were asked for cast-off clothing. The Bible women also held classes for men too ashamed to go to the "Ragged School", and taught them to read and write. A smallpox epidemic in 1869, which lasted nine months, was reported by the mission at Seacombe as making a lot of work for their missionary, for he was visiting continually.

Some churches had difficulties with their buildings from the start. Grange Road's vestry was very damp because it was in the basement, and was approached by very awkward stairs. Moreover, the buildings nearby caused insanitary conditions because of the proximity of their ashpits. In other churches the congregation complained of draughts or felt that the heating system was inadequate. Grange Road, indeed, had more pressing structural concerns. Soon after the building was opened, a gallery was added which eventually also housed the organ. It was not part of the original structure. Some years later, when the hall under the church was being refloored, the workmen removed the flooring under the pillars of the gallery. One Sunday morning there was a loud crack. The people in the gallery left hurriedly, and it was found that the pillars, far from supporting the gallery, were hanging from the ceiling and adding to its weight.

During the 1860s and early 70s, the Liverpool and Birkenhead area passed through a severe trade depression - in 1866 there was a cattle plague, a bank panic, floods, coalpit fires and a severe winter - but most of the congregations grew so rapidly that these disasters had little apparent effect either on numbers or finance.

On 18 June 1876, the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in England met for the last time in Canning Street Church. On the same day the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church met in Mount Pleasant Church. At the appointed time, the two Synods left their respective churches and marched to the Philharmonic Hall. They were timed to reach the hall together, and the two streams mingled with each other as they neared the hall - a symbol of the Union they were about to witness. The hall was so full that many members of the public could not get in. After the union of the Presbyterian Church *in* England and the United Presbyterian Church had taken place, and the Presbyterian Church *of* England had been formed, another Church was admitted to the Union. This was the union with the new Presbyterian Church of England of the only Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland Congregation in England - Shaw Street Reformed Presbyterian Church, Liverpool, with its minister, Dr. John Graham. The rest of the Union Synod was held in Mount Pleasant Church.

ALBERTA JEAN DOODSON

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WILLIAM EDWIN ORCHARD (1877-1955): A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

William Edwin Orchard was born at Linslade, near Leighton Buzzard, on 20 November 1877, the eldest son of John Orchard and his wife, Fanny, née Braggins.¹ His parents were married at Winslow in 1875, when John Orchard was described as a railway clerk from Rugby. Fanny's father was also a railway clerk. In his autobiography *From Faith to Faith* W.E. Orchard confirms that much when he tells us that his father was a railway clerk and he adds that his father's father, also John Orchard, was a soldier who served in the Crimean War (1854-56) and in India after the Mutiny (1857). He goes on by recounting the pleasant fantasy that his grandfather was the illegitimate son of a nobleman, called Orchard because he was found abandoned in one as a baby. This has all the whimsy of a story told to children and is familiar to family historians, who find the rumour of noble blood lies in most family histories. Orchard's other grandfather, John Braggins, had, he said, been under-gardener on a large estate. Any stories of the misdemeanours of the nobility were more likely to have originated from that source.

The prosaic disciplines of searching the registers for the Orchard family yield more definite results. Orchard's father, John, was registered as born in West Street, Warwick on 13 May 1851. His parents were John Orchard, Private in the 28th Regiment of Foot, and Mary, née Sisam, sometimes rendered Lisam. His mother notified the birth and made her mark on 2 June. A little more research leads to the marriage of John Orchard, then a bachelor and ribbon weaver, and Mary Sisam, spinster, at St. Mary's Church, Warwick, on 9 March 1846. John Orchard's father is given as Jonathan Orchard, labourer, and Mary Sisam's as Joseph Sisam, publican. Both parties have the address of West Street, where Mary's father kept *The Unicorn* inn, no doubt much patronised by soldiers of the 28th Foot. The bride again made her mark, but John Orchard signed. William and Sarah Fairfield were the witnesses.

The 28th Regiment of Foot subsequently became a Gloucestershire Regiment and their archive provides further information. A first enquiry found only bald details of John Orchard, inserted into a ledger in pencil, but further diligent

1. I am grateful for the assistance of Miss Rita Almond with Orchard family history, the Regiments of Gloucestershire Museum and especially Col. D.E. Wheatmore, and Dr. Elaine Kaye, co-author of *W.E. Orchard, A Study in Christian Exploration*, in the preparation of his article.

enquiry by a researcher at the Regiments of Gloucestershire Museum turned up more information in another old ledger. Private John Orchard, number 1394, enlisted on 28 December 1837 at Hinckley, giving his age as eighteen and his place of birth as "Iham" in Leicestershire. He was a ribbon weaver on enlistment, 5ft 7½ins. tall, with grey eyes, light hair and a fresh complexion. He was sent out to Parramatta, New South Wales in 1841 on board the *Palmyra*, a member of a party of reinforcements for the 28th, which served in New South Wales from 1835 to 1842. He was discharged in May 1859 with a pension. It was after his return from Australia that John married Mary Lisam in 1846. It was another five years before John, the father of William Edwin, was born, after which soldier John took ship for the Crimean and Indian campaigns. He does not appear to have been a colour sergeant as William Edwin recalled, but his military accoutrements may well have been around for his grandson to see in the 1880s.

What were the origins of Private John Orchard of the 28th Foot, sometime ribbon weaver? "Iham" is undoubtedly Higham on the Hill in Leicestershire, near to Hinckley, where John Orchard enlisted. John Orchard was baptised there on 12 April 1820, one of the family of Jonathan Orchard and Sarah Arnold, who married there on 7 May 1815. At his marriage Jonathan was a framework knitter and labourer, so it is not surprising that his son was a ribbon weaver. The Orchard part of this family can be traced further back in Leicestershire. Jonathan Orchard was baptised 31 December 1786 at Higham, one of the family of Jonathan Orchard and Hannah Scotton, who married at Higham 12 October 1771. At this point we are a little nearer to illegitimacy, noble or otherwise, for Jonathan Orchard senior, baptised 2 February 1740 at Orton on the Hill, was the son of Sarah Orchard, baptised 17 May 1719 at Orton on the Hill, daughter of William and Dorothy Orchard. The father of Sarah's child is not evident.

At this point the ancestral trail of William Edwin Orchard is travelling northwards through Leicestershire towards the south Derbyshire origins of the writer's family. There may be a seventeenth-century link as yet undiscovered, if William Orchard, father of Sarah, could be positively identified. However, if we reflect on genetics, rather than the male primogeniture which dominates genealogy, we may safely conclude that the author is no more related to William Edwin Orchard than thousands of other people.

Why did the great preacher tell the story of his origins as he did? It seems much more likely that, not being very interested in his family origins, he recounted a story he had been told as a child. That seems more probable than pure invention, since there is no great credit in the story as it is. Given that, it is a commonplace of family history for generations to be compressed when such stories are told. Sarah may have been a maid at a large house in Leicestershire, though not necessarily that of a nobleman. The obvious explanation for the name "Orchard" is that it is topographical, though its spread is not as general as might be supposed. From such elements might the story have been shaped which W.E. Orchard told. The whole issue is of no great significance in relation

to his remarkable ministry, excepting one possibility. It is conceivable that the absence of identity with an ancestral home, or loyalty to a particular denomination over several generations, gave Orchard the freedom to develop his theology and ecclesiology in the way he did.

STEPHEN ORCHARD

REVIEW

John Bunyan and English Nonconformity. By Richard Greaves. Pp. 230. London: The Hambledon Press, 1992. ISBN 1 85285 072 8. £35.00

Richard Greaves is well-known to students of seventeenth-century church history from his fine work on Bunyan's theology and from his more recent publications on radicals and Nonconformists in the period from the Act of Uniformity to the Toleration Act. This collection of essays is an important contribution to the thesis that Bunyan is only rightly understood when his work is seen and interpreted against the background of contemporary social and church political tensions. Traditionally Bunyan has often been depicted – mainly in the light of his self-revelations in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* – as an introspective and pious Puritan preacher whose only burning concern was the salvation of souls. One of the recurrent themes in Professor Greaves's essays is that Bunyan's autobiography is a deeply problematic source to our understanding of his work and personality. Instead our attention is turned to his later writings and his posthumous work. Several essays contain penetrating analyses of the underlying political aspects of the allegorical narrative in *The Holy War*, and of the millennialism of *Of Antichrist and His Ruin*.

Two of the thirteen papers in this collection provide helpful and scholarly introductions to the Nonconformist tradition in England and its self-understanding in relation to the Stuart state. One essay on "The state of historical scholarship" delineates four of the most important questions in contemporary Bunyan studies. In the following ten essays Professor Greaves, with insight and care, places Bunyan in the complex web of late Stuart radicalism; he discusses his relation to "Popery", to the Fifth Monarchists and to the radical tradition in general. The essay on "The Organizational Response to Repression and Indulgence" in Bedford is a very interesting piece of local history. It describes how Bunyan and some of his Nonconformist friends, during the time of persecution, implemented a plan which provided a network of preachers and teachers in the local village. Other papers describe Bunyan's relation to and influence on the Nonconformist tradition in London, the Midlands and East Anglia. Professor Greaves's interpretation of the Holy War as London Nonconformity against the monarchy (the four captains representing four significant London preachers) is interesting and may be tenable, but it needs to be supported by stronger arguments than those given in these papers.

The strength of this collection of essays is that it very carefully places Bunyan in his historical, political and ecclesiastical context. The weakness, or should I say the limitation, of this approach is that Bunyan's works lose some of their immediate spiritual appeal. And despite much recent scholarship it still remains questionable whether the best way to reach an understanding of Bunyan's work and personality is through the self-revelations in *Grace Abounding* and his allegorical works as they appear against this background.

However, whether one fully sympathizes with Professor Greaves's approach or not, this is a book no serious student of Bunyan should be without.

NIELS NYMANN ERIKSEN