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EDITORIAL

Contrary to the impression sometimes gained from contemporary debates, questions about ministry, its practice and its recognition, are not new. They have exercised minds throughout the history of the Church and, as even a brief investigation would confirm, opinions have differed over how best to answer them, sometimes favouring pragmatic over theological concerns, sometimes *vice versa* and sometimes trying to balance the two. From two of this *Journal*'s articles we can see that current debates in the URC have their antecedents, where previous generations sought to rationalize practice, to institute a single roll of ministers, and thereby assert that, as far as is possible, there could be no second order, and therefore no perceived second-rate, ministry. Alan Sell reminds us of Congregationalism's "List B" ministers and Nigel Lemon highlights those on the URC's ministerial roll who were designated "AR". Both papers tell us much about ministry and its recognition, particularly from the Congregational part of the URC's heritage. It is not directly the historian's task *qua* historian to comment on contemporary debate, though history can and should inform it. Nevertheless, it is, perhaps, timely that these articles see the light of day at this point in the denomination's life.

Fleur Houston's article is further fruit of her meticulous researches into the life and work of John Oman. She recounts the remarkable story of a visit Oman made to the Ruhr and the Rhineland in order to report on the conditions suffered by German people, defeated and humiliated by incursions into their territory by French forces in search of the severe and unachievable reparations demanded at Versailles in 1919. This was unmistakably a practice of Christian ministry, but the sphere of influence was society and the world, its practice inevitably political rather than exclusively liturgical. This paper, and that by Nigel Lemon, were both presented at the History Society's study weekend at Shepherds Dene Retreat House, Riding Mill, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, 6 to 8 September 2013. I am grateful to both authors, and to Alan Sell, for submitting such intriguing articles for publication in the *Journal*.

We welcome Alan Gaunt and Norman Wallwork as reviewers.

Note: Members of the Society may be interested in a project www.victorianprofessions.ox.ac.uk The objective is to test whether Harold Perkin's thesis that the professions in the 19th century formed a cohesive social group that held strong social welfare ideals inimical to economic growth. This is being done by exploring the family histories of 1,000 members of the old and new professions, drawn from non-metropolitan towns across Britain, including members of the clergy from all denominations.

THE UNSUNG MINISTERS OF CONGREGATIONALISM'S LIST B

Information on the Dissenting academies, to which Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Unitarians sent their young men, and on the theological colleges of England and Welsh Congregationalism, is not difficult to find.[1] But, historically and to this day, many ministers have arrived at their pastorates by a non-collegiate route, and their tale has, thus far, not been adequately told. From their earliest days Congregationalists would seek out "gifted brethren" from among their members and, through their Church Meetings, call them to ministry. Those called in some cases served their home church, in other cases they were released to serve needy causes elsewhere, or to plant new ones. Many were regarded as lay pastors, and many of them exercised a "tent-making" ministry. Under the impetus of the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century home, no less than foreign, mission clamoured for attention. Thus, for example, in 1797, just two years after the foundation of The [London] Missionary Society, the Surrey Mission was formed with the objective of reaching villages that were otherwise deprived of the gospel. By 1836 there were 579 mission stations in 39 county associations.[3] In 1839, at the first Autumn Assembly of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, a plan for the evangelization of the entire country was presented. A distinction was drawn between lay agents who would work under the supervision of churches and pastors, and ministerial missionaries who would be college-trained. By the following year the Home Missionary Society had 120 missionaries on its roll, and this despite the fact that some college students declined such pioneering work on the ground that traditional pastorates were "more respectable and comfortable".[3]

Nobody denied that Congregational churches were competent to call whomsoever they willed to serve them as pastors, but since on some occasions calls were addressed to ignorant or otherwise unacceptable men, the question of their financial support was raised as early as 1845. Many felt that the Union was under no obligation to fund those in whom it had no confidence, and by the end of the nineteenth century matters began to come to a head. In 1901, D. W. Simon declared that of 3,123 Congregational ministers, 692 had received no college education,[4] and many deemed it a matter of urgency to address this situation.

A start was made by adding a section B to the list of ministers printed in the

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1 The colleges to which Northern College Manchester is heir and Mansfield College have, for example, been well served by Elaine Kaye: *For the Work of Ministry: Northern College and its Predecessors* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999); *Mansfield College: Its Origin, History and Significance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

2 Albert Peel, *These Hundred Years: A History of the Congregational Union of England and Wales* [hereafter CUEW]*, 1831-1931* (London: Independent Press, 1931), p. 102.

3 Ibid., p. 151.

4 D. W. Simon, "The Congregational Ministry in the British Isles", *The British Weekly* (17 January 1901), p. 374 (misprinted as 274).

Congregational Year Book. Thus, in the 1901 volume we find a six-page "List of Evangelists and Lay Pastors holding regular appointments, with or without stipend, in connection with County Unions or Churches, officially furnished for the year commencing January 1, 1901".[5] Steps were shortly taken towards the organization of non-collegiate ministerial education. On 1 March 1904 a Special Sub-Committee on County Union Examinations, appointed by the General Committee of the Congregational Union, met for the first time. A three-year course, including required reading, was devised for those seeking admission to List A. The Bible, Theology and Church History were to be studied over the three years, with English History in the first, English Literature in the second, and Logic and Philosophy in the third. It was also agreed "As indicating the comparative importance of these departments", that 35 per cent of the marks be allocated to work in the Bible; 30 per cent to Theology; 20 per cent to Church History; and 15 per cent to work in each other subject. The Sub-Committee further recommended that the General Committee appoint an Examination Board to select examiners, determine dates and places of examinations, receive examiners' reports, and report decisions to the General Committee. Finally, it was recommended that the Board comprise seven members, including J. D. Jones of the Union, and W. B. Selbie, minister at Emmanuel Congregational Church, Cambridge, and later Principal of Mansfield College.[6]

Among those who passed the List A examinations were some who became well-known in the denomination, among them Dr James Alfred Kaye, trained initially at the independent Harley College,[7] who exercised an outstanding ministry as "bishop" of the Guildford church and its nine village causes; Martin Shepherd, who came into the ministry *via* the China Inland Mission, returning later to that country under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, and ending as Moderator of the North-Eastern province; Robert Duce, of religious drama and pioneer television epilogues fame; and John Reardon, whose pastoral and administrative experience admirably equipped him to become the first General Secretary of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland. To this day the United Reformed Church ministry benefits from the service of a number of children of ministers who came to List A *via* List B, among them Anthony Burnham, Alan Gaunt and Noel Shepherd.

It should carefully be noted that for the rest of this paper, and with one concluding exception, I have in mind those only who remained on List B throughout their ministries.

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5 *The Congregational Year Book* [hereafter CYB] (1901), pp. 498-504. I am most grateful to David Powell, Senior Cataloguer of The Congregational Library, London, for supplying archival material concerning the inauguration of List B, its courses and examinations.

6 Congregational Library: Congregational Union of England and Wales (hereafter CUEW) archives, 351-2, SSC, II (1898-1909).

7 For Harley College see Alan P. F. Sell, *Commemorations: Studies in Christian Thought and History* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998 [1993]), ch. 12.

I: The Training of List B Evangelists

From time to time the question of non-accredited pastors was raised, but it was the Yorkshire County Union which brought matters to a head in 1911. It sent a successful motion to the Congregational Council (from 1905, formerly, the General Committee): "It was resolved to ask the Council of the Congregational Union of England and Wales to take immediate steps to formulate regulations for the admission and status of Evangelists through the country". In response the Council convened a "Conference re. Status of Evangelists" on 30 November 1911. We learn that "After a long discussion it was resolved 'To appoint a Sub-Committee to draft regulations for the admission of names upon List B and upon such lines as may now be determined'".[8] It was agreed that candidates for admission to the List should have served a probationary period and passed a preliminary examination, and that they should be members of a Congregational church.[9] The drafting committee comprised J. E. Flower, MA, J. D. Jones, MA, BD, E. Johnson Saxton, and Messrs W. H. Brown, Montague Holmes and A. E. Hutton, MA.[10] On 15 February 1912 the Sub-Committee re. Rules and Regulations as to the Recognition of Evangelists and Lay Pastors endorsed the findings of the Conference, and instructed County Union secretaries "to return only the names of men who are members of Congregational Churches and holding the office of Evangelist or Lay Pastor as now defined".[11] It was further decided that those who successfully completed a further three years of examined study would be admitted to List A. By contrast with those on List A, List B ministers were not ordained, but were normally recognized or inducted, and their stipends were lower.

The first List B examinations (recorded under the heading "Evangelists' Examination") were held in 1917. At their meeting of 17 December 1917 the List B Examiners heard that of the nine candidates, six had failed.[12] They also noted the criticism "that the present system tends both to let in and keep out the wrong men".[13] It was resolved that the Settlements and Removals Committee should obtain a satisfactory report from County Unions "of the work done throughout the year by the men seeking admission, giving special heed to character, industry, preaching and pastoral qualifications, and power of appeal to young people; secondly, the candidate shall undertake a course of reading under the guidance of a fully accredited minister, who shall report to the Examiners; and thirdly, that where necessary a *viva voce* examination shall be arranged".[14] The List B examinations syllabus was revised from time to time,

8 Special Sub-Committee [hereafter SSC), III (1909-1912), 174.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., 175.
11 Ibid., 201.
12 SSC, V (1917, 1924), 84.
13 Ibid., 83.
14 Ibid.

and, for example, in 1917 it covered New Testament, Old Testament, Congregationalism, English Grammar and Composition, and a Sermon. It is worthy of note that examiners of a high calibre were engaged, A. J. Grieve and Robert Franks among them. Perhaps not surprisingly, success in the examinations was not a foregone conclusion. We find, for example, that in 1919 eleven candidates were entered for the examinations, of whom three passed and eight failed.[15] In the following year there were fifteen candidates, of whom five passed, eight failed, and two were allowed to pass. Following consultation with County Unions, seven of the eight who failed were recalled for oral examinations, of whom two were successful.[16] In 1923 no fewer than twenty-five men sat the examinations, of whom seven passed, and nine were successful in subsequent oral examinations.[17]

On 24 January 1924 the List B examiners promulgated the following syllabus for 1925:

A. (1) A written sermon to be submitted on a prescribed text.
(2) A short Essay to be submitted on some subject connected with practical church life.
(Suggestions will be made to the candidates as to the length of the Sermon and Essay).

B. Four Papers
(1) New Testament. Two hour paper.
Gospel of St Matthew (Century Bible Commentary, 3/6d).
Our Lord's Teaching (Rev. James Robertson, DD) 1/- paper, 3/- cloth.
(2) Old Testament. Two hour paper.
Genesis (Century Bible) Rev W. H. Bennett, DD (3/6d).
(3) Congregationalism, its Principles and History. Two hour paper.
Text Books:
Manual of Congregational Principles (Rev R. W. Dale, LL.D) 2/-.
The Story of English Congregationalism (Rev Thomas Hooper) 6d.
(4) English Grammar. One hour paper.
Text Book:
Outlines of English Grammar (Nesfield) 2/-.
N.B. This paper will include an exercise in paraphrasing.

15 Ibid., 159.
16 Ibid., 194.
17 Ibid., 283.
18 Ibid., 295.

> On account of the cost of conducting the Examination – printing, postage, etc., there will be levied on each candidate an entrance fee of 10/-.[18]

A significant change occurred when, from 1930 onwards, the List B course was extended to two years, thus:

Year 1	Essay on Church History (V. Bartlet), to be written at home. New Testament, three-hour paper; John (Century Bible). Life of Christ, three-hour paper (Stalker). Congregational Principles and History, three-hour paper (Horne, Dale).
Year 2	Sermon (submitted from home). Preaching, one-hour paper (The Mystery of Preaching, Black). Bible, two-hour paper; How to Read the Bible (Adeney). Old Testament, three-hour paper; I and II Kings (Century Bible). Amos and Hosea (Century Bible).[19]

The first examinations of both parts were held in 1932.[20]

II: The Status of List B Ministers

As the century progressed, those whose names appeared on List B came increasingly to be regarded as ministers rather than evangelists;[21] and, indeed, the nature of the work that the majority of them did was indistinguishable from that of the fully accredited ministers of List A. But they remained unordained, and their stipends and pension entitlements were significantly lower than those of List A ministers. More than that, it seemed to many to be theologically inappropriate for Congregationalists to sanction a two-tier ministry. Accordingly, when the question was raised by the List B Ministers Association, a "Committee on Ordination of List B Ministers [mark the word]" was appointed as a sub-committee of the Union's General Purposes Committee. It met for the first time on 5 December 1950, under the chairmanship of T. T. James. In its typewritten "Notes"[22] the following assertion is recorded: "If a Church calls a man and solemnly sets him apart, this is virtually Ordination". It was then observed that Congregationalists were ill-advised to use the term "ordination" at all, because it signified "election to an Order", and this is not how Congregationalists think of ministry. However, "we have to take our place as Congregationalists in

19 Ibid.
20 CUEW Examinations, 1924 (typed results attached to p. 42).
21 Both terms are used of them in *Year Book* lists from 1929 onwards.
22 Inserted in SSC, VI.

relation to other churches", so the term must be kept and understood as signifying "(a) the ministry confirmed by the local church; (b) the ministry valid[23] in the wider field of Christian service; (c) as a standard of capability and competence". As if noticing that God is absent from these three points, it is asserted that while ordination does not confer a special grace, it depends upon God's grace, and lest the point go unheard, there follows the strong declaration that "the Minister does not do anything that cannot be done by a Layman commissioned by the Church". Having said that Congregationalists have no orders, they proceed to deny it by claiming two: A and B. Ordination is to be reserved for "fully qualified" persons on List A. In addition there should be "an Order of Evangelists with certain academic standards and spiritual fitness for whom there would be Recognition but not Ordination. Services of Recognition should be conducted with denominational representatives present. Evangelists should have an induction service at the beginning of their pastorates but should be recognized at the end of their third year provided List B was completed and their fitness for the work proved".

The Committee met again on 26 January 1951.[24] On this occasion Harold Simpson, the Union's financial secretary, attended in order to advise his colleagues on the feasibility or otherwise of extending the List A superannuation rights to List B ministers. A further meeting took place on 1 March, and then on 30 March Leslie Cooke, General Secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, proposed a scheme whereby there would be one Order of Ministry only, with two modes of entry to it: college training (the only route for candidates under the age of 30); and a period of probation extending over five years, with courses and examinations taken. Further, there would be a list of Lay Pastors, who would be under the supervision of ministers, and this office would not be regarded as a gateway to the ministry. Those already on List B might remain there until death, or they might be given status by their County or Provincial Ministerial Committee, who might require further study. Some on List B might become probationer ministers. On 18 May various refinements were made to Cooke's proposal, and on 17 October Philip Ashton, the Union's Assistant Secretary, reported that List B comprised 210 ministers. Questions concerning stipend and superannuation were again discussed. On 9 January 1952, with representatives of the Home Churches Fund present, the question was raised as to whether some List B ministers might be promoted to List A. The Fund officers explained that since the Fund's expenditure could not be increased, such promotions would entail the withdrawal of the Fund's responsibilities towards the Superannuation Committee, and require the continued raising of £45,000 per annum for the maintenance of the ministry. The List B Sub-Committee was requested to give the matter further consideration.

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23 "Valid": a red rag to a bull *vis à vis* some in "the wider field".

24 For this sequence of committee meetings see SSC, VI.

By now the List B question was "in the air", and on 10 January 1952 a letter signed by "One of the List Bs" appeared in *The Christian World* under the heading, "Plight of the List B Man". The writer explained that whereas the List A stipend is £300 per annum, his is £250, and "when compulsory National Health contributions are paid he has just £4. 10s. 2d. per week for man and wife to live on".[25] No immediate replies were forthcoming, but in May the List B question was raised at the Council, and towards the end of the year there was a flurry of correspondence in the press. N. F. B. Dennes wrote in favour of the ordination of List B ministers, on the ground that Bunyans as well as Owens were needed.[26] This drew a reply from the Revd B. A. J. Boghurst of Jersey, who declared the remedy was in the hands of the List B ministers themselves: they should study and take the List A examinations, for "The status of an ordained minister is only for those who have 'won their way'".[27] A further correspondent referred to the Report of the May Council, which said that the approach of the List B Ministers Association had focused attention on "the position of the denomination in having two lists", and urged that the anomaly be removed.[28] On 11 December three letters appeared. The first was from Dennes, who observed that Boghurst had missed his point, which was that "ordination should not be made to depend upon passing examinations"; the others were from Norman E. Jones and A. G. Wheeler, both of whom sided with the List B ministers.[29] A counter came from the Revd A. H. Richards to the effect that List B men are unqualified for the tasks of ministry (though he himself had been one, and had proceeded to List A); and Boghurst denied that examinations are all, but remained convinced that there must be no "easy" way into the ministry.[30] By then, at their meeting of 20 October 1952, the List B examiners had already made the way slightly harder by resolving that if a candidate failed two papers at one sitting, all papers would have to be re-taken, though they excluded the sermon from this rubric.[31]

The debate on the status of List B ministers rumbled on, and the Status Committee of the Union was reconstituted on 10 April 1957.[32] On 14 May 1957, during the Annual Assembly, it was resolved that "There shall be one Roll of fully trained, accredited and ordained ministers"; that there "shall be a scheme of Examinations for those who desire to enter the Ministry but for whom a college course is not practicable"; and regarding List B, that

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25 *The Christian World* (10 January 1952), p. 11.
26 Ibid., (20 November 1952), p. 11.
27 Ibid., (27 November 1952), p. 11.
28 Ibid., (4 December 1952), p. 20.
29 Ibid., (11 December 1952), p. 11. They had both been List B ministers. Jones proceeded to List A by examination, while Wheeler was, like a number of others, placed on List A by the Status Committee in 1958.
30 Ibid., (18 December 1952), p. 11.
31 SSC, V, 177.
32 CUEW Status Committee Minutes, 1.

> (a) No further admission to List B after stated date. (b) Present List B shall be retained until the demise of those at present named in it or their removal for other reasons. (c) Evangelists on List B after the stated date may make application to the Status Committee through County and Provincial Committees for inscription upon the Roll, the requirements for each case to be determined by the Status Committee.

It was further resolved "That the last occasion on which the First Year List B Examination shall be held shall be September 1957".[33] Provision was made for those in the midst of their course. The final List B examination was held in 1962. The solitary candidate sat two papers, and was referred to the Status Committee because of a "very poor" result in Church History, and a mark of 45 per cent only in New Testament "even exercising considerable leniency", confessed the examiner: "probably should have awarded 35%!"[34] The last admissions to List B occurred in 1962, with one transfer from the Congregational Union of Ireland in 1965. Over the following years a number of List B ministers successfully applied to the Status Committee for admission to the Roll of Ministers, the last of them, Joseph Houston, in 1973.[35] The last *Year Book* reference to List B concerned the deletion of W. Clark and F. J. Smith from the List, together with the notice, "This list will not appear in future Year Books".[36] Thus, after sixteen years of meetings, of admissions to List A and deletions from List B, List B was no more.

III: List B Ministers Surveyed

The first obituaries of List B ministers appeared in *The Congregational Year Book* for 1931, the last in the 1966-67 *Year Book*. We thus have accounts spanning some thirty-five years but, since the lives they record run from two ministers who were born in 1844, the 177 available obituaries provide a reasonable coverage of the List B Years. Some obituaries are helpfully detailed, a minority lack facts such as date and place of birth[37] and previous occupation. The following information can, however, be supplied: 57 List B ministers were born in rural areas; 47 in towns; and 36 in cities.[38] Prior to entering List B, or becoming Congregationalists

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33 CYB (1958), p. 93.

34 Uncatalogued folder labelled "Examination Results", covering the years 1954 to 1970. The later years concern the Roll of Ministers examinations which replaced those for Lists A and B. An uncatalogued packet contains List B *syllabi* for 1942, 1943, 1945-1950, and 1954-1959. No List B examinations papers have thus far come to light.

35 *The United Reformed Church Year Book* (1973-1974), p. 262. In the same volume, p. 255, a remaining three List B Ministers are recorded, of whom two were retired.

36 Ibid., (1975), p. 285.

37 The absence of place of birth adversely, but only slightly, affects the statistics regarding counties as listed on p. 347.

38 This assertion is to be taken literally: by now some of the villages have become towns, some of the towns, cities.

8 had received post-school education and 1 was a graduate; 67 had served as evangelists, lay pastors, missioners, or as colporteurs; 5 had worked in agriculture; 1 had come from the arts (music); 34 had been in business, clerical or social work; 10 had worked in industry; 2 had been miners; 1 had been in a profession other than teaching; 9 had been teachers. Perhaps the most striking thing here is that of the 57 ministers who were born in rural areas, five only had worked on the land.

Prior to becoming Congregationalists: 1 List B minister had worked for the Bible Christian Connexion; 3 for the Church of England; 1 for the Episcopal (Free) Church of England; 1 for the Methodist Church; 1 for the Primitive Methodist Connexion; 4 for the Salvation Army; 2 for the Wesleyan Connexion; and 1 for the Wesleyan Reform Union. We may also note that 19 List B ministers served in the Great War, and 1 in the Second World War.

In the following list of counties (pre-1974 designations given) the first figure refers to the number of List B ministers born in the county, the second to the number of *occasions*[39] – 828 in all – on which List B ministers undertook pastorates in the county.

County	Born in County	Occasion of Pastorate		Born in County	Occasion of Pastorate
Bedfordshire	1	5	London	14	22
Berkshire	2	28	Middlesex	2	0
Buckinghamshire	1	3	Monmouthshire	3	3
Caithness	1	0	Montgomeryshire	1	2
Cambridgeshire	6	31	Norfolk	5	19
Carmarthenshire	1	0	Northamptonshire	1	6
Cheshire	1	4	Northumberland	1	3
Clackmannanshire	1	0	Nottinghamshire	0	3
Cornwall	3	4	Oxfordshire	1	9
Cumberland	2	5	Pembrokeshire	0	1
Derbyshire	0	3	Perthshire	0	1
Devonshire	4	67	Rutland	0	1
Dorset	2	27	Shropshire	0	5
Durham	5	18	Somerset	10	68
Essex	5	42	Staffordshire	2	15
Flintshire	1	1	Suffolk	4	30
Glamorgan	2	3	Surrey	2	24
Gloucestershire	3	28	Sussex	7	86
Hampshire	4	51	Warwickshire	5	10
Herefordshire	0	3	Westmoreland	0	2
Hertfordshire	0	14	Wiltshire	5	21
Huntingdonshire	2	9	Worcestershire	2	8
Kent	5	24	Yorkshire	13	57
Lancashire	7	51	Glasgow	1	0
Leicestershire	3	7	Cork	0	1
Lincolnshire	2	12	USA	1	0

39 A number of churches were served more than once by List B ministers; indeed, some ministers served a particular church more than once.

From this we see that more List B ministers were born in London (14) and Yorkshire (13) than anywhere else, and that ten counties received, but did not produce, any List B ministers in the period covered by the obituaries. We also see that the south-western counties were served on 262 occasions by List B ministers; the south-eastern counties on 134, and the eastern on 131 occasions; while the north-western counties were served on 62 occasions, and the north-eastern on 78. Indeed, the single counties of Devon (67) and Somerset (68) were served by List B ministers on more occasions than the whole of the north-west.

The obituaries further reveal that 5 List B ministers chaired County Unions (Berkshire, Derbyshire, Devon, Leicestershire and Norfolk); 1 chaired a Yorkshire District, and 4 served as District secretaries (Lancashire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Wiltshire).

IV: Some List B Ministers Recalled

But much more interesting than the statistics are the ministers themselves, as a few soundings from the obituaries will show. In the first place, we learn that some ministers gave the whole of their ministerial service to one church. This was the case with Arthur Humphries, whose obituary is the first to be recorded. He was born in 1863 at Norley, Cheshire, and worked with his father in the building trade, while serving as a lay preacher. In 1895 he was appointed to the pastorate of Hey Head in the Bowdon group of churches, and there he remained until his death in 1930. He served the village well, establishing a lads' club and an institute; he was on the Board of Guardians and the Rural District Council, in which latter connection he superintended the Council's housing scheme for the village. He was a school manager, and chaired two charities, and "like so many of our village pastors, [he] became the spiritual guide, trusted friend and wise counsellor of all".[40]

By contrast, John Jeremiah Jordan served no fewer than eleven churches, all of them in Somerset.[41] By a further contrast, a few List B ministers were of the globe-trotting type. Among these was James Rose. He began to work on his father's Sussex farm at the age of eleven. He emigrated to Canada at the age of eighteen, and "whilst ploughing the virgin prairieland ... he heard and answered the call to the ministry". He undertook training at Glasgow Bible Training Institute, and then went to Australia as a home missionary of the Presbyterian Church. From the outbreak of the First World War until 1920 he served in the Australian Army Medical Corps, and then returned to farming in East Sussex. During the next nine years he was married, and supplied various churches, until in 1929 he became minister of Amberley and its rural churches in West Sussex. There followed pastorates at Whitehill, Hampshire, and Wingham and Preston, East Kent. He retired to Cherry Hinton, Cambridge, where he continued to serve the village churches until he died in 1962, leaving a widow and two sons.[42]

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40 CYB (1931), pp. 254-5.
41 CYB (1939), p. 719.
42 CYB (1963-4), pp. 446-7.

There remains one more pattern of service to be considered: that of the minority of List B ministers who, like Alfred Roy Drake, remained in full-time employment. He was employed by an insurance company, and in his spare time he studied at Birkbeck College London, and served a variety of London churches. Born in 1905, he died in 1940 as a result of an accident, leaving a widow and a small daughter.[43] John Poulson of Lavenham likewise remained in employment throughout his working life, but he served just one church, Hartest, Suffolk, from 1891 to 1933. For thirteen years he walked the five miles each way from Lavenham, until he came by a cycle, and still later was driven there by friends. He was highly regarded in Lavenham: active with a Friendly Society, a school manager, a member for fifty years of the parish council, and its chairman for twenty-five years. He was, we learn, "a truly great man; for his was the greatness of those who rejoice to serve". He and his wife, Mary Ann Tatum, had seven children, one of whom, Alfred, trained at Paton College, Nottingham, and held Congregational pastorates in Essex and Suffolk, becoming chairman of the latter County Union. Born in 1863, John Poulson died in his eighty-seventh year on 14 February 1950.[44]

Examples of Christian work done prior to undertaking Congregational ministry abound. Prior to Congregational pastorates in Yorkshire, William Thomas Coggan had ministered with great success at the Stanley Park People's Church, Liverpool, from the ranks of which no fewer than 300 men enlisted during the Great War.[45] Wilfred Monk was born into an evangelical Congregational home in the Essex village of Good Easter in 1899. He served in the First World War and, on sensing the call to Christian service, became lay pastor at Mill End Green, Dunmow, at the same time working for the Christian Colportage Association. He then had charge of a mission hall in Colchester, and from 1932 until his death in 1952 he served rural pastorates. "He was a cheerful and loveable character," we are told, "keenly interested in young people, joining in their fun and games … He was the friend and confident [*sic*] of older people ... He was a good man, a devoted minister, a humble but earnest servant of Jesus Christ". Married to Miss Gertrude Lee of High Easter in 1921, "their life together was a real partnership in faith and service".[46]

There are three obituaries of female List B ministers who remained on that List. When Mabel M. Snowball (1870-1932), a native of Sunderland, died on 17 October 1932, at the age of sixty-two, "with tragic suddenness", her "innumerable friends throughout Teesdale" were shocked. For ten years from 1912 she had worked with the National British Women's Total Abstinence Union, on whose behalf she had travelled throughout England and Ireland, and had visited South America. On the death of her husband she became pastor of the church at Cotherstone, where she was then living, and from 1925 until her

43 CYB (1942), p. 433.
44 CYB (1951), p. 525.
45 CYB (1957), p. 527.
46 CYB (1957), p. 534.

death she served among the Barnard Castle group of churches. Her uncle, the Revd Arthur W. Potts, had founded the Christian Endeavour Movement in England, and Mabel Snowball opened the first branch in Sunderland, and others wherever she worked. This "powerful preacher with an attractive style [who] possessed a gift of human sympathy to a remarkable degree" was buried beside her husband at Cotherstone.[47] The Cumbrian, Nellie Watson, was raised in the Church of England, and for fifteen years she served as a Church Army Sister, notably caring for those in hospitals and homes under the auspices of the Moral Welfare Department. She became uneasy with the (unspecified) doctrines of the Church of England and joined Tyndale Congregational Church, Oxford, where she felt called to the ministry. Called to Barton-on-Humber in 1959, her ministry was cut short by her untimely death on 20 April 1960. "Miss Watson … a cultured, brave woman of independent and forthright judgment", had no relatives.[48] Ethel Beatrice Boxall (1899/1900-1966) was the wife of the Revd K. F. Boxall, who had proceeded *via* List B to List A. She had trained as a school teacher, and was especially interested in the Women's Guild Movement and the British and Foreign Bible Society. She and her husband served as joint ministers at Petworth (1946-51) and Burlesdon (1957-59), the only List B partnership of its kind. It is recorded that "Her gracious personality attracted young people to her"; she had "undoubted gifts as a preacher"; and "she was an organist of considerable talent and served many churches by her music".[49]

As we might expect, List B ministers, like all other ministers, varied considerably in temperament. Leonard Thomas Foster, who had studied at Cliff College and at the Bible Training College, Clapham, is said to have been "A man of strong convictions but reserved temperament" who "was 'content to bloom in native bower, although the place be small'"[50] – in Somerset villages, to be precise. William George Lambert who, during the First World War had served with the YMCA at Euston Station and in France, lovingly nursed his invalid wife for a number of years. This exhausted him, so that following her death he spent much of his last six years in hospital. He was "a quiet, humble man of a very retiring nature; perhaps with no great gifts but a faithful pastor, one who spent his life serving others". He left "no family and no near relatives", but "His fellow ministers and many others remember him with deep gratitude and high regard".[51] Arthur Merlin Johns could hardly have been more different. He ministered at Oakengates, Wallsend-on-Tyne, and then for fourteen years at Selby, where he became widely known. He had "a great enthusiasm for amateur dramatics and his use of the tape recorder". He wrote and produced religious plays, and took taped recordings of the church services to the sick and elderly,

47 CYB (1933), p. 251.
48 CYB (1961), p. 457.
49 CYB (1966-7), p. 468.
50 CYB (1944), p. 439.
51 CYB (1962), p. 478.

and returned from Congregational meetings in Leeds with recordings that he played to the members. "All his enthusiasms were typified on one occasion in 1957 when he produced a religious play, acted by members of various youth organizations in the town, the incidental music for which was played by the local Salvation Army Band, and performed in Selby Abbey".[52]

Following training at Cliff College and service as a Wesleyan Connexional Evangelist at Eyam, and then, briefly, at Dumfries, William Young came to Congregationalism, and made for London, where he ministered at West Ham Mission, Walthamstow and Bromley-by-Bow. His final pastorate was at Chelmsford Avenue, Southend. He was "Enthusiastic yet gracious; active and full of vigour, yet serene and with a rare listening spirit, he brought to his preaching the necessity of decision, to his pastoral work healing and sympathy, and to his organizing thoroughness and vision". Much of his organizing concerned buildings. While with the Wesleyans he built a church at Eyam and laid the groundwork for a new school hall at Dumfries. At Southend, "renewals and repairs of every kind have been carried out, so that to-day the buildings show no signs of war's severities". He was also "a builder of Christian character", and while "Many buildings stand as a memorial to him ... the greatest memorial is in the lives of those who, under his guidance, decided to accept Christ as their Saviour and Friend".[53]

From two consecutive obituaries we have evidence that some ministers changed pastorates owing to indifferent health. Frederick William King had three months' training under the Salvation Army, and was then thrown in at the deep end. He suffered "persecution and rough handling, and carried their scars all his days". Twelve years on, ill health prompted his retirement from this "strenuous and dangerous work", and he went into business for two years. His health improved and he began to serve Congregational churches, sometimes walking twenty miles and preaching three times on a Sunday. More settled pastorates in the West Country followed until he suffered a further breakdown and was ordered by his doctor to remove to the Lake District for its bracing air, hence his pastorates at Cleator Moor and Bootle, "probably the most isolated Congregational cause in England". Following his retirement he continued at Bootle, unpaid, for a further fourteen years until a successor was found.[54] Walter Seymour Seager – another who had studied at Cliff College – had been a Wesleyan Lay Pastor for twelve years. Following a pastorate at Cannington and neighbouring villages he was called to Haresfinch, St Helens, in 1947. But within a year it became clear that "his health was no equal to the demands of a northern climate"; so whereas King had gone north for his health, Seager returned south for his. He accepted the call to Cerne Abbas in Dorset in 1948, and in the following year he died.[55]

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52 CYB (1959), p. 436.
53 CYB (1950), p. 536.
54 CYB (1950), p. 534.
55 CYB (1950), pp. 534-5.

A number of the ministers majored, like Mabel Snowball, on the temperance aspect of the Nonconformist conscience, George James Charrett among them. Born at Bishop's Sutton, near Winchester, on 9 May 1848, he was soon an orphan, was lovingly raised by his grandfather, and after some years in business he had a succession of pastorates in Hampshire. He worked for the Rechabite Order, the Hants and Isle of Wight Band of Hope Union, and the Good Templars; but he also served the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Scouts, and other charitable bodies. "He was a true and stalwart Nonconformist, and bore much persecution because of loyalty to principle, and stood firm as the one Nonconformist representative on the old Established Church School Board".[56]

Among many other tit-bits yielded up by the obituaries, we find that George Roberts founded a special mission at Pole Elm, Worcestershire, for seasonal hop pickers.[57] When George Macdonald, who had begun his ministry at Keld and Thwaite, and then served five years at Kirkby Lonsdale, "doing brave work in a lonely place", died after just four months at Dundee, Ramsbottom, "his wife, always a true helpmeet, survived him and is the chosen pastor at Dundee, Ramsbottom".[58] William Rowland Davidson had worked for the Protestant Truth Society for sixteen years.[59] Harold Holland died while conducting a service on 8 October 1950.[60] John Baines went from first violinist at the Theatre Royal, Peterborough, to three pastorates, of which the longest kept him cycling around four churches in the hilly land around Fordingbridge for forty years, and until he was well over seventy-five years of age.[61] George Albert Hibbert seems to have had what the epistle calls "itching ears" in that he resigned his Dudley pastorate in order to become the West Midlands area commissioner of the British Israel World Federation.[62] Putting first things first, Albert Morrison's obituarist informs us that "He was a good athlete for Jesus Christ, beloved on the rugby field and bowling green, as well as in the Church".[63] Norman Reed, a Northumbrian school teacher turned pastor at Jarrow and then at Preesall, was noted for his pastoral care and for "the way he used his gift of muscular manipulation for the healing of many patients".[64] Among honours bestowed upon List B men was the Presidency of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, held by Edwin Tulley in 1938,[65] William Frederick Elmes's investiture by King George VI as a Knight of the order of St John of Jerusalem,[66]

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56 CYB (1933), p. 250.
57 CYB (1933), p. 250.
58 CYB (1947), p. 497.
59 CYB (1950), p. 534.
60 CYB (1951), p. 524.
61 CYB (1952), p. 527.
62 CYB (1952), p. 527.
63 CYB (1962), p. 478.
64 CYB (1966-7), p. 469.
65 CYB (1953), p. 527.
66 CYB (1945), p. 446.

and the OBE, which was awarded to George Nicholls, JP. But George Nicholls, who had been Member of Parliament for North Northamptonshire and four times Mayor of Peterborough, is unique in another way too for, lapsing into Disneyesque language, his obituarist assures us that on 30 November 1943, he "passed into Yonderland".[67]

V: A Personal Recollection

As the years pass, the number of those who have personal memories of List B ministers becomes ever fewer. For this reason I conclude this study by paying tribute to the one I knew best. Although Henry Alfred Grant Osborne was justifiably transferred by the Status Committee of the Congregational Union to the single Roll of Ministers in 1958,[68] for most of the years in which he and I were in quite regular contact he was on List B.[69] He was born on 22 October 1895 in Portsmouth, and never lost his rich Hampshire burr. He became a member of the church at Redhill, and from there he embarked upon lay preaching. Wounded in the First World War, he spent a year in hospital and then, according to his obituary, he "read Theology at Manchester University" (albeit the University has no record of a theological student of that name during the years 1918-1923; and he would surely have mentioned this to me when he knew that my steps were tending in that direction). In 1923 he and Nellie Walker were married, and in due course their daughter, Joan, was born. In 1926 they removed to Portsmouth, and in 1929 Grant became the founding lay pastor of the Congregational church at Corsham, proceeding to Bishop's Waltham, Botley and East End, Lymington in 1932. While there he studied for the List B examinations. In 1933 he was examined in Bible (58 per cent), Essay (90 per cent), and Congregational History and Principles (60 per cent); in the following year, he submitted only the sermon (62 per cent); and in 1935 he satisfied the examiners in Bible (56 per cent), Old Testament, Part 1 (72 per cent), Old Testament, Part 2 (43 per cent) and Preaching (55 per cent), thereby completing the course and gaining access to List B.[70]

In 1940 Grant accepted a call to Warsash, and there he remained until 1948. He served as chaplain to HMS Tormentor, and was a member of an Air Raid Precautions contingent, while his wife was appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to work among the "Wrens" (Women's Royal Naval Service).

In 1948 he entered upon his final, and probably his most significant pastorate. He became one of the two village ministers in the Guildford group of churches. He, his wife, and Joan lived at Wonersh, and it was not long before

67 CYB (1944), p. 439.

68 CUEW Status Committee Minutes, 32, where he is among those listed who were over 60, and had served for more than 25 years; and p. 60, where the names of those to be admitted to the Roll of Ministers in the 1959 *Year Book* are recorded.

69 For his obituary see *The United Reformed Church Year Book* (1994), p. 275.

70 The results for the successive years are in "CUEW Examinations 1924 to 1953", attached to pages 50, 55, 60.

Grant and the Vicar, Hugh G. B. Anthony, had struck up good ecumenical relations. Nor need we guess who became the first Nonconformist to preach at the nearby St John's Roman Catholic Seminary. In the midst of her busy rounds as a district nurse, Joan founded the Tangley Players – their name taken from the barn in which the church first met during the 1860s. Religious plays were performed on Christian festivals and significant church occasions, "always to a packed church; and much blessing has attended this experiment".[71] In 1960 the church celebrated its centenary, and a number of special services were held. The first of these was conducted by the Moderator of the Southern Province, W. Andrew James, and during it seventeen new members were received. Previous ministers conducted the remaining services in the series. The climax of the year was the Tangley Players' production of "A Pageant of Congregationalism".[72]

Meanwhile, in 1958 the entire group of churches and, indeed, the wider denomination, had been shocked by the sudden death of James Alfred Kaye, the Congregational "bishop" of Guildford. He was a remarkable man who possessed the skill of combining ebullience with dignity. He threw himself into good works all around the district and, indeed, this ardent supporter collapsed and died while at a Guildford City Football Club match. The large city church looked to one of its district ministers for support and guidance, and Grant Osborne did not disappoint them. On the contrary, he gave "magnificent service, not only in the Churches under his immediate care but during the very difficult interim months after the death of Dr. Kaye … He courageously shouldered the additional responsibility of the North Street Church during the seventeen months when the Church sought a new pastor; and in this he had the support of a magnificent band of deacons".[73] During this hectic period Grant Osborne lost the tangible support of his wife, who died in 1959.

In 1971 Grant retired, but continued his chaplaincy at Guildford Crematorium. He went to art classes and became a skilled water colourist. In 1973 he and Joan removed to Norfolk, where Joan became Senior Nursing Officer in the Cromer area. Two further moves followed, and they ended at Hoveton on the Norfolk Broads. They became members of Jessopp Road Congregational Church, Norwich, whose members appointed Grant an Honorary Associate minister. He continued to serve the churches of the area, and gave eighteen months to the North Walsham Church. In 1986 he suffered a stroke which affected the whole of his left side; but three weeks later he was walking normally, and he maintained his preaching duties until 1989 when, he fell and broke his shoulder. Cared for to the end by Joan, he died peacefully on 31 August 1992, aged ninety-six.[74]

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71 Joyce Reason, *A Fellowship of Churches, 1662-1962: A Short History of the witness of the Guildford and District Congregational Churches* (published by the churches, 1962),p. 31.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid., pp. 18, 19.

74 Some material in this paragraph is gleaned from letters from Joan Osborne to Mrs F. M. Sell, of 18 November 1988, and to myself, of 9 August 1989.

Although my church membership was in a "non-Guildford" village, I came to know Grant well (though in those days he was "Mr Osborne"). He was among those who ensured that I was kept busy with preaching appointments before and during my college years. I was thus able to visit the Guildford district churches at Cartbridge, Merrow, Normandy, Shamley Green,[75] Stoughton Road Guildford, Westborough and Wonersh.[76] Since my first pastorate was to be at Sedbergh, then in the Yorkshire Dales, my home church at Worplesdon arranged a Valedictory Service for me, the distance being too great and the journey too daunting in those pre-motorway days for more than a handful to make the trip to the Ordination Service. Among those taking part was Grant Osborne, who read the lessons.[77]

Grant conducted worship with dignity and utter sincerity. His conceived prayers were thoughtful and orderly; the following was among his favourite printed prayers:

> O Jesus, Master Carpenter of Nazareth, who on the Cross with wood and nails hast wrought man's full salvation, wield well thy tools in this thy workshop, that we, who come to thee rough-hewn, may be fashioned to a truer beauty by thy hand; for thy name and glory's sake. Amen.

His preaching was of a kind to command the hearer's attention, and what he said was always worth hearing. I allow him to have the last word. I have an undated cutting from the *Surrey Advertiser* column, "Faith in the life of today: A Christian Commentary". Grant here tells us what one of the great Christian festivals is all about. He does it concisely, clearly, and with utter sincerity. It is difficult to think of a more comprehensive statement on this subject within the constraints imposed by strict journalistic word limits, and given the diversity of the intended readership. List B he may have been, but I award his essay A+.

> For so many, the meaning of Whitsun is not at all clear. They understand Christmas, Good Friday or Easter, but Whitsun seems so vague and unreal.
>
> Let us try to catch one of its meanings.
>
> Most of us would agree that we are influenced by our

75 Where my mother was raised in the Congregational Church, and where my father was a village schoolmaster for thirty-two years.

76 Of these churches only Normandy, Westborough and Wonersh continue to this day.

77 Others were my former minister and great supporter, the saintly G. Sydney Morgan; the then current minister, Perrin J. Spooner; George Curry of the Yorkshire Dales; Principal W. Gordon Robinson of Manchester; Leslie Whiteman, secretary of the Surrey Congregational Union; and Charles Burch, the Worplesdon church secretary. The Moderator, Andrew James, sent a message of greeting.

companionships. Whenever or wherever two persons associate, each catches something from the other. Where one is strong and the other weak, the weaker inevitably falls into the habits or vices of the stronger. And of course, though perhaps less easily, the virtues too. We all have known cases of character being ruined by bad companionship; just as on the other hand, we have known characters being elevated by friendship with a good and strong personality.

Whitsun speaks of a process like this. A process set in motion whenever two persons associate; most of all when one is weak and the other strong.

Companionship with God is possible, in a new way, by the Holy Spirit. God in Christ can dwell with and in men, that through His companionship they might be lifted on to higher levels of life. As we sometimes sing:

He came sweet influence to impart,
A gracious willing guest
While He can find one humble heart
Wherein to dwell.
And every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness
Are his alone.

For proof of this let us go back to those men on whom the Spirit came on that first Whitsunday.

They were very ordinary, undistinguished men. For three years they had companioned with Jesus. Then quite suddenly the end had come, and in the shadow of the cross they scattered like lost and frightened children. But they could not forget him, for love never forgets, and they lived to learn that was not the end of all things, but only the end of a chapter.

A more glorious chapter was being opened when they made the glad discovery that he kept His word. He rose from the dead and before leaving them, commanded them to wait in Jerusalem for a further revealing. So they had waited expectantly and were rewarded by that great experience which we commemorate on Whit-Sunday.

On that great day they were filled with a power not of themselves.

It was the Holy Spirit. It was God of old come down to dwell with them and in them; for to these men it was no mysterious stranger confronting them; it was the Lord they loved come to them in a new way: come to be with them, and with all who love him for ever.

As the years went by they found the experience continued, for "Where two or three met in His name there was He in the midst." For them the communion or companionship of the Holy Spirit became the great reality, their inspiration and their strength.

And what happened then has continued to happen ever since. It is this which emphasises the difference between Christmas, Good Friday

or Easter. These are all events in history and can never be repeated. But what happened on Whit-Sunday is never ending. It can happen at any hour or in any place, for this is the experience of every individual who associates with God.

So we can read the story of the first Whitsun in Acts 2, and instead of Jerusalem, you can read London, New York, Moscow or Guildford. Instead of Peter, James and John, you can read Wesley, Whitefield, Luther or even yourself and you don't alter the meaning one iota, because what happened then was the beginning of a never-ending story.

The message and meaning of Whitsun is that God in Christ is alive and active. He dwells in this world, most of all in the hearts and lives of His faithful people; for those who love Him and keep His word, know this communion, or companionship of the Holy Spirit.

In Memoriam Henry Alfred Grant Osborne (1895-1992).

ALAN P. F. SELL

SPARE-TIME MINISTRY: ORDAINED "AR" – THE STORY OF AN ANOMALY (PERHAPS) REMOVED

Not unlike its predecessors, the Roll of Ministers in the *United Reformed Church Year Book* 1980 displayed the multiplicity of routes by which men and women in the then young United Reformed Church (URC) had come to ordination. They had variously attended a total of sixteen recognised Colleges in England or Wales, and among the many colleges to have closed was Hackney whose alumni reached back to 1917. Some ministers had transferred from a related Presbyterianism in Ireland, Scotland or Wales; some from other denominations, including the Baptists, the Wesleyan Reform Union, and even the ecclesiologically more distant Church of England. Yet others were Congregationalists for whom List B, the Roll of Ministers Examinations, or the recommendations of the Status Committee (SC) had allowed admission. One further route now made its first printed appearance, those ministers shown as "AR" with an explanatory introduction to the Year Book Ministers' List stating that "AR indicates Assembly Resolution regarding former Local Pastors".[1] Prior to a final retirement, the 2013 Year Book was the last to include someone ordained "AR" who was still in active pastoral ministry.

The AR route to ordination remains often poorly known and understood. Official papers apart, it has been lightly – and sometimes incorrectly – documented. However, its distinctive history involves the concept of local congregational call and the practice of devoted ministry by lay people. Local Pastors had in effect been lay ministers but only of their own congregations, with examples of ordinations AR in every Province of the new denomination, save Yorkshire.

I: Antecedent Lay Ministries

The two initial uniting denominations differed considerably in their understanding and practice of a call to specific pastoral charge. Some respective responsibilities were in 1978 described succinctly for the Applications Committee by the Clerk to Assembly. In Congregationalism where a call might have been given to lay or ordained, "the recognition of the right to minister was a matter for the local church. The recognition of status as a minister of the denomination was

1 *United Reformed Church Year Book* [hereafter, URCYB] (1981). The present author, himself Ordained AR, is particularly indebted to these other former Local Pastors: the Revds David Bunney, Richard Gill, Andrew Lorimer and Michael Marshall. He is also appreciative of substantial help from the staff and facilities of Dr Williams's Library, and at Luther King House, Manchester; from discussions with participants in the 2013 URCHS Study Weekend where an introductory version of this paper was read; from the Revd Michael Hopkins; and from the Revd Dr Robert Pope for his comments on an earlier draft. The URC Archive in the Congregational Library at DWL has been accessed where possible: some of its files remain closed for reasons of confidentiality.

[through its Status Committee] nationally controlled...[Presbyterianism, however] started from the concept of the ministry as belonging to the whole Church and the right of call by the local church, while jealously guarded, was limited to those whom the Church had first recognised as ministers".[2]

Congregationalism had a wide acceptance of lay ministry: the formal structure for local pastors developed by the Congregational Union of England and Wales (CUEW) and, from 1966, the Congregational Church in England and Wales (CCEW), would be largely adopted by the new URC. Membership of a Congregational Church was primary, "for at least two years" in 1948; that was halved by 1959, remaining so at the time of Union. The first published CUEW Register of Lay Pastors (RLP) appeared in the *Congregational Year Book* for 1959, naming 59 people:[3] the Rules (1958) and Regulations (1959) "Relating to Admission to the RLP" required set courses of study, any remuneration of lay pastors to be fully the responsibility of church rather than denomination, with the Status Committee competent to dispense with qualifying requirements.[4] Not all lay pastors sought admission to the Register.

The RLP seems to have been operative from 1958 and from then onwards, either "SC" or "CU EXAM" described admission. Some 1958 entrants whose pastoral experience was already of long-standing had each successively served such geographically different places as to suggest that they were probably full-time: some of the earliest lived in a local manse, perhaps in lieu of, or as part of a stipend, indicative also of locally-perceived ministerial status; one RLP had passed the List B Examinations but was not ordained, since he was yet to give whole time service in a pastorate, this noted in *Congregational Year Books* from 1957 to 1966-67. Immediately before Union, RLPs served approximately seventy Congregational churches of which no more than fifty opted into the URC. Essex was the County Union then with the largest number of churches served solely by RLPs, and these eleven churches ranged in size from Thundersley's one hundred and fifty-six members to Tollesbury Major's nine.

The fifteen years prior to the 1972 Union had already seen the disappearance of two patterns of Congregational ministry which lacked formal ordination. From 1899, List B had comprised recognised Evangelists who, without college training, had successfully fulfilled certain required conditions:[5] the 1957 May Assembly

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2 URC Archive at Dr Williams's Library [hereafter URC Archive], B/a/17/2a, A. L. MacArthur to Members of the Applications Committee meeting on Monday 16 October 1978.

3 *Congregational Year Book* [hereafter CYB] (1959), p. 389: after CYB (1969-70), the formal list became the "Register of Local Pastors". In this present paper, the abbreviation "RLP" also refers to Registered Local Pastor, the particular context guiding the intended meaning.

4 CYB (1959), p. 46.

5 From CYB (1896) to CYB (1898), it had been List E; initially, it recorded "Evangelists and Lay Pastors resident in the British Isles"; only from 1929 onwards was List B simply of "Evangelists". The Revd Professor Alan Sell has been helpful with regard to List B details.

moved to close the List; no First Year Examination would be held after that September; and the final entrants were admitted in 1962, with one 1965 transfer from the Congregational Union of Ireland.[6] The 1960s and 1970s saw the Status Committee admit to the Roll of Ministers some of those then still on List B which nonetheless continued to be published in its residual form as late as the final, 1972 Commemorative Edition of the *Congregational Year Book*. Similarly, some of the Home Missionaries trained between 1945 and 1965 at St Paul's House, Liverpool, were ordained from 1966 onwards, a perception being that the Congregational Church was seeking to regularise its ministerial rolls. Despite their experience, they were to be considered by the Status Committee only individually rather than as a group, this normally resulting in an interview by a Provincial or other Committee.[7] The final Congregational and first United Reformed Church *Year Books* also included on their Church Lists others in pastoral charge, who were simply denoted "Lay Pastors". Other early URC Church Lists might state "Vacant" or "Supplied", failing to name even a then serving Lay Pastor.

The Presbyterian Church of England's use of lay ministry at the time of Union in 1972 included a range of personnel and titles, all in reality of quite limited extent. The Order of Deaconesses, also known as Church Sisters, was denominationally determined and structured. Their role was diaconal in the New Testament sense, normally alongside an ordained minister and frequently in inner-urban areas (Eileen Gooding at Battersea Rise), but not entirely to the exclusion of posts in suburbia (Patricia [Pat] Parrish at Allerton). Although the first deaconess took up service in 1920, numbers remained limited until the period of expansion following the Second World War. In the final *Official Handbook* prior to Union, the seven then in post were named both in their respective pastorates and on a separate list of Deaconesses.[8]

Other lay activity was far more *ad hoc*, Presbyteries describing by different titles those various lay people appointed to specific local tasks. Some were in mission churches or preaching stations, some remained in secular employment, but whatever their titles, all may have fulfilled similar functions save that the word "pastoral" might have inferred a limited oversight role. In 1971/72, the Presbytery of London South had one Lay Worker and, in Chatham, one Lay Agent; at least three such served on Merseyside in the Liverpool Presbytery with a Lay Pastor at Linacre Park Bootle, and Lay Agents at both Liverpool Green Lane and St Andrew's Waterloo with Caradoc Seaforth;[9] the Presbytery of Durham, between 1929 and 1967, had

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6 CYB (1958), pp. 92-94. I owe this reference and other related detail to David Powell of the Congregational Library.

7 CYB (1965-66), p. 82 and (1966-67), p. 89. I am indebted to the Revds Margaret Laurie and Brenda Willis for considerable help regarding St Paul's House. Year Book entries show six 1966 or 1968 ordinations supported by SC recommendations; three others from 1968 to 1978 omit any such specific explanation. I am grateful for sight of Margaret Laurie's unpublished memoir of St Paul's House; and a parallel piece by her fellow *alumna*, Jean Mortimer.

8 *Official Handbook of the Presbyterian Church of England* [hereafter PCEH] (1971/72), p. 180.

9 PCEH (1971/72), pp. 72, 76, 83, 108 and 114.

Preachers-in-charge, Pastoral Agents and Lay Agents, and permissions varied perhaps as much as titles – at least one was authorised, and another refused permission, to preside at the Sacraments.[10] In most cases, the involvement of an Interim Moderator was needed to complement the preaching and pastoral work of these lay ministers, who appeared in no formal, separated lists in the Handbook.

The background for what became for some years a URC lay ministry was thus mostly but not entirely the preserve of former Congregationalists. For the few former Presbyterians, Union brought sole pastoral charge of churches for the first time. Movement towards a unified pattern of ministry in fact dated from 1957: the CUEW then, and the URC in 1974, both intended that "There shall be one Roll of Ministers".[11] From 1981, the list would also include ordained Elders from the Churches of Christ, and then an emerging Auxiliary Ministry. Lay ministry would by design now fade away, whether precipitately or more gently. Twenty-first century needs and practice, far too current and still evolving to be explored here, suggest however that that might well have been too dogmatic and final a view and expectation.

II: The 1977 and 1978 Assembly Resolutions

One specific event preceded and facilitated the ordination of the Local Pastors, this beyond the discussions already under way in committees about more general possibilities.[12] In pastoral charge at Painswick, Cranham and Slad in the Gloucester District of the West Midlands Province was Miss Phyllis Cordon, in service there as Local Pastor since 1972 following a similar previous ministry at Long Eaton on the Derbyshire-Nottinghamshire border. Her pre-retirement working life had been as a Welfare Assistant in Children's Clinics, and she was admitted to the Register of Local Pastors of the CCEW in 1971. The Gloucester District Council now requested authority to ordain her. At General Assembly 1977, the Church Life Department's resolution to effect this was formally moved by the Revd R. O. Latham and seconded by the Revd A. L. MacArthur, respectively Secretary of the Department and Clerk to Assembly. Following discussion and amendment, it was ultimately passed as: "That having considered the request from District and Province that Miss P. M. Cordon be ordained, the Assembly authorises the Gloucester District to arrange for her ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments".[13] Again following both

10 F. H. Hawkins, *History of the Presbytery of Durham* (South Shields: Presbytery of Durham, 1972), *passim*. I owe this reference to the Revd Michael Hopkins.

11 CYB (1958), p. 93; *URC Reports to Assembly* (1974), p. 18.

12 *URC Reports to Assembly* (1977), p. 29: Church Life Department (Supplementary Ministries Committee), Item 19.

13 Ministers were ordained by District Councils, not by any individual person: Services of Ordination were in effect meetings of the District Council, which at a previous meeting, would have named specific ministers and elders to act as, and for, the whole District Council in the ordination.

initial input from the Church Life Department and subsequent amendment, a second successful resolution ran: "The Assembly asks the Ministerial Training Committee to investigate the conditions under which ordination may be offered to local pastors on the official register and to report".[14]

Surprisingly, there is no mention of Phyllis Cordon and the Gloucester District in any section of the published "Reports". It remains unclear whether informative preliminary papers were available to Members of Assembly before the debate.[15] In any event, the major catalyst for the now imminent move towards wider ordination was when one particular laywoman's ministry was recognised as being the same as that of the more normally trained and ordained ministers. Her ordination was both prior and additional to all others: she was never designated as AR in Year Books, but "By Special Resolution of General Assembly".

The charge to the Ministerial Training Committee in 1977 to investigate "the conditions under which ordination may be offered to local pastors" might already presume a strong inference towards a positive recommendation being brought to the 1978 Assembly. The committee took wide soundings, not least from the Doctrine and Worship Committee which saw no doctrinal objection, noting rather the advantage that such ordination would "correct what is otherwise an anomaly".[16] The word "anomaly" thus had serious usage. It was perhaps first used in this context in a paper for the Supplementary Ministries Committee (SMC), saying that "As received from the CCEW, there are already so many anomalies that the URC should look at local ministry afresh",[17] but it would surface again in other official material. Significant information was included in the Ministerial Training Committee's report to General Assembly. Forty-two Local Pastors were then currently on the official Register, in pastoral charge, exercising a ministry of Word and Sacraments, not ordained, "and their position is anomalous in the URC"; forty-four others were qualified through the Lay Preachers' and Pastoralia courses, either temporarily out of pastoral charge or never yet having received a call.[18] Some of these would later be ordained AR. The report noted the variety of financial, honoraria, or manse arrangements locally determined.[19] Crucially it stated: "Following the debate in the Assembly 1977, the various committees consulted recommended that [this] anomaly be ended by offering [the Local Pastors] ordination", this despite ongoing considerations regarding an Auxiliary Ministry.

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14 *Minutes of Assembly* (1977), p. 15: Church Life Department.

15 Neither members' working papers nor the full Minutes of Assembly appear to be lodged in the URC Archive in the Congregational Library at Dr Williams's Library.

16 URC Archive, B/a/27/1. Papers of the Ministerial Training Committee (MTC), 4 January 1978 communication from the Doctrine and Worship Committee.

17 URC Archive, B/a/20/1. Paper prepared by the Revd Wilfred Gathercole for, most probably, the SMC meeting on 2 January 1973.

18 *URC Reports to Assembly* (1978), pp. 19f; Church Life Department.

19 URC Archive, C/a/1. The Central Committee of the Church Life Department on 20 May 1977 when discussing the intended Auxiliary Ministry noted: "Some Local Pastors would not be Auxiliary Ministers since they worked for the Church full-time".

The key decisions were made by Assembly at Southport in 1978. It accepted

> ...the principle that it is appropriate for [Local Pastors] to be ordained and therefore gives discretion to District Council to offer ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments to those presently serving as Local Pastors in charge of local churches within the District, and to ordain them. ..All such ordinations should not alter previously agreed terms of service, and such ministers should be designated with the letters AR (Assembly Resolution) in Year Book, appearing where other ministers have their mode of entry indicated... That local pastors on the official Register not wishing to accept ordination be permitted to continue as at present. The offer of ordination shall remain open for five years from this Assembly, i.e. to the Assembly of 1983. That the list of local pastors shall be closed from the date on which training is provided for the auxiliary ministry and no new candidates be accepted for the Pastoralia Course.[20]

The effect of these resolutions was immediate. More than half of all Ordinations AR, thirty-four in fact, occurred in the remaining months of 1978: three in 1982 and two in 1983 would conclude the process. While it is not yet possible to state with any certainty the total number of United Reformed Church RLPs, seventy-two were named in the *Year Books* covering 1973/74 to 1987/88, and this number includes both those listed as then in pastoral charge and a further five recorded in the 1975 book as "Deleted".[21] The fall in numbers of RLPs was precipitate, from an active 47 in 1978 to the final two in 1987/88. No published list ever included local pastors who had now retired from pastoral charge, and the existence of any formal Register of Local Pastors remains thoroughly elusive.[22]

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20 *Record of Assembly* (1978), p. 18: Church Life Department Resolutions. An earlier suggestion within the MTC on 6 January 1978 was to use the letter "E", perhaps to indicate (secular) Experience. In Congregational days however, there had been four lists from A to D: List D (Ministers resident abroad) was omitted after 1946; Lists C (Wales, Scotland and Ireland) after 1957. The proposed new E might alternatively have been seen as being in this succession.

21 Cf. this figure with the total of eighty-six reported to the General Assembly by the MTC in 1978, with 42 on the official register and 44 on the "inactive" list held by the SMC: this additional list was mentioned as late as *URC Reports to Assembly* (1982), it has yet to be located, and even its existence as a specific document confirmed. Moreover, no more formal Register of Local Pastors than that published in Year Books can yet be claimed with any confidence.

22 The website Catalogue of the URC Archive held in the Congregational Library seems to identify no such document. The figures in this paragraph are taken from the named Year Books, information that does not necessarily remain constant through successive editions. Ordinations AR during 1978 numbered 34; 1979, 10; 1980, 6; 1981, 4; 1982, 3; 1983, 2: the combined total was 59. The numbers of RLPs remaining in URCYBs until the final RLP list were: 1978, 47; 1979, 42; 1980, 14; 1981, 9; 1982, 8; 1983, 7; 1984, 5; 1984/85, 5; 1985/86, 5; 1986/87, 4; 1987/88, 2.

III: Additional Ordinations AR, and statistical detail

The Year Book legend AR was next used in relation to some who had not been former Registered Local Pastors, active in 1978. Least problematic were the former Presbyterian deaconesses, whose work had many pastoral similarities to that of Local Pastors, but was liturgically different through not presiding at the Sacraments. They were the subject of early committee consideration. The Supplementary Ministries Committee, "in view of . . . gradually changing circumstances", questioned the need to retain this separate Order. The remaining deaconesses were approached about the possibility of being ordained and it was then resolved, in 1979, that, "Assembly authorises District Councils to ordain to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments those deaconesses presently serving in charge of local churches within the District". Those actively employed by the URC in 1979 were offered ordination. The responses were not uniform, repeating the pattern of Congregationalism's Home Missionaries some years previously, but three were ordained in 1979, a fourth in 1982, and one declined ordination.[23]

As many as twelve ARs appear not to have been included on any published lists, whether of churches or pastors, until those lists which noted their respective ordinations; three others were included only on Church Lists.[24] Some may already have been on what might be called the inactive list and were now, in the period after the 1978 Resolution, called by pastorates and then ordained and inducted as ministers without first being commissioned as pastors. Committee minutes also note when any required course had been successfully completed by future ARs, who nonetheless seem never to have appeared on a published Register of Local Pastors.[25] It is possible that others were the subject of individual decisions which accepted local pastoral experience and their history as lay preachers as sufficient for ordination AR.

One distinctively human story deserves telling. In 1972, the South East London Group of Presbyterian churches had in addition to its ordained minister a deaconess (Miss Eileen Gooding) and a lay worker (Henry Wiles): both would later be Ordained AR, in 1979 and 1978 respectively. Eileen was deaconess at various South London churches from 1959 to 1974 including both West and Upper Norwood. Henry, admitted RLP in 1974, served successively as Lay Worker, Local Pastor and Minister from about 1970 to 1988 in suburban Brockley and Norwood. They later married in his widower years.[26]

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23 *URC Reports to Assembly* (1979), pp. 35, 45; *Record of Assembly* (1979), p. 16.

24 The URCYB Obituaries of some of these twelve note that they had been Lay Pastors before Union or before their ordination: the relevant Church Lists for the periods cited often state "Supplied", with no one named as in pastoral charge. Closed files in the URC Archive do not permit confirmation or otherwise of their positions. Those who were included on Church Lists were styled as, e.g., "Clutton: Mr F. G. Lambern (LP)".

25 URC Archive, B/a/20/1, e.g. Andrew Fraser 17 October 1973 and Herbert Elliott 11 June 1976. The *URC Reports to Assembly* (1979) mention of Mrs O. Long (Southern Province) may be an error for Olive Ling. None is later noted as Admitted to the RLP.

26 PCEH (1971/72), p. 114; URCYB (1990/91), p. 199.

We move now from people to statistics. Despite the risk of overloading this paper with figures, it might be helpful to set out some salient details concerning Registers, changes and ordinations, however inconsistently recorded some successive numerical details might have been.

When specifically questioned on the eve of Union concerning their future intentions, 24 of 69 Congregational RLPs stated a wish not to become URC Local Pastors;[27] twelve of the remaining majority went on to be ordained AR under the URC 1978 Assembly Resolution. Late in 1977, the Ministerial Training Committee's Working Party reported 37 qualified as RLPs but not then in a pastorate:[28] slightly later, four lay preachers were noted as still following the Pastoralia course;[29] and of the 47 RLPs listed in the 1978 Year Book, only 33 would be Ordained AR while one other reached ordination through the Roll of Ministers Examination. Nine RLPs who continued in pastoral charge after Assembly 1978 and so were potentially AR, declined that opportunity, remaining always as local pastors; five were on the continuing Register for at least two years beyond the 1983 expiry of the ordination offer; Edith Young (East Knoyle) was unique as a local pastor in receiving a URCYB Obituary;[30] the final URCYB RLP entry in 1987/88 showed just two names, Katherine (Kay) Fullerton (Thetford) and Kenneth Moyes (Minworth). Theoretically, District Councils may have declined to offer them ordination; a far more likely supposition is that personal principle concerning their call and activity as lay ministers informed their choices.[31]

Fifty-nine ministers were ultimately "Ordained AR". This total included: the 33 RLPs in pastoral charge at the time of the 1978 "offer"; an unknown number already on the register but not then in pastoral charge; at least three still working towards RLP status; four former deaconesses; and yet others taking up pastoral charge only after the 1978 General Assembly resolutions, but deemed qualified as RLPs. Some ordinations took place in the year in which their ministry started, thus Alice Wright in 1980 (Hackney Group);[32] one person was in 1978 both admitted to the RLP and then Ordained AR (Kenneth Brooks, Lewisham High

27 These are named in URCYB (1973-74), p. 263: others who did not continue as active Local Pastors into the URC are listed in the same edition as "Deleted", their views unrecorded though six were noted as "no longer in pastoral charge" and five as "not in pastoral charge of a United Reformed Church".

28 URC Archive, B/a/27/1. 25 November 1977 R. O. Latham of the MTC Working Party to investigate ordination of Local Pastors.

29 URC Archive, B/a/27/1. June 1978 "reminder" paper from C. K. Meachin, for Supplementary Ministries Committee, of the history and current position.

30 URCYB (1987/88), p. 201.

31 Kay Fullerton (née Mitchell) had been a Home Missionary trained at St Paul's House: she twice declined the offer of ordination. I owe confirmation of this detail to the Revd Brenda Willis.

32 Here and subsequently where a pastorate is so named with reference to an AR, it is where that RLP served at the time of their ordination AR.

Street). General Assembly's 1978 offer was for five years: Elizabeth R. Brown (Bricket Wood) and Michael Marshall (Rainford) were the only 1983 ordinations.

IV: The Churches, Pastors and Ministers

There was little uniformity of background, training and service among ARs. As for their pastorates, it might be expected that small causes would predominate. While average size of membership may in reality be of little significance, nonetheless the 1978 figure of approximately 35 members per church across 59 of the churches ranging from a minimum of four (Battersea Bridge Road) to a maximum of 88 (Enfield, Bush Hill Park) is itself telling. Small rural churches included Lavister & Trevalyn (Denbighshire, but in the Cheshire URC District), and Avebury (Wiltshire). Equally, there were small causes in London's older residential areas, thus Leyton, Stoke Newington or Islington. Villages ranged from coal-mining Johnstown (Flintshire) to the seaside community of Minnis Bay (Kent), while Soham (Cambridgeshire) was a small country town. The unexpected might occur as with 1930s London suburban South Woodford north of the Thames and Elmers End to the south, or Hunt's Cross in Liverpool. Not so unexpected is the church closure rate: a like-for-like comparison is awkward since the past decades have everywhere seen local ecumenical unions or the merging of URC congregations. Nonetheless the many absences from the 2014 Year Book suggest that around one half of 1980's approximately 65 churches have since closed.

The emerging list of former occupations may be no more unusual than that of either chapel trustees or college trained ministers of their time. The distinctive difference is that, normally, the secular occupation remained even after ordination. Secular is an imprecise term: Audrey Langdown (Loftus) was among four Presbyterian deaconesses; Phyllis Wenyon (Five Oak Green *et al.*) had served as a nurse with the London Missionary Society; seven others worked with children or students, including the Chief Children's Officer for a County Borough (William Royle, Southend Southchurch Park) and a headteacher (Wilfred Jones, East Leicester Group); a consultant anaesthetist (Andrew Fraser, Hartlepool), butcher's assistant (Sydney Boffey, Farndon), stonemason (Frederick [Fred] Lambern, Bristol Clifton Down), and farmer (Ellis Tomlinson, Southport Hampton Road) variously exemplified wide-ranging diversity among professionals, service industries and skilled tradesmen. A call to pastoral service might come only after retirement; some were able to combine their varied tasks while a few of working age were full-time pastors when still of "lay" status; the former deaconesses continued their then current work but now as full-time ministers.

The ages of the Ordained AR contrasted strongly with those of College-trained ministers. Few were still under forty; fifteen were at the time of their ordination already at or past the normal retirement age of sixty-five; four had turned seventy-five; the oldest, Charles Goodall (Emsworth) was born in 1894 and aged eighty-four. Local churches seemed likely to call as local pastors men and women of long experience in church work, that experience often witnessed

in their own local area: and age was no barrier at call.

The modest number of graduate ARs simply reflected society at the time. For some, university training had necessarily preceded work in medicine or teaching; two of four graduating in theology may actually have done so while in pastoral charge; less formal training included leadership experience in the young person's non-denominational Christian Endeavour Movement, a helpful background for Leslie Fidgen (South Woodford) and for Fred Lambern who for many years held both local and regional office. And however formal or minimal the varied personal preparations for ministry, many extended further their religious awareness and understanding, for example William (Bill) Davis (Erewash Valley Group) who was "a fervent reader, particularly of Hans Küng".

The URC, following Congregational precedent, normally required of RLPs the successful completion of the Lay Preacher's Certificate and the Pastoralia course. Frederick (Fred) Worrall (Little Eaton) was said to have "studied with Dr Shergold", a probable reference to the correspondence courses produced by the Revd Dr William Shergold at the request of the Congregational Union's Lay Preaching Committee.[33] The present writer (Lavister & Trevalyn) and Frank Richards (Johnstown) both worked for the Lay Pastors' Certificate through discussion with local ministers and the submission of required essays to assessors elsewhere, while two RLPs undertook distance study through the London Theological College.[34] Bertrand Chalmers (St John's, Jersey), a Channel Islands fruit grower, followed a distinctively individual route. Attendance at the South Wales Bible Training Institute, unfortunately curtailed through changed domestic circumstances, derived perhaps from his Brethren upbringing, while a hope towards ministry in the Presbyterian Church of England led to its Preliminary Certificate. However, local inter-church collaboration saw him become lay pastor of a Congregational church on Jersey.

Full-time remunerated lay pastors or ARs who had already travelled widely across both country and denomination included Ernest Crewes (Ruyton XI Towns). A Cornishman, Crewes trained for the Salvation Army Officer Corps, served also as a Baptist pastor in County Durham, but moved into Shropshire Congregationalism and thus the URC for a combined total there of seventeen years. From 1945 to 1983, Maurice Bennett (Dawlish) was lay pastor and then minister of a succession of churches in Kent and Devon, returning to one church previously served, his charges lasting up to nine years, and ordained only in his final pastorate. And Andrew Lorimer (Walton-on-the-Hill) had been a pastor and City Missionary in Belfast before being called to outer suburban Surrey.

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33 For William James Shergold (1879-1959), see CYB (1960), pp. 436-7. The CUEW's first Director of Studies for Lay Preachers, his ministry was spent entirely in local pastorates: the correspondence courses were published in book form as *A Devotional Commentary on the Shorter Oxford Bible* (London: Independent Press, 1954).

34 Details about this institution have proved elusive, defying even internet investigation: it was apparently a strongly evangelical foundation.

Conversely, some were called as Lay Pastor where they grew up from childhood, or spent all their working lives. Joseph Bath (Baker Street, Heaton Norris), the organ-builder son of a Horwich railway worker, filled almost every possible office within one church "until, without formal training for the ministry, he was recognised as its Lay Pastor in 1953 and its minister, after ordination, in 1978".[35] Others had similar experiences. In 1960, Jack Knott (Chigwell Row) was called as Lay Pastor by Stratford, Brickfields, where he had grown up; Bill Davis, born at Jacksville in the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Coalfield, "served the church at [nearby] Riddings all his life, retiring as minister after completing his training at Northern College 1979 [*sic*]";[36] Derby railwayman Fred Worrall spent all his forty-one years in pastoral charge in Derbyshire, sixteen of those at Old Normanton, Derby, whose Sunday School he had himself attended. The story of Charles Goodall (Emsworth) stands out, not just for continuous church service but that in his eightieth year he was "because of his age and experience" admitted to the RLP: "All his life was spent in association with the Waterside Church in Emsworth … After the departure of the minister in 1966 he was appointed Lay Leader; in 1974 he was inducted as Lay Pastor. Then, by Assembly Resolution in 1978, he was ordained to the URC ministry".[37] If nothing else, we see devoted individual commitment to a local church, the benefits of pastoral continuity, and the varied manner in which different churches described their leadership roles.

If a call to full-time ministry was subsequently felt by ARs, opportunity was given for assessment and individually prescribed additional training, sometimes accommodating varied domestic circumstances. Those accepted for this step included Frederick Hutchinson (Farnworth), his year at Westminster unremarked in the URCYB obituary; David Bunney (Soham), a modern languages teacher who studied personally for the RLP with retired New Testament Professor, Dr Cyril Blackman, was then invited to consider ordination, and later had a non-residential Westminster year before initial full-time appointment at Newbury and Hungerford; and Richard Gill (Ingress Vale, Dartford Group), whose two part-time Manchester years paralleled an initial stipendiary Lancashire pastorate to which county he would retire after subsequent charges in Yorkshire and Sussex. A former chairman of the Supplementary Ministries Committee, John Williamson, strongly supported the need for this very obvious flexibility of treatment, feeling it normally financially unjustifiable for the URC to require a year's full-time study for pastorally experienced, older ARs. Not without opposition, he also thought ARs should be eligible for call to churches other

35 URCYB (1985/86), p. 194.

36 URCYB (2003), p. 323 is here in one particular quite misleading: there is no record to affirm Davis's reported attendance at Northern College but there may have been an informal distance-learning arrangement. I am indebted to administrative staff at Northern College and Ministries Department, Church House, for their help.

37 URC Archive, B/a/20/1. 21 June 1974, SMC Minutes; URCYB (1984/85), p. 196.

than where they had been ordained.[38]

Two contrasting Methodist links and a multi-minister pastorate conclude this overview of people. Olive Ling, first a Congregationalist but then Methodist, unsuccessfully offered for the latter's ministry in the 1970s. Her URCYB obituary notes her acceptance as a local pastor with her ordination and induction at Minnis Bay, Birchington all in the year of the Assembly Resolution and her transfer from Methodism. Sydney Boffey had in 1932 been accepted for Primitive Methodist ministerial training, but that year's Methodist union halved the numbers called into college. Boffey was omitted, but forty-six years later he was ordained AR by the URC at Farndon. And uniquely, the years 1978 to 1981 saw three Ordinations AR in the Hackney Group of churches: its eight congregations would receive ministry from one full-time Group Leader and the newly-ordained three.[39]

V: Epilogue

In 2015, when only twelve ARs remain listed in the Year Book, our swiftly diminishing first-hand knowledge now lessens the likelihood of a comprehensive and accurate record of this group of ministers. The lack of any college course to name compounds the difficulty for Year Book obituaries to provide a succinct and correct description of the route to ordination or, if applicable, any transfer to full-time ministry. The designation AR may be misinterpreted. Minister Lists may show variable starting dates for pastoral charge, sometimes giving the year of ordination rather than of an earlier call to, or commissioning as, lay pastor. Indeed, obituarists not infrequently omit all mention of an AR's prior ministry as local pastor or what specifically occasions their ordination. Other published sources are tantalisingly inexplicit: an opportunity to note the lengthy existence of a formal Congregational Register of Lay Pastors was lost; even an account of Phyllis Cordon overlooked her position as someone in pastoral charge. Too economical a statement may indeed have concentrated these unintended inaccuracies.

The breadth of experience among ARs was collectively very considerable, ecclesiastically as well as in secular occupations. They did not seek ordination, but obituaries note how significant that ordination felt when it arrived. Perhaps this was because it marked not so much an assumption of status as a fulfilment of recognition by a wider constituency. Individual ARs normally felt viewed as "minister" without any distinction: they were accepted by other churches as

38 URC Archive, B/a/27/1. Correspondence from John Williamson to Michael Dunford of the SMC, 26 March 1981.

39 This section draws on numerous URCYB Obituaries, which are the source of all direct quotations unless otherwise referenced: see also N. Lemon, "Pastor Boffey's Congregational Circuit", *Congregational History Circle Magazine*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (2002), pp. 248-250.

preacher or Interim Moderator; they were available for consideration for Call to another church; and almost always was their experience and ministry equally recognised in ecumenical situations. Phyllis Wenyon's ministry at Five Oak Green included both liturgical and pastoral oversight for Anglicans during a period when they lacked an incumbent.[40]

The Revd John Williamson, second Chairman of the Supplementary Ministries Committee, whose brief included local pastors, seems to have played a key facilitating role in the progression of RLPs to ordination. He was also the first Moderator of the Mersey Province where local pastors already served and his encouragement resulted in the settlement of one returned lay missionary as a Cheshire church's local pastor. Indeed, by 1983, Mersey would have six ARs, from both Congregational and Presbyterian backgrounds. Here was a first-hand experience of the situation. Williamson's own ministry had started with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, following an upbringing in a country manse in West Cork, and he spoke of Cheshire's local pastors as serving in situations quite similar to his father's Irish communities. It was Williamson's involvement in a 1983 call to Rainford that led to the ordination AR of Michael Marshall, whose retirement in 2013 after fifteen years at St Stephen's, Bootle, marked the close of active, spare-time ministry by those Ordained AR. After one ordination service of an AR as presiding moderator, Williamson was heard to say that he had "never been more convinced of the rightness of our decision" than he was then.[41] In committee, province and denomination, his wisdom facilitated much.[42]

The anomaly word was used by some simply in light-hearted manner: AR might mean Anomaly Removed now that only ministers would normally have pastoral charge and preside at the Sacraments. But it was in fact employed in early, formal discussions; the unification of ministry developed with little delay; truly local ministries were built on the local pastor foundation, owing much to Congregationalism's historic insistence on the right of a local church to choose its own minister, whether lay or ordained. But as that era closes, only far longer and wider experience will determine whether AR served as precursor for renewed lay ministry today, or whether a later twenty-first century pattern might evoke other unnecessary anomalies.

NIGEL LEMON

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40 This paragraph derives from personal communications and conversations during 2012 and 2013.

41 Personal Information.

42 For John William Patrick Williamson (1922-2005), see URCYB (2007), p.343; and *The Guardian* (8 December 2005).

A VISIT TO THE PRISONS OF THE RUHR AND THE RHINELAND: AN EXERCISE IN CHURCH DIPLOMACY

On 3 August 1923, three men met in Düsseldorf. Two were Lutheran pastors from Sweden: Sam Stadener and Alfred Wihlborg. The third, and senior of the three, was John Wood Oman, Principal of Westminster College, Cambridge, at that time a training college for ministers of the Presbyterian Church of England. Their stated aim was to visit the French prisons in the Ruhr occupied zone in order to "take consolation and religious support to the German prisoners".[1] But, as will be seen, this bland description covers a complex series of issues, ecclesiastical and political, which will briefly be explored before attempting to give an assessment of what the delegation was able to achieve.

The visit was made under the auspices of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship Through the Churches (hereafter World Alliance) which played a key role in the development of the Ecumenical Movement; it originated in 1909[2] in a reciprocal visit by church representatives from England to Germany. On the deck of a Potsdam steamboat, Sir Willoughby Dickinson and Dr Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze sketched out a plan to apply principles of Christian friendship to international relations.[3] Thanks to their efforts, and those of the Quaker J. Allen Baker, the founding conference of the World Alliance was held at Constance, 2 to 5 August, 1914.[4] As with dramatic irony, war broke out all around, delegates left after one day and got home as best they could. But first they sturdily passed resolutions which made their object clear:

> . . . inasmuch as the work of conciliation and the promotion of amity is essentially a Christian task, it is expedient that the Churches in all lands should use their influence. . . to bring about good and friendly relations between the nations, so that, along the path of peaceful civilisation, they may reach that universal goodwill which Christianity has taught mankind to aspire after.[5]

Religious support for political causes was scarcely new, and although the World Alliance was certainly influenced by nineteenth century moral campaigns

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1 "Report of a Visit to the French Prisons in Germany", by Rev. S. Stadener, Dr. Oman, and Rev. A. Wihlborg, *Goodwill*, 6/2 (December 1923). This is the Journal of the British Council of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship Through the Churches.

2 See Keith Clements, *A Notable Ecumenical Anniversary: The Anglo-German Churches' Exchange Visits of 1908-09.* Available at: http://www.ctbi.org.uk/pdf_view.php?id+147.

3 "Our German Guests. A Romance of Christian Fellowship", *The Christian World* (28 June 1928).

4 The date was chosen to mark the 500th anniversary of the Council of Constance which had been convened by the German Emperor Sigismund to repair the papal schism.

5 These were published as regular reminders on the inside back page of *Goodwill.*

such as the campaign against slavery,[6] its main thrust was not to respond to international ills, but to prevent or ameliorate future international problems.[7]

Over the next few years associated councils were established in fifteen countries. The carnage of war gave the World Alliance renewed purpose and when it convened its first post-war meeting at Oud Wassenaar hotel, The Hague, from 26 September to 3 October 1919, there were fifty-one delegates from fourteen countries,[8] including belligerents and neutrals, although the French had refused to attend because the Germans were present.[9] But the significant decision was taken to organize an international ecumenical conference on a formal basis. This conference, ultimately held in Stockholm in 1925,[10] was vigorously promoted by the Archbishop of Uppsala, Nathan Söderblom, chair of the Swedish Council of the World Alliance.[11] It would deal with "some well-defined urgent practical aims".[12] However, although the resolution was passed, it did not meet with universal favour. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, left Söderblom in no doubt as to where he stood in the matter.[13] In his view, his fellow archbishop was "a churchman in a hurry, full of hazy plans which in the end did not amount to very much".[14] For his part, Söderblom saw Davidson as being "more political and cautious than whole-hearted".[15] Additional political tensions were reflected in the election of President of the World Alliance the following year at St Beatenberg. The two candidates were Davidson and Söderblom. Although the leader of the German delegation, Dr Spiecker, spoke courteously against Canterbury's candidature "on the grounds that he was the chief ecclesiastic of a great hostile power",[16] Davidson was finally elected.

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6 It is noteworthy that one of the longest serving representatives of the PCE on the British Council was Mr Travers Buxton, secretary (1898-1934) of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society.

7 Daniel Gorman, "Ecumenical Internationalism: Willoughby Dickinson, the League of Nations and the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 45/1 (2010), pp. 51-73.

8 "Speech delivered by Sir W. Dickinson at the meeting of the British Council of the World Alliance", 5 December 1928, London Metropolitan Archives F/DCK/038/018.

9 G. K. A. Bell, *Randall Davidson* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 1036.

10 Söderblom was awarded the Nobel peace prize in 1930 in recognition of his achievement. see Nathan Söderblom, "Nobel Lecture", 11 December 1930, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1930/soderblom-lecture.html (accessed 18 March 2014).

11 Bengt Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom. His Life and Work* (Lund: Gleerups, 1968), pp. 228-30.

12 Ibid., p. 230.

13 Ibid., pp. 223-33; Bell gives an amusing account of how on 15 April 1921, Davidson was visited by Nathan Söderblom and his wife at Lambeth. Söderblom wanted to engage Davidson's support for the conference at Stockholm – but the Archbishop stalled, "unwilling to give himself away, either for or against". When the conference took place in 1925, the Archbishop of Canterbury was represented by the Bishop of Winchester. Bell, *Randall Davidson*, pp. 1048-51.

14 Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom*, p. 234.

15 Ibid., p. 235.

16 Bell, *Randall Davidson*, p. 1036; cf. Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom*, p. 239.

On 29 September 1922, the executive of the British Council discussed a memorandum that argued for "a permanent body of the most representative Church leaders in England ... expressing the voice and conscience of Christianity in Great Britain".[17] They acted quickly. At the 6th Annual Meeting on 13 December 1922 new structures were accepted[18] and the inaugural meeting of the newly constituted British Council was held at Church House, Westminster, 12-14 June 1923. Members were officially appointed by all the mainstream traditions in England, Scotland and Wales. The Presbyterian Church of England had three representatives, one of whom was Oman.[19] He was present at the opening service in Westminster Abbey where the Archbishop of Canterbury preached the sermon. It was their hope, Davidson said "to breathe into the League of Nations a living soul"; not "to handle politically ... those great issues which the League had to deal with", but "to make public opinion so powerful on Christ's side that the monstrous arbitrament of war should not be used again". [20]

Barely two months later, Oman was in Düsseldorf. The visit seems to have originated in an approach made to Nathan Söderblom by Maître Coulet, Professor in Law and attorney at the Swedish embassy in Paris, who had offered to accompany him on a visit to the Ruhr.[21] The suggestion was not unprecedented. Six years before, Söderblom had responded to the plea from Siegmund-Schultze, echoed by the American YMCA, that the welfare of prisoners of war had to be investigated, and promptly sent Herman Neander to look into the matter.[22] Now, in 1923, he commended Stadener, his successor as embassy chaplain in Paris, then pastor of Ystad and a proven diplomat, as being "plus capable que moi pour une telle tâche".[23] And so Stadener and Wihlborg, secretary to the group, were commissioned by the Swedish Committee of the World Alliance. This was entirely in keeping with Söderblom's use of special envoys from Sweden whom he sent out, as occasion demanded, on international errands of special importance.[24] But this errand was different. For this time, uniquely, the Swedish envoys were accompanied by a non-Swede, John Oman.

Why might Söderblom have wished to widen the membership of this particular delegation? Two reasons may be suggested. First, the letter from the Swedish

17 Minutes of Executive, 29 September 1922, WAIF/2/1/3. It was felt that the existing British Council, inaugurated on 6 February 1911, was not adequately rooted in church structures, nor sufficiently representative of the traditions.

18 Minutes of 6th Annual Meeting, 13 December 1922, WAIF/2/1/3.

19 The other two were Dr Gillie and Mr Travers Buxton.

20 *The Times* (13 June 1923).

21 Letter to M. Delavaud, French minister at Stockholm, undated. The report dates the reply, giving permission to "the Swedish delegation" as 24 July 1923.

22 Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom,* p. 183.

23 "More capable than I for such a task". Letter to M. Delavaud. Söderblom "sought Stadener's services for difficult tasks where diplomatic skill and a knowledge of France and the French were particularly needed". Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom*, p. 171.

24 Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom*, p. 172.

bishops sent on 1 February 1923 over Söderblom's signature to "our fellow Christians in all countries and to responsible statesmen, particularly to President Harding" was sharply critical of France's invasion of the Ruhr; it was approved in Germany and vehemently criticised in France. Prime Minister Poincaré, Wilfred Monod, chair of the French Council of the World Alliance, and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Paris, were highly indignant. Matters were not helped by the realisation that the English and German versions of the letter were more pointed in their condemnation than the French.[25] Söderblom's attempt to salvage the situation by pleading that the translator had proved inadequate fell on deaf ears.[26]

Secondly, he would have been aware of the widely held view in Sweden that friendship between Sweden and Germany was "so solidly anchored that it can be regarded as a constant factor in (their) foreign policies".[27] That had not always been the case. Sweden was generally francophile up to the twentieth century, Swedish soldiers fought in the ranks of the French army, the royal family was French in origin and French language and culture were dominant in Swedish society. But the situation changed gradually as Sweden became the chief supplier of iron ore and timber for German industry. With the Ruhr occupation, the German purchase of ore came to a standstill and relationships between the two countries could no longer be based on trade. But there was in Sweden a chorus of sympathy for Germany following reports of the sufferings endured by the Ruhr population. The common shared history of the Church of Sweden and the Protestant church in Germany gave rise to a sense of family obligation. Swedish church congregations collected "such considerable sums for the church institutions in Germany that a proportion of the latter has been supported directly by Swedes".[28]

With this in mind, Söderblom might have considered that a visit by Swedes to German prisoners in the Ruhr would look partisan. A British delegate, however, might redress the balance. Söderblom admired what he had read of the British Council,[29] some of whom he had met in 1921 in the House of Lords.[30] But how did the decision to send John Oman come about?

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25 Wolfram Weisse, "Irenic Mediator for Unity – Partisan Advocate for Truth. Nathan Söderblom's Initiatives for Peace and Justice", in Sam Dahlgren (ed.), *Nathan Söderblom as a European* (Tro und Tanke, Svenska Kyrkans forskringsrad, 1993:7), pp. 15-42. References to the fact that the occupation led to "sexual degradation" and that troops had "torn large pieces of territory from their unarmed neighbours" did not feature in the French version. Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom*, p. 334.

26 Söderblom, in *Die Eiche* (1923), p. 200; quoted in Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom*, p. 334.

27 "Memorandum on the relationship of Sweden to Germany from Nadolny to Foreign Office Berlin, 19 May 1923", *Akten zur Deutschen äuswortigen Politik,* Band VII (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1989).

28 Ibid.

29 Acceptance speech for Nobel Prize (see note 10).

30 On 25 April, the meeting was arranged by Lord and Lady Parmoor. Minutes of the 5th Annual Meeting of the British Council of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship Through the Churches, WAIF/2/1/3.

On 22 June, Nathan Söderblom, Fru Söderblom, Miss and Mr Söderblom stayed overnight at Lambeth Palace. George Bell, then Davidson's chaplain, notes in his diary: "He specially wanted Archbishop to send a delegate to visit German prisons in the Ruhr. I had a long talk with him at night".[31] Bell makes no further reference to Söderblom's request and this is not mentioned in Davidson's papers.[32] Nor, for that matter, is Oman.

There is no indication that Davidson knew Oman particularly well. But he had contacts with people who did and whose judgment he trusted. Patrick Carnegie Simpson, professor of Church History at Westminster College, and one of Oman's immediate colleagues, was at that time a frequent visitor to Lambeth Palace. He had chaired the committee which produced the Free Church response to the Lambeth Appeal of 1920, and was co-convenor of the subsequent "long and important series of meetings"[33] between Anglicans and the Free Churches. Davidson was "a sympathetic observer"[34] throughout, and formed a long-standing friendship with Simpson – more than once Simpson was invited to stay at Lambeth.[35] It is likely that Simpson would have spoken of Oman. He could testify to his colleague's language skills and intellectual ability; he knew of his war-time visits to camps and prisons, and of his work on the Western Front with the YMCA in France.

Then there was David S. Cairns, Professor at the United Free Church College, Aberdeen, and from 1923 principal of the college. Cairns and Oman had known one another since the late 1880s when they struck up a life-long friendship.[36] Cairns also knew Söderblom, who addressed him in 1911 as his "dear and highly esteemed friend".[37] In January 1915, Söderblom was to receive warm personal support from the man he called the "Apostle of Scotland" at the time when most

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31 G. K. A. Bell, *Diary 1923-1925*, Papers 257. Söderblom admired Bell who had worked with him during the war on the exchange of prisoners of war and whom he came to recognise as one of his closest lifelong friends. With Bell, Söderblom discussed his plans for ecumenical conferences and his hopes for peace. Is it not likely that the "long talk" on the evening of the 22 June was as least in part taken up with the situation in the Ruhr?

32 Davidson merely notes in his diary on 12 August 1923 that he had received an "interesting" visit during the past year from "Söderblom from Upsala and his family": Bell, *Randall Davidson*, p. 1172. Söderblom refers to "important and delightful hours spent with You in Lambeth". Letter to Randall Davidson, 29 August 1923, N.Söderbloms samling, Uppsala.

33 P. Carnegie Simpson, *Recollections* (London: Nisbet and Co. Ltd, 1943), p. 76. There were 22 meetings between 1921 and 1925. See Bell, *Randall Davidson*, p. 1116.

34 Bell, *Randall Davidson*, p. 1117.

35 P. Carnegie Simpson, *Recollections*, p. 82.

36 *David Cairns, an Autobiography, with a memoir by Professor D. M. Baillie* (London: SCM, 1950), p. 79.

37 Söderblom to David S. Cairns, 17 November 1911, University of Aberdeen Special Collections, MS 3384/3/6. The two had met in April 1911 when both gave lectures at the Constantinople conference of the World Student Christian Federation. See Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom*, p. 97.

leading British churchmen regarded his Appeal for Peace as untimely[38] and regular friendly correspondence continued during the war years. In August 1920 Cairns was elected alongside Söderblom in Geneva as one of the vice-presidents of the World Alliance.[39]

However the invitation came about, it appears that Oman joined the group at short notice.[40] The political circumstances were fraught. Since 11 January when five French divisions and one Belgian division marched into the Ruhr, ostensibly because Germany was in arrears with a delivery to France of 100,000 telegraph punches, relations between France and Germany were tense. France was politically insecure; the country was in great need of cash and coal. The French were determined to hold the Ruhr, laying claim as their due to coking coal and dyestuffs and seizing money from banks and factories, in lieu of German reparation debts under the Treaty of Versailles. The fact that the Treaty was entirely unclear as to how to proceed, if reparations could not be paid, did not help. And the French were surprised by the campaign of passive resistance by Ruhr industrialists, mine workers and railway men. Britain remained aloof. But on the day the three churchmen met in Düsseldorf, the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, finally made it clear that Britain was not prepared to protect Germany's interests against France and that the campaign of passive resistance had to stop.[41] The German government, however, insisted that abandonment of passive resistance could only be considered when the military presence in the Ruhr was removed.[42] Frenzied diplomatic activity had come to a head.[43]

Many of the prisoners whom the three men were to meet had been implicated in passive resistance. Directors of works were held responsible for the behaviour of their employees and regularly arrested. "It is hard to realise from a brief visit (to Essen)", wrote the Cologne correspondent of *The Times*, "what it means to live under pressure of military force seeking to break down the resistance of a sullen and hostile population". Almost all the Germans with whom he came into contact were regarded as actual or potential informers.[44] On 13 July a strong French force with tanks took possession of Barmen for five hours in a retaliatory "straf expedition", withdrawing with prisoners, including the director of the Reichsbank.[45]

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38 Söderblom's Appeal was supported also by leading members of the Society of Friends, notably J. Allen Baker and Henry Hodgkin. See Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom*, pp. 164, 179.

39 Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom*, p. 239.

40 The two letters on 24 July to request a *laissez-passer*, from Söderblom to M. Delavaud and to General Degoutte, mention only Stadener and Wihlborg.

41 *The Times* (3 August 1923).

42 *The Times* (22 July 1923).

43 See telegrams to and from the Foreign Office in Berlin (*Akten zur deutschen äuswortigen Politik*, Serie A, Band VIII). Elspeth Y. O'Riordan, *Britain and the Ruhr Crisis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), gives a persuasive account of the hardening of stances between France and Germany and of Britain's indecisiveness.

44 *The Times* (23 July 1923).

45 *The Times* (13 July 1923).

Other prisoners had been sentenced for acts of sabotage: what began with attempts to prevent the French from carrying off German coke on German trains led to the politicised desire to "make the Ruhr a second Ireland". In June a Cologne-Mainz passenger train was wrecked. No one was injured, but two weeks later, a bomb exploded in a Belgian leave train near Duisberg, resulting in several deaths.[46] Subsequent ordinances by General Degoutte proclaimed the death penalty for sabotage of railways or telephone lines and the eviction of all those who lived in the neighbourhood of the accused.[47] By the end of July, eleven Germans were under sentence of death for acts of sabotage.

Oman would have been aware that travel in the Rhineland, then also under French occupation, was extremely difficult. *The Times* correspondent in Cologne went to Coblenz by French/Belgian Régie trains.[48] He saw "decay and destruction". There were no workmen to undertake repairs. There were neither signals nor points, only a man with a red flag.[49] A letter from Lord Lamington, corroborating this report, suggested that "from Griesheim to Coblenz the life of the country is literally paralysed".[50] During most of July a strict blockade was imposed on the Ruhr. Movement between the occupied and unoccupied territory was prohibited and travellers were stranded.[51] Trade and food supplies were hindered. Goods yards were full of loaded trucks, some had been there so long that corn was growing in them, one and a half feet high. It became increasingly difficult to obtain foreign currency; there was galloping inflation and Krupps was in difficulties with its wages owing to the closure of the Reichsbank at Essen. By 3 August "the population was in extreme tension" and fears were growing of a Communist inspired crisis.[52] This was the context of the visit to the prisons.

Permission had not been easy to obtain. The French minister in Stockholm, Delavaud, made a condition that the delegates "were not to make any political comments either during the trip or as a result of it, and agree to adhere to French regulations".[53] Hesitant military authorities in Düsseldorf finally granted them leave to visit all prisons under French administration in the Ruhr and the three men were escorted by the Protestant Army chaplain, pasteur Patry.[54] They visited seven prisons, in Düsseldorf, Dortmund, Bochum, Werden, and Witten.[55] Although

46 *The Times* (24 June 1923; 1 July 1923).
47 *The Times* (1 July 1923).
48 *The Times* (4 July 1923).
49 *The Times* (5 July 1923).
50 *The Times* (5 July 1923).
51 *The Times* (15 July 1923).
52 *The Times* (16 and 23 July 1923). Fears were exacerbated by Karl Radek's public eulogy of Schlageter, a Krupp employee executed in May for involvement in an act of sabotage.
53 Report in Swedish, Evangelisches Zentralarchiv in Berlin, Ref: EZA 51/E ll d1.
54 Poincaré said "the French had nothing to hide". *British Weekly* (31 January1935); *The Times* (6 July 1923).
55 They did not have time to visit Recklinghausen, a smaller prison in the north of the Ruhr zone. They also sought entry to Duisberg prison, but were unsuccessful as their papers did not permit them to visit the area occupied by Belgium.

some of these were housed in buildings which were still partly under the administration of German authorities as a civil prison, this did not appear to be cause for friction. The number of prisoners varied – from 184 in Düsseldorf to 40 in Witten – as did the number of men per cell.[56]

The French authorities had divided the prisoners up into categories. There were the ordinary criminals. Then there were the political prisoners, among whom prefects and mayors, post office and police officials as well as a great number of manufacturing and business people. There was a range of local leaders who had been imprisoned for offences against the French regulations, committed not by them but by offenders who had not been caught. And finally there was a group of prisoners on remand who were *sous secret* and for them the delegates had great sympathy. Suspected of having committed acts of sabotage, they were in solitary confinement, permitted neither to send nor receive letters, nor speak with a priest or lawyer without permission. This was usually refused.

In general, the prisons looked clean and prisoners seemed in reasonably good health. Provision for exercise in the fresh air varied from prison to prison. Soldiers and prisoners ate the same food, except for political prisoners whose meals were provided by the German Red Cross.

In noting all this, the report reminds us that the stated purpose of the delegation was pastoral – to see what religious provision was available in the prisons and to offer ministry, although private conversation with the prisoners was supervised. In Düsseldorf they attended the Catholic Mass and the Protestant service and joined with gusto in singing a hymn about courage.

While they were in the Ruhr, the delegates found that many prisoners, especially those who were serving longer sentences, had been transferred to prisons in the Rhineland. So they felt duty-bound to visit these as well. The French Prime Minister gave permission and they were received cordially by the French authorities in Coblenz. So they visited further prisons in Coblenz, Trier, Zweibrucken and Mainz, seven in all. These varied. The two prisons in Coblenz were relatively small and catered for political prisoners. Trier Windstrasse was larger, with 91 political prisoners, 52 remand prisoners and 6 held *sous secret.* The régime there was harsher. As for the second prison in Trier, thanks to the hostile officiousness of the Prison Governor, time ran out before the delegation could visit. But they knew that 72 political prisoners were detained here and African troops served in the kitchen as well as undertaking general supervision. The situation in Zweibrucken, however, was satisfactory. This visit took place on a Sunday and the chapel was filled to overflowing for the Protestant service which Wihlborg was permitted to lead.

Oman had to leave before they reached Mainz but conditions there were

56 In general there was one prisoner in each cell but in Dortmund there were two or three. In Witten there were medium-sized rooms accommodating three to six prisoners. The prison in Werden was in a former monastery with dormitories for about fifty beds; this was particularly popular with the prisoners.

particularly harsh. There were about 200 ordinary prisoners, a further 20 saboteurs from the Ruhr, a small number of political prisoners and 7 on death row. Outdoor exercise was severely limited, the prison was unclean and there were bad smells. The food was not nourishing and religious services had been suspended.

In Britain, few people seem to have known about the delegation.[57] Even the British Council, nominally responsible for sending Oman, did not appear to have known about the visit in advance, despite the lengthy discussions they had been holding all year about the Ruhr crisis. At the meeting of the Executive on 10 October 1923, which Oman attended by invitation, "Canon Barnes explained the circumstances which had led to Dr Oman's visit". Oman gave a verbal account which aroused keen interest in the Committee who asked for his "interesting report" to be circulated before the next meeting on November. "Dr Oman requested that a letter of thanks might be sent to the Archbishop of Uppsala at whose instigation and through whom the tour had been arranged – also to Dr Stadener, for the very valuable work which he had done". At the meeting on 14 November, "the Committee accepted Dr Oman's report which had been circulated and warmly approved of the suggestion that some part of it should be inserted into the next number of *Goodwill*".[58] And it was agreed to pay his expenses for the trip which came to £15.00.

A comparison between the extensive extract published in *Goodwill* and the report in Swedish[59] signed by the three men and dated "Zweibrucken and Frankfurt, 12th and 14th August", is suggestive. The reports are clearly the same; there is word for word correspondence throughout. The opening sections, however, differ. There is no mention in *Goodwill* of the agency of the British Council or the Archbishop of Canterbury. Davidson was not of course, chair of the British Council – that was the Bishop of Oxford. But as we have seen, he was involved in the appointment. Is it far-fetched to see this omission as evidence of Davidson's legendary personal caution?[60]

A further factor in the apparent secrecy might have been Davidson's habitual deference to Lord Curzon over his church colleagues. This is illustrated particularly well by his response to the letter about the Ruhr prisons dated 12 November 1923 and delivered in person by Dr Spiecker, chair of the German Council. After expressing "heartfelt thanks that you, dear Lord Archbishop, were involved in the

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57 Oman's oldest and closest friend, Mr George Alexander, refers obliquely in this context to "a report, which, I think, was private", in his memoir of the author in *Honest Religion*, p. xxiii. This may be contrasted with the reports of other visits to the Ruhr by the Scottish and English Labour Parties, the Co-operative Party, the Quakers, all of which were immediately published in full in *The Times.*

58 WAIF/2/1/4.

59 I am indebted to the Revd Camilla Veitch for her assistance in translating the report into English.

60 Cf. Randall Davidson to Nathan Söderblom, 15 August 1923: (the memorandum about Riga) "must be described simply as a document coming from Sweden, and the intimate knowledge it shows of what has happened will be its own justification. But I am sure that it must not go to the world as from me" (N. Söderbloms samling, Uppsala).

despatch of the ministers to the prisoners, through which you contributed to the relief of the lot of the prisoners" he draws on the report of the visit to indicate that the lot of the political prisoners is still very hard. Even after the ending of Passive Resistance great numbers of people were still being kept prisoner. He begs the Archbishop to exert his influence on behalf of the World Alliance to secure their release.[61] Davidson referred the matter to Dickinson, secretary of the British Council, on 23 November. In reply, Dickinson advised Davidson to write to Wilfred Monod, to suggest that the French Council might take some steps to secure the release of the remaining German prisoners. Davidson then indicated that "I do not think I could appropriately do this unless it were with the knowledge and general approval of the Foreign Office ...They might possibly see objection to such a letter from me as being likely to be twisted into some kind of secret political influence behind the back of the Government". On 13 December, Davidson asked Lord Curzon's advice. Curzon "looked up the papers on the subject of French deportations from the Ruhr" and found that these had "resulted in the infliction of serious hardship". However it was his view that it was better at present to "avoid raising any issue of a controversial nature which might be calculated to jeopardise" diplomatic efforts. Davidson, "completely persuaded" that Curzon was right, suggested to Dickinson that it would be "very unwise" to intervene. Dr Spiecker received a bland acknowledgment.

So what did the mission achieve? Dr Spiecker's letter implies that there had been some amelioration in the situation of the prisoners. This is corroborated by Oman's warm letter of thanks to Söderblom "for the trouble you took to make our visit a success".[62] He observed: "It served a more useful purpose than I had expected. Mr Wihlborg was ready with all the arrangements and spoke at services for edification. But such success as we had was more due to Mr Stadener than to any of us, especially to his clearness and courage when some further consideration was asked for the prisoners". Requests were made of the French authorities, for example: that the prisoners should be allowed to be more out in the open air: where several prisoners share a cell, that opportunity be given them for "emptying the vessels more than once a day"; that prisoners be permitted to receive gifts freely from friends and from the Red Cross; that prisoners might talk to their relatives in a visitor's room rather than in the corridor; that they might have fresh water daily; that Roman Catholic and Protestant pastors should be given time alone with their people. And there is every indication that these requests were viewed favourably.[63] But political prisoners were often treated inhumanely, usually by NCOs; in the south, these were Berbers of the Foreign Legion. At Trier in particular, relations were very bad and prisoners were verbally abused. Although Oman addressed the issue

61 Papers of Archbishop Davidson 412ff pp. 231-49.

62 26 October 1923.

63 The brief report in French addressed to General Degoutte and headed "Düsseldorf, 8 August 1923", is a masterpiece of diplomacy. It confines itself to a request that chaplains be allowed unsupervised access to prisoners, including those held *sous secret.*

with the High Commissioner, the implications were that little could be done.[64]

It is clear too from the report that the prisoners did benefit from the moral and spiritual support given by the visit both in services and in conversation. Oman was "regarded somewhat as Noah's dove". He observes: "being less clerically adorned than the others, I think the prisoners spoke more freely to me. In no case had I the least difficulty in entering into conversation at once".[65] He "talked freely with all kinds of prisoners, from Baron Krupp to a small boy taken up for stealing".[66] "Usually I was met with the warmest sympathy. Some said they had no hope except in working for Christian principles. Some even thought that military dominance was a danger in itself". But not all were so inclined. "A Burgomaster said, 'I don't know what I am here for, but if I live to be a hundred, I will preach this to my children's children.' A police officer said, 'The minister spoke of love, I would have preferred that he had spoken of hate'".

It is clear that Oman's approachability also enabled conversation with non-prisoners. He records conversations with the High Commissioner and the second in command and also with interpreters and privates. And he spoke with many Germans outside the prisons, "especially a Superintendent and a Professor of Fine Arts" who both gave him what he found to be exact and unbiased information. Yet it was, he concluded to Söderblom,[67] "a seemingly hopeless situation. The French talk like reason and moderation incarnate, but France is for them the universe. Germany is being thrown back on force as the sole remedy. It is the old story of Athens and Sparta – every Athenian a liar, every Spartan a brute. 'Our policy may have been wrong, but it is patriotism not to admit it'".

It would be wrong to underestimate the very real and specific difficulties faced by the three ministers as they visited the prisons of the Ruhr and the Rhineland. They made positive gains and faced considerable challenges. They had to maintain a fine balance between optimistic intervention in support of their vision of the common good and a realism about the substantial obstacles that they had to face. Sometimes, as in the improvements in prisoners' welfare, there were concrete outcomes. At other times they were able to facilitate a better understanding of the value that faith has in people's lives. The long-term effect of this cannot be predicated on the immediate impact it has on an individual or community.[68] And the visit also displays the remarkable degree of networking that existed at the time between Christians whose traditions were distinct from one another and of their ability to co-operate across national boundaries in the most fraught of political circumstances.

FLEUR HOUSTON

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64 "Report of a Visit to the French Prisons in Germany", pp. 36-38.

65 Ibid.

66 "'Germany: Fifty years apart', by Dr. John Oman", *The British Weekly* (31 January1935).

67 26 October1923.

68 The point is well made by Maleiha Malik, who bases her discussion of faith, politics and justice on observations made by Oman in *Grace and Personality* (1917). See "Justice", in David Ford, Ben Quash and Janet Martin Soskice (eds), *Fields of Faith, Theology and Religious Studies for the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

REVIEWS

***Varieties of Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century English Radicalism in Context*. Edited by Ariel Hessayon and David Finnegan. Farnham: Ashgate, 2011. Pp. xiv + 271. £65.00. ISBN 978-0-7546-6905-0.**

Volumes publishing conference papers are inevitably eclectic. This one is no different, though the contents are focused around the subject area highlighted in the title. Most papers deal with the seventeenth century, notably treating the post-Restoration period and admitting to radicalism beyond the usual Nonconformist groups, with the last three chapters entering into the following century and the final chapter discussing the work of the bookseller William Hone who lived until 1842.

Readers are invited to consider the nature of radicalism in the editors' introduction, which offers an extended discussion of the word's provenance and how other authors have applied – or refused to apply – the word to the movements of the early modern period. Christopher Hill's work, especially *The World Turned Upside Down* (1972), makes an appearance in most chapters largely because Hill's rehabilitation of seventeenth-century movements as forerunners of subsequent radical political movements, motivated, it seems, by Marxist convictions and understanding of history, is largely disputed by the authors of this volume. The idea of a single radical tradition is eschewed in these essays in favour of the idea, as summarized by Jason McElligott in the final chapter, that radicalism was not "a continuous 'red thread' spun across the ages" but "a series of moments" (p. 259).

The book's twelve chapters deal with figures and movements that might well be expected to appear in any discussion of English radicalism: Abiezer Coppe and the Ranters, John Saltmarsh and the Seekers, Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers. Richard Crashaw, the "metaphysical poet" who finally left his Puritan roots for Catholicism, is discussed as part of the argument that radicalism could take on a number of forms. The importance of the printed word, the content of pamphlets and those who printed, published and sold them, is assessed, as the contributors to this volume consider how particular tactics were employed to ensure that subversive teachings were conveyed as covertly as possible. The Presbyterian controversialist, Joseph Boyse, is discussed through his correspondence with the (finally) conformist antiquarian Ralph Thoresby of Leeds (Boyse's birthplace), while a chapter on Anthony Collins characterizes its subject as "Free-thinker, radical reader and Independent Whig". Less expected, perhaps, is the inclusion of the Cambridge Platonists (especially given their general disinterest in politics), which argues that they rightly belong among the "radical" because of their "sweet reasonableness".

The essays are erudite and treat their subjects comprehensively. All are intriguing, though the chapter on Italian responses to the events of the English "revolution", as well as the chapter on the building of "Empire" under the Commonwealth, are particularly noteworthy. Throughout the volume, a "functionalist" understanding of radicalism is upheld where various individuals and groups responded to their contexts and challenged the basic political

assumptions and social axioms of their day. They all serve to "whet" rather than to "satisfy" the appetite, for they point to a sense in which such radicalism does not belong to the English experience alone but emerged in other contexts and other countries. As the editors acknowledge, "much work still remains to be done on radicals and radicalism", though the book undoubtedly contributes much to that on-going debate.

ROBERT POPE

***Confessing the Faith Yesterday and Today: Essays Reformed, Dissenting, and Catholic*. By Alan P. F. Sell. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013. Pp. xii + 305. £28.00. ISBN 978-1-62032-594-0.**

Take Faulkner's famous line "The past is never dead. It's not even past" and Luther's lapidary declaration "Crux probat omnia" (the Cross examines everything) and you have, respectively, the formal and material principles that inform this splendid book. There are two parts to it: "Confessing the Faith in Context" and "Confessing the Faith Ecclesially and Hopefully". Alan Sell is not ashamed of the gospel, and his learned and detailed historical excavations are always in service to the proclamation of today's church. In an age of "presentism" where history is either ignored as bunk or deployed as nostalgia, and in a church where the word of the cross is dismissed by liberals and distorted by evangelicals, this collection of essays comes as a refreshing cloudburst, raining on fashionable intellectual parades and rinsing dust from neglected gems in the Reformed tradition. And while the themes are weighty, Sell writes with a light touch, with style and wit, and he always talks sense.

The themes are also "relevant", as the gospel is relevant, not in an instrumentalist sense, but in the sense that the "fullness of life" (chapter 2) – *tua res agitur*! In two chapters (3 and 4) Sell scrutinises our culture's virtue *du jour,* tolerance, digging beneath its secular-liberal outcrop in Mill to its religious foundations in sixteenth and seventeenth century Dissent and the struggle for confessional freedom. Sell not only observes how morally problematic the modern notion of tolerance is (without even mentioning the confusions of multiculturalism), he also demonstrates how a historically deracinated understanding of tolerance easily morphs into indifference or even *in*tolerance, and how, for the church, ever tempted by the sectarian spirit, "the first thing and the compelling thing is . . . to realise within its own borders the values it professes to uphold" (p. 102).

The chapters on Calvin (7 and 8) are outstanding exercises in relevant retrieval. The watchword of "Calvin's Challenges to the Twenty-First Century Church" is "holding together" six theological cleavages – gospel and church, Spirit and Word, Word and church, Word and sacrament, preaching and pastoral care (with a cockshy at managerial models of ministry), and doctrine and ethics (with a reference to the economic order and ecology). In "Rectifying Calvin's Ecclesiology", with pride and purpose Sell draws on the insights of Congregational polity. Emphasising the

catholicity of Congregationalism, extolling the church as the saints gathered and sent, and commending the gift and the task of Church Meeting, Sell at once lauds the Congregational heritage and laments the laxity of its practitioners.

Given Sell's long and distinguished career as a participant in ecumenical discussions in the context of the undeniable phenomenon of ecumenical cooling, "Receiving from Other Christian Communions and Overcoming the Hindrances Thereto" is perhaps the book's most urgent chapter (9). After a short list of "theologians who have stimulated me" (p. 210) – which includes a wonderfully backhanded appreciation of "Newman's great hymn 'Praise to the holiest in the height', provided that I am permitted to omit the verse which speaks of 'a higher gift than grace' – of which I know no such thing" – Sell gets down to the business of "practical matters" and "doctrinal considerations". In another exercise of "holding together", he chastens both sectarians, Evangelical and Catholic, who sacrifice unity at the altar of truth [*sic*], and social activists who do not see that there can be no "disjunction" between unity and justice. Then Sell goes to "the very nub of the ecumenical problem", the "Galatian heresy" – "matters on which human interpretations are elevated above God's action in Christ" – referring particularly to episcopacy, and roaring with his hero P. T. Forsyth that "If unity is in polity, Christ died in vain" (p. 225). And yet another "holding together": the doctrinal bleeds into the pastoral, as Sell poignantly points to the pain caused by the refusal of eucharistic hospitality. He calls the Church to "lateral thinking", and to a realised ecclesial eschatology: "'the coming great Church?' But it is already here. Can we not see it?" (p. 229).

Space forbids comment on chapters (9 and 10) on eschatology (and its continuing *practical* importance) and contemporary systematic theology (which is not cross-centred enough in Sell's challenging, if challengeable, view). Suffice it to say the reader's attention never flags and is richly rewarded. Is it fair to suggest what the book may be missing – missing in the sense that there are issues on which I wish that Sell would tell us more? Three points occur.

First, educated in the tradition of British analytic philosophy, Sell is clearly ill at ease with continental "postmodern" thought. However, some thinkers from across *la Manche* might be very useful to his projects. For instance, at several points in the essays – e.g., on religious freedom and ecclesiastical politics – I thought: "There is something missing here: the discourse of power. I'd like to see a conversation with Foucault and Deleuze".

Second, the cross, its confessional centrality – absolutely. Nevertheless, granted that Sell includes the life, resurrection and reign of Jesus in the confession of "Christ crucified", for me it remains rather skeletal, inviting the accusation that in Reformed theology there is too much epistle and not enough gospel, not enough of the teaching of the Nazarene. For example, the Quakers often feature in Sell's narratives, but their way of nonviolence, drawn from the Sermon on the Mount, goes unmentioned when he ventures into social ethics. Could there be a more pressing issue in "confessing the faith today" than war and peace? Might not the witness of the Quakers be not only prophetic but also relevant, indeed realistic?

And third, on the atonement, while Sell is rightly horrified by the

conservative evangelical model of penal substitution, he is, I feel, rather one-dimensional in his focus on the model of sacrifice. Nor is there any mention of the "New Perspectives on Paul", or of recent apocalyptic readings of the apostle, and the questions they raise about the Reformation understanding of justification, works, and – again – social ethics.

A book reviewer does not think he has done his job unless he has lobbed in a few reservations. But in this case they are small beer compared to the vintage wine that is *Confessing the Faith Yesterday and Today*. Blurbs abound with the blah, blah, blah of "this is a must-read book". But not least for ministers in the URC, a must-read book this is, *and* for URC ordinands too. Otherwise, I fear for confessing the faith *tomorrow*.

KIM FABRICIUS

***Dissenting Praise: Religious Dissent and the Hymn in England and Wales*. Edited by Isabel Rivers and David Wykes. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. 299. £71.00. ISBN 978-0-19-954524-7.**

This publication arises from the excellent Dr Williams's Centre for Dissenting Studies, established in September 2004, which has published a number of books and other resources, bringing the story of Dissent into the light, where it belongs. The important contribution of Dissent to British life and culture has been long overshadowed by the prevalent history of the Establishment, in Church and Politics, and this has, in turn, eclipsed the significance of hymns and hymn-singing to the shaping of society during the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries and beyond.

David Wykes and Isabel Rivers begin with the bold claim: "The introduction of hymns and hymn-singing into public worship in the seventeenth century by dissenters from the Church of England has been described as one of the greatest contributions ever made to Christian worship" (p. 1). This begins a thorough and clear overview of the rise and decline of Dissent, which sets the scene for what follows.

Of course, these were centuries of religious and political upheaval and, as they entered public and popular culture, hymn writing and singing became a weapon in the political conflicts of the seventeenth century, and then a powerful force for shaping the emerging theology of the next generation.

Several themes run through the book, including the interaction between the great issues of the times and the writing and singing of hymns. It is possible to trace the development of dissenting theology through the hymns, their writers and, later in the book, their editors, compilers and commentators. The hymns are not merely responses to developments in theology; they are part of the process. So Watts's precise and complex use of the word "saints", Rippon's concern to provide a non-sectarian but theologically sound diet, and even the musicians' achievements in bringing about improvements to hymnody without excluding

the congregation (as happened in Anglicanism) are all expressions of the theology of Dissent.

The movement to improve the experience of congregational singing runs through the chapters from the days of persecution, through the practice of "lining out" (which I have heard among tribal Congregationalists in the hills between India and Myanmar, and it is certainly not beautiful, though it carries raw emotional power) to the well-rehearsed congregations of one thousand or more, led by a mighty pipe organ. My own former church, Union Chapel, Islington, was home to the hymnologist, Henry Allon, and very much part of that movement epitomising the values of great hymn singing in its architecture and Father Willis organ.

The book focuses largely on individuals to tell and exemplify the story. J. R. Watson writes with great erudition and affection about Isaac Watts, who, of course, became a central and foundational figure. Françoise Deconninck-Brossard explores the reception of Doddridge's hymns, of which no authorised or authoritative version exists. Part of his story becomes another thread running through the book: the close association between English/British Dissent and New England Congregationalism.

The story of hymn collection and commentary also concentrates on collectors of hymns and compilers of books. Ken R. Manley looks at Baptist hymnody through the contribution of John Rippon, and Josiah Conder exemplifies a more institutional approach in Congregationalism. Unitarian hymnody is followed through the same period, and focused in the mighty person of James Martineau. By the late nineteenth century, the phenomenon of English hymnody could be charted in such a book as W. Garrett Horder's *The Hymn Lover*, which is the subject addressed by Clyde Binfield. Collecting, compiling and commenting are all part of the impulse to improvement, which is the basis for Nicholas Temperley's fascinating insights into the musical heritage of Dissent.

The book ends with a chapter on Welsh hymnody by E. Wyn James. The chapter takes a great sweep from the end of the Roman Empire to the decline of the Welsh chapels in the twentieth century, but deals mainly with the period following the Methodist revival of the 1730s. Here there is a focus on the "father" of Welsh hymnody, William Williams of Pantycelyn, whose influence is still immense. But it is good to see a section on Ann Griffiths, the only female writer to merit a central place.

By focusing on individuals, for the most part, as the most prominent figures, or exemplars of their time, the great majority of people involved in hymn writing are glossed over. I found this particularly frustrating as it contributes to the marginalisation of women's voices. Anne Steele, for example, is credited with "feminine sensibility…matched with an awareness of human suffering and a deep personal spirituality" (pp. 95-96), which does not convey the depth or seriousness of her work, and James Martineau's sister, the influential Harriet Martineau, whose hymns appear in Unitarian collections on both sides of the Atlantic, is not mentioned at all. The rise and range of women's hymn writing in the nineteenth century is largely ignored.

The great themes of dissenting writing are also inevitably fragmented by this treatment. I would have liked to have seen greater reference to the contribution

of hymnody to the popular theology of mission, for example, or the campaign against the slave trade, where the dissenting view was significantly different from that of the establishment. However, *Dissenting Praise* is to be much commended for bringing together two long-neglected fields of writing: hymnody and Dissent, both of which had hugely more cultural impact on Britain, and, through the expansion of mission and empire, on the world, than they have ever been given credit for.

JANET WOOTTON

Reforming Worship: English Reformed Principles and Practice. **Edited by Julian Templeton and Keith Riglin. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2012. Pp. xviii + 178. £15.00. ISBN 978-1-61097-320-5.**

Angela Tilby sets the tone of this book in her Foreword when she grits her teeth at styles of worship that "seem to be more about the worshippers' feelings …than the God of Sinai and Calvary".

Ernest Marvin is justifiably afraid that ecclesiologically many Protestants have lost the plot and forgotten what the church is for. He argues that the transformation of Reformed worship is not possible without the recovery of a true Reformed doctrine of the church. Only when the central doctrines of Incarnation and Resurrection are rediscovered can there be a sacramental view of life. For a worshipper in the Reformed tradition "to glorify God and enjoy him for ever" there must be a new openness to transcendence, mystery and humility. David Cornick opens a window on a number of key moments in Reformed worship. In the Reformed understanding of time "the barnacles of [early and mediaeval] tradition" such as the Marian festivals and the feasts of the saints are laid aside to reveal the Christological framework of Easter, Ascension, Pentecost and Christmas. On Sundays and Wednesdays, Calvin's Christ was made "sacramentally present through the preaching of the Word and the Lord's Supper" after which "the worshipper lived in the world with vocational delight in the theatre of God's glory". Alas, the liturgical heritage of Bucer, Calvin and Knox was tragically laid aside by the advent of the Westminster Directory – a prayer book that was all rubrics and no text! Arid "Congregational" worship awaited its own version of the Oxford Movement under such twentieth century "new Genevans" as J. S. Whale and Nathaniel Micklem. The new climate arrived in English Congregationalism and Presbyterianism indicated outwardly by the design of Union Chapel and Mansfield College and the transformation of the King's Weigh House under the eccentric and influential Catholic Presbyterian W. E. Orchard. Calvin's "Word and Sacrament" was finally recovered and "Zwingli lay vanquished".

Julian Templeton challenges the impersonal alternatives to traditional Trinitarian language that now permeate many Reformed liturgies. Such alternatives as "God the Creator…God in Christ...God the Comforter" and "God: Creator, Redeemer and Spirit" are profound departures from Christian orthodoxy.

Worship language assigning functions to the persons of the Trinity divides the work of the Godhead and removes the inter-personal and inter-dependent nature of the Trinity. Thoughtless and careless use of male imagery about God is both deeply wounding and inappropriate but ultimately the "motherly Father" cannot be removed from a Christian tradition that has continuity at its heart. Keith Riglin revisits the Achilles heel of Reformed and Free Church liturgical order – lay presidency at the Eucharist. The writer argues that the 1998 amendment to the URC *Basis of Union* allowing "a suitable person to preside at the celebration of the sacrament in case of an emergency" (when appointed – there and then – by a church meeting from among the congregation) displays a practice of authority and order different from the inherited traditions of both Congregationalism and Presbyterianism. Such a "church meeting", he claims, is not a court of the church, as this is classically understood in the United Reformed Church, dishonours the covenant nature of the original Congregational-Presbyterian union of 1972, and runs contrary to the predominant understanding of ordination and ministry within the Reformed tradition.

Fleur Houston uses Barth's theology of God's Word in the Bible and Ricoeur's "hermeneutical theory" to expose and unlock the power of metaphor and meaning in Reformed preaching. Barth's homiletic weakness was the presumption that his objective doctrine of preaching did not need to be enfleshed by the requirements of communication and audience reception. The writer believes this conundrum is rescued by Ricoeur's belief that preaching is not just talk *about* God but also talk *by* God. The biblical text has to be in touch with "the great romance of culture" and there is no true preaching without "dynamic equivalence". At the heart of preaching are the "living metaphors" incapable of interpretation because "being the message" they have no message behind them to be interpreted. "The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" is to be experienced and encountered not interpreted. The preacher is to relate the "event" in Scripture so that it becomes "advent" now. Preaching is about the poetic dimension of language. We reach the heart of things by analogy.

David Thompson analyses the enigma surrounding the centrality and frequency of celebrations of the Lord's Supper among the Reformed Churches. Calvin lamented that it was only "the frailty of the people" that prevented his requirement that "the communion of the Holy Supper of Jesus Christ be held every Sunday at least as a rule". The Churches of Christ and the Christian Brethren, perhaps because "Elders" could preside, have been exceptions to the rule. But the long-term practice of infrequency among Presbyterians and Congregationalists must never be equated with irreverence. Feeling unworthy to receive the sacrament frequently, or indeed at all, permeated the life of both mediaeval Catholicism and the emerging Reformation. Scottish Presbyterians had "communion seasons" stretching across the weeks before and after Communion Sunday and – both sides of the Atlantic – these were sometimes at the heart of spiritual revival.

Richard Howard ably demonstrates that the ancient and ecumenical notion of *anamnesis* enables both Catholic and Reformed Christians to rediscover the

Eucharist as the "living and effective sign" which makes the once-for-all sacrifice of Calvary truly present to us now and also enables us to take our place in the on-going nature of Christ's work – complete but unfinished. Everything the church offers is a participation in the eternal offering that exists within the Trinity. In the light of scripture's "the one bread" and "the one cup" the relatively modern custom of the Reformed faithful receiving individual cubes of bread and individual glasses while they never move from their places is, he claims, to be questioned.

Barbara Douglas movingly returns to the great settings of the *Genevan Psalter* both words and tunes and recaptures something of the experience of the original users and of those who enjoyed an evening with famous stanzas and melodies at the Westminster College conference where these papers were originally delivered. Colin Thompson also provides extracts from Hunter's *Devotional Services*, Orchard's *Divine Service* and two contemporary Reformed liturgies as used at the Conference.

NORMAN WALLWORK

***Hallowed Be Thy Name: The Sanctification of All in the Soteriology of P. T. Forsyth*. By Jason Goroncy. London: T & T Clark, 2013. Pp. 320. £70.00. ISBN 978-0-56706-682-4.**

On his final page Jason Goroncy quotes Sydney Cave who said, "No summary of [Forsyth's] theology can serve as a substitute for his books". Goroncy agrees and suggests "the best service that any study on Forsyth can render is to whet readers' appetites…" (p. 244) hoping they will read Forsyth's books for themselves.

I read Forsyth's *Positive Preaching* in my first year of ministry and it had a profound effect on me and, especially, on my preaching. I subsequently read most of Forsyth's published works, and found them immensely readable and exciting. However, what this study makes me realise is how much I was influenced, and yet how little I absorbed intellectually: not having a great (or even a feeble) theological mind. Yet as Goroncy says, "Even Forsyth's most systematic work, was not…'meant for scholars, but largely for ministers of the Word'"(p. 26). He also says that "Like Dostoyevsky, Forsyth is a poet's theologian: he believes that theologians like 'first rate poets, must deal with human life'" (p. 27). That is some comfort to me, aware that poets usually do not quite know where they are going!

Perhaps not altogether new to me, and yet enlightening, was the realisation of all the influences on him of philosophers and theologians, not always acknowledged in his writings. This was not due to any sort of slackness on Forsyth's part, but because he was not writing systematic theology, dotting every *I* and crossing every *T*, but lecturing or preaching for preachers of the word, like me: and how one could wish that more preachers in our own times would be influenced by his work.

What I did retain from my own reading was the centrality of the Cross in Forsyth's theology, and the concept of *holy* love, as opposed to soft, undemanding, love for the sake of love. In a sense, therefore, in spite of the vast range covered by this study, its title and subtitle sum up what Forsyth's theology has always meant to me. The crucified Christ, honouring God's holiness, opened the way to the complete and eternal hallowing of God's name. And God's name can only be ultimately hallowed when every soul acknowledges God's holiness.

I used to think that Anne Brontë was the most evangelical and, perhaps, the narrowest of the three sisters. But then I found, on the internet, her 12 stanza poem: *A Word to the Elect.* The last three verses read,

> That even the wicked shall at last
> Be fitted for the skies;
> And when their dreadful doom is past,
> To life and light arise.
>
> I ask not, how remote the day,
> Nor what the sinner's woe,
> Before the dross is purged away;
> Enough for me to know
>
> That when the cup of wrath is drained,
> The metal purified,
> They'll cling to what they once disdained,
> And live by Him that died.

Although Goroncy suggests that Forsyth may not have definitely affirmed the notion of universal salvation, and refers to Alan Sell who "judiciously stops short of concluding whether Forsyth does or does not embrace universalism" (p. 211), it has always seemed to me that universal salvation is the logical conclusion of Forsyth's doctrine of the solidarity of the whole of humanity: which is the only way in which the name of God can be ultimately hallowed. Perhaps the first three lines of Anne's penultimate verse sum up Forsyth's position: "I ask not how remote the day,/Nor what the sinner's woe,/Before the dross is purged away…" But if Forsyth cannot quite bring himself to insist on the truth of the final five lines of the poem, I think he did believe them.

Out of all that might be said about this book, I am struck by the significance of one aspect of Forsyth's theology for the twenty-first century. As Goroncy says, his (Forsyth's) "concern spanned the whole of society . . . In the face of the exploitation that attend local and global communities and economics, Forsyth contends that a holy Church has a duty to challenge injustice wherever it exists": living wages for workers, proper housing for families, the modification of Capitalism, "if it is dogged by masses of unemployed" (p. 178). Such social justice is all part of the hallowing of God's name. But I also believe that the whole of Forsyth's theology is still worthy of study by ministers of the Word today.

I found this study immense, and I have not done justice to the magnitude of it here. But it has, as the author suggests, whetted, or re-whetted, my appetite and has already sent me back to read Forsyth's books for myself again. And what could be better than that?

ALAN GAUNT

John Flavel: Puritan Life and Thought in Stuart England. **By Brian H. Cosby. Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2014. Pp. 172. £49.95. ISBN 978-0-73917-952-9.**

Tourists visiting the town of Dartmouth in South Devon, if they were lucky enough to find a parking space in the town centre, may well have noticed that they were parking next to the Flavel Memorial Church. They may also have noticed they were near the Flavel Arts Centre, in Flavel Place, housing the Flavel Cinema and the Flavel Theatre. In many towns, the name of the Puritan minister ejected after the Restoration is known only to the keepers of cherished memories within our churches, but in Dartmouth John Flavel's name lives on in the whole town, although one wonders what Flavel would have made of his name being applied to a theatre and a cinema, the more so, given that they open on Sundays.

Perhaps John Flavel is more remembered than some of his contemporaries because he simply carried on his ministry after the Restoration, until his death in 1691, and left behind six volumes of *Works*. However, interest faded by the end of the nineteenth century, and it is only recently that interest in Flavel has re-emerged. Brian Cosby's book is one such contribution. What Cosby presents is a short and readable introduction to Flavel's life and thought. Clearly Cosby believes Flavel to be an especially important thinker, but since he makes no comparisons of Flavel's thought with others, it is difficult for the reader to see whether or not this claim stands up. The book – very expensive for what it is – is nevertheless a useful introduction to Flavel's life and thought.

MICHAEL HOPKINS

Elsie Chamberlain: The Independent Life of a Woman Minister. **By Alan Argent. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing, 2013. Pp. 288. £60.00. ISBN 978-1845539313.**

Alan Argent has clearly performed a great service in providing a comprehensive and objective biography of Elsie Chamberlain, which has already become definitive. Elsie Chamberlain was not the first woman minister in Congregationalism by a long way, but she was the first woman forces chaplain, the first woman producer in religious broadcasting at the BBC, the first woman to chair the Congregational Union, and the first Nonconformist minister to

marry an Anglican priest. That Elsie Chamberlain deserves a serious biography is not in doubt, and Argent has undoubtedly provided that.

From what I have learned of Elsie Chamberlain from this biography (unlike most other reviewers, I never met her), she would probably have been bemused to be part of a series on *Gender, Theology and Spirituality*, but the difficulty of publishing books commercially these days means we should welcome a quality publication in whatever guise.

In many ways Elsie's ministry was as usual as for any woman Congregational minister until after the Second World War, when she was appointed as a chaplain to the Royal Air Force. Elsie had studied at King's College London with Margaret Stansgate, and remained friends ever after. In 1945 that friendship bore tangible fruit, when Margaret's husband, Viscount Stansgate, Secretary of State for Air, appointed Elsie as a Chaplain in the RAF, and ensured that she continued in post in the face of opposition. After the RAF, Elsie's next prominent appointment was as a producer at the BBC, which gradually increased to a full-time role by 1954, and her voice became known to millions. Perhaps it was little surprise that she was elected to chair the Congregational Union in 1956. However, she had not been closely involved in the workings of the Union, and was not a diplomat, which made the role harder than it might otherwise have been, and I learnt that Elsie did not feel she had fulfilled this very well.

The significant puzzle about Elsie Chamberlain remains why she supported earlier attempts at Congregational-Presbyterian union, and then at the eleventh hour declared herself against the formation of the United Reformed Church. Argent does not provide an unequivocal answer to this puzzle, but that is not a criticism, because what he does provide, through an exhaustive analysis of the situation from every angle, is that there simply is no unequivocal answer. Elsie left no such answer herself, and although there are hints and inferences, I was satisfied that I would have to remain unsatisfied. The best answer would seem to be a combination of personality issues, some fears over what the United Reformed Church might be, and some misunderstandings of what was proposed. After 1972 Elsie found "elder statesman" status in the Congregational Federation, where she was clearly deeply loved, and rightly so. No doubt her popularity was a great help in the early days of the Federation.

Argent has richly blessed his readers with a clear, well-written, comprehensive, and objective biography of someone who richly deserves to be written about. Those interested in biography generally, in the history of Congregationalism, in the formation of the United Reformed Church, in religious broadcasting, in relationships between Nonconformity and the Church of England, in armed forces chaplaincy, and the role of women in the church and the world in the twentieth century will all find something to enjoy here.

MICHAEL HOPKINS