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A table of contents for the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* can be found here:

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# Proceedings

OF THE

# Wesley Historical Society

Editor: REV. JOHN C. BOWMER, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.

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## EDITORIAL

IT is a debatable point whether an historical society like ours should confine its attention to "historic" events of the past or whether it should widen its field of interest to note contemporary movements which are likely to be regarded as "historic" by future historians. If we take the wider view, we cannot fail to notice that in recent years events have been taking place which are changing the face of British Methodism, and we venture to prophesy (always a precarious exercise!) that our successors in years to come will regard them as landmarks in Methodist history. We are thinking in particular of the new *Methodist Service Book*, the restructuring of our organization, and the Methodist Church Act. Nor must we forget the renovation of Wesley's Chapel (due to celebrate its bicentenary in 1978), the removal of the Archives to Manchester with repercussions on the location of our own Library, and the publication of the first volume of Wesley's *Works*. As an historical society, we shall recognize these events as evidence of the fact that history is being made in the present, just as much as it was in the past.

At the same time, there are no signs that the last word has been said about Wesley; in fact, we anticipate that the new edition of Wesley's *Works* will encourage further research. A reliable text is going to be a great asset, and we look forward to a renewed interest in what Wesley said and thought.

We rejoice in the activities of the British Section of the World Methodist Historical Society in the production of literature and the promotion of regional conferences. Our Branches continue to flourish, and their *Bulletins* contain articles which are the result of much careful research and deserve a wide readership.

As we now go into the forty-first volume of these *Proceedings*, we are confident that interest in Wesley and the history of Methodism is as keen as ever it was. Contributions are always welcome; as a general rule articles should not exceed 2,500 to 3,000 words, though we realize that in exceptional cases some subjects require longer treatment. We hope that both the general reader and the specialist will find something of interest in our pages.

## METHODISM AND THE "REVOLT OF THE FIELD" IN EAST ANGLIA, 1872-96

OVER a period of years a number of writers—notably A. Clayden, F. E. Clifford, F. G. Heath, L. M. Springhall, E. Selley, R. F. Wearmouth, and more recently E. J. Hobsbawm, E. P. Thompson, J. P. D. Dunbabin, and Pamela L. R. Horn<sup>1</sup>—have hinted at the strong influence of Methodism, and particularly Primitive Methodism, on the agricultural labourers' unions of the 1870s—a movement popularly known as the "Revolt of the Field". The present writer attempted, by means of a detailed local study, to investigate the validity of allusions such as those referred to above in the context of one particular region. The area selected for this purpose was that covered by the counties of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.<sup>2</sup>

These three adjoining counties were chosen because they formed a part of the country in which Methodism and unionism achieved a fairly widespread presence. They constituted also an area in which the older dissenting bodies had obtained a foothold. For this reason the Methodist contribution to the agricultural movement in relation to that of the other nonconformist bodies can be adjudged with greater fairness.

This study was concerned with only two unions—the National Agricultural Labourers' Union, with its headquarters in Leamington, Warwickshire, led by Joseph Arch (1828-1919), and the Amalgamated Labour League, with its headquarters in Boston and Grantham, and later in Eye (Suffolk) and Norwich, and led by William Banks (b. 1835). These were the two largest agricultural unions in the area selected.

The role of Methodist groups in the "Revolt of the Field" appears to have been twofold. In the first place, Methodism contributed importantly to the origin and early growth of the movement. Secondly, Methodism shows a marked impress on the subsequent development of agricultural unionism in the middle 1870s and 1880s.

The study began with Methodist conversion, for this was the very

<sup>1</sup> See A. Clayden: *The Revolt of the Field* (London, 1874); F. E. Clifford: *The Agricultural Lock-out of 1874* (London, 1875); F. G. Heath: *The English Peasantry* (London, 1874); E. Selley: *Village Trade Unions in Two Centuries* (London, 1919); L. M. Springhall: *Labouring Life in Norfolk Villages, 1834-1913* (London, 1936); R. F. Wearmouth: *Methodism and the Struggle of the Working Classes* (Leicester, 1954); E. P. Thompson: *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1963); E. J. Hobsbawm: *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester, 1959); J. P. D. Dunbabin: "The Revolt of the Field" (*Past and Present*, No. 26 (1963), pp. 68-97) and "The Incidence and Organisation of Agricultural Trade Unionism in the 1870s" (*Agricultural History Review*, xvi, p. 114); Pamela L. R. Horn: "Methodism and Agricultural Trade Unionism in Oxfordshire" (*Proceedings*, xxxvii, pp. 67-71).

<sup>2</sup> N. A. D. Scotland: "The Role of Methodism in the Origin and Development of the 'Revolt of the Field' in Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, 1872-96" (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1975).

*sine qua non*, not only of early Methodism, but also of the period of the "Revolt". Such conversion experience helped to convey dignity and self-respect to the agricultural labourer in that it possessed him with the feeling of acceptance and personal worth.<sup>5</sup> The maintenance of the conversion experience by means of a Methodistical life-style also helped to generate resolve and determination on the part of the subjects concerned. It was this which supplied "much of the motive power . . . the moral earnestness, and the tenacity" of the movement.

Methodism contributed significantly to the emergence of a more articulate labourer. The East Anglian agricultural worker of the 1870s appears an altogether different kind of man from his counterpart of the 1860s. For the latter, recourse to rioting was perhaps the only means of expressing his feeling. Wherein lies the explanation for the change between 1830 and 1870? Our study suggested that the most plausible solution was that these years saw a period of very rapid missioning and expansion by Methodist groups in East Anglia.<sup>6</sup> They were marked by the powerful ministries of men like Robert Key (1805-76)<sup>6</sup> and George Seaman (b. 1839) in Norfolk and Suffolk, and John Benton (1775-1856), the "Apostle of Lincolnshire".<sup>7</sup>

It needs to be borne in mind that few agricultural labourers attended school prior to the Forster Education Act of 1870, and even after the bill became law, it was some years before labourers' children began to appear in the state schools with sufficient regularity to gain even a rudimentary education. Yet not only did Methodist bodies provide day-schools,<sup>8</sup> their Sunday schools were of major import in providing education.<sup>9</sup> George Edwards (1851-1933) stated in his autobiography that Sunday school was the only formal education he ever had. James Applegate (1835-93), district chairman of the Aylsham Union, often spoke with gratitude of his schooling in the Primitive Methodist Sunday school.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, this may be part of the reason why a number of Joseph Arch's union officials in the chosen counties were Sunday-school superintendents and teachers.<sup>11</sup> For example, Zacharias Walker (1843-1900), the Walsingham district secretary, was tireless in his work as superintendent of the Primitive Methodist Sunday school at North Creake.

Perhaps the genius of Methodism was its organization, which provided opportunities for the labourer to testify, speak, pray, and

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, *Diss Express*, 5th April 1878 (speech by Joseph Arch at Diss) and *Norwich Argus*, 28th December 1872 (speech by Henry Gibson at Swaffham).  
<sup>4</sup> *Labourers' Union Chronicle*, 14th June 1873.

<sup>6</sup> H. B. Kendall: *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church* (London, 1906), i, p. 253.

<sup>6</sup> See R. Key: *The Gospel among the Masses* (London, 1876).

<sup>7</sup> Kendall, op. cit., i, p. 97.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, E. H. Mumby: *Methodism in Caistor* (typed, 1961), p. 30.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Wickham Skeith Wesleyan Sunday-school account books, which indicate that spelling-books were still being purchased in the 1870s.

<sup>10</sup> *Primitive Methodist Magazine*, 1895, pp. 305-7.

<sup>11</sup> Scotland, op. cit., p. 68.

discuss in a proliferation of class-meetings, "protracted meetings", services of song, lovefeasts, and camp-meetings.<sup>12</sup> There were also opportunities for the labouring man to take responsibility as a local preacher, prayer-leader, exhorter, Sunday-school teacher, steward, sick-visitor, or trustee.<sup>13</sup>

In the light of such an educative impact, it is perhaps less surprising that Methodist groups supplied so many of the leaders of the various union districts and branches. In examining the union leadership of the chosen area, the procedure adopted was the compilation of a biographical index containing the names of all unionists mentioned in the trade union and county newspapers covering the entire period of the "Revolt of the Field", 1872-96.<sup>14</sup> Thus the sample can be viewed as fairly comprehensive.

In Lincolnshire, researches demonstrated that 134 out of a total of 254 men who were active in the county districts and branches of the two unions as speakers, chairmen or officials were identifiable as Methodists. In Norfolk, where both unionism and Methodism achieved a stronger hold, 273 men out of a total of 525 who were similarly active were identified as Methodists. In Suffolk, the figure was 83 out of a total of 170 leaders. In the three counties, 95 per cent of the leaders whose religious affiliations could be established were known Methodists.

These figures would seem to indicate that a fairly significant proportion of union leaders were Methodists, particularly in view of the fact that in some circuits much valuable material is either missing or in unknown private hands. It might be countered that the Methodism of these union leaders was no more than a badge in a society which was still at least nominally a religious one; yet the fact remains that approximately 75 per cent of their number were office-holders in one or other of the Methodist bodies. At this point, therefore, our study tends to confirm the traditionally-accepted view that the bulk of the leaders of the "Revolt of the Field" were Methodists. Thus Dr. L. M. Springhall, without providing any figures, wrote: "Nearly all the men at the heads of these unions were local preachers, the majority within the Primitive Methodist chapels."<sup>15</sup>

Perhaps the most interesting fact emerging from the study was the relatively large proportion of activists who were Wesleyans. For example, of our 80 Methodist activists in Suffolk, 22 were Wesleyans, and in Lincolnshire, of 142 activists 40 were Wesleyans. Rather surprisingly, at the district or highest level the proportion of Wesleyans to Primitive Methodists was a little smaller than was the case at branch level.

It has often been supposed that the Wesleyans drew their adherents largely from the lower middle-class traders and small farmers, whilst

<sup>12</sup> Hobsbawm, op. cit., p. 132.

<sup>13</sup> See A. Jessop: *Arcady for Better for Worse* (London, 1887), pp. 77-8.

<sup>14</sup> Scotland, op. cit., Biographical Index, pp. 452-500, which gives brief biographies of over 1,000 local leaders.

<sup>15</sup> Springhall, op. cit., p. 83.

the Primitive Methodists drew wholesale from the proletarian strata. The area studied did not suggest such a rigid line of demarcation as this. Of our 22 Suffolk Wesleyans, 19 were labourers, whilst of 40 Lincolnshire Wesleyan activists 29 were labourers.

The reasons for this apparently significant proportion of Wesleyan leaders are obviously diverse. At Gissing in Norfolk, where Wesleyan William Randle was branch secretary for Arch's union, there was no PM chapel. Jacob Quinton (1842-1917), the Suffolk League activist, was expelled from the Primitives for neglecting his appointments and for immoral conduct, but he almost immediately joined the Wesleyans, and was a much-respected local preacher among them for more than forty years. But perhaps in a real sense it might be argued that the 1870s represent a kind of watershed in the stance of the Wesleyan body towards both the establishment and movements for social reform. After 1870 a new social awareness is discernible even at the higher levels of the Wesleyan Connexion—an awareness which was a little later to emerge as the "Forward Movement" under the inspiration of Hugh Price Hughes (1847-1902) and Samuel E. Keeble. The *Norfolk News* gives the reader a glimpse of what one suspects may have occurred elsewhere also. At a meeting of agricultural labourers on the bowling-green of the Star Inn, Aylsham, the Rev. E. Sibcey, a Wesleyan minister,

who said that he had also been an agricultural labourer, and that he commenced to work in the fields when he was eight years of age, and remembered crying with cold, likewise expressed his approval of the meeting.<sup>16</sup>

Some few weeks later, a further issue of the same paper reported that the Rev. Mr. Sibcey had given an address along with other agricultural union delegates at a meeting of agricultural labourers held at Aylsham Town Hall.<sup>17</sup>

Taken as a whole, the Methodist leadership of the unions in the chosen area shows a remarkably high percentage of labourers. The proportion of union officials who were representatives of the lower middle class or tradesmen group was higher at the district than at the local level. In the three counties taken as a whole, only 71 out of a total of 410 known Methodist branch-leaders fitted Hobsbawm's "labour aristocrat" category.<sup>18</sup> Taken as a whole, these figures suggest that the "Revolt of the Field" in this part of East Anglia was a real "grass roots" movement, and clearly militate against theories which argue for a politically conservative working-class élite superimposing a tone of contentment and respectability on the unions.<sup>19</sup> The assertion by Mr. J. P. D. Dunbabin must also be regarded as an overstatement of the case: "Moreover the movement was heavily dependent on outside assistance at all levels."<sup>20</sup>

There seems little doubt that a Methodist biblicism contributed

<sup>16</sup> *Norfolk News*, 18th May 1872.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, 29th June 1872.

<sup>18</sup> See E. J. Hobsbawm: *Labouring Men* (London, 1963), p. 273.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 272-315.

<sup>20</sup> J. P. D. Dunbabin: "The Revolt of the Field" (*Past and Present*, November 1963).

significantly to the new-found social awareness of the agricultural union leadership. Here it is important to remember, as has been noted, that many union leaders were either labourers or were tradespeople from the smaller market-towns where they were not readily confronted with the more radical thought which was current in the larger industrial centres. The education of such a leadership was sparse. Most were not wide readers, and it is significant that none of Arch's district secretaries for our three counties quotes anything beyond the level of the *PM Magazine* in writing their weekly columns.

A careful examination of the brief glimpses and summaries of the union speeches given by the newspapers revealed that where argument was made for better conditions, shorter hours, or increase of wages, it was invariably grounded on one of two bases—a biblical passage or an innate sense of what is just. In the case of the latter, appeal was often made to the fact that England as a Christian country ought not to tolerate injustice.<sup>21</sup> In a typical instance in which Joseph Arch addressed over 1,000 locked-out labourers at Woodbridge in Suffolk, he said

he felt that afternoon that in 1874 in this christian country of England it was a disgrace that a meeting such as that should be a necessity. If a request for 1s. a week was met with nine weeks' lock-out which meant starvation . . . then it was a shame and disgrace upon the christianity of England that it had not taught the people better.<sup>22</sup>

The agricultural unionists do in large measure appear to have drawn their social awareness from the Bible. William Chadwick, for example, in preaching at Ulceby to Lincolnshire unionists gathered for the district anniversary service, spoke from the words "Search the scriptures". "He pointed out how the scriptures were the magna charta of the poor, and how they denounced the oppression of the poor by the rich."<sup>23</sup> George Edwards (1850-1933) described in his autobiography how he searched through the Bible before he preached his first labour sermons:

I was most anxious to assure myself that I was doing the right thing from a religious point of view . . . I searched the scriptures and was able to satisfy myself that I was doing the right thing. Then as now, to me the Labour Movement was a most sacred thing and, try as one may, one cannot divorce labour from religion.<sup>24</sup>

Of the texts reported as used by union leaders (the majority of whom were Methodists) from the chosen area, most were drawn from the Old Testament. Favourites were Psalm xli. 1: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor", and Deuteronomy xxv. 4: "The working ox shall not be muzzled". Such an Old Testament biblical basis for social justice seems to reinforce what work done in other areas has demonstrated.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Scotland, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-8, Table 1.

<sup>22</sup> *Essex Telegraph*, 9th June 1874. <sup>23</sup> *The Labourer*, 27th April 1878.

<sup>24</sup> G. Edwards: *From Crow-Scaring to Westminster* (London, 1922), p. 43.

<sup>25</sup> R. S. Moore: "The Political Effects of Village Methodism" (*A Sociological Year-book of Religion in Britain* (London, 1973), p. 172).



**ZACHARIAS WALKER**

(1843 - 1900)

**Walsingham District Secretary of the Agricultural Labourers'  
Union.**

**Primitive Methodist Circuit Steward, Local Preacher,  
Trustee and Sunday School Superintendent.**

(See page 3.)

Another way in which Methodism aided the growth of the agricultural unions was in providing a model of organization. In a comparative examination of the basic structures of the agricultural unions and Methodist organization, the most striking fact is the omission of the circuit from the structure of the agricultural unions. Methodism is founded on a four-tier structure of conference, district meeting, circuit meeting, and local society, whilst the agricultural unions were based on a three-tier system of conference, district meeting, and local branch. Nevertheless, having stated this, it is apparent that the union district fulfilled very much the same sort of function as the Methodist circuit. The union secretary certainly moved around the local branches of his district, visiting each one quarterly if circumstances permitted. Where possible, he ensured that union widows were receiving the prescribed allowance, and that sick members were properly cared for and obtaining their benefit. In the summer months the district secretary often organized religious services on Sunday. He also supervised the district anniversary, and was responsible for arranging the annual or bi-annual district meeting.

In 1872 the strong union branches sent out delegates to stir up the villages round about them and to help the inexperienced branch officials in their work and organization. In this way Spilsby, Spalding, Lincoln, Alford, and Grantham (Lincolnshire), Thetford, Swaffham, Fakenham, East Dereham, Attleborough, North Walsham, Aylsham, Docking, and Holt (Norfolk), and Eye, Bury St. Edmunds, Newmarket, and Ipswich (Suffolk) (all of which were heads of Methodist circuits) emerged as centres round which the smaller village and hamlet branches clustered. This was something similar to the way in which the Methodist circuits had missioned their surrounding areas, working outwards from the larger towns to the smaller more isolated villages.

There is an almost uncanny similarity between the annual League and National conferences and those of the Methodists, both of which debated policy and elected an executive to carry out the year's business. It was doubtless this which caused E. P. Thompson to remark:

Those Wesleyan Annual Conferences, with their "platform", their caucuses at work on the agendas, and their careful management, seem uncomfortably like another "contribution" to the Labour Movement of more recent times.<sup>26</sup>

The union branch, with its ticket of membership and weekly subscription, shows clear traces of the Methodist class-meeting. Some of the personal designations and names given to union office-bearers may also have been chosen as the result of Methodist influence. For example, some unions appointed "trustees" and "sick visitors".

Perhaps the borrowing by the agricultural unions from Methodism is nowhere so clear as in the matter of union camp-meetings and a union lovefeast, for both of these activities were distinctively Methodist. Nine instances of union camp-meetings were noted—seven

<sup>26</sup> Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-4.

in Lincolnshire and one each in Norfolk and Suffolk. The following report which appeared in Arch's *Chronicle* provides a typical instance :

On Sunday August 12th at Kelsey Moor a very good camp meeting was held near the railway station. The speakers were Everett, Wilmore, Douse, Ashley and Philipson. A good spirit prevailed throughout the day.<sup>27</sup>

Yet not only did the agricultural unions draw on Methodist organization in the ways which have been indicated; they even on occasion, as the following instance shows, suggested the possibility of actually using Methodist organization as a vehicle for promoting their programme.

Paid delegates have been tried, and as a rule found too expensive . . . How is it [i.e. organizing] to be done best and most economically? Well one suggestion is this : let us follow the Methodist local preachers' plan. Let the Executive Council and General Secretary prepare a plan for each county, and call on the men who are earnestly preaching salvation for the souls of men to assist us save their bodies also.<sup>28</sup>

Methodist buildings also had an important role to play in the "Revolt of the Field" in the chosen area. Not only did the various groups lend their premises for union meetings; it appears that the buildings themselves may well have influenced the location of union branches. This aspect is suggested by J. P. D. Dunbabin in an important article entitled "The Incidence and Organisation of Agricultural Trade Unionism in the 1870s".<sup>29</sup> Out of a total of 604 branches in the three counties, 535 were located in towns and villages where there was already a Methodist chapel. The significance of this is particularly well illustrated in Suffolk. Although only 46 per cent of the county's towns and villages had a Methodist chapel, yet 78 per cent of the agricultural union branches were formed in those villages. The following sample of District figures is clearly suggestive of this locational influence of Methodist buildings.

Name of District	Number of Branches in District	Number of Branches located in villages where there was a Methodist chapel	Number of Branches located in villages where there was a Primitive Methodist chapel
East Dereham (National)	12	12	12
Diss ... (National)	54	50	38
Dersingham ... (League)	5	5	5
Peasenhall ... (League)	14	13	8

<sup>27</sup> *English Labourers' Chronicle*, 1st September 1877.

<sup>28</sup> *The Labourer*, 7th June 1879.

<sup>29</sup> See the *Agricultural History Review*, xvi, p. 114.

In many villages it was very hard for the unionists to find rooms large enough to hold their meetings. Whilst in the summer these could be held out of doors, this was obviously difficult during the cold winter months. The loan of chapel buildings and schoolrooms was therefore a great asset. In this respect the Primitive Methodists, despite their rule forbidding the loan of connexional property for political meetings,<sup>80</sup> appear to have been the most generous. For example, of the thirteen different chapels loaned by Methodist groups to the Spalding District of Arch's union, eight belonged to the Primitive Methodists, and of nine different chapels loaned to the Market Rasen District of the same union, eight belonged to the Primitive Methodists. Significantly, perhaps, the union newspapers make almost no reference to the unions' use of chapels belonging to other nonconformist groups.

\* \* \*

We now turn to agricultural unionism's subsequent development. As the unions sprang into full flower, Methodism exerted a clearly-discernible influence in regard to its character, policies, and struggles. Perhaps this fact is most apparent in the whole quasi-religious atmosphere which pervaded union meetings and related activities. Many union branch meetings, particularly those held in chapels, were quite similar in form to the Methodist mid-week services. Weekly dues would be paid by the members, and the meeting would begin with a hymn or union song, which was sometimes followed by prayer. After this there would be announcements, addresses by union officials, and sometimes members would speak rather in the style of the "protracted meetings". The following examples are illustrative.

At Bardwell, near Thetford, the branch meeting of the 9th October 1874 was held in the Primitive Methodist chapel. John Addison, the district chairman, and himself a trustee and local preacher, presided over the gathering. In commencing the proceedings, he stated that he always liked to reverence God's house, and therefore felt it appropriate that they should begin with singing and prayer. He gave out the hymn commencing:

When all Thy mercies, oh, my God,  
My rising soul surveys,  
Transported by Thy love [sic], I'm lost  
In wonder, love and praise.

After this he called on Mr. Edward Bradbury, another Primitive Methodist preacher, to offer a short prayer. The paper commented: "While this brother was praying we indeed felt we were going in the right direction."<sup>81</sup>

From the *Norwich Argus*, a Norfolk paper which was singularly hostile to the agricultural unions, comes the following glimpse of

<sup>80</sup> See *Consolidated Minutes of the Primitive Methodist Connexion* (London, 1870), section 339.

<sup>81</sup> *Labour League Examiner*, 17th October 1874.

activities at Swaffham, put in the paper's consistently mocking style :

Mr. Gibson, the tailor, appeared in high feather as chairman at Swaffham; his flock commenced with singing the 67th psalm . . . and when the meeting was over or supposed to be over, they sang the Doxology and retired.<sup>82</sup>

At a union meeting at Sturton-by-Stowe in Lincolnshire, Robert Coulbeck, the district delegate, and himself a PM local preacher, was the evening's speaker. Arch's *Chronicle* gave the following comment on the start of the meeting :

An old man of eighty occupied the chair, who, in opening the meeting, said he wished he had been forty years younger, and he would be in the front rank; as it was, his work was very near done. He would have to be content to say, " Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."<sup>83</sup>

Union speeches reported by the press abound with biblical quotations, metaphors, and other language which would be familiar to Methodist adherents. Thus, for instance, a unionist such as Bonnett of Lissington expressed his belief that " the union was the cause of God, and therefore he should stick to it ". On another occasion, district secretary William Everett, a local preacher, invited " a few backsliders [i.e. lapsed unionists of the Market Rasen District] to return ". Richard Colman (1823-91), the Swaffham delegate, wrote in the *English Labourers' Chronicle*, and expressed the hope that those labourers who had had a good harvest and made good money would give generously to those who had been out of work: ". . . I hope that those who cannot afford a shilling will be like the widow with the mite, give all they can."<sup>84</sup> This quasi-religious atmosphere also showed in such aspects as union Sunday worship, anniversaries, and a strict Sabbatarianism.

The fact that so many unionists, and particularly union leaders, were Methodists heightened the tension between " Church " and " Chapel " until there was open war. The clergy of the established Church were denounced from the union platform for demoralizing the poor with doles of broth and blankets, and for their shortcomings as trustees of the public charities. George Ball (b. 1832), for instance, in an address at Wangford in Suffolk, said

he was quite aware that parsons had been preaching contentment to them all their lives, and that prayer and fasting were the way to heaven, but thought that if that were true only a few parsons would get there!<sup>85</sup>

Speaking during the lock-out crisis of 1874, Howard Evans told Saxmundham labourers

not to be led into infidelity by the conduct of the clergy, but to read the Bible for themselves. Then they would see that the clergy were putting up a revolting caricature of the beautiful religion of Jesus Christ.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>82</sup> *Norwich Argus*, 18th May 1872.

<sup>83</sup> *Labourers' Union Chronicle*, 13th December 1873.

<sup>84</sup> *English Labourers' Chronicle*, 3rd September 1881.

<sup>85</sup> *Halesworth Times*, 16th March 1875.

<sup>86</sup> *Suffolk Chronicle*, 11th April 1874.

Suffolk delegate and PM local preacher Charles Warren (1844-89), in a "most able and telling speech", referred to the shallow prayers of the Church clergy

which never went higher than an old crow flies. . . . Though they had been saying a prayer for the Lord to bless the poor in their low estate, when the union came to bless them they thought the world was going to be turned upside down.<sup>87</sup>

George Phillips (1851-91), a Primitive Methodist of Kelsale, was one of a number of activists who gained a reputation for repeatedly questioning the clergyman's handling of the parish charities.<sup>88</sup> George Ball frequently dwelt on this question, and on one occasion told the labourers that they had been robbed of £750,000.<sup>89</sup> Clerical critics of the unions such as Bishops Ellicott and Magee were attacked mercilessly in union speeches. At Bury St. Edmunds in June 1874 William<sup>o</sup>Banks referred to the Bishop of Peterborough having likened the leaders of the union to kites and vultures: ". . . was that proper language for a disciple of Jesus?"<sup>40</sup> At a lock-out demonstration at Ipswich, one of the speakers said that

if the Great Founder of Christianity came on the earth tomorrow preaching against fat livings, the Bishops of Peterborough and Gloucester would be the first men to shout "Crucify Him!"<sup>41</sup>

In view of invective such as this, it is not surprising that the majority of clergymen remained among Arch's and Banks's most vehement critics.<sup>42</sup> Typical of their number was the Rev. J. W. Josling, rector of Moulton and formerly fellow and tutor at Christ's College, Cambridge. In a hot-headed speech to the Newmarket and District Farmers' Defence Association, he attacked the Bishop of Manchester's attempts to teach the farmers their duty.

What on earth did the Bishop of Manchester know about it? . . . The Bishop wrote a lot of bosh in the *Times* newspaper, and he would have been better preaching the Gospel. When he read the Bishop's letter he said to himself, "Bosh!" and "Oxford rhetoric!". . . If the Bishop of Manchester were to ask him, he would tell him, that walking between Newmarket and his parish church, he could see more sense under the bodies of the horses there training than he could find in the parish school or around his labourers' hearths. . . . What they wanted was more Cambridge common sense and less Oxford logic.<sup>48</sup>

NIGEL SCOTLAND.

(To be continued)

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<sup>87</sup> *English Labourers' Chronicle*, 28th February 1880.

<sup>88</sup> *Bury Free Press*, 7th April 1877.

<sup>89</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 28th March 1874.

<sup>40</sup> *Bury and Norwich Post*, 16th June 1874.

<sup>41</sup> *Suffolk Chronicle*, 5th May 1874.

<sup>42</sup> Not all the clergy, however, were opposed to the unions. See Scotland, *op. cit.*, pp. 301-2.

<sup>48</sup> *Bury and Norwich Post*, 5th May 1874.

# THE EXTINCT METHODIST SOCIETIES OF SOUTH-EAST SCOTLAND

## 1. Dunfermline

**D**ESPITE the pioneer work of the late Rev. Wesley F. Swift,<sup>1</sup> and the later notes of Dr. Oliver A. Beckerlegge,<sup>2</sup> the history of Scottish Methodism remains a relatively little-explored field. Indeed, Mr. Swift's opening comment, "Scottish Methodism is a phenomenon worthy of study"—culled from the leading article of *The Watchman*, 11th August 1853—remains as true today as it was 124 years ago. One of the "phenomena" was the way in which Methodism took root in large numbers of towns and villages up and down Scotland and the equally remarkable way in which numbers of the societies withered away after an all-too-brief existence. Mr. Swift suggests that although Methodism commenced by satisfying a need, something in its organization failed to give or secure it the nourishment which the Scottish situation required. In the Edinburgh area, at any rate, the causes of this mushroom-like growth and decline appear to be somewhat simpler: three of the societies which are now extinct—Dunfermline, Haddington, and Musselburgh—all coincided with the period of chapel-speculation which marred the early nineteenth century. The fourth—Dalkeith—enjoyed a much more protracted existence, until it too finally succumbed. It is hoped to examine the history of these four societies in a series of articles.

Dunfermline Methodism was a direct result of the activities of the Rev. Valentine Ward, who had a long and distinguished career in Scotland from 1811 to 1829. He travelled first in Glasgow (1811-14), then in Edinburgh (1814-17), Aberdeen (1817-20), Glasgow (1820-3), Edinburgh (1823-4), and in Glasgow for a final two-year term (1827-9) following a three-year break in Leeds. For thirteen of these fifteen years, Valentine Ward was also Chairman of one or other of the (then) two Scottish Districts of Edinburgh and Aberdeen—a quite remarkable achievement. Described by Wesley Swift<sup>3</sup> as of an optimistic and buoyant temperament, this influential preacher had one signal defect in his constitution: he was a compulsive chapel-builder. Probably no man in the whole history of Methodism devoted himself to this self-appointed task with greater diligence. He bought and built with abandon, and left a legacy of problems for his successors to solve,<sup>4</sup> in the shape of burdensome debts.

During his first Glasgow ministry he notes:

... I was strongly solicited to visit Dunfermline, a manufacturing town

<sup>1</sup> Wesley F. Swift: *Methodism in Scotland: The First Hundred Years* (Epworth Press, 1947).

<sup>2</sup> O. A. Beckerlegge: "In search of Forgotten Methodism" (*Proceedings*, xxxii, pp. 109-13).

<sup>3</sup> Swift, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 73-5.

16 miles from Edinburgh and 40 or 50 from Glasgow. I went in November 1812, preached five times, and God blessed the Word. At my second visit in May following, (1813), I found an affectionate Society of about 18 members, and no small stir in the town about this new way. Such continued our prosperity, that during my second year in Edinburgh (1815) we built a chapel there, which, ground included, has cost us eleven hundred pounds . . .<sup>5</sup>

Wesley Swift's contention regarding Valentine Ward in general and Dunfermline in particular was thus amply justified :

. . . most of Ward's ventures had no such justification. Small Societies at . . . Haddington, Leith, . . . Dunfermline . . . , worshipping in disused Episcopalian chapels or "upper rooms", apparently content with the facilities they enjoyed, found themselves in possession of large chapels and correspondingly large debts.<sup>6</sup>

Notwithstanding the fact that Clegg casts a somewhat jaundiced eye over the affairs of Scottish Methodism, the general impression of this writer's account is one of realism which accords ill with the rosy picture painted by Valentine Ward :

Dunfermline is the last of the deficient Circuits, in which chapels have been lately procured, noticed by Mr. W[ard]. He says, "such continued to be our prosperity there, that we built a chapel". Let us then see what this prosperity was. I wish this, because it will show that there are hindrances, much more formidable than Mr. W. mentions, and will consequently prepare the way to what I consider the principal causes of our slow progress in Scotland.

Mr. Ward and two of his three colleagues [these were John Jones, Samuel Blackburn and John Gaskell] visited Dunfermline in 1812 and 1813. Partly because of these visits, and partly because there were some who had been Methodists in the Army, who could take others by the hand, there arose a Society of 18 members, who were encouraged to expect a chapel and preacher soon. A small room was taken for a single preacher in 1813 at, I think 4/- [20p.] a week. The Mason's Lodge was hired for preaching at £10 per year, and was much crowded in the evening, when a stranger went, or when there happened to be no preaching in other places of worship. And our people exerted themselves astonishingly well.

But what was the deficiency of 1814, the first year? Why, after the promising appearance attending the Glasgow preachers, and after regular preaching for a year, it was £31. In 1815, when there was a change with the Edinburgh preachers, and when the people were expecting a chapel immediately, it was £27. In 1816, when one would suppose an unusual spirit of inquiry was executed by the erection and opening of the new chapel, it was £26. So after labouring upwards of 4 years, after giving the people a great variety of preachers, and after expending in chapel building &c upwards of £1200, we have between 40 and 50 members in this populous town. . . . Mr. W. was the first preacher . . .<sup>7</sup>

Buoyed up by his own optimism, but certainly not by material resources in Dunfermline, Valentine Ward sought and purchased a

<sup>5</sup> V. Ward : *Free and Candid Structures on Methodism* (Aberdeen, 1818).

<sup>6</sup> Swift, op. cit., pp. 74-5.

<sup>7</sup> W. Clegg : *Methodism in Scotland* (Leeds, 1818).

site for a chapel. Although the sasine was dated 23rd June 1815, it was not registered<sup>8</sup> until 30th August 1822, for reasons which will become apparent later. On that date in 1815, the Rev. Valentine Ward and the Rev. John Gaskell, together with Robert Harley, Weaver in Dunfermline; James Morrison, Weaver there; John Stephens, Innkeeper there; John Lootfoot and Adam Walker, Weavers there; Thomas Peebles, Slater there; John Dott, Hairdresser there, and John Morris, Weaver there, were infeft with

all and whole that tenement of land and houses [then ruinous] with the pertinents which sometime pertained to George Currie, then to David Douglas, thereafter to James Rolland, Merchant in Dunfermline and Giles Currie his spouse, lying within the liberties of the Burgh of Dunfermline, upon the south side of the street called the Maygate, and bounded betwixt the lands sometime of Sir Henry Wardlaw of Pitreavie, then of David Wardlaw of Craighouse, then of William Black, thereafter of John Lindsay, and now the Master and Brethren of St Johns Lodge of Dunfermline on the east; the lands of John Bunting, then of George Crawford, now of the heirs of David Robertson, Baker on the west; the church yard upon the south, and by the said street called the Maygate on the north parts . . .

The deed contained the clauses which are usually found in early nineteenth-century deeds of Methodist property, but there are a few peculiarities which are worthy of note. First, that although Conference had the whole right and power of stationing the preacher, it should not appoint the same preacher for more than two years without the consent of the named trustees. Second, in true Valentine Ward fashion, the said trustees were empowered to borrow money or to obtain it on annuity and to grant heritable bonds or other legal security in the most ample manner. Third, that the trustees had power to sell the premises, but that before such a sale was made they were obliged to make an offer of the premises to the Conference, although shops and dwellings belonging to the premises were exempted from this provision. Fourth, that the whole of the trustees or any of them could cause a valuation to be made of the property, and if the debt was so far reduced as to be only one-quarter of the value of the property, all the proceeds after paying the interest and keeping the premises in repair could be applied to the support of the minister, or to any other purpose connected with the spread of Methodism in Dunfermline and its vicinity. Fifth, should any measure be determined or adopted by a majority of the trustees which should appear to the superintendent preacher for the time being, or by a minority of one-third of the trustees, to be contrary to the rules of Methodism, the resolution was to be suspended in its operation until the business had been considered by the District Meeting, to which it should be referred, and from which an appeal might be made to the supreme authority, the Conference, in whose final decision both parties were obliged to acquiesce. With this exception, all questions

<sup>8</sup> Burgh Register of Sasines, Dunfermline, B.20/3/3, pp. 147-52. Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh (SRO in subsequent footnotes).

were to be determined by a fair majority as should be regularly named in writing by trustees resident at least five miles from Dunfermline. By this sasine, the property was relieved from an annual rent of £5, in virtue of a life-rent provision dating from 1752.

In the fashion of many of Valentine Ward's financial speculations, the property was immediately used as security for a loan of £400 from Hunters & Co., bankers, of Ayr, the partners being Captain Patrick Hunter, resident in Edinburgh, and William Cowan and Quintin Kennedy, residing at Drumellan in Ayr. In addition to the trustees named in the original deed, the names of Richard Thompson, Manufacturer, Glasgow; John Fisher, Bookbinder, Glasgow; William Cadell, Merchant Tailor, Glasgow; John Preston, Ropemaker, Bridgton, and George Richardson, Merchant Tradesman, also appear as guarantors for the loan. Accordingly the chapel in Maygate was disposed "heritably but redeemably" to Messrs. Hunters & Co.

The Dunfermline cause must have shown some promise in the early years, as may be judged by the membership returns. Whilst these are somewhat fragmentary, sufficient remain to indicate the state of affairs:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Membership</i>
1813	Valentine Ward	18
1815	Conference <i>Minutes</i>	106
1816	Conference Journal	50
1817	"	80
1819	"	60
1820	"	30
1826	Edinburgh Society Book <sup>9</sup>	13

The purchase of the ground and the building of the chapel clearly sounded the death-knell of the society.

As early as 1815, permission was given by Conference for a collection to be made at Aberdeen for the Dunfermline chapel, and in the following year throughout the Edinburgh circuit.<sup>10</sup> By 1820, Conference had come to the conclusion that Dunfermline was a lost cause. It was resolved

That Dunfermline and Ayr chapels shall be tried a further year, but should there be no better prospect at its termination than there is at present, they shall be sold.<sup>11</sup>

Prior to the 1820 Conference, the case of Dunfermline had been raised in the Edinburgh District Meeting:

Q. 16. What is the opinion of this meeting respecting Dunfermline being united to the Edinburgh Circuit?

Ans. Under the existing circumstances [the Edinburgh circuit was also heavily burdened with debt] it is the opinion of this meeting that Dunfermline cannot be recognised as an integral part of the Edinburgh Circuit with prudence or propriety and that the prayer of the petition of

<sup>9</sup> SRO. CH.11/1/22.

<sup>10</sup> Edinburgh District Meeting Minutes. (Methodist Archives.)

<sup>11</sup> Conference Journal. (Methodist Archives.)

the Edinburgh Society receive the recommendation and support of this meeting.<sup>12</sup>

Although the Edinburgh society clearly did not wish to have a second millstone hung around its neck, the Conference was minded to disregard the recommendations. For the three years 1820, 1821 and 1822, four preachers were stationed in the Edinburgh circuit, the fourth preacher probably residing at Dunfermline.

In the same District Meeting (1820), the harsh light of reality exposed the shortcomings of Valentine Ward's financial policies:

Q. What is the opinion of this meeting respecting the Leith, Dunfermline, Greenock, Ayr and Perth chapels?

A. The debts and embarrassments of these chapels awaken painful apprehensions in our minds, but we find ourselves unable to dissipate the obscurity of the accounts and regret that we are not furnished with the means of stating anything more explicit: the Superintendents of the Circuits in which these chapels are situated not having been able to *obtain the information necessary from Mr. Ward to whom they have made application for such information and, who alone was able to furnish it.*

Q. What in our opinion ought to be done with Dunfermline chapel?

A. That it be sold, and a committee be appointed by the Conference to determine the disposal of it in the best way.

In 1823, permission was given by Conference to sell the Dunfermline chapel, but matters dragged on for a number of years (Valentine Ward having removed to Leeds). In June 1827, however, a special meeting (of which Ward was blissfully unaware) of the President (Richard Watson) and Secretary of the Conference (Dr. Jabez Bunting), together with the preachers stationed in Scotland, was destined to change his whole future. A report of the meeting states:

(1) The state of the work of God in this District generally was examined, and the result, as it relates to the spiritual improvement of the Societies, was on the whole satisfactory.

(2) The distressing embarrassments of several chapels in this District were taken into serious consideration and it was unanimously agreed to report the following particularly to the Conference.

(a) It is the opinion of this meeting that the chapels in Leith, Haddington, Tradeston, Greenock and Port Glasgow are so deeply involved in debt, as to afford not the least rational hope that they can ever be so effectually relieved as to be brought into a manageable state by any local exertions of which the Trustees and Societies in those places are capable.

(b) That the honour of our Connexion requires that some of the above cases be brought to a speedy issue, and we recommend that they be sold as soon as possible, though it should even be at a considerable loss, the deficiency to be provided for, partly by some arrangements with the creditors, partly by sacrifices on the part of the Trustees, and partly by grants from the General Chapel Fund.

<sup>12</sup> Edinburgh District Meeting Minutes.

N.B.—In several cases opportunities for sale have been allowed to pass and we think ought to have been embraced.

(c) That on account of Mr. Valentine Ward's particular connexion with these chapels; his responsibility for monies borrowed upon them and the painful consequences which must result to the Trustees and to our Connexion at large, in the event of Mr. W.'s demise—we strongly recommend that he be stationed in one of the Circuits in Scotland at the ensuing Conference with instructions to dispose of the several chapels above named.

(d) That at an early period of the sitting of the Conference, a committee be appointed, to prepare special instructions for Mr. W.'s guidance and assistance in the disposal of the said chapels . . .<sup>15</sup>

The Conference of 1827 considered this plea from the Edinburgh District to be wise advice, for Valentine Ward was stationed in Glasgow during 1827 and 1828. During this period, however, the financial embarrassment in Scotland became progressively more acute.<sup>14</sup> For this reason, it was simple poetic justice that, at the 1829 Conference, Valentine Ward was authorized to go through the Connexion in the next three years to appeal for subscriptions for the specific purpose

of effecting such a reduction of the debts on the chapels in Scotland as would place them in easy circumstances and prevent the necessity of future applications to the General Chapel Fund.<sup>16</sup>

The District Meeting minutes quoted above demonstrate that Valentine Ward was brought back to Scotland by a specific request from the District, although Jabez Bunting must have played some part in the affair. They also serve to amplify the comments made by Wesley Swift.<sup>16</sup>

The desire of this Special District Meeting to end the continuing financial drain of Dunfermline on both District and Connexion speedily bore fruit, for late in June 1828 (Wesley Swift says 1827)

. . . the Rev. Valentine Ward, then residing in Glasgow; John Gaskell, sometime residing in Dunfermline, thereafter in Prescot; Robert Harley, Manchester, sometime in Dunfermline, thereafter in Liverpool; James Morrison, Weaver in Dunfermline; John Stephens, sometime Innkeeper there, afterward Tollkeeper near Perth; Adam Walker, Weaver in Dunfermline; John Dott, Hairdresser there and John Morris, Weaver there, surviving Trustees of the Methodists Society in Dunfermline, or at least a quorum of their number, and bearing date 28/6/1828 . . . SOLD, ALIENATED and DISPOSED to the Rev. James Masee . . .<sup>17</sup>

The sale price of the chapel was a mere £420, leaving a deficiency of £1,163! From this date the Maygate chapel passed out of Methodist hands, but it is interesting to note that the Rev. James Masee granted a disposition<sup>18</sup> in 1833 to a number of trustees comprising the Fourth United Associate Congregation (the Maygate Congregation) in Dunfermline, under the pastoral care of the Rev. George Barlass. This Fourth United Associate Congregation was founded

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Swift, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-87.

<sup>15</sup>, <sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>17</sup>, <sup>18</sup> Burgh Register of Sasines, Dunfermline, B.20/3/22, pp. 188-90.

in September 1832 by a secession from the Chalmers Street Congregation, together with their minister, George Barlass. Chalmers notes: sittings 410, stipend £100-£120, no house or garden.<sup>19</sup> The Maygate Congregation eventually became the Chalmers Street United Free Church—one of the many threads of the present Church of Scotland. In later years the Maygate site passed to the grocery firm of Fraser & Carmichael. Indeed, Dr. Beckerlegge noted that as late as 1951 they were still in business there.<sup>20</sup> The site is now vacant, and has been converted to an open space.

This is by no means the end of the story, for the District Meeting minutes provide some information concerning the parlous financial condition of the Dunfermline society throughout its brief existence. Ever since its inception, Dunfermline had received regular payments from the Contingent Fund. In 1813, when the society was but 18 strong, the District Meeting first recommended Dunfermline to the Conference, and suggested that a preacher be sent to Dunfermline to change with Perth. This was evidently carried into effect by the Stationing Committee, for "Hall's Arrangement"<sup>21</sup> lists the Perth circuit as having two preachers in the period 1813-17, and this was mentioned also by Wesley Swift in an article in these *Proceedings* in 1929.<sup>22</sup> Thomas Bridgman was the first preacher stationed in Dunfermline.

In 1814, the ordinary deficiencies were

	£	s.	d.	
Minister's Quaterage ... ..	16	16	0	[£16 80p.]
House Rent ... ..	4	13	0	[£ 4 65p.]

The extraordinary deficiencies comprised

Travelling expenses from Dunfermline to Perth	4	4	0	[£ 4 20p.]
Rent of Preaching House in Dunfermline ...	10	0	0	
Bro. Bridgman travelling from Port Glasgow— Dunfermline ... ..	2	0	0	

At that time, Dunfermline boasted three Sunday services and one weekday service.

In 1815, the ordinary deficiencies again comprised the minister's quaterage (£16 16s.) and the house rent of £10 8s. (£10 40p.). There were also extraordinary deficiencies:

Preaching House Rent ... ..	10	8	0	[£10 40p.]
Bro. Gaskell Travelling Airdrie—Dunfermline	4	2	0	[£ 4 10p.]

This latter was the cost of John Gaskell's removal into the newly-created Dunfermline circuit—a circuit which lasted only three years (1815-18) before being amalgamated with the Edinburgh circuit.<sup>23</sup> In this year, the District Meeting recommended that collections to aid Dunfermline should be taken up. The following year, 1817, saw

<sup>19</sup> P. Chalmers: *Historical and Statistical Account of Dunfermline*, i (Edinburgh, 1844).

<sup>20</sup> *Proceedings*, xxxii, p. 112.

<sup>21</sup> *Hall's Circuits and Ministers, 1765-1912* (ed. T. Hartley Galland).

<sup>22</sup> Wesley F. Swift: "Early Methodism in Edinburgh" (*Proceedings*, xvii, pp. 78-86).

<sup>23</sup> Edinburgh District Meeting Minutes.

the ordinary deficiencies remaining much as before (£16 16s. and £9 8s. respectively), but no extraordinary deficiencies. However, in view of the increasingly difficult financial situation, the District Meeting recommended that one preacher from Perth should spend half his time in Dunfermline—the latter to pay half the quarterage, board, and travelling expenses. This proposal was apparently not implemented.

By 1817, after the opening of the chapel, the deficiencies rose to £30 14s. 2d. [£30 71p.], comprising

				£	s.	d.	
Quarterage	...	...	...	16	16	0	[£16 80p.]
House Rent	...	...	...	10	8	0	[£10 40p.]
Coals	...	...	...	2	10	2	[£ 2 51p.]

and in addition there was a special payment of £20 for furniture.

There must still have been some promise in the area, for the District Meeting recommended the appointment of an additional preacher to the Dunfermline circuit. Later that year (1817), a married man, Abraham Crabtree, was stationed at Dunfermline, and in consequence the deficiencies rose sharply to £53 3s. [£53 15p.]:

Quarterage	...	...	...	16	16	0	[£16 80p.]
Wife	...	...	...	16	16	0	[£16 80p.]
Coal and candles	...	...	...	8	0	0	
House Rent	...	...	...	11	11	0	[£11 55p.]

The extraordinary deficiencies were

Bro. Crabtree's travelling from Greenock	...	...	...	3	0	0	
Deficiencies of board	...	...	...	4	4	0	[£ 4 20p.]
Carriage of boxes	...	...	...	1	2	0	[£ 1 10p.]

In 1819, there was a further increase in the deficit to £69 18s. [£69 90p.], comprising

Quarterage	...	...	...	16	16	0	[£16 80p.]
Wife	...	...	...	16	16	0	[£16 80p.]
Child	...	...	...	13	13	0	[£13 65p.]
Servant	...	...	...	1	0	0	
House Rent	...	...	...	13	13	0	[£13 65p.]
Coal and candles	...	...	...	8	0	0	

There was a further recommendation that collections for Dunfermline should be taken up in the District. The minute ends with the comment:

Owing to the peculiar circumstances at Dunfermline, it is strongly recommended that the married man be withdrawn and a single man be appointed the ensuing year to change with Edinburgh.

Again, this recommendation does not appear to have been implemented. It seems likely that attempts were made to drop the Dunfermline minister altogether in 1821, but the District Meeting minutes note that the preacher was continued for a further year consequent upon a pledge having been made.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*

After the Conference of 1822, with the dissolution of the society well advanced, George Marshland was sent from Spalding to Dunfermline (expenses £5). The District Meeting of 1823 recommended that the preacher should be withdrawn from Dunfermline and be transferred to Haddington, but by the autumn meeting it was directed that the preacher usually stationed at Dunfermline should itinerate in Fife.

The kindness of the Connexional Archivist in searching the relevant *Minutes of Conference* has enabled a list of the preachers stationed at Dunfermline to be drawn up:

1813	Thomas Bridgman	(joined with Perth circuit)
1814-15	John Gaskell	
1816	Richard Heape	
1817	Abraham Crabtree <sup>26</sup>	
1818	James Beckwith	
1819	Thomas Moss	(Edinburgh circuit)
1820-1	Peter McOwan	"
1822	George Marshland	"
1823	? Preacher withdrawn	"

[NOTE—From 1819, when Dunfermline was amalgamated with Edinburgh, the names are conjectural, based on the assumption that the four Edinburgh circuit preachers would be for Nicolson Square, Leith, Dalkeith and Dunfermline respectively. However, in 1819 Edinburgh had three preachers only, as was the case from 1824, presumably by the withdrawal of the Dunfermline preacher.]

The last comment on the Dunfermline affair is perhaps the most poignant, but equally is an example of poetic justice:

1829. Dunfermline chapel. In consequence of law proceedings connected with this chapel, a charge has been made on Mr. Ward of £10 13/- [£10 65p.] which he has been obliged to pay. This meeting strongly recommends that he be repaid.<sup>26</sup>

The sum involved strongly suggests arrears of rent on the preacher's house, plus a small sum for costs, but the Glasgow and Dunfermline Sheriff Court records have been searched, so far without success. In a way, it is fitting that Valentine Ward should have been involved at the burial of the Dunfermline society, as he had been with its birth.

The local histories of the Burgh of Dunfermline add little to the story. Henderson indicates that the chapel was founded in 1815 and opened for worship in 1816, the congregation having assembled in the Masons' Lodge, Maygate, which was rented for £10 per year for two years before their chapel was built. By the year 1823 he notes that

the members of this persuasion had so much dwindled away that the Kirk had to be shut up; afterwards it was used for public purposes, etc.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> cf. C. Henderson: *Annals of Dunfermline* (Glasgow, 1879).

<sup>26</sup> Edinburgh District Meeting Minutes.

<sup>27</sup> Henderson, op. cit.

Between its final abandonment by the Methodist society and the sale in 1828, the chapel was used from 1825 to 1827 by the congregation which was to become St. Margaret's United Free Church. A secession from the Queen Anne Street United Secession Congregation resulted in the calling of the Rev. Ebenezer Brown of Inverkeithing as minister to this congregation. Negotiations were at once entered into with a certain Mr. David Adam for the use of the Methodist chapel in the Maygate, and a lease was taken for a year at a rent of £45. There the congregation worshipped with a fair degree of comfort until their present church was completed two years later. Considerable difficulty was experienced in arranging for sufficient accommodation, as application was made for 527 sittings and the building was small, but ultimately provision was made for all.<sup>28</sup>

As Wesley Swift so rightly states, the financial burdens which Valentine Ward left behind him retarded the progress of Scottish Methodism for many years.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, Scottish Methodism entered on a period of stagnation at a time when there were abundant opportunities for expansion, and despite a belated attempt to re-start the work from Edinburgh in 1896, the results were not encouraging—"Captain Morrison, however, undertook to make further enquiries"<sup>30</sup>—and no revival of the Dunfermline cause resulted. It is tempting to speculate that if Valentine Ward had left the infant Dunfermline society to worship in the Masons' Hall instead of exposing it to a "hot-house" treatment, Dunfermline might still appear in the list of Scottish stations. It was left to another century and to other circumstances to revive the Methodist witness in this part of Fife. The establishment of Rosyth as a naval base in the early years of this century led to the influx of dockyard workers from England. A descendant, though not a direct one, of the ill-fated Dunfermline society is that which now flourishes in Rosyth. ALAN J. HAYES.

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<sup>28</sup> *History of St. Margaret's U.F. Church, 1825-1925.* (Dunfermline Public Library.)

<sup>29</sup> Swift, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>30</sup> SRO. CH.11/1/19.

We have received and gratefully acknowledge the following periodicals, some of which come to us on a reciprocal basis with copies of our own *Proceedings*.

*The Wesleyan Theological Journal* (the bulletin of the Wesleyan Theological Society, Kansas City, USA), Spring 1976.

*The Local Historian*, Vol. 12, Nos. 3, 4 and 5.

*The Baptist Quarterly*, October 1976 and January 1977.

*Methodist History*, July and October 1976; January 1977.

## A PETTY ATTACK ON WESLEY'S HYMNS

IN the nineteenth century, the Church of England contained many outspoken clergy, who usually called themselves "broad Churchmen". One such man was the Rev. Thomas Pennington Kirkman, M.A., F.R.S., who was rector at Croft, near Warrington, from 1845 to 1892. Kirkman not only spoke out in favour of Bishop Colenso in the early 1860s, but also contributed many times to Thomas Scott's tracts of *Free Inquiry and Free Expression*. In one of these papers<sup>1</sup> he makes a petty attack on some of the hymns of Wesley for the

deep infidelity in such a picturing of the bleeding advocate, and much spiritual pride in such a tone of the importunate self-asserting worshipper . . .<sup>2</sup>

He believes that it is to this "pride and infidelity" that the "hymns of Wesley owe much of their poetic vigour".<sup>3</sup>

The poetry of Wesley's hymns has been discussed before,<sup>4</sup> and, in any case, in metre form does not concern us here, as Kirkman wants only to "expose these conceptions of the popular orthodoxy of Ditheism in all their incongruous infidelity and canting pharisaism".<sup>5</sup>

Kirkman quotes the hymns to which he particularly objects, all taken from the 1831 collection of Wesley's hymns and supplement, to which the numbers below also refer. The first group for condemnation contains those hymns which suggest "the Son pathetically and perpetually reminding the Father, by the exhibition of his wounds, about the satisfaction once for all completed . . ."<sup>6</sup> In this section are included the hymns

- 127 Wherewith, O God, shall I draw near
- 168 Depth of mercy ! can there be
- 202 Arise, my soul, arise
- 627 Enter'd the holy place above

—which are all on the theme of the following stanza from Hymn 202 in the 1831 collection :

Five bleeding wounds He bears,  
Received on Calvary ;  
They pour effectual prayers,  
They strongly speak for me :  
Forgive him, O forgive ! they cry,  
Nor let that ransomed sinner die !

However, it is not the actual picture of the Son interceding with

<sup>1</sup> "On the Infidelity of Orthodoxy", Part III (Ramsgate, 1871), in particular pp. 28-39.

<sup>2,3</sup> *ibid.*, p. 28.  
<sup>4</sup> For example, in "Poetry in the Hymns of John and Charles Wesley", by Miss E. M. Hodgson (*Proceedings*, xxxviii, pp. 131-5, 161-5).

<sup>5</sup> Kirkman, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p. 28.

the Father on behalf of a sinner which offends Kirkman, but the implication in these hymns that the atonement of Calvary

must be offered everywhere and continually, and impudently thrust into the faces of the Father and the Son, that the former may not perfidiously forget their compact and that the old wrath may not kindle again on the burning throne!<sup>7</sup>

This "unbelief" finds its climax in the section "For Mourners Convinced of Sin". These hymns, according to Kirkman, are to be used by the earnest penitent

after the necessary amount of infidelity has been forced into that soul concerning the evidence which Holy Scripture and his life's mercies give of the divine benignity to him and to all . . .<sup>8</sup>

The hymns picked out in this section:are

- 96 How can a sinner know
- 109 Wretched, helpless, and distrest
- 111 Thus saith the Lord! Who seek the Lamb
- 112 Woe is me! what tongue can tell
- 113 O Thou whom fain my soul would love!
- 115 Let the world their virtue boast
- 118 Author of faith, to Thee I cry
- 124 O that I, first of love possessed

A typical example of Kirkman's arguments against these hymns of Wesley is given for Hymn 115:

Let the world their virtue boast,  
Their works of righteousness;  
I, a wretch undone and lost,  
Am freely saved by grace;

*I the chief of sinners am,  
But Jesus died for me.*

According to Kirkman, this hymn begins "with a much-admired rap at those dark moral people who go to prayers and Sacrament in Church . . .",<sup>9</sup> whereas in reality Charles Wesley, as Stevenson points out,

takes up the apostle Paul's idea of his own unworthiness, and closes each verse with the expressive declaration, "I the chief of sinners am;" but adds the comforting assurance that "Jesus died for me." This is the language of unfeigned humility, and of profound self-knowledge.<sup>10</sup>

The pettiness of Kirkman's argument, such as is given for Hymn 115, domineers every criticism of Wesley's hymns that he makes, and after a while becomes rather monotonous and pathetic. Thus, he finds Hymn 124 particularly presumptuous:

"Appear my sanctuary from sin, Open Thine arms and take me in, In Thine own presence hide, Hide in the place where Moses stood, And show me now the face of God" (not the back, which Moses saw), "My Father pacified" . . .<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>10</sup> George J. Stevenson: *The Methodist Hymn-Book and its Associations* (London, 1870), note on Hymn 115 in the 1831 collection.

<sup>11</sup> Kirkman, *op cit.*, p. 35.

and also Hymn 123 (incorrectly referred to by Kirkman as No. 23) :

Let the redeemed give thanks and praise  
To a forgiving God!

—“ which opens with the delightful pharisaic contrast in which mainly lies the aristocratic power of Methodism . . . ”.<sup>12</sup>

To make his point really clear, Kirkman quotes Hymn 201, “ And can it be ” (our present-day MHB 371), and suggests that in order to see the full import of these hymns, the reader should change the first person singular to the second or the third person, “ as may best suit the effect ”. Thus we have for Hymn 109 :

You are all unclean, unclean, My Purity you want ; (*my* and *his* are all one here . . . ), Your whole heart is sick of sin, And your whole head is faint ; Full of putrefying sores, Of bruises and of wounds, your soul Looks to Jesus, help implores, And gasps to be made whole. In the wilderness you stray, Your foolish heart is blind ; Nothing do you know, the way Of peace you cannot find. Jesus, Lord, restore their sight, And take, oh, take the veil away ; Turn their darkness into light, Their midnight into day.<sup>13</sup>

The futility of this kind of argument need hardly be pointed out, for it is easy to see that to say “ *your* foolish heart ” is completely different from saying “ *my* foolish heart ”. Today such methods of argument would not be tolerated even when they are hidden behind a screen of “ big words ”, and it is pleasing to see that in his own time Kirkman’s methods were rigorously questioned by Free Churchmen.<sup>14</sup>

Other hymns which are here subject to Kirkman’s sarcasm are

189 Now I have found the ground wherein  
614 'Tis finished! the Messiah dies  
616 All ye that pass by

Kirkman concludes his attack on Wesley’s hymns by adding a footnote in which he lists some more hymns which show “ the horrible blasphemy of a dying and dead God ”.<sup>15</sup> These hymns, of course, are those which refer to Christ’s death on the cross, and Kirkman lists

27 Saviour, the world’s and mine  
28 O Love divine! what hast thou done!  
30 Where shall my wondering soul begin?  
181 Thou Man of griefs, remember me  
254 The day of Christ, the day of God  
552 Jesus drinks the bitter cup  
553 He dies! the Friend of sinners dies! [this is actually  
a Watts-Wesley hymn]  
613 From whence these dire portents around  
614 'Tis finished! the Messiah dies

He also quotes Hymns 29 and 280, but these quotations seem to be incorrect.

Well might one wonder why Kirkman has taken such trouble to

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 36-7.

<sup>14</sup> For example in J. B. Johnstone: *What saith the Scripture?* (Warrington, 1867).

<sup>15</sup> Kirkman, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

attack these hymns of Wesley, especially as his arguments consist of quoting lines of various hymns each intended to show one particular aspect of our faith, and then exhibiting their apparent contradiction or conceit. Perhaps worst of all is his trick of changing personal pronouns, as with Hymn 109.

The reasons for this attack seem to be twofold. First, Kirkman had a grudge against Methodism—"for it poisoned my young days . . ."<sup>16</sup> What exactly this "poisoning" was we do not know, but it obviously made a deep impression on him, for he was 65 years old when he wrote this attack. Secondly, Kirkman believed the clergy should teach only of "the all-present or ever-present Father . . . Him in whom we live and move and have our being".<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, he missed the *raison d'être* of Methodism. As Telford wrote:

His [John Wesley's] legacy to Methodism was that burst of exulting faith, "The best of all is, God is with us". In this assurance his first followers faced the trials that followed his departure from their midst. It is still the watchword of Methodism.<sup>18</sup>

STELLA MILLS.

[The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Rev. J. Norman Pickering and the Rev. J. Munsey Turner.]

[Miss Stella Mills, M.Sc., a member of our Society, is engaged in research on the history of Mathematics for a Ph.D. degree in the University of Birmingham.]

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p. 37. A mention of this is also made in Kirkman's obituary, to be found in the Annual Report of the Council of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, 1895.

<sup>17</sup> Kirkman, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>18</sup> John Telford: *The Popular History of Methodism* (London, 1900).

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## THE ANNUAL LECTURE

in connexion with the Hull Conference, 1977,

WILL BE DELIVERED IN

Princes Avenue Methodist Church, Hull,

On Monday, 27th June, at 7-30 p.m.,

BY

The Rev. HENRY D. RACK, M.A.

*Subject*: "WESLEYANISM AND THE WORLD IN THE LATER  
NINETEENTH CENTURY".

The chair will be taken by the REV. DR. JOHN A. NEWTON, M.A.

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held at the same church at 5-30 p.m.

Mr. and Mrs. Rowland C. Swift kindly invite members of the Society to Tea in the schoolroom at 4-30 p.m. It is desirable that all those who intend to be present at the Tea should send their names to the Rev. Harry Allen, 692, Beverley Road, Hull, HU6 7JH (Tel. 0482 853160) not later than Saturday, 25th June. There is a frequent bus service (a 15-minute journey) from the entrance of the Conference Hall to Princes Avenue. Inquiry should be made at the Conference Hall Transport desk.

This year's Exhibition will be found in the attractive Court-room at the Town Docks Museum in Queen's Gardens.

## NEWS FROM OUR BRANCHES

[All dates refer to 1976 unless otherwise stated.]

THE **Bristol** branch met at the New Room in March to hear the Rev. Leslie Wollen on the diaries of John Harrison, Methodist local preacher (1821-1911). In September the branch joined with the Paulton church in their bicentenary celebrations, on which occasion the Rev. E. Ralph Bates gave a fascinating account of the rise of Methodism in North-East Somerset. The survey covered the period from 1739 to 1791.

The branch has lost by death three founder members, notably Mr. F. S. Cook, M.A., who had been editor since its inception, and who rendered invaluable and informed service in recording lectures.

*Bulletin* : Nos. 18 and [19] received.

*Secretary* : Rev. Wilfrid J. Little, 5, Leyton Villas, Redland, Bristol,

*Membership* : 71. [BS6 6JF.

No report has been received from the **Cornish** branch.

*Secretary* : Mr. C. J. Tromans, M.A., 17, Knight's Meadow, Carnon Downs, Truro, Cornwall.

WE are glad to hear of the formation of a branch in **Cumbria**. The inaugural meeting was held on Saturday, 6th November, at Armathwaite chapel in the Eden Valley. It is hoped to launch a journal during 1977. The annual subscription is 50p., and intending members should write to the Secretary.

*Secretary* : Mr. John Burgess, M.A., Winden, 6, The Crescent, Highmoor,

*Membership* : 18. [Wigton, Cumbria.

THE spring meeting of the **East Anglia** branch was held in May at Elmswell, when the Rev. William D. Horton addressed the branch on "William Nunn, his family and his chapels: an East Anglian story". At the autumn meeting, Dr. Arthur R. Hill spoke on John Wesley's *Primitive Physick*.

*Bulletin* : Nos. 33, 34 and 35 received.

*Secretary* (until August) : Rev. John D. H. Wren, The Manse, 28, Stoke Road, Methwold, Thetford, Norfolk, IP26 4PE.

*Membership* : 81.

THE **Lancashire and Cheshire** branch began the year with a lecture by Mr. E. A. Rose on the Methodist New Connexion at the historic ex-MNC chapel at Lees, near Oldham. An outing in June to historic chapels in Derbyshire included a visit to the graves of John and Grace Bennet at Chinley, and concluded at Buxton. At the Annual Meeting at Manchester in October, the Rev. David H. Tripp gave a scholarly lecture on local service books.

For the second successive year, branch-members were involved in the preparation of the historical exhibition in connexion with the Conference.

During the year the branch has issued its fourth Occasional Publication—*Primitive Methodism in the Manchester Area, 1820-1830*, by the Rev. Michael R. Sheard.

*Journal* : Vol. III. Nos. 3 and 4 received.

*Secretary* : Mr. E. A. Rose, B.A., 26, Roe Cross Green, Mottram, Hyde,

*Membership* : 137. [Cheshire, SK14 6LP.

THE spring meeting of the **Lincolnshire** branch was held in May at the Wesley Memorial chapel, Epworth, when Mr. Barry J. Biggs of Retford spoke on "Early Preachers in a rural area". Mr. Biggs, a member of the branch, presented an interesting and informed account of preaching experiences in the early days of the old Epworth and North Nottinghamshire circuits.

The Annual Meeting, held at Louth in October, was attended by fourteen members. Following the formal business, the Rev. Peter Robinson spoke on "Louth and the rise of Free Methodism". The meeting, open to all, was attended by some sixty people. An exhibition of Free Methodist items added to the interest of the evening.

*Journal*: Vol. II. Part 10 received.

*Secretary*: Mr. H. Jubbs, 3A, Church Road, Upton, Gainsborough, Lincs,  
*Membership*: 110. [DN21 5NR.

WESLEY DAY was celebrated by the **London** branch with a pilgrimage to Wesley sites in the City, led by the Rev. Dr. John C. Bowmer, the Connexional Archivist. The culmination was a crowded service at the church of St. Martin-within-Ludgate, addressed by the Chairman of the London North-East District, the Rev. Deryck C. Collingwood.

*Bulletin*: No. 15 received.

*Secretary*: Mr. J. A. Pendry Morris, 118, Elgar Avenue, Tolworth,  
*Membership*: 80. [Surbiton, Surrey.

THE **Isle of Man** branch held three meetings during the year: at Douglas in March, when Miss Harrison spoke on early Methodism in the town; in the Peel area in May, when a tour was made of four rural chapels, and again at Douglas in October, when discussion took place on the subject of suitable stamps to mark the bicentenary of Methodism on the island.

*Secretary*: Miss A. M. McHardy, Zeerust, Clayhead Road, Baldrine,  
Isle of Man.

THE spring lecture to the **North-East** branch was delivered in the Central Hall, Ashington, Northumberland, where the Rev. Geoffrey Robson spoke about his detailed researches into nineteenth-century religion and society, based especially on Birmingham.

Two summer outings were held—in June to the dales of Allen, and in September to Ampleforth (Benedictine) Abbey and some moorland chapels in the North Yorkshire area.

The branch assembled for the autumn meeting at Elm Ridge Methodist church, Darlington (a former Quaker house converted into a chapel) to hear the Rev. C. Norman R. Wallwork lecture authoritatively on the Holy Communion in Methodism from the death of Wesley in 1791 until 1932.

The final gathering of 1976 was for a lively Wesleyana and slides evening at Chester-le-Street in November.

*Bulletin*: Nos. 25 and 26 received.

*Secretaries*: Mr. G. E. Milburn, M.A., 8, Ashbrooke Mount, Sunderland,  
Tyne and Wear.

Mr. A. P. Champley, B.A., 121, Haydon Close, Redhouse Farm, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne.

*Membership*: 159.

IN May, the **Plymouth and Exeter** branch joined with the Cornish branch in a joint pilgrimage to chapels in East Cornwall that had been associated

with mining activities. In the autumn the branch joined in the celebrations at Kingston St. Mary to commemorate the first meeting between Thomas Coke and John Wesley in August 1776. Commemorative services and an historical exhibition were followed by a lecture on Thomas Coke by Mr. John A. Vickers, his most recent biographer.

*Bulletin*: Vol. III. No. 5 and Vol. IV. No. 1 received.

*Secretary*: Mr. M. E. Thorne, 29, Anne's Crescent, Barnstaple, N. Devon.

*Membership*: 90.

Two meetings of the **Scottish** branch were held. The spring meeting was held at Nicolson Square, Edinburgh, where Dr. Alan J. Hayes delivered a talk entitled "Highlights of Edinburgh Methodism"—part of a much larger work recently published. The autumn meeting was held at Maryhill Road, Glasgow, where the Rev. T. Powley Addison gave a talk on the history of Methodism in Inverness.

*Journal*: Nos. 7 and 8 received.

*Secretary*: Dr. D. A. Gowland, Department of Modern History,

*Membership*: 125. [The University, Dundee, DDI 4HN.

THE **Shropshire** branch held three meetings—the first at Ludlow, the second at Wrockwardine Wood, and the third at Moreton Mill, near Shrewsbury. On each occasion competent local histories were presented, with a "field day" element at two of them.

Mr. John Lenton has put the branch to work on a systematic recording of discontinued buildings in the county. A number of nineteenth-century circuit plans have been discovered, notably a 32-year run of the Shrewsbury circuit, and some of these have been deposited at the Shropshire Record Office.

*Bulletin*: Nos. 5, 6 and 7 received.

*Secretary*: Rev. R. Ward Davies, B.D., 1, Clive Road, Market Drayton,

*Membership*: 50. [Salop, TF9 3DJ.

THE spring meeting of the **West Midlands** branch was held at Fallings Park, Wolverhampton, when the Rev. Donald H. Ryan gave an illustrated lecture on "The Development of Methodist Commemorative Pottery", bringing with him an extensive display of Methodist pottery, which gave rise to much interest.

In October the branch spent a fascinating afternoon in the Local Studies Department of Birmingham Public Library observing the work that goes on behind the scenes in order to preserve the local history of the West Midlands. The Annual General Meeting followed this meeting.

*Bulletin*: Vol. III. No. 1 received.

*Secretary*: Mrs. E. D. Graham, B.A., B.D., 34, Spiceland Road,

*Membership*: 90. [Northfield, Birmingham, B31 1NJ.

IN May, the **Yorkshire** branch met at Priory Place chapel, Doncaster, which still retains its "City Road" arrangement. Mr. Richard Porter spoke on "The life and work of Isaac Marsden", the Wesleyan lay evangelist from Skelmanthorpe, who became a member and trustee at Priory Place following his conversion there.

The September meeting was held at the late-Georgian Methodist chapel at Tadcaster, where Mrs. Shirley Ludlow spoke on "Sammy—village blacksmith", relating the story of Sammy Hick, the Aberford-born local

preacher. The Secretary gave a talk on "Messrs. Howdill of Leeds"—Primitive Methodists and architects of over two hundred chapels.

Progress has been maintained, the meetings having been extremely well attended, and the branch archives having doubled in numbers in the course of a year.

*Bulletin*: Nos. 28 and 29 received.

*Secretary*: Mr. D. Colin Dews, B.Ed., 4, Lynwood Grove, Leeds,

*Membership*: 154.

[LS12 4AU.

E. A. ROSE.

## MORE LOCAL HISTORIES

Handbooks and brochures from all parts of the Connexion continue to reach us, and for these we are grateful. In the following list the prices are given where these are stated thereon.

Finsbury Park centenary brochure, by Joan Brockelsby (pp. 12): copies from the Rev. Philip A. Spence, 56, Redston Road, Hornsey, London, N.8 8HE.

*Two Hundred Years of Methodism in Burnopfield* (Haswell Memorial chapel) (pp. 12): copies from Mr. R. R. Rowell, The Laurels, Leazes, Burnopfield, Newcastle upon Tyne.

*Reminiscences of Chester Methodism*, by the Rev. Kenneth Bounds (pp. 22): copies from the author at 144, Henrietta Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs, OL6 8PH.

*The Hand of the Lord*, by Olive M. Philpott—the story of "Nanny Cuff's Chapel", Whitechurch, Dorset (pp. 4): copies from Mr. John A. Vickers, 87, Marshall Avenue, Bognor Regis, Sussex, PO21 2TW.

*The Hayle Circuit, 1818-1975*, by C. J. Appleby (pp. 19): copies from the author at Mandalay, Hillside, St. Erth, Hayle, Cornwall.

Whitefield centenary brochure (pp. 40): copies, price 60p. post paid, from Mrs. Eileen Helliwell, 28, Wingate Drive, Whitefield, Manchester, M25 7QY.

*A Short History of Sketty Methodism, 1832-1976*, by Ernie Scriven (pp. 32): copies from the Rev. Ivor F. Mann, 47, Sketty Park Road, Sketty, Swansea, SA2 9AS.

Beamsley centenary brochure (pp. 12): copies from the Rev. Peter R. Gray, Springfield Manse, Addingham, Ilkley, Yorks, LS29 0JA.

*The History of Methodism in Walton-on-the-Naze*, by Peter P. Boyden (pp. 21 plus introduction and appendices): copies, price 31p. post paid, from Mrs. M. E. Boyden, 10, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, CO14 8QP. (Corrected notice)

*The Story of Elburton Village Chapel*, by Arthur Clamp (pp. 24): copies, price 90p. post paid, from the author at 203, Elburton Road, Elburton, Plymouth.

Barnstaple centenary brochure (pp. 8): copies, price 35p. post paid, from Mr. A. S. Andrew, 26, Ashleigh Road, Barnstaple, Devon.

Minehead centenary brochure (pp. 8): copies, price 30p. post paid, from Mr. A. G. Pointon, 41, Five Bells, Watchet, Somerset.

*The Methodist Chapels and Preaching Places in the Warrington Circuit, 1750-1976*, by Ian Sellers (pp. 28): copies, price 30p., from the author at 10, Wells Close, Woolston, Warrington, WA1 4LH.

## MANUSCRIPT DIARY OF THE REV. JOHN DOUBLEDAY JULIAN (1812-96)

THE "Diary of Rev. J. D. Julian, Wesleyan Minister" consists of 257 handwritten pages, size 6 in. by 3 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. This much-worked-over volume is bound in parchment covers with a brass clasp, and has marbled pages. It is an interesting record of his day-to-day ministry from May 1836 to May 1838 in the Whitechurch (Salop) and Wigan circuits, and from January 1843 to March 1844 in the Haverfordwest and Newbury circuits.

The diary contains a good deal of comment on issues and personalities of the day, and gives a valuable insight into Conference and District Meetings. There is much sociological material also. Of his little son "Jacky" he comments, on 9th December 1843: "He has a very good notion of singing at times." "Jacky" was destined to become world-famous as the Anglican hymnologist, author of the immense *Dictionary of Hymnology* (1892), the Rev. Dr. John Julian (1839-1913).

In many places the diary illustrates vividly the themes so ably set out in Dr. Bowmer's book *Pastor and People*. For instance, prevailed upon to solemnize a marriage for the first time ever:

Have altered my views upon the subject in consequence of the intolerant bearing of Mother Church towards us lately. (17th February 1844)

And on the question of Reform:

. . . a printed circular out of Cornwall . . . an insidious attack upon the essential principles of our constitution . . . neither more nor less than the old radical spirit which has been at work lately and now manifesting itself in a new way and pursuing a more wily policy. What they evidently want is to wrest the power of government entirely out of the hands of the preachers and get it into their own but they only want a little at once, they would do it by degrees; but if Conference once begins to make concessions it is my opinion they will never rest until they have introduced lay delegation into that body. They seem to be actuated by the Democratical Spirit of the day and wish to place everything upon a popular representative footing . . . the very principles of Kilhamitism.

(18th June 1836)

We are given two glimpses of Dr. Jabez Bunting by an admirer of that powerful Secretary of the Conference. The first comes when Mr. Julian briefly visited the Birmingham Conference of 1836, and Dr. Bunting was for the third time President:

What little I saw of Dr. Bunting's able superintendency of the Conference and clever management of its business served to raise him considerably higher in my estimation and while I would always guard against a slavish adherence to all he says and does yet it is my belief that in the way of business he is by far the cleverest man in the whole connexion and of inestimable service to our body. May the Lord long preserve his valuable life.

Eight years later, on Saturday, 16th March 1844, he notes:



THE REV. JOHN DOUBLEDAY JULIAN  
(1812 - 96)

Spent about an hour this evening with Dr. Bunting who accompanied by Mrs. B. has come down from London to preach us some sermons for our Chapel. It is five years come Conference since I last saw the Dr. and he appears more than 10 years older. He has grown quite the old man. I was really sorry to find that time was making so much work with him. But I pray that he may be spared to afford his counsels even should the day of labour soon draw to a close which I fear there is but too much reason to apprehend. He seems to be quite changed from a vigorous to a feeble man . . . He conversed not very much, but kindly. Was very agreeable.

This obviously treasured volume begins and ends with very full indexes to places, people and issues, including one of "Wesleyan Ministers Referred to in this Diary"—and some of the comments are pungent! The original is in the possession of the diarist's great-granddaughter, Mrs. W. E. Jarman, 76, Ringinglow Road, Sheffield, S11 7PQ.  
HAROLD R. BOWES.

[The Rev. Harold R. Bowes, B.D. is a Methodist minister stationed in the Sheffield North circuit.]

Members of our Society, especially those living in or visiting London, will be pleased to know that the plaque commemorating John Wesley's Aldersgate experience has now been fixed on its new site. Aldersgate Street has undergone many changes since Wesley's day, but none more drastic than those of recent years. It will be remembered that this plaque was affixed to the wall of Barclays Bank, but now this building and its immediate neighbours have been swept away to give place to the new Museum of London. However, no pains were spared to make sure that the plaque was re-sited as near as possible to its previous location, so that now it occupies a conspicuous position on the wall of the Museum. The plaque was fixed at a short ceremony on Tuesday, 21st December 1976, in the presence of the Rev. N. Allen Birtwhistle (minister of Wesley's Chapel), Mrs. G. J. Holsey (also of Wesley's Chapel, who was present in August 1926 when the plaque was affixed on its former site), and Mr. S. Abrahams and Mr. John Clarke (representing the Museum of London). The wording on the plaque reads:

THE  
PROBABLE SITE, WHERE, ON MAY 24, 1738  
JOHN WESLEY  
"FELT HIS HEART STRANGELY WARMED".  
THIS EXPERIENCE OF GRACE WAS THE BEGINNING  
OF METHODISM.  
THIS TABLET IS GRATEFULLY PLACED HERE BY  
THE DREW THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
MADISON, NEW JERSEY, U.S.A.  
AUGUST 1926.

The Wesley Historical Society Library is at present in course of removal to Southlands College, Wimbledon. Any inquiries should be sent to the Librarian, the Rev. Kenneth B. Garlick, whose address is now Wesley House, 1, Chester Road, Wanstead, London, E.11 2JR.

## WORLD METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOTES

### Important Publication

THE World Methodist Historical Society (British Section) announces the forthcoming publication of

### MR. WESLEY'S PREACHERS :

**An alphabetical arrangement of Wesleyan Methodist Preachers and Missionaries, and the Stations to which they were appointed, 1739-1818.**

William Hill's *Alphabetical Arrangement of Wesleyan Methodist Preachers* (popularly known as "Hill's Arrangement") has gone through many editions since it first appeared in 1819, and has long been an invaluable reference-book for historians and genealogists. However, there has until now been a gap in the records, covering the vital years between 1739 and 1819—the formative period of Wesleyan history.

This volume, compiled by the Rev. Kenneth B. Garlick, fills that gap by providing a list of all Wesleyan itinerants who died before 1819, and of supernumeraries who died between 1819 and 1824, with the circuits in which they were stationed. Mr. Garlick is well known as an official of the Wesley Historical Society and a contributor to these *Proceedings*, and is a member of the Archives Committee of the British Methodist Conference.

The book will be published in September 1977 at £2.50 or \$4.50 (plus postage). The edition will be limited to 500 numbered copies.

**Pre-publication offer.** All orders received by 30th July 1977 will be charged at the special rate of **£1.75** (or **\$3.25**) plus postage.

Orders (*without* remittance) should be sent to Mr. John A. Vickers, WMHS Publications, 87, Marshall Avenue, Bognor Regis, Sussex, PO21 2TW.

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### Subscriptions

MEMBERS of the Wesley Historical Society may like to be reminded that subscriptions to the World Methodist Historical Society (\$5 for one year or \$20 for five years) and subscriptions to the American quarterly *Methodist History* may be paid in sterling if sent to me at the address stated above. The amount should be calculated on the exchange rate current at the time of payment. (Receipts and reminders will not be sent unless requested and accompanied by a stamped envelope.)

JOHN A. VICKERS (British Secretary, WMHS).

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### Regional Conference in 1978

THE next British Section Conference will take place at Selly Oak, Birmingham, from 25th to 28th July 1978. The general theme of the Conference will be "Methodist Minorities and Methodists in the majority", and case studies will include examples from both continental Europe and North America, as well as from the United Kingdom. Offers of major or minor contributions to the programme will be welcomed by Mr. Barrie S. Trinder, 20, Garmaston Road, Shrewsbury. Further details may be obtained from Mr. John A. Vickers.

## BOOK NOTICES

*Religion and Voluntary Organizations in Crisis*, by S. Yeo. (Croom Helm, 1976: pp. 426, £9 95p.)

This recent addition to Croom Helm's "Social History" series can be compared with Hugh McLeod's *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City* (1974), which analysed the role of the churches in certain London boroughs at the turn of the century. Dr. Yeo tackles a single area—the town of Reading in Berkshire—for the years 1890 to 1914, and seeks to show how at a particular stage in the development of capitalism (he writes from a Marxist angle), industry (in this case Huntley & Palmers) and voluntary organizations such as churches, sports clubs, the Workers' Educational Association and political parties, sharing a common context, interact and often show similar responses to social change.

The churches tended to "secularize" their programmes (cf. Robert Currie's analysis in *Methodism Divided* of the shift in Methodism from the class-meeting to the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon), to jump on the many social welfare and other "band-wagons" to secure a new mass constituency and become subject to the "apathy" which has afflicted so many parallel organizations. This was a period of tremendous effort and energy (the positive side of the "religious boom" thesis), with the churches producing numerous organizations for each age-group beyond Sunday-school age. Dr. Yeo shows the Reading Free Churches in a competitive but federal framework engaging in open political activity on "moral" issues, as in the Education Act controversy of 1902, with similar Anglican activity in 1906.

This is a book packed with meticulously-researched detail, including 70 pages of end-notes pursuing every imaginable hare. Anyone concerned with the Church's role in community-development in the period of what V. A. Demant once called "Religion and the Decline of Capitalism" would do well to follow Dr. Yeo's complex argument about the effect of change in industrialism on the life of society. J. MUNSEY TURNER.

*Religion and Respectability. Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780-1850*, by Thomas Walter Laqueur. (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1976: pp. xvi. 293, £10 50p.)

The municipal libraries of the North and the Midlands have preserved many of the ephemera from which Sunday-school history has to be written. Readers of the *Proceedings* should make sure that they also preserve copies of this excellent book by an American scholar, which takes account of most of the original material ever likely to come to light.

Professor Laqueur treats history of the schools during the two generations which separated their meteoric rise in the 1780s and their universal acceptance in the middle of the nineteenth century, by which time they had long succeeded in enrolling almost every working-class child outside London for at least a short period, and had created their own band of loyal activists who stuck with them for life. He sets out the chronology of the story, and produces far more material about the finances, the organization, and what was taught in the schools, than any previous scholar, and, without being extravagant, assesses both their educational effectiveness and the religious content of what they did much more positively than critics have often done in the past.

The point Professor Laqueur wishes to make, however, is a secular rather than an ecclesiastical one. A pupil of Brian Harrison, he wishes, in his own field, to confirm his master's vision of a radical cohesion, transcending the divide between middle and working class, and perceptible even in the Chartist heyday of the early 1840s. That Sunday schools had a good deal to do with this in the second half of the nineteenth century is not in question; but Professor Laqueur has to explain away rather too much of his own evidence in maintaining that the same was true throughout his own (earlier) period, that Sunday schools were not a distorting mirror of the social tensions from which class attitudes developed, and that social alignments and ideological differences did not enter into the clash between the Wesleyan ministry and the schools, which he presents as a simple struggle for the control of an institution. The author here treats his sources with something of the same literal-mindedness which leads him to produce graphs proving that conversions normally took place in the adolescent years! It is true that the great institutional explosions were infrequent, but it is also true that schism was no less important a feature of nineteenth-century religious life for never having occurred in many congregations, and rarely occurring more than once in any.

There is also an ecclesiastical point in the story which Professor Laqueur does not make it his business to pursue. Sunday schools were not "church" in any inherited sense, and never became "church" in the way ecclesiastical politicians tried to make them, but were religious institutions of great influence and durability, because, as the author shows with equal charm and learning, they were often created, and still more often run, by working men with an existential appreciation of their fellows' needs. How far Christianity can be had without "church" is now an urgent issue. Ecclesiastical historians have done their best to see that the history of religious belief and practice outside the Church is not written; our own connexional leaders may have exposed themselves to prosecution under the Trade Descriptions Act by selling Sunday School under the amazing label of "Junior Church"! Professor Laqueur offers a scholarly account of one facet of this question, and leaves his readers to weigh it up themselves.

W. R. WARD.

*What Methodists believe*, by Rupert E. Davies. (Mowbrays, 75p.)

This is the second in a series by Mowbrays—the former being *What Anglicans believe*, by David L. Edwards. To read these two books simultaneously is instructive. Thankfully we can feel the warmer, more personal approach of the latter!

In an introductory chapter Mr. Davies states his aim: to explore what Methodists believe, in common with most other Christians, in respect of some "ultimate" questions. In Part One, consisting of five chapters, he deals with Christian doctrine and practice, in a less formal manner than David Edwards. His fourth chapter—"The Witnesses: Church, Sacraments and Bible"—is most helpful; and his paragraph on the Lord's Supper and his exposition of "anamnesis" are particularly relevant.

In Part Two, he addresses himself to the question "Why Methodism?". If Romans, Orthodox, Anglicans and Methodists are so largely agreed on matters of Christian doctrine, why do they remain apart? Methodists, he declares, have clearly demonstrated their determination not to be separate a moment longer than necessary. But there *are* Methodist features (stemming largely from the experiences of the Wesleys) which we want to

see in a united Church, and which, until this is possible, we must continue "to exercise in separation": (1) a double tradition in worship—liturgical and non-liturgical; (2) a strong social concern; (3) stress on the universal scope of the Gospel; (4) an equal partnership between ministers and lay-people, and (5) the intensely personal nature of Christianity.

Part Three is an excellent brief review of the Ecumenical Movement. Because the unity movement is grounded in the plain teaching of the New Testament, affirms Mr. Davies, a divided Church is contradictory to God's will. So the movement goes on and must go on.

The book has a stimulating Foreword by the President of the Conference, Dr. Colin Morris. "Personally," he writes, "I am delighted that Mr. Davies has taken as his starting point the common Christian heritage. Methodism functions best within an environment of catholicity." There is a helpful index, and an attractive cover. One wonders, however, whether a view of Coniston (welcome as it must be to every lover of the Lake District) is the best "subliminal" background to the title *What Methodists believe*. The "stained glass" background to *What Anglicans believe* seems right for that volume. But is "Coniston" right for *What Methodists believe*?

EDWIN THOMPSON.

### Brief Notices

*Methodism*, by Rupert E. Davies (Epworth Press, pp. 196) is a new and revised edition of a work which was first published in 1963 by Penguin Books and the Epworth Press. It was reviewed in these *Proceedings*, xxxiv, p. 45. This new edition takes into account certain comments made in the *Proceedings*, xxxiv, pp. 66 ff, and brings the story of Methodism up to date, i.e. to the Methodist Church Act of 1976 and the Ten Propositions for Unity.

*The Burning Heart: John Wesley, Evangelist*, by A. Skevington Wood (Paternoster Press, pp. 302), is a reprint of a book published in 1967 and reviewed in these *Proceedings*, xxxvi, p. 157.

*Isaac Ambrose, Lancashire Nonconformist* (pp. 10) has been written by the Rev. Norman J. Goreham. Copies, price 15p. plus 6½p. postage, are obtainable from Mr. H. L. Kirby, 18, Thornfield Avenue, Ribbleson, Preston, Lancs, PR2 6NE. Profits are donated to the Methodist Missionary Society. John Wesley included *The Works of Isaac Ambrose* in his *Christian Library*, vols. XIII-XV (see Frank Baker's *Union Catalogue*, p. 85).

*The Origins and Early Development of Primitive Methodism in the Manchester Area, 1820-1830*, by the Rev. Michael R. Sheard (pp. 30) is "Occasional Publication" No. 4 of our Lancashire and Cheshire branch. Copies are obtainable from Mr. E. Alan Rose, 26, Roe Cross Green, Mottram, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 6LP—as are also copies, price 75p., of Mr. Rose's own 20-page booklet *Methodism in Cheshire to 1800* (reprinted from the *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, vol. LXXVIII (1975)).

*The Memoirs of Richard Cook*, edited, with introduction and notes, by Nicholas J. L. Lyons (pp. vi. 56) provide glimpses of South Ferriby in the mid-nineteenth century. Copies are obtainable from Mr. Lyons at Sir John Nelthorpe School, Brigg, South Humberside.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

## 1291. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES?

In James Everett's *Methodism as it is*, Appendix, p. 22, there is an interesting note concerning the mural tablet to John Wesley in City Road chapel. The note refers us to the *Arminian Magazine* for 1800, which quotes the original inscription on the tablet, composed by Dr. Whitehead (author of one of the first "lives" of Wesley); lines 11 ff. originally read:

HE WENT OUT INTO THE HIGHWAYS AND HEDGES  
CALLING SINNERS TO REPENTANCE  
AND PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF PEACE.  
[HE WAS THE FOUNDER OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES,  
THE PATRON AND FRIEND OF THE LAY PREACHERS,  
BY WHOSE AID HE EXTENDED THE PLAN OF ITINERANT PREACHING  
THROUGH GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,  
THE WEST INDIES AND AMERICA . . .

These lines, says Everett, were altered at the instigation of Jabez Bunting to read:

HE WENT OUT INTO THE HIGHWAYS AND HEDGES  
CALLING SINNERS TO REPENTANCE  
AND PUBLISHING THE GOSPEL OF PEACE.  
HE WAS THE FOUNDER OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES,  
AND THE CHIEF PROMOTER AND PATRON  
OF THE PLAN OF ITINERANT PREACHING  
WHICH HE EXTENDED THROUGH GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND . . .

The reader will note the alterations: "preaching" has been replaced by "publishing", and the lay preachers have been eliminated. Did James Everett read into those changes his suspicion of Bunting's high churchmanship, denigrating preaching and belittling the work of the local preacher? And was his suspicion correct? If not, what was the significance of the changes?

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE.

## 1292. METHODISM IN CUMBRIA.

Mr. John Burgess, a research student of Durham University, whose address is 6, The Crescent, Highmoor, Wigton, Cumbria, writes to say that he is working on the history of Methodism in Cumbria, and would be pleased to hear from anyone able to help him in his research. Any information will be welcome. Pictures or other illustrative material will be cared for and returned to their owners unless specifically donated to Mr. Burgess.

EDITOR.

In addition to the list printed on page 29, copies of the following local history booklets have recently come to hand:

- Windsor—The Centenary Story*, by Jean Kirkwood (pp. 28): copies, price 50p. (62p. by post), from the Rev. E. Donald Mason, The Manse, 117, Dedworth Road, Windsor, Berks, SL4 5BB.
- Orrell Post (Wigan) centenary handbook (pp. 22): copies, price 30p., from Mr. R. Worthington, 9, Coleridge Avenue, Orrell, Wigan, Lancs.
- Mount View, Derbyshire Lane (Sheffield) centenary handbook (pp. 24): copies from Miss N. Jones, 2, Mount View Avenue, Sheffield, s8 8PN.
- Heath Street (Hackett Street), Blackheath 1867-1976 souvenir handbook (pp. 16): copies, price 50p., from the Rev. Reginald G. Parsons, 10, Springfield Road, Halesowen, West Midlands.