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# Proceedings

OF THE

## Wesley Historical Society

Editor: E. ALAN ROSE, B.A.

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### THE METHODIST CLASS MEETING

#### The Significance of its Decline

IN recent years the more inward aspects of Methodism have received some long-overdue attention. The class meeting is the unique feature of the movement, and whilst a detailed study has yet to be done on the development of the class (a topic quite distinct from what Wesley said and wrote about the class), two attempts have been made to explain the decline of the class meeting in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1968 Robert Currie devoted a few pages to the class,<sup>1</sup> and argued that the liberalization of Methodism after 1860 made the disciplinary connotation of the class unpopular with those who shared the new outlook which replaced religious values with social, and sought entertainment within the chapel community rather than rigorous religious exercises. In 1973, Henry Rack explored the tensions arising from the requirement for class-membership (and attendance) as a necessary qualification for membership of society—a controversy that produced a flood of pamphlets in the second half of the century. The source of this dissatisfaction and tension was the declining intensity of religious experience, which caused the classes to be boring, repetitive, and viewed with resentment. Taking the argument a step farther, using Troeltsch's church-sect model, he argues that this decline was inevitable as Methodism moved from the position of a society within the Anglican Church to that of an autonomous body—one which should make room for all varieties of religious experience and degrees of religious commitment. As educated and affluent Methodists came to make up an increasing percentage of the membership, their criticism of and opposition to the old ways undermined the traditional status of the class meeting.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robert Currie: *Methodism Divided: A Study in the Sociology of Ecumenicalism* (London: Faber & Faber, 1968), pp. 125-31. In chapters 2 and 4 Dr. Currie deals with the whole question of the rise of the chapel community, which offers several insights bearing on the class meeting.

<sup>2</sup> Henry D. Rack: "The Decline of the Class-meeting and the Problem of Church-membership in Nineteenth-century Wesleyanism", *Proceedings*, xxxix, pp. 12-21.

All of this is accurate, but superficial in that the process of decline is viewed as a result of developments of the latter half of the century. But vocal criticism was nothing new: both the class system itself and its requirement for membership in the society had been roundly criticized from the beginning, and Wesley himself, as early as 1748, had to spend a good deal of time defending his policies. I believe that the critical period for the class meeting was not the latter half of the century but the generation between 1800 and 1830, and that behind the subsequent decline of the class was a basic erosion of functional significance between Wesley's death in 1791 and 1850.

I have found research in Methodist autobiography a fascinating and informative effort. Often what is not recorded in these diaries and journals is as significant as what is included. A startling and general feature shared by many of these accounts is that during the 1830s references to class meetings seem to decline almost to zero. We could talk about "invisible classes" after this decade, at least as far as the recorded perceptions of their members are concerned, and, were this our only source of Methodist history, we could plausibly argue that the class meeting generally had ceased to function by 1850. In fact we know differently, but the silence is suggestive.

A good example of this is to be found in the diary of the Rev. Joseph Wood, a major part of which is contained in his biography.<sup>8</sup> Wood was born in 1797, the son of a Somerset schoolmaster—local preacher, who died when Joseph was but nine years old. He was more-or-less self-educated, sometimes under the tutelage of a neighbouring master or minister, more often on his own. He became a local preacher in 1815, and established a school in his father's vacant schoolroom the next year. Within two or three years he was leader of two classes—one he himself began in a neighbouring village, and the other a class of young men in his home village of Banwell. He entered the itinerancy in 1826. In the course of the next two decades there are numerous references to meeting classes, starting classes, giving quarterly tickets, and so forth. As late as 1839 there is an account of the organization of a new class. But at that point references of any kind to classes end. Thus during the mature years of his ministry he records tea meetings for leaders and the members of the missionary society, he discusses the work of the tract societies, and refers to prayer meetings, Bible classes, and even a band meeting. But there is scarcely a word about the class meeting. It seems unlikely that he merely lost interest, for after his retirement in 1860 he again records his activities as a leader, and even organized a class of young men in his home. Besides, a travelling preacher dealt with the classes regularly. The class meeting continued to function institutionally for another half-century, so such silence suggests that it had become nothing more than a routine part of church life, infrequently troubled by problems, and just as infrequently stirred by

<sup>8</sup> Henry W. Williams: *The Life of the Rev. Joseph Wood, with Extracts from his Diary* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1871), *passim*.

any religious dynamic. The class had ceased to be the heart of Methodism.

It is easy, but too simple, to explain the decline of the class in terms of declining spirituality in Methodism, and such an explanation may actually be a case of reading into the first half of the nineteenth century the characteristic situation of the second half. Often it seems that historians have defined the classes in terms of what Wesley wrote about them in 1748, and then assumed that the system continued unchanged until the tacit acknowledgement by Conference in the 1880s that class-attendance had not been and could not now be enforced. What actually happened, however, was that the web of circumstances that gave the class meeting functional significance in the eighteenth century eroded, leaving an institutional shell without a clearly manifest purpose, except that attendance was the door to membership. The class was a fellowship group of sorts, but its functional importance was deeper. The basic functions were evangelism and conservation—the *recruitment* and *assimilation* of new members. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century the class lost the evangelistic function that had placed it at the heart of Methodist growth, and then the superficial acceptance by British society of a veneer of evangelical values towards the middle of the century began to undermine the remaining conservative function.

The overt reason for Wesley's enthusiasm for the class meeting is clear. It gave him, as pastor, a window into the daily lives and behaviour of those who responded to his preaching, for whom he felt a keen moral responsibility. As such, it appeared to be conservatory in function—to encourage those who had begun the pursuit of holiness to persevere. In 1776, Mr. Hilton, one of his preachers, tried to convince the very Anglican mother of a young convert that the class was proper and necessary. The daughter (later the wife of John Pawson) recorded the gist of the conversation:

Mr. Hilton took tea with us; he endeavoured to convince my mother, that she laboured under religious prejudice, in not attending the preaching, and the class meetings; and he observed, among others, that when live coals are put together, the fire burns vehemently; but, when the coals are scattered, the fire dies away . . .<sup>4</sup>

Implicit in this imagery are the ideas of strong inward religious commitment, shared zeal, and—of particular importance—an outside world that was the antithesis of that religious life. Wesley and the early Methodists were convinced that the isolated Christian could not continue growth in grace, and, rooted in his Arminian doctrine of free will, he could never understand how any serious Christian could object to the necessary encouragement and supervision found in the class meeting.

What is less clear in all this is that wrapped up in this perception

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Sutcliffe: *The Experience of the late Mrs. Frances Pawson, Wife of the late Rev. John Pawson, who was about forty-four Years an Itinerant Preacher in the Methodist Connexion* (London: James Nichols, 1821), p. 47.

of the Christian life is Wesley's conception of conversion. Quick and instantaneous conversion (the norm for the twentieth-century evangelical heirs of a century of mass evangelistic methodology) was not the "normal" religious experience of the eighteenth century. In Wesley's day, and in his own experience, a period of searching, sometimes quite lengthy, under the accusing finger of an awakened conscience was expected. Because the process was extended, much more personal commitment was necessary to continue the search until the goal was attained. It was in this period of striving that the class had its evangelistic impact. The class meeting served as a weekly boost to serious prayer, and the close relationship with a leader provided a measure of emotional support that intensified the desire for the experience. Thus it is not at all surprising to find in the biographical resources very frequent accounts of individuals "finding peace with God" in a class meeting. Perhaps half of the individuals born before 1800 whose memoirs and diaries I have read were converted in a class meeting or through the influence of a meeting or a leader, whilst only a handful record conversions without such a background, and none record conversion in the context of a preaching or chapel service. Mary Lomas was converted in 1791, and her biographer, doubtless referring to a diary entry, writes:

Mary, while under these convictions, when "the remembrance of her sins became grievous to her, and the burden intolerable," found her way to a Methodist Class Meeting, having a desire to "flee from the wrath to come."<sup>6</sup>

A few weeks later she was converted.

William Reeves's introduction to the class was only a little different. The severe illness of himself and his wife caused him to visit the Methodist chapel in 1808:

As soon as the sermon was ended, I was constrained to go trembling into the vestry, to the dear man of God, to know what I should do. He then tried to give me some comfort, and spoke many comfortable words to me: but alas! I could take no comfort. He then spoke to Mr. Shaw, to take me to his class which he did the next night.<sup>6</sup>

Again, in a few weeks he too was converted.

Reeves was later to become one of the outstanding class leaders in Methodism in the first half of the nineteenth century. He seemed to understand better than most the close relationship between conservation and evangelism as far as the health of the class meeting was concerned. In defending his reluctance to divide up his large classes, and his unwillingness to direct new converts to smaller classes, he writes:

<sup>6</sup> Alexander Bell: *Memorials of Mrs. Mary Knowles Lomas, of Manchester, for Many Years a Successful Class-Leader in the Wesleyan Society, with Extracts from her Diary* (London: For the author by John Mason, 1844), p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Corderoy: *Father Reeves, the Methodist Class Leader: A Brief Account of Mr. William Reeves, Thirty-Four Years a Class Leader in the Wesleyan Methodist Society, Lambeth* (New York: Carlton & Phillips, 1853), p. 20.

But ever since I have had the unspeakable honour of being a Methodist class-leader . . . I have invariably proved that only whilst I am *adding* to my heavenly graces, I am kept alive and growing: so I daily prove that only while I am getting new members to my classes we keep alive the old members . . . Now new members being the means to bring or to keep this life, therefore not to strive to get new members would be to give up this life as far as it concerns our classes.<sup>7</sup>

The principle is a simple one: enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm, and, in the evangelical Methodist tradition, nothing bred enthusiasm like fresh accounts of conversions.

It was during the first generation of the nineteenth century that the evangelistic function of the class meeting was lost to the prayer meeting, especially the after-preaching prayer meeting at the communion-rail or in the vestry. The references to such chapel prayer meetings multiply between 1820 and 1850, whilst in the diaries and biographies of individuals born after 1800 there are few clear references to conversions in the class meeting. Prayer meetings were certainly nothing new to Methodism, but Wesley himself, whilst encouraging them as a means of extending the cause of Christ, was strangely reticent about emphasizing them in any institutional sense. He cautioned Hannah Ball in 1786:

I am glad to hear that your society prospers and that the work of God continues to increase in the town. It always will if prayer meetings are kept up (without interfering with the classes and bands) . . .<sup>8</sup>

After the turn of the century the prayer meeting did become institutionalized—sometimes formally, more often informally. Hugh Bourne became a prayer-leader before he became a local preacher, and eventually institutionalized the mass prayer meeting in his version of the camp meeting, deliberately using the emotion thus generated as the dynamic of the camp. We find in other areas as widely separated as Leeds and Cornwall organized bodies of prayer-leaders, who, in the Leeds case at any rate, came at least for a time to work on a formal plan similar to that of the preachers. In Lancashire, William Banning, an established merchant of Preston, generally used a prayer meeting to gather potential members for a class, and seems to have established several in this way in neighbouring villages in the early decades of the century.<sup>9</sup> Grace Bennet, living her last years in Derbyshire, records with equal fervour the blessings of both prayer and class meetings (she died in 1803),<sup>10</sup> but in Wood's diary, dating twenty years later, spiritual vitality was more frequently related to the prayer meeting than the class. As references to class meetings disappeared, his references to prayer meetings increased, suggesting the nature of the change that was under way.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 56-7.

<sup>8</sup> *Letters*, vii, p. 324.

<sup>9</sup> John Banning: *Memoir of the Late Mr. William Banning, of Roach, Near Preston, who died August 3rd, 1846, aged 90 Years* (Manchester: J. Thompson, 1846), *passim*.

<sup>10</sup> Manuscript fragments of her diary for the years 1797-1800 are held at the Methodist Archives, John Rylands University Library, Manchester.

In the 1820s Squire Brooke, a Wesleyan local preacher, seems as a matter of evangelistic methodology to have encouraged after-preaching prayer meetings. In one excerpt from his diary, covering the period 2nd April to 14th May 1826, eleven times he records that he followed preaching with a prayer meeting, generally with several individuals "finding peace". The entry for 19th April includes the comment, "preached in the evening at Cowns, and felt distressed, held a prayer meeting as usual . . ."<sup>11</sup> The influence of American revivalists is detectable—even though the Wesleyan Conference was aligning itself in opposition to revivalism in general. There is no suggestion that his congregations were startled by the chapel-orientated prayer meeting. The prayer meeting was less structured, and more spontaneous than the class, even in the chapel setting, and the devout Methodist, whilst attending class without complaint, turned to the prayer meeting for a dynamic expression of spirituality.

Not only was the conception of the nature of conversion changing: the conception of the nature of the Christian community was also changing. As Methodism moved from a position of *ecclesiola in ecclesia* to that of a denomination, emphasis shifted to chapel—i.e. institutional—activities. Public worship was held in church hours, whilst classes for the most part were moved from homes to the chapel, and most other meetings, educational and fellowship, were held in the chapel or schoolroom. Disappearing was the earlier emphasis on the quality of personal relationships among Methodists as the chief evidence of the work of God. Eroding as a result was the warm informality and direct mutuality that gave the class meeting its original form. As life came to revolve around the structured chapel-community rather than around interpersonal spirituality, public worship understandably became the characteristic measure of the religious life. Robert Currie gives an interesting analysis of the shift from worship to entertainment (he assumes that we know what the difference actually was) in the public services of the chapel towards the end of the century. This was the end-result of the institutional re-orientation that began much earlier, and in this shifting scenario the class meeting had to become an anachronism. The same process affected the prayer meetings as well, but they suffered less than the class because they were more flexible and adaptable to different kinds of purposes.

There is the other side to the erosion of the rationale for the class meeting. If the evangelistic function was eroded by the institutional emphasis on public worship, then the conservatory function was eroded by the apparent success of the evangelical revival that resulted in the Victorian cultural synthesis of the nineteenth century. One of the characteristics of the sect, according to Troeltsch's model, is that it holds a rigorous and uncompromising ethical standard which

<sup>11</sup> John Holt Lord: *Squire Brooke: A Memorial of Edward Brooke, of Fieldhouse, near Huddersfield, with Extracts from his Diary and Correspondence* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co. (1874), p. 66).

contrasts with its social environment. An obvious corollary is that the greater the disparity between the ethical standard of the sect and the norms of the society of which it is a part, the greater the danger of apostasy, and the greater the necessity of strong intra-group bonding and support. Wesley's perfectionist ethic, his Arminian theology of moral responsibility, his implicit challenge to both ecclesiastical and social order, his demand for total surrender to God, all set his followers in an obvious and direct opposition to the cultural values of the eighteenth century. For a generation he and his followers faced determined and violent resistance nearly everywhere they went. Egging, stoning, destruction of property, physical abuse, social ostracism—all made the disparity of values unmistakably clear. As long as Methodism faced such opposition, the need to draw together to support one another was readily apparent. The urgency of that need overshadowed personal preferences, social status, even personal friendship.

There were several factors that tended, from the 1770s on, to decrease the disparity between the Methodist and British society as a whole. As the movement matured, public opinion moderated, as it became clear that Methodism was neither politically subversive nor pseudo-Catholic. By the 1770s Wesley had ceased to face direct opposition, and by the time of his death he was widely respected, even by his opponents. By the end of the century, Methodism's sphere of influence touched perhaps as much as ten per cent of the population, and Methodists were generally perceived as industrious, dependable, and upright. The French Revolution served to re-ignite some of the old animosity, but after 1815 it quickly became respectable to be a Methodist.

The British reaction to the French Revolution was actually a catalyst in decreasing the disparity. Sociologist Victor Kiernan constructed a perhaps too simplistic model to explain the interaction between revolution and Methodism, but still makes a valid point. He argues that the ruling classes, who had been deeply influenced by French philosophy in its deist form, were appalled by the implications of that philosophy made clear as the Revolution ran its course. Traditional Anglicanism had little to offer in the way of a substitute rationale, and Nonconformity, in any of its forms, represented lower social classes. Into this vacuum came Evangelicalism, parallel to Methodism in its values and zeal, but conformable to existing structures in church order. The appeal of Evangelicalism to the ruling classes was broad, but superficial. Nevertheless, many evangelical values were gradually accepted as norms in British society generally, giving strong flavour to the Victorian synthesis.<sup>13</sup> The matter of declining Methodist fervour aside, it was clear that the Methodist of 1850 did not stand in opposition to social norms in the way that his ancestors had done two generations earlier, nor had

<sup>13</sup> Victor Kiernan: "Evangelicalism and the French Revolution", *Past and Present*, i (1952), pp. 44-56.

he the need so to do. But Methodist religious life was becoming more superficial, and as society became superficially evangelical, the disparity which had given the class meeting its rationale for existence all but disappeared. Classes continued to function, but they were essentially friendship circles, based on social class or personal compatibility, or centred round an individual popular leader.

In conclusion, it is the belief of the present writer that the class meeting did not succumb to opposition and criticism or apostasy, but to a creeping institutionalism that shifted the centre of attention from Wesley's emphasis on the quality of interpersonal relationships as the key to dynamic religious life to an emphasis on the public, more impersonal, and less demanding services of the chapel, whilst externally the broader currents of social change were washing the foundations out from under the ideal of a closely-knit and strictly-disciplined brotherhood in the Church. WILLIAM W. DEAN.

[The Rev. William W. Dean, M.A. is an American Methodist minister at present serving in the Radcliffe circuit while completing research for a doctoral thesis at the University of Iowa History Department. His topic is "Discipline and Cell Structure in Early Methodism".]

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## THE ANNUAL LECTURE

in connexion with the Plymouth Conference, 1982,

WILL BE DELIVERED IN

Wesley Methodist Chapel, Saltash,

On Monday, 28th June, at 7-30 p.m.,

BY

**The Rev. RUPERT E. DAVIES, M.A., B.D.**

*Subject:*

"FIFTY YEARS ON: THE FRUITS OF METHODIST UNION".

The chair will be taken by PROFESSOR MORNA HOOKER STACEY.

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**The Annual Meeting** of the Society will be held at the same chapel 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. Alfred H. Wood, 41, Essa Road, Saltash, Cornwall, PL12 4EE (Tel. 07555 2788) by Friday, June 25th.

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**An Exhibition** entitled "Methodism in the South-West" will be on view at Saltash Wesley from 28th June to 1st July.

## A METHODIST FAMILY

### Ministerial Succession and Intermarriage

**M**ETHODISM has been remarkable for the number of families in which the ministry has had a succession of father and son, or uncle and nephew, through four or five generations. Methodism has been remarkable too for the way in which such families have intermarried, linking these and other successions collaterally.

The longest succession is in the Waddy family. Richard Waddy entered the Wesleyan ministry in 1793, two years after the death of our founder. His great-great-grandson, Leonard Waddy, remains in the ministry today. One year later, in 1794, William Moulton entered the ministry, and Harold Moulton, the author of this article, continues in the ministry still. Other instances are the Gregorys, beginning with Benjamin Gregory in 1799 and still continuing, the Greeves, from John Greeves in 1815, and the Rattenburys, beginning with John in 1828 and still in the *Minutes* with Morley. Further examples could be quoted, and shorter successions were mentioned in the *Methodist Recorder* early in 1979.

I take the liberty, however, of concentrating on the Moulton family and its connexions as the strain with which I am most closely associated. The family actually goes back in its Methodist links to two generations behind the first Moulton in the ministry. John Bakewell, who wrote the hymn "Hail, Thou once-despised Jesus!",<sup>1</sup> was one of John Wesley's preachers. His daughter married Dr. James Egan of Greenwich, and Dr. Egan's daughter married William Moulton.

John Bakewell's dying wish was that "nothing should be said respecting him after his death".<sup>2</sup> This was modest, but unfortunate for Methodist history. He goes back to the early days. His poetic gift and his evangelistic spirit are permanently maintained, however, in his hymn.

His daughter's generation which followed—the Egan family—were notable Methodists of their time, but perhaps can be mentioned in only two connexions: firstly, one daughter's marriage with William Moulton brought the name Egan into the family, where it continued with their son, James Egan Moulton I, and their grandson, James Egan Moulton II, the illustrious missionary to Tonga and Australian Methodist leader, and his descendants; and secondly, another Egan daughter, who became an excellent classical scholar and actually began teaching her great-nephew, William Fiddian Moulton, at the age of eight.

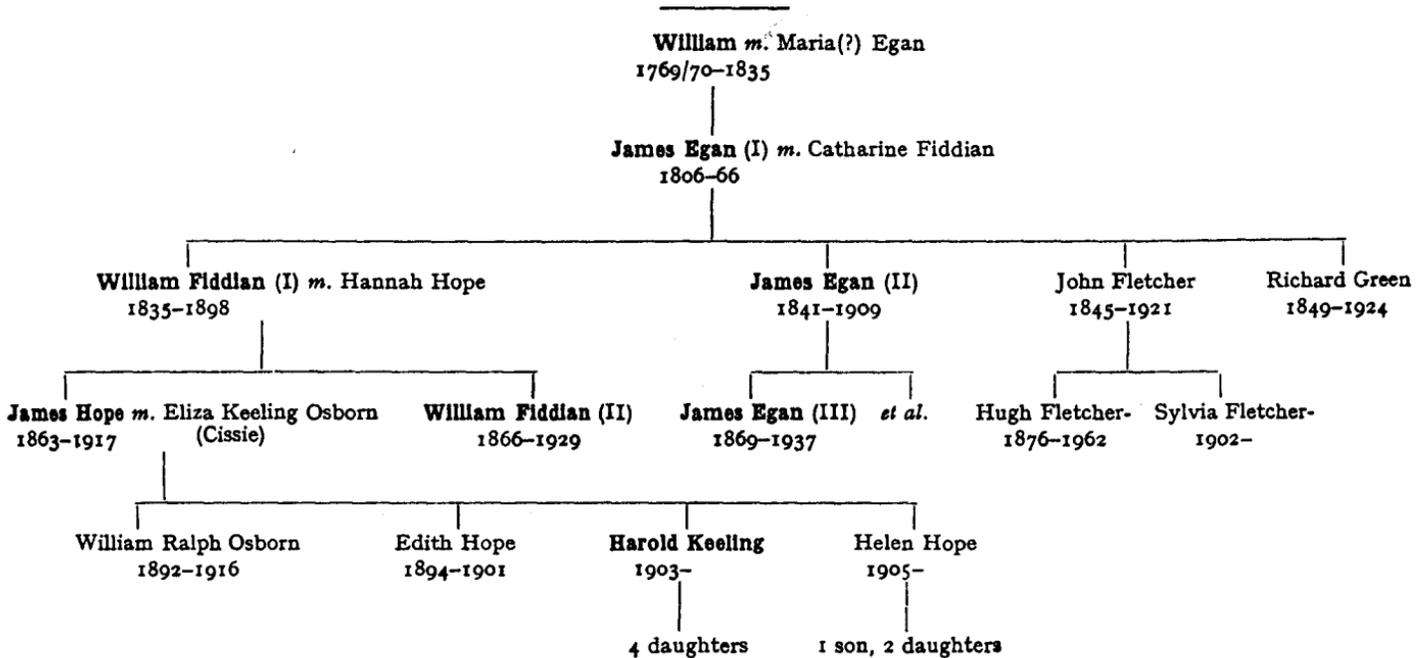
William Moulton, the first of the five generations of Methodist ministers, did not come from a Methodist family. His father,

<sup>1</sup> See *Proceedings*, xxxix, pp. 92-3.

<sup>2</sup> "Memoir of the Rev. William Moulton, by his son, Rev. James Egan Moulton", *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, November 1837, as quoted in W. Fiddian Moulton: *William F. Moulton* (1899), p. 14.

# THE MOULTON MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION

(Ministers' names in bold type)



Robert Moulton, was a godly eighteenth-century Anglican, and did not approve of the emotionalism of the early Methodists. His son, however, realized the spiritual values of the new movement, and remained firm in his resolve to be identified with it. Unusually in those days for a quite young man, he was soon made a class leader, and had the joy of welcoming his changed father and mother as members. After ordination he continued in close and happy relationships with Anglican clergy in his circuits. Perhaps his most noteworthy appointment was to City Road, London, where he benefited outstandingly from the collegueship of Joseph Benson, whose name is still perpetuated in the Benson Room, adjoining Wesley's Chapel.

William Moulton had a family of fifteen, nine of whom survived to maturity. The direct succession in the ministerial line was maintained by James Egan Moulton, who entered in 1828 and died in 1866. Two other brothers also became Wesleyan ministers—John Bakewell Moulton and Ebenezer Moulton (A), but the former died young and the latter had no ministerial descendants.<sup>3</sup>

James Egan Moulton, whose portrait in oils I still possess, was a man of great gifts, which were certainly bequeathed to his four brilliant sons. He was granted an extra year at Kingswood, the normal maximum age being then fourteen, and at fifteen became a master, until he entered the ministry at twenty-two. It was said of him that the boys "would rather do sums with Mr. Moulton than play". How degenerate we now are! One of his sons later remembered his capacity for doing three things at once: making up his schedules as Chairman of the Northampton District, reading a Latin author with one son and a Greek author with another, and giving all three matters detailed attention. This capacity for orderliness led, according to Dr. Benjamin Gregory, to his being known as "Arrangement Moulton". He was far, however, from being a mere arranger. Dr. Gregory goes on to say of him:

His cheerfulness was radiant, and most healthfully catching . . . He was a thorough Methodist preacher, lively, spiritual, energetic, indefatigable . . . He was one of the very few men who have had much to do with tutorship who betrayed nothing of the pedagogue in after life.<sup>4</sup>

Things might, however, have turned out differently. He had been friendly for some time with the family of Mr. William Fiddian, a Birmingham circuit steward, and had proposed to his daughter, Catharine, whose outstanding character is outlined in the biography of their son,<sup>5</sup> but there was a time when the marriage hung in the balance. Catharine was not in good health, and, to quote from a sad but truly Christian letter in my possession from Egan to his father written in January 1833,

<sup>3</sup> By a strange coincidence there is also an Ebenezer Moulton (B), who entered the ministry in 1859 and died in 1905. His son was Wilfred J. Moulton, the much-loved principal of both Headingley and Didsbury Colleges. His daughter was principal of Southlands Training College. The two families were excellent friends, but could not discover any relationship.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in W. Fiddian Moulton, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 21 ff.

She believes indeed that she may so far recruit her strength as to be equal to the ordinary routine of duties, but the duties of a Preacher's Wife!—it is from these she shrinks.

For the good of Methodism, however, they were eventually married. She lived till 1855, and bore four illustrious sons to carry on the family.

She also brought in the name of Fiddian, with collaterals to be mentioned later. Her eldest son was William Fiddian Moulton, and her grandson bore the same name. A generation was then missed, but one of our daughters has it as a given name, and so has the son of another daughter.

The four sons of James Egan and Catharine Moulton were William Fiddian, founder of The Leys School, Cambridge, my grandfather; James Egan of Tonga; John Fletcher, later Lord Moulton; and Richard Green of Chicago. There were also two daughters: Sarah Ann and Elizabeth Green, both of whom I remember from my Cambridge undergraduate days. It is reputed that her four outstanding brothers said of "Aunt Lizzie", as I knew her, that she was more gifted than any of themselves, but that was in the days before women's education had developed to university level.

William Fiddian Moulton was born in the manse at Leek in 1835. His nonconformist church allegiance precluded him from entering either of the ancient universities, but he took his London B.A. at nineteen, and won a gold medal for mathematics when he took his M.A. two years later. He entered the ministry in 1858, and even as a probationer was immediately appointed to the staff of Richmond College. In 1862 he married Hannah Hope, daughter of the Rev. Samuel Hope, Methodist minister, thus bringing another name into the family. Their elder son was James Hope Moulton. His two daughters, one of whom died young, the other still living, have the name, and so has our eldest daughter. I well remember the old lady with her black sequin-covered dress and her white widow's cap, which she wore for fourteen years until her own death.

W. F. Moulton remained a gifted and beloved tutor at Richmond until 1874, when the momentous step of establishing a Methodist school at Cambridge was undertaken and he was appointed the first headmaster. The Leys School was opened early in 1875, and he remained headmaster until his sudden death in 1898, establishing by his personality and ability a school which, over more than a century, has produced men of character and influence in every walk of life. The Leysian Mission in City Road, London, owed its foundation to him. He was an outstanding member of the Revised Version New Testament Committee from 1871 to 1881, and continued to work on the Apocrypha revision with his friends Dr. Westcott and Dr. Hort. I still possess a page of their attendance-register. He was President of the Wesleyan Conference in 1890.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For a modern assessment of Moulton as headmaster see D. Baker: *Partnership in Excellence* (1975), pp. 109-53.—EDITOR.

The second brother, James Egan, took his father's names, and the name Egan has descended in the Australian branch of the family until today. Egan Moulton's influential service was primarily in Tonga, but concluded in Australia. He was born in his father's manse in North Shields, but spent his entire ministry in the Pacific. Others have contributed much to the island kingdom of Tonga, but it was he who established its education, built up its church, developed its literature, and above all made its Bible. I quote from his brother Richard's foreword to his biography :

The crown of my brother's life was his work on the Bible. This was not what is ordinarily understood by translation; the Bible had already been translated into the Tongan language. What was wanted was the enlargement of the Tongan language to make it adequate to Biblical literature,

and he goes on to compare him in this context with Dante, "preparing the raw Italian to be a vehicle of the poetry that was coming". But there was nothing in Tonga that he did not touch and adorn. I had the honour of speaking at the centenary celebrations of the college he founded—the college through which all leading Tongans including the King himself have passed, and there is no doubt that being dead he yet speaks. His influence in the wider sphere of Australia was great. In Tonga it was unique.

The third brother, John Fletcher, was named after Fletcher of Madeley, where he was born in 1845. He was educated at Kingswood School, of which he was head boy at the age of thirteen, and came out first in all England in the Oxford and Cambridge Locals. He maintained his links with the school, and the Moulton Hall is named after him. He had a brilliant academic career. For example, he was senior wrangler at Cambridge, gaining more marks above the second wrangler than the latter had over the lowest one. He then turned to Law, becoming an expert in Patent Law and finally a Lord Justice of Appeal. He also entered Parliament as a Liberal, standing incidentally for the London borough in which one of our daughters and her family now live. He left Launceston later only on his elevation to the peerage. If all this was not enough, he so mastered scientific subjects in his legal work that he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society, and in the 1914-18 War was appointed by Lord Kitchener to be Director-General of Explosive Services. In the preface to his biography, written by his son, Lord Birkenhead says: "On the scientific side his individual contribution to winning the war was as great as that of any contemporary Englishman." He wrote little for a bibliography except his Rede Lecture on Science and War, but his 1921 speech to the Pen Club on "Law and Manners" was printed in the *Atlantic Monthly* and reprinted in its celebrated centenary edition. His judgements are still read as models of clarity, and no less a person than A. P. Herbert in his book *What a Word* chooses from one of them in his "Intervals for

<sup>1</sup> H. Fletcher-Moulton: *Lord Moulton* (1922), p. 4.

Good Stuff" amid the jargon he condemns, because it states a complicated legal case clearly and simply. I met him only once, when, as a small boy, I had my tonsils removed in his house in Onslow Square and bought a bicycle with his kindly tip. His son followed him in the legal profession and was also a successful novelist. His daughter by his second marriage won a C.B.E. for air-raid service in the second war, served as a J.P. for many years, and has been one of the few women churchwardens in this country. Happily she is still with us.

The fourth and last brother, born in 1849, was Richard Green Moulton, named after the Green family into which his Fiddian aunt married. He like his brother John was able to be educated at Cambridge, and then devoted his life to English literature. I remember his room in Glisson Road, Cambridge, opposite the old Hills Road chapel, where he lived for a while with his two sisters. It was wallpapered with scenes and diagrams from Spenser's *Faerie Queen*. He threw himself early into the University Extension Movement—a mission which characterized his whole life. At his death he was described as its greatest figure. One of his regular public lectures was a dramatized recital of the book of Job. This led on to his outstanding achievement, *The Modern Reader's Bible*—the Revised Version, with which his eldest brother was so closely connected, arranged in literary form rather than in two columns in traditional order. A simple example is the placing of the Pauline epistles in the book of Acts, at the places to which they were written. Several books on *The Literary Study of the Bible* (to quote one symbolic title) were written, and twenty-seven years of his life were spent as Professor of Literary Interpretation in the University of Chicago and in writing books on Shakespeare. His list of writings comprises eight major works. He married one of the Coles of Sheffield—a family still linked with Methodism.

Coming to the next generation, my grandfather W. F. Moulton had two sons: my father, James Hope Moulton, and my uncle, William Fiddian Moulton—named exactly after his father. James Hope Moulton was born at Richmond College in 1863, and was one of the first sixteen boys at The Leys School when his father opened it in 1875. I still possess many of his school prizes and his articles on astronomy, English poetry and other subjects in *The Leys Fortnightly*. After a first class degree in the Cambridge classical tripos, the Chancellor's Gold Medal (still with me) for a poem on Vasco da Gama, and incidentally a half-blue at lacrosse, he entered the Wesleyan ministry, and was the first nonconformist minister to be elected a Fellow of a Cambridge college. He served as a Leys master from 1886 to 1902, when he was appointed as New Testament tutor at Didsbury College, Manchester. It was there that his outstanding work on the Greek language was done. The German scholar Adolf Deissmann had made the epoch-making discovery of the links between the Greek of the New Testament and the common Greek of

the "Egyptian Rubbish Heaps", to quote the title of my father's popular book. My father dealt with the relationship on an academic level in his famous *Prolegomena*, described as the most readable grammar ever written, and in the first two fascicles of *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament illustrated from the Papyri*. He did not live to complete either of these great works, though they have been finished by other hands. Dr. W. F. Howard completed the second volume of the grammar, and his family have kindly given me his interleaved and annotated copy of the *Prolegomena*. While at Didsbury, he was Greenwood Professor of Hellenistic Greek in the University of Manchester, Dean of the Faculty of Theology and a governor of the John Rylands Library. Most of all, he was a beloved inspirer of his students, keenly interested in the work of Samuel Collier in the Manchester Mission, and a preacher in demand throughout Methodism. I was only twelve when I last saw him, but I rejoice that he taught me my first Greek and that the feel of his personality is still with me, reinforced by so many of his old students. Two of them are still alive, and remember him with reverence and love.

Astonishingly, his pre-eminence in Zoroastrian studies was equal to his New Testament achievements. The common origin was in his Cambridge studies in Comparative Indo-European Philology, including Greek, Zend, and also Sanskrit. He wrote articles for the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, and in 1912 delivered the Hibbert Lectures on Early Zoroastrianism. It so happened that in 1915, when my mother had just died and the war was closing Didsbury College, Dr. J. N. Farquhar, all unknowing, invited my father to visit India on behalf of the Y.M.C.A. and lecture to the Parsis in Bombay. This made a great impression. Here was a man who knew more about their religion than did the Parsis themselves. His lectures on "The Teaching of Zarathushtra" were respectfully and affectionately published in India, and there was a posthumously-published book, *The Treasure of the Magi*, revealing his own respect and love for the religion which "only needed Christ adding to it". When I first went to India, ten years after my father's death, I still found those whose eyes lit up when they spoke of him.

After finishing his Parsi work, he stayed on for another year in great demand by Christian organizations, and ended with a few weeks at the United Theological College in Bangalore, where I later spent twenty-seven years of my ministry—the "Indian Didsbury", as he called it. My brother's death on the Somme came as a deep grief to him. We have the whole series of his weekly circular letters to the family, giving an observant, affectionate, deeply religious impression of the eighteen-month climax of his life. On his return journey to England, when he was joined in Egypt by his Quaker friend Rendel Harris, they were torpedoed in the Mediterranean, and he died of exposure in an open boat. Rendel Harris was with him at the end, and gave us a moving account of an event which shocked the whole

Church. He would almost certainly have been President of the Conference after his return.

His marriage in 1890 to my mother had forged more Methodist links. Her father, G. R. Osborn, had been superintendent of the Cambridge circuit. His father had been the celebrated Dr. George Osborn, President of the Conference in 1863 and 1881, and editor of the thirteen-volume *Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*. His mother was a daughter of Isaac Keeling, President of the Conference in 1855. I myself bear the name Keeling, and I believe that I have the blood of nine Methodist ministers in my veins, including my own. My mother's sister married Charles Barber, brother of W. T. A. Barber, second headmaster of The Leys, President of the Conference in 1919, and afterwards principal of Richmond College. He in turn had married into the Methodist Clapham family, but regretfully we cannot take this further afield.

My father would have been embarrassed to find how much more space I have given to him than to his equally distinguished father and uncles. Perhaps it needs no explanation, and I am sure I am forgiven. When he went to India, he left my sister Helen and me in the care of his brother, W. Fiddian Moulton, and his wife. When my father died the arrangement simply continued. Nothing could have been more blessed. Our aunt was a wonderful woman—a second mother to us. We in our turn went some way to replacing her only child, who had died in infancy. Our uncle was a master at The Leys till he entered the ministry at the age of thirty-five, but he was an excellent circuit minister, as well as writing the biographies of his father, two uncles, and his brother. For thirteen years he was on the staff of Cliff College, in true sympathy with its ideals but also providing balance to its then somewhat exuberant evangelism. Many old Cliff men have been grateful for all that he and his wife gave them in addition to the more characteristic Cliff atmosphere, and I myself can hardly calculate what I owe to them both in their complementary ways. What might have happened if, when my sister and I were orphaned, they had not been there to protect, develop, love and be loved?

The link with Cliff College is not quite finished. My sister married Dr. George Hollings, son of the Rev. W. W. Hollings and nephew of Samuel Chadwick. They were missionaries in South China till they were evacuated to Australia during the war. My brother-in-law continued as a much-trusted doctor there until his death, my sister remains at the centre of her church, and their son follows eminently in his father's medical footsteps and in Methodism.

It remains only to clear up the record with myself. I am the last to bear the Moulton name, though we could not be happier with our four daughters, and our eldest daughter's four children all have Moulton as a given name. I followed closely in the family footsteps: born at Didsbury in 1903, then The Leys, Cambridge, and so back to Didsbury as a student under Alec Findlay and George Jackson.

Then to India as a missionary for the next thirty years, first in a small country town where I learnt something of Hinduism from the inside, but for a quarter of a century at the great United Theological College in Bangalore, teaching Greek and New Testament as my father had done for a short period to the future leaders of the Indian Church. Twenty-six of our old students have become bishops, and some half-dozen principals of colleges—including one who began as my student and finished as my principal. I joined in Indian Independence Day celebrations in 1947, and in the inauguration of the Church of South India a few weeks later. I had a share in the revision of the Tamil New Testament and in the building-up of the C.S.I. Liturgy. When I returned to England I served in the Translations Department of the British and Foreign Bible Society, being sent to help translators in twenty-two different countries, including Tonga, where I had the joy of assisting my great-uncle Egan's Bible on its next stage. In 1971 my wife and I were invited back to Bangalore for a further two years, and on our return I followed another Methodist in Frank Glasson, lecturing at New College, Hampstead, till the close of its long history in 1977.

I suppose that I have also continued the family tradition of writing books. I am most proud of having produced in 1978 a revised fifth edition of the Moulton and Geden *Concordance* to the Greek Testament, first published by my grandfather in 1897. Another family tradition which I have maintained is that neither I nor my father nor my grandfather have ever been officially appointed circuit ministers, intimate though our connexions with local circuits have been. My great-grandfather and my uncle make up for it with high circuit reputations, and my wife is the daughter of a Liverpool circuit steward, Mr. W. J. Ireland, and has taught for many years at Farringtons School. Our own daughters were all at Queenswood, where my sister and my mother had been before them.

Time fails me, as it failed the writer to the Hebrews in another connexion, to tell of other marriage-relationships: with the Martin family, whose representative J. Henry Martin adorned the Conference platform until some few years ago, with the Peart family, of whom Richard Peart died in 1928 after seventy-two years in the ministry—he was one of the early ministers of the Bromley circuit, where we are now members, and with the Reddaways. William Fiddian Reddaway was a Cambridge don, and a good friend when I was an undergraduate. He had been a boy at The Leys under my grandfather, bearing the same Christian names and going back to a sister of the Fiddian daughter whom my great-grandfather married.

Let the list rest there. I hope it will not be seen as simply a family panegyric. I have indeed tried to sketch a distinguished record, but I have tried to look at it primarily as a Methodist family tree, going back vertically seven generations to the beginning, and branching sideways in many Methodist directions. Methodism

values her ecumenical connexions—I not least with a ministry in South India, the Bible Society, and New College, Hampstead—but she values perhaps even more intimately the links through the generations, and, in each generation, the spread which joins John Wesley's people together. We give thanks that neither set of values excludes the other.

HAROLD K. MOULTON.

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#### MORE LOCAL HISTORIES

The following are some of the handbooks and brochures which have recently been received, and for which we express our thanks to the senders.

Centenary of Warmington Methodist chapel (1881-1981), by James F. Paterson (pp. 32): copies, price £1 post free, from the author at 26, School Lane, Warmington, Peterborough, PE8 6TA.

Horrabridge and district (Part III)—Bible Christian, Wesleyan and Anglican churches of Horrabridge (Devon) (pp. 28): copies, price £1 10p. post free, from Miss A. M. Mobbs, 70, Station Road, Horrabridge, Yelverton, Devon, PL20 7RD.

The Methodist chapel and schoolroom, Steyne Road, Seaford, Sussex—an illustrated souvenir and history to mark the dedication of the rebuilt schoolroom in 1981: copies, price £1, from Mr. P. O. Beale, 10, Cornfield Road, Seaford, East Sussex.

*Methodism in Three Parishes*—the story of Coplestone chapel, 1831-1981, by Roger F. S. Thorne (pp. 45): copies, price 75p. post free, from the author at 11, Station Road, Topsham, Exeter, Devon. Coplestone is an ex-Bible Christian chapel near Crediton (Devon).

*The Life and Times of a Chapel*—the story of Truro's Bible Christian chapel, by Ronald E. Tonkin (pp. 54): copies, price £1 50p. post free, from the author at 19, Broad Street, Truro, Cornwall. Mr. Tonkin has not only written this substantial booklet, but printed it as well!

*The Methodists of Oadby*—published for the golden jubilee of Trinity Methodist chapel, Oadby, Leicester, October 1981, by Eric and Stella Orbell (pp. 40): copies, price £1 25p. post free, from the authors at 33, Vandyke Road, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5UB.

The Rev. J. Munsey Turner draws attention to an important article by Dr. Geoffrey Nuttall in the October 1981 issue of the *Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society*—"Methodism and the Older Dissent: Some Perspectives", which shows how much personal religion there was around in the early eighteenth century, especially in the form of personal covenants. The same issue contains an article by Michael Watts on "Nonconformists and Hell" which is as relevant to Methodism as it is to the "older Dissent".

# JOHN WESLEY'S THIRD LONDON CHAPEL

WESLEY'S two bases north of the Thames—the Foundry (1739), succeeded by his "New Chapel in the City Road" in 1778, and West Street chapel (1743)—are well known and well documented, and two of them still survive. His third London chapel has long since disappeared and is comparatively unknown. It lay south of the river in the area of Southwark east of the Borough High Street, and was known as "Snowsfields Chapel" from the thoroughfare of that name which still runs to the south of Guy's Hospital.

Despite numerous references to "Snowsfields chapel" in Wesley's *Journal* between 1743 and 1790, the information given by later writers is sparse, imprecise, and at certain points misleading.<sup>1</sup> The following notes are an attempt to set out the details that can be substantiated.

## Summary

Wesley had not one, but *two* successive chapels in this area. The first he took over in 1743 from a group of Unitarian Baptists.<sup>2</sup> Twenty years later he was ousted from this chapel, and moved to a new one built for him in Crosby Row, a short distance to the west, in 1764. H. J. Foster's note in these *Proceedings*, vii, p. 110, has misled later writers, such as F. C. Gill, by failing to distinguish between the two different sites and buildings.

## The first Snowsfields chapel

This stood on the west side of "Meeting House Walk"—an alley running south from Snowsfields a short distance to the east of Crosby Row. It is shown clearly on some eighteenth- and nineteenth-century maps, such as Rocque's map of 1746. The area has since been redeveloped out of all recognition. Meeting House Walk is now approximately represented by the line of Kipling Street, and the chapel probably stood just south of the present *Old Miller of Mansfield* public-house.

The most circumstantial account of this chapel is to be found in Walter Wilson's *History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches and Meeting Houses in London, Westminster and Southwark* (4 vols., 1814), iv, pp. 279-84. It was built in 1736 by Mrs. Elizabeth Ginn, a gentlewoman of Newington Butts, for the use of a Unitarian Baptist preacher whom she favoured—Mr. Sayer Rudd. (In Wesley's words, the chapel was built "by a poor Arian misbeliever, for the defence and propagation of her bad faith".) Rudd fell out of favour with both his benefactress and his congregation, and eventually, in 1742, seeing the error of his ways, he conformed, and was

<sup>1</sup> An exception to this is the brief note on Southwark Methodism which forms part of a memoir of Mrs. Elizabeth Mainwaring by Benjamin Browne in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1879, pp. 721-7.

<sup>2</sup> See *Journal*, iii, p. 82 (6th August 1743).

presented to the living of Walmer in Kent. The chapel was thereupon taken over by the Methodists, and Wesley himself preached there for the first time on 6th August 1743.

Wilson goes on to give some account of the circumstances which forced Wesley to move to a new chapel nearby. In 1763

The society in this place, having embraced many extravagant sentiments concerning perfection, chiefly through the agency of George Bell, one of their preachers, proceeded in a manner rather unbecoming persons who had attained to perfection. They excluded their spiritual father, John Wesley, from their society, and engaged Thomas Maxfield, who had espoused Bell's notions, to be their stated preacher.

This dispute at Snowsfields chapel was, in fact, part of a wider disruption, in which Thomas Maxfield rather than Bell seems to have been the leading figure. Wesley looked back on the year 1762 as one of "uncommon trials and uncommon blessings".<sup>3</sup> There had been widespread signs of spiritual revival, but on his return to London in August he had had to face the problem of extravagant behaviour and heretical teachings by Maxfield and Bell. He set out his views fully in a letter to Maxfield printed in his *Journal* (iv, pp. 535-8). By early 1763 Bell was proclaiming the imminent end of the world; and when the separation eventually came, Maxfield and Bell took about 170 members of the Methodist society with them—many of that number, presumably, from Snowsfields.<sup>4</sup> In the absence of any contemporary records or deeds relating to this chapel, it is impossible to say how the followers of Maxfield succeeded in retaining possession. There appears to be no trust deed enrolled in Chancery, which supports the probability that the chapel was rented. It is significant, in any case, that it was at the ensuing Conference of 1763 that the first Model Deed designed to secure Methodist chapels to the Connexion was adopted. Wesley had learned a lesson, though in characteristic fashion he studiously avoided reference to the Snowsfields case then or in later years (e.g. when the controversy arose in the 1780s over the "settlement" of the chapel at Birstall (Yorks), where the blame could be laid at someone else's door).

### The second Snowsfields chapel

Ousted from the preaching-house in Meeting House Walk, Wesley moved a short distance to the west, taking with him the "faithful remnant" of his society. On Saturday, 18th August 1764, he records preaching for the first time in "our new chapel at Snowsfields". After the fierce dissension, his text was a significant one, expressive of a sense of relief at being once more under a "roof of his own"—"O how amiable are Thy tabernacles, Thou Lord of Hosts".

This second chapel stood near the northern end of Crosby Row, on the site of the present *Charterhouse Ark*. No deeds have been

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, iv, p. 542 (31st December 1762).

<sup>4</sup> See George Smith: *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, 2nd edn. (1859), i, pp. 295-7; Henry Moore: *Life of John Wesley* (1824), ii, pp. 218-31, etc.

traced, but a careful examination of contemporary maps leaves no room for doubt on this. Described as one of Wesley's octagons (though Horwood's map of 1799 shows it as only six-sided), it was built chiefly at the instigation of one of Wesley's more well-to-do local supporters, a Bermondsey leather-dealer named Samuel Butcher. (Curnock in the *Standard Journal*, v, p. 92n says that he came from "Crucifix Lane".) In its turn, this chapel was replaced in 1808 by "Southwark Chapel" in Long Lane to the south, and became Sunday-school premises.<sup>6</sup> William Rendel, who had lifelong associations with the area, recalls that

In 1816 the old chapel had become on weekdays a "court of requests" for the recovery of small debts, and on Sundays a Methodist Sunday School.

He himself joined the Sunday school there in that year at the age of four. By the time he wrote his reminiscences at the age of 76, it had become a "Welsh dissenting chapel".<sup>6</sup> The Ordnance Survey map of 1872 marks it clearly as a "Welsh Chapel, Calvinistic Methodist". About 1909, H. J. Foster reported it as "still standing, externally very little altered", and "in the occupation of the Salvation Army". By 1914, Curnock (*loc. cit.*) speaks of it as a warehouse. When it was replaced by the present building I have not yet established. F. C. Gill's statement<sup>7</sup> is certainly wrong, and serves to show only that he failed to visit the site or to use up-to-date source-material.

JOHN A. VICKERS.

<sup>6</sup> *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1879, p. 724.

<sup>6</sup> William Rendel: *The Inns of Old Southwark* (1888), pp. 274-5.

<sup>7</sup> F. C. Gill: *In the steps of John Wesley* (1962), p. 67.

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Mr. Pendry Morris, one of our members, has written *The Chapel on the Hill: A History of Surbiton Hill Methodist Church, 1882-1982* (pp. xi. 92). This attractively-produced and illustrated book is much more than its sub-title claims. Beginning as far back as Domesday Book, it traces the development of Surbiton from a stretch of common land to a quiet village which grew with the coming of the railway into a London suburb. Against this background is told not only the history of Surbiton Hill church, but of its predecessors also.

The story includes much that is of human interest. One anecdote stands out as a clear warning to those not yet convinced of the vulnerability of local church records left in private hands. The earliest records of the Surbiton society were destroyed by the wife of the trustees' secretary "during one of the fits to which she was unfortunately subject". The solution to this all-too-common problem is ready to hand, but it is not the enforced celibacy of all Methodist office-holders.

The book, published by the author for the Surbiton Hill church council, costs £4 in hardback or £2 50p. in limp covers, and is obtainable from Mr. Arthur M. Lloyd, 46, Queen's Drive, Surbiton, Surrey. J.A.V.

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*My Life Story*, by T. Howden (1859-1948), Methodist local preacher of Thorganby (pp. 56), has been edited by Mr. C. R. Moody, from whom copies, price 70p. post free, may be had at Green Lodge, Brayton, Selby, Yorks.

## AN UNPUBLISHED HANDBOOK

**M**OST members of the Wesley Historical Society will be familiar with the title, if not the contents, of the *Free Methodist Handbooks*. There were three of these, published in 1877, 1887, and 1899 respectively, the first two being the work of William Boyden and Edwin Askew jointly, and issued on their sole responsibility. The third volume, the work of Edwin Askew alone, was an official publication of the United Methodist Free Churches. All of them contained lists of circuits and their ministers, ministers and their circuits, a brief synopsis of connexional history, lists of committees, etc., the amount of material made available increasing with each issue.

Within eight years of the last, the United Methodist Union had taken place—in 1907; and in 1915 it was considered that the time was ripe for a further issue. Consequently a sub-committee, appointed by the UM Connexional Committee, met at Beckett Street, Derby (William Griffith's old church), on 2nd March 1915. Those present included the Revs. J. B. Stedeford, Dr. George Packer, Dr. David Brook, Edwin Askew and Henry Hooks, and Messrs. W. S. Skelton and J. K. Baker, both of Sheffield.

Dr. Packer explained that the sub-committee had been formed for the express purpose of considering the publication of a connexional handbook; and Henry Hooks (the Book Steward) reported that he had talked over the matter with Edwin Askew, that they might come prepared with suggestions. After some discussion, it was agreed to include the following sections :

1. An Historic Sketch of the Union with names of Union Committee.
2. Brief description of Uniting Conference in City Road, 1907.
3. Doctrinal statement.
4. Provisions relating to Organizations and Constitutions of Meetings (*Min.* 1907) with such modifications and expositions as have been adopted by recent Conferences.
5. Circuit Membership as at 1916 Conference.
6. Ministers and their Circuits.
7. Ministers who have died in the work.
8. Brief biographical notes on the work of the most noteworthy.
9. Constitutions and functions of Connexional Committees.
10. Brief statement in relation to the Connexional Departments.
11. Scale of Annuities to Ministers and Widows with amounts payable on retirement or death.
12. Colleges with illustrations.
13. Chapels and Preaching Rooms.
14. Conferences since Union—with officers and chief items of legislation.

It was considered that such matter " could be got within a volume of about 240 to 270 pages or thereabouts ".

Consequently, the sub-committee resolved that such a handbook, with illustrations, should be issued some eighteen months later, its price not to exceed 2s. 6d. Naturally, Edwin Askew was asked to

be responsible for it, with assistance from Dr. Packer (Secretary of the Connexional Committee) and J. B. Stedeford (Secretary for Local Preachers' Studies, and destined to be elected President later that year). Mr. Askew was to receive out-of-pocket expenses and an honorarium of £25. The *Handbook*, when completed, was to be the property of the Publishing House; and the sub-committee was to "be continued in existence for consultative purposes" until the book was published.

For some reason this publication never saw the light of day—perhaps because of the exigencies of war-time conditions. How far preparation got it is probably impossible to say; but Edwin Askew died in 1918, and it may well be that no one else felt that he had inherited his mantle.

Twenty years or so ago, his daughter, Miss Askew of Derby (where he had retired) told me that she had a bundle of papers of her father's put together in preparation for this publication; but she could not find them when she made a search. It may well be that on his death all the material he had gathered and prepared was handed over to the sub-committee for the use of a successor. It would be interesting to know if these papers now repose at the Methodist Archives or elsewhere.

The United Methodist Church had to wait till the close of the chapter before much of the projected material was published in *The Story of the United Methodist Church* in November 1932.

The sub-committee members were :

J. B. Stedeford (served 1878-1929): BC President 1906; UM President 1915; held various secretaryships.

Dr. George Packer (served 1865-1920): MNC President 1895; UM President 1911; Connexional Secretary 1907-19; etc.

Dr. David Brook (served 1875-1933): UMFC President 1901; Principal of Victoria Park College 1913-18; etc.

Edwin Askew (served 1858-1918): UMFC President 1884, Secretary 1880-4; etc.

Henry Hooks (served 1884-1941): Book Steward 1912-32; Editor 1923-32; etc.

W. S. Skelton and J. K. Baker: Book-room Treasurers.

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE.

### "From Mow Cop to Peake": The PM 175th Anniversary

To mark the 175th anniversary of the first camp meeting on Mow Cop, 31st May 1807, our Yorkshire branch has organized an event at Trinity, Monkgate, York, on Saturday, 22nd May 1982. The programme will include lectures by Mr. G. E. Milburn and the Rev. T. D. Meadley, a performance of Thomas Mitchell's *Pioneers of Primitive Methodism* (containing "Ranter" hymns and tunes), and an exhibition, to be opened at 1.30 p.m., the proceedings ending, it is expected, around 7.30. It is hoped to produce a book of commemorative essays linked with the occasion.

This venture deserves widespread support from our members. Those requiring further details should write (stamped addressed envelope, please) to Mr. L. Savage, 63, Weetwood Lane, Leeds, LS16 5NH.

## BOOK NOTICES

*The Making of Post-Christian Britain: A history of the secularization of modern society*, by Alan D. Gilbert. (Longman (1980): pp. 175, hardback, £8 95p.; paper, £4 50p.)

Alan D. Gilbert has in his second major book turned from examining the relationship of church and chapel in nineteenth-century England to the wider issue of the secularization of modern British culture. He allows that secularizing tendencies have always been present in Western culture, since the strict separation of the sacred and the profane, characteristic of the Judæo-Christian tradition, has encouraged the autonomous development of the secular world. Dr. Gilbert also allows that both the Renaissance and the Reformation contributed to secularization, since they curtailed the influence of religious belief and religious authority respectively. But the author's main thesis is one familiar from the work of some—but by no means all—sociologists. It is that the secularization of modern Britain has occurred chiefly since and because of the Industrial Revolution, and Dr. Gilbert suggests briefly that the same pattern is to be found in other industrial countries. He clearly subscribes to the "God of the gaps" conception of religion, holding that as men's practical resources for life increase, so their religious belief and practice decline. He defines religion as the use of supernatural means to attain human ends, and, in keeping with this definition, he understands and explains secularization chiefly as the acquisition of more effective techniques for overcoming the powerlessness, poverty and contingency which in his view previously led men to resort to religion. He describes his approach to secularization as "neutral" and "social scientific", and, unlike some sociologists and theologians, refrains from understanding religion as a particular sense or experience. Students, teachers and the general reader will be grateful to Dr. Gilbert for stating his terms, his standpoint, and his view of the history of secularization so clearly and consistently in the early chapters of his book, but they may wonder a little about his insight into the nature of the religious and the secular.

The detailed account of the secularization of British culture which takes up the book's second part is likewise very clear and well-organized. In the introduction it is stated that the main purpose of the book is to add an historical dimension to the study of secularization, and indeed the discussion of the decline of community, the effects of politics and class, the relation of the churches to leisure, and the consequences of mobility and privatization, is a stimulating summary of relevant themes in recent social history. The brief treatment of the growth of secular culture in the nineteenth century which overlaps with his first book also blends lively historical detail with its social analysis. But concerning more recent developments in British culture the author has little to say. Sociologists such as Daniel Bell and Bernice Martin have argued that Western culture has changed significantly in the post-War period, and both argue that the so-called counter-culture incorporates many values inimical to the scientism, rationality, and secularism which Gilbert emphasizes in his account of the emergence of modern British culture. Gilbert leaves the impression with the reader that by the twentieth century a secular culture had simply arrived in Britain, and that from the point of view of the historian or the sociologist there is no more to be said. When earlier introducing the notions of industrialization and modernity, the author carefully points out that it is historically unsound to regard these as irreversible trends. Some

reference to the recent sociology of culture would perhaps have led Gilbert to modify his certainty concerning the arrival of a secular culture and to re-assert his historian's sense of the complexity of change. The term "post-Christian" is perhaps no help to the author in this. It makes for a striking title, and seems to denote a new stage of culture, but it is really no more specific or descriptive than the phrases "after lunch" or "before dinner".

In the final part of the book, Gilbert explores the position of the churches in post-Christian Britain, and uses the notions of accommodation and resistance to classify their responses to the secularization of culture. To accommodate is to surrender to the secular and abandon the distinctiveness of Christianity, and to resist is to retreat into a marginal sub-culture. This classification undoubtedly highlights some of the dilemmas of liberal Christians on the one hand and conservative evangelicals and sectarians on the other, but in some ways is unsatisfactory. The author's own previous book argues convincingly that nineteenth-century nonconformity was very much a sub-culture, so that this reaction to the wider society is not exclusively a post-Christian one. Perhaps it is just that the size of the sub-culture has diminished. The author also seems inhibited by his classification from mentioning what might be points of growth for Christianity—the suburban churches of the prosperous South-East, and the "charismatic movement", both of which seem to draw on the expanding middle classes of post-War Britain.

A final criticism of this useful, concise and forcefully-argued book is that it neglects changes in the structure of modern society. In his first book, Alan Gilbert argued from his reading of neglected primary sources that the change from artisan and domestic production in the nineteenth century undermined the occupational groups which formed the backbone of chapel life. It would be rewarding to pursue a similar inquiry into the social structure of the churches today and in the recent past. Alan Gilbert has addressed himself to the question of secularization and cultural change, but a contribution is needed to the question of secularization and structural change.

SARAH POTTER.

*John Wesley's England*, edited by Richard Bewes. (Hodder & Stoughton (1981): £5 95p.)

Dr. Skevington Wood's introductory note to this volume of extracts from Wesley's *Journal* describes its presentation, with perhaps a touch of ambiguity, as "distinctive". Whether the combination of print (for the editorial matter) and not-very-attractive script (for the *Journal* extracts) proves distinctive or just a typographical mish-mash is largely a matter of taste. Certainly the use of script instead of print means that you get much less of Wesley for your money (which may be why italic or some other distinctive type-face was not used?). The editorial matter is on the whole remarkably uninformative, and some of the illustrations (e.g. the Manchester Royal Exchange and Free Trade Hall and Stephenson's *Rocket*) are blatantly irrelevant. The lack of pagination at least provides an excuse for the absence of an index. (All we are offered is an expanded Contents list, tucked away at the end of the book and looking suspiciously like an afterthought.)

Altogether, very far from a "must" even for someone who does not yet possess any copy of Wesley's *Journal*. A good second-hand copy of *Wesley his own Biographer* would be a far better "buy".

JOHN A. VICKERS.

*John R. Mott, 1865-1955: A Biography*, by C. Howard Hopkins. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: National Board of the Young Men's Christian Associations by arrangement with Eerdmans (1980), pp. xvii. 816, \$22.50.)

This book, commissioned in celebration of the centenary of Mott's birth, gives us all that we have any right to expect from an official biography of someone who, though an exact contemporary of Kipling, is still much more difficult to see in proportion. It is a big book about a big man; like Mott's own speeches and writings, it handles vast amounts of detail in a disciplined and therefore readable way; like Mott himself, it is more concerned with events than with abstract ideas. The author's evident sympathy with his subject does not prevent him from giving a fair account of the few controversial episodes in Mott's career, and of adding his own discreet comment. To take the most striking example, his participation in the American government's mission to Russia in 1917, which damaged his influence in Europe after the War, is described as "in both fact and implication . . . hardly neutral" (p. 500).

This, then, is doubtless the definitive biography of Mott. It is based on archival collections at Yale and elsewhere, on numerous interviews, and less directly on the research which went into Hopkins's *History of the YMCA in North America* (1951). The seventy pages of notes are only a sample of the documentation preserved in two typescript copies of the book, deposited in American libraries. Errors of fact are few (British readers will be momentarily distracted by references to "Balliol Hall" (p. 443 and elsewhere)); misprints are rare and insignificant. Occasionally, one finds oneself asking: Why?—for example, why the watchword "The Evangelization of the World in this generation" fell into disuse (p. 322); or wishing that after seventy years the veil of confidentiality could be lifted (p. 293). Hopkins is not, however, any more than Mott himself, a man whom one can suspect of hushing things up; where sources are lacking, he usually tells us.

This is nevertheless not the definitive assessment of Mott's work. The author fully appreciates that Mott was a man of his time, aptly described by Howard Mumford Jones as "The Age of Energy" (p. 50); he does not distance himself sufficiently from his subject to explore the significance of Mott's rooting, in time and space, for the more recent history of the movements in which he was involved. The present-day reader may wish that he could roll history back to the point at which it was possible for people of deep evangelical piety to speak positively and without inhibitions about ecumenism and the social gospel, and where at least a lay Christian leader could avoid identification either as a liberal or as a conservative in theology. But some people today may find it more difficult than either Mott or his biographer to speak without qualification of a faith mission as "the Kansas heresy" (pp. 86, cf. 79); and the relationship between Mott and Gustav Warneck deserves further exploration.

References to Wesley and Methodism are understated in the index (see also, e.g., pp. 3, 8, 9, 21, 36, 94, 133, 144, 193, 203 f., 213, 277, 282, 319), yet it is clear that, though Mott remained throughout his life a faithful Methodist, Methodism was only one of the influences which made him what he was, and by no means the most powerful. We should ask rather what Mott gave to World Methodism, and no one who has heard old missionaries speak about the Student Volunteer Movement can underestimate our debt.

PAUL ELLINGWORTH.

*Power and Piety: The Origins of Religious Revival in the early Eighteenth Century*, by W. R. Ward.<sup>1</sup> (Reprint from the *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, vol. lxiii (1980), pp. 24, £1 25p.)

A few years ago Professor Ward turned conventional early nineteenth-century church history on its head in his book on *Religion and Society*, making one feel that the old scenery could never be quite the same again when viewed from Manchester instead of from Lambeth and Oxford. A single lecture could not do quite the same for the Evangelical Revival, but it certainly provides a fresh perspective which is long overdue. Professor Ward justly claims that English historians have been too parochial and have neglected the clues in the tangled history of continental Pietism (though one excuse is that most of the material remains in German, and another is that German church historians have not been very kind or perceptive about Pietism until relatively recently). Professor Ward's thesis is that the roots of the Revival should be sought in the "shared anxieties" of the early eighteenth-century Protestant world which gave rise to "shared expectations" and so to "the random outbreak of religious revival all the way from Carinthia to New England". Protestants in the Catholic Habsburg lands developed a simple piety, whilst minimal ecclesiastical institutions and circumstances in the early eighteenth century stimulated them into activities like a pre-view of Methodist revivalism right down to the language of class meeting, field preacher, and even camp meeting. These circumstances were the rivalry between Protestant Prussia and the Catholic Habsburgs, the Prussians using the Pietists of Halle as missionaries and colonizers, and Habsburg persecution leading to extensive migrations of enthusiasts across Europe and in some cases on to America. Add to this the Pietist challenge to conventional establishment religion, the familiar story of the Moravians, the Hanoverian connexion of the English kings from 1714, and the strands linking the international revival seem to come together.

Professor Ward's picture is not a simple one of diffusion from a Central European source, though clearly he thinks this kind of personal migration is an important stimulant. It is also a matter of the Protestant world at large being made aware of threats to its position by news from the continent; and, one may add, of parallel anxieties and feelings of guilt and betrayal over the spiritual inadequacies of their churches being felt by future revivalists. Local circumstances and responses to this naturally varied. Professor Ward sees "resistance" as a common political and social attitude in his Europeans (and he hints at a relationship between resistance to Walpole and early Methodism). But he acknowledges that religious renewal could also be an instrument of state policy. This suggests that whilst Professor Ward rightly points to common concerns in the Revival and to the importance of its continental sources, we also need to know much more about variations in its local roots. A good deal is now known about these in America, and Professor Ward's footnotes offer much material for the continent of Europe. The English situation remains enigmatic, and one hopes that Professor Ward himself will develop this side further. In the meantime he has unveiled a fascinating picture of unfamiliar territory, and has contributed a perspective on the Revival as a whole which is much more far-reaching and weighty than the modest length of his essay might suggest.

HENRY D. RACK.

<sup>1</sup> The Wesley Historical Society Lecture for 1979, delivered by Professor Ward in Wesley's Chapel, London.

*Methodism and the Revolt of the Field: A study of the Methodist contribution to agricultural trade unions in East Anglia, 1872-96*, by Nigel Scotland. (Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., 17A, Brunswick Road, Gloucester, GL1 1HG: pp. 296, £10.)

George Edwards, the Norfolk agricultural trade unionist, described in his autobiography how, in 1908, he drew up the programme for a Sunday meeting to be held at East Winch. Edwards, a Primitive Methodist, was concerned "that the meeting should be of strictly religious character", and advertised it as a camp meeting with addresses. The notice ended: "Sankey's Hymns will be sung." On the day of the meeting, Edwards took as the texts for his addresses "The labourer is worthy of his hire" and "Thy kingdom come". Although the mixture of religion with politics was denounced by some, "others said they had never heard the Gospel preached like it before, and demands for Sunday meetings came in rapidly". As long as Edwards was responsible for them, "they were always conducted on strictly religious lines".

It is clear from this account that the success of this type of meeting was based on a common cultural experience rooted in the language and forms of revivalism and shared by both the speaker and those who came to his meetings. The consciousness of the Norfolk agricultural labourers had been permeated with them to such an extent that Edwards was able to offer this form of union activity and find it accepted by those who listened to him. This incident serves as an example of a body of literature which argues that trade union leaders like Edwards were not uncommon and that links between Methodism and trade union activities were strong. The work of Dr. Robert F. Wearmouth is an example of this type of Methodist historiography which is continued in Dr. Scotland's interesting book. Through a detailed examination of Methodist records in Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk he seeks to assess the Methodist contribution to agricultural trade unionism.

The problem in dealing with this important question is not only to measure the extent of the links, but also to determine their nature. This book's strength lies in the way it tackles the first part of the problem. The author has performed a valuable service by examining Methodist church records and matching these to what is known about the leadership of the agricultural trade unions. He has identified 486 Methodists out of a total of 949 union leaders who were active as speakers, chairmen at branch meetings, or as officials. In a fascinating biographical index of agricultural union leaders in Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk we meet such individuals as John Topley. He was born at Coningsby (Lincs) in 1839, worked as an agricultural labourer, and was a Primitive Methodist local preacher who later joined the Wesleyans. As a result of Dr. Scotland's work he emerges from the pages of the local and trade union press, as well as Methodist baptismal registers and quarterly meeting minute-books, as a person who played a role in both church and trade union. However, if the extent to which men like Topley were involved in trade unionism can be measured, the nature of these links is less clear. The central question is whether these men were trade unionists because they were Methodists—that is, whether there is a causal link between the two facts—or whether their Methodism and their trade union activities sprang from a different—although perhaps common—background, so that the fact that they were both Methodists and trade unionists is coincidental.

The author's discussion of the rhetoric used by agricultural trade unionists, their organization, and their millennial expectations, could be seen

as strengthening his case for the direct link between Methodism and trade union activism. Yet many of the aspects of trade union life which he attributes to Methodism were not the sole property of either the unionists or the various branches of the Methodist churches. The single-minded pursuit of evidence to support the thesis on which the book is based has produced valuable material, but has also limited the author's viewpoint and made him too dismissive of other organizations and influences at work in the countryside in the period under discussion. When George Ball spoke at Crowland (Lincs) in June 1872, he urged the labourers there "to cultivate a spirit of self-respect . . .". Such a spirit owed much to Methodist influences, but it was not the exclusive preserve of those who attended country chapels. There were other independent life-styles which were not based exclusively on Methodism. The friendly societies, for example, however much temperance advocates might deplore it, were closely associated with the public-house, and there were men who would participate in their activities as well as being "hearers" on at least some occasions in the chapels' year. They were fully committed to neither the public-house nor the chapel, and are less easy to identify than those men who stood out because of their clear and sometimes uncompromising allegiances. It might also have been interesting to have had a more detailed discussion of any differences between the Free Methodists, the Primitives and the Wesleyans, as well as between the ethos of individual trade unions, which may have differed from place to place with different types of men assuming leadership. This would have made a larger book than the present attractive and interestingly-illustrated volume. In the material which is presented here, we have a valuable contribution to the discussion of the role of Methodism in the social life of the late Victorian countryside.

R. W. AMBLER.

*Belmont's Portias: Victorian Nonconformists and Middle-class Education for Girls*, by Clyde Binfield. (Dr. Williams's Library Lecture (1981): pp. 35, 80p., obtainable from the Library, 14, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1H 0AG.)

Dr. Binfield provides a haunting glimpse into the world of Victorian nonconformist education for the daughters of the middle classes from the times when few professions other than those of governess and teacher were open to them to the far more bracing and open-ended opportunities of the Edwardian era. Inevitably the author, as an ex-Congregationalist and a Kentishman, selects not a few of his examples from the Independent tradition and the Home Counties, but he is also in this lecture as elsewhere fascinated by the cross-denominational ties fostered by marriages among Victorian dissenters, and has an important section on Hannah Elizabeth Pipe, the Wesleyan foundress and long-serving head of Laleham House, Clapton Park.

So entertaining and instructive is Dr. Binfield's selection of just a few schools from what must have been a great number that we might request from his pen a full-scale treatment of the subject. This could include an account of the Unitarian contribution only just touched on in these pages: how useful it would be to contrast the early years of Channing School with those of Milton Mount, of which Dr. Binfield gives a touching account in his lecture! He might also stretch his theme to include the considerable nonconformist contribution to women's higher education.

IAN SELLERS.

*The Fall of Zion: Northern Chapel Architecture and its future*, by Kenneth Powell. (Save Britain's Heritage Series (1980), obtainable from 3, Park Square West, London, N.W.1 4LJ: £2 50p. post free.)

This overdue *cri de cœur* for northern chapels will be welcomed by all who value the built environment. Years ago the late Clough Williams Ellis (creator of Port Meirion) summed up one of my student designs with the single word: "How?". It looked good on paper, but was impossible to build. Ken Powell may well provoke the same reaction—How? The desirability of preserving for posterity the best-designed of our historic northern chapels is unchallengeable—if only to confute the implication of "Can any good come out of Nonconformity?". The book is full of fine illustrations and (apart from adding aisles to City Road chapel) excellent information.

New towns, new roads and new housing estates have obliterated many fine old chapels—for posterity! The main reason for the demise of many others is lack of finance in days of static congregations and unprecedented building repair costs. Powell recognizes this, though all too briefly, and pays tribute to efforts by the Methodist Church to face the dilemma. Yet those most sensitive to the future of our best church buildings must reiterate—How? The pittance available from the Department of the Environment (£15,000 initial grant to the £900,000 needed for City Road chapel) may be explicable in terms of the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement, but hard-pressed managing trustees of many a large old chapel are no less subject to their own PSBR (property sector borrowing restriction). The author may be correct when he says, "There is no real conflict between preservation and profit", but there is a very real conflict between the conservation and charity claims on limited resources.

Moreover, Section 4 of the 1976 Methodist Church Act requires the resources of Methodism to be used for advancement of "the Christian faith in accordance with the doctrinal standards and the discipline of the Methodist Church". In fact, within the terms of this purpose, prodigious efforts have been made in London, Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Barnsley and Doncaster (to name but a few places) to preserve some of our finest chapels. That other efforts have been less successful is unfortunate but inevitable while the *raison d'être* of the Church is the saving of people. It remains an anomaly that on compulsory acquisition by a local authority a new church can be erected under equivalent reinstatement compensation, but on listing (compulsory preservation) by the DOE the charity has to meet the cost. Listing is probably unique in our legal system in that there is no provision whatever for any appeal from the decision.

GEORGE W. DOLBEY.

*Lincolnshire Returns of the Census of Religious Worship, 1851*, edited by R. W. Ambler. (The Lincoln Record Society (1979): pp. xcv. 317, £10.)

The 1851 Census of Religious Worship—the only national attempt to quantify churchgoing in Britain—is increasingly used by local historians of all kinds, as the bibliography published in these *Proceedings*, xli, pp. 175-82 shows. Plans for publishing transcripts of returns for a number of counties, in whole or in part, have made variable progress, and one of the latest of the handful that have been completed is that for Lincolnshire.

For a number of years Lincolnshire Methodist historians have had the benefit of the Rev. William Leary's transcripts of the Methodist entries from the county's returns, but now Mr. Ambler puts them, and many other

historians, in his debt, for the details for all denominations have been faithfully transcribed in 278 pages, supported by 37 pages of indexes and a 95-page introduction. This covers the Census Report itself, and its strengths and drawbacks as a source for local and church history, as well as such matters as attendance-patterns, church and chapel accommodation and social conditions and religious worship, together with sections on the Anglican clergy, the "Old Dissent", Roman Catholicism, and the Mormons. The sections on nonconformity deal largely with Methodism (with passing glances at other denominations), and the Wesleyan Reform movement merits a section to itself.

The use and value of the Census as an historical record is the subject of debate among historians, and for an analysis of this question the reader is referred to the relevant chapter (with its excellent list of references) in *The Census and Social Structure*, edited by Richard Lawton (F. Cass, 1978); meanwhile Mr. Ambler and the Lincoln Record Society are to be congratulated on an excellent, well-organized and well-bound volume, and their example is one that could well be emulated by the record societies of other counties.

J. S. ENGLISH.

*A Collection of Tunes, set to Music, as they are commonly sung at the Foundery. London: . . . MDCCXLII.* [A Facsimile, with explanatory notes]: pp. 40, 50p. plus 20p. postage, obtainable from the Rev. Bryan F. Spinney, 17, First Avenue, St. Anne's Park, Bristol, BS4 4DU.

Readers of the first chapter of the late Dr. F. B. Westbrook's lecture, *Some Early Methodist Tune Books*, will be grateful to Mr. Spinney for producing this facsimile of the earliest of John Wesley's three collections of tunes, and thereby showing page by page what Dr. Westbrook could only describe, with but one illustration. He is able to explain, too, the volume- and page-references which Wesley placed at the head of each tune. The four pages of "Brief Notes on the Tunes" which conclude the booklet are models of clarity, enabling us to recognize the sources of tunes still in use today. The rugged appearance of the 1742 printing, representing typesetters' early efforts to enable music to be printed from movable characters (though engraved music was known long before) make us appreciate the great improvements in hymn- and tune-book production which have taken place since Wesley's day.

ALFRED A. TABERER.

*How to write a local history of Methodism*, third revised edition, edited by E. Alan Rose. (Wesley Historical Society (1981): pp. 24, 50p. plus postage.)

No member of this Society will need an introduction to this invaluable aid to local research by Wesley F. Swift. It has been re-issued several times since its first appearance as an article in these *Proceedings* in 1954. The passage of time has necessitated a number of further changes and additions—some of them substantial, such as the new locations of the Public Record Office and our own Archives Centre. Alan Rose has incorporated these into the new edition, together with new sections on maps and oral history and a bibliography brought up to date. At 50p. it is still the local history bargain of the year, which will save its owner several times its cost in sparing him wasted postages, travel, and avoidable frustration. It remains a major contribution to the improvement of the level of local Methodist historical research and writing.

JOHN A. VICKERS.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

## 1351. THE DALKEITH METHODIST CHAPEL.

The history of the former Methodist cause at Dalkeith has recently received attention in these *Proceedings* (xli, pp. 104-17). However, following the formation of the Edinburgh and Forth circuit by the amalgamation of the Edinburgh (Nicolson Square) and Edinburgh (Mission) circuits at the Conference of 1778, the clearing of the circuit safe at Nicolson Square revealed two documents which throw some additional light on the early history of Zechariah Yewdall's chapel at Dalkeith.

It will be recalled that initially Yewdall alone was responsible for the whole property, and not until 1789 did he draw up a deed of disposition to trustees. Re-reading the details of the disposition to ministerial nominees throws up an additional problem, for although John Barber was "second man" in the Edinburgh circuit 1788-9, James Bogie did not re-appear in Scotland (after a year at Berwick upon Tweed) until the autumn of 1789, and then as "second man" in the Glasgow circuit. Just why this curious situation existed is not clear, but it may be related to the separation of Glasgow from the Edinburgh circuit following the Conference of 1789. Some additional explanation may be found in the fact that during James Bogie's superintendency at Berwick upon Tweed (1788-9) Yewdall was there as his colleague.

But to return to the documents: the first, dated 10th February 1795, is an "Estimate of Intended Alterations in a Chapel at Dalkeith according to a Plan" (which unfortunately has not survived). However, the very scale of these alterations implies a considerable re-arrangement of the chapel premises which antedate those mentioned by Valentine Ward in 1815. Included among the items are 5 rods ( $27\frac{1}{2}$  yards) of rubble building at £5 per rod (£25), together with 167 yards of brick-on-edge divisions at 1s. 4d. per yard, 56 yards of joisting and flooring at 4s. 6d. per yard, etc. The whole tone of the estimate suggests a separation of a house from the chapel premises proper—perhaps even the construction of a manse for the Dalkeith chapel.

The second document is the account for this work, from which it is clear that James Bogie had instructed the plans for these alterations. There was, however, considerable delay in putting this work in hand. The account includes a number of minor items of repair in 1794 and 1795; but not until November 1796 is there clear evidence that the work had started by the entry:

	£	s.	d.
To 10 hours of a joiner erecting and taking down a scaffold			
in Chapel—and nails	...	...	2 10
& To 15 days of a Mason slapping doors, windows and vents			
@ 2s. 2d.	...	...	1 12 6

Slates then cost 3s. 4d. per lineal yard laid, and hewn masonry was priced at 6d. per lineal yard.

The account presented by Charles Sanderson on 11th July 1797 was fully discharged by James Bogie immediately before he relinquished the superintendency of the Edinburgh circuit (to which he had been appointed in 1794) on 21st August 1797.

What remains difficult to understand is why this small country chapel required major alterations within seven years of its completion in 1789 and a further alteration some twenty-five years later in 1814-15 (referred

to in Valentine Ward's *Free and Candid Strictures on Methodism*). Ward's comments on the latter suggest that the chapel was removed to the first floor of the premises, the ground floor being converted into shops. Did the 1796 alterations provide a manse on the chapel site? In the absence of the plan, it is impossible to say.

ALAN J. HAYES.

#### 1352. A GUARD-BOOK FIND.

A rather exciting "find" at the Methodist Division of Property, Manchester, in the form of a guard-book of preaching-plans is the result of a complete overhaul of the divisional material. This book, along with many others, will be deposited in Archives after a careful examination of its contents, which will be reported in more detail in *Cirplan*.

The book is the work of Joseph Ward of Sheffield, one-time manager and director of the firm of Thomas W. Ward Ltd., Master Cutler (1931-2), and in Methodist circles a member of the United Methodist Free Churches. No evidence has so far been found for the commissioning of the work, but it is clear that Joseph Ward sent letters to all circuit superintendents of the uniting Churches which formed the United Methodist Church in 1907. It appears from an examination of the book that almost all superintendents replied, either by stating that there was no plan to send or by sending one or two covering the period prior to and immediately following that Union.

The result is a book made up in alphabetical order of Districts containing all the preaching-plans Mr. Ward received. They are all in excellent condition, and such a collection is the more valuable because it has been bound in a large book with the utmost care and with minimum folding of the leaves. Where there is no plan, there is preserved the letter of the superintendent stating the reason—usually because there was only one church in the circuit.

Here then are plans of the Bible Christians, Methodist New Connexion and United Methodist Free Churches, and almost all the United Methodist plans for the first quarter following September 1907. It ought to be stated, though, that owing to the size of the volume and the binding, it would be almost impossible to make a Xerox copy of any of its contents.

WILLIAM LEARY.

#### 1353. JAMES EVERETT'S "HISTORICAL SKETCHES".

In 1823 James Everett, having published volume I of *Historical Sketches of Wesleyan Methodism in Sheffield and its Vicinity*, apparently abandoned his intention to publish a second volume because of the poor sales of the first. However, a series of letters to James Montgomery written between 1825 and 1827 (now at Sheffield Library) make it clear that he was changing and did change his mind while living in Manchester and producing his Manchester history. On 10th November 1827 he wrote:

If anything I have done or am engaged in can excite a moment's interest I have to state that I have published the first part of Methodism in Manchester on a similar plan to that of Sheffield, and that the second volume of Methodism in Sheffield, the first few sheets of which were in your press, is now passing through the press of a Manchester printer.

But there is no record of a completed book or of a manuscript. Does anyone know of any letter or document subsequent to 1827 in which Everett (or anyone else) refers to volume II and its fate?

Any information would be welcomed by Mr. N. Flavell, 45, Carr Bank Lane, Nether Green, Sheffield, S11 7FB.

## 1354. "BISHOPS BY BALLOT".

The recent publication of F. V. Mills's fine book *Bishops by Ballot: An Eighteenth Century Ecclesiastical Revolution* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1978) raises several questions in Methodist history.

Mills highlights William White's pamphlet of 1782, *The Case of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States Considered*. White was prepared for ordination by presbyters to get his scheme off the ground.

It will not be difficult to prove that a temporary departure from episcopacy would be warranted by the [Church of England] doctrines, by her practice and by the principles on which episcopal government is asserted. Cranmer, Hooker. Whitgift, Ussher and Hoadly are cited, as well as the Marian exiles! *The Case* was circulated in England. *Did Wesley read it?* Can the Wesley-Coke ordinations be linked with White's scheme rendered needless by Samuel Seabury's consecration in Aberdeen in November 1784? Can Wesley's Scottish ordinations be seen in the light of the overseas clergy Act of 1786 (26 Geo. III c. 84), which forbade Anglican priests from the United States to preside at Holy Communion in England? What Ronald Knox gibed at as "Gretna Green ordinations", only valid north of "the Border", seem rather similar—a bit like the restrictions imposed on Anglican women priests now! More and more, I suspect, we should see Wesley as very much a latitudinarian Anglican in some of his views on Church order. Perhaps White is as important as Stillingfleet and King. Coke was reading Bishop Hoadly on the way to America to ordain Francis Asbury! Maybe we need a new look at the whole matter of the "grand climacteric year"! The rest of the story of White's involvement in Methodist history has been told by John Vickers in his biography of Coke, especially the abortive White-Wesley correspondence and a possible fusion of Methodist and Episcopalian churches, for which White's *Case* was wheeled out again.

J. MUNSEY TURNER.

## 1355. JOHN WESLEY AND "THE POOR MALABARIANS".

Writing in 1748 to Vincent Perronet (*Letters*, ii, pp. 292-311), John Wesley gives a "plain account" of the people called Methodists, and in paragraph 11 of the first section (p. 295) defends himself against the objection of making a schism by saying that

(1) These were not Christians before they were thus joined. Most of them were barefaced heathens. (2) Neither are they Christians from whom you suppose them to be divided. . . . What! drunken Christians! cursing and swearing Christians! lying Christians! cheating Christians! If these are Christians at all, they are devil Christians, as the poor Malabarians term them.

From where did John Wesley learn about these devil-possessed Christians of the part of India then known as Malabar?

In 1709 a book containing a translation of the letters of B. Ziegenbalg and H. Plütschau, the pioneer Protestant missionaries to India, was published in London: *The Propagation of the Gospel in the East: being an account of the success of two Danish Missionaries, late sent to the East Indies, for the conversion of the heathens in Malabar*. John's elder sister, Emilia, found this book in her father's study at Epworth during his long absence in London (1711-12), and read it to her mother. Susanna Wesley was so affected that she resolved to begin missionary work with her own children. This took the form of her private conferences with each child.

Although I have not read this book, of which there were second and third editions in 1714 and 1718, or *An Account of the . . . Malabarians* (1717), it is evident that the writers were calling the Tamils Malabarians and referring to Tamilnad, formerly Madras Presidency, on the east coast of South India, as Malabar. When the Portuguese, who first landed on the west or Malabar coast of South India in 1498, reached the east or Coromandel coast, they thought that Tamil, the language spoken there, was the same as Malayalam, and wrongly called the people Malabarians. The first Protestant missionaries (1706) continued to call them by this name. It is possible therefore that the Wesleys learned something about the beginning of missionary work in Tamilnad from their mother or from these books.

A lecturer from the Women's Christian College in Madras, Mrs. Anjala Richard, visited England recently to research for a doctoral thesis in Madras University on the religious poetry of the Wesleys and Vedanayagam Sastriar (1774-1864), whose lyrics filled the early Tamil Christian lyric-books in the same way that the hymns of the Wesleys filled the old Methodist hymn-books. She wrote to me that Dr. Francis Frost's article on "Biblical Imagery and Religious Experience in the Hymns of the Wesleys" (*Proceedings*, xlii, pp. 158-66) was "very, very valuable", because these were the qualities she was concentrating on in her study of the two poets. She was not a little surprised to learn that John Wesley knew about the Tamils, even if he called them Malabarians. One wonders how much more of the copious information about Hinduism in Tamilnad and its devotional literature, sent by Ziegenbalg to A. H. Francke (1663-1727), his old teacher at Halle, was so disseminated that it reached the Wesleys?

NORMAN C. SARGANT

(Church of South India, 1947-72).

1356. R. C. BRACKENBURY: INFORMATION SOUGHT.

I have recently resumed my study of the life and activities of Robert Carr Brackenbury (1752-1818) and of his wife Sarah (née Holland), who died in 1847. I have accumulated over the years a considerable amount of material about Brackenbury's life, and I hope that I have consulted all the major and most likely sources of information. However, I am sure that I may well have missed a great deal of material from a variety of sources which may not have been indexed. There must be many references to the couple in accounts of chapel openings, subscription lists (especially for missions), obituaries of friends and of Brackenbury's converts, and in biographies of Methodist preachers who served in Lincolnshire, particularly at Horncastle and Spilsby, and also in Portland and the Channel Islands. The couple were also active in Leicestershire and other areas, and frequented Weymouth and Bath.

Because of Brackenbury's insistence on the destruction of his papers, it is unlikely that letters to him can be found, but letters from him to others may have survived. His wife also was obsessed with anonymity, but I have discovered letters from her which throw a great deal of light upon the character of her husband.

I will gladly refund postage to any member of the Society who can supply information on Brackenbury. No reference is too trivial—his life is such a puzzle that everything matters. His unique place in the history of Methodism makes it all the more desirable that the story of his life should be put together. Correspondence should be addressed to me at 3, Merleswen, Dunholme, Lincoln.

TERENCE R. LEACH.

## 1357. METHODIST BELLS.

Mrs. E. V. Chapman's account of King's Cross Methodist church, Halifax, contains details of a bell in the old chapel. (The building was sold for £180 in 1878.) A fine-toned tenor, weighing 292 lb., founded by William Dobson of Downham (Norfolk), it had this inscription :

TO CALL FOLK TO CHURCH IN TIME — I CHIME.  
WHEN MIRTH AND JOY ARE ON THE WING — I RING.  
WHEN FROM THE BODY PARTS THE SOUL — I TOLL.

J. MUNSEY TURNER.

## 1358. THOMAS GREAVES: INFORMATION SOUGHT.

Thomas Greaves was an itinerant preacher, 1790-1801. We have seen records of him baptizing children at Nottingham, 1795-6. He baptized at Mansfield also. The circuits in which he served were :

1790	Chatham	1795	Nottingham
1791	Derby	1796	Macclesfield
1792	Nottingham	1797-8	Macclesfield (supernumerary)
1793-4	Castle Donington	1798	Sheffield

His name is listed among those attending the London Conference of 1792 and the Manchester Conference of 1795.

I should appreciate from any reader further information about Thomas Greaves, especially his residence when he was preaching in Nottingham. From the circuits mentioned it looks as though he resided in Nottinghamshire or Derbyshire.

CHARLES GRAVES, D.Theol.,  
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## 1359. METHODISM IN SUSSEX.

As I am gathering material with the intention of writing some account of Methodism in Sussex, I should be glad of any circuit plans, brochures, local histories, etc., which friends may be able to let me have, together with information about diaries or other manuscript material which may be available. Postage will be paid, and items loaned promptly returned.

ROWLAND C. SWIFT,  
By the Wood, Danehill, West Sussex, RH17 7HE.

The title *Order! Order!* given to a recent book by Ramon Hunston and published by Marshall, Morgan & Scott (pp. 145, £1 60p.) provides at once the clue to the identity of the personage mirrored in its pages: it is none other than our own Methodist The Right Hon. George Thomas, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons. From start to finish it is a book easy to read and enthralling too. The tale is told simply and vividly, bringing out all those traits we all have come to recognize in this great-heart bachelor Welshman. Both the private and public life is revealed; what the writer knows of George, and much, too, of what the Speaker actually said. The political career is particularly revealing, but all the time the Methodist preacher is there. The mother-son relationship is explored, but the manliness of George is always apparent. It is a human story clearly told, and the book must rank as one of the best in contemporary Methodist biography. It is not based on private papers, but is rather the work of a writer who has personal knowledge of his subject and yet hides himself behind the man he wants us all to see.

W.L.