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PIETY, PROFIT AND PATERNALISM

Methodists in Business in the North-East of England, c. 1760-1920

[The choice of this subject was prompted in part by an invitation to take part in the seminar on "Christianity and Business" held in March 1982 at the Business History Unit of the London School of Economics. I am grateful to Dr. David Jeremy for that invitation, and for making it possible for me subsequently to see several typescript entries for the forthcoming *Dictionary of Business Biography* (of which he is joint editor). Other acknowledgements and thanks go to the following: Mr. W. R. Irving, Mr. W. Hodge, Mr. J. C. Watson, the Rev. Bernard W. Blanchard, the Rev. John A. Beardsley, Mr. R. Brown and Dr. Joyce Bellamy, for help with Hull businessmen; Mrs. Olga Reckitt of Bridlington; Professor W. R. Ward of Durham University; the late Mr. Kirtland Hinton of Hintons Ltd. of Thornaby; Mr. and Mrs. E. Willits of Middlesbrough; Mrs. J. Dodds of Eaglescliffe; a number of friends and colleagues in Sunderland; the staffs of various libraries and record offices in Hull, York, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Stockton, Sunderland, South Shields, Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, and the John Rylands University Library of Manchester; the editor of the *Methodist Recorder*. Some of the research costs were met by Sunderland Polytechnic. Footnotes to the text have been kept to a minimum in view of the fact that references are given for each of the biographical entries in the Appendix.—G.E.M.]

AMONG some items of Wesleyana which came to me recently was a copy of a little Wesleyan diary for the year 1813. This *Methodist Pocket Book* was an official connexional publication, sold through the chapels, and was obviously something that a self-respecting Wesleyan layman would be likely to possess. With no written entries, this particular copy appears at first sight a disappointing historical document. In fact, the layout of the diary, and the printed information which it offers, are in themselves very revealing, especially with regard to Wesleyan attitudes to business at that date. A brief description will illustrate this, and also serve very well to introduce our theme. Each week of the year in the pocket-book is allotted a double-page spread—on the left a diary

page, headed by a biblical text and a verse of a hymn, and opposite a page ruled in columns for weekly cash accounting. Piety on the left, profit on the right! Paternalism also finds a place, in the shape of a detailed table of daily morning and evening lessons for family worship. This would of course normally be led by the father of the family, and attended, in addition to his wife and children, by his servants and probably some of his employees also. The position of this lectionary, squeezed in between a commercial ready-reckoner and a set of annuity tables and a list of the London banks, is illuminating. The quaint and rather naïve way in which this little book juxtaposes religion and commerce throughout its pages, obviously assuming them to be dominant and equal concerns in the mind of its owner, is a lively reminder of the existence of considerable business interests among Wesleyans by the early years of the nineteenth century, and of a frankly-accepted accommodation between Methodism and the market-place.

I

THIS fact is our starting-point. But there is a deeper implication to be reckoned with. This *Methodist Pocket Book* can be taken as a reminder not only that Methodism and business could and did live together, but also of a conviction that those who were in business needed religion in order to counteract worldly and material temptations belonging to their profession. The mixing together in the diary of religious and commercial matters might indeed be seen as a parable of the way in which religion ought to permeate the daily concerns and ambitions of the businessman. Those Methodists who took this to heart would certainly find that religion and business did not live together in a state of easy compromise, but rather in a state of fruitful tension.

John Wesley's own position on this matter is illuminating. On the one hand, he said and did much which encouraged Methodists to conclude that a successful career in industry or trade was not incompatible with Methodism. In fact the Puritan ethic, to which Methodism gave a powerful new impetus, tended, as Wesley clearly realized, to foster the very characteristics which helped men to succeed in business enterprises. Moreover, he recruited a growing number of businessmen, found them enormously helpful to his cause, and leaned on them hard. There was indeed a good deal of mutual admiration between Wesley and them—the qualities of the successful evangelist and the successful businessman (energy, dedication, organization) being not dissimilar. On the other hand, Wesley warned constantly and passionately, especially in his later years, of the dangers of commercialism and materialism. Business life, and the accumulation of riches that resulted from it, he urged, were safe only for those who accepted in a most stringent manner the Gospel injunctions to self-renunciation and philanthropy, and who saw their possessions as a trust to be held in stewardship.

Wesley in fact revealed in his words and actions the tensions

which he himself obviously experienced on this particular question. He admired successful and religious businessmen; he needed them, and Methodism needed them. Yet he feared that the very wealth they were making would, if not consecrated to unselfish uses, undermine their own Christian loyalties and the religious movement which he had built up. Wesley had to live with this tension, as with a good many others. He was, as we know, a master at holding apparent opposites together. When the contradictions in his mind became too acute he could resolve them by a pious ejaculation such as that contained in a letter dated 24th January 1760 to George Merryweather of Yarm, referring to another rich man of that town: "Even the rich *may* enter the kingdom; for with God all things are possible"! In practice this is how a lot of rich Methodists must also have resolved the conflict between the competing claims of business and religion in their own lives. Nevertheless, the tension between the two would not go away, and it raised sharp questions about the integrity and generosity of Methodist businessmen in Wesley's time and for years to come—questions to which we shall return later.

II

GEORGE MERRYWEATHER, of whom mention has just been made, was an outstanding example of one of those affluent early Methodists whose support and friendship meant so much to Wesley and to Methodism in the North-East. A Yarm merchant, he nurtured the infant society in that town, made available a hay-loft behind his house as its first meeting-place, took a leading part in the erection of the fine octagon chapel there in 1763, acted as Wesley's local agent and correspondent, offered generous hospitality to Wesley and other travelling preachers, and was obviously held in high esteem and affection by them. In the early period of Methodism recruits of the wealth and social position of Merryweather were unusual; but as the movement grew, so did the proportion of its prosperous members, who, if they were not affluent to start with, became so by seizing the commercial and manufacturing opportunities offered by the Industrial Revolution, and finding in the process that the personal and social qualities fostered by evangelical religion were well suited to their entrepreneurial ventures.

The growth of a Methodist commercial and industrial class continued throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, and it affected all the divisions of Methodism, even the most proletarian of all—the Primitives—from an early date. In this respect, Methodism may be seen as simply continuing and extending a process already well established in the other older nonconformist denominations. The role played by dissenters in the industrial development of Britain is a well-worn theme of social history. Yet Methodist entrepreneurs have not been examined with the same kind of enthusiasm. There are various possible explanations why

¹ *Letters*, iv, p. 83.

this should be so. It might be because Methodism, due to its later emergence, is thought not to have made significant contributions to the pioneering work of the Industrial Revolution. It might be because of the relatively low numbers of really rich Methodist businessmen compared, say, with the other dissenters, especially the Quakers—a tiny denomination by comparison.² It might simply be due to a feeling (mistaken, as I hope to show) that the lives of Methodist businessmen do not offer a particularly interesting or fruitful field of inquiry.

Some Methodist leaders of industry and commerce are of course familiar and famous, though their Methodist allegiances are not always recalled today. We might mention for instance men such as Richard Trevithick (1771-1833), the locomotive pioneer; Sir Josiah Guest (1785-1852), the great Welsh ironmaster; Jesse Boot (1850-1931) of Nottingham, founder of Boots Chemists; the Chubb dynasty of locksmiths, whose safes are found in many a chapel vestry; Joseph Hepworth (1834-1911), the clothier; John Mackintosh (1868-1920), of toffee fame; Sir Isaac Holden (1807-97), the textile magnate; Sir Henry Lunn (1859-1939), founder of a famous travel agency; Sir William Hartley (1846-1922), of the great Aintree jam factory; and Joseph Rank (1854-1943), who produced enough flour to make bread for a sizeable proportion of the population, many of whom no doubt spread on it Hartley's jam! But these men did not stand alone. They were indeed the mountain-peaks of Methodist business achievement, but below them stood ranged a considerable number of men who never attained or aspired to such heights, but who nevertheless achieved varying degrees of affluence and made useful and often significant contributions to English industrial, commercial and social development, as well as being interesting for their Methodist associations. There does seem to be value in refreshing our awareness of these, in assessing the range and importance of their achievements, and in examining the influence of Methodism upon them and their own influence upon Methodism. This is what is attempted in this lecture. For various reasons—practical and academic—the approach is regional and not national; and it is also multi-biographical. We shall explore the theme of Methodist involvement in industry and commerce through the lives of a number of businessmen active in various localities between the Rivers Humber and Tyne, from Wesley's day to the early twentieth century. It is hoped that this broad survey will open up our theme in interesting and helpful ways, and offer evidence which will be of value for a general understanding of the relation of Methodism to English industrial society, certainly beyond the North-East itself.

Summary biographies of these men in question are given in the

² W. D. Rubinstein: *Men of Property: The very wealthy in Britain since the Industrial Revolution* (1981), pp. 152-4. The limited incidence of great wealth among Methodists referred to here is based on probate evidence to 1880. Dr. Rubinstein's book has provided much stimulus in the preparation of this lecture.

Appendix, where much of the factual detail of their lives can be found. There are some seventy or eighty names here; this is a select list, and to some extent an arbitrary one. Some men chose themselves by virtue of their eminence. Others, less eminent, were known to me through the researches of others or through my own earlier work. Very many, however, have come to my awareness while working on this theme, and I am sure that many more await rediscovery and rescue from the virtual oblivion into which they have fallen. Out of a considerable number thus discovered I have selected those whose names appear in the Appendix. The criteria for selection were that the men chosen should be significant for their economic, social and religious interest. Some are included for fulfilling one of these criteria rather than another, but in general the emphasis is upon the interaction of all three. Those selected are in almost all cases those who either founded their own businesses and built them up from nothing, or else those who, having inherited a small business, extended and enlarged it in some very substantial way through their own efforts. In other words, we are in the main considering the genuine entrepreneurs, who succeeded in their enterprises. It is worth recording here, without further comment, that there must have been many who tried and failed to establish themselves in business. Indeed, some of those listed in the Appendix were not immune from commercial setback—in some cases after many years of growth and profitability.

III

THE town of Middlesbrough makes a good starting-point for a study of the considerable economic and social impact of some of these men. On 27th December 1830 the first train ran into Middlesbrough on the newly-extended Stockton and Darlington Railway, and inaugurated Middlesbrough's development as a port. The train was pulled by a locomotive called *The Globe*, made at the S. & D.R. works at Shildon by the Wesleyan engineer Timothy Hackworth, whose determination and ingenuity helped to ensure the early success of steam locomotives, and whose career has been so unjustifiably underrated in relation to others. Hackworth was also the designer of the riverside staiths where coal from this first train was loaded on to the colliers in the River Tees. Other Wesleyans were to have an interesting part in the early development of Middlesbrough. The first house to be erected in the new town was built by George Chapman (it has been demolished, but an inscribed memorial-stone is to be found in the Dorman Museum), one of the founder-members of the earliest Wesleyan society in Middlesbrough. Moreover the ironmaster John Vaughan, whose discovery and exploitation of the Cleveland iron ore deposits was to revolutionize Middlesbrough's economic and social development, worshipped at the town's Wesleyan Centenary chapel.³ (Vaughan's

³ It is said that Vaughan's famous partner, Henry Bolckow, also worshipped at this chapel. (See *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1904, p. 290.)

father and Vaughan himself had worked for Josiah Guest—another Wesleyan—at Dowlais in South Wales.) Another Methodist Tees-side industrial giant of some decades later was Christopher Furness, born in Hartlepool, whose shipping and shipbuilding empire grew to comprise some forty companies, including the Furness Shipbuilding Company near Haverton Hill on that great loop of the Tees north of Middlesbrough and the Cargo Fleet Iron and Steel complex on the Tees south bank. Nor ought we to overlook the role of Middlesbrough Methodists in the consumer revolution of later Victorian England; and here the name of Amos Hinton, Wesleyan master grocer, may be offered as one major example.

Examples of pioneering ventures by Methodists a little further to the north, in Tyne and Wear, also deserve recognition. The first public railway on Tyneside, the Pontop to South Shields Railway, was opened officially in September 1834 by a train pulled by the *Michael Longridge*, an engine made at Bedlington and named after its maker, whose father of the same name was one of the most influential Wesleyan laymen both on Wearside and in the Connexion as a whole, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Michael Longridge junior made many important contributions at Bedlington to locomotive development, building the engine which pulled the first train to run from King's Cross, as well as the first locomotives used in Holland and Italy. Other achievements by Tyne and Wear men merit our attention. The revolutionary invention of rolled plate glass by the Wesleyan James Hartley made his Wear Glass Works in Sunderland world-famous in the 1850s and 1860s. Emerson Muschamp Bainbridge, another Wesleyan, established in Newcastle in 1841 what is claimed to be the first department-store in England—a business still in existence today, though no longer in the ownership of the Bainbridge family. Sam Storey, of the United Methodist Free Churches, founded the *Sunderland Echo* (an evening daily still in existence) in 1873, and, with Andrew Carnegie, went on to launch in the 1880s one of the earliest newspaper chains, buying up papers in Newcastle, Sunderland, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Stockton, Portsmouth, London and elsewhere. Walter Runciman, having given up seafaring, bought an old laid-up steamer in South Shields in 1885, and went on to found the famous Moor Line and a multi-millionaire's fortune.

The most visually dramatic memorial to the work of a Methodist entrepreneur in Tyne and Wear must be Newcastle city centre, built in splendid classical style in the early nineteenth century by a group of local architects and builders, pre-eminent among them being the Wesleyan Richard Grainger, of whom it has been said that

in the course of a few years he raised Newcastle from an irregular cluster of smoke-dried brick and timber dwellings to a condition exceeding anything to be seen elsewhere in Britain except in the best parts of Edinburgh or Glasgow.

A memorial to Grainger in St. John's Church, Newcastle, was

erected by his daughter twenty-seven years after his death. The inscription acknowledges his achievement in a few compelling words:

A citizen of Newcastle does not need to be reminded of the genius of Richard Grainger; and a stranger is referred to the principal streets in the centre of the city as forming the most splendid and enduring monument to that genius.

One of those central streets of Newcastle—Mosley Street—was illuminated in 1880 by electric lighting—the first use of electricity in a public street anywhere in the world, and the incandescent bulbs used were those invented by Joseph Swan of Sunderland and later of Newcastle, whose parents were ardent Methodists.

Three-quarters of a century after Grainger's work in Newcastle, another northern seaport had its central parts extensively redeveloped in splendid style by a Methodist architect. Alfred Gelder, a life-long Wesleyan, inspired the Hull city council to undertake this mammoth task, according to a plan which was largely his own and which was substantially carried out during his five successive mayoralties, 1889-1904. This "Baron Haussman of Hull" was acclaimed for transforming the town "from ramshackle narrow streets and alley-ways into broad thoroughfares where a man or woman may go with safety at any hour of the day or night". It is interesting to note that Gelder was an active protagonist for the Humber Bridge scheme many years before it was realized. In addition to his civic work, he designed many Hull buildings, including some Methodist chapels, and undertook projects in other parts of the country. In this work he was often commissioned by fellow-Methodists whose names are, one suspects, much better remembered today than his own: such were T. R. Ferens, of the firm of Reckitts of Hull, and especially Joseph Rank. Of these more will be said later, but here we may note that it was Rank's early application in his mills of the new method of roller grinding, as distinct from the older stone grinding, that established his success as a flour-manufacturer and brought to him that enormous fortune most of which he expended on charitable and religious purposes, Methodism being his greatest beneficiary.

Methodists in fact were involved in virtually all the trades and commercial undertakings found in the North-East of England. We find them for instance in the older traditional crafts and industries (often with agrarian and rural links) as builders, quarrymen, lime-burners, millers, corn merchants, seed-crushers, tanners and leather workers, rope-makers, potters, glass-makers, coopers and so forth, with at least one Wesleyan brewer (at Newcastle) in pre-temperance days.⁴ (In this group incidentally it is striking to note how many curriers (leather-dressers) were active in North-Eastern Methodism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, forming a network covering a number of towns, with contacts which were

⁴ William Potter of Swalwell, a brewer, was a trustee of the New Road Wesleyan chapel, Newcastle, in 1812. See W. W. Stamp: *The Orphan House of Wesley* (1863), p. 201.

presumably of value both to their trade and to Methodism at that time.) We find Methodists also, as we should expect, much in evidence in retail trade as drapers, grocers, hatters, chemists, and confectioners—occupations which when enlarged usually developed wholesale and manufacturing connexions. We find them in the great staple North-Eastern industries, as shipbuilders, ironmakers, engineers, and locomotive-builders, often beginning as working craftsmen and rising through skill and endeavour. We find them, of course, as ship-owners, since to own a ship or a fraction of one was a traditional source of income in coastal towns like Sunderland, South Shields and Stockton for anyone with a little money to invest. And since ship-owning was a classic way in which the fortunate and enterprising could make quick money, it is not surprising that some Methodists are found beginning with one or two ships and ending with a fleet. They might end up with a title also: the two peers in our list—Furness and Runciman—were both ship-owners. Colliery-ownership was a different proposition, since large capital sums were involved to develop a coal-mine. Those Methodists who became coal-owners did so by investing capital they had acquired through other enterprises—farming, ship-owning, and industrial activities of various kinds. Unlike ship-owners, it was rare for a coal-owner to be a self-made man, so that the career of Joseph Love, who started from nothing and became almost a millionaire, is all the more remarkable on that account.⁵

Included in our list are some professional men—architects, bankers, at least one stockbroker, and quite a crop of lawyers. These occupations presume a reasonably good education and in some cases a prolonged training, so that those entering them were generally the sons of men of some substance, or, in some cases, of ministers. Sons of the manse often entered the legal profession—no doubt after being educated at one of the connexional schools. Wesleyanism has some famous examples, such as Samuel Waddy, Q.C., who was born in Gateshead in 1830 when his father was minister there; and Sir William Atherton, Attorney-General from 1861 to 1864, who spent some boyhood years in Durham during his Wesleyan father's North-Eastern ministry, and who represented Durham City as Member of Parliament from 1852.⁶ These two are not on our list, but in it are to be found the son and grandson of William Bramwell (that great Wesleyan revivalist minister), who both had prosperous practices in Durham City. Durham in fact was thick with lawyers, and some of them played a very influential role in supporting and extending the work of Methodism. There is something slightly ironic in this, in view of John Wesley's low view of lawyers and contempt for their legal jargon—"that villanous [sic] tautology . . . which is the scandal of our nation".⁷

⁵ On the wealth and commercial prospects of ship-owners and coal-owners in general, see Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-8, 97-101.

⁶ For Waddy, see G. J. Stevenson: *Methodist Worthies* (1885), iv, pp. 592-4. For Atherton, *D.N.B.* and *Durham Directory*, 1865, pp. 41-4. ⁷ *Journal*, viii, p. 70.

IV

WHAT were the social origins of these Methodist entrepreneurs, and how were they launched on their business careers? Very few of them came from lower working-class backgrounds, though there were some exceptions—Richard Grainger, for instance, whose father was a Newcastle porter; and Joseph Love, the son of a miner, whose rise from pit-boy to colliery millionaire is a classic Victorian success story in the mould of Samuel Smiles. Most of them came from that stratum which, as John Munsey Turner has reminded us, provided the backbone of Puritanism and of Methodism—"that social grade which lies between the working class and the middle class—skilled artisans, small tradesmen, small farmers, clerks, schoolmasters".⁸ Certainly we find that a good proportion of our list came, for instance, from farming backgrounds—the Bainbridges, Fenwicks and Stephensons of Newcastle, the Muschamps of Sunderland, Sir Alfred Gelder and the Hodges and Needlers of Hull, Samuel Storey of Sunderland—and they seem to have inherited some of the toughness, shrewdness and practical sense of the yeoman farmer, fashioned by generations of toil in environments such as the Pennine dales or the remoteness of Holderness. The fathers of several of our group were millers, generally regarded as a sturdy and independent order. These include John Middleton of Hartlepool, T. R. Ferens and Joseph Rank of Hull, and Amos Hinton of Middlesbrough. John Vaughan and Timothy Hackworth were the sons of highly-skilled and responsible artisans. Christopher Furness of Hartlepool was the son of a coal-trimmer turned butcher, and the father of John James Fenwick of Newcastle had come out of dales farming to run a small grocery shop, first in Richmond and then in Middlesbrough. Walter Runciman's father was a Scots sailor who settled on shore as a coastguard officer at Cresswell in Northumberland. When he wrote his life-story, Runciman looked back on what he thought of as the poverty of his childhood days, but it is very clear that it was poverty of a very genteel and even respectable kind. His father was a thoughtful and book-loving Wesleyan preacher, and his mother a fervently religious, capable woman, very ambitious to do the best for her children (several of whom had remarkable talents), and eager to instil into them good old Puritan maxims of the "Wilful waste brings woeful want" variety. Indeed, one is struck time and time again in reading the lives of these men by the importance of the role played by their mothers in the moulding of their character and outlook. They reared their children in strict, old-fashioned Methodist habits of piety and self-discipline.

The entry into business of the men we are considering was usually by the hard way—beginning as juniors or apprentices, becoming journeymen and managers, then taking the risky leap of setting up

⁸ J. M. Turner: "Religion and Capitalism—a continuing debate", *Epworth Review*, January 1982, pp. 57-65. The words here are those of Dr. Henry Bett, quoted by Mr. Turner.

their own enterprises. This was the way of Timothy Hackworth, of Amos Hinton, of John Vaughan, of E. M. Bainbridge and many others. Some had harder slopes to climb, some easier, depending on their backgrounds and the help they might receive from their own families, which in some cases was none at all. (We have in our list at least one example of the boy who ran away from home to make his fortune, and eventually did so. His name was Walter Runciman.) The availability of working capital was always a problem. It might come from within the family—little nest-eggs accumulated by hard work and thrift—as in the case of Frederick Needler of Hull, the sweet- and chocolate-maker, who was launched in business by his mother. It might come from a mother-in-law, as with John Witherington of Sunderland, who was helped in this way to invest in his first ship in what was to become a major Tyne-side shipping company—Witherington & Everett. It might come from a lucky commission or a fortunate marriage, or even both, as Richard Grainger's career nicely illustrates. The first street he built in Newcastle—Higham Place (1819), part of which fortunately survives, was commissioned by a fellow-Wesleyan, Alderman William Batson; and his wife's dowry of £5,000 enabled him to go on to his more ambitious projects such as Eldon Square, for which his name is famous today. Another interesting example is that of John Vaughan, who, when he was working as manager at the firm of Losh, Walker & Bell at Walker-on-Tyne, took as his second wife the sister-in-law of Henry Bolckow, who was then working in Newcastle. When the two men who had come together through this relationship decided to establish a joint business (which they launched in Middlesbrough in 1840 on Joseph Pease's urgent invitation), it united Bolckow's wealth and business ability with Vaughan's technical skill as an ironmaster. Perhaps an even more striking example of a fortunate marriage connexion was that of Robinson Ferens, a Durham City draper, who by marrying the widowed daughter-in-law of Joseph Love found himself very quickly rocketed into the prosperous but anxious world of coal-ownership, in partnership with Love himself.

The business career of Thomas Robinson Ferens (who was born in Shildon and must surely have been related to Robinson Ferens of Durham, though I have not yet traced the connexion) is particularly interesting in that his rise to commercial success and wealth was pursued along the managerial route, climbing the ladder to the top in a firm which was not his own, and accumulating great wealth in the process. In 1868, when he was twenty-one, he was offered the position of confidential shorthand clerk at Reckitts of Hull, the Quaker manufacturers of starch, blue, black lead and a range of other once-familiar household products. Within twenty years he was general manager and a director; and finally, in the last few years before his death in 1930, became joint and then sole chairman. Ferens was obviously much in sympathy with the dedicated and enlightened Quaker approach to business, and the Reckitts

recognized in him not only business flair but a spirit kindred to their own. He must have been one of the first men to make real wealth in business as a manager rather than as a proprietor. The very first is said to have been William Manners, born in the same year as Ferens (1847), who entered Worthington & Co. as an office-boy and ended up as chairman, dying fifteen years before Ferens.⁹ He was a member of the strict Plymouth Brethren, and there is certainly something more incongruous in a teetotaler becoming the chairman of a brewery company than in a Methodist doing so in a Quaker company. There were after all interesting similarities between the Quakers and the Methodists, as well as other examples of friendly business connexions such as those between Joseph Pease and Timothy Hackworth.

Despite his Quaker links, Ferens remained a devout and very active Wesleyan, with his membership at the Brunswick chapel, Hull, the home of a large and lively congregation. One cannot help feeling that he and all the other men on our list found social and commercial advantages in belonging to a chapel. Here among their fellow-worshippers they might find potential customers, creditors, business partners, employees and apprentices, and often a wife. Certainly there evolved in some northern towns complex webs of interrelated Methodist middle-class families, bound together by marriage and business interests. In Newcastle, for instance, there was that clan made up of Bainbridges, Vickers, Bensons, Hudsons, Bargates, Gibsons and others. In Sunderland, which I know best, the interlockings are of a dizzying complexity—Whites, Browns, Youngs, Dixons, Vints, Pantons, Punshons, Muschamps, Tuers, Squances and others in the early Victorian period, and later on Speddings, Cravens, Witheringtons, Hudsons, Nicholsons, Milburns, Brethertons, Beans, and many more. In Sunderland the Fawcett Street Wesleyan chapel, and its successor on Durham Road, were focal-points of these relationships, and so were in Newcastle the Brunswick and Jesmond (Clayton Road) Wesleyan chapels.

V

THE piety of many of these men was profound. Personal documents such as the diary of John Young, a Sunderland chemist, for the early 1840s, or the letters of Emerson Bainbridge, illustrate this unmistakably, as does the deep religious earnestness of the lives these and others led. Yet piety did not stifle the business instinct. These serious-minded young men with a passion for holiness could be disarmingly frank about their ambition to make money. A vivid illustration of this is seen in an entry in John Young's diary for 29th August 1843. He was at this time establishing himself as a chemist

⁹ Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, p. 90. See also Harold Perkin: *Professionalism, Property and English Society since 1800*, Stenton Lecture, University of Reading, 1981, p. 14. Professor Perkin remarks: "My computer study of élites in British society since 1800 suggests that career managers who get to the top of their companies leave more wealth at death than any other professional group."

in Sunderland, and later was to go on to develop an extensive wholesale and manufacturing side to his business. Despite a whiff of irony in this extract, one feels him to be very much in earnest about what he says, and that it expresses very well his business attitude:

My attention during the past week has been absorbed by business. My thoughts have dwelt almost exclusively on the grand theme of the business man—getting money. The soonest and easiest way to brass . . . I entertain the idea that while we are at work we should work, not simply stand behind the counter and receive the halfpence which by chance may tumble in, but to think deeply and seriously by what means one's business may be extended as to yield the highest possible return.

“The soonest and easiest way to brass” sounds a crude philosophy. And yet John Young's diary reveals him to have been a high-minded and idealistic man, intellectually lively, and a committed Free Methodist. To understand how he came to adopt such an apparently materialistic outlook in his commercial life it helps to remember the context in which he lived and worked. An account of Sunderland more or less contemporary with John Young's diary describes it in these terms:

Sunderland is as new as an Australian or a Yankee settlement . . . There is no dreamy, stupid, aristocratic indolence about the place. They [i.e. the Sunderland bourgeoisie to which John Young belonged] are perfectly fierce in their money-making. They team with self-reliance; and they love and hate with a terrible impetuosity . . . They like their politics but they relish cash still more.¹⁰

About the same time, Middlesbrough was seen by an observer as a “vigorous, stalwart, muscular, blazing, booming, sweltering town”.¹¹ In these towns a businessman needed a hard head, sharp business instincts, a lot of plain commercial ambition, and strong powers of survival. In a highly competitive free-enterprise economy, self-help was the order of the day. Methodist businessmen were not exempted from these pressures, nor is it surprising that they should come to adopt the prevailing attitudes of their own class. And once ingrained, these attitudes persisted. Of course commercial ambition was not new, but in the Victorian boom-towns it was given a harder edge; it also was accorded acceptability, and indeed respectability. Among the middle class, and the aspiring part of the working class, self-help was regarded as natural and praiseworthy, and material success was the hoped-for fruit of self-help. Most Victorian Methodists were sufficiently moulded by the spirit of their age to accept this, and to consider as normal a frank admission of a desire to make “brass” of the sort quoted from Young's diary. Methodist businessmen went on openly making this sort of admission. About twenty years after John Young's diary was written, another Sunderland Free Methodist, Sam Storey, gave up school-teaching in order to try his luck in the

¹⁰ Anon.: *Public Men of the North* (1855), p. 56.

¹¹ Quoted in Minnie Horton: *The Story of Cleveland* (1979), p. 242.

commercial life of Sunderland, confessing that his dominant ambitions were to get rich quickly and to find a position in the world. He succeeded in both. And it is interesting to note that when J. R. Clapham, the Primitive Methodist rope-maker of Yarm, told the members of the PM Conference assembled at Grimsby in 1919 that he had set out in life to make money, and had made it, they applauded him. Their applause was no doubt the more readily given because it had just been revealed that Clapham was the anonymous donor of £10,000 to the Itinerant Preachers' Friendly Society, but it does indicate an admiration for the successful businessman who had risen through his own talents and hard work.

In making their money they did not all emerge morally unscathed. The acquisitive instinct itself led to some moral dilemmas. Several cases of actual commercial impropriety involving Methodists may be quoted from mid-nineteenth-century Sunderland: the alleged adulteration of pepper (by John Young the diarist), the forging of signatures on money bills, and the serious mismanagement of the affairs of a bank owned and run by Wesleyans. Business malpractice by religious men goes back to Old Testament times, and is not unknown in our own century. The Victorian age, however, was especially prone to it, and one factor was the inadequacy of much conventional piety to offer firm guidance in matters of commercial morality. In the 1860s Matthew Arnold mourned the collapse of a vital relation between faith and work, resulting in the growth of commercial immorality in our serious middle class, the melting away of habits of strict probity before the temptation to get quickly rich and to cut a figure in the world.¹²

(There is an interesting similarity between these final words and those in which Samuel Storey confessed his ambitions at a very similar date.)

Arnold was a very perceptive critic of mid-Victorian England, and put his finger here on a genuine problem, but it has to be admitted that he was no lover of the nonconformist industrial middle classes ("the Philistines"), and was given to exaggerating their weaknesses to high-light his argument. And whilst we cannot close our eyes to this darker side of our theme, it would be misleading to over-stress it. In reading about Methodist businessmen, or talking to those who remember them, their integrity and the respect in which they were held are constantly emphasized. Certainly the over-all impression is of general honesty, with, in some cases, the highest standards of integrity. Nevertheless it was never easy for a businessman, no matter how honest he tried to be, to reconcile personal faith and public actions, especially in large concerns which were subject to complex economic pressures and presented difficult commercial decisions. And when a man was known for pious

¹² Matthew Arnold: *Culture and Anarchy* (1869). The edition used here is that edited by J. Dover Wilson, 1932/1960, p. 159. Much of chapter 5 ("Porro unum est necessarium") is relevant.

evangelicalism on the one hand and hard-headed business dealing on the other, this not surprisingly attracted critical comment and charges of hypocrisy. Some people said that the right hands of such men did not know always what their left hands were up to!

An ambition to make money is of course only one element in the motivation and success of the men we are considering. Other characteristics stand out: phenomenal energy, especially in the formative stages of their business concerns; determination and a streak of ruthlessness, not suffering fools gladly; a willingness to bear immense strain and pressure; the courage at crucial moments to take make-or-break decisions which often decided the success of their enterprises; and a determination to offer high-quality goods and services at competitive prices and to make that the basis of commercial success. Instances of all these might be quoted if there were space to do so. Around 1850, when Emerson Muschamp Bainbridge, then in his early thirties, was expanding his drapery premises on Market Street, Newcastle, and launching the famous department-store, a fellow-Wesleyan draper, John James Fenwick, described him in these terms:

His energy was volcanic. Anyone who witnessed the energy and rush of those early days can never forget it . . . His men knew from daily experience that they could not work harder nor undergo a more continuous strain than he did.¹³

For an instance of business acumen, and willingness to take high risks, it is harder to find a more telling example than that of the eighteen-year-old Christopher Furness while on a business trip to the Continent on behalf of the family provision firm in Hartlepool. This was in 1870, during the Franco-Prussian War. Foreseeing the shortage of continental grain that would result from the war, and with a remarkable piece of youthful initiative (he was obviously a born entrepreneur), he is said to have bought up great quantities of grain from alternative sources in Denmark and Sweden, thereby making a considerable profit, which was to lay the foundations of his subsequent commercial career.¹⁴

A strong impression of vigour and energy emerges from reading about these businessmen. Work, it seems, was both a consuming passion and a delight, and they could hardly keep away from it. I suppose today we might call some of them "workaholics". Their enthusiasm was perhaps strongest where the work involved their creative skill and pride in achievement. It is said of Joseph Lowes Thompson senior, a committed Free Methodist and one of that dynasty of fine shipbuilders who established the North Sands shipyard on the River Wear, that in his later years he still visited the office pretty well every day to keep the staff on their toes, and "on launch days used to skip about like a young man as if he must find

¹³ Thomas Darlington (ed.): *Memoir of Emerson Muschamp Bainbridge* (1893), p.

¹⁴.

¹⁴ An incident quoted in several places, including Horton, *op. cit.*, p. 479 f.

some outlet for the superfluous energy which seemed to electrify him". And the Middlesbrough grocer Amos Hinton, part of whose expertise was great skill in the blending of coffee and tea, died at 75 from a heart attack on the same day as he had been to the shop to do some tea-tasting. At the age of 90 that grand old sea-dog-turned-shipowner Walter Runciman wrote to Sir Samuel Hoare, expressing a desire to join the Royal Naval Volunteer Supplementary Reserve! (They made him an Honorary Commodore.) Whilst admiring the energy of bosses like these, one can't help feeling some sympathy for their employees, always under surveillance from their "great taskmaster's eye", if one may here interpret that phrase in a human context!

VI

WHAT were the material rewards of all this hard work? One obvious indicator is the amount of money left by these men in their wills. Probate evidence is complex. Wills are full of lawyers' jargon which can conceal more than it reveals, at least to the layman. Moreover one cannot usually know what financial provisions were made in the testator's lifetime; if considerable, these could make the will itself an unreal guide as to a man's actual wealth, as we shall note later with regard to one or two very distinguished examples. Despite these reservations, there is much to be learned from wills. In particular they give, for our purposes, a fairly clear indication of relative commercial success.

For this study I have referred to wills for fifty-one of the men under survey.¹⁵ The estates range in size from nearly £3,000,000 to £800—the former that of Walter Runciman and the latter that of Andrew White of Sunderland, whose rather pathetic will shows the remnant of his former wealth, destroyed by commercial disasters and indiscretions in the 1840s. A wide range of affluence is in fact to be expected, since the men we are considering were active in different places, periods and occupations, and varied in their business acumen and ambition. Moreover, it would be wrong to limit this survey to the very wealthy, since a man's importance in social and religious terms is by no means determined by the size of his bank balance.

Five of the group—ten per cent—may be classified as millionaires, though some explanation is needed on this point. Lords Furness and Runciman both died as millionaires; the others need a little qualification. Joseph Love is quoted as being a millionaire—indeed the first colliery millionaire—in a recent study.¹⁶ In fact his will describes his estate as "under one million pounds" according to the convention at that time, but if he was not in fact a millionaire, he was very near to being one. Joseph Rank and T. R. Ferens did not leave millionaire fortunes, but would have done so had each not given away so much money in his lifetime.

¹⁵ For the whereabouts of these wills, see introduction to the Appendix.

¹⁶ Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

This was particularly true of Rank, who left £70,000, but would have been a millionaire several times over but for his immense benefactions.

Love's fortune is especially remarkable in that it was made relatively early—in fact by 1875. I suspect that the bulk of it came to him in the last decade or so of his life. The others gained their wealth in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—that golden age for many businessmen when death duties and the highest marginal rates of Income Tax were at something like one-tenth the levels they were to reach by the mid-twentieth century, and when enormous fortunes could be rapidly accumulated from escalating profits and dividends. The fortune of T. R. Ferens, for instance, is explicable when we remember that between his joining Reckitts in 1868 and his death in 1930 the firm's profits rose from a few thousands to well over £1,000,000 a year, with dividend rates at between 20 and 30 per cent for much of that period. To possess shares in a successful company was a passport to affluence. Sir Alfred Gelder of Hull was not a millionaire, but he did leave £159,000, a surprisingly large sum for an architect—so much so indeed that some doubts are said to have been expressed in Hull as to the propriety with which he had made it. The answer seems to be that Joseph Rank (and possibly others) paid for his professional services not in cash but in shares. Gelder's fortune contrasts sadly with the £17,000 left by the unfortunate Richard Grainger of Newcastle, with £128,000 owing to his creditors. Grainger was, I think, the greater albeit the unluckier of these two very distinguished town-developers. Ironically, the Grainger Estate rose steadily in value after Grainger's death, reaching a value of over £1,000,000 in a few decades.

The broad distribution of wealth among the rest of our men is as follows: four left fortunes of between £250,000 and £500,000; seven left between £100,000 and £200,000; sixteen between £20,000 and £100,000; and nineteen below £20,000. There are no very clear patterns observable in the way this money was made, but one or two circumstances may be pointed out. Some of the big fortunes (though oddly enough not the very biggest) were made by sons developing businesses their fathers had begun. Robert Thompson junior, the Sunderland shipbuilder whose father left £23,000 in 1860, made a fortune of £159,000 by 1910. Another example is that of J. R. Clapham of Yarm, who in 1923 left ten times the amount of his father's estate in 1901. A good deal of Clapham's money was, I suspect, made from investing in shipping, which was the source of wealth for many of the men in our list, ranging from the comfortably prosperous to the really affluent, depending on the size of their undertaking. Another source was colliery-ownership or -investment. And yet another was the exploitation in various ways of the consumer boom in clothing, foodstuffs, household products and so forth, due to the rising standards and expectations of ordinary people in England from the latter part of Queen Victoria's

reign onwards. T. R. Ferens at Reckitts, the Bainbridges, Fenwicks, and Stewarts (all drapers), James Hartley the glass-maker, Amos Hinton the grocer, all benefited from this boom in various ways and degrees. Samuel Storey might also be said to have done so by exploiting and stimulating the demand for a popular press.

Those men at the bottom of the wills table, with estates below £20,000, should not be overlooked. There are one or two eminent names here (Grainger and Hackworth, for example), but in the main they are men whose reputations were local. Almost every one of them remained a devout and active Methodist, and some of them were remarkable lay leaders—a reminder that influence is not to be measured by affluence alone. At the same time, it is worth stressing that their estates, tiny in comparison with some already mentioned, were on the whole enough to give a man a quite solid prosperity, especially in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, and would have to be multiplied by many times to gain any idea of their equivalent value today. Included in their number are very interesting men such as the Wesleyans Anthony Steele of Barnard Castle and George Waddington of Newland (Hull); United Methodist Free Church leaders such as John Benson of Newcastle and T. R. Blumer of Sunderland; and Primitive Methodists such as John Gordon Black of Sunderland and Sir James Meek of York, who is said to have been the first PM to receive a title.

It is obvious from this study of wealth that Methodism was not incompatible with money-making, sometimes on a vast scale. Yet it can, I think, be argued that for some Methodist businessmen religion acted paradoxically both as an incentive to business activity in ways described earlier, but also as a restraint upon commercial ambition for its own sake. A good many of the men we are considering, whilst being diligent enough in their callings, seemed to be content to hold their business activities at a moderate level, accepting a life-style which was solid but not flamboyant, and being content to go on living within the communities where their business interests and chapel commitments lay. "Believing himself to be in the place appointed him by Providence," it was said of John Wilkinson, a dedicated Wesleyan currier of Bishop Auckland who died in 1827, "no prospect of a worldly nature, however flattering, could prevail upon him to leave it." And I suspect that he is typical of many others. Timothy Hackworth, for instance, who even in his later years, when his achievements as a locomotive-builder had given him a considerable reputation, was content to remain at Shildon and to go on living in Soho House, in the midst of the busy railway community which he had done so much to build up, and for whose religious and social provision he took such great concern. (He left the surprisingly small sum of under £5,000 when he died in 1850.) The Claphams of Yarm make another good example; their business interests were confined to Stockton and Yarm, where they were deeply immersed in Primitive Methodism

and local community life; and they lived on in the middle of Yarm itself, in what is somewhat misleadingly called the Manor House, on High Street.

An anxiety to maintain a close personal control over one's business, in order to ensure that the highest possible standards of service and integrity prevailed, might also be seen to be the product of religious ideals. Amos Hinton is a good illustration here. He preferred to keep his grocery activities concentrated within a limited area in order to allow him to maintain vigilant control over the various branches. This policy certainly limited the firm's expansion in the early years, but it was deliberate, and displayed a concern higher than that of mere profit-making. Hinton's will (he died in 1919) shows a modest estate of £21,000.

But such considerations certainly did not affect all the businessmen on our list. Christopher Furness, for instance, approximates most closely perhaps to the type we know as the "business tycoon", and towards the end of his life (he died in 1912) was the employer of 50,000 men in the various parts of his vast empire. We are in a very different world here from that of Amos Hinton, with about 200 employees in a handful of Teesside groceries at that same date. Yet it is said of Furness that, not unlike Hinton, in all his concerns he was the master mind, "never associating himself with managing any company whose affairs he could not directly influence". The aspiration may have been the same, but the scale was very different. And so were the rewards. Furness became a baron, the lord of the manor of Grantley (near Ripon), the owner of 30,000 acres, patron of half-a-dozen Church livings, and the bequeather of an estate worth £1,000,000. It is tempting to imagine a conversation between Furness and John Wesley on the theme of the dangers of riches! In fact there does not appear to be much evidence of Furness's active association with Methodism in later life, though I am open to correction on this point.

Becoming a landowner and a country gentleman could certainly put a strain on a man's links with Methodism by isolating him from the influence and expectations of the chapel community which he had known in the town, and by placing him in a social class where Methodist membership might well seem eccentric. Some, however, did manage to resist these pressures. Emerson Bainbridge and Walter Runciman both had estates in Northumberland, probably in part to serve as retreats in which they could re-live the delight in open country and rural pursuits which they had known in boyhood, before the hectic rush of their commercial careers. Both of them remained active Wesleyans, no doubt partly because they still had close business and personal links with Newcastle. But if an affluent and gentrified life-style did not affect the first generation or even the second, it almost inevitably made Methodist commitment more and more tenuous for the children and the grandchildren of the founding fathers whose money had made this social elevation possible.

VII

LET us draw the strands together, and attempt an evaluation of these North-Eastern businessmen. I am not thinking here of their economic and commercial importance, which has already been briefly touched upon—and shown, I hope, to have been not inconsiderable. Rather am I concerned with them as men, and in particular, men who were both rich and Methodist; concerned, too, to inquire how they used their wealth and the social influence which went with it. There are deep and complex issues here which deserve to be investigated at length. Here I can only sketch in the broad outlines, with a minimal use of vivid personal evidence which can be so revealing, and omitting some of the qualifications and reservations which a fuller study would allow.

Let us consider first their attitudes to money. It has already been made very clear that they were generally acquisitive, seeing no wrong in the accumulation of wealth, sometimes on a spectacular scale. But did Wesley's urgent warnings about the danger of riches, his command not only to earn and save but to give "all you can", his plea for the stewardship of possessions, ring in their ears and challenge their consciences? It is of course difficult to know. Some may have dismissed Wesley's warnings as irrelevant or impracticable. But others, whether due to Wesley or to the great Victorian social prophets, or simply to a developing sense of the injustices caused by industrialization, were without any doubt moved to regard wealth as a trust and to seek to consecrate it to purposes higher than those which were merely personal, material or commercial. They did not find it easy. Those Methodists who took the stewardship of wealth most seriously confessed that it involved what Sir William Hartley, the Primitive Methodist jam-maker, used to call the crucifixion of one's selfishness.¹⁷ "Every man has to fight his own battle against his innate selfishness in respect to the use of money," wrote Thomas Hudson Bainbridge of Newcastle, who, like Hartley, advocated the need for an approach to giving which was both conscientious and systematic.¹⁸ Wesley himself had urged the value of tithing (e.g. in his sermon "On the danger of increasing riches", 1790), and it is interesting to find the deliberate setting aside for charitable purposes of a fixed proportion of income (not necessarily just one-tenth) being practised by a number of the North-Eastern Methodist businessmen under consideration in this lecture: John Ward of Durham, Timothy Hackworth of Shildon, T. R. Ferens, Joseph Rank and Henry Hodge of Hull, the Claphams of Yarm, Tom Bainbridge himself, and no doubt others too. There is an entry in the journal of John Wilkinson, a Wesleyan carrier of Bishop Auckland, for 22nd May 1801, which reveals with telling simplicity the earnest consecration of money and possessions typical of Methodism at its best:

¹⁷ A. S. Peake: *The Life of Sir William Hartley* (1926), p. 189.

¹⁸ T. H. Bainbridge: *Reminiscences* (1913), p. 110.

I here enter into a covenant with God and myself, by this to render unto the Lord the profits arising from all the hog-skins which shall be bought till May 22nd 1802, giving all the labour in, and all expenses in dressing the same, the profits to be disposed of as the Lord directs. O my God give me ability heartily to work for Thee and let it be a means of my increasing in grace.¹⁹

The consecration of money in this devoted way was of course part of a wider and deeper consecration expressed through an active commitment to Methodism. Not all businessmen maintained in the years of their success the active allegiance to Methodism which they had shown in younger years, but a large number of the men in our list, spanning the whole of the period with which we are concerned, certainly did. John Wilkinson, whose journal has just been quoted, may serve as an admirable example. In his earlier days he had been a thorn in the flesh of the nonconformists of Bishop Auckland, breaking the windows at the Quaker meeting-house, and annoying the little Methodist society. From his mid-twenties, when he was converted, he became one of the local pillars of Methodism, serving as a class leader and Sunday-school teacher, and for a quarter of a century as a local preacher, taking appointments every Sunday in what was then the Barnard Castle circuit. He introduced Methodism to many new places around Bishop Auckland in the process, a work which was taken up by another layman, Timothy Hackworth, in the same area later. Significantly, Wilkinson's journal shows that a few months after his covenant regarding the hog-skins he was urging the local Methodists to consider prayerfully a proposal to build their first chapel, which was accomplished in 1804. We see epitomized in his life, in fact, some of the principal ways in which active and affluent Methodists offered their time and talents to Methodism—in spiritual leadership, financial liberality, wise administrative guidance, and practical stimulation and encouragement in big ventures such as chapel-building.

Methodism in Wesley's day, and just after, owed a great debt to men like Wilkinson. Each of the principal North-Eastern centres of Methodist work had one or two leaders like him—sometimes more in the larger towns—around whom the early causes gathered. Men like George Merryweather of Yarm, John Middleton of Hartlepool, Michael Longridge of Sunderland, Thomas Thompson of Hull, Christopher Wawn of South Shields, John Ward of Durham, Matthew Naylor of Darlington, and William Smith of Newcastle (who was the husband of Wesley's stepdaughter), were invaluable in pioneering and consolidating the work of early Wesleyanism. They emerge from the records as admirable men working with devotion in an age when Methodism had still about it some of the freshness and simplicity of its early period. In the nineteenth century, Methodism altered. It was divided into several major

¹⁹ Matthew Braithwaite: *History of Methodism in the Bishop Auckland Circuit* (1885), p. 23.

strands, each becoming, sooner or later, steadily more respectable, more cultured, more ecclesiastical. The contribution which men of means could make to Methodism inevitably was affected. There was a steady increase in claims for their support for connexional schemes (a process which began in Wesleyanism and affected the other branches some decades later)—support for instance for bigger and better chapels, Sunday schools, day schools, boarding schools, theological colleges, home missions, foreign missions, ministers' and preachers' welfare funds, and so on. Able and rich laymen were recruited to serve on connexional committees, and were relied on to push Conference-inspired schemes in their localities. At the same time, some of these laymen became, by a natural process, leaders in the various Methodist secessions, finding in them some of the freedom and spontaneity which their fathers and grandfathers had enjoyed in earlier Wesleyanism, but also having to face inevitable demands upon their generosity to support the new connexions as they developed. Inevitably a spirit of competition between the Methodist groups affected the laity, who were spurred on to develop their own causes, to show their equality with the others, or indeed their superiority.

This fertile and complex age produced some outstanding laymen in the North-East. Wesleyans such as the Bainbridges and Sir William Stephenson of Newcastle, T. R. Ferens and Joseph Rank of Hull (the two latter living on, as we know, well into the twentieth century); a New Connexion man like Joseph Love; Primitive Methodists such as J. Gordon Black and Emerson Muschamp of Sunderland, the Hodges of Hull, the Claphams of Yarm; Free Methodists such as T. B. Young of Sunderland and John Benson of Newcastle—some of these, as we have seen, became enormously wealthy, beyond anything that Methodism had known in its earlier periods, and when their wealth was offered (in some cases unstintingly) to their own Church, it made possible developments which would otherwise have been unthinkable.²⁰ Here the giving of Joseph Rank, in particular, literally staggers the imagination. The effect of the patronage available to Methodism from Rank and many other rich laymen deserves a full-scale analysis which is impossible here. I am not sure that the full amount given by Rank to Methodism has ever been fully calculated, but it appears to be around £4,000,000—over half of this to the Missionary Society. There is no other giving to match this in size, and Rank must surely have fulfilled more completely than any other wealthy Methodist the injunctions of John Wesley with regard to money. Other men gave very impressively in relation to their lesser wealth, but in general they gave a small proportion of their total financial resources, whilst he gave a major proportion.

²⁰ "To do them justice it must be said that they gave the modern Church a new standard of generosity. No Church has been better served by its laymen in money, in sacrifice and in personal devotion than the Methodist Church." (A. W. Harrison: *The Evangelical Revival and Christian Reunion* (1942), p. 180.)

As with John Wilkinson at a humbler level, so with these later and richer men, the consecration of money was at best combined with the active dedication of their talents, often in humble ways. Sunday-school work appealed to many of them, including Rank and Ferens, and this may tell us something significant about their religious make-up. Theirs was on the whole a simple and conservative faith, based on the tenets of traditional evangelicalism. Much of their money and effort went towards promoting schemes for evangelical outreach such as central mission-halls for the towns and Gospel caravans for the rural areas—ideas reflecting the influence of later Victorian Methodist leaders such as Hugh Price Hughes and Thomas Champness. Another source of religious inspiration came from the work of the American revivalists Walter and Phoebe Palmer, and Moody and Sankey, whose visits for instance to Tyneside were encouraged and indeed partly organized by the Bainbridges of Newcastle.

Many businessmen were preachers and class leaders, and some exercised very influential lay ministries through Bible classes and Brotherhoods, finding in these groups, which often had a rather loose relationship with Methodism, the freedom to exercise their gifts of leadership in ways not always possible within the usual church structures. One such lay leader, T. R. Blumer of Sunderland, eventually gave up his active shipbuilding interests in order to devote himself full-time to the pastoral and administrative oversight of the Thompson Memorial Hall in Monkwearmouth, of which he was the creator and the presiding genius. The Hall did much work on behalf of those men who worked in Monkwearmouth colliery and the Wear shipyards; it was said that to be a member at the Hall was a great help to a man looking for work in any of the concerns in which T. R. Blumer had an interest.

There is little opportunity here to enlarge on the social and political influence of the men we are considering, though a few things need to be said. Without doubt they embodied evangelical piety in its social aspects, and in so doing helped to encourage in society those qualities which we associate above all with the Victorian age—respectability, temperance, self-help—among the middle class and the aspiring part of the working class. They were men of their age, with its virtues, and its limitations too. They were unashamed paternalists.²¹ They knew that religion, self-discipline, temperance and hard work had been good for them, and they sought to employ whatever means they could, in their homes, Sunday schools, chapels, businesses and communities, to persuade, exhort and even oblige others to live by the same lights. In general they accepted the hard fact that society was unequal, and that social classes were inevitable, but they also believed that with effort it was possible to rise to a

²¹ On paternalistic attitudes and practices there is much of great interest in David Roberts: *Paternalism in Early Victorian England* (1979), chapter vii in particular being devoted to industrial paternalism.

higher and better life. They themselves had done it; and they were willing to help others to do the same. They were usually eager to serve their communities, as Poor Law Guardians, members of School Boards, Justices of the Peace, and town and city councillors, in some cases taking a lead in the 1830s to get corporations revived or created. Quite a number of them were elected to Parliament, and these included Thomas Thompson of Hull—the first Methodist MP. Some of these men were, from quite early in the nineteenth century, radicals and reformers. Nevertheless in most cases they believed profoundly that to change society it is necessary to change men, and that men could not be made good by Act of Parliament.²²

As they grew in breadth of social vision, some of them exercised a civic patronage which was generous and enlightened, giving institutes, libraries, almshouses, playgrounds and public parks to their towns, as well as injecting financial aid into existing institutions such as hospitals. Hull benefited more than any other north-eastern town from Methodist patronage and social leadership, especially due to the great trio of Rank, Gelder and Ferens. Rank's main contribution to his native city was the endowment of a benevolent trust (not to be confused with the Rank Trust, which administers his gifts to Methodism). Gelder and Ferens showed greater willingness than Rank to use their wealth and influence in secular ways for the physical and cultural improvement of the city. The drastic re-shaping of the city centre described earlier was Gelder's main work. Ferens's contributions included almshouses, a fine art gallery, and, most notably, the endowment of the University College (now the University) which opened in 1930. He gave over a quarter of a million pounds to help found the college, to which his friend the Wesleyan leather manufacturer G. F. Grant added £100,000 to endow professorial chairs. It was not only money that Ferens gave, but enthusiastic support and encouragement in the early stages, when the idea of a college was viewed pessimistically by many local men who might have helped it. Among these was Joseph Rank, who refused to have anything to do with the college, declaring in his blunt Yorkshire fashion that college-trained men were of no value to industry, and that Ferens could be giving his money to more useful causes!²³ This whole episode shows Rank in his worst light and Ferens in his best. It was a happy thought of T. E. Jessop, a distinguished Methodist scholar and one of the first professors at Hull, to incorporate Ferens's name in the Latin motto of the college: *LAMPADA FERENS* [bearing the torch].

²² This nineteenth-century nonconformist axiom was in fact giving way in the closing years of the century to a conviction, among the more radically minded, that effective legislation could influence the character of the nation for good—at least in certain limited ways. Hugh Price Hughes was an advocate of this view. See D. W. Bebbington: *The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics, 1870-1974* (1982), chapter one.

²³ T. W. Bamford: *The University of Hull: The first Fifty Years* (1978), pp. 59-61.

Ferens was justifiably revered in Hull as a man who exercised a genuinely benevolent influence in the city. Other men played a similar role in different communities, sometimes on a much smaller scale, but in the same spirit. When one reads about J. R. Clapham, the Primitive Methodist rope-maker of Yarm, who was very active in the religious and social life of his home town and a generous benefactor, there is a strong impression of a man locally regarded with real affection and respect—a father-figure in his community.

Finally we turn to consider our group of businessmen as employers of labour, and their record in industrial relations. Once again the spirit of paternalism is evident, though modified in practice by the nature of the business in question. Where a works or shop was relatively compact, and under the direct personal management of the owner, good relations were more easily maintained. Such conditions prevailed, for instance, at the Shildon works under Timothy Hackworth and at Bedlington under Michael Longridge, both of whom were highly respected by their men. They prevailed also in compact retail businesses such as those of Emerson Bainbridge in Newcastle and Amos Hinton in Middlesbrough. These both took a keen interest in all aspects of their employees' welfare. When one looks at old photographs of Hinton's apprentices and assistants, one is struck by their self-respect and earnestness—qualities surely imparted in large degree by the owner and his sons, who set very high standards of their own. On a much larger scale, one finds this same kind of concern for workers' welfare at Reckitts of Hull, where Ferens was a director and ultimately became chairman. Being a Quaker company, Reckitts exhibited the features found in other Quaker concerns such as Rowntrees in York and Cadbury's in Birmingham, including a garden village. James Reckitt initiated this with Ferens's support, as a way of applying some of their rapidly-expanding profits for the general good of the work-force.²⁴

Good industrial relations were harder to maintain in larger and more diverse enterprises. Christopher Furness suffered labour troubles in his shipyards in the early twentieth century, and sought to resolve them by proposing a profit-sharing scheme to his Hartlepool shipbuilders in 1908. Profit-sharing was much in vogue among enlightened employers from the mid-nineteenth century, from both philanthropic and practical motives. Sir William Hartley practised it at Aintree, as did Frederick Needler at his Hull chocolate factory, and Reckitts also at their Hull works. One hope was that it would engage the workers' loyalty to the firm and prevent friction in labour

²⁴ Nonconformist concern over housing and living conditions was growing in the later nineteenth century. Influential voices were the Rev. C. Fleming Williams (a Congregational minister) and Ebenezer Howard, promoter of the "garden city" idea. A practical lead was given by nonconformist industrialists such as W. P. Hartley, W. H. Lever and George Cadbury, who all built garden villages for their employees in the last decade or so of the century. See Bebbington, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

relations.²⁶ Indeed, it was a condition of Furness's scheme that the men should abandon strikes. They declined to accept the proposal, perhaps not surprisingly in view of the developing strength of the trade unions and the uncertain state of the shipbuilding industry in the years prior to the first World War.

The most serious breakdown in labour relations affecting the men we are studying was an extended miners' strike at some of Joseph Love's collieries in 1863-4. The upshot was that Love evicted many miners and their families from their tied cottages to seek what shelter they could in very inclement weather. This incident so burned itself into the memories of the miners that Love was constantly referred to in critical terms in the standard histories of the Durham miners' union, in a way which is very much at odds with the favourable references to him in the Methodist New Connexion literature and elsewhere. Legally Love was in the right; morally the issues are much less clear. The incident is a very good example of the difficulty faced in evaluating a Methodist businessman whose philanthropic and religious reputation seems at variance with part at least of his record as an industrialist and employer.

It is not unfitting to end on this rather enigmatic and controversial note. Love's life serves to remind us that the historical assessment of the Methodist businessmen we have had in mind is not always a straightforward task. Looking back at them from our vantage-point, we might feel that there are searching questions we should like to ask about some of their attitudes, beliefs and actions. Yet in putting our questions we need to exercise both historical understanding and charity. These men lived in societies which were in many respects different from ours. They were men of their age, and they lived by the light they had. They were also caught up in dynamic and challenging situations in which responses and decisions were not easy. Within those situations they achieved much that was remarkable and much also that was undoubtedly good. Their dedication and their generosity challenge us today; and their best achievements deservedly command our admiration and our gratitude.

GEOFFREY E. MILBURN.

²⁶ Profit-sharing schemes usually embodied the paternalistic and moralistic attitudes of the employers, as was certainly the case with Hartley's at Aintree. (Peake, *op. cit.*, especially chapter 4.) They were also often aimed at preventing or circumventing trade unionism. A remarkable exception is described by R. B. Perks in "Real Profit-sharing: William Thomson of Huddersfield, 1886-1925", *Business History*, No. 24 (July 1982), pp. 156-74—an article which throws much light on this whole topic.

BIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX

A select list of North-Eastern Methodist Businessmen

ABBREVIATIONS USED

WM—Wesleyan Methodism. WR—Wesleyan Reformers.
 WMA—Wesleyan Methodist Association. PM—Primitive Methodism.
 MNC—Methodist New Connexion. UM—United Methodism.
 UMFC—United Methodist Free Churches. IM—Independent Methodism.
Mag.—Magazine (usually for one or other of the above Methodist Con-
 nexions).

DNB—Dictionary of National Biography.

DBB—The forthcoming *Dictionary of Business Biography* edited by Leslie Hannah and David Jeremy. I am very grateful to the editors and the contributors for being able to read some entries in typescript while preparing this lecture and the accompanying appendix.

SOURCES

THE principal printed sources are shown after each entry. Probate information for some of the businessmen came from a study of surviving wills held by the Department of Palæography, University of Durham, and for others from the annual indexes of wills at the Probate District Registry, Newcastle upon Tyne. Up to 1881 the value of an estate was shown as under a stated figure; the amount by which the estate was less than the figure shown (always a round number) would obviously vary according to the size of the estate.

BAINBRIDGE FAMILY (WM)

EMERSON MUSCHAMP BAINBRIDGE (1817–92) was born in Eastgate, Weardale, the son of Cuthbert Bainbridge (a farmer) who had married Mary Muschamp, sister of John Dover Muschamp (q.v.). The family were staunchly Wesleyan. E.M.B. was apprenticed to a Newcastle draper at the age of 13. After a short period in London, he became a partner of W. Alder Dunn in a drapery business on Market Street, Newcastle. In 1861 he established his own business next door to Dunn, in partnership with his cousin J. B. Muschamp of Sunderland (q.v.), who withdrew from the business a few years later. Due to business flair and hard work, the business expanded rapidly and was organized as (what is claimed to be) the first department-store in Europe. Wholesale and manufacturing activities were associated with it, and by 1892 the business had 1,000 employees at Newcastle and Leeds. He also had considerable interests in collieries, shipping, and the Consett Iron Co. E.M.B. built a town house on Framlington Place, and in 1887 bought Eshott Hall and estate, near Morpeth. He married Annie Hudson, daughter of Thomas Hudson, a Methodist tanner, in 1839. An active Wesleyan, attending Brunswick chapel. Active supporter of the visit of American revivalists Walter and Phoebe Palmer in 1859. One of the first lay representatives to the Newcastle Conference, 1878. A memorial stone is in Brunswick. Left £392,000.

Two sons of E. M. Bainbridge—CUTHBERT (1840–72) and THOMAS HUDSON (1842–1912)—in particular inherited their father's intense evangelicalism and piety, and were instrumental in helping to arrange the visit of Moody and Sankey to England in the early 1870s. Cuthbert died of typhus before they came—a church to his memory stands in Heaton, Newcastle. He left under £30,000. Thomas Hudson Bainbridge was head of the family business from the late 1880s. Much involved in religious and philanthropic work in Newcastle. Promoted "Gospel Cars" for Home

Missions. With W. H. Stephenson (q.v.) founded the Newcastle Wesleyan Mission. Temperance worker. Urged systematic giving and stewardship. Much influenced by Revs. Thomas Champness and Hugh Price Hughes. Married his cousin Kate Benson, daughter of John Benson (q.v.). Left £413,000.

A. & J. Airey: *The Bainbridges of Newcastle* (1979); T. H. Bainbridge: *Reminiscences* (ed. G. France, 1913); T. Darlington (ed.): *Memoir of Emerson Muschamp Bainbridge* (1893); *D.B.B.* (entry by A. Airey).

BARRY, JAMES (1765-1824) (WM)

Born at Durham. A carrier by trade. Married well and enjoyed a moderate but comfortable prosperity. Brought up in the Church of England. Influenced as a young man by the preaching of Thomas Parker (q.v.), Methodist solicitor, of Durham, and finally joined the Durham Methodist society in 1800. Class leader. Superintendent of the Sunday School. Society and Circuit Steward. Respected for his sincerity in religion and uprightness in business, and widely popular in Durham. Left approx. £3,000. *WM Mag.*, 1830, pp. 577-88.

BENSON, JOHN (1818-66) (WM and UMFC)

Born at Eggleston in Teesdale, father a land agent. Clerk to Chapman's bank in Newcastle, then set up his own business as a sharebroker. Later (from 1843) combined this with a grocery business. Active Wesleyan at Brunswick, Newcastle; seceded with the Reformers in 1849. Became "the backbone of the UMFC in Newcastle"; founder member of Prudhoe Street chapel. Local preacher. Temperance worker. Town Councillor. Married Ellen Hudson (sister of Mrs. E. M. Bainbridge). (His daughter Kate married Thomas Hudson Bainbridge (q.v.)) Left under £14,000.

Airey, *op. cit.*; W. R. Sunman: *History of Free Methodism in and about Newcastle upon Tyne*, pp. 197-216; *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 20th February 1866.

BLACK, JOHN GORDON (1791-1851) (PM)

Born at Silksworth, near Sunderland, son of Lancelot Black. A lime manufacturer; despite some losses in business, enjoyed a reasonable prosperity. He joined the PMs in Sunderland in 1823, being formerly a Wesleyan. Rose quickly to a position of very considerable influence in northern Primitive Methodism. Class leader, but not a preacher. Keenly interested in theology and powerful in debate. Actively promoted chapel-building, missionary enterprise (including the Channel Islands mission), temperance, and general evangelical projects. Member of the Evangelical Alliance. Deed Poll member of the PM Conference from 1830. Promoted the idea of theological training for PM ministers from an early date. Not greatly noted for financial liberality, but built a chapel at Knitsley Grange, Shotley Bridge, where he had a house. Member of the Sunderland Board of Guardians and a councillor when the Sunderland Corporation was revived in 1835. Several children. Left under £7,000.

PM Mag., 1852, pp. 129-34; G. J. Stevenson (ed.): *Methodist Worthies* (1886), v, pp. 829-33.

BLUMER, THOMAS RICKABY (1860-1937) (UMFC-UM)

Son of John Blumer of Sunderland, shipbuilder (died 1913). Educated in Sunderland and at Gainford Academy. Active member of the Dock Street chapel, Sunderland, with which many public men were associated. Leader of a very large Bible Class. In 1904, helped by his father and J. L. Thompson

(q.v.), opened the Thompson Memorial Hall as a home for the Bible Class and as an Institute. Much enlarged it in 1906, mainly at his and his father's expense. T.R.B. abandoned his shipbuilding activities in 1904 to work full-time in social and religious work in Sunderland, especially in connexion with the Thompson Memorial Hall. Magistrate. Left £20,000.

J. Young (ed.): *Memories* (1923).

BRAMWELL, JOHN (1794-1882) (WM)

Born at Birstall, son of William Bramwell (1759-1818), a famous Wesleyan itinerant preacher and revivalist. Articled to John Ward (q.v.), Methodist solicitor of Durham, and joined him (from 1815 to 1831) as a partner in what was a growing and prosperous practice. Left Ward to practise on his own. Appointed Recorder of Durham, 1860. A member of the first Durham town council elected after the Municipal Corporation Act. Mayor in 1840, and also four other times later. Alderman; Magistrate. An advanced Liberal in politics, and took a very active part in promoting progressive policies locally and nationally. Helped to secure John Bright's election as MP for Durham in 1843. Considerable gifts of oratory. A local preacher in the Durham WM circuit from 1826. Left £8,800. His son, W. H. Bramwell (died 1865), was a solicitor and Registrar of Durham County Court. His nephew J. G. Hargreaves (died 1893) worked with him as a solicitor, and also served as solicitor for Durham University; a strong Evangelical, attending St. Nicholas parish church, Durham.

Durham Directory, 1883, pp. 51-4; *Durham Chronicle*, 1st December 1882.

BRANFOOT, WILLIAM (1825-1902) (PM-IM)

Son of John Branfoot, a PM minister who was one of the first preachers to introduce Primitive Methodism to the South Shields and Sunderland area, and who was killed on the Hetton Colliery wagon-way in 1831 walking to an appointment. William Branfoot was brought up in Sunderland in straitened circumstances, but later enjoyed a successful career as shipbroker, coal exporter, shipowner and colliery owner. A lover of traditional Primitive Methodism, he was increasingly disenchanted with developments in the PM Connexion in the 1860s and 1870s, believing them to be destroying the character of the movement. He was a founder member of the Christian Lay Church (Independent Methodist) secession in Sunderland in 1877, and played a leading role in developing the Lay Churches in the North-East. Active in the national IM cause, and was Connexional President, 1899-1900. Active also in general evangelical movements in the North-East, and the Free Church Council work. Member of the Sunderland School Board. A River Wear Commissioner. Left £37,000.

G. E. Milburn: *The Christian Lay Churches* (1977).

CLAPHAM FAMILY (PM)

ROBERT CLAPHAM (died 1901) was a PM itinerant preacher from 1839. While stationed in the Stockton-on-Tees circuit (1845) resigned from the ministry because of ill-health and settled in Yarm, establishing a grocery business and a ropery there and (later) a ropery in Stockton. His son JOHN ROBERT (1847-1923) joined him in the business. Both were very actively engaged in Primitive Methodism locally and nationally. Robert was Vice-President of the PM Conference in 1891. Left £27,000.

J.R.C. expert in shipping matters. Member of Tees Conservancy. Poor Law Guardian. County Councillor. Much philanthropic work in Yarm and locality. Gave £10,000 to the PM Itinerant Preachers' Friendly Society,

1919. Lived in the Manor House, Yarm High Street. Left £266,000. Two sons of J.R.C.—Harvey (b. 1876) and John (b. 1877) divided the family business between them, taking charge of the grocery and ropery respectively. Mainly personal communications from Mrs. Jean Dodds. Also *PM Mag.*, 1912, pp. 444-7; 1921, pp. 91-2; M. Race: *Yarm of Yesteryear* (n.d. [1980?]); *Century Booklet of the West Street Church, Yarm, 1836-1936* (1936).

COWARD FAMILY (PM and MNC)

GEORGE COWARD, SEN. (1805-77) was born at Selby. His parents later moved to Durham and did pioneering work on behalf of Primitive Methodism in the county. Worked as a young man for Ralph Crozier, grocer, tallow chandler and paper manufacturer of Durham. He set up his own business in Durham, as a stationer. By unremitting hard work he greatly expanded the business and established an extensive and prosperous trade in the North-East as a paper merchant. Noted for his integrity, frugality and industrious habits. Was for many years a PM and a local preacher. In 1859 he left to join the MNC and attended Bethel chapel, Durham. He left under £12,000. He had three sons—EDWARD (died 1874, aged 36) had a chemist's business. Very musical—choirmaster at Bethel MNC. GEORGE, JUN. (died 1875, aged 40) worked with his brother JOHN in the family paper business. A PM like his father to 1859, then joined the MNC. Main interests education and music. He compiled a children's hymn-book and was a member of the committee appointed to produce a new MNC hymn-book. Member of the Durham School Board. Active in temperance and Sunday School work. John ran the business after George junior's death, but *c.* 1880 sold out to John Willan. He remained loyal to Primitive Methodism. Was a trustee of the Manchester Theological Institute from its inception, and Vice-President of the PM Conference, 1887.

Durham Chronicle, 28th December 1877; *Durham Directory*, 1874, p. 47; 1876, pp. 58-9.

CRAVEN, HIRAM (d. 1895) (WM)

Son of John Craven of York, civil engineering contractor, who built the Sunderland South Dock, 1850. Hiram married Mary Jane Speeding, a Wesleyan of Sunderland, in 1851, and built up the Sunderland firm of Craven & Speeding, rope-makers. Built a large house, The Briery, in the Ashbrooke area of Sunderland in 1869 and was one of the founder members of St. John's Wesleyan chapel, Ashbrooke, 1888. He left £89,700.

FENWICK, JOHN JAMES (1846-1905) (WM)

His grandfather a Swaledale farmer and his father a grocer in Richmond and later Middlesbrough (his father left £171 in 1885). Draper's assistant in Stockton, Middlesbrough, and (from 1868) Newcastle. Married Mary Burnand, 1872. Rose to become manager of a silk mercer's shop in Newcastle; also an insurance agent. In 1882 established his own high-class fashion store on Northumberland Street, Newcastle, which rapidly prospered. Limited company, 1897. Employed about 200 in Newcastle, *c.* 1900. Active in Brunswick WM circuit—Sunday School Superintendent, Circuit Steward. An enlightened employer. Left £40,972.

D.B.B. (entry by David Rowe); R. Pound: *The Fenwick Story* (1972).

FERENS, ROBINSON (d. 1892) (MNC)

Born at Durham, son of a draper. He and three brothers carried on the family business at 4, Market Place. Married the widow of Isaac Pearson

Love (Joseph Love's son), c. 1857, and left the family business. May have joined the MNC about this time. Appointed manager of Love's collieries near Willington and resided at Love's former home, Willington Hall. Partner with Love in developing new collieries. After Love's death he had sole direction and management of the collieries he had owned with Love, and became wealthy. Moved to Oswald House, Durham, which he bought for £10,000. Not a great public figure, appearing usually only at MNC and missionary functions. Donated money to the MNC, but not on Love's scale. Poor Law Guardian; Magistrate. No issue. Left £74,000.

Note: A family link with Thomas Robinson Ferens (next entry) is very probable, but I have not yet traced it.

Durham Directory, 1893, pp. 65-7.

FERENS, [Rt. Hon.] *THOMAS ROBINSON* (1847-1930) (WM)

Born at Shildon, where his father, a miller, was a Wesleyan of the third generation. Education at a private school in Bishop Auckland. In 1860, junior clerk at the Stockton and Darlington Railway offices, Shildon. Clerk at Head Wrightson's, Stockton, 1866. Confidential short-hand clerk to James Reckitt of Reckitts of Hull, 1868. Married Esther Ellen Field, 1873. Rapid promotion at Reckitts'—Works Manager for the Blue- and Blacklead Mills, 1874; Secretary of the Company, 1879; General Manager, 1880; Director, 1888; Joint Chairman, 1924; Chairman, 1927. Acquired considerable wealth through shares and dividends. Left £292,843, but donated enormous sums in his lifetime to many good causes, in particular £250,000 to launch Hull University College, opened in 1928. Very active in Wesleyanism and gave much time and money in its service. Member at Brunswick chapel, Hull. Superintendent of the Sunday School for over 40 years. Magistrate, 1894; MP for East Hull, 1906-18; Privy Counsellor, 1912. A benevolent paternalist as an employer. Friend of Joseph Rank and Sir Alfred Gelder. Lived at Holderness House, Hull, near to the Reckitt works.

Ours (the magazine of Reckitts of Hull), Vol. 11, No. 12 (June, 1930), pp. 619-32; Mona S. Black: *An Outline Investigation into the Life and Work of Thomas Robinson Ferens, 1847-1930* (University of Hull Diploma in Social Studies, 1974—unpublished dissertation); various obituaries; T. W. Bamford: *The University of Hull: The First Fifty Years* (1978); B. N. Reckitt: *The History of Reckitt and Sons Ltd.* (1951); *D.B.B.* (entry by M. Black).

FURNESS, *CHRISTOPHER* [*Lord*] (1852-1912) (UMFC-UM)

Youngest son of John Furness of Hartlepool, a coal-trimmer who later set up in business as a butcher and provision merchant, and who left £460 on his death. John was one of the Wesleyan seceders who founded the Lynn Street chapel in Hartlepool, 1850. At 16 Christopher Furness joined his elder brother Thomas in the family business (wholesale and retail provisions, and lard-refining). He showed precocious skill and ambition; under his forceful persuasion and initiative there was a rapid extension of the business, including the purchase of some ships. His eagerness to develop both shipping and shipbuilding interests led to his separating from his brother Stephen. He acquired a controlling interest in the firm of Edward Withy & Co. of Hartlepool, and established the famous firm of Furness, Withy & Co., registered in 1891 with £700,000 capital. Various related businesses were soon acquired in other parts of the North-East and elsewhere, and enormous wealth soon accrued from these undertakings. Furness was forthright and pugnacious in manner; a strict and demanding employer, but just. In 1908 he proposed a profit-sharing scheme to his shipyard workers in Hartlepool;

this was rejected. A radical Liberal in politics. MP for The Hartlepoons, 1891-8, and 1900-10. Knighted, 1895; raised to barony, 1910. Died 11th November 1912. Attended in his last illness by the Rev. James Longden, UM minister who served in Hartlepool, 1889-93, and in Middlesbrough, 1905-12. Married Jane Suggitt; one son, Marmaduke, created viscount in 1918. Left £1,000,000. His brother Stephen, who stayed in family business and died 1911, left £20,000.

D.B.B. (entry by Gordon Boyce); James Clement: *Pioneer Ship Owners*, i (1934), pp. 145-52; *D.N.B.*: *Middlesbrough Year Book*, 1908, pp. 52-3; *Northern Daily Mail*, 11th November 1912; *The Times*, 11th November 1912; Christopher Furness: *Industrial Peace and Industrial Efficiency* (1908) (proposals for profit-sharing put to a conference of trade union representatives at West Hartlepool, 7th October 1908). See also H. V. Emy: *Liberals, Radicals, and Social Politics, 1892-1914* (1973), pp. 238 ff.

GELDER, [Sir] ALFRED (1855-1941) (WM)

Born at North Cave, near Hull; his father, William Gelder, a small farmer, was an active Wesleyan for many years in the Howden circuit. Trained as an architect and worked in Hull, where he built up an extensive practice (Gelder & Kitchen) designing mills, warehouses, libraries, chapels, Sunday schools, etc. Fellow of the Surveyors' Institution, and Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Acquired considerable wealth. A lifelong and committed Methodist, attending the Kingston WM chapel in Hull; Sunday-school teacher; local preacher for fifty years. An excellent speaker and chairman. Great sprightliness and energy in manner. Member of the Hull School Board 1892, and of the Hull Corporation as councillor and alderman, 1895-1940. Mayor five successive years, 1899-1904. Chairman of the Hull New Streets Committee from 1900. Under his inspiration and leadership the Hull city centre was largely rebuilt in the early 1900s. Knighted 1903. Chairman of the first Education Committee appointed in Hull under the Balfour Act of 1902. MP 1910-18 (Liberal, for Brigg constituency). Chairman of the Parliamentary Commission on the Humber Bridge. Freedom of the City of Hull, 1930. Married Elizabeth Parker, a Wesleyan of Hull, 1877. Left £159,000.

Hull Daily Mail, 27th August 1941; *Hull News*, 3rd November 1900, 15th October 1904; *Eastern Morning News*, 26th June 1903; obituary in *The Builder*, 5th September 1941; personal communications from the Rev. Bernard W. Blanchard and from the firm of Gelder & Kitchen of Hull; E. Gillett and K. A. MacMahon: *A History of Hull* (1980).

GRAINGER, RICHARD (1797-1851) (WM)

Son of a Newcastle porter. Trained as a carpenter and then set up as a jobbing builder. Showed remarkable talent and skill. Commissioned to build Higham Place, Newcastle, by Alderman William Batson (a Wesleyan) in 1819. Married Rachel Arundale, daughter of a successful Newcastle tanner. Showed great enthusiasm and financial adventurousness in his subsequent building ventures in the 1820s and 1830s which resulted in the transformation of large parts of central Newcastle. Others who worked with him included architects John Dobson and Thomas Oliver, and the town clerk John Clayton, but Grainger's own vision and skill (as builder and designer) were crucial. Some of his major schemes included Eldon Square, Grey Street, Grainger Street, the covered market, etc. He prospered but was always eager to re-invest his money for new schemes, and later ran into serious financial difficulties. Died owing heavy debts (£128,000) to Methodist and Quaker creditors and lawyers. His debts were paid off after

his death from the value of the Grainger Estate. He lived for some years in Elswick Hall, Newcastle. He was a member at Brunswick Wesleyan chapel, Newcastle, and is said to have taught at the Orphan House Sunday School. He was the builder of the New Connexion chapel in Newcastle, 1835. Left £16,913.

Lyall Wilkes: *Tyneside Portraits* (1971); L. Wilkes and G. Dodds: *Tyneside Classical* (1964); Tyne and Wear County Council: *The Tyneside Classical Tradition* (1980), especially pp. 18-21; R. Welford: *Men of Mark twixt Tyne and Tweed* (1895), ii, pp. 321-6.

GRANT, GEORGE FREDERICK (1843-1930) (WM)

Born at Boston (Lincs), where there is a plaque to his memory in the old Grammar School. Founded a leather-working business on Paragon Street, Hull, before the age of twenty. Became ultimately very prosperous. An active Wesleyan at the Coltman Street chapel, Hull. With his friend T. R. Ferens was a vigorous supporter of the scheme to found Hull University College, to which he bequeathed £100,000 to endow several professorial chairs. Active in other philanthropic ways in Hull. Left £156,000.

Hull Times, 17th May 1930.

HACKWORTH, TIMOTHY (1786-1850) (WM)

Born at Wylam, on the Tyne, son of a colliery blacksmith. Followed his father's trade at Wylam colliery, where he had to deal with some very early locomotive engines. In 1815, dismissed for refusing Sunday work; moved to Walbottle colliery. In 1825, invited to superintend the locomotives of the Stockton and Darlington Railway; settled at Shildon as resident engineer and manager. In this capacity he introduced some very important innovations in design, and also built some locomotives himself, including the *Royal George* (1827) and the *Sans Pareil* (1829). In 1829, designed the new coal staiths at Middlesbrough. From 1833 he became an independent engineer, though still working on contract for the S. & D.R. to 1840. He established his own works, the Soho Works, in Shildon, and lived in the midst of them at Soho House. A modest, unambitious, but important engineer. Cheerful in manner and a popular employer. A dedicated Wesleyan from 1810. Local preacher. By his hard work and generosity he did much to strengthen and extend Wesleyan Methodism in the Shildon and Bishop Auckland area, and also gave generously to Connexional causes. Married Jane Golightly, Wesleyan. His son was the engineer John Wesley Hackworth; and two of his daughters married ministers. His will shows his estate valued at under £5,000.

R. Young: *Timothy Hackworth and the Locomotive* (1923/1975); G. E. Milburn: "Timothy Hackworth", *Bulletin of the Wesley Historical Society North-East Branch*, No. 24 (August 1975), pp. 4-33.

HARTLEY, JAMES (1811-86) (WM-C. of E.)

Born at Dumbarton, of pious Wesleyan parents. His uncle was the Wesleyan minister Robert Dall. His father was a glass-maker who worked in Bristol and Smethwick, where he and his two sons entered into a partnership with Messrs. Chance to produce German sheet glass. James Hartley moved to Sunderland in 1837 and founded the Wear Glass Works. After some difficulties he became a renowned producer of coloured glass (for church windows, etc.) and of rolled plate glass for which he patented a method of manufacture in 1847, and which was ideal for roofing purposes. By the 1860s Hartley was employing 700 men and supplying one-third of all plate

glass used in the country. The firm also had a large export business. Town councillor from 1842. Mayor of Sunderland, 1851, 1853, 1862. River Wear Commissioner. Encouraged railway development in Sunderland, and was a director of the N.E. Railway Co. Conservative MP for Sunderland 1865-8. An active Wesleyan; circuit steward in Sunderland. Joined the Church of England, 1853. Died in London. Left £147,623.

W. Brockie: *Sunderland Notables* (1894), pp. 450-9; *D.B.B.* (entry by Catherine Ross); *The Alderman* (Sunderland), iii, No. 68 (July 1877), pp. 1-5; Tyne and Wear County Council: *The Glass Industry of Tyne and Wear: Part I. Glassmaking on Wearside* (1979), pp. 31-3.

HINTON, AMOS (1844-1919) (WM)

Born at Tring in Hertfordshire, where his father (a Baptist apparently) was a miller and a baker. Apprenticed to grocery trade in Herts, then briefly in Batley, and from 1862 in Middlesbrough working for John Birks, a Wesleyan local preacher, who appears to have had a strong influence on him. Left Birks in 1865 to advance his knowledge of grocery business in London, but returned in 1868 as Birks's partner, and from 1871 took over completely from Birks and ran the business, still a smallish shop on South Street, Middlesbrough, on his own. Through skill and very hard work, and in the face of severe competition, he developed the business considerably in the 1870s and 1880s, opening several new branches in Middlesbrough and enlarging the old shop. The largest grocer in the town by the mid-1880s. His sons William and Humphrey joined him in the business in the 1890s, and further expansion followed, though still within the Teesside area. (N.B.—This progress reflects the consumer boom resulting from Middlesbrough's population growth from 19,000 in 1861 to 105,000 in 1911.) By 1916 the firm employed 230 employees in eight establishments, maintaining a high reputation for integrity and quality. Direct trading contacts with America, etc., and an important wholesale side to the business, were established. The firm became a private company as Amos Hinton & Sons Ltd. in 1914. In 1922 the profits were £19,000. A major expansion of the business took place after Amos's death, and continues today. Amos Hinton was elected to Middlesbrough Town Council in 1874 and served for many years as councillor and alderman. Mayor, 1887. Staunch Liberal; Magistrate. Chairman of Tees Valley Water Board. With Sir Hugh Bell gave the land on which Middlesbrough Central Library was built, 1910-12. A dedicated Wesleyan in all his years in Middlesbrough, attending in succession Centenary, Wesley, and Park chapels. Staunch teetotaler. A benevolent paternalist as an employer. Introduced a weekly half-day holiday in 1882. Lived in earlier years at Hilda House, near the Park chapel. Left £21,600.

D. Taylor: "The Case of the Jamaican Banana; or How to be a Successful Grocer in Nineteenth Century Middlesbrough", *Bulletin of the Cleveland and Teesside Local History Society*, No. 42 (Spring 1982), pp. 1-18; information supplied by the firm of Hintons, and personal communication from the late Mr. Kirtland Hinton.

HODGE, HENRY (1812-89) (PM)

Born at Kilnsea in Holderness, the son of a farmer whose home was a base for PM travelling preachers. The family moved to Hull in 1826, and Henry and his brothers eventually set up there as seed-crushers, oil-refiners and cattle cake manufacturers. Henry, after working with his older brother William (d. 1867), carried on the business alone, with the trade mark "H.H. Pure". He developed the techniques of cotton seed crushing and built the Phoenix and Alexandria Mills in Hull, where some 20,000 tons of seed were crushed annually, producing 16,000 tons of cake and 4,000 tons of oil. An

honest, blunt but kindly businessman, extremely energetic; organized his mills very well, and had a high reputation among farmers. His sons Edwin and Herbert carried on the business. A staunch and lifelong Primitive Methodist. Promoted Sunday schools, gave generously to chapel-building in Hull, e.g. Jarratt Street (1851), Hodgson Street, Williamson Street (1873), and helped in many ways to give Primitive Methodism considerable standing in the city. He was chosen as Vice-President of the PM Conference in 1886, the second after the office was officially established in 1885. Left £62,000.

Entry based mainly on personal communication from Mr. Wilf. Hodge of Key-ingham. Also *Hull Primitive Methodist Centenary Book* (1907); *Victoria County History: East Riding* [i] (1969), pp. 396, 456.

HORSLEY, GEORGE (1836-95) (WM)

Son of Matthew Horsley of Hartlepool, and one of a Wesleyan family active over several generations in that town. Timber merchant and ship-owner. Attended Northgate chapel, to which his sons and widow gave the Horsley Institute in his memory at a cost of £40,000. Councillor and mayor of Hartlepool, as were his brother John and his son Matthew. Left £8,300.

W. R. Owen: *Methodism in the Hartlepoons* (1912), pp. 63-4.

HUDSON FAMILY (WM)

Sunderland builders. ROBERT HUDSON (1840-1920) was born at Warkworth. Trained as a joiner. Worked as a builder in Cumbria and elsewhere. Moved to Sunderland and set up his own business as a builder and contractor. Built houses, bridges, churches, etc. (including St. George's ex-Presbyterian church, Sunderland, 1888-90). Married Ann Atkinson of Kirkby Thore. Left £2,500. His sons THOMAS ATKINSON HUDSON (1867-1931) and ROBERT JAMES HUDSON carried on the family business in their lifetime, but his grandsons Robert Milburn Hudson and Stephen Hudson separated to run different undertakings. The family worshipped at the Fawcett Street and Durham Road chapels in Sunderland.

Personal communications from Miss C. Brown, Mrs. M. Witherington, and Mr. R. M. Hudson.

HUISON, ROBERT (b. 1821) (PM)

Born at Durham. In 1844 established a successful wholesale stationery business in Sunderland. Also a shipowner. Very active Primitive Methodist at Flag Lane and Tatham Street chapels in Sunderland. Class leader, local preacher, circuit steward, representative to Conference. A supporter of schemes to modernize and advance PM work by building better chapels, establishing theological training, etc. Town councillor from 1875.

The Alderman (Sunderland), iii, No. 54 (31st March 1877).

LILBURN, CHARLES (d. 1891) (WM)

Son of William Lilburn of Sunderland, a baker on High Street; possibly descended from the famous Puritan family of the seventeenth century. Began work as a clerk with the Haswell, Shotton and Easington Coal Company and rose to become coal-fitter for that company and a coalowner. Also a considerable shipowner. Poor Law Guardian, River Wear Commissioner. Philanthropist to many causes. Active promoter of the new grounds at Ashbrooke for the Sunderland Cricket and Rugby Clubs. Promoter of the scheme to build St. John's Wesleyan chapel, Sunderland (1888) and a founder member. Bachelor. Possessor of a very fine library. Lived at Glenside, Sunderland. Left £39,000.

Corder MS (Sunderland Library); *Local Biography*, iii (Newcastle Central Library).

LONGRIDGE, MICHAEL (1757-1815) (WM)

Son of an ironmonger and fitter, and brother of Thomas Longridge who was a partner in Hawks & Co. of Gateshead, owners of the Bedlington Iron Works, 1782-1809. Michael Longridge settled in Sunderland and became a prosperous draper and mercer. Married Elizabeth Bewick in 1782, and lived at Hunters Hall, Bishopwearmouth. Very active Wesleyan. Class leader and local preacher from his early twenties, and did much pioneering work extending Wesleyan work in the vast Sunderland circuit. Largely responsible for launching Sunday schools in Sunderland from 1786, and he and his sons were actively involved in them for many years. Steered a middle course in the troubles afflicting Wesleyanism after Wesley's death, and worked hard for reconciliation. He was one of those who took part in the discussion leading to the Plan of Pacification in 1795. He was a personal friend of Alexander Kilham, but retained his loyalty to Wesleyanism when Kilham founded the New Connexion. A man of culture and wide reading. Promoted libraries in Sunderland. Wrote tracts and other religious material. His son George William (b. 1788?) remained in Sunderland. A conservative and supporter of Jabez Bunting. His other son Michael (b. 1785) followed in his uncle Thomas's footsteps at the Bedlington Iron Works and made a considerable name as a railway engineer. A benevolent employer, introducing welfare and educational schemes for his workers and their families.

WM *Mag.*, 1815, pp. 481-6, 561-8; E. Martin: *Bedlington Iron and Engine Works, 1736-1867* (1974); G. E. Milburn: "Michael Longridge of Sunderland", *Bulletin of the Wesley Historical Society North-East Branch*, No. 23 (February 1975), pp. 22-8.

LOVE, JOSEPH (1796-1875) (MNC)

Born in a pit village near North Shields, son of William Love, miner, of whose sons (from two marriages) at least three became coalowners. Started work in the pit as a trapper-boy. Rose to become a hewer working at Percy Main and other collieries. In 1821 left mining and set up as a hawker of groceries and draperies, later opening a shop in Lumley. Married Sarah, daughter of Isaac Pearson, timber merchant, of North Shields in 1825. Opened a shop at Easington Lane, 1829, and began also to build miners' cottages, making considerable profits. Took over the Shincliffe Corn Mill in 1837 for a short period, but the collapse of the Newcastle District Bank affected him. Returned to North Shields to work for Joseph and John Straker, shipbuilders and timber merchants. In 1840 he and the Strakers bought the Brancepeth Coal royalty and began mining. Turned adversity to advantage by using the very soft coal for coking purposes. Opened new collieries (Oakenshaw, Sunnybrow, Willington, etc.) and many coke ovens, in partnership with Strakers. Later in partnership with Robinson Ferens he acquired collieries in the Deerness Valley, Shincliffe and elsewhere. Vast profits came to him from his fities onwards. Lived at Willington Hall from 1850 to 1858, when he built Mount Beulah on the outskirts of Durham City. His son Isaac Pearson Love died 1854, aged 27; a grandson, Joseph Horatio Love, born 1853. Isaac's widow married Robinson Ferens (q.v.), who became Love's partner. Love was a generous supporter of the New Connexion, stimulating its work by many gifts and encouraging the construction of well-built chapels, e.g. Bethel chapel, Durham (1853), to which he gave £1,000 and the manse. Helped to consolidate and extend the MNC's work, especially in the North-East. A local preacher for the MNC from 1819. Apparently aimed to be a fair employer, but was caught up in a bitter strike in 1863-4 which damaged his reputation among certain sections of the miners. His philanthropy extended beyond the MNC to various north-

eastern causes, and to the Church of England. Love's will showed an estate worth almost £1,000,000.

Durham Chronicle, 26th February 1875; 5th March 1875; *Durham Directory*, 1876, pp. 44-7; *MNC Mag.*, 1856, pp. 288-90; 1859, pp. 275-6, 564 ff.; 1862, pp. 119-21; 1874, pp. 106-8; R. S. Moore: *Pitmen, Preachers and Politics* (1974), chapter 3 (with many references); R. Fynes: *The Miners of Northumberland and Durham* (1873/1923), especially pp. 225 ff.; *Illustrated London News*, 21st November 1863.

MEEK, JAMES (1790-1862) (WM)
and

MEEK, [Sir] JAMES (1815-91) (WM-PM)

James Meek senior (1790-1862), a currier and glass-maker of York, had served his apprenticeship with Joseph Agar (1761-1847), currier, a leading York Wesleyan whose son became an itinerant. Meek senior in turn became one of York's principal Wesleyan laymen. He was an alderman, Lord Mayor three times, and a Liberal. In addition to his leather and glass interests, chairman of the York and Midland, and Newcastle and Berwick Railways. Left £60,000.

James Meek junior (1815-91) succeeded to his father's business interests, and also followed him on to the York Corporation, becoming an alderman in 1853 and (like his father) holding the Lord Mayoralty three times. Chairman of the Governors of Bootham Asylum, York. Liberal. Deputy Lieutenant of the North Riding, 1865. Knighted, 1869 (under Gladstone's government) for entertaining the Prince of Wales while Lord Mayor three years earlier. His title believed to be the first gained by a Primitive Methodist. Left the Wesleyans (with the class of which he was a leader) in 1853 and joined the Primitive Methodists, becoming an active member of the Little Stonegate chapel. A supporter of Elmfield College, York (the PM school) and the PM Theological Institution which began at Elmfield and was transferred to Sunderland in 1868. His home (and his father's too) was Middlethorpe Lodge, Yorks. Left York, 1885. Died at Cheltenham. Left £16,000.

Yorkshire Gazette, 8th April 1865; 11th February 1891; *Victoria County History: York*, pp. 269, 272, 305, 414.

MERRYWEATHER, GEORGE (fl. 1750s-early 1800s) (WM)

A merchant of Yarm-on-Tees. Probably one of those "gentlemen of Yarm" who persuaded Wesley to visit the town for the first time in 1748. For over half a century he had a leading role in Yarm Methodism and acted as Wesley's principal lay agent in that vicinity, Yarm being head of a large circuit. The society first met in a hay-loft behind his house (17, High Street) before the building of the Octagon in 1763. Merryweather was generous in offering hospitality and practical support to Wesley and the preachers, and was held in affection and regard by them. With other Yarm men he gave generously to the connexional funds to extinguish chapel debts in 1767. He was a man of broad and liberal sympathies; continued to correspond with and support preachers like John Hampson, sen., who left Wesley after the Deed of Declaration, and was in favour of reform in the Connexion, though did not apparently leave it. The latest reference to him (at present known) is in 1805. He married in 1765 or shortly before, and appears to have curtailed his business involvements about that time. His daughter married Matthew Naylor (b. Doncaster 1764) who was a businessman in Darlington, and active as a lay preacher in that town and vicinity, introducing Methodism to several new places. Mrs. Naylor preserved many letters to her father from

Wesley, Fletcher, Romaine, Grimshaw, Sarah Crosby, Alexander Mather, John Pawson, Christopher Hopper and others, which were copied by James Everett.

J. Wright: *Early Methodism in Yarm* (1969). Also references in Wesley's *Letters and Journal*, and letters in the Tyerman collection. I am indebted to Professor W. R. Ward for access to Xerox copies of the latter.

MIDDLETON, JOHN (1724-95) (WM)

Born near Ripon, son of a millwright. About the age of 30 took a mill at Guisborough; in 1766 moved to Hartlepool, where he rebuilt and enlarged an old mill. Prospered through hard work, skill and frugality. Brought up in the Church of England, and without losing his attachment to that church he threw in his lot with the Methodists in the 1760s. Attended Methodist meetings at Sheraton but then was instrumental in establishing meetings in Hartlepool, and in getting preaching-houses built there. He was the devoted father of the society at Stranton, and also supported the wider work in the circuit. Hospitable, generous and respected. His four sons all brought up as Methodists. One of them is probably the Robert Middleton of Hartlepool who married Hannah, the daughter of John Ward, sen. of Durham (q.v.).

WM *Mag.*, 1810, pp. 209-17; W. R. Owen, op. cit.

MUSCHAMP FAMILY (WM and PM)

A Weardale family with Quaker roots. Related to the Bainbridges (q.v.). JOHN DOVER MUSCHAMP of Westgate (1777-1858) was a protector and patron of early Primitive Methodism in Weardale. Three of his sons migrated to Sunderland. Two of them, William Muschamp and John Bell Muschamp, were Wesleyans, and shared a drapery business on High Street. William also had interests in coal-ownership and paper-making. During the 1840s and early 1850s J.B.M. was a partner with his cousin Emerson Muschamp Bainbridge in Newcastle. He married Ann Tuer of Sunderland.

EMERSON MUSCHAMP (1809-49), the third son, was a Primitive Methodist. He showed virtuosity in his social and commercial activities, being involved in farming and estate-management, iron-making, and civil engineering including railway construction. He was a member of the first Borough Council elected in Sunderland after the restoration of borough status in 1835. A deeply-committed Primitive Methodist, and active in many schemes for its expansion as well as for the general progress of evangelical religion in Sunderland and elsewhere. His widow married the Rev. Luke Tyerman, Wesleyan, biographer of Wesley. A daughter by this marriage became the wife of a son of John Benson of Newcastle (q.v.).

A. & J. Airey, op. cit.; PM *Mag.*, 1839, pp. 26-31; 1849, pp. 705-8; 1858, pp. 699-701.

NEEDLER, FREDERICK (MNC-UM)

Born in Holderness of a farming family. Started as a confectioner in 1886 on money borrowed from his mother. By 1921 he was employing 1,100 workers in the large-scale manufacture of sweets and chocolates. Benevolent employer, offering welfare and recreational facilities and a profit-sharing scheme. Active in the Methodist New Connexion and the United Methodist Church, at Stepney chapel, Hull. Sunday-school teacher. Close friend of T. R. Ferens (q.v.). A Sabbatarian, opposing Sunday trading. Benefactor of Hull University College, Needler Hall of Residence being named after him.

PANNETT, ROBERT ELLIOTT (1834-1920) (WM)

Son of a hairdresser from Sussex, who had settled in Whitby. Left school at 12; thereafter largely self-educated. Qualified as a solicitor in 1858, and established a practice in Whitby in 1859. Very active in civic affairs as Town Improvement Commissioner, and as clerk to the Commission and ultimately to the local Council. Magistrate. Chairman of the local Water Company, and Director of a Building Society. On the committee of the Literary and Philosophical Society for 60 years. On the North Riding County Council 1888-1908 and chairman of the Education Committee. A Liberal. Dedicated Wesleyan, member at Brunswick chapel, Whitby. Organized the Sunday-school Library and left £200 in his will for its upkeep. He gave the impressive "Brunswick Room" as a school hall in 1892, and provided in his will for a pipe organ to be installed. Also donated a park and the Art Gallery to Whitby. Generous benefactor to the poor. His portrait hangs in the Brunswick Room. Left £30,000.

G. E. Gunner: "Robert Elliott Pannett, 1834-1920", in the *Annual Report* of the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society, 1980.

PARKER, THOMAS (d. 1829) (WM-Swedenborgian)

Barrister. Became a member of the Durham Methodist society, c. 1780, and active in its support. Very powerful local preacher; made a big impact on Methodism in the city (doubling the membership in five years) and in the neighbourhood. Lived at Shincliffe near Durham, where Wesley visited him in May 1780 and preached from near his doorstep. Late in 1783 published a circular, with Thomas Coke, setting out a "Plan for the establishment of Missions among the Heathen". Coke may have conceived this plan in conversation with Parker, whose address in it is shown as York. Moved to Hull c. 1785 to become counsel to the Hull Dock Co. Lived in Beverley. In 1790 moved to London. Joined the Swedenborgians. Later lived in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Author of several works including a Scripture Commentary (1784).

WM *Mag.*, 1830, pp. 577-80 (note).

RACE FAMILY

There was a widespread clan of Races in Weardale, both Primitive and Wesleyan. ANTHONY RACE was a Wesleyan local preacher who joined the Primitives in the early 1820s and worked for some years as a travelling preacher. His grandson GEORGE RACE (1810-86), a grocer and draper, became one of the leading laymen in northern Primitive Methodism; was an effective and learned preacher, and an official for 54 years. There is a memorial to him and his brother Nathan (1826-88) in the chapel at Westgate. George left £1,400.

C. C. McKechnie: "George Race", *PM Mag.*, 1892, pp. 20-4.

RANK, JOSEPH (1854-1943) (WM)

Born on Holderness Road, Hull, the son of James Rank, miller. Father Wesleyan and mother Primitive Methodist. Rank's younger years gave little indication of the qualities he later revealed in commerce and religion. Father left £30,000 (1874), but Joseph received only £500 of this. He began milling on his own in 1875, slowly expanding and enlarging his business. Converted 1883 at Kingston chapel, Hull—invited there by Alfred Gelder (q.v.). Influenced also about this time by the Rev. Thomas Champness; a strong religious dedication was added to his natural business shrewdness and

ambition. He combined an aggressive, hard-headed commercial outlook with a deep evangelicalism. Established a new mill on Williamson Street, Hull, which ground the flour by steam-powered rollers instead of grindstones. His early recognition of this new technique is one major factor in his rise to national pre-eminence. The mill was an immediate success, and another, the Clarence Mill, opened in 1891. Other mills built later in London, Cardiff and Ireland, and businesses in Scotland, Lancashire, and elsewhere were bought up as part of the rapidly-expanding Rank empire. Rank moved to London as the result of these developments. At his peak Rank was said to supply flour for bread for one-seventh of the British people. His very real devotion to Methodism was evinced both in simple ways (e.g. by his long and active association with Sunday schools in Hull and London as superintendent) and in great. He eagerly supported the Wesleyan Forward Movement. Gave massively to Methodist work at home and overseas, his gifts totalling several million pounds in all. Also a generous benefactor to his native city, in particular establishing the Rank Benevolent Trust with a gift of £300,000. Lifelong temperance advocate. Married Emily Voase, a farmer's daughter, 1880. Three sons, including Joseph Arthur (Lord) Rank (died 1972). His will shows estate of £70,954 gross.

D.N.B.; R. Burnett: *Through the Mill* (1945); *Hull Times*, 15th April 1944; E. Gillett and K. A. MacMahon, op. cit.; *D.B.B.* (entry by Jonathan Brown).

RITSON, UTRICK A. (1842-1932) (WM)

Son of William Ritson (1811-93), a stonemason who rose to be a civil engineering contractor building docks and railways. Utrick Ritson began work as a contractor; built the Hexham-Allendale Railway and (with his uncle) worked on the construction of the Thames Embankment. Inherited some coal mines from his father and acquired others, the most profitable being the Preston colliery, near North Shields. Director of the Newcastle and Gateshead Gas Co., and the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Co., as well as other concerns on Tyneside. Vice-Chairman of the Northern Counties Conservative Newspaper Co. Ltd. Member of Durham County Council from 1882, and Newcastle Town Council from 1878, and a Magistrate. He had a house in Newcastle, and also Calf Hall, Muggleswick. Attended Jesmond Wesleyan chapel, Newcastle. Erected the obelisk marking Wesley's first visit to Newcastle (1742) on the Quayside in 1891. Married Annie Ridley of Hexham. Left £107,000.

D.B.B. (entry by R. W. Rennison); R. W. Rennison: *Water to Tyneside* (1979), p. 325.

RUNCIMAN, WALTER [Lord] (1847-1937) (WM)

Born at Dunbar, fourth son of Walter Runciman, master of a schooner who later settled on shore as a coastguard officer at Cresswell, Northumberland, where Runciman was brought up as a boy in a staunchly Wesleyan household. His father was a local preacher and his mother fervently religious. He ran away from home at the age of 12, hoping to seek his fortune. Sailed the seas for the next 25 years, being master of several ships from 1873. Settled on shore at South Shields, and in 1885 started business as a shipowner, beginning with second-hand vessels and then later having new ones built. Established the Moor Line (based later in Newcastle), which had 40 ships by 1914. He acquired a controlling interest in the Anchor Line in 1935 at the age of 88. Bought estates at Shoreston and Doxford on the Northumberland coast, but kept Fernwood House in Jesmond, Newcastle, as his home. He was active in civic and political life. A strong Liberal of independent outlook. MP for The Hartlepoons 1914-18. Knighted, 1906; and raised to

peage in 1933 as Baron Runciman of Shoreston. The final revision in the Probate Register shows his estate as £2,902,561. A dedicated Methodist, loving the old traditions and old hymns. Popular as a preacher. When living in Newcastle, he worshipped at Jesmond Wesleyan chapel. Acted at various times as Circuit Steward, representative to Conference, and member of connexional committees. Lady Runciman was a class leader at Jesmond. An eager temperance reformer. Gave practical assistance to many chapels, e.g. £500 to Harton chapel, South Shields, in 1937, and paying the bulk of the cost of the Seahouses chapel. Other benefactions included £75,000 to Newcastle Infirmary. His brothers had remarkable talents: Thomas was an artist and poet, and James (1852-91) a writer and journalist, and sub-editor of *Vanity Fair* and *London* magazines. Walter Runciman himself wrote several books, including *Before the Mast and After* (1924). He married Ann Margaret Lawson of Cresswell in 1869. His only child, Walter, was educated at Cambridge, married the daughter of J. C. Stevenson, MP for Shields, entered Parliament himself in 1902, and served for many years, holding a number of ministerial posts. Created Viscount Runciman of Doxford in 1937, not long before his father's death.

D.N.B.; *D.B.B.*; Walter Runciman: *Before the Mast and After* (1924); *The Times*, 14th August 1937; *Shields Gazette*, 13th August 1937.

SANDERSON, JOHN (1833-99) (MNC)

The Sandersons were an old Sunderland family, associated with the Zion New Connexion chapel in that town. John Sanderson went to sea at 13 in a ship owned partly by his father; later was master of a ship sailing mainly to the Far East. Settled on shore c. 1870, and entered into a ship-owning partnership with his brother-in-law John Wallace Taylor (q.v.). Built up a fleet of twenty or so vessels, switching to steam power at an early date. Sanderson was also associated with a number of local engineering and glass businesses as director or chairman. Town councillor from 1888; Magistrate. Mayor 1893 and 1894. River Wear Commissioner. Staunch Liberal. Dedicated member of the New Connexion, being a Guardian Representative (i.e. life-member of Conference) from 1892. He and his wife much involved in the building of the gothic Park Road MNC chapel in Sunderland (1886-7), which "stands as a fitting memorial to his religious enterprise and devotion". He gave the organ to the church. Trust Steward. Circuit Steward. President of Sunday School. Teetotaller. Three daughters, one of them (*Oceana*) born at sea.

Sunderland Y.M.C.A. Flashes, May 1894, pp. 97-8.

SKINNER FAMILY (WM?)

A Whitby family of shipowners, whaling boat owners, etc. Established links with Stockton-on-Tees and commenced banking there in 1815 with the Commercial Bank (partners William Skinner, sen., William Skinner, jun., J. Holt Skinner, William Holt and Mr. Atty—all Whitby men). The bank weathered several crises, and apparently was trustworthy. Other branches in Yarm, Darlington, Barnard Castle, Stokesley. Taken over in 1836 by the new National Provincial Bank, William Skinner, jun. becoming manager. The Skinners were active in Stockton municipal life, both Williams being elected to the mayoralty in the 1820s; William sen. was later the first Mayor under the *new* corporation (1836), and William jun. Mayor in 1840, 1841, 1844, 1853. The Skinners intermarried with the Wesleyan family of Walkers (q.v.). William Skinner, jun. married Ann, daughter of James Walker, 6th July 1820; she died in 1822 and he apparently married her

sister Mary, 23rd April 1825. William's sister Mary married Ann's brother, Richard Walker.

M. Phillips: *A History of Banks . . . in Northumberland, Durham and N. Yorks* (1894), pp. 379-82; T. Richmond: *Local Records of Stockton* (1868/1972), pp. 125, 150-1, 171.

SMITH, WILLIAM (1736-1824) (WM)

Born at Corbridge. Brought up in a pious Church of England home and educated by a clergyman. Entered business with a relative in Newcastle and ultimately became a wealthy corn merchant, retiring before he was sixty to devote his last thirty years fully to the cause of Methodism, of which he became a member in his early years in Newcastle. Joined the Orphan House society and was appointed by Wesley as a class leader at about the age of 20. Also undertook various other duties, including preaching. In 1769 he married Jane Vazeille, Wesley's step-daughter. Much trusted by Wesley, and assumed a role in Newcastle almost as one of the itinerants. Accompanied Wesley on many northern journeys, and saved his life when his coach-horses bolted in 1774. Active in the various schemes to settle the Methodist Connexion in the troubled years after Wesley's death. Was himself a liberal, but accepted the Plan of Pacification and remained loyal to Wesleyanism, continuing to serve the Newcastle society in a quasi-ministerial role. A founder member of Brunswick chapel, 1820. Two daughters, Mary and Jane, who were regarded by Wesley as his grandchildren. Mary married the Rev. John Stamp, but died young. Stamp's son by his second wife was the Rev. Dr. W. W. Stamp, author of *The Orphan House of Wesley* (1863). Smith's portrait hangs in the vestry of Brunswick chapel, and there is a large inscribed stone over his tomb in St. Andrew's churchyard, Newcastle. Described by James Everett as "wealthy; neat, trim in person; below the middle size; not profound [as a preacher] but good matter and respectable style" (in *Gatherings from the Pit Heaps* (1868), p. 105).

W. W. Stamp: *The Orphan House of Wesley* (1863), pp. 120-6; *WM Mag.*, 1845, pp. 121-2.

STEELE, ANTHONY (1793-1861) (WM)

Son of Richard Steele, jun., currier, of Barnard Castle (d. 1807), a grandson of Jacob Rowell (1722-83), one of Wesley's travelling preachers who worked for many years in the northern dales. Wesley was entertained at the Steele household. Anthony Steele was a very active Wesleyan, serving as Sunday-school teacher, preacher, etc. He had a valuable theological library which was an asset to the travelling preachers. In 1857 (a century after Jacob Rowell was first appointed to the Dales circuit), Anthony Steele published *Methodism in Barnard Castle and the Dales*. He carried on the family leather-working business in Barnard Castle. Left under £5,000 in his will. He had two brothers John and Richard, and a son Anthony.

WM Mag., 1808, pp. 233-4; 1864, pp. 577 ff.

STEPHENSON, [Sir] WILLIAM HASWELL (1836-1918)

Born at Throckley House, near Newcastle, son of William Stephenson (1801-76), a descendant of John Stephenson who sold Wesley land on which to build the Orphan House. This William, and his wife Elizabeth, were strong supporters of Wesleyanism, and did much to encourage its extension in the Throckley area. A farmer, William ventured with success into the exploitation of coal and clay on his lands, establishing the Throckley Fire Clay and Gas Retort Works, and reviving an old colliery. His son, W. H. Stephenson, was educated at Wesley College, Sheffield, and trained at a

shipbroker's on the Quayside, Newcastle. Formed the Throckley Coal Company, 1867, with his father and brother; W.H.S. was managing director and also proprietor of the Clay Works. Acquired numerous other industrial and commercial interests, being director of local water, gas, shipping, railway, grain and insurance companies. A Tyne Improvement Commissioner. Very active in civic life. City councillor from 1869. Mayor several times between 1875 and 1911; Sheriff 1886. School Board member. Conservative. Knighted 1900. Presented the statute of Queen Victoria which stands on the north side of Newcastle Cathedral. One of those who presented the Elswick Hall estate to the city. Built branch libraries at Elswick, Benwell and Throckley. A dedicated and autocratic Wesleyan. Local preacher from 1859; class leader from 1866. Teetotaller. Representative at Wesleyan Conference 1893. Gave generously to chapel-building, and built Elswick Road chapel, where he worshipped. A founder and governor of The Leys School. Chairman of Woodhouse Grove School. Married Eliza Mary Bond. One daughter. Left £85,600.

D.H.B. (entry by R. W. Rennison); A. D. Walton: "Sir Wm. Haswell Stephenson", *Bulletin of the Wesley Historical Society North-East Branch*, Nos. 32 and 33 (September 1979 and February 1980). R. Welford, *op. cit.*, has a chapter on William Stephenson, father of W. Haswell Stephenson.

STEWART, THOMAS DORMAND (1855-1946) (WM)

Founder of Stewart's Clothiers of Middlesbrough. Started with a single shop in Middlesbrough, but later established many branches. The business transferred to Price's (Tailors) before his death. Gave Marton Hall and grounds (now Stewart Park) to Middlesbrough. A Liberal in politics. Mayor of Middlesbrough. Freeman, 1924. Worshipped at the Park Wesleyan chapel. Left £75,000 with only small donations to Methodist causes, though said to have been munificent in his lifetime. Died at his country house at Low Straggleton, near Whitby. His nephew T. Dormand Stewart (d. 1952) started in business with the above, but later established his own tailoring and raincoat business with many branches in the North. Regular worshipper at the Avenue Wesleyan chapel, and had a special interest in the musical life there. Founder of the Middlesbrough Rotary. Left £4,676.

North-Eastern Gazette, 12th June 1946; 12th October 1946.

STOREY, SAMUEL (1841-1925) (UMFC-UM)

Son of a farmer, who died young. Storey's mother a member of Dock Street UMFC chapel, Sunderland, and he was brought up in that tradition. Married Mary Ann Addison in 1864, a fellow-member at Dock Street. In later life he was sympathetic towards the Brotherhood Movement, and was a friend of William Walker (q.v.). Trained as a teacher, and became a schoolmaster at Birtley. Much influenced by Mazzini's *Duties of Man*, and acquired a profound belief in politics as a means of forming a good society. Abandoned teaching in 1864 and went to Sunderland to "make his fortune and seek public position", as he admitted. Involved in various undertakings—a building society, a timber business, land dealings, etc. Showed an acute business instinct. An advanced Liberal in politics. Town councillor from 1869. Mayor 1876. Said to be the first Sunderland mayor to order the civic parade to be held in a nonconformist chapel. Leader of a powerful reformist pressure group in Sunderland. In December 1873 was the master-mind of a group (including Edward Backhouse, E. T. Gourley, MP, Charles Mark Palmer) who launched the *Sunderland Echo* as a radical evening paper. In

the 1880s he worked with Andrew Carnegie on a national newspaper syndicate buying up papers in many towns, and converting them to radical organs. MP for Sunderland, 1881-95. Friend and political adviser of Christopher Furness of Hartlepool (q.v.), and helped him to win the election at Hartlepool in 1891. Durham County Councillor, 1892-1913, and Chairman 1896-1905. Left £202,300, according to his will, but his family say the estate was £370,000.

P. J. Storey: *Samuel Storey of Sunderland, 1841-1925* (University of Edinburgh M.Litt. thesis, 1978—unpublished).

SWAN, JOHN CAMERON (1827-1916)

and

SWAN, [Sir] JOSEPH WILSON (1828-1914) (WM)

Sons of John Swan, a Sunderland ironmonger, whose wife's mother was converted by Wesley on one of his last visits to that town. The two boys were brought up in a strongly Wesleyan household. Educated in Sunderland. Apprenticed as chemists, and in the 1840s both went to Newcastle to work with the Methodist John Mawson (q.v.), who had married their aunt and later married their sister. Joseph became a partner in this business later. JOHN set up his own business in Newcastle in 1855 as a merchant dealing especially in chemicals and metals. Also involved in lead-mining and smelting in the Pennine dales. An active Liberal and a close friend of Joseph Cowen of Newcastle. Married Harriet, daughter of the Rev. Thomas Rowland (1792-1858), a Wesleyan who succeeded in 1849 and became a minister with the Wesleyan Reformers and Free Methodists. After her death he married her step-sister Mary. A connoisseur of sermons, Swan often attended St. James's (Congregational) church, Newcastle, to hear the Rev. Dr. J. H. Jowett.

JOSEPH as a boy acquired a strong interest in science and inventions, partly through friendship with an older Wesleyan local preacher, John Ridley (b. 1806), who owned an electrical machine, and partly through lectures at the Sunderland Athenæum. He continued these interests after moving to Newcastle, and worked especially towards the production of a successful incandescent electric light bulb, which he achieved finally in 1879 about the same time as Edison's invention in the USA. In 1880 Mosley Street in Newcastle was illuminated by the use of Swan's invention. Swan's Electric Light Company was formed in 1881. Edison and Swan later combined to develop the new lighting. Swan was also an important pioneer in photography. Regarded as one of Britain's leading scientists, Swan received several honours—D.Sc., F.R.S., and a knighthood in 1904. His later contacts with Methodism appear to have been nominal. Left £60,000.

T. H. Corfe: *Swan in Sunderland* (1979); *John Cameron Swan, 1827-1916*, by his daughters.

TAYLOR, JOHN WALLACE (1846-1927) (WM)

Son of John Taylor (born Sutton Bank, near Thirsk) and Mary Ann Wallace (of Durham). His father a shipbroker and coal exporter in Sunderland, and J.W.T. entered the family business at the age of 13. Showed great aptitude, and in due course became head of the firm. Also senior partner with his brother-in-law John Sanderson (q.v.) in an important ship-owning business. Town councillor in Sunderland for several years. River Wear Commissioner. Magistrate. Country residence Dalton Hall, Yorks; in Sunderland lived on Thornhill Park. A keen Wesleyan. He and his friend Charles Lilburn (q.v.) helped save the old Sans Street chapel of 1793 as a mission, and these two and others, including Hiram Craven (q.v.) were founding members of the

fine gothic St. John's Wesleyan chapel in Sunderland (1888), which has a memorial window to Taylor. Left £189,700.

Sunderland Y.M.C.A. Flashes, July 1898, pp. 121-2; *Corder MS* (Sunderland Library).

THOMPSON, THOMAS (1753-1828) (WM)

Son of a farmer at Owbridge, Swine parish, near Hull. Became a banker in Hull with Abel Smith, a former partner of William Wilberforce, and had a successful career in banking and commerce. In his religious and social convictions Thompson was much influenced by Wilberforce and the Anglican Evangelicals, and also by Methodism. He attended Cottingham parish church, but became increasingly active in Methodism. Local preacher. Built chapel at Cottingham. Keen supporter of Methodist Missions. Deep concern for poor, and experimented with small holdings. A "Church-Methodist"; after Wesley's death he issued a circular letter, with Richard Terry of Hull, prophesying the decline of Methodism if it parted from the Church of England. Built Cottingham Castle, 1808. MP for Midhurst, Sussex, 1807-18—the first Methodist to sit in the House of Commons. Married Philothea Perronet Briggs, granddaughter of Vincent Perronet, vicar of Shoreham, and daughter of William Briggs, Wesley's first Book Steward. His son Thomas Perronet Thompson (1783-1869) had a varied and colourful career as soldier, scholar, author and politician, and was a noted free-trader.

P. Rigby : *A Cottingham Century* (1978); *D.N.B.* (for T. P. Thompson).

THOMPSON FAMILY (UMFC-UM)

A family of Sunderland shipbuilders. ROBERT THOMPSON (1797-1860) started as a shipwright, became foreman of a shipyard in Southwick (on the Wear near Sunderland), and in 1846 began to build wooden ships on the North Sands at Monkwearmouth. His will shows effects of under £2,000. His sons ROBERT (1819-1910) and JOSEPH LOWES THOMPSON, SEN. (1827-93) also worked as shipbuilders on the Wear, Robert at Southwick and Joseph at North Sands. Robert left estate of £159,000. Joseph built up one of Sunderland's leading shipyards, and acquired the whole of the North Sands site in 1880. He had made the business over to his three sons in 1875. A strong supporter of Dock Street UMFC chapel, and helped to build the Roker Avenue chapel. Left £23,800. His son JOSEPH LOWES THOMPSON, JUN. (1853-1903) served his apprenticeship with his father and his uncle Robert, then became a partner in the North Sands yard. Active in the UMFC. Generous supporter of T. R. Blumer (q.v.) in the building of a Methodist Men's Institute, which after his death in 1903 was named after him as the Thompson Memorial Hall. Left £61,000.

Sunderland Y.M.C.A. Flashes, January 1904, pp. 49-50; J. W. Smith : *Where Ships are born* (1947), pp. 42-6; various press-cuttings; J. Young (ed.), op. cit.

TUER, JOSEPH (WM)

Born at Appleby. Clerk and later a partner in the Wear Glass Works, Deptford, Sunderland, also known as the Wear Flint Glass Co. (White, Young & Tuer), producers of especially fine glass tableware. The company changed hands by 1834. Tuer was also a draper in Sunderland in partnership with Thomas Jopling from 1804, this partnership being carried on by their sons Joseph Robertson Tuer and James Jopling. (This business was the forerunner of Jopling's of Sunderland.) Joseph Tuer, sen. married Elizabeth Dixon, sister of the wives of Andrew White (q.v.) and T. B. Young (q.v.), and his daughter Ann married John Bell Muschamp (q.v.). Everett

describes Joseph Tuer, sen. as "a fine natural speaker: good style, could work up a Scripture narrative . . . with touching and telling effect; sharp spirited; shrewd; courteous; and free." (*Gatherings from the Pit Heaps: The Allens of Shiney Row* (1868), p. 105.)

VAUGHAN, JOHN (1799-1868) (WM)

Son of a skilled iron-worker at the Dowlais (South Wales) works of Josiah Guest, who was himself a Wesleyan. Trained in the iron works, and showed skill and ambition. Manager of iron works at Carlisle (1825) and later at Walker-on-Tyne with the firm of Losh, Wilson & Bell (1832). His second wife was the sister-in-law of Henry Bolckow, then working in Newcastle; in 1839 Bolckow and Vaughan moved to Middlesbrough to establish their own iron works, which opened in 1841. Bolckow sank £30,000 into the project. In 1850 Vaughan by careful surveys confirmed the existence of rich iron ore seams in the Cleveland Hills, and obtained leases for the company. The first ore was mined in August 1850, and blast furnaces were built soon after at Eston and Middlesbrough. The impact of this industrial development on Middlesbrough was considerable—population increased from 7,893 in 1851 to 18,273 in 1861. In 1864, a limited liability company was formed with capital of £2,500,000, by which date Bolckow and Vaughan were employing several thousand men in furnaces, collieries, etc. Vaughan bought Gunner-gate Hall, 1858. He left £160,000, much of which is said to have been squandered by his son Thomas. Though he was Mayor of Middlesbrough in 1855, his local reputation was not as high as that of his partner, probably because of his disregard for social graces. He is said to have been liked by his workmen. He was a Wesleyan, worshipping at the Centenary chapel, Middlesbrough, and for a time a class leader. His statue erected in 1884 near the Albert Bridge is now in Victoria Square, Middlesbrough.

Northern Echo, 7th October 1881; *WM Mag.*, 1904, p. 292. (Vaughan's partner, Bolckow, has an entry in *D.N.B.*)

WADDINGTON, GEORGE (1815-1901) (WM)

Born near Pickering. After working in York, Hull and Market Weighton, he took over a business as a tanner and leather-dealer at Newland near Hull. The business later developed a very important glove-making side. Waddington, a deeply devout Wesleyan and father of the cause at Newland, took a leading role in the erection of a new chapel (1858) and in the efficient organization of the Sunday school, of which he was superintendent until 1888. Served for 50 years as a local preacher. He died a fortnight after a new school-chapel designed by Alfred Gelder (q.v.) was opened by T. R. Ferens (q.v.), with Joseph Rank (q.v.) as a trustee. Left £13,500. His son Thomas Gibson Waddington carried on the family's leading role in Newland Methodism, to which they contributed so much.

Frank Baker: *Methodism in Newland* (1958).

WALKER FAMILY (WM)

Leading Wesleyans in Stockton in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Exact dates and connexions are as yet uncertain. JAMES WALKER, a flax merchant, was Mayor of Stockton in 1809 and 1811, and died in 1814 (aged 64). He appears to be the father of ANN WALKER (1797-1822), a pious and dedicated Methodist who married William Skinner, jun. (q.v.), a banker of Stockton. Ann's brother RICHARD married Mary Skinner, William's sister. Richard Walker donated £500 towards the cost of the Brunswick chapel, Stockton, opened in 1823. In the 1840s he helped to

protect William Clemitson, a PM itinerant, from an attempt to prevent his open-air preaching in Stockton High Street.

WALKER, WILLIAM (1864-1927) (WM)

Born in Sunderland of Wesleyan parents who were reared in Durham pit-village Methodism. His father, a colliery engineer, died aged 48. His mother (d. 1929, aged 91) carried on a remarkable lay ministry through cottage prayer-meetings at her home in Sunderland, influencing many young men who knew her affectionately as "Mother Walker". At 15 William Walker was converted in Newcastle under Thomas Champness, and about that time he began his business career in a corn merchant's office in Newcastle. Later established his own business as a corn and seed merchant in Sunderland. Director of several companies. Building on his mother's work, he established a Men's Fellowship class, and later a Sunday Afternoon Men's Homely Hour (Brotherhood), which both became based at Ewesley Road chapel, Sunderland, when it opened in 1903. The Brotherhood (of which he was President) was interdenominational and grew rapidly, attracting several hundred men each week and carrying on much evangelistic and temperance work. In 1918 he launched "Sunshine Hour" Sunday evening services in the Victoria Hall, Sunderland, which often attracted several thousand worshippers. Town councillor from 1898. Mayor 1907. Alderman from 1920. Magistrate. Left £24,300.

D. Timmins: *These Twenty Five Years* (1924).

WARD, JOHN (1771-1857) (WM-MNC)

Born in Durham, the son of John Ward (d. 1838), of Weardale ancestry. Educated at Durham Grammar School. Very proficient in languages, and had a remarkable memory. Very effective public speaker. Trained as a solicitor and had a successful career in practice in Durham City. One of his partners was John Bramwell (q.v.). Another later partner was Abraham Story. Ward's specialism was property law. By 1847 he was Master Extraordinary in Chancery and Deputy Prothonotary in the Court of Pleas at the Exchequer in Durham. Joined Methodism in early life, and was an active and able worker in its behalf with other Durham men like John Barry (q.v.). Class leader. Offered valued legal advice to the preachers. James Everett knew Ward, and held him in high regard. Disagreed with Wesleyanism in the 1820s over doctrinal and disciplinary issues. Joined the New Connexion, and remained in that communion until his death. Ward was a lifelong Whig and Liberal. Spoke often on civil and religious matters. Married The Hon. Frances Leveson Gower in 1813 (she died in 1849). He left under £3,000 in his will, but had obviously made financial provision in his lifetime—at least £8,000 was in trust. Said to have allocated one-third of his income to charitable purposes.

J. Everett: *The Polemic Divine* (1839), pp. 73-4, 97-100; *Durham Directory*, 1858, pp. 35-8; W. R. Ward: *Early Correspondence of Jabez Bunting* (1972), pp. 174-5.

WARDELL, MATTHEW (1779-1868) (WM)

Builder of Durham, and a faithful Wesleyan at Old Elvet. Class leader. Sunday-school worker. Though said to be prosperous, his will was under £100. Said to have been the author of many plans for the public improvement of Durham City. A quiet, unobtrusive, but respected figure in the city.

W. Thwaites: *Wesleyan Methodism in Durham City* (1909), p. 23; *Durham Directory*, 1869, p. 38.

WATSON, GEORGE (d. 1782) (WM)

Master of a trading vessel who retired early and settled in Stockton. Keen supporter of Methodism; offered hospitality to Wesley and other preachers. Wesley preached outside his door on 12th June 1770. Watson's will mentions sums totalling at least £700, plus his house and property.

WAWN FAMILY (WM)

Active Tyneside Wesleyans in the early nineteenth century. CHRISTOPHER WAWN was a shipowner of South Shields who took a leading role in the erection of the Chapter Row Wesleyan chapel (cost £3,800) in 1808. Married Margaret Twizell of East Boldon. His son JOHN TWIZELL WAWN (1800-59) was trained as a lawyer and became a shipowner and shipbroker; a radical Liberal, he was elected MP for South Shields in 1841 and 1847, retiring in 1852. His election posters (1841) describe him as a member of the established Church. CHARLES NEWBY WAWN (1782-1840) (relationship uncertain) was a wealthy surgeon-dentist and a leading Wesleyan in Newcastle. He was born in Carlisle.

G. Hodgson: *The Borough of South Shields*, pp. 271, 484.

WHITE FAMILY (WM)

A Sunderland family important in commerce, Methodism and civic development in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. JOHN WHITE (1764-1833) was born at Monkwearmouth, and began his business life as a cooper. By astuteness and hard work he progressed to become a wealthy shipowner, and the head of the Bishopwearmouth Iron Works (White, Sons, Panton & Kirk) and the Wear Flint Glass Company (White, Young & Tuer). Lived on Ryhope Lane and at Thorney Close, where he bought a farm. A shrewd but honest businessman, given to unusual and generous benefactions. Loyal to the Church of England, but a very committed Methodist also. Keen supporter of Sunday schools; built the Nicholson Street Schools in Sunderland. A strict paternalist to his employees, and a Sabbatarian. Married Jane Young. Left estate under £18,000.

John White had three sons: ANDREW WHITE (1792-1856) continued the family interests of ironworking and shipowning, and was also an extensive colliery owner and chairman of the Sunderland Joint Stock Banking Company. First Mayor after the revival of the Corporation (which he had helped to restore), 1835; re-elected 1836 and 1842. MP for Sunderland, 1837-41. An advanced Liberal. Magistrate. River Wear Commissioner. A Wesleyan in his younger years—later allegiance unclear. May have joined the Free Methodists. Serious business difficulties in the 1840s and 1850s. Left under £800. Married Ophelia Dixon. Lived at Frederick Lodge and Tunstall Lodge in his prosperous period. JOHN WHITE, JUN. (1794-1828) was a very active worker for the Sunderland Sunday schools and other local evangelical and philanthropic causes. RICHARD WHITE (b. 1804) was involved in the various family interests and also fitter at Whitwell Colliery. Councillor, alderman, and Mayor of Sunderland. John White, sen. had several daughters also, and they and his sons married into a number of other local business families, creating a complex network of relationships. W. Brockie, op. cit., pp. 80-9, 154-60; G. E. Milburn in *Antiquities of Sunderland*, vol. 27 (1979), pp. 18-20. (See also under Young below.)

WILKINSON, JOHN (1773-1827) (WM)

Carrier of Bishop Auckland. Converted when young, and a lifelong Methodist thereafter, though retained his family pew in the Church of St. Andrew, Auckland. A class leader, and a local preacher for 25 years, taking services most Sundays and instrumental in introducing Methodism to new places

round about Bishop Auckland. Led the efforts to erect a Wesleyan chapel in Bishop Auckland in 1804. An attractive man, widely popular, and noted for his integrity. Left estate valued under £4,000 making careful provision for his wife and several children, one of whom was a Wesleyan missionary, the Rev. Samuel Wilkinson.

A. Steele: *Methodism in Barnard Castle and the Dales* (1857), pp. 196-7; M. Braithwaite, op. cit., pp. 16-22; *WM Mag.*, 1827, p. 720.

WILLANS, JAMES (d. 1871) (WM)

Businessman of Durham. The original importer of German yeast into England. Very active Wesleyan. Defrayed about half of the cost of Giles-gate Wesleyan chapel, Durham, built in 1868-9 as an extension of the work from the old Elvet chapel. Left £14,000 in his will. His son James gave £1,000 towards the new chapel on Old Elvet (built 1903), and organized the raising of £1,450 more. The Willan family was much involved in the Elvet cause. Another son, John, may be the person to whom John Coward (q.v.) of Durham sold his paper merchant's business, c. 1881.

W. Thwaites, op. cit., pp. 36-7, 45 6, 56-61.

WITHERINGTON, JOHN (1861-1933) (WM)

Born in Sunderland. Clerk in a coal-exporting business. In 1898 he and a fellow clerk, Harry Everett (a Congregationalist) bought a second-hand ship and began the Tyneside-based company of Witherington & Everett. Mainly a coal-exporting business with a maximum of eighteen ships c. 1930. J.W. was joined by his son Arthur (1889-1979), who ran the business for many years, and was highly respected on the Newcastle quayside for his integrity and moral authority. An active Wesleyan, local preacher, etc. Both John and Arthur Witherington refused to allow their ships to load or discharge on Sundays. John Witherington left £99,000.

Personal communications from Mr. H. Witherington and Mrs. J. Bretherton.

YOUNG FAMILY (WM-WMA-UMFC)

THOMAS BROWN YOUNG (b. 1794) was a nephew of John White (q.v.) and related also to several other Sunderland business families. A sailmaker and shipbroker. To his forties he was a dedicated Wesleyan, active as Sunday-school teacher, class leader, etc. Took a principal part in the opposition to official Wesleyan policies in the mid-1830s, which led to the secession of a large number of members who took in due course the name of the Wesleyan Methodist Association. T.B.Y. was one of the main leaders of the Association in Sunderland and the region. Married Ann Dixon, sister of the wife of Andrew White (q.v.). Emigrated to Australia in 1852 with his second wife. An energetic, forceful, and perhaps domineering personality. His son JOHN YOUNG (1820-1904) began his business career as a chemist in Sunderland in 1841. By 1853 he had launched a wholesale chemical company and was the agent for two north-eastern chemical works. He also was engaged in the manufacture of oils and paints. His retail work continued throughout these other activities. A commercial crash affected him badly in the mid-1870s, and he does not seem to have ever properly recovered. He died in straitened circumstances. He never married. A dedicated member of the Wesleyan Methodist Association and the United Methodist Free Churches in his early years. Local preacher, etc. Member of connexional committees. His later allegiance uncertain. A man of wide intellectual interests. Well informed on naval matters. His diary for the years 1841-3 survives.

G. E. Milburn: *Antiquities of Sunderland*, vol. 27 (1979), pp. 20, 31-56. Also G. E. Milburn (ed.): *The Diary of John Young*, to be published shortly by the Surtees Society. There are many references in the diary to business relatives of the Youngs, such as Andrew White (q.v.).