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Proceedings

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Editor: E. ALAN ROSE, B.A.

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JOHN WESLEY: FOUNDER OF A MISSIONARY CHURCH?

When John Wesley died in 1791, he left behind a small, but healthy 'connexion' of religious societies. Most of those societies were in England with a few scattered in Ireland, Scotland, and the British colonies of North America and the West Indies. In addition, his connexion had spawned a growing, new denomination in the United States of America. Wesley had ordained ministers to oversee the extension of the societies in North America, the West Indies and even in Britain. In spite of the expansion of the movement and the ordinations, however, the Methodism Wesley left behind was still uneasily tied to the Church of England. It had yet to define its identity either as a new denomination or as a missionary agency. The Methodist Connexion John Wesley left behind, was a connexion of societies with an identity crisis.

By 1891 much had changed. One hundred years of growth and development had built Methodism into a firmly-established denomination with a uniquely strong missionary identity. It was no longer clinging to the skirts of the 'mother church', but had confidently set out on its own path to win the world for Christ. All this was not without complications, but they were not the complications of an orphaned group of societies in an identity crisis. Wesleyan Methodism had spawned half a dozen daughter connexions of its own in North America, France, the South Pacific, South Africa and the West Indies and had a missionary force that spread from Europe to Africa and Asia. The Conference and the local societies had well-organised committees set apart to look after these missions and advance them. The whole organisation of Wesleyan Methodism had become tied-up in its commitment to a world mission.

Was this missionary denomination the Methodism John Wesley had envisaged or intended? Would he have been surprised or unhappy to see the path his societies had taken in this world missionary enterprise? Was this missionary identity of Methodism a late child of the genius of John Wesley or had it been grafted in by some other hand?

In exploring the ties that exist between John Wesley's Methodism and the missionary Methodism that developed largely after his death, this paper will examine Wesley's reaction to missionary opportunities in his own lifetime and, as far as possible, Wesley's evangelistic commitment and his vision for Methodism and the Evangelical Revival.

Wesley's Response to Missionary Opportunities

In Wesley's lifetime, the response of Methodist officialdom to overseas missions seemed less than enthusiastic. Opportunities and calls were responded to slowly, hesitantly, if at all. Was this a reflection of Wesley's own attitude toward overseas missions or was he hampered in his actions by the caution of his colleagues?

F. Deaville Walker, writing for the *Foreign Field* in 1913, opined,

The Evangelical Revival had continued for twenty years before its influence spread beyond the British Isles. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the Wesleys and their preachers found their hands more than full with the work at home. They were still so occupied, and without definite plan of any wider sphere, when some of their converts began to carry the Living Water to lands to which they emigrated as colonists.¹

Walker referred here to the work of colonists starting Methodist societies in Antigua (West Indies) and North America in the early 1760s. What was the response of Wesley and the Conference to these new fields for Methodism? In 1760 Nathaniel Gilbert, a planter in Antigua, sought out John Wesley in England. As a result he and two of his 'servants' were converted. Wesley's response, recorded in his *Journal*, was, 'Shall not God's saving health be made known unto all nations?'² But, in spite of that enthusiastic outburst and the rapid

¹ F. Deaville Walker, 'Milestones: A Survey of a Hundred and Fifty Years of Wesleyan Missions,' *Foreign Field*, (October 1913), pp. 16-17.

² G.G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, (1921), i: p 32.

response of Gilbert's slaves to the Gospel, no missionary was sent to the West Indies until 1786. Instead, the work was carried on by Gilbert, a few converts and then by a volunteer lay preacher (John Baxter) who had gone to Antigua as a skilled craftsman rather than being sent as a missionary. The opportunity was wide open, the response of the 'heathen' was remarkable, and yet, for two and a half decades, no itinerant preacher was sent to oversee the work. Was this, as Walker suggests, because Wesley and his preachers 'found their hands more than full with the work at home'?

While Antigua waited, the first Wesleyan itinerants appointed for overseas work were sent to North America in 1769. These were Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor, who, in response to an appeal from New York, were sent to minister among the colonists in New York and Philadelphia. Walker observed,

These were the first Missions authorised by Conference, and it will be observed that the men were sent to minister to nominally Christian colonists. Just as the first Apostles of our Faith went 'to the Jews first,' so the Methodist Missionaries sought to evangelise men of their own race.³

Whatever the reason, the Conference that felt overwhelmed with the work at home felt able to send missionaries to North America while the West Indies waited.

In 1775 Francis Asbury volunteered to go to Antigua. Wesley objected to Asbury's going but allowed he would have no objection to 'one or two young men willingly offering themselves to that service, though none should go unless he was fully persuaded in his own mind.'⁴

Wesley's unwillingness to yield certain preachers to certain foreign fields showed itself again in 1778 when a call came from converted ex-slaves for a missionary in West Africa. Two German brothers from Bristol had gone to West Africa, but died shortly after their arrival. Coke sent around a petition to the younger preachers which called for volunteers. One of those who apparently responded to the petition was Duncan McAllum. To him Wesley wrote just before the Conference, 'You have nothing to do at present in Africa. Convert the heathen in Scotland.'⁵ When the Conference met and considered the call 'it was concluded that the time had not arrived

³ Walker, p.17.

⁴ Wesley to Thomas Rankin (April 21, 1775), *Standard Letters*, vi: p. 148.

⁵ Wesley to McAllum, July 14, 1778, *Standard Letters*, vi: p. 316.

for sending missionaries to Africa.⁶ This decision, as Vickers assumes, was most likely made under Wesley's influence.⁷ It could be that Wesley interpreted the deaths of the German brothers as a providential caution. It could be that the Conference felt that the work at home was not yet stable and prosperous enough to afford workers for the 'White Man's Grave.' In any case, Wesley once again guarded his picked preachers from venturing into some far-away, foreign field.

Another indication of Wesley's jealous guarding of his picked preachers is found in a letter written to Peard Dickinson in April 1789. Wesley wrote, 'Consider likewise another point: ought we to suffer Dr. Coke to pick out one after another of the choicest of our young preachers?'⁸ No further explanation was offered, but the reference was most likely to Coke's missionary recruiting activities which had intensified since the Conference's appointment of its first missionaries to the West Indies in 1786.

Roger Martin writes,

Wesleyan resistance to forming a central missionary organisation during Wesley's lifetime was largely due to Wesley himself. Though no enemy to foreign missions, Wesley preferred to concentrate the resources of his connexion on the harvest at home, and on several occasions opposed expanding Wesleyan missions beyond the stations already existing in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the West Indies.⁹

Martin's evaluation concurs with Walker's, that Wesley felt a need to conserve Methodist resources mainly for the British work. This evaluation is supported by the above references to Wesley's preference to keep his best preachers for the home (and, by extension, the North American) work. Wesley's resistance was felt at other levels, too, as Coke pressed more and more for a missionary commitment from Methodism.

Thomas Coke's dream missionary project was a mission to the East Indies. He made his first clear pitch for this in 'A Plan of the Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathens'

⁶ Quoted from Macdonald, *Memoir of Joseph Benson*, p.75 (also in Tyerman, *John Wesley*, III: pp. 272ff) by John Vickers in *Thomas Coke: Apostle of Methodism*, (1964), p. 132.

⁷ Vickers p. 132

⁸ John Wesley to Peard Dickinson, April 11, 1789 in *Standard Letters*, viii p. 129.

⁹ Roger H. Martin, 'Missionary Competition between Evangelical Dissenters and Wesleyan Methodists in the early nineteenth century: *Proceedings* xlii, p. 81.

which he released in 1784. The 'Plan' outlined the establishment of a new missionary society, including a suggested subscription amount, a committee set-up, and plans for sending missionaries overseas and printing scriptures for use in 'heathen' countries.¹⁰ Coke circulated this 'Plan' early in the new year. Vickers suggests that this may have been done in an effort to 'by-pass the Conference' as Coke had reason to expect opposition there and from Wesley. Opposition was exactly what he got. Wesley asserted that 'missionaries would not be forthcoming' and chided Coke for admitting members 'who were not Methodists and therefore could have no control of Methodist preachers at home or overseas.'¹¹

In February 1784, Wesley consulted the preachers on the question of a mission to the East. The decision recorded was, 'We were unanimous in our judgment that we have no call thither yet, no invitation, no providential opening of any kind.'¹² In September 1784 Wesley (joined by the Rev. James Creighton) ordained Coke as superintendent for the American societies. In addition, he ordained two preachers to administer sacraments in America. These he sent across the Atlantic to assist in establishing this new system for the American societies, a system which included ordinations (to make up for the lack of Anglican ministers for administering the sacraments). By the time Coke returned to England, the missionary society established by his 'Plan' had dissolved.¹³ Thus Wesley had again managed to conserve the resources of his Connexion for the British and their brothers in North America. The American Methodist Church was thereby established on a firm footing while the West and East Indies were, once again, asked to wait.

While Coke became enthusiastically involved in the American experiment, he did not forget his missionary dream. His next attempt to get Methodism involved in missions came with his 'Address to the Pious and Benevolent . . .' in 1786. Having learned from his experience of the rejection of the 'Plan', Coke proceeded far more cautiously with the 'Address'. He wrote,

Some time past I took the liberty of addressing you in behalf of a mission intended to be established in the British dominions in Asia; . . . We have not indeed lost sight of it at present; . . . But the

¹⁰ Vickers, *Thomas Coke*, pp. 133-134.

¹¹ Cyril J. Davey, *The March of Methodism*: (1951), p. 6.

¹² In Henry D. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast* (1989), p. 479.

¹³ Vickers, *Thomas Coke*, p. 134.

providence of God has lately opened to us so many doors nearer home, that Mr. Wesley thinks it imprudent to hazard at present the lives of any of our preachers, by sending them to so great a distance, and amidst so many uncertainties and difficulties; when so large a field of action is afforded us in countries to which we have so much easier admittance, and where the success, through the blessing of God, is more or less certain.¹⁴

Coke here turned his attention to Christian nations and parts thereof which 'are deeper sunk in ignorance and impiety than others', even 'still buried in grossest darkness.'¹⁵ Among these he included the Scottish Highlands and Islands, the Channel Islands, the West Indies and the eastern provinces of British North America. The consideration of missions to Africa and the East Indies he left for a more opportune time.

Coke's narrowing of his missionary vision won support, for he was able to procure a letter of commendation from Wesley to preface the 'Address' for circulation. Wesley enthused,

I greatly approve of your proposal for raising a subscription in order to send missionaries to the Highlands of Scotland, the Islands of Jersey and Guernsey, the Leeward Islands, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland. It is not easy to conceive the extreme want there is, in all those places, of men that will not count their lives dear unto themselves, so that they may testify the Gospel of the Grace of God.¹⁶

Africa was too disease-ridden, Asia was too closed and far away, but Wesley was this time ready to lend his support to missions not only to the rougher and lonelier regions of Britain, but also to the British colonies of the West Indies (the slavery issue lending weight to Coke's campaign for missions there) as well as North America. This was, at least, one step closer to Coke's missionary dream.

The immediate fruit of this 'Address' was borne in the decisions of the 1786 Conference to receive de Quetteville on trial for Guernsey, to send Adam Clarke to Jersey, and to send missionaries for British North America and the West Indies. In August 1786 William Warrener was ordained for Antigua and William Hammett for Newfoundland. Coke set sail to deliver Hammett and another to North America, planning to go on then to Antigua to deliver

¹⁴ Quoted in *History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, (1988), iv: p. 209.

¹⁵ *History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, iv: p. 209.

¹⁶ John Wesley to Thomas Coke, March 12, 1786, *Standard Letters*, vii: p. 322.

William Warrener there. Bad weather, however, forced the ship to sail to the West Indies first and Coke was so overwhelmed by the Methodist work he found there that he left all the missionaries there. A year after Warrener's ordination, four more preachers were set apart and ordained for West Indian service, and one for Nova Scotia.

Rack notes that by 1786, Wesley would have had reason to feel more able to consider these additional missionary projects.¹⁷ The Deed for the British Connexion and the American sacrament/organisational crisis had been settled by then. In addition, the reports of Methodist growth in the West Indies, would have been understood by Wesley as a clear indication of providence. Conference *Minutes* support this latter suggestion as they record,

Q. 9. Ought we not diligently to observe in what places God is pleased to pour out his spirit more abundantly?

A. We ought; and at that time to send more labourers than usual into that part of the harvest.¹⁸

And again,

Q. 6. Where should we endeavour to preach most?

A. (1) Where there is the greatest number of quiet and, willing hearers.
(2) Where there is most fruit.¹⁹

These lines would also support Coke in his decision to leave all the missionaries in the West Indies on his first visit there, even though not all were designated for that location (and even though Wesley was not entirely pleased by this action).

While Wesley gave his support to Coke's 'Address' and to missionary ordinations and allowed Coke to make missionary collections, there were times thereafter when his instinct to conserve resources for the home work was still evident. In addition to the letter to Peard Dickinson quoted above, there is another written to Thomas Taylor in 1790 which showed Wesley's resistance to Coke's missionary enthusiasm. He wrote, 'I did not approve of Dr. Coke's making collections either in yours or in any other circuit. I told him

¹⁷ Rack, p. 480.

¹⁸ Minutes of Several Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and Others from the year 1744, to the Year 1789, *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), Reprint from 1872, iii: pp. 300-301.

¹⁹ *Minutes*, p. 300.

so and I am not well pleased with his doing it. It was very ill done.²⁰ Barber noted that it was not until after Wesley's death that the Conference moved to make a general collection for missions.²¹ This likewise reveals Wesley's tendency to conserve resources for the home work.

Reflecting on Wesley's response to Methodism's missionary opportunities Allen Birtwhistle wrote,

Perhaps no words of John Wesley are more frequently quoted than his famous claim: 'I look upon all the world as my parish.' Yet his own caution when it came to initiating missions to non-Christians overseas—springing, perhaps, from memories of his own experiences in Georgia and certainly strengthened by a shrewd estimate as to the prospects of immediate success for such ventures by comparison with the harvest waiting to be gathered at home—led him at times to be less than exuberant about some of the schemes proposed by his colleague Dr. Thomas Coke.²²

Walker wrote,

There can be no doubt about John Wesley's own concern for the salvation of the heathen or his intention to provide for such work as opportunity arose. But such thoughts were beyond the purview of the majority of his followers, and it was Coke's work to develop in Methodism the Missionary spirit, already latent, but not yet manifest.²³

Which evaluation is correct? Was John Wesley actually enthusiastic for missions, but hampered by a less-than-enthusiastic Conference, was it the other way around, or did Wesley and Conference together share a spirit of caution? The evidence thus far presented shows a cautious Wesley (supported by a cautious Conference) who as Martin says was 'no enemy to foreign mission' but too committed to his home mission to become overly enthusiastic about foreign missions. Was it simply that he felt the timing was not yet right? or was his vision for Methodism limited to

²⁰ John Wesley to Thomas Taylor, 4 April 1790, *Standard Letters*, viii: p. 211.

²¹ Barber, W. T. A. 'The Work of British Societies,' *A New History of Methodism*, (1909), ii: p. 292.

²² N. Allen Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions' *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain* (1983), iii: p. 1.

²³ Walker, p.18.

a more-or-less British constituency? The next section will attempt to dig deeper into Wesley's concepts of evangelism and mission.

Wesley's Passion for Evangelism: The Seed of the Methodist Missionary Spirit?

Shortly after his Aldersgate experience and his turn to an open air ministry John Wesley wrote, 'God in Scripture commands me, according to my power; to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous.'²⁴ Later in the same letter he quoted (in reference to himself), 'A dispensation of the gospel is committed to me; and woe is me if I preach not the gospel.' This command burned in him as a call to preach Christ to the lost. Conference *Minutes* considered the practice of field preaching in this light:

Q. 8. Have we not used it too sparingly?

A. It seems we have; (1.)Because our call is, to save a that which is lost. Now, we cannot expect them to seek *us*. Therefore, we should go and seek *them*. (2.)Because we are particularly called, by 'going into the highways and hedges,' which none else will do, 'to compel them to come in.'²⁵

Wesley's rules for helpers in the *Minutes* advised:

It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society; but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which no man can see the Lord.²⁶

Wesley was clearly an enthusiastic evangelist who saw not only his own ministry but that of his Connexion as an out-reaching, soul-winning ministry.

Though hesitantly at first, Wesley tirelessly and boldly preached the gospel of Christ not only within the four walls of the church or society hall, but in fields and marketplaces, wherever there were needy souls to listen to his message. Because of his outpouring of evangelistic energy, Methodist missionary enthusiasts were later

²⁴ Monday, June 11, 1739, *Standard Journal*, ii: p. 217.

²⁵ 'Minutes of Several Conversations', p. 300.

²⁶ 'Minutes of Several Conversations', p. 310.

able to refer to Wesley as a 'missionary' who had preached through Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales.²⁷

Especially in the early days of Methodist overseas missions, missionary terminology was used interchangeably for home and foreign missions. No one would have questioned the use of the term 'missionary' to refer to Wesley's preaching ventures in the British Isles. David Bosch observes,

Methodists could see no real difference between nominal Christians and pagans and could not, by implication, distinguish between 'home' and 'foreign' missions. . . . The whole world was a mission field; hence John Wesley's famous adage, 'The world is my parish.'²⁸

In evidence of Bosch's assertion, 'heathen,' a term which later became connected with the unchristianized populations of other lands, was used by Wesley more than once to refer to the unconverted of Christianized England. Before sailing for Georgia in 1735 John wrote to his brother Samuel at Westminster School,

Assure yourself, dear brother, you are even now called to the converting of the *heathens* as well as I. so many souls are committed to your charge by God . . . You are to instruct them, not only in the beggarly elements of Greek & Latin, but much more in the gospel.²⁹

And to his nephew, Samuel, in 1790 Wesley wrote, '. . . I am grieved at your being a heathen. Certain it is that the general religion both of Protestants and Catholics is no better than refined heathenism.'³⁰ He went on in that letter to exhort 'Sammy,' 'Give God your heart.'³¹ For John Wesley all who had not given God their hearts were no better than refined heathens in need of a missionary to preach the gospel to them.

²⁷ J. M. Byron in *Methodist Missions. An Account of the formation of a Methodist Missionary Society, at Plymouth-Dock. on Tuesday November 15, 1814.* (Dock: J. Johns, 1814), p. 11. See also Thomas Roberts in *Resolutions at the Formation of the Methodist Missionary Society, of the Dublin District, on the 5th of May. 1814: with abstracts* (Dublin: M. M. S., 1814), p. 20.

²⁸ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission and Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), p. 278.

²⁹ Quoted by Norman W. Taggart in 'Methodist Foreign Missions, the First Half Century,' *Proceedings* xlv, p. 158. (From *Standard Letters*, i: 192f.)

³⁰ John Wesley to Samuel Wesley, April 29, 1790, *Standard Letters*, viii: p. 218.

³¹ *Standard Letters*, viii: p. 219.

Partly because of this blurring of terms, the evangelistic call and fervour communicated by Wesley could easily be interpreted in missionary terms, 'foreign' as well as 'home'. An article on 'Wesleyan Foreign Missions' reprinted from *The London Quarterly Review* in 1885 could therefore assert:

And when the aged man rested from the labour and sorrow of his fourscore years, he bequeathed to his spiritual children a theology, a hymnary, and an organisation which severally and conjointly ensured the Missionary character of the united Societies through all ages. Methodism must deny itself ere it can leave a human soul, whether in the garrets of destitute London or in the jungles of India, unsaved and unsought.³²

In terms of being a 'man with a mission', John Wesley clearly was a missionary to the British Isles, and he communicated to his followers an even larger sense of mission. Thus, wittingly or unwittingly, with his evangelistic passion John Wesley sowed the seeds of the Methodist missionary spirit.

When Wesley began his ministry, preaching in the fields was not an easy calling to accept, it required from him a spirit of commitment, self-sacrifice and passion for the lost similar to that required of those who later ventured forth to preach in 'foreign' fields. Wesley hesitated at first, and debated with both himself and others before he could commit himself to field preaching, but once the commitment was made it was wholehearted. Later in Wesley's ministry Coke and others began to insist that not only was the 'field' the 'world', but the world was the field into which Christ's preachers must go. Again, Wesley hesitated and resisted, as with field preaching at the first. Slowly, he began to come round, even going so far as to tread on the toes of the Church of England in order to properly equip Methodism's missions with ordained ministers. His commitment to win the lost, urged on by the successes of Methodism in North America and the West Indies, was gradually outweighing his conservative desire to reserve Methodism's finest for Britain.

Had Wesley lived longer, perhaps his evangelistic spirit would have been clearly seen to overcome his reluctance toward overseas missions. The possibility of such an eventuality can be more clearly

³² 'Wesleyan Foreign Missions,' Reprinted from *the London Quarterly Review*, (July 1885), (London: Hayman Brothers and Lilly), p. 4.

evaluated by examining not only Wesley's evangelistic passion, but also his evangelistic vision. (*to be continued*)

CHRISTI-AN C. BENNETT

(Mrs Bennett is a minister in the Church of Nazarene, currently residing in New Zealand. She completed her PhD in 1995 at Manchester University.)

Methodists in Dialog by Geoffrey Wainwright (Kingswood Books, Abingdon Press, 1995) is a substantial collection of contributions from one who has inherited to Albert Outler's mantle in the ecumenical debate of our time and who represents World Methodism in the on-going dialogue with the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran and Reformed traditions. The debate is conducted in a rarified theological atmosphere, often far removed from the grass-roots level of church life and individual discipleship with which most of us as historians are concerned. Its vital significance and relevance, as the author himself makes clear in a concluding chapter, lie in its contribution to the struggle to retain, or regain, identity (both denominationally and at the level of the World Council of Churches) in the face of the erosive powers of secularism and modernism. Not a book to be read easily or dismissed lightly.

JOHN A. VICKERS

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Annual Meeting will be asked to consider the following amendment to Section VII OFFICERS:

Insert after 'Local Branches Secretary': 'A Member to represent the general membership and to be elected by the Annual Meeting to serve for a term of no more than three years - nominations to be notified to the General Secretary in writing fourteen days prior to the Annual Meeting-' (The section continues '...and Auditor!')

Library Appeal

As a result of the generosity of members of the Society, almost £2,000 has now been raised towards the Library Appeal. The building work at Westminster College, Oxford is now complete and work has begun on computerising the library catalogue, with the assistance of a substantial grant from the Higher Education Funding Council for England. An approach is about to be made to Trusts and Foundations, but further donations from members, both individuals and institutions, would still be very welcome and should be sent to the Society's Hon. Treasurer, Ralph Wilkinson, 87 York Street, Dunnington, York, YO1 5QW.

5: J. ERNEST RATTENBURY, *THE EVANGELICAL DOCTRINES OF CHARLES WESLEY'S HYMNS*, AND *THE EUCHARISTIC HYMNS OF JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY*¹.

In these two volumes, Dr. Rattenbury attempted a systematic treatment of Charles Wesley's theology, as expressed in his hymns. The third volume of a projected trilogy dealing with 'the man, Charles Wesley, as portrayed by his verse', was never published. However, in his two volumes on the hymns, Rattenbury worked on the principle that, 'The man and the doctrine must be considered together, because the theological worth of the doctrine is largely to be found in the personal testimony of the man.'⁽²⁾ We still await a full-scale critical modern biography of Charles, which could stand comparison, in range and depth, with Henry Rack's *Reasonable Enthusiast*.

When Rattenbury published *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns* - the Fernley-Hartley Lecture of 1941 - he did so in a fraught atmosphere. On the macro scale, the world was convulsed by the 1939-1945 War. On the micro scale of British Methodism, there were still tensions to be worked through following the Union of 1932. Rattenbury, as a High Wesleyan, had been personally caught up in the strains and stresses of a Church which now included former Wesleyan, Primitive and United Methodists. He was President of the Methodist Sacramental Fellowship from 1938 to 1950, and at the Hull Conference of 1938 had made a major speech in defence of the Fellowship, following a Conference committee of enquiry into its activities. His reasoned reply to his critics effectively cleared the Fellowship of the charge of being a Romanizing body, disloyal to the faith of the Wesleys. He pointed out, fairly enough, that John Wesley had received Holy Communion on average about twice a week, so that it was, 'preposterous to quote Wesley against those who only impose on their members a reception of Holy Communion once a month as if they were Sacramentalists in a sense in which he was not.'⁽³⁾

These events were recent history when Rattenbury published the first of his two volumes on the hymns. He chose to deal initially with their evangelical doctrines, no doubt, as part of his effort to, 'contradict the foolish antithesis of some modern Methodists - Sacrament or Evangelism: as if one were exclusive of

1. Cited hereafter as: *Evangelical Doctrines and Eucharistic Hymns*.
2. *Evangelical Doctrines*, p. 15. Frank Baker, in his *Charles Wesley's Verse: An Introduction* (1964), p.99, recalls that, 'Dr. J. E. Rattenbury believed it would be possible to reconstruct Charles Wesley's life from his poems, and long before his death gave me the extensive materials he had collected to illustrate this theme.'
3. J. E. Rattenbury, *In Defence of the Methodist Sacramental Fellowship at the Conference of the Methodist Church at Hull, 1938*, n.d., Methodist Sacramental Fellowship Pamphlet No. 7, p.5.

the other! (4) Rattenbury himself was not only a convinced sacramentalist, but a mission preacher with a strong evangelical appeal. This, then, was the central thesis of his two volumes, that sacramentalism and evangelism are correlatives, not opposites, and that both are essential to the life and faith of the people called Methodists.

In these writings, Rattenbury wanted to recover for contemporary Methodists the rich heritage of the Wesley hymns, in both their evangelical and eucharistic dimensions. The evangelical doctrine were clearly better known than the eucharistic ones, and he performed a notable service to the Church by his inclusion of Part Three of the *Eucharistic Hymns*. This section was a major appendix, containing John Wesley's extract from the Dean of Lincoln, Dr. Daniel Brevint's tractate, *On the Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice* (1673; 3rd edn. 1739), together with the complete collection of the 166 *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*. (5) Lest it should be thought that this collection was in any sense tangential to the mainstream of Methodist hymnody, Rattenbury reminds us that, 'In point of fact, no Methodist hymn book was more emphatically endorsed by John Wesley than this. His name, along with that of Charles, was printed on the title page of every edition; the book had the widest circulation, with the exception of General Collections, of all their hymn-books...No book more characteristic of the beliefs of the Wesleys was ever published by them.' (6)

Daniel Brevint represents the High Church Anglican tradition in which the Wesleys were reared, and to which they owed a lasting debt. Brevint, strong as he was on the Eucharist as both sacrament and sacrifice, clearly repudiates the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, and sides with the Reformers against the Mass. Yet he has a profound, and profoundly biblical, understanding of sacrifice - in Christ supremely, in the Christian, the Church, and the Eucharist. I cannot follow Dr. Rattenbury, therefore, when he argues that, 'When John Wesley wrote that he was a "High-Churchman and the son of a High Churchman", he did not mean that in the modern sense of the term he was a "High Churchman" - an Anglo-Catholic of our own times. His use of the term "high" was political rather than ecclesiastical.' (7)

One can readily accept that it is anachronistic and unjust to see Wesley as a High Churchman in the modern Anglo-Catholic sense. (Rattenbury, in these writings, is also conducting a running argument against Anglo-Catholic criticisms of Methodist church order, ministry and sacraments.) Yet he himself suggests a little later that the Wesleys' High Church upbringing was much more than 'political': 'There can be no doubt that Holy Communion was the central devotion of the Evangelical Revival. It was not only the special devotion of the Wesleys, whose early church training would account for that, but quite a conspicuous feature of the devotional life of the early Methodist preachers.' (8)

4. *Eucharistic Hymns*, p. 7; see also *ibid.*, p. 140.

5. A facsimile of the 1745 edition of the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* was published in 1995 by the Charles Wesley Society.

6. *Evangelical Doctrines*, p. 68. The 10th edition of *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* was published in 1792.

7. *Eucharistic Hymns*, p. 3.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7. My italics.

Certainly Dr. Rattenbury makes a convincing case for the continuing elements of high churchmanship in both John and Charles. He reminds us that the early Methodists, 'were Churchmen as well as Methodists', led by the Wesleys who insisted that their movement was a society, distinct from, but part of, the Church of England. To describe Charles's views of the Church as 'Laudian' is, I think, an overstatement, but he argues strongly that neither Charles nor John appears to have given up belief in 'the outward priesthood and the outward sacrifice' (in the Eucharist).⁹

At the same time, Rattenbury is anxious to distance Methodist sacramentalism in the Wesley tradition from what he clearly sees as traditional Roman Catholic distortions. He sets out, in the Preface to the *Eucharistic Hymns*, his basic convictions:

I have tried to demonstrate that the hymns, instead of showing a tendency toward Roman doctrine, of which they have sometimes been accused and often suspected, in reality express, develop, and enrich the Reformation doctrine of the Priesthood of all Believers.

The obvious abuses of priesthood, and sacramental oblations, in the Middle Ages caused a natural and desirable reaction at the Protestant Reformation, which however went so far that it is necessary now to affirm that Priesthood and Sacrifice are abiding features, in spite of abuses, of Christianity.

His emphasis on the Priesthood of all Believers as a corporate priesthood of the whole Church, is a timely one, and may help to rid the doctrine of the extreme individualistic interpretations which still bedevil it. In Rattenbury's succinct phrasing, 'The Christian Church itself as a corporation is the Priest, not any member of it. Ministers are the instrument of the priesthood.' At this point, though critical of much modern Anglo-Catholic theology, Rattenbury finds welcome support in Dom Gregory Dix's *The Shape of the Liturgy* (1945), and so seeks to claim for Methodism some of the fruits of the twentieth-century Liturgical Movement.

If the main contention of Dom Gregory Dix in *The Shape of the Liturgy* is that the Holy Sacrifice in the Early Church was the oblation of the whole Church and not of selected individuals be admitted, a common ground of united witness may well be found amongst Christians of very diverse opinions, since that is also clearly the teaching of Wesley's Eucharistic hymns. May we not find once more in the Lord's Supper a Sacrament of Unity...instead of the source of strife and division which it has so disastrously become?¹⁰

That *cri de coeur* reminds us that we have progressed in a measure towards greater eucharistic unity in the half-century since Rattenbury wrote. Methodists and other Free Church people are widely welcomed at Anglican altars. In local

9. *Evangelical Doctrines*, pp. 71, 84, 228.

10. *Eucharistic Hymns*, Preface, p.viii.

ecumenical partnerships, Methodist ministers may indeed preside at the Anglican liturgy. There has also been a genuine degree of convergence in eucharistic theology.

If he were writing today, Dr. Rattenbury would hardly claim that the Anglican Order of Morning Prayer 'is still used in a good many [sc. Methodist] churches'.⁽¹¹⁾ He would, on the other hand, have plenty to say about modern Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement across the churches. This movement of renewal has been a life-giving stream for many Christians; but there has been some froth and bubble on the surface too. Rattenbury speaks of Charles Wesley's metrical experiment with anapaestics as having an effect 'on staid and solid worshippers..not dissimilar from that of ragtime on quiet people in our own days.'⁽¹²⁾ He also cites John Wesley's criticism of various popular hymns, not from his brother's pen, circulating among some Methodist societies. Wesley sees they meet a need, and gathers a number of them into a pocket hymn-book he issued in 1787. Yet he exercises a typical discrimination, and omits a number as 'grievous doggerel'. He comments in his Preface: 'But a friend tells me, "some of these, especially those two which are doggerel double distilled, namely, 'The Despised Nazarene,' and that which begins 'A Christ I have, O what a Christ I have', are hugely admired and continually echoed from Berwick-upon-Tweed to London.'" If they are, I am sorry for it; it will bring a deep reproach upon the judgment of the Methodists, but I dare not increase that reproach, by countenancing in any degree such an insult, both on religion and common sense...'.⁽¹³⁾

In some degree, ecumenically, theologically, liturgically, the books have inevitably dated. That said, they still constitute an admirably thorough analysis of Charles Wesley's hymns, which are at the heart of Methodist doctrine and piety. They make a convincing case for conjoining evangelism and sacramentalism. They also set out a richly many-sided eucharistic theology, admirably consonant with the liturgy of The Sunday Service. In the words of Dr. Rattenbury's summary:

The Lord's Supper, though primarily a memorial of the crucifixion of Jesus - of Christ crucified - is much more; by means of it the risen and ascended Christ is called to mind, the Victim-Priest in heaven, whose death is 'ever new' and always availing for sinful men. Though ascended to heaven, He is present in His Church, because the ascension does not localise him. Heaven is just behind the Veil. The Elements, the tokens of His dying Love, are the organs which the ever-present Christ uses to feed and refresh His people. Not only is He really present at the Supper, but heaven comes with Him, and His people find in their joyful experience heaven on earth and taste of the fullness that is to be..⁽¹⁴⁾

In his day, Rattenbury was avant-garde; Methodism as a whole has still not caught up with him.

JOHN A. NEWTON

¹¹ *Eucharistic Hymns*, p. 150.

¹² *Evangelical Doctrines*, p. 36.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

BOOK REVIEWS

Wesley and the People Called Methodists by Richard P. Heitzenrater, (Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1995, pp. 338, £11.99 ISBN 0 687 44311 3)

As the best decipherer of Wesley's coded diary and the General Editor of the ongoing Bicentennial Edition of Wesley's *Works*, Professor Heitzenrater is well equipped to essay a life of the founder of Methodism. He has already, in his *The Elusive Mr Wesley* given us an unusual and stimulating introduction to the life through a selective documentary survey, together with examples of contemporary views of Wesley and a detailed critical bibliography. In the present work he does not claim to offer a straight biography of Wesley but rather focuses on Wesley's 'relationship to the movement that would become characterised as a religious revival among the people called Methodists'. This certainly gives a fresh perspective seldom emphasised by Wesley's biographers who have generally tended to see the development of early Methodism largely in terms of the development, opinions and guiding hand of the leader. In reality, the movement owed much to local leaders and even rank and file members as well as to other revival groups, not to mention pressure from contemporary religious and secular forces - if only by reaction. Professor Heitzenrater is well aware of all this and although some of his predecessors (notably Tyerman and Simon) did offer vignettes of the lesser lights of the movement, the present account integrates their contribution more closely with the process of Methodist institutional development which is a central theme of the book.

The result is probably the clearest and most accurate account to date of just how the connexion evolved from an untidy and haphazard 'revival' movement, though Wesley's personal development does also receive attention. A very readable text is enhanced by a quantity of well-chosen illustrations. To throw light on rank and file attitudes good use is made of the still unjustly neglected volumes of Leslie Church on the early Methodist people, though there is still room for studies of preachers' and rank and file attitudes on a variety of issues for which a good deal of unexploited material exists in published and unpublished biographies and letters. (The recently published letters of John Pawson show how useful such material can be.) The local character of Methodism often owed less to Wesley or even to the itinerants than is often assumed and the motives of individuals for responding to Wesley's message still need further exploration.

It is perhaps a pity that Professor Heitzenrater denied himself the opportunity for a fresh estimate of Wesley's complex personality, including the psychological interpretations by some modern writers who are generally more fruitful in theories than in accurate biographical data. It is arguable that Wesley's personality affected his theology and that his theology was more changeable and less consistent than he liked to claim. Professor Heitzenrater is certainly not uncritical of Wesley though he seems to see a greater consistency and coherence in his beliefs and attitudes than some other students of Wesley (including, it must be admitted, the present reviewer). But this debate will continue.

Other issues for further exploration might include Wesley's attitude to contemporary thought which has been reopened in some recent studies, but this is perhaps more the concern for a formal biography. What one would like to know more about is the extent to which Wesley was in control of policy in his last years

and how far he was influenced by his closest associates. Some of the itinerants hint darkly at undue influence by designing favourites who are seldom named except for the egregious and perhaps unjustly maligned Dr Coke.

Professor Heitzenrater is an exact and meticulous scholar and the few slips noted are mainly on peripheral matters. Fénelon (p. 52 and p. 331) was an archbishop not a cardinal. It is an over-simplification to say (p. 8) that the English Calvinists 'became known popularly as "Puritans"'. 'Durham' should read 'Derham' (p. 19). Samuel and Susanna Wesley were more at odds politically and less easily reconciled than is implied here (p. 27). That 'uneducated curates' were confined to reading the Homilies in place of sermons (p. 213) reads oddly of a largely graduate profession in the eighteenth century and seems to be a misinterpretation of Canon 49 which really refers to the licensing of deacons to preach. (Which applied also to visiting clergy as Whitefield and Wesley found to their cost.) It was John Hampson, not John Pawson (p.215) who asserted his right to preach without permission from clergy like Charles Wesley. Wesley's definition of sin as a 'voluntary transgression of a known law' (p. 229) occurs even earlier than 1738 - in a letter of 1731. John Pawson (p. 318) *was* a member of the Legal Hundred though indeed he had other reasons for being critical of Wesley, as his private autobiography and obituary of Wesley showed.

But these, it must be emphasised, are merely minor slips in an authoritative account of Methodist development. The book will not only be an excellent guide for students but also for the general reader and even professed Wesley experts will find that their knowledge and understanding of early Methodism is greatly enhanced by this work.

HENRY D. RACK

The Eighteenth-Century Hymn in England. by Donald Davie. (Cambridge University Press 1993. xi, 167 pp, £27.95 ISBN 0 521 38168 1)

Donald Davie is described by his publishers, with less than usual hyperbole, as 'the foremost literary critic of his generation and one of its leading poets.' His recent death makes it harder to criticise this, presumably his last completed book, so it is just as well that it contains infinitely more to praise than to criticise.

The titles of some of his chapters are appetisers: 'Isaac Watts: the axiomatic hymns'; 'Watts' atrocity hymns'; 'the carnality of Charles Wesley'; and, more prosaically, 'Psalmody as translation'.

Within the body of the book, one is impressed both by the range and the depth of Davie's scholarship. He has published special studies on eighteenth-century Dissent, so he is thoroughly at home with the cross-currents of what he finds to have been, in contrast with the nineteenth century, an 'oecumenical' age.

His main concern is with eighteenth-century hymns as literature; yet he refers, whenever appropriate, to their political contexts, and to the congregational setting (or, in the case of Christopher Smart, the lack of it) in which most of them were sung. He takes a fresh look at everything, correcting the popular view that eighteenth-century England was a waste of materialistic corruption until the Wesleys came; revising Lord David Cecil's assessment of Cowper; and even modifying some of his own earlier pronouncements. If, in places, he appears to

stray rather far from his main theme, this is surely an aspect of the poet's (and the rabbi's) gift of free association of ideas; and in the end, he always finds the right way home.

In a brief review, there is space only for a small selection of Davie's conclusions. On Watts he has sentences which demand quotation in full:

[I]n any age there has to be a point at which order, harmony, composure are bought too dearly at the expense of fellow-feeling with torment and suffering. Watts, we may well think, too often did not accurately estimate the price that he was paying. 'When I survey the wondrous cross' represents one moment when he knew the price that was asked of him, and refused to pay it. By refusing that bargain he moved outside the orbit of contemporaries like John Byrom or Joseph Addison. (p. 47)

Davie's approach to Charles Wesley, though far from hagiographical, is always perceptive and usually constructive; for example: '... Wesley's 'vulgarity' [a term quoted from Martha England] manifests itself not as fervently unfocussed feeling, but as crabbed and congested *thought*' (p. 65). After a searching criticism of what Davie believes to be Wesley's misuse of metaphor, he more than makes amends with a claim that 'Charles Wesley sounds notes that are outside the range, or outside the intentions, of any other sacred poet in English' (p. 69). His chapter on (English) metrical psalms makes good use of George Steiner's four phases of literary translation: trust, aggression, incorporation, and restitution.

It is always too easy to speculate about what the departed 'would have wished'; but Davie would surely not have wished us to gloss over minor points of disagreement, or the occasional lacuna or positive error. He takes Christopher Smart to task for writing

Of billows, breaking to refund
The fishes on the shore,

remarking that 'no sense that the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives for "refund", including the most obsolete, seems to make sense of Smart's lines' (p. 82); yet *Chambers English Dictionary* notes this precise meaning: 'pour back (*now rare*)'. His comment that 'no one translation of a text has ever, or at least not for long been thought more canonical than any other' (83) clearly does not apply to translations of the Bible. In quoting from Charles Wesley's *Journal*, Davie misses a clear allusion to Aesop (p. 88), and in a few other places some biblical allusions. It is not true that "'Vail" ... is not an alternative spelling for "veil"' (131), as both the Oxford dictionaries and *Chambers* confirm; 'curtain' may be a better translation of *katapetasma* in Heb 6.19, and COD⁸ gives a 'v. archaic' verb 'vail'; but those are quite different matters. And 'a little taper to the sum' (p. 128) is the only significant misprint noted in a beautifully produced (and illustrated) volume.

This is a stimulating and enriching book from which all who love Watts and Wesley, not to mention those who know nothing of Christopher Smart, will learn much.

PAUL ELLINGWORTH

Workaday Preachers. The Story of Methodist Local Preaching edited by Geoffrey Milburn and Margaret Batty (Methodist Publishing House, 1995, pp. xiv, 367, £10.00, ISBN 85852 058 4).

1996 marks the bicentenary of the first formal recognition by the Wesleyan Conference of the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting and the present volume has been compiled to celebrate that event. It is a worthy offering, with its portraits and other illustrations and, as is the custom these days, snippets from original sources neatly boxed and spread throughout to enliven the text. Though two themes (or perhaps nagging questions) run through the book from first to last - why do local preachers in every age feel somehow redundant and in what sense, if any, should they be regarded as an Order - the chapters fall roughly into two major sections, six of narrative history taking the story from the 1740s to the present day, and eight more specialist studies. The latter give Methodist historians the opportunity to cultivate fields of study they have made particularly their own: Alan Rose on the Preaching Plan, Dorothy Graham on women preachers (an Extraordinary work to John Wesley, merely extraordinary to Samuel Johnson: what a depth of meaning attaches to that use of a capital letter), Alan Parker on LPMA and its antecedents, Clive Field on the class background of local preachers, historically considered and Norman Wallwork on the LP Recognition Service. Two chapters, by John Banks and John Stacey, on local preachers and theological change focus on the impact of A. S. Peake and on the varied responses of the preachers to *Doing Theology*.

There are two chapters which deal with the present day situation and even gaze into the future. Donald English is remarkably upbeat and optimistic, John Lampard frankly realistic and perhaps a little puzzled, particularly over changes in terminology. (Could it be that the word 'Order' was not included in the Recognition Service for Local Preachers in 1975 (p. 135) because the People Who Matter (J. M. Turner's *Gemeinschaft*, p 46) were toying with the notion of presenting the whole of British Methodism as an Order to some Coming Great Church, or were they, more narrowly, trying to restrict the term to the ordained ministry? We shall never know.)

An outstanding contribution comes from Robert Colls in his chapter on Methodism and the Poor. Robert with his delightfully lyrical style must be one of the most poetic of professional historians writing today: no computer-speak for him. Three of his insights are particularly challenging: he demolishes E. P. Thompson in two sentences of matchless prose (p. 250); he believes in the overwhelmingly working-class character of the early Methodist preachers (though Clive Field seems to show that this is true only of the Primitive Methodism and that for only a comparatively short period); and then there is this, *à propos* the Conference 'control' of the Bunting era and the more subtle theological discipline later exercised in all branches of Methodism by the colleges: 'for some college scholarship was enabling...for others there was not much difference between college and control'. (p. 252) John Banks in his chapter on Peake would align himself with the former viewpoint: others of us would restate our conviction that after the Peake era the kind of spiritual fervour depicted in Titcomb's well-known painting reproduced in this volume would be rarely felt, if not frankly impossible, and when Revival did return in the later twentieth century, its manifestations would be largely outside the ranks of organised Methodism. (See further Jack Clemo's poem on page 290).

There is a final consideration. Not the least of the merits of this splendid book is the testimony it gives to the thirst for knowledge and desire for self-improvement of the local preachers of the past, a passion which Geoff Milburn rightly says (p. 77) requires an effort of imagination on our part to appreciate fully. However if some of the preachers of the past like Fred Milburn (p. 81) or Tom Glasson (chapter 5) could return today, would they really be astonished by the high standards of educational attainment in our generally middle class congregations? Would they not be more likely bewildered by the current infantilization of our entire culture, a phenomenon of which the jejune character of what passes for some of our worship services is a fitting expression? Not a few of these scholar-preachers could have told you the ancient Greeks had a word for it: *paizein*, to shout, sway, wave and stamp, but rarely to think. Yet here too our God is at work, as not a few others of the glorious company honoured here could themselves have testified.

IAN SELLERS

Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal. Evangelicals and Society in Britain in Britain 1780-1980 by John Wolffe (ed). (SPCK, 1995, pp viii, 221 £10.99, ISBN: 0 281 04782 0)

Evangelicals are very much in fashion among historians. David Bebbington's *Evangelicals in Modern Britain* (1989) has had several sequels. Now John Wolffe edits a symposium of high quality, featuring Evangelical public policy, showing that the tendency to withdraw from political involvement into a premillennial ghetto was a temporary aberration.

Evangelicalism (following Bebbington) is defined by the centrality of conversion, the Bible, the cross and *activism*. The last is the theme here with styles as varied as the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury and Joseph Rank, with the constant tension between the conversion of the individual and the transformation of society exemplified by Ian Randall in the work of the Baptist, F. B. Meyer - I would add Samuel Chadwick in his Leeds period. But first David Hempton illuminates yet again the 'Halévy-Thompson' thesis. 'What we can say with certainty is that the conversionist zeal, moral discipline and social concern of thousands of evangelicals of all social ranks made early industrial British society more stable, more humane and more religious than it otherwise would have been' (p. 33).

Attitudes to poverty including Stranger's Friend Societies are analysed by Brian Dickey who shows the importance of Thomas Chalmers whose style was 'rurally derived and paternalistic' but set the pattern of much voluntary initiative. Edward Royle shows the width of educational endeavour including public schools, theological colleges and Bible institutions like Cliff College. The hindrances caused by rivalry between Anglican and Dissenters at primary level are underlined. Business activities are dealt with by Jane Garnett who mentions forgotten biographies of Wesleyan merchants by William Arthur and Benjamin Gregory. On the vital overseas 'field', Brian Stanley shows the Methodists demanding the annexation of Fiji 'to curb the Pacific slave trade'. Trusteeship Imperialism was followed in the twentieth century by naivety over the role of Marxism in liberation movements (pp.192-3). Evangelical ambiguity over the role of women is handled perceptively by Jocelyn Murray, though a glance at P. W. Chilcote and Dorothy

Graham's recent work could have filled out the interesting observations on Primitive Methodism. T. B. Stephenson's work is also strangely omitted.

Kenneth Brown and Ian Randall illustrate the social concerns at the turn of the century. Methodists feature, including Samuel Collier, and Hugh Price Hughes as holiness preacher as well as the epitome of the Nonconformist conscience. But was Lloyd George really a practising chapelgoer in the way that Arthur Henderson was? Randall and then David Bebbington show increasing fragmentation - liberal evangelicals going the way of COPEC, conservative evangelicals becoming pietist and then picking up social concerns after World War Two - Tear Fund, David Sheppard, business men like Alfred Owen and Sir Frederick Catherwood. Clive Calver, Director General of the Evangelical Alliance - one of whose earliest Honorary Secretaries was W. M. Bunting - gives a positive 'Afterword' though 'Evangelical' has now clearly become 'Conservative Evangelical'.

This is a pertinent and relevant book which could be read alongside Derek Tidball's more polemical *Who are the Evangelicals*. (Marshall Pickering 1994).

JOHN MUNSEY TURNER.

Growing up with Primitive Methodism by Harold Miller (Fifth Chapel Aid Lecture 1995, 44pp, £2.00, copies from Rev John Banks, 36 Wilton Crescent, Alderley Edge, Cheshire SK9 7RG.)

This autobiographical account of a born and bred Derbyshire Primitive Methodist who became a distinguished physicist sheds light on the qualities nurtured by Primitive Methodism in its latter years. For Harold Miller liberal thinking and rooted dissent were its two basic ingredients. To this was added close involvement in Labour party and Trade Union activities, and the politics of local government. He did not lose his faith at Cambridge, but found that it developed as he participated in wider Christian student life. Though he questioned much doctrine and liturgy, his faith gave him 'a firm base for which I am extremely grateful'.

Here is a fascinating glimpse into the outlook of a keen young Primitive Methodist from the first World War to the early thirties. We are introduced to the life of the Barrow Hill and Poolsbrook PM chapels in the Staveley Circuit, with their Band of Hope and Sankey hymns - 'Dare to be a Daniel! Dare to stand alone! Dare to have a purpose firm, dare to make it known!'. (Cornish Methodists will be relieved to read of the author's second thoughts about the origin of such carols as 'Lo, the eastern sages rise', which was thought to be unique to Poolsbrook!) The son of a local preacher who was a conscientious objector, the young Miller refused to salute the flag during a wartime Sunday School concert rehearsal, and was turned out in disgrace. He enjoyed the Anniversaries, but found many of the services 'not particularly intellectual or theological'. He thought that infant baptism was an unimportant ritual. His prize books built up the family library, and the Christian Endeavour coached him in the arts of discussion and public speaking. In a close-knit mining community, with its daily hazards and poverty, the PM chapel developed a rich life of its own, with a sturdy independence of outlook and a responsibility for Christian leadership; in it political radicalism and dissent were inherent - a combination to which the Labour party as well as Methodism owed so

much. Miller found it 'a vigorous, sincere and devoted religious community in which it was a privilege to grow up'.

At Cambridge, Miller was influenced by current ecumenical thinking. Alienated by the Christian Union, he joined the S.C.M. admiring 'forward looking, left wing christian leaders' of the intellectual calibre of Charles Raven and Alex Wood. All this was as different from the Primitive Methodist past as from the more conservative and charismatic Methodism of today. The imagination boggles at what William Clowes would have said about a refusal to crown a Lincolnshire chapel retreat attended by enthusiastic youngsters with a 'thorough-going emotional appeal for converts in the evening service'. Although it was requested by the Church leaders, the Methodist Society group of which Miller was a part 'decided to avoid treating these youngsters, who trusted us, as subjects for our manipulation'. These are words that need to be taken seriously today!

This fine booklet should be read by those who belittle early twentieth - century Nonconformity for its liberal theology; it paints an attractive and positive picture of contemporary chapel life and thought. It has earned a well deserved and appreciative forward by the Right Hon. Tony Benn MP.

MICHAEL S. EDWARDS.

Holiness Manuscripts. A Guide to Sources Documenting the Wesleyan Holiness Movement in the United States and Canada by William Kostlevy (The American Theological Library Association and The Scarecrow Press, 1994, pp xvi, 423, £49.50, ISBN 0 8108 2861 8).

The Holiness Revival in the United States that is usually dated from the 1830s not only raised up many churches and denominations proclaiming John Wesley's emphasis on Christian holiness, but it also led to a tide of holiness literature. This included books, pamphlets, tracts, magazines, testimonies, photographs, estate files, minutes of meetings, financial records and such like. Now Dr Kostlevy, Special Collections Librarian at Asbury Theological Seminary, has set about the task of discovering the locations of all these writings and producing a very full and helpful guide to where they can be found. Altogether Dr Kostlevy guides us to 1249 locations in the USA and Canada with brief details of what items are held in each library, archive or other depository. These items date from the 1830s to the 1980s and many of the later twentieth-century holdings include microfilms and research theses. The holdings vary greatly in size, from those who have just a few items to those, like Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, which is credited with 100 feet of shelf space! Each American and Canadian state is listed alphabetically and the book is very fully indexed. This is not a volume for reading from beginning to end but provides an excellent resource for scholars and historians. Now, when will some enterprising archivist do similar research on the many like collections of this literature housed throughout the British Isles?

H. MCGONIGLE

SHORTER NOTICES

James H. Rigg by David Carter, (People Called Methodists No. 2, M.P.H. pp. 35, 1994, £2.50, ISBN: 1 85852 0207)

The representative Wesleyan conservative minister of the late 19th century has had comparatively little written about him; reading between the lines of David Carter's useful essay reveals why. Dr. Rigg was not an original thinker, but a traditionalist adapting the Wesleyan system to cautious reform after the trauma of the 1849-51 disruption. Although he called himself 'a Conference man who is also a Reformer', he gives the impression that only fear of renewed agitation made him one. He achieved lay representation to the Conference, but upheld its authority and that of the pastoral office, to the dismay of the non-Wesleyan connexions. His public image as the champion of Wesleyan traditional ways made his claim to be a reformer seem unconvincing. An impressive connexional career (twice President of Conference, Principal of Westminster College for 35 years, a noted ecclesiological, educationalist, and author) only underlined this - a little unfairly, as he did strive for sensible compromises and not the status quo. Like Bunting, he was a statesman, a good committee man, and pro-Church of England while defending the connexion against attacks by the Anglo-Catholics. He disliked increasing state involvement in education, and defended Wesleyan schools against incorporation in a state system.

Neither on Wesleyan schools, Methodist union, nor the pastoral office did later Methodism vindicate his judgment. The underlying reason is that at heart he was a compromised Buntingite moving in the succeeding age of liberal Nonconformity. David Carter does not draw this conclusion, though he has written a commendable and much needed account of Rigg.

MICHAEL S. EDWARDS

Why am I in Paradise? The Great War diaries of J. B. Goodridge by Ernest Goodridge (ed.) (Loughborough, Teamprint, 1994, 125 illus. paper. £9.95. ISBN: 1 871431 03 4)

This is an unusual book which deserves to be read. With the exception of Alan Wilkinson, very little has been written on the First World War and the Churches. This book gives an "inside" view from a sensitive young probationer agonizing about whether he should serve in France like his brother (who was killed) and his (male) friends or not. They are his working diaries for the period, giving his appointments with brief comments on what happened. They have been well illustrated, e.g. with the circuit plan, and many photographs and drawings of people and places referred to in the text. The editor also adds notes to explain who, what and where everybody or thing is. The book gives an excellent picture of two rural circuits (Dove Valley and Ely Fenland) at what was a critical period.

JOHN H. LENTON

LOCAL HISTORIES

Trinity Methodist Church, Penarth: A Portrait (294pp) by J. and S. Gibbs. Copies, £8.00 post free, from Trinity Church Office, Woodland Place, Penarth, Cardiff, CF6 2EX.

In every generation: the story of the development of Methodism in Teignmouth by Gillian M. James (92pp. ill). Copies, £3.00 post free from the author at Shawcroft, Brookfield Drive, Teignmouth, Devon TQ14 8QQ.

Inspired by Wesley: Two Centuries of Methodism in Bewdley by Sue Dernie (48pp). Copies from the author at 18 Brook Vale, Bewdley, Worcs, DY12 1BQ, price £4.35 post free.

The History of the Methodist Church in the Southend and Leigh Circuit: Hockley (15pp) and *Whittingham Avenue, Tomlin Memorial* (16pp) by G. T. Brake. Copies, £3.00 each, from the author at 43 Florence Gardens, Hadleigh, Benfleet, Essex SS7 2PH.

A Winding Lane in the Wilderness - the story of Wesleyan Methodism in Sandhurst, Berkshire by Elizabeth Godden (48pp). Copies from the author at 11 Scotland Hill, Sandhurst, Camberley, Surrey, GU17 8JR, price £4.30 post free.

High Barnet Methodist Church 1770-1995 (39pp). Copies from Rev Martin Caldwell, 17 Hillside Gardens, Barnet, Herts, EN5 2NG, no price stated.

Wem Methodist - URC Church. A History by P. and T. F. Edwards (195pp). Copies price £6.60 post free, from the authors at 1 Eckford Park, Wem, Shrewsbury SY4 5HL.

Stocksfield Methodist Church 1895-1995 by B. J. Elstob (28pp). Copies from the author at 9 Birkdene, Stocksfield, Northumberland NE43 7EN, price £2.50 plus a large stamped addressed envelope.

A House Nigh Unto Heaven (Bispham Methodist Church, Billinge, Wigan) by David Lythgoe (133pp). Copies from the author at 53 Gathurst Road, Orrell, Wigan, WN5 8QJ, £10 hardback, £6 softback, plus 75p postage)

The Thin Thread. A History of Castle Bromwich Methodist Church 1843-1995 by Bill Sanders (54pp). Copies from the author at 59 Hawthorne Road, Castle Bromwich, B36 OHJ, price £3.00 plus postage.

Headingley Methodist Church 1845-1995, Celebrating Three Jubilees by D. Sheldon and D. C. Dews. (48pp). Copies, £2.30 post free from Miss H. J. Savage, 4 Grove Wood, Grove Lane, Leeds, LS6 4AD.

NOTES AND QUERIES

1492 ALEXANDER KILHAM'S CASH BOOK

Among the oldest Methodist documents in Aberdeen is a quarterly account book for December 1792 to February 1795. It was kept 'in the Closset at the preacher's-room Newbury'. On its 49 pages, carefully handstitched, the travelling preachers noted income 'at the Country places' from classes and 'public collections', as well as their expenses.

Those preachers were Alexander Kilham, James Anderson, John Sanderson, and William Fenwick; and, on exchange from nearby circuits, Joshua Cross, John Doncaster, George Duglass [*sic*], James Penman, and John Townsend [*sic*], Alexander Cummin, Alexander ('Sandy') Smith, and Samuel Davidson also appear. The Aberdeen Circuit then included Hatton of Fintray, Kintore (with nearby Leylodge and Wardes), Inverurie, Old Meldrum (with visits to Daviot and Broadplace), Crawlie and Newburgh, all long-vanished from Methodist preaching plans.

Interesting, even humorous comments appear. When Kilham's income and expenses matched exactly at 18s/8d, he notes: 'This is a wonder if not a miracle'. 'A second miracle' was Anderson's equal balance of 17s/6³/4d. 'If this is not a just, upright and moderate account I appeal to the Wise Men of the East' - which drew a marginal comment from Kilham: 'Is it just and upright to cheat yourself, as you have done in Candles, Wages &c?'.

Social historian will also observe; 'At Newbury in good money!!! 7s/6d' - and opposite: 'Bawbies that winna gang 4d'. Also of interest are references to shoeing a Sheltie, the cost of bleeding, antimony, and 'rasping her teeth'; buying coal and peats; and a grant to Kilham of £2/5s/6d, being 'Expences of the Child's funeral & the Dr. in my wife's late affliction'.

This frail little cash-book found its way to Ranmoor College, Sheffield, along with leaflets by or about Kilham. Through the diligence of Mr Alan Cass it has been returned to Aberdeen, and the original cash-book with a transcript is in the University of Aberdeen Archives, Special Collections, Reference MS 3461. I will gladly supply a xerox of the typescript to anyone interested.

HAROLD R. BOWES

1493 REV. THOMAS COLLINS'S JOURNALS:

The Rev. Thomas Collins (1810-1864) was stationed in the Sandhurst (Kent/East Sussex) Wesleyan Circuit from 1832, and there exercised a powerful evangelistic ministry. There were extensive emigrations from the Kent/East Sussex parishes to the colony of New South Wales from the late 1830s. The emigrants included many whose conversion experience occurred under Collins' ministry, and who went on to play a significant role in the development and extension of Methodism in NSW. This is the subject of a major current research project.

Rev. Thomas Collins's journal and personal correspondence were major sources for Samuel Coley's biography *The Life of Thomas Collins* and his journal

was also cited in the memorial minute for the 1865 Conference.

I would be most grateful for any assistance in locating Thomas Collins's journals and any other personal papers in relation to this research project.

DARYL H. LIGHTFOOT

PO Box 574, Toronto. 2283 NSW. Australia

1494 WESLEY EVENSONG AT DERBY CATHEDRAL

On Sunday, 16 July 1995 there was a virtually all-Wesley evensong at Derby Cathedral sung by the Derby Voluntary Choir under the direction of the Assistant Organist of the Cathedral, Tom Corfield. The Canticles were sung to (Samuel) Wesley in F, copies of which I supplied, and the anthem was 'In Exitu Israel' by Samuel Wesley. I know of no cathedral in the country where this service is in the repertoire, so this performance of Wesley in F will have been the first for many years. Of the hymns, all three were to words by Charles Wesley, and the tunes of two were by S S Wesley; the tune of the third was from John Wesley's *Foundery Collection*. The optional prayers were all by John Wesley, and the sermon was in praise of the contribution of the various generations of the Wesley family to Methodism and to Anglicanism. It was a most enjoyable, and a most enlightening, occasion.

PHILIP OLLESON

1495 PREACHERS ON METHODIST POTTERY

Quite a number of pieces of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Methodist pottery depict John Wesley surrounded by fifteen of his preachers in miniature cameos. The preachers are: T. Hanby, P. Jaco, W. Thompson, J. Hampson, T. Hanson, J. Hall, J. Shaw, J. Goodwin, R. Costerdine, T. Taylor, J. Mason, L. Allen, J. Pawson, J. Murlin and C. Hopper. Can anyone give any clues as to why those particular fifteen names were chosen?

HERBERT McGONIGLE

Robert Dall (1745-1828) was a pioneer travelling preacher who spent much of his ministry in Scotland, although he died in Manchester. His career has been rescued from obscurity by George Davis in a short pamphlet, *The Robert Dall Story*, published by the Scottish WHS. Copies can be obtained from the author at 6 Gowan Park, Gowan Street, Arbroath, Angus DD11 2BH, price £2.00 including postage.

Correction

The list of Rattenbury Papers on page 149 of the last issue should read: 'Diary of H. B. Rattenbury....letters of Emily Ewins.....1911-12.'

THE ANNUAL LECTURE

will be delivered in Park Street Methodist Church, Lytham
on Monday, 24 June 1996 at 7.30pm

by **Dr David Bebbington**

'The Holiness Movements in British and Canadian Methodism
in the late Nineteenth Century.'

Chairman: The Rev. Tim Macquiban MA

The Lecture will be preceded by TEA* for members at 5pm and the
Annual Meeting at 6pm.

** Please notify the General Secretary of your intention to be present.*

Lytham Methodist Church is situated on Park Street, a few yards from the Railway Station and some 200 yards from Lytham Square, Park Street being an off Street from the main shopping street in Lytham. (Note that Lytham is quite separate from St. Annes)

TRAVEL DIRECTIONS:

By car: From all parts of the county M6 leaving at Junction 32 on to the M55. Exit from M55 at Junction 4 and follow signs to Lytham St. Annes. Coming down Common Edge Rd, Queensway, Heyhouses Lane and drive on into **Lytham at town centre** (Clifton Street/ Dicconson Square) turn into Park Street, Church a few yards on the left before railway bridge.

via **Preston A583 Blackpool Road:** fork left at Clifton to Freckleton, Warton and on to Lytham town centre (then as above).

By public transport:

Train from Preston to Blackpool (South) alight at Lytham Station. Lytham Methodist Church Hall is opposite the Station exit. Corner of Westby St./Park Street.

Bus: No 11 & 11a from Blackpool Promenade near the Tower to **Lytham Square** turn into Park Street and the Church is few yards on the left.

Bus from Preston Bus Station Nos 167/168 alighting at Lytham Square.