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CONTENTS

Articles

Notices

Book Reviews

Cover Illustration:

Staffordshire Toby Jug George Whitefield sometimes known as the Night-watchman. (George Whitefield was introduced in Joseph Reed's play 'The Register Office' 1761.as Mr Watchlight.) Date c 1800. Height 8 inches 204 mm Base 43/4 inches 212 mm x 31/2 inches 89mm See WHSP vol 33 page 170 Donald H Ryan Collection

Past and Present: Taking the Long View of Methodist and Anglican History

The Annual Lecture of the Wesley Historical Society Delivered at The New Room of John Wesley's Chapel, Bristol on Saturday 30 June 2012

In early September 1862, following the death of Archbishop Sumner of Canterbury, Archbishop Longley of York seemed the obvious successor, and speculation and interest immediately focused rather on the anticipated vacancy at York. Samuel Wilberforce of Oxford, the leading High Church bishop on the bench, desperately wanted the post and wrote to William Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, entreating him to promote his candidacy to the Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston. Wilberforce wrote:

> I believe that there is the greatest conceivable opening for usefulness at York if the right man were there. … If a Yorkshireman, with a Yorkshire tradition, a power of moving the masses, a power of getting at the Methodists, were placed there, there might be a true revival of the Church and the Faith.[1]

While Gladstone was sympathetic to Wilberforce, he recognised that his own influence with Palmerston was limited, and declined to pursue the matter. In the event, to Wilberforce's bitter disappointment, Palmerston promoted over his head the much more junior and moderately evangelical bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, William Thomson. Thomson, it seemed, was more inclined to cooperate with Methodists than to be 'getting at' them, and for Palmerston, anxious not gratuitously to provoke opposition to the Church of England, he appeared a much safer pair of hands.[2] The decision was a pivotal one insofar as in rejecting Wilberforce's vision of the future, it implicitly confirmed that Anglicanism's best prospects for the future lay in accepting coexistence with Methodism rather than in seeking to secure the undivided loyalty of Methodists to the Church.

Wilberforce's perception of Methodism as a threat to the Church was not uncommon among High Churchmen, but it contrasts with numerous instances of more harmonious relations at the local level. For example, at Newton upon Ouse, near York, in 1865, the Anglican incumbent reported to Archbishop Thomson that 'We have several Wesleyans but they are all good Church goers, and regular Communicants,

[1] London, British Library Additional Manuscript 44344, fol. 194, Wilberforce to Gladstone, 9 September 1862.

[2] For a full analysis of the context of the appointment see John Wolffe, 'Lord Palmerston and Religion: A Reappraisal', *English Historical Review*, vol. 120, no. 488 (September, 2005), 907-36.

class leaders included.'[3] As Edward Royle has shown, until well into the second half of the nineteenth century, many Methodists continued also to attend their parish churches, at least in rural areas.[4] Although this practice appears to have largely ceased by 1900, it is arguable that in the light of the growth of Anglican-Methodist Local Ecumenical Projects since the 1970s, the earlier twentieth century pattern of entirely separate and distinct congregations should be seen in long term historical perspective as more the aberration than the norm.

This article is not intended as an analysis of Anglican-Methodist relations in the specific sense. Rather, by taking a long view of parallel and often interlinked histories, the intention is to illuminate wider patterns of church growth, decline and resurgence. The argument also develops insights arising from the recent 'Building on History' project, which sought to highlight ways in which history can serve as a resource to inform strategic thinking about contemporary mission and ministry.[5] Evidence is drawn primarily from contrasting case studies of Yorkshire, as a region of historic Methodist strength, and from London and Middlesex, where Methodism has been relatively weak and Victorian Anglican church-building efforts were particularly intense.

The seemingly inexorable growth of Methodism in the first half of the nineteenth century is a familiar story. In England the Wesleyans alone grew from 57,000 at John Wesley's death in 1791 to 180,000 in 1820 and 334,000 in 1850. By mid-century the Primitive Methodists added a further 102,000 and the smaller secessions, including the Bible Christians, at least 42,000 between them.[6] In the Religious Census of 1851 total Methodist attendances in England and Wales of 2.6 million were second only to Anglican ones of 4.9 million and well in advance of the next largest Nonconformist group, the Congregationalists with 1.2 million.[7] Methodist strength, moreover, was unevenly distributed across the country: for example in Yorkshire total Methodist attendances of 428,000 substantially exceeded Anglican ones of 350,000.[8] Such was the context of the experience on the ground of W. F. Hook, who shortly after his

[3] Edward Royle and Ruth M. Larsen (eds), *Archbishop Thomson's Visitation Returns for the Diocese of York, 1865* (York: Borthwick Institute, 2006), p. 309.

[4] Edward Royle, 'When did Methodists Stop Attending their Parish Churches?' *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, vol. 56, part 6 (October 2008), 275-96.

[5] The financial support of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (grant references AH/G010234/1 and AH/ J004480/1) for this work is gratefully acknowledged. For project websites see http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/building-on-history-project and http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/religion-in-london and for published discussion John Wolffe, 'What can the Twenty-First Century Church Learn from the Victorians?' *Ecclesiology,* vol. 9, Issue 2 (2013), 205-22 and John Wolffe, 'The Church of England in the Diocese of London: What does History have to Offer to the Present-Day Church?', *Studies in Church History*, vol. 49 (2013), 248-58.

[6] Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert and Lee Horsley, *Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles since 1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 139-41.

[7] *Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Worship, England and Wales – Report and Tables* (House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1852-3, vol. 89), Table A, p. clxxviii.

[8] Ibid., Table B, p. cxcii.

arrival in Leeds as vicar of the Parish Church wrote to Samuel Wilberforce in July 1837 that Methodism was the '*de facto* established religion' of the town.[9]

The 1851 Religious Census is, however, a treacherous document, not least because as an isolated snapshot of attendances it prompts unfounded assumptions about how these fitted into longer term trends.[10] The sequence of Methodist membership figures supports the impression of steady growth over the preceding half century. Nevertheless the ratio of attendances to membership, standing at about 5:1 in 1851 (on the basis of the attendances reported in the census and the membership figures for that year) was not necessarily a constant – it might plausibly have been even higher earlier in the century. If so, the growth in membership was as much the consolidation of a committed core as indicative of a continuing expansion in overall reach and attendance.

For Anglicans trend data are almost completely lacking. Accordingly just as we should not *assume* that overall attendances were lower in 1851 than they had been in the late eighteenth century, Methodist growth was not necessarily straightforwardly at the expense of the Church of England. As Royle puts it, 'Methodists did not so much secede from their parish churches as resort to their own devices to supplement the inadequacies of the church'.[11] Such inadequacies were not only spiritual and pastoral ones, but could often be very physical and practical problems of lack of proximity and sufficient accommodation.

Royle has used the evidence of the Religious Census and subsequent visitation returns to document the extent to which in mid-nineteenth century rural Yorkshire Anglicans and Methodists avoided clashing service times.[12] The census evidence also shows how initially at least Methodist expansion activity tended to complement rather than compete with the Church. Not only, as Royle has shown, did Methodists still also go to church, but if they did not it was often likely to be because there was no convenient church to go to. The point can be illustrated effectively by reference to a single medium-sized Yorkshire registration district, Ripon, which had recently in 1836 become the seat of the first new Anglican bishopric to be founded since the Reformation. In 1851 there were returns from 75 places of worship from 34 townships in a circle about twelve miles in diameter extending from the edge of the Vale of York in the east to the Pennine moorlands to the west.[13] There were 28 Anglican places of worship, 3 Baptist, 2 Roman Catholic ones, and one Independent chapel. All the other recorded places of worship, a total of 41, were Methodist, making up the majority of

[9] Quoted W. R. W. Stephens, *The Life and Letters of Walter Farquhar Hook* (2 vols, London: Richard Bentley, 1879), vol. 1, p. 404.

[10] For assessment of the reliability of the census data, see John Wolffe, *The Religious Census of 1851 in Yorkshire* (York: Borthwick Institute, 2005), pp. 6-15.

[11] Royle, 'When did Methodists Stop Attending their Parish Churches?', 278.

[12] Ibid., 280-3.

[13] The original returns from the census are in the National Archives at Kew, and are also available online. The file reference for the Ripon registration district is HO129/491. They are also published in John Wolffe (ed.), *Yorkshire Returns of the 1851 Census of Religious Worship: Volume 2: West Riding (North)* (York: Borthwick Institute, 2005), pp. 42-54.

the available locations for public worship in the district. The Methodist places of worship can be further broken down into 28 Wesleyan, 3 New Connexion and 10 Primitive. The Reformers, who had a significant impact further south in the more urbanised parts of the West Riding, did not have an obvious presence in the Ripon district. Moreover, the predominance of Methodist provision in the Ripon district was by no means new in 1850 – of the 32 places of worship that specifically reported a construction date in or before 1820, 11 were Anglican, 18 Methodist and 3 from other denominations. Even if the Anglican count is increased by the 4 churches rebuilt between 1820 and 1851, which presumably had had an earlier but inadequate building, Methodists already in 1820 probably had as many places of worship as everyone else put together.

When one looks at individual returns and settlements, however, there is a strong impression that Methodism indeed developed more as a complement than as a competitor to Anglican provision. In 14 of the smaller townships there was an Anglican church or a Methodist chapel, but not both: 6 were provided for by the Church, 6 by the Wesleyans, 1 by the Primitives and 1 by both Wesleyans and Primitives. Elsewhere it is apparent that Methodism originally developed in a context of obvious Anglican deficiency. In Ripon town itself until the building of Holy Trinity in 1827 the only public Anglican provision was at the Minster, later the Cathedral, which imposing building though it was, already lacked the seating capacity to accommodate the whole population, and was not well placed to cater for more popular tastes in worship.[14] Hence it is no surprise to find that the Wesleyan chapel, built in 1777, the New Connexion one of 1794 and the Primitive Methodist chapel of 1821 all pre-dated the second Anglican church.[15] In the sprawling upland parish of Kirkby Malzeard, to the north-west of Ripon, the only Anglican provision until the 1840s was at the parish church in the main township. In the other quite populous hamlets of Dallowgill, Grewelthorpe, Mickley and Galphay, Methodist chapels all pre-dated the Anglican church. It can be presumed, for example, that only the most loyal of churchmen would regularly have made the two and a half mile journey across open country from Mickley to Kirkby Malzeard to attend the parish church, and that in the quarter century between the opening of the Wesleyan chapel in 1815 and of St John's Church in 1842, it was Methodism rather than Anglicanism that provided the natural religious focus for that community. On the other hand, in Kirkby Malzeard itself, it was the more radical New Connexion rather than the Wesleyans who initially set up in competition with the parish church, and the Wesleyan chapel came relatively late, in 1829.[16]

Even in villages where there was longstanding Anglican provision, there could still be problems of capacity and accessibility. St Mary's Raskelf, some miles to the east in Easingwold district, had a total seating capacity of 243, which on the face of it was perfectly adequate for the largest Census Sunday congregation of 156 in the afternoon,

[14] National Archives, HO 129/491/20, 21.
[15] Ibid., HO129/491/22, 25, 26.
[16] Ibid., HO/129/491/45-56.

and even for the larger average congregation of 189. However 62 seats were assigned to the Sunday School, and these were almost full with 59 children. Of the remainder only 99 were free and, the incumbent reported, these were frequently full at afternoon service. Under such circumstances those who came later had little option but to sit in vacant 'customary seats' only to find themselves turned out when those claiming entitlement to them arrived at the last minute, a process that understandably occasioned 'unpleasant …disputes'. It was therefore hardly surprising that 'many' cited a lack of free sittings as a reason for not attending church. By 1851 they had two other options, the Wesleyan Chapel built in 1835, which held alternate morning and afternoon services, and a weekly evening one; and the new Primitive preaching room in a private house, which also alternated between the morning and the afternoon. Clearly in this village Methodists were well-placed to provide for those whose initial inclinations may have been to the church, but who had found themselves humiliated and in practice excluded from the service there.[17]

Keeping such local examples in mind, it is instructive to look at the pattern of Methodist and Anglican building across the whole of Yorkshire during the first half of the nineteenth century. As Table 1 shows, Anglicans and Methodists between them accounted for more than four fifths of the new places of worship built in the registration county, in every decade of the first half of the nineteenth century except the first. The Wesleyan contribution peaked earliest and started to decline in the 1840s, while the Primitives were expanding most rapidly in the latter half of the period, and Anglican church-building only began to take off in the 1840s. However the striking consistency and dominance of their combined percentage is indicative of significant complementarity of approaches and coverage.

Table 1 – Church and Chapel Building in Yorkshire 1801-1851[18]

	CofE	Wesleyan	Primitive	Other Methodist	Total All Denominations	CofE + Methodist as % of Total
1801-11	6	98	2	4	158	69.6%
1811-21	13	201	15	12	297	81.1%
1821-31	45	196	80	32	417	84.7%
1831-41	69	203	130	40	516	85.7%
1841-51	163	165	129	41	583	85.4%

[17] Ibid., HO/129/52725-27. Publication of the returns for the North Riding, including Raskelf, is currently pending.

[18] *Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Worship, England and Wales*, Table D, pp. ccxlix-ccl.

The combined Yorkshire figures for total attendances by time of day, shown in Table 2 give further support to the argument. The Methodist pattern of attendance was very different from the Anglican one, which is consistent with the sometimes explicit and sometimes circumstantial evidence of individuals attending the parish church in the morning and the Methodist chapel in the evening. Indeed, total Methodist evening attendances were almost exactly equal to the Anglican morning ones. Of course by no means all these 170,000 or so attendances were accounted for by the same individuals, but it is likely that a significant proportion of them were, especially in the countryside. It is noteworthy that when Anglican and Methodist attendances are combined, their joint distribution across the three periods of the day was very similar to that of the next largest group, the Independents. In the towns the indications are, as Royle has shown, that Anglican and Methodist constituencies had already become more distinct by the second decade of the nineteenth century.[19] However the more distinct nature of urban Methodism did not necessary mean it was antagonistic to Anglicanism: for many Methodists even in town settings chapels would have been closer than churches, and W. F. Hook's success in rebuilding Anglicanism in Leeds was in part a consequence of his capacity to attract some Methodists back to a more effective and accessible church. [20]

Table 2 – Attendances at Religious Worship in Yorkshire on 30 March 1851[21]

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Church of England	170,248	124,430	55,186
Wesleyan	90,805	84,079	103,526
Other Methodist	40,542	43,620	65,098
Total CofE + Methodist	301,595	252,129	223,810
Independent	43,011	26,865	26,141

We should therefore learn to see Anglicans and Methodists as more partners than competitors in the rechristianization of early nineteenth century Yorkshire. The flexibility of Methodism, with its capacity to move from a class meeting to cottage worship to a purpose-built chapel, was ideally suited to evangelization of the numerous settlements where Anglican provision was deficient or non-existent. However, as the century wore on, the Church of England, increasingly liberated from

[19] Royle, 'When did Methodists stop attending their parish churches?', 276-8.

[20] Stephens, *Hook*, vol. 1, pp. 398, 408. Hook's biographer acknowledged (p.398) that 'only a few of the more sober kind actually came over', but this observation appears to relate to the committed Wesleyan core who attended class meetings and it is probable that the loyalties of the outer circle of 'hearers' were more fluid.

[21] *Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Worship, England and Wales*, Table B, p. cxcii.

earlier legal and ecclesiological obstacles, began to make up lost ground, in part through catering for those settlements not yet provided for by Methodism. On the other hand, in places where Methodism was already well established, it would have seemed that church rather than chapel was the interloper.

What then of London? The contrast to Yorkshire in relative Anglican and Methodist strengths revealed in 1851 is striking with 495,000 Anglican attendances compared with a mere 71,000 Methodist ones, even when the most expansive possible definition of Methodism, including Bible Christians, Welsh Calvinistic Methodists and Lady Huntingdon's Connexion is applied.[22] However, when Methodist and Anglican attendances are aggregated, the proportion of the total, while significantly lower than that in Yorkshire is not radically different, at 65% rather than 79%. The difference of course is accounted for largely by the more extensive, deep-rooted and expanding presence of Old Dissent in the capital, together with the more recent impact of Irish Catholic migration. Nevertheless, Anglicans and Methodists between them still made up a substantial majority of attendances on Census Sunday.

Unfortunately the tables for church and chapel building in the census report are organized on a county basis, and hence there are not accessible figures for London as such. However the figures for Middlesex in Table 3 provide a suggestive comparison with Yorkshire. It should be borne in mind, however, that although in 1851 much of Middlesex was already heavily built up and it included the greater part of the metropolis north of the Thames, the north and west of the county was still largely rural. Two significant conclusions are indicated. First, Anglican church building in Middlesex began to accelerate at a perceptively earlier date than in Yorkshire. Second, by contrast, the Methodists were relatively slow to move, and here, in contrast to Yorkshire, the relationship to Anglican advance appears to have been synergistic rather than complementary. In other words, whether in response to common stimuli or in conscious competition, Methodist expansion was proceeding in tandem with Anglican growth rather than preceding it.

Table 3 – Church and Chapel Building in Middlesex 1801-1851[23]

	CofE	Methodist	Total All Denominations	CofE + Meth as % of Total
1801-11	3	2	21	23.9%
1811-21	11	17	65	43.0%
1821-31	30	18	94	51.0%
1831-41	49	17	114	57.9%
1841-51	79	37	217	53.5%

[22] Ibid. Table B, p. clxxxiv. These figures relate to the 36 'metropolitan' registration districts, covering the then continuously built up area extending from Hampstead in the north to Greenwich and Wandsworth in the south, and from Chelsea in the west to Stepney in the east.

[23] *Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Worship, England and Wales*, Table D, pp. ccxliv.

As in Yorkshire the argument is usefully developed by sampling of the situation at registration district and parish level. Here the chosen registration district is Barnet,[24] stretching from the northern fringe of the metropolis out as far as roughly the present-day line of the M25, which was then rural Hertfordshire and Middlesex. Anglican places of worship made up the majority in the district, 16 out of 28, and of the remainder 5 were Independent, 2 Roman Catholic, and 1 Baptist, leaving just 4 Methodist chapels, all of them Wesleyan. Moreover the visible Methodist presence was, in contrast to Ripon, still a recent one in 1851, with the four chapels having been built in 1829, 1836, 1838 and 1840. During the same period Anglican provision had also expanded substantially, with 6 of the 16 churches having been built since 1800.

Most of the settlements in the district were nucleated villages with ancient parish churches, which even in Yorkshire was less favourable territory for early Methodist expansion. The exception, however, was Finchley, at the southern end of the district and therefore most exposed to the impact of the growing metropolis. With 4120 inhabitants in 1851 it was much the most populous parish in the district. The pattern of settlement and local ecclesiastical circumstances also gave rise to conditions that in Yorkshire would have seemed highly conducive to Methodist growth. The historic centre of the parish was the medieval church of St Mary at Finchley situated about a mile to the west of the Great North Road. However in 1851 less than a thousand of the total population lived near the parish church, and over three quarters were in settlements along and close to the main highway to the east, the hamlet of Whetstone in the far north of the parish, and the districts now known as North and East Finchley. All of these were at least a mile and in some cases over two miles from the parish church. [25]

The Rector of Finchley from 1794 to 1848 was Ralph Worsley, a pluralist whose simultaneous tenure as Sub-Dean of Ripon and Perpetual Curate of St Olave's York offers a somewhat unedifying link between Finchley and Yorkshire. Although he resided at Finchley, the parish benefitted little from his presence. According to the recollections of Eliza Anne Salvin, who attended the church as a child, Worsley

> … enjoyed good dinners and was a martyr to gout. He did not consider it incumbent on him to visit the poor, if he read the service and preached, that was all he had to do. Perhaps if he had left out the sermon altogether, his parishioners would not have been the sufferers.[26]

In 1847 Bishop Blomfield of London received an allegation that Worsley had been for a long time cohabiting with a woman to whom he was not married, but when the bishop began to investigate the matter he discovered that the Rector was now in a state of 'entire imbecility of mind'. The charge of adultery was therefore not pressed and

[24] HO 129/136. Dr Jonathan Rodell is preparing an edition of the London and Middlesex returns, to be published by the London Record Society.

[25] John Wolffe, 'The Chicken or the Egg? Building Anglican Churches and Building Congregations in a Victorian London Suburb', *Material Religion*, vol. 9, issue 1 (2013), 41-2.

[26] Hendon, Barnet Archives, MS 6787/7, Eliza Anne Salvin, 'Reminiscences of Bygone Years', p. 168.

remained unproven, but the evidence of senility is further confirmation of the church's lack of effective leadership in Finchley.[27]

It is therefore no surprise to find that two of the four Wesleyan chapels in Barnet district were in Finchley parish. It is more surprising to note how small they were. There had been a Methodist presence at Whetstone since around 1810, substantially predating the building of the Anglican district church of St John's in 1832, but in 1851 the congregation at the chapel there was only 25 in the morning and 38 in the evening.[28] Meanwhile the incumbent of St John's did not provide any attendance figures in his Census return, observing that they varied greatly with the weather, an indication that he was by no means satisfied with the turnout on this occasion. [29]

At East Finchley there had been a Wesleyan presence since 1820, led by John Freeman, a native of Brackley, Northamptonshire, who settled in the village as a young man. Freeman began prayer and class meetings in his cottage, which was subsequently licensed as a place of public worship. A purpose-built chapel was opened in 1829. Membership, however, remained small, at only 18 in 1837, rising to 28 in 1840, but then falling back to 10 in 1843.[30] This is the more striking as in that period the only Anglican provision was the uninspiring ministry of Ralph Worsley at St Mary's a mile way. There was also an Independent chapel in East Finchley, founded in 1815, but that too was still quite small with only 44 members in 1845.[31] In 1851, however, the population of East Finchley was already 1,690, so these low membership figures tend to corroborate the claim of the promoters of the new Anglican church of Holy Trinity and its associated school that

> …though it is due to the Dissenters (Wesleyans and Independents) to say, that they first turned their attention to this neglected spot… it is also the truth to add, that they were able to do little to relieve the spiritual and moral destitution of the inhabitants, which was at as low an ebb as in any part of England.[32]

For whatever reasons it seems that even in a vacuum of Anglican provision, Methodism was initially unable to make significant headway in East Finchley and that the greater part of the population remained unchurched. However, although Holy Trinity was not opened until 1846, on Census Sunday in 1851 it already had a substantial congregation of 210 in the morning and 240 in the evening, along with a

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[27] London, Lambeth Palace Library, Blomfield Papers, vol. 46, fols 190a-19, 208, Blomfield to Worsley, 22 November 1847; Blomfield to Richard Dawes, 27 November 1847.

[28] HO 129/136/26; 'Finchley: Protestant Nonconformity', *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 6: Friern Barnet, Finchley, Hornsey with Highgate* (1980), http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=22510, accessed 24 February 2014.

[29] HO 129/136/22, 23.

[30] Barnet Archives, MS 21539, Box 10, Wesleyan Methodist Church East Finchley: Sale of Work: Official Handbook and Souvenir, April 1896; W. B. Passmore, *Bygone Finchley* (c.1881, copy in Barnet Archives), vol. 1, p. 205.

[31] Barnet Archives, MS 11310/1, Independent Church Records Finchley 1815-1890, fol. 7.

[32] *The Origin and Progress of the National and Industrial Schools in Connection with the Chapel of the Holy Trinity at Finchley* (London: Joseph Masters, 1855).

further 90 Sunday scholars. This attendance was much larger than the Wesleyan one, with 25 in the morning, and 30 in the afternoon and evening, together with 22 Sunday scholars, and also exceeded the Independents with 172 in the morning, 168 in the evening and 85 Sunday scholars.[33] In Finchley, at least, it seemed that late arrival on the scene was no disadvantage to the Church of England.

In London, as in Yorkshire, extensive Anglican church-building continued for most of the rest of the century. However, there was a growing implicit readiness to learn from Methodist methods, in pursuing strategies such as open-air preaching or the initial erection of unpretentious mission halls or iron churches, in the endeavour to evangelise hitherto unchurched populations.[34] Conversely, Methodists became increasingly interested in buildings not only as necessary meeting places, but as visible statements of presence and solidity. In Finchley both Anglicans and Methodists were responding to the blended opportunities and challenges presented by the coming of the railway in the 1860s and the consequent rapid suburbanization of the area. East Finchley again provides a good example: the 1829 chapel was rebuilt in 1869 and replaced in 1897 by a prominent new building fronting on to the Great North Road, which increased the seating capacity from 300 to 650.[35] In Finchley, indeed, Methodism appears to have flourished more in this later period of assimilation to Anglican approaches than it did in the earlier nineteenth century. In the 1903 *Daily News* census of religious worship in London, total attendances of 834 were reported for East Finchley Wesleyan Church, now comfortably ahead of both Holy Trinity with 331 and the Congregationalists with 535. The intervening years had also in 1879 seen the opening of another substantial Methodist Church on Ballards Lane, half way between the parish church and North Finchley. Meanwhile, however, Anglicans had also been active, opening Christ Church, North Finchley in 1869, St Paul's Long Lane in 1886 and All Saints Durham Road in 1892. [36] By the turn of the twentieth century, here as elsewhere, non-attendance could no longer be attributed in any way to insufficient provision.

In October 1920 East Finchley Wesleyan Church marked its centenary with a civic service 'symbolical of the contribution of Methodism to Christian Citizenship in Finchley during the last 100 years', attended by the chairman and councillors of the Urban District Council. The proceedings included the singing of the 'Te Deum' and an anthem. In the programme a section headed 'Beginning the New Century' reflected that 'our assets and opportunities are incomparably greater than John Freeman's' and

[33] HO 129/136/25, 26, 27.

[34] For example in a printed address *To the Laity of the Diocese of London* (dated 20 June 1863, British Library 1879.cc.15 (86)), Bishop Tait advocated prioritising the support of 'living agents' over the building of the 'material edifice' and pledged to assist incumbents with 'Missionary Clergy… temporary Churches, School Churches, or Mission Rooms' by means of the recently-established Bishop of London's Fund.

[35] 'Finchley: Protestant Nonconformity'. This building still stands and remains in use for Methodist worship.

[36] Richard Mudie-Smith, *The Religious Life of London* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), p. 412; Wolffe, 'The Chicken or the Egg?', 48-51.

looked forward to the future in the expectation of yet greater achievements.[37] This celebration well illustrates the sense of achievement and social consequence present in early twentieth century Methodism, but in retrospect the confident opening of the church's second century seems hollow in the light of subsequent steep declines in membership and attendance. It is true that East Finchley Methodist has remained a functioning church, but its average attendance of 36 in 2011 looks very slender compared with the 462 reportedly present at morning service in 1903.[38] This is just one dramatic illustration of wider Methodist decline, in which membership in Great Britain, after a final slight rise in the 1920s, has dropped by more than two thirds from a peak of 843,825 in 1928 to 231,850 in 2012, the most recent year for which figures are currently available.[39] The greater part of this decline has occurred in the last half century, with membership still standing at 728,589 in 1960, and only in very recent years has it begun to slow, let alone bottom out.[40] In the remainder of this lecture I want to look further at this more recent history, again considering Methodist and Anglican trajectories alongside each other, and suggesting some ways in which a long historical perspective may usefully inform constructive responses to contemporary circumstances.

Closer analysis of recent trends does indeed lead to some stark conclusions. The last half century has seen serious decline in all historic British Christian traditions with the exception of the Baptists, mitigated to some extent by the growth of Pentecostal, Black Majority and other new churches. Methodism, however, along with the United Reformed Church, has declined even more steeply than other historic denominations. The earlier tendency for Methodist attendances substantially to exceed membership is also disappearing: even in 1990 Methodist attendances in England exceeded membership by 25%, but by 2005 that margin had dropped to a mere 6%.[41] There may well in the future be a convergence with the Anglican pattern of electoral roll numbers somewhat *exceeding* Sunday attendances.

While much academic ink has been expended on analysing and debating the overall decline of Christian participation, the specificities of the Methodist experience have received limited attention. As in the past, Methodists have been outstandingly conscientious in collecting statistics, but little energy has been committed to analysing them. The exception is Clive Field's extensive recent work on Methodist demography, which paints a depressing picture of a steadily ageing constituency, which on current

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[37] Barnet Archives, *A Programme and Souvenir of the Services and Meetings held at the Centenary (1820-1920) of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, High Road, East Finchley,* pp. 3-4.

[38] Methodist Church, Statistics for Mission, http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/stats-35-london-5year-1011-0312.pdf, Circuit 35, accessed 24 February 2014; Mudie-Smith, *Religious Life of London*, p. 412.

[39] Currie, Gilbert and Horsley, *Churches and Churchgoers*, p. 143; http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/stats-National-Membership-1213-0513.pdf, accessed 24 February 2014.

[40] David Hempton, *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 214. Between 2005 and 2007 membership declined by 6%, and between 2010 and 2012 by 2.5% (http://www.methodist.org.uk/statisticsformission, accessed 24 February 2014).

[41] Peter Brierley, ed., *UKCH Religious Trends* , 4 (2003/4), p. 9.8; *UKCH Religious Trends* , 8 (2008), p. 2.24.

trends would appear likely literally to die out before the end of the current century.[42] Otherwise, John Munsey Turner, in his otherwise excellent survey of modern Methodism in England, merely tabulates declining membership and leaves this as 'a silent commentary on fifty years of vast changes in culture and lifestyle which affected many organisations besides the churches.'[43] In his recent book, *Empire of the Spirit,* David Hempton offers a masterly general account of the debate on secularization, but, apart from a few stimulating insights, does not offer much comment of distinctive features of the Methodist case. There are some useful local studies, notably by Steve Bruce and Matthew Wood, [44] but in general one has a sense of a hitherto missed opportunity to use the exceptional quality of Methodist documentation not only better to understand Methodism's own situation, but also to illuminate wider trends in the recent history of British Christianity.

Figures drawn from Peter Brierley's Church Census calculations for 1979 and 2005 provide an opportunity for comparing Methodist and Anglican trajectories, and also for revisiting the comparison of London and Yorkshire in relation to the recent past. As Table 4 shows, while both churches have experienced substantial net decline, Methodism has fared worse than Anglicanism at both national and regional levels, while both churches have resisted decline more successfully in London than in Yorkshire. The particularly catastrophic numerical decline of Yorkshire Methodism in the last thirty years is a poignant counterpart to its dramatic expansion in the first half of the nineteenth century. Whereas, as we have seen, in 1851 Yorkshire Methodist attendances were 122% of Anglican ones, in 1979 they were only 64% of a much reduced Anglican figure and in 2005 barely half of an Anglican figure that was itself less than half what it had been in 1979.

[42] Clive D. Field, 'Joining and Leaving British Methodism since the 1960s', in Leslie J. Francis and Yaacov J. Katz (eds), *Joining and Leaving Religion: Research Perspectives* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2000), pp. 57-85; 'The People called Methodists today: statistical insights from the social sciences', *Epworth Review*, vol. 36, no. 4 (October 2009), 16-29; 'Demography and the Decline of British Methodism', *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, vol. 58, part 4 (February 2012), 175-88; vol. 58, part 5 (May 2012), 200-14; vol. 58 part 6 (October 2012), 247-63. I am indebted to Clive Field for making some of this material available to me in advance of publication.

[43] John Munsey Turner, *Modern Methodism in England 1932-1998* (London: Epworth, 1998), p. 20.

[44] Matthew Wood, 'Public religions and civil society: the case of London Methodism', *Fieldwork in Religion* vol. 1, part 3 (2005), 235-251; Steve Bruce 'Secularisation, Church and Popular Religion', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 62, no. 3 (July 2011), 543-61: Steve Bruce, 'Methodism and Mining in County Durham, 1881-1991', *Northern History*, vol. 48, no. 2 (September 2011), 337-55.

Table 4 – Methodist and Anglican Attendance Decline 1979-2005[45]

A. All England

	CofE	Methodist
1979	1,671,000	621,000
2005	980,600	289,400
2005 as % of 1979	58.7%	46.4%
Mean church size (2005)	54	48

B. London

	CofE	Methodist
1979	140,500	35,000
2005	90,300	20,600
2005 as % of 1979	64.3%	58.6%
Mean church size (2005)	89	82

C. Yorkshire

	CofE	Methodist
1979	141,700	91,100
2005	68,800	34,400
2005 as % of 1979	48.6%	37.8%
Mean church size (2005)	47	37

One potentially fruitful line of enquiry in seeking to explain these trends is to consider the size of churches. Of course it is inevitable that, unless there were to be wholesale church closures, overall decline in attendance leads to decline in average congregation sizes. However, smaller churches may often be especially vulnerable to further and eventually terminal decline. This is in part, as Robin Gill has argued, because of the demoralizing effect of worshipping week after week in a building with hundreds of empty seats that give a reproachful but sometimes misleading impression of past glories.[46] Also, small congregations are likely to have age profiles radically at variance with those of the population as a whole: a church where over-60s predominate will struggle to make itself attractive to younger adults, let alone children and teenagers, and eventually as its loyal congregation becomes still older and frailer will find it difficult to fill key offices, let alone find energy for the kind of outreach activity that would begin to reverse numerical decline. The extent to which this process has played out in Yorkshire is evident from the fact that even in the shorter

[45] Source: Peter Brierley, ed., *UKCH Religious Trends,* 6 (2006/7), pp. 12.2, 12.36, 12.46, 12, 74, 12.90, 12.108.

[46] Robin Gill, *The "Empty" Church Revisited* (Aldershot: Ashgate 2003).

period from 1989 to 2005, there was a net decrease of 84 in the number of functioning Methodist chapels. Meanwhile the total number of Anglican churches decreased only by 28. In London on the other hand, in 2005 there was only one fewer Methodist chapel than there had been in 1989, and there were 30 *more* Anglican churches. [47]

It therefore seems that the very ability of Yorkshire Methodism in the early nineteenth century rapidly to establish a presence in hitherto largely unchurched communities eventually made it in the late twentieth century especially exposed to almost equally steep decline, as its numerous small and dispersed chapels teetered on the edge of viability. The local dynamics of the process have been researched in detail for one case, that of the fishing village of Staithes on the north Yorkshire coast, in the 1970s by David Clark, and in recent years by Steve Bruce. Clark's work pointed to the persistence down to the period of his research of strong chapel cultures in the village, which still at that time supported two Methodist chapels, with former Wesleyans and Primitives nearly half a century after the 1932 reunion more competitors than collaborators at the local level.[48] Bruce, however, finds that after connexional attempts to merge the chapels repeatedly broke on the rocks of local intransigence, the issue was eventually forced in the early 1980s when one of them proved unable to fill statutory offices and was therefore obliged to close. Its demise, however, did nothing to boost the fortunes of the surviving chapel which, twenty years later, appeared also to be on its last legs.[49] Bruce finds therein support for his own robustly and consistently argued thesis of the inexorability of secularization: a more limited conclusion would be to observe how Methodism has been particularly vulnerable to the social changes that have undermined local community life in many smaller rural settlements.

Certainly, the somewhat greater resilience of Methodism in London would suggest that the metropolitan setting is now relatively more favourable territory than it was in the past. Anglican performance there has also been stronger within the context of an overall level of churchgoing in Greater London which is now one of the highest of any major local government unit in England.[50] This statistical reality is very much at odds with unreconstructed secularization theory, which would place the most urbanised and 'modernised' places in the country at the forefront of religious decline.

A significant factor in the overall level of churchgoing in London is of course the presence of substantial numbers of black Christians, whose settlement in the capital has not only resulted in the formation of numerous Black Majority Churches, but also significant boosts to Anglican and Methodist numbers.[51] Nevertheless post Second World War migration is only a partial explanation. In the Church of England the overall Greater London figures compiled by Brierley obscure a marked difference in

[47] *Religious Trends*, 6, p. 12.46
[48] David Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew: Folk Religion in a North Yorkshire Fishing Village* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
[49] Bruce, 'Secularisation, Church and Popular Religion'.
[50] In 2005 church attendance in London corresponded to 8.3% of population, compared with the national mean for England of 6.3% (*Religious Trends*, 6 (2006), pp. 12.2., 12.46).
[51] Wood, 'Case of London Methodism'.

trajectories between the Diocese of London, covering the boroughs north of the Thames and west of the Lea, and the Dioceses of Chelmsford, Rochester and Southwark, which also include significant parts of the metropolis. In the Diocese of London, Anglican electoral roll figures, and, to a lesser extent, Sunday attendances, have seen significant *increases* since 1990, whereas at least until very recent years, the other dioceses have seen stagnation or continuing decline.[52] This contrast between Anglican dioceses suggests that organizational factors have also had a significant impact. For whatever reasons, however, it is apparent that something of a 'London effect' also operates in Methodism especially as the differential between Methodist and Anglican performance there, at less than 6%, is appreciably narrower than elsewhere in the country.

The 'Building on History' project,[53] which has synergies with the important work being done by organizations such as Methodist Heritage, has explored ways in which a more informed engagement with history can provide valuable ideas and resources for the present-day church. We have sought to move beyond a heightened awareness and celebration of the past, to stimulate thinking about how it can be brought into constructively critical engagement with contemporary church life. So what conclusions on such lines might be offered?

Three general points can be made. First, a key priority in the 'Building on History' project has been to make ministers and committed laity aware of the extent to which academic analysis has moved on from a model of inevitable linear secularization. True, there are still those, such as Steve Bruce, who would both hold to such a view and defend it cogently, but they are looking much more in the minority than they would have done twenty or thirty years ago.[54] Given that a demoralized perception that decline is unavoidable is all too likely to become self-fulfilling, this is a crucial message to seek to convey. A second and linked point is to highlight the contingency, variability and complexity of the pattern of individual church experience: in any period there have been both growing and declining churches, and net national and regional trends obscure enormous local variation. The implication is that the trajectory of local churches is much more in their own hands than it is often perceived to be. Third, there is much practical value in local churches understanding more of their own history – for example to consider the original function of their buildings, to be aware of founding visions, to explore long term patterns of ministerial and congregational behaviour, and to consider mechanisms of fundraising and expenditure.[55] The purpose

[52] There is substantial year by year fluctuation, but as an indication of medium term trends, between 1998 and 2004 electoral roll numbers *increased* by 12.8% in London, but *decreased* by 7.3% in Chelmsford. Numbers in Rochester and Southwark were almost stable with a 1.9% decrease and a 0.8% increase respectively (*Religious Trends*, 4, p. 8.3; 7 (2007/8), p. 8.3).

[53] See footnote 5 above.

[54] Steve Bruce, *Secularization: In Defence of an Unfashionable Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). For converse arguments, see David Goodhew (ed.), *Church Growth in Britain: 1980 to the Present* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012).

[55] Neil Evans and John Maiden, *What can Churches Learn from their Past? The Parish History Audit* (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2012).

of such an exercise is emphatically not to seek to turn back the clock, but to promote a sense of perspective and potentially an enhanced capacity to think 'outside the box' about their current situation. And at the very least such a process can facilitate outreach: it may well be difficult for a small and elderly congregation to draw younger people into regular Sunday attendance, but more realistic to inspire them to take an interest in the history of the church or chapel as a central institution in the past life of their community.

Following the publication of his book *Bias to the Poor* in 1983, I wrote to the then Bishop of Liverpool, David Sheppard, to ask what agendas for historical enquiry he thought would best serve the needs of the present-day church. He responded quickly with the suggestion that – for Anglicans as well as Methodists – a pivotal issue was the need to understand better the reasons for the later Victorian decline of the Methodist class meeting, thereby to inform thinking about developing forms of grass-roots Christian community that can function effectively in our own day.[56] In this connection it is instructive to recall Sir Herbert Butterfield's opposition to Anglican-Methodist reunion in 1972 on the grounds that he feared it would blunt the edge of what he called 'insurgent religion' and David Hempton's recent judgement that 'For Methodism to thrive it requires energy, change, mobility and flux.'[57]

What the observations of these three very different wise men have in common is awareness that Methodism at its best has complemented the inherent inertia of the established Church of England by a capacity for swift and sometimes radical response to changing circumstances. This has been seen for example not only in the setting up of class meetings and subsequent erection of chapels across early nineteenth-century Yorkshire, but also in late nineteenth-century London and other cities in the building of central halls that in their heyday drew immense congregations and achieved strong and broadly-based community engagement.[58] The corollary, however, appears to be that when Methodist churches themselves slip into stasis, they are particularly vulnerable to decline, and across the last two centuries as a whole, the Anglican tortoise has often overtaken the Methodist hare, even as both are being pursued by the secular cheetah. For Methodists the development of quasi-established local churches such as East Finchley in the early twentieth century sometimes proved a successful medium-term strategy. However in the long term, it is very arguable that Methodists might have done better to have sustained their early endeavour to offer manifestly contrasting but complementary forms of church life rather than attempting to compete with the Church of England at its own game. In that connection, it is noteworthy that in his analysis of the growth of Protestantism in twentieth-century Latin America, David Martin has drawn a sustained analogy with the early history of British

[56] Correspondence with the author.

[57] John Munsey Turner, *Conflict and Reconciliation: Studies in Methodism and Ecumenism in England 1740-1982* (London: Epworth, 1985), p. 212; Hempton, *Empire of the Spirit*, p. 200.

[58] Angela Connelly, 'Methodist Central Halls as Public Sacred Space', University of Manchester PhD thesis, 2011.

Methodism.[59] In twentieth century Britain, though, despite the continuing residual presence of Methodism, the initiative for 'insurgent religion' has passed rather to the Pentecostals, Black Majority Churches, and new church networks.

Perhaps therefore, after all, Samuel Wilberforce had a valid point in 1862 insofar as he saw the best prospects for the future of Christianity in the north of England as lying in a confrontational and dynamic relationship between Anglicanism and Methodism rather than in more comfortable but more static coexistence. However each local situation must be seen in its own contingent historical context: sometimes competition worked best for both parties, sometimes cooperation has done so, but in either scenario, Anglicans and Methodists have been most effective when they have sustained complementary rather than similar strategies.

Nevertheless the shared inspiration of the eighteenth century evangelical revival has had a continuing resonance. So it is appropriate to end this overview of trends in Anglicanism and Methodism at the beginning, before Anglican-Methodist separation was institutionalised, in the north Buckinghamshire of the 1770s. Here in their shared Anglican ministry at Olney, John Newton and William Cowper were gathering small groups of committed believers in devotional meetings outside the normal church services, which had a strong resemblance to a Methodist class meeting.[60] Cowper's and Newton's Olney hymns were composed primarily for these gatherings, as it would have been technically illegal to use them in Anglican public worship services before the 1820s. Among the Olney hymns still sung today is Cowper's 'Jesus, where'er they people meet'. A stanza omitted from modern hymnbooks was not perhaps the most felicitous of verses composed by that greatest of Anglican evangelical hymnwriters, but together with the more familiar final stanza it provides an apt tail-piece to an article reflecting on patterns of church growth and decline:

> Behold! at thy commanding word,
> We stretch the curtain and the cord;
> Come thou, and fill this larger space;
> And help us with a large encrease.
>
> Lord, we are few, but thou art near;
> Nor short thine arm, nor deaf thine ear;
> Oh rend the heav'ns, come quickly down,
> And make a thousand hearts thine own![61]

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[59] David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

[60] Bruce Hindmarsh, *John Newton and the English Evangelical Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 195-203.

[61] *Olney Hymns* (Olney: Trustees of The Cowper and Newton Museum, 1979, facsimile if first, 1779 edition), p.235. The biblical allusion is to Isaiah 54:2.

The Mock-Preacher (1739): More than just an anti-Methodist play?

In his 1902 bibliography of eighteenth-century anti-Methodist publications, Richard Green had very little to say about the 1739 play *The Mock-Preacher: A Satyrico-Comical-Allegorical Farce*, which he simply dismissed as a 'coarse, vulgar, filthy production, holding up Whitefield to ridicule in a vile manner.'[1] Green's assessment of the play was true in the sense that, when one compares it to the numerous anti-Methodist publications that were also written during the early years of the evangelical revival, this play was easily the most personal and brutal attack on any individual preacher. Interestingly, the author of *The Mock-Preacher* utilises many of the criticisms that were regularly voiced by opponents of the revival. Such similarities to other contemporary anti-Methodist works will be highlighted throughout this analysis. Unfortunately, one gets the impression that Green only gave the contents of this work a cursory glance and then dismissed it for its bawdy tone. In fact, *The Mock-Preacher* is more than just a critique of the revival. Indeed, while most of the play is dedicated to ridiculing Whitefield, a portion of it also targets the contemporary Church of England, or, more specifically, the High Church faction within it.

According to an advertisement that appeared in the *London Evening Post* on 16 June, 1739, *The Mock-Preacher* was published on 'This Day.'[2] Charles Corbett, a printer and bookseller of Fleet Street, was responsible for the publication and sale of this 32-page-long work, which was priced at sixpence.[3] Although this would have

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[1] Richard Green, *Anti-Methodist Publications Issued During the Eighteenth Century* (London: C. H. Kelly, 1902), p. 9.

[2] *London Evening Post*, 16 June, 1739.

[3] Corbett was involved in the publication and sale of several other anti-Methodist works. The edition of the *London Evening Post* that advertised *The Mock-Preacher* also contained an advertisement for a forthcoming work by 'T.H.', entitled 'The METHODISTS. A SATIRE.' Apparently, this work was going to be 'Printed for Charles Corbett…and sold by D. Henry, Printer, at Reading.' Interestingly, the 28 June edition of the *London Daily Post* contained a 'This Day is publish'd' advertisement for a work by 'T.H.', entitled 'THE METHODISTS, a Satirical POEM.' Evidently, these advertisements were both referring to the same work. Yet, the latter advertisement stated that this work had been 'Printed for D. Henry' and 'sold in London by C. Corbett.' This suggests that the *London Evening Post* got the respective roles of Henry and Corbett mixed up. Unfortunately, no copies of this work appear to have survived. See also *A Compleat Account of the Conduct of that Eminent Enthusiast Mr. Whitefield* (London: C. Corbett, 1739); *Enthusiasm Display'd; or, The Moor-Fields Congregation* ([London]: C. Corbett, 1739).

been 'within the financial reach of the less well-off', the fact that no subsequent editions of *The Mock-Preacher* were published implies that this play did not sell well.[4]

Furthermore, Green's description of this play as a 'production' suggests that he paid scant attention to the anonymous playwright's prologue. The title page of this publication states that *The Mock-Preacher* was 'Acted to a Crowded Audience at Kennington-Common and many other Theatres.'[5] Yet, according to the prologue, it was not the author's intention for this play to be introduced 'on the Stage' and no record can be found of *The Mock-Preacher* being performed at all.[6] By describing Kennington Common, which was a regular venue for Whitefield's open-air services, as a theatre, the author is, in fact, likening the young itinerant's services to theatrical performances. This was not the only anti-Methodist publication that made such a comparison. A later pamphlet entitled *Harlequin Methodist* contained an illustration which depicted Whitefield giving a performance as Harlequin, complete with a black mask and cape.[7] Whitefield's oratorical style certainly resembled that of a performer, which is unsurprising, given that he had displayed a passion for acting and mimicry as a child.[8]

Elsewhere on the title page, there is a reference to the 'Humours of the Mob.' The inclusion of the word 'Mob' suggests that the author is attempting to portray revivalist meetings as events that tended to attract the lower orders. By claiming that Whitefield raised the 'Humours' of this group of people, the author is portraying revivalism as an intellectually inferior phenomenon.[9] Numerous other opponents of Whitefield provided similar descriptions of what they believed to be the typical revivalist audience. For example, a month before *The Mock-Preacher* was published, an article in the *Weekly Miscellany* reported that itinerant preachers were 'Ringleaders of the Rabble.'[10] There is certainly much truth in the claim that Methodism had a special appeal to the labouring poor. This can be partly explained by the fact that, unlike parish churches, open-air revival meetings were devoid of any form of social segregation.[11]

It becomes evident to the reader that the Mock Preacher is supposed to represent Whitefield at the beginning of the first scene, where the preacher compares Christ's birth in a 'Stable' to his own upbringing in 'an Inn.' This is clearly a reference to Whitefield's upbringing in the Bell Inn, a public house in Gloucester that was owned by his father and, subsequently, his brother. By comparing himself to Christ, the

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[4] Gavin Budge, Michael Caines, Daniel Cook and Bonnie Latimer, 'Literary and Cultural Figures, Genres and Contexts', in Gary Day and Bridget Keegan (eds), *The Eighteenth-Century Literature Handbook* (London: Continuum, 2009), p. 67.

[5] *The Mock-Preacher: A Satyrico-Comical-Allegorical Farce* (London: C. Corbett, 1739), p. 2.

[6] Ibid., p. 5.

[7] *Harlequin Methodist, to the Tune of 'An Old Woman Cloathed in Grey'* ([London]: n.p., [1750]).

[8] Harry S. Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), pp. 4-5.

[9] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 2.

[10] *Weekly Miscellany*, 12 May, 1739.

[11] Mark Smith, 'The Hanoverian Parish: Towards a New Agenda', *Past and Present*, no. 216, (August, 2012), p. 94.

preacher instantly comes across as extremely arrogant. Spiritual pride was a charge that Whitefield often faced during the early years of his ministry. This is unsurprising, given that Whitefield's early journals were filled with accounts of divine providence governing his every move (sometimes in even the most obscure of circumstances).[12] One contemporary critic of Whitefield viewed such accounts of divine intervention as an attempt to 'mimick the Apostles.'[13]

Elsewhere, the preacher voices his contempt for 'Riches', which he describes as obstructions to one's 'Passage to Heaven.'[14] Here, the author is mocking the prominence of anti-wealth sentiments in Whitefield's sermons. For example, in one of his earliest sermons, the then 22 year old evangelist had denounced: 'The covetous Worldling, that employs all his Care and Pains in "heaping up riches."'[15] Following his condemnation of wealth, the Mock Preacher then instructs his followers to give their money to him, or more explicitly, 'the pretty little Orphans in *Georgia*.'[16] The gullibility of these followers is particularly illustrated later in this scene, when the preacher praises his 'flock' for their many generous donations, but warns them that he 'can't tell indeed how long it will be, before they [the orphans] will have it all…for it is a great way to *Georgia*, and who can tell but that some Accident or other may happen, to prevent my good Design?'[17] It is obvious to the reader that this orphanage in Georgia does not exist and that the preacher has simply filled his own pockets with these donations. The allegation of financial deception was one of the most common criticisms that Whitefield faced. In 1740, Joseph Trapp, an Anglican clergyman and Oxford don, claimed that the amount of money Whitefield had raised over the previous three years was more 'than one of the Generality of the Clergy receives from his Preferment, in *twenty* [years].' Trapp also had his suspicions about whether the destinations of these funds was 'indeed, to be for *Charity*.'[18]

In the following scene, the preacher is away from his audience and it is here that the reader sees that all of this money has enabled him to purchase 'the most costly Linnen', a 'Perriwig of five Guineas Price', and a 'Gold watch.'[19] It is possible that the playwright is adding a touch of irony by describing the preacher's love of finery

[12] For example, in one of his published journals, Whitefield's entry for 22nd February, 1737 read: 'This Day I intended to stay on Board to write Letters; but GOD being pleased to shew me, it was not his Will, I went on Shore again.' See George Whitefield, *A Journal of a Voyage from Gibraltar to Georgia* (London: T. Cooper, 1738), p. 3. This particular entry was ridiculed by Bishop Gibson in *The Bishop of London's Pastoral Letter to the People of his Diocese* (London: S. Buckley, 1739), p. 27.

[13] *A Letter to the Right Reverend the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England, upon Mr. Whitefield' s Extraordinary Manner of Preaching the Gospel, his Criminal Presumption, and Enthusiastick Doctrine* (London: J. Brett, 1739), p. 11.

[14] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 10.

[15] George Whitefield, *The Benefits of an Early Piety. A Sermon Preach'd at Bow-Church, London, Before the Religious Societies, at one of their Quarterly Meetings, on Wednesday, September 28. 1737* (London: C. Rivington and James Hutton, 1737), p. 2.

[16] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 10.

[17] Ibid., p. 10.

[18] Joseph Trapp, *The True Spirit of the Methodists and their Allies (Whether Other Enthusiasts, Papists, Deists, Quakers or Atheists) Fully Laid Open* (London: T. Cooper, 1740), pp. 53-4.

[19] *Mock-Preacher*, pp. 13-4.

and jewellery. Indeed, Whitefield was highly critical of fine dress and similar luxuries, which he described as 'Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World' in his published journal.[20] Similar irony can be found in another scene, where the preacher is holding a meeting with his deputies in a tavern.[21] In a sermon he preached on Kennington Common in 1739, Whitefield chastised his fellow Anglican clergymen for 'frequenting Taverns and publick Houses' and urged the laity to avoid such places too.[22] It is also in this scene that the reader is introduced to the preacher's two deputies. The possibility that the deputies are supposed to represent John and Charles Wesley can be discerned from a conversation between these two characters, in which one deputy refers to the other as 'Brother.'[23] Assuming these characters are indeed meant to represent the Wesley brothers, their subordinate role in the story reflects the fact that most of the early anti-Methodist works primarily targeted Whitefield and not these two brothers.

In a later scene, allegations of crypto-popery and Jacobitism can be discerned from the preacher's description of Spain as a 'Proud Nation.' The preacher then goes on to inform his followers that, during his time in Gibraltar, he had been an 'Eye-Witness to the Bravery' of the English military forces. The falseness of this display of patriotism becomes evident when the preacher declares that he has instructed these soldiers and sailors that 'if their Enemies smote them upon one cheek, they must likewise turn the other.' One can see here that, through his utilisation of Jesus' teachings on pacifism, the preacher has ordered these men to refrain from fighting the Spaniards in Gibraltar. The preacher's candour about his treason, coupled with the fact that none of the crowd appears to be the least bit concerned about it, further suggests that the author is attempting to display Whitefield's converts as gullible and completely oblivious to his blatant treason.[24] The charge of crypto-popery was something that Whitefield regularly faced. There were numerous ways in which Whitefield and other evangelicals were compared to Roman Catholics and a discussion of each of these would be beyond the focus of this study. Most prominently though, it was the way in which these preachers allegedly aroused the passions of their audiences that many found especially reminiscent of popery. For example, one critic of the revival declared 'that a *passionate, mechanical* Religion is the most sublime and pure Spirit that there is in *Popery*.'[25]

Yet, the Mock Preacher also has his critics. One character who has absolutely no time for him is a local cobbler. However, the cobbler's sentiments are not shared by

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[20] George Whitefield, *A Continuation of the Reverend Mr. Whitefield's Journal, from a Few Days After His Return to Georgia to His Arrival at Falmouth, on the 11th of March 1741* (London: T. Cooper, 1741), p. 42.

[21] *Mock-Preacher*, pp. 23-4.

[22] George Whitefield, *Jesus Christ the Only Way to Salvation. A Sermon Preached on Kennington-Common* (London: C. Whitefield, 1739), pp. 6, 17.

[23] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 14.

[24] Ibid., p. 18.

[25] Eusebius, *A Fine Picture of Enthusiasm, Chiefly Drawn by Dr. John Scott, Formerly Rector of St. Giles's in the Fields* (London: J. Noon, 1744), p. iv.

his wife, whose admiration for the 'very fine' preacher borders on infatuation.[26] Anti-Methodist publications often claimed that 'ignorant women' were particularly vulnerable to the 'enthusiasm' of the evangelical revival.[27] This is an allegation that the playwright is clearly attempting to voice through the weak and gullible cobbler's wife, who is also the only significant female character in the play. Furthermore, the alleged spiritual vulnerability of women was deemed to be something that rendered them vulnerable to immorality too. One 1743 anti-Methodist publication evoked images of the Garden of Eden by describing female followers of Whitefield and Wesley as 'Women [who] are most prone to fall, Like *Eve*, their Mother, first of all.'[28] In *The Mock-Preacher*, the author applies this image of the 'fallen' evangelical woman to the cobbler's wife by implying that she has become romantically involved with the evangelist. Indeed, after she informs her husband that the preacher will show her the 'Way to Heaven', the cobbler quips that he will also be guaranteed a 'Place' there, since 'Cuckolds go to Heaven.'[29] By describing himself as a 'cuckold', the cobbler is evidently accusing his wife of adultery. This is confirmed by the wife's angry reaction: 'Do you question my Virtue? Do you call me a Whore?' The cobbler's accusation of adultery appears to have been triggered by his wife's admiration for the preacher. This suggests that the cobbler believes that his wife has been sexually seduced by the preacher, as well as spiritually seduced.[30] Sexual predation was another accusation that was frequently levelled against Whitefield. One contemporary satirist crudely described Methodist Love Feasts as events which enabled Whitefield to observe a 'youthful Creature's lily Breast.'[31]

This confrontation between the cobbler and his wife highlights the detrimental effect that the preacher has had on the stability of this family. At the beginning of this scene, the cobbler angrily complains that he has been left to 'nurse' his offspring. From this, one can see that the author is portraying the evangelical revival as a movement that is both tearing families apart and destroying traditional gender roles. In this instance, it is clearly the traditional role of the domestic wife that has been affected.[32] Familial instability was a regular theme in anti-Methodist works. Around the same time that this play was published, another opponent of Whitefield enquired: 'How many weak women, surprized by his Enthusiasm, will neglect the care of their Families?'[33] Other contemporaries feared that such neglect would eventually lead

[26] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 15.
[27] [Edmund Gibson], *The Charge of the Right Reverend Father in God, Edmund, Lord Bishop of London, at the Visitation of his Diocese in the Years 1746 and 1747* ([London]: n.p., [1747]), p.6. For two other examples of anti-Methodist works which portrayed the revival as a movement that was dominated by females, see the illustrations contained in *Harlequin Methodist* and *Enthusiasm Display'd*. Importantly, these two illustrations specifically depict Whitefield as somebody who gained a following among women.
[28] *The Progress of Methodism in Bristol; or, The Methodist Unmask'd* (Bristol: J. Watts, 1743), p. 20.
[29] *Mock-Preacher,* p. 15.
[30] Ibid., pp. 15-6.
[31] *The Amorous Humours and Audacious Adventures of One Whd.* (London: M. Watson, 1739), p. 7.
[32] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 15.
[33] *A Letter to the Right Reverend the Archbishops and Bishops,* p. 17.

families into destitution, making them 'burthensome to their Parishes.'[34] For the cobbler, this becomes a reality when his wife informs him that they no longer have any money, as she has 'lent' it all 'to the Lord' (or, more specifically, the preacher's 'cause'). The wife's use of the term 'lent' is an allusion to how Samuel had been 'lent to the Lord' by his mother Hannah, who, after continuously praying to God, had miraculously given birth to the child, despite being infertile (1 Samuel 1: 28). One can discern from this that the cobbler's wife feels just as indebted to the preacher as Hannah did to God.[35]

Whilst it is evident that the anonymous author of this play was no admirer of either Whitefield or revivalism in general, it is also clear from one scene that the author was just as critical of the contemporary Church of England. In this scene, the reader is introduced to three characters called Namirreb, Omnes and Part.[36] That these three characters are supposed to be Anglican ministers becomes clear at the start of the scene, where Namirreb voices his worry that the Mock Preacher's followers will be unable to 'pay their proper Pastors' as a result of their constant donations to the itinerant. Evidently, Namirreb is talking about the payment of tithes. The fact that this criticism is voiced at the very beginning of the scene suggests that the author intended to portray contemporary Anglican ministers as a self-interested group of people, whose main concern about the revival is the effect that it will have on their own finances.[37]

Namirreb goes on to say that the 'Scriptures being translated into *English,* has made every ignorant Upstart turn Preacher, and Coblers are become Commentators.' Part concurs with his colleague and states that 'Religion ought to be couch'd under Mysteries.' Namirreb also argues that the 'Laity should mind their temporal Affairs only, and trust their Souls with us.'[38] From this conversation, one can see that the author is attempting to display contemporary Anglicans as autocratic and popish. These clergymen's High Church leanings can be discerned from their praise for 'Archbishop *Laud*', whom Part describes as 'that glorious Martyr', and their tribute to the 'blessed and immortal Memory' of 'Queen *Anne*.' With regard to the latter monarch, these clergymen lament that, 'Had she liv'd, the *Convocation* would have

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[34] *Observations on the Reverend Mr. Whitefield's Answer to the Bishop of London's Last Pastoral Letter* (London: J. Roberts, 1739), p. 26. See also Ralph Skerret, *The Nature and Proper Evidence of Regeneration* (London: C. Davis, 1739), pp. vii-viii.

[35] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 16. I am grateful to Alison Searle for pointing out to me that this is an allusion to the First Book of Samuel.

[36] When spelt backwards, 'Part' and 'Namirreb' become 'Trap' and 'Berriman.' Therefore, the character of Part is supposed to represent Joseph Trapp, who, as has already been argued, was a very vocal opponent of the revival. Namirreb represents William Berriman, another contemporary High Churchman, who preached an anti-Methodist sermon in 1739. This sermon was subsequently published as *A Sermon Preach'd to the Religious Societies in and about London at their Quarterly Meeting in the Parish Church of St. Mary le Bow on Wednesday, March the 21st. 1738-9* (London: John Carter, 1739). 'Omnes' is most likely a misspelling of the Latin term 'Omnis', which means everything and all. This suggests that the character of Omnes represents all of the remaining critics of Methodism within the established Church.

[37] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 20.

[38] Ibid., pp. 20-1.

taken these Affairs in hand.'[39] Around the time that *The Mock-Preacher* was published, another anti-Methodist writer had called for the Convocation to take action against Whitefield, before facetiously adding: 'But I forget, a Convocation now is an *Inquisition!*'[40] Ironically, Part has no qualms about likening the relatively powerful Convocation of Queen Anne's short reign to the persecuting regimes of Roman Catholic nations and proudly calls for a 'Protestant Inquisition.' This further implies that the playwright is likening High Churchmen to papists.[41]

Finally, as a means of dealing with the Mock Preacher, Part suggests utilising 'an unrepeal'd Statute of *Charles* the Second, which forbids preaching in Fields and upon Commons.'[42] Here, the character is referring to the 1670 Conventicles Act (22 Car. II. c. 1), which criminalised the gathering of 'five persons or more' in a house or field 'under colour or pretence of any Exercise of Religion.'[43] Part's enthusiasm for a 69 year old piece of legislation highlights the established Church's desperation and powerlessness against this revivalist threat.[44] Such desperation and helplessness is further implied when Part states his intention to 'muster up all our Forces', adding that he has 'already prepared some Discourses against him [the Mock Preacher]' to be 'communicated to the Publick.' This suggests that, rather than being physically threatening, the established Church's 'Forces' amount to nothing more than a series of literary critiques.[45] Evidently, the author is mocking the many critiques that Anglican

[39] Ibid., pp. 21-2. Jeremy Gregory notes that whilst Convocation 'had a negligible part to play in voicing Church interests' after the Restoration, the period between 1701 and 1717 (which covers all of Queen Anne's reign) was an exception to this rule. See Jeremy Gregory, 'Archbishops of Canterbury, their diocese, and the shaping of the National Church', in Jeremy Gregory and Jeffrey S. Chamberlain (eds), *The National Church in Local Perspective: The Church of England and the Regions, 1660-1800* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), p. 32.

[40] Timothy Scrub, *A Letter to Robert Seagrave, M.A., Occasioned by His Two Late Performances: One Entituled, an Answer to Dr. Trapp's Four Sermons. The Other Called, Remarks on the Bishop of London's Pastoral Letter* (London: J. Roberts, 1739), p. 37.

[41] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 21.

[42] Ibid., p. 20.

[43] 'Charles II, 1670: An Act to Prevent and Suppresse Seditious Conventicles.', *British History Online*, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=47409 [accessed: 1 January 2014].

[44] *A Compleat Account of the Conduct of that Eminent Enthusiast Mr. Whitefield*, which was also published in 1739 and sold by Corbett, was one anti-Methodist work that referred to this legislation (p. 14). However, the author of *The Mock-Preacher* could not have consulted this work, which (according to an advertisement that appeared in the *Weekly Miscellany* on this date) was not published until 14 July, 1739. In the prologue of *The Mock-Preacher*, the playwright boasts of having 'diligently' studied the 'History of *England*' (p. 6). This may explain where the playwright's knowledge of the 1670 Conventicles Act stemmed from. For two later examples of anti-Methodist publications which referred to this legislation, see J. B., *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, Occasion'd by His Pretended Answer to the First Part of the Observations on the Conduct and Behaviour of the Methodists* (London: M. Cooper, [1744]), p. 26; [Edmund Gibson], *Observations upon the Conduct and Behaviour of a Certain Sect Usually Distinguished by the Name of Methodists* ([London]: E. Owen, 1744), p. 4.

[45] *Mock-Preacher*, p. 20.

ministers published in response to Whitefield's preaching and implying that such actions are completely futile.[46]

Initially, the author's ridicule of anti-Methodist literature may seem somewhat ironic, given that *The Mock-Preacher* fits into this category too. Certainly, by referring to other contemporary critiques of the revival, this analysis has demonstrated that the playwright voiced many of the criticisms that Whitefield and other evangelicals regularly faced, including spiritual pride, deception, sexual predation, crypto-popery and familial disruption. This, along with the references to Berriman and Trapp, suggests that some preliminary reading of anti-Methodist works had been undertaken by the author.[47] Yet, by discussing the way in which the anonymous playwright critiqued both revivalism and contemporary Anglicanism, it has been shown that this play is more than just a piece of anti-Methodist satire. In fact, the author clearly intended to portray both revivalists and Anglicans as self-interested tricksters. One can see this from the evident juxtaposition of the preacher's fraudulent activity and the three Anglican ministers' desire to secure tithe payments by preaching a message of 'Mysteries.'

SIMON LEWIS (Oxford)

[46] Approximately 90 separate anti-Methodist books and pamphlets were published during 1738-9. The fact that only slightly more anti-Methodist works were published during the longer period of 1740-5 suggests that opposition to the revival was at its peak during the late 1730s. See Clive D. Field, 'Anti-Methodist Publications of the Eighteenth Century: A Revised Bibliography', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library*, vol. 73, no. 2 (1991), 159-280; Idem, 'Anti-Methodist Publications of the Eighteenth Century: A Supplemental Bibliography', *Wesley and Methodist Studies*, vol. 6 (2014), 154-86.

[47] When the preacher is on trial at the end of the play, the magistrate refers to an Oxford don, who has been maligned by '*Methodists*', resulting in a number of recent 'Discourses printed against being over-righteous' (pp. 27-8). The don in question is Trapp, who preached a series of anti-Whitefield sermons at various churches across London and Westminster in 1739. According to Whitefield's journal entry for Sunday 29 April, 1739, the young itinerant actually attended one of these sermons, where he 'heard Doctor *Trapp* preach most virulently against' him. See George Whitefield, *A Continuation of the Reverend Mr. Whitefield's Journal, from his Arrival at London, to his Departure from Thence on his way to Georgia* (London: James Hutton, 1739), p. 89. These sermons, which Trapp referred to as 'four discourses' in his title page, were subsequently published as *The Nature, Folly, Sin, and Danger of Being Righteous Over-Much* (London: T. Cooper, 1739). Therefore, this is clearly the publication that the magistrate is referring to. An advertisement that appeared in the *London Daily Post* on 5 June, 1739, stated that *Nature, Folly, Sin* was published on 'This Day.' This was only 11 days before the publication of *The Mock-Preacher*, implying that the play was fairly rushed. The playwright would have had substantially more time to consult Berriman's critique of the revival, which was published more than two months before *The Mock-Preacher* (see *London Daily Post*, 12 April, 1739).

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING, HIGH LEIGH CONFERENCE CENTRE, HODDESDON, HERTS 28 JUNE 2014

For the first time, the Wesley Historical Society Annual Meeting and Lecture will take place on the final day of the Wesley Historical Society's triennial residential conference at the High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, EN11 8SG on Saturday 28 June 2014. The Wesley Historical Society Annual Lecture will be given by Professor Michael Hughes, Professor of Russian and International History in the University of Liverpool, and the lecture will be open to both members and friends of the Wesley Historical Society and those attending the Conference from 26-28 June 2014. The lecture very appropriately given the theme of the Conference will be chaired by Professor Ulrike Schuler of the United Methodist Theological Seminary from Reutlingen in Germany. The theme of the conference is 'Methodism and Conflict' and among the other topics to be featured in the conference programme will be the role of Methodist military chaplains; Methodism and conscientious objection in two world wars and Methodism and the occupation of the Channel Islands 1940-45.

This specially arranged joint programme commemorates the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War and in addition to the Annual Lecture, which takes place on the centenary of the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, an event widely held to have triggered the war, there will also be the opportunity to attend the AGM and the concluding open forum discussion of the Conference (further details of which will be available from the Conference Secretary, the Revd Dr David Hart in the autumn of 2013 (1b, Whiteladies Road, Bristol, BS8 4NU; conferencesecretary@wesleyhistoricalsociety.org.uk).This presents an opportunity for members and supporters to attend both events and we hope that many will wish to participate in this way, but we also welcome day visitors, arriving for 10.30 a.m. and departing by 4.00 p.m. It may also be possible to book overnight accommodation at the venue and/or refreshments on arrival and pre-booked lunch at the conference venue (enquiries to Revd Dr David Hart).

Michael Hughes is Professor of Russian and International History at the University of Liverpool. He has written numerous books and articles on Russian history and Anglo-Russian relations in the twentieth century. Michael also has a long-standing interest in the role of the churches - and religion more generally - in shaping responses to war and other forms of conflict. It was this interest that prompted him to research and write *Conscience and Conflict: Methodism, Peace and War in the Twentieth Century* (2008). Michael is particularly interested in studying how Christians have in the past responded to the challenge of deciding whether to use force in particular situations of conflict and violence. He is a member of the Anglican Church and was for many years a Lay Reader in the Church of Wales.

The Annual Lecture entitled 'Methodist Consciences and the Challenge of the First World War' will explore how the Christian response to any situation of conflict or war

must necessarily be situated in a clear review of the specific circumstances involved. The 'messiness' of history nevertheless means that it is seldom easy to make definite judgements about the rights and wrongs involved in any particular case. The outbreak of war in 1914 posed a particular challenge for the various Methodist connexions in Great Britain. There had over the previous few years emerged a definite strand of unconditional pacifism within Methodism, which assumed that the use of force could never be justified, although it was always outweighed by those who believed that such a position was neither ethically nor practically defensible. The conflict with Germany and Austro-Hungary sharpened this conflict. Methodists in Great Britain struggled to carve out a position that would allow them to reconcile their patriotism and their commitment to the injunction to 'love thy neighbour as thyself'.

For further information about the Annual Lecture please contact General Secretary, Dr John A. Hargreaves: tel. 01422 250780; e-mail johnahargreaves@blueyonder.co.uk

BOOK REVIEWS

Alan P.F. Sell, *The Theological Education of the Ministry* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), xiv + 313 pp. £24. paperback. ISBN 978-1-62032-593-3.

The clue to this wide-ranging and stimulating collection of essays and articles by Alan Sell may be found in its subtitle: 'soundings in the British Reformed and Dissenting Traditions'. In his 'bibliographical appendix' Professor Sell remarks that 'over the years I have arranged "mini-resurrections" for a number of the divines who have taught in the academies and theological colleges of English and Welsh Dissent and Nonconformity.' (p. 291). The present volume adds to their number, while also discussing the work of scholars very much alive, or still held in respectful memory. The common threads are a place in the Reformed tradition, broadly defined, and engagement in theological education. Thus Professor Sell offers a study of Caleb Ashworth (1720-75), and his Dissenting Academy at Daventry, a chapter on 'Scottish Religious Philosophy, 1850-1900', a finely nuanced piece on the Presbyterian John Oman (1860-1939), a tribute to the Church of Scotland systematic theologian N. H. G. Robinson (1912-78), an autobiographical memoir and an assessment of the theology of that quintessential Congregationalist and ecclesiastical historian Geoffrey Nuttall (1911-2007), and recollections of four New Testament scholars in the University of Manchester in the mid-twentieth century. Not all those treated were Nonconformists, since a fair proportion were members of the (Established) Church of Scotland. All, however, belonged to the Reformed tradition in theology, with the sole exception of the Methodist Owen Evans, one of the Manchester biblical scholars. Otherwise, Methodists feature in this volume only occasionally, and in supporting roles, or, in the case of Rupert Davies, as the butt of Geoffrey Nuttall's pungent appraisal ('no great scholarly weight; yet he bursts with self-satisfaction and maintains a wonderfully consistent smugness.' [p. 201]). Each chapter has its own bibliography; each is supported by wide reading in archival and printed sources; each is furnished with footnotes which supply not only references but also additional biographical information. There is rich material here for historians, theologians and philosophers, and for those who (like the present reviewer) struggle with philosophy and warm to J. F. Ferrier's remark that 'he had read Hegel's works [but] had quite failed to understand them' (p. 62), the chapters on Ashworth and Nuttall may be the most accessible. Professor Sell's erudition and expertise speak volumes for the place of learning in the ministry; it is to be wondered whether contemporary 'learning pathways' will enable similar breadth and depth to flourish in the future.

MARTIN WELLINGS

Ian J. Maddock, *Men of One Book: A Comparison of Two Methodist Preachers, John Wesley and George Whitefield* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2011), pp. xiii & 256. Paperback, £19.50. ISBN 978-0-7188-9261-6.

Peter Charles Hoffer, *When Benjamin Franklin Met the Reverend Whitefield: Enlightenment, Revival, and the Power of the Printed Word* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), pp. 156. Paperback, £10.50.

Twenty-fourteen marks the tercentenary of the birth of that other eighteenth century Methodist pioneer, George Whitefield. Given the Methodist penchant for commemorating anniversaries, it seems only right that Whitefield should figure in the *Proceedings*, even if only in the form of some reviews of the latest literature on him, his revival and Calvinistic Methodism more generally.

Based on his doctoral thesis, Ian Maddock's *Men of One Book* is a comparative study of the preaching ministries of Whitefield and his sometime friend and contemporary, John Wesley. In taking what he calls an 'intentionally comparative' (p. 1) approach, Maddock attempts to move beyond the 'polarized and partisan' (p. 2) nature of much of the historical writing on the two men by examining the things they had in common, rather than the more obvious personality and theological differences that set them apart. This seems to be something of a trend in current Methodist historiography: James Schwenk's *Catholic Spirit: Wesley, Whitefield, and the Quest for Evangelical Unity in Eighteenth Century British Methodism* (2008), attempted to do something quite similar. Given the very different subsequent developments of Whitefield and Wesley's theologies, leading to two distinct strands in the nineteenth century evangelical movement for example, one wonders how achievable the task undertaken by Maddock and Schwenk actually is.

Having said this, Maddock's thesis is a deceptively simple one; Whitefield and Wesley were both 'men of one book', the Bible. Despite many of their theological and doctrinal disagreements, they shared a commitment to the 'foundational evangelical doctrines' (p. 2), and were able, through their 'print and preach' ministries, to transcend 'the narrow confines of their respective doctrinal positions' (p. 2). Through a discussion of their itinerant ministries, and an examination of their attitudes towards the Bible in their printed sermons, Maddock sees many commonalities. This is not to say that he is blind to any nuances in their approaches, and Maddock regards the different character of their ministries, their different approaches, one 'actor-preacher', the other 'scholar-preacher', as marking the most obvious points of contrast. While there's much that is sensible here, this reviewer couldn't help but feel that much of this discussion was written against the backdrop of continued divisions between Calvinists and Arminians within the contemporary evangelical movement. Indeed, the foreword seems to suggest that the recovery of the kind of evangelical ecumenicity practiced by Whitefield and Wesley would be of considerable benefit to the modern evangelical movement.

By contrast Hoffer's relatively short study of the friendship and mutually beneficial working relationship of George Whitefield and the American printer and entrepreneur Benjamin Franklin is situated foursquare within the contemporary historiography of the eighteenth century Atlantic world. A mixture of narrative and analysis, Hoffer begins his study with an account of the first meeting between the two men in Philadelphia in November 1739, at the beginning of Whitefield's most successful period of itinerant evangelism in America. Hoffer sees both men as representative figures, both 'truly Atlantic world figures', who made an 'indelible impression on the British colonies and the home country, linking the English-speaking peoples on both sides of the ocean together' (p. 3). One was the champion of the Enlightenment, the other evangelicalism. The core of Hoffer's book are two chapters in which he draws comparisons between the 'sermons' of Whitefield and Franklin, the one using a language of hope drawn from the Bible, the other stressing worldly improvement through the agency of science.

The purposes of Hoffer's comparison comes to the fore in an epilogue that makes some extremely grand claims, especially as regards Whitefield. Both Franklin and Whitefield were, according to Hoffer, 'anticipators, forerunners, prototypes' of the modern world, 'they set the wheels of modernity in motion' (p. 122). Indeed he regards them as the originators of two of the most prevalent worldviews in contemporary America; Franklin of the 'scientifically advanced, technologically sophisticated' modern society; Whitefield of that version of America that longs for a 'sacred moral purity' (p. 121). Whitefield's revivalist preaching at which men and women, rich and poor stood side by side, his use of the most advanced forms of new media to which all had free access, made him 'the ultimate democrat in a time of rank and station' (p. 124). In Hoffer's hands Whitefield emerges as an American patriot, a long way removed from the Anglican and Methodist evangelist, with a backward-looking Calvinist theology, that figures so prominently in much of what has been written about him. This reviewer has rarely read a book that left him asking 'but what about?' and 'what if?' quite so frequently, but perhaps that is inevitable in a book that draws such ambitious, even audacious conclusions.

Both books, in their own very different ways, show that Whitefield has become the subject of renewed historical interest in recent times. One looks forward to further fresh interpretations in this tercentenary year and beyond. At last Whitefield may be beginning the long process of catching up his old friend John Wesley, at least within the context of the interests and concerns of early twenty-first century historians of Methodism, evangelicalism and the Atlantic world.

DAVID CERI JONES

David Martin, *The Education of David Martin: The Making of an Unlikely Sociologist* (London: SPCK, 2013), pp. xi + 251. Paperback, £25.00. ISBN: 978-0-281-07118-0.

Professor David Martin, FBA is the elder statesman of British sociology of religion, best known for his writings on secularization and Pentecostalism, and long associated with the London School of Economics. He was confirmed into the Church of England late in life, aged 50 in 1979, 'after years of "occasional conformity"', subsequently being ordained as deacon and priest and campaigning for the preservation in Anglican worship of the Prayer Book and Authorized Version of the Bible ('the twin pillars of English religion'). But, as this memoir reveals, his formative years were spent in Methodism.

Martin's grandfather was a Dorset Wesleyan and preacher. His father, converted under Gypsy Smith, was a fervent Evangelical and open-air preacher in Hyde Park, who gave Martin a revivalist, Bible-embedded, Sabbatarian, and teetotal upbringing; 'I had a Victorian childhood some three decades after the death of Victoria'. His parents had met at Westminster Central Hall, and it was there that Martin was baptised (by Dinsdale Young) in 1929 and where the family often worshipped. Barnes Methodist Church was closer to his home in Mortlake, and Martin had a lengthy association with it. Indeed, it became 'a second home', initially through attending the Sunday school and youth club, and later teaching in the Sunday school and participating in the church's musical life. When he entered the Methodist Westminster College in 1950, to train as a schoolteacher, and was asked to relate his education to date, he 'ascribed as much weight to the Methodist Church as to my grammar school'.

Later, for some 25 years from the early 1950s, Martin was a local preacher in the Richmond and Barnes Circuit, a period which coincided with his belated higher education and entry on an academic career. He recounts how local preaching instilled in him the basic skills needed for university lecturing: 'how to throw your voice to fill a given type of space; how to employ body language, gesture, pace and silence; how to emphasize what is important; how to use little props …; and above all when to stop and how to reduce complexity to what can be grasped at different levels of sophistication'. It was during his first academic post, at the University of Sheffield in 1961-62, that his earliest forays into journalism began when recruited by Amos Cresswell as a columnist for Cliff College's *Joyful News*. Martin's first academic article, in the *British Journal of Sociology* in 1962, examined the denomination as organizational type, drawing on Methodism. Another early piece (1967) considered 'The Methodist local preacher', in the proceedings of the ninth Conférence Internationale de Sociologie Religieuse.

Martin's Methodist connections are alluded to with affection in this entertaining, elegantly written (relatively jargon-free, for a sociologist), and occasionally even amusing memoir, especially in part 1 ('preludes'), yet they are neither treated systematically nor sequentially. For the volume does not set out to offer a rounded autobiography but to chart Martin's educational journey to 1991 and 'close links between personal life and intellectual engagement'. As academic credo and self-

apology this is a brilliant book, with the 'retrospect' to be recommended as a resumé of 'losses and recoveries of faith', Martin's faiths being 'as much political and social as religious'. As narrative, the Methodist historian (for whom the book is obviously not primarily intended) may find it a trifle frustrating, the Methodist content being at once pervasive yet fragmented and/or implicit. Matters are not helped by the lack of a decent index and of a *curriculum vitae*, both of which would perhaps have made the work more navigable to non-sociologists.

CLIVE D. FIELD

David Hart and David Jeremy (eds), *Brands Plucked from the Burning: Essays on Methodist Memorialisation and Remembering* (Evesham, Wesley Historical Society, 2013) pp 292, paperback, £14.95. ISBN 9780 955452796

The matter of remembering is a rich seam in Christian consciousness and thought. The idea and the action together take on special significance when, Sunday by Sunday, Christians meet on their Lord's Day, to remember. For some this is a simple bringing to mind. For others this remembering is a re-enacting, and in between there are a host of understandings in which most wish to express a faithful and contemporary participating in their Lord's life, his death and his new life so they too might share in that new, resurrection life. This is what Christians call remembering.

When the organisers of the residential conference of the Wesley Historical Society called that event 'Memorialising and Remembering: Life Stories in Methodism' they were surely giving a nod to the notion that remembering, in this special sense, is also a source of new life in the body of Christians known as the Church. This is no more than a nod though, and this rich theological theme is not referred to in any significant way in the essays published.

In the introductory essay (though not called an introduction) one of the editors, David Hart, lays out for readers that the conference explored three related, but distinct areas of Methodist history: first, how the telling of stories contributed to the wider process of the Methodist movement being established; secondly, how later generations were influenced by the remembering of those gone before; and thirdly, some tools available to the task of assessing and analysing the past. Though the book is not in three parts, these three elements are clearly discernable in the essays.

In all the essays the figure of John Wesley looms large, though not larger than life, and not all the essays are about him. Also, these are not uncritical appreciations, that's all been done before, but all the contributors make it clear that it is the Methodist movement (and this idea of movement is mentioned more than church, perhaps an influence from current Methodist thinking and emphasis) is motivated by and takes much of its emphasis from Mr Wesley. This has been the Methodist way and for a long time those in Connexion with Mr Wesley have been known as Mr Wesley's preachers.

In his editor's contribution, David Jeremy, asks two questions: 'How have Methodists recalled their past and what significance does this hold for present day Methodist Christians?' And he's doing this, he says, because "[o]ne thing is plain, memorialising is closely connected to the sustaining of group identity".

Jeremy takes us on a journey identifying issues of group identity in the context of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, its rituals (comparing the funerals of the Wesley brothers and those of Adam Clarke and Jabez Bunting and the superior social status) and images used to identify especially Wesleyan Methodists (the ceramic busts, paintings and the centenary celebration medals of 1939), all illustrating the rising prosperity of the people who shaped this identity.

Behind all this he identifies the Victorian view of history expressed by Thomas Carlyle who in 1841 'widened the definition of national greatness from the military hero to the concept to the great man' and the monuments built as memorials bear witness to these great men.

Obviously John Wesley is the 'great man', though Charles, while not quite as 'great', is not forgotten. All this comes into sharp focus when, in 1876 a bas-relief profile of the Wesley brothers was unveiled in Westminster Abbey, to which Jeremy notes that '[i]f memorialisation shaped identity, Methodism had become part of the English identity after 1876'.

Jeremy reflects on two significant paintings of Methodism. First Henry Perlee Parker's painting, exhibited in 1839, thence the etching and hand-coloured lithograph, of the five-year-old John Wesley being rescued from the flaming rectory. The latter is used on the front cover and a detail of the former reproduced on the back cover. Half-tone photographs of both are reproduced in the book. Jeremy says that this image, which he describes as the 'founder-hero' being providentially saved from the burning house, won the day over the other, quite different painting by C. A. Duvall of the Wesleyan Centenary Meeting of 1838.

Through all this, Jeremy suggests that, for Wesleyan clergy it reminded them and reinforced their claim through John Wesley and his teaching 'to their apostolic inheritance and mission'.

In her essay, Prosser illustrates how the *Arminian Magazine* changed over its short life. John Wesley conceived of it in 1777, when he was already 74 and published the first edition just a year later, in 'open and avowed opposition' (p104) to the Calvinist *The Gospel Magazine* – his single intention, he said, 'to preserve the Arminian character of the widely expanding Methodist movement' (p108) that salvation is available to all, and to produce written material in support of this. John Wesley was certainly sharp to see the opportunities of keeping in touch with the growing movement, himself keeping in touch, so that he was as much the author as compiler of the magazine, one of the ways he kept control of the movement.

Prosser's observation about the change is interesting, especially as Wesley did not always approve. Under some pressure from readers the publication becomes rather more what we think of as a magazine today, a miscellany with a range of writing, but publishing only what he thought members should be reading, including sermons

specially written by him, stories of people's lives of faith and death-bed accounts – obituaries written with intent – and 'little pieces', articles about music, penal reform, arguments against slavery, even humorous anecdotes.

Lloyd's essay confirms all that the *Arminian Magazine* put into practice, the stories, perhaps even legend, of John Wesley's primacy in establishing and maintaining the Methodist movement during his lifetime and beyond. While our era is willing to be critical and to weigh opinions and characters, Lloyd observes that much of the study of John Wesley is based upon 'the assumption that he remains a man and leader apart' (p145). Lloyd has no intention of challenging this, but in this essay considers how this has come about. He invites us to consider three things: 1) how John Wesley laid the foundations of his personal primacy; 2) how his legacy was consolidated after his death; and 3) some positive and some negative effects on the movement's preoccupation "with this extraordinary man".

To this day, there remains a strong bond between Methodism and Mr Wesley, whom Lloyd considers 'a marketing man's (*sic*) dream', 'an exciting figure, whose mix of conservative theology, charismatic practices, and organisational grasp, provided the launch pad for a wave of expansion'. Lloyd goes some way in encouraging us to continue engaging with 'the man, who is both an historic figure and a continuing presence across substantial areas of Church life and mission'.

Lenton's essay moves us away from John Wesley directly and introduces readers to prosopography. For the uninitiated he offers a definition: it is 'collective biography' relating to 'a group of individuals with one or more common characteristics', which with the rise of computers and the ability to categorise and catalogue data relatively easily, is now within reach of many more people. Field, in his essay at the end this collection also uses the tool of prosopography and offers that it is the 'aggregate study of the lives of a group of individuals with common background characteristics'. Field also fills in the theological link in that the word originates from the Greek *prosopon*, a familiar word to the Church via Trinitarian theology.

The result of this work is that we are offered insights which do not come from looking at a sample of people, as useful as this is, but at a group for whom we have some information. Lenton considers the reasons given for those who left the Wesleyan ministry during what he calls 'the Methodist long nineteenth century' (p168), that is from the death of John Wesley in 1791 to Methodist union in 1932. This essay extends his substantial volume *John Wesley's Preachers*, published in 2009

Field's essay outlines what can be learned through the use of prosopography, especially as not every person has a published biography. He notes the dramatic increase of biographies in the on-line version of *A Dictionary of Methodism in Britain and Ireland* (though the on-line reference in the essay is not correct) and this will assist any future study. Field offers four case studies to illustrate: 1) views about Union in 1932; 2) the demography of Methodist members (that is, by what route have people become members?); 3) Methodist Local Preachers, where they come from and what they do in churches other than preach and 4) 'the prosopographical potential of the registers of male Wesleyan schoolteachers trained at the Glasgow Normal

Secondary and at Westminster college in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries'.

Hurst's contribution about biographies in church monuments reminded me of a visit to an unknown church and then learning about the people who lived there and made this place their place of worship. He tells a fascinating story about John Wesley's step-daughter Jane, who married William Smith. St Andrew's Church, Newcastle, has a memorial to them which has recently had remedial work carried out on it. This memorial includes some of their children and spouses. Of course, John Wesley gets special mention as the 'Founder of Methodism' and as the person who married the widow of Anthony Vazeille, Mary. There is always some significance to who is included and who is left off. And Hurst helps us understand the connections on this memorial.

Kelly's essay on motherhood contributes to the small, but growing amount of information about the role of women in Methodism. Her analysis is drawn 'primarily on … the memoirs of minister's (*sic*) wives published in the *Arminian/Methodist/Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* between 1780 and 1880' (p221) and what we may know about them. Being married to a Methodist minister meant itinerancy and the challenges and dislocation this brought. Also being married to a presbyter brought certain expectations on the wife from members of the local congregation. Reading Kelly's essay I appreciate how much things have changed, especially in relation to medical facilities available to all (primarily through the NHS in Britain), and the dangers of pregnancy and childbirth, dangers not unique to wives of presbyters. I also noticed how little some things have changed when it comes to the spouse's 'position in the public eye'.

This is a fascinating collection of essays. Challenging us to recognise what it is we remember as significant and what it is we wish to preserve and how this influences who we think we are. Lloyd reminds us that of the original 1791 Connexion, there are over 40 denominations in the world which claim descent from Mr Wesley, who after all these years remains a significant influence "in matters of doctrine, structure and identity".

BARRY LOTZ

Norman Wallwork, *The Gospel Church Secure: The Official History of The Methodist Sacramental Fellowship* (Church in the Market Place Publications, 2013), xiii + 210, Paperback, £10.99. ISBN 978 1899146922.

Towards the end of the 1950s a new minister was appointed to our Circuit. When he ascended the tall central pulpit of my home chapel there was an audible intake of breath for he was clad in a cassock, gown and bands. No other minister in the circuit, or indeed in the two other circuits in the town, had ever been so attired. The only other Free Church minister in the town who wore such an ensemble was a formidable Congregational minister, who was also a Labour town councillor. It was difficult to discern whether the sharp intake of breath was because of suspected high

churchmanship or because of possible leftward leanings in politics. But for this late teenage 'On Note' preacher it was a revelation probably on both counts. The scales fell from my eyes. There was a strand of Methodist ecclesiology which was concerned with dignity in worship, the use of a liturgy and thoughtful Biblical exposition that followed the pattern of the church year. There was also a full use of the Book of Offices in respect of Holy Communion, instead of the truncated sacrament which the bulk of the congregation absented themselves from when it was tacked on the end of the usual service. My theological education began to take a different path because of that minister's appearance and I began to look at worship, and its conduct, in a new way.

Norman Wallwork's history of the Methodist Sacramental Fellowship charts, in some detail, the origins and progress of Wesleyan churchmanship from the time of John Wesley until the present day. It is a carefully researched and earnestly written account of the development of a Eucharistic spirituality from which all can learn, even if their experiences of 'being church' have taken them in other directions. We all need to learn from each other and we all need to learn from our own Methodist history. The author, at the beginning of the book, wisely cautions us about different groups or factions claiming John Wesley s their own. The man was too complex a character to be explained in an over simplified manner, and the movement he led is both a connexion and a church. Our present description of ourselves as a 'discipleship movement', whilst emphasising our activity and evangelical enterprise, does not further our appreciation of ourselves as a church with a history, a pattern of ministry and a liturgical past and, one hopes, a present ordered practice of worship. The book opens with an examination of our Wesleyan legacy and demonstrates the importance that John and Charles Wesley placed upon the Eucharist as a chief means of grace, an importance that is profoundly illustrated in the hymns of Charles Wesley. This early part of the book should inspire some further investigation into the Eucharistic hymns especially. We have for personal and private use, as well as public proclamation, a great spiritual treasure here.

The Wesleyan legacy chapter moves on quickly to the opening years of the twentieth century and introduces us to the cast of characters whose theological study and devotional reflections prepared the ground for the planting of the seed that would become MSF. We are also introduced to the Wesleyan Guild of Divine Service which seems to have existed from 1902 until 1914, and whilst this invited the support of significant Wesleyan ministers it also attracted vociferous opposition from the Protestant Defence Brigade who attacked the Guild for being 'the Guild for Corrupting Methodism with Ritualism'. This is a ghost which palely loitering still makes its presence felt one way or another on the letters page of the Methodist Recorder.

Almost on the eve of Methodist Union, the Rev. Thomas Barrat wrote an article for the *London Quarterly Review* entitled 'The Place of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism' which reminded readers of John Wesley's 1733 publication 'The Duty of Constant Communion' which our venerable founder had re-issued some 55 years later

without feeling the need to revise it in any way. Both Thomas Barratt and Ernest Rattenbury made considerable contributions to a Wesleyan theology of the eucharist, each in his own way and Wallwork's summarising of their thinking provides us with much food for thought, not least in the way of encouraging communicants to reflect on their understanding of and spiritual yearnings for 'the body and the blood'.

The uniting Conference of the Methodist Church was held in London in September 1932 and while it was in session a group of ministers met in Sidcup to discuss, among other things, their anxieties for the future of Methodism, the visible unity of the Church and a developing devotional discipline. In December 1932 they circulated a paper headed 'a Proposed basis of a Methodist Catholic Society'. Over the next three years they explored the idea of a permanent organisation for those of a sacramentalist inclination and in April 1935 the title the Methodist Sacramental Fellowship was adopted.

The launch of the Fellowship was almost derailed when T. S. Gregory, one of the prime movers announced his resignation from the Methodist ministry and church before converting to Rome. Wallwork describes the near catastrophe and the Fellowship's recovery under the leadership of Alfred Witham who led them into their inaugural conference in August 1935.

It was not an easy start and the Fellowship came under attack from the Protestant Truth Society for 'Romanising tendencies' while there were memorials to Conference asking that the Fellowship be disbanded, with even the Secretary of the Conference, Robert Bond, stating that he 'truly regretted the existence of the Fellowship'.

The struggle through the 1930s and the war years is carefully recorded with details such as the need to bring one's own rations to the conferences. 1947, and the formation of the Church of South India brought renewed hope as did the Anglican-Methodist conversations. The author brings a commendable honesty to the record of the highs and the lows of that period of the Fellowship's history without attempting to disguise the disappointments.

There is, I think, something of a roll-call of 'saints and those to glory gone' in the description of those who led the fellowship and worked for its growth and development. The latter half of the twentieth century has been something of a desert experience for all churches but the MSF has produced its own variety of 'Desert Fathers' and the commitment of so many, not just to the Fellowship, but to the life and work of the church is an inspiration.

A reviewer in another journal commented that this book ends abruptly and that was my feeling on first reading. On later reflection I came to the view that the abruptness is not a case of hitting the buffers, but recognising that the story is not ended. Norman Wallwork has written a story of High Church Wesleyanism, shining a light on the debate around the sacraments, the liturgical rites that we inherit and the new ones we create. In that respect we are in his debt. This is a significant piece of Methodist history which should not stand on its own. A parallel work on other facets of Methodist spirituality would offer a useful context for this one.

G. DAVID HALL

We are pleased to welcome the following new Member:

Rev Gervase Charmley	Stoke on Trent
Mr Simon Lewis MA	Oxford
Rev Dr Terence E. Steels,	Heaton Mersey, Stockport

We send our sympathies to the families of the following Members who have died:

Mr John H Boyes	Chingford
Rev Dr Kenneth G Greet BA BD	Rustington
Mr Christopher F Stell	Rickmansworth