

## **SERVICE TO THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT**

### **The Contribution of British Baptists<sup>2</sup>**

The degree to which Baptists have been involved within the ecumenical movement at all levels has been frequently underestimated, often misrepresented or just simply unknown, but it is a fact that many leading British ecumenists have been and are Baptists.<sup>3</sup> This present article is a continuation and development of my own research on Baptist theology and practice in the twentieth century and is offered recognizing its preliminary nature in that the whole issue of Baptists and the ecumenical movement is one which calls for further detailed examination. Its provisional nature then must be noted, as there is a wealth of untapped source material, documented and in the form of personal reminiscences, experiences and involvement. There will inevitably be omissions and mistakes which arise out of the diversity and incompleteness of available sources: comments, corrections and further details would be greatly appreciated.

Though this article predominantly takes the form of lists it nevertheless appears to substantiate the claim that Baptists have always been and continue to be at the very heart of ecumenical life in Britain. What is more, many of these have been leading figures within the Baptist Union of Great Britain (and Ireland, until 1988)(BU) and the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) and therefore cannot be assigned to a marginal position within the denomination nor accused of sitting lightly to Baptist principles.

#### **EARLY HISTORY AND MISSIONARY BACKGROUND TO THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT**

With their emphasis on freedom and the individual's responsibility in matters of faith, Baptists have always formed a broad church and, whilst it is true that some Baptists have tended to isolate themselves from other Christian traditions, it is equally true that many have been able to relate to other Christians both at a personal level and through involvement in both informal and formal 'ecumenical' bodies. Recently this has been demonstrated by the overwhelming support given to ecumenical involvement at the Baptist Assemblies in Leicester in 1989 and Plymouth in 1995.

Prior to the origins of the ecumenical movement proper, which many date from the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910, such Baptist involvement is evidenced, for example, by the Bunyan tradition and Baptist-Independent 'mixed congregations' in the seventeenth century,<sup>4</sup> Baptist involvement in the Bedfordshire Union of Christians (f.1797),<sup>5</sup> Union Churches whose existence can be traced at least to the end of the eighteenth century and possibly earlier,<sup>6</sup> participation in the Protestant Dissenting Deputies (f.1732) and the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty (f.1811),<sup>7</sup> the British and Foreign Bible Society (f.1804),<sup>8</sup> and the Evangelical Alliance (f.1846).<sup>9</sup>

William Carey had an ecumenical vision which was reflected in his 1806 call for a decennial world mission conference, the first of which he proposed for 1810 at the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>10</sup> Though this was never taken up, the first meeting of the London Secretaries' Association was held in the offices of the BMS in 1819 with Mr W. Burls as chairman.<sup>11</sup> The Association brought together the secretaries of all missionary societies whose headquarters were in London and they continued to meet until 1919 with the Baptist secretaries always taking their full part. By 1919 the work of the Association had been taken over by the Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain and Ireland (CBMS, f.1912), which had been formed as a result of the first World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910. C.E. Wilson, a General Secretary and Foreign Secretary of the BMS from 1906,<sup>12</sup> was one of the CBMS's honorary secretaries from 1912-6 and Chairman of its Standing Committee from 1935-8, the latter position also held by J.B. Middlebrook (Home Secretary of the BMS 1942-62) from 1959-62.<sup>13</sup> Other BMS secretaries have served the CBMS as chairmen of its area committees, although Basil Amey has been the only secretary for Home, Caribbean and South America (1976-9), while Victor Hayward was the CBMS's first Project Officer of the China Study Project. Wilson, accompanied by fellow Baptists, Mr Charles Pugh and John Reid, attended the first International Missionary Conference held in Jerusalem in 1928.<sup>14</sup>

#### THE FREE CHURCH MOVEMENT<sup>15</sup>

The late nineteenth-century pioneers of the Free Church movement were the Methodist Hugh Price Hughes and the Congregationalist Guinness Rogers, but they received strong Baptist support from Dr John Clifford and F.B. Meyer.

The first Free Church Congress was held in Manchester in November 1892, and this developed, in 1896, into the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches (NCEFC). Baptists were very much involved in the early years of the NCEFC and included Dr Richard Glover of Bristol, C.F. Aked of Liverpool,<sup>16</sup> Alexander McLaren of Manchester<sup>17</sup> and J.C. Carlile of Folkestone.<sup>18</sup> Over time, J.H. Shakespeare, General Secretary of the BU from 1898-1924, increasingly became dissatisfied with the NCEFC and, from 1910, began to work towards closer Free Church union, courageously setting out a vision for the federation of the Free Churches during his year as President of the NCEFC. Largely due to his determination, the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches (FCEFC) was formed in 1919 and he was appointed its first Moderator. For nearly the next two and a half decades there existed two Free Church organizations in England. Dr M.E. Aubrey, Dr Henry Townsend, R.W. Black, J.W. Ewing and S.W. Hughes were closely involved in the negotiations which led to the formation of the Free Church Federal Council (FCFC), which was the merger of the previous two Councils and which took place at a meeting held in Baptist Church House, London, during an air-raid on 16 September 1940. It should be mentioned that R.W. Black, a noted and successful businessman, was deeply committed to the work of the Free

Church bodies and a major benefactor, not least in his purchasing of several buildings in Tavistock Square for its use. Sir Cyril Black followed in his father's footsteps, frequently behind the scenes, in supporting, not only financially, the work of the FCFC.<sup>19</sup> The FCFC was formed and has continued to the present day, changing its name to the Free Churches Council (FCC) in 1998. Baptist involvement has included:

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Dr John Clifford <sup>20</sup>    | - President, NCEFC, 1898   |
| J.G. Greenhough                   | - President, NCEFC, 1901   |
| Dr F.B. Meyer <sup>21</sup>       | - President, NCEFC, 1904 and 1920; Secretary 1910-20   |
| Dr Charles Brown <sup>22</sup>    | - President, NCEFC, 1911; Moderator, FCEFC, 1930-1   |
| Dr J.H. Shakespeare <sup>23</sup> | - President, NCEFC, 1916; Moderator, FCEFC, 1919-20; Secretary FCEFC, 1921-5   |
| F.C. Spurr                        | - President, NCEFC, 1923   |
| Dr Thomas Phillips                | - President, NCEFC, 1929   |
| Dr S.W. Hughes                    | - Secretary, NCEFC 1932-40; first General Secretary, FCFC, 1939-46   |
| Mr C.T. Le Quesne                 | - chaired the Baptist group investigating Baptist, Congregational and Presbyterian union in the 1930s; Chairman, Protestant Dissenting Deputies from 1937; BU representative on the union discussions with the Churches of Christ, 1941-mid 1950s <sup>24</sup>  |
| Mr R.W. Black <sup>25</sup>       | - Treasurer, NCEFC, 1933-40; Treasurer, FCFC, with Ernest Brown until his death in 1951; BU representative to discussions with Churches of Christ, 1941-mid 1950s  |
| Dr J.H. Rushbrooke <sup>26</sup>  | - President, NCEFC, 1934   |
| Dr F.W. Norwood <sup>27</sup>     | - President, NCEFC, 1935   |
| Dr M.E. Aubrey <sup>28</sup>      | - Moderator, FCEFC, 1936-7 and 1937-8. All BU General Secretaries (Drs Aubrey, Payne and Russell, Bernard Green and David Coffey) are <i>ex-officio</i> members of the FCFC/FCC Council and Executive and also Joint Chair of the United Army, Navy and Air Force Board (Chaplains) since its constitution in 1914 |
| Rt Hon. Ernest Brown MP           | - Treasurer, FCEFC, 1938-40; Treasurer, FCFC, with R.W. Black, retiring in 1951  |
| Dr J.W. Ewing                     | - President, NCEFC, 1939   |
| Dr P.W. Evans <sup>29</sup>       | - BU representative on FCFC from 1941, serving on its Finance, Administration and General Purposes Committees, as well as many special committees;   |

- Moderator, FCFC, 1948; BU representative to discussions with Churches of Christ, 1941-mid 1950s
- Dr Henry Townsend - BU representative to discussions with Churches of Christ, 1941-mid 1950s, Moderator, FCFC, 1944
- Dr H. Wheeler Robinson - BU representative to discussions with Churches of Christ, 1941-mid 1950s<sup>30</sup>
- Dr Gilbert Laws - BU representative to discussions with Churches of Christ, 1941-mid 1950s
- William Cowlan - Youth Secretary, FCFC, 1946-9
- Kenneth Hyde - Youth Secretary, FCFC, 1949-57
- Dr Hugh Martin<sup>31</sup> - Moderator, FCFC, 1953
- Dr Ernest Payne<sup>32</sup> - Moderator, FCFC, 1958-9
- George A.D. Mann - served first as Assistant General Secretary and then Secretary of the FCFC Hospital Chaplaincy Board from 1958; General Secretary, FCFC, 1970-9
- Dr Ithel Jones - Moderator, FCFC, 1963
- Hubert William Janisch<sup>33</sup> - Moderator, FCFC, 1967
- Dr L.G. Champion<sup>34</sup> - Moderator, FCFC, 1971
- Dr D.S. Russell<sup>35</sup> - Moderator, FCFC, 1974
- Stanley Turl - Moderator, FCFC, 1978
- Richard Hamper - General Secretary, FCFC, up to his premature death, 1979-86. Hamper was deeply involved in maintaining the growing co-operation between the FCFC and the British Council of Churches (BCC), and the fact that three Baptists served the FCFC consecutively reflects the commitment, ability and trust placed in Baptists for such an important Free Church position.
- Dr W.M.S. West<sup>36</sup> - Moderator, FCFC, 1982
- Dr Howard Williams<sup>37</sup> - Moderator, FCFC, 1984-5
- David Staple - General Secretary, FCFC, 1986-96; since when he has been Secretary Emeritus.
- Bernard Green - Moderator, FCFC, 1988. The Moderator is one of the Presidents of the Council of Christians and Jews along with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain, Moderator of the Church of Scotland General Assembly, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and the Chief Rabbi.
- Dr John Biggs - Moderator, FCFC, 1992

For over twenty years the FCFC honorary solicitor has been a Baptist, first Peter

N. Clark and, since 1989, Alan Parker. The present Treasurer of the FCC is Bill Allen, a member of Dagnall Street Baptist Church, St Albans.

Important books of the history of the Free Church movement have been written by Baptist authors: Dr Henry Townsend, Dr Ernest Payne, Dr E.K.H. Jordan, Professor John Briggs and Dr David W. Bebbington.<sup>38</sup>

### THE BRITISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES<sup>39</sup>

Another milestone in British ecumenism took place in the Council Chamber of Baptist Church House when, in September 1942, the BCC was formed. Its formation reflects the developments which were already under way and culminated in the formation of the World Council of Churches six years later and in many ways the BCC was the national counterpart of the WCC. From its inception in 1942 the BCC has been ably supported by many Baptists, and it was only dissolved on 31 August 1990 to make way for Churches Together in England. Baptists played key roles from the very beginning of the BCC.

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|----------------------------|--|
| Dr M.E. Aubrey             | - BCC Vice President, 1948-50  |
| Dr Hugh Martin             | - involved in the earliest days of the BCC; Chair, BCC Administrative Committee (formerly the Finance and Administration Committee), 1943-56; BCC Vice President, 1950-2; Chair, BCC Executive Committee, 1956-62  |
| Dr J.H. Rushbrooke         | - Acting Chair, International Affairs, 1945  |
| Clifford Cleal             | - Secretary, BCC's Social Responsibility Department, 1948-53   |
| J.O. Barrett <sup>40</sup> | - representative to BCC for a few years in the 1950s, was appointed for a while to its Evangelism Committee and also took part in the Inter-Church Aid Department visit to Germany which led eventually to the founding of the Conference of European Churches (CEC)   |
| Dr E.A. Payne              | - BCC Vice President, 1960-62; Chair, BCC Executive Committee, 1962-71; honoured with the unique office of Honorary President  |
| Dr W.M.S. West             | - BU representative on BCC from 1963, a position which he shared over the years with a number of other Baptists at any one time, including all General Secretaries of the Union who are <i>ex officio</i> representatives to the BCC and members of the Executive - including Dr Russell, Bernard Green, David Coffey. |
| Dr Leonard G. Champion     | - Chair, Mission and Unity Department, 1967-9  |

- Mr John E.T. Hough - Secretary, BCC Social Responsibility Department from 1968; member of the Social Responsibility Group and the Advisory Group on Sex, Marriage and the Family from 1968
- Roger Nunn - BCC Youth Secretary, 1968-72
- Paul Rowntree Clifford<sup>41</sup> - Chair, Mission and Unity Department from 1969; member of BCC committee which liaised with the Roman Catholic hierarchy
- Mrs Ruth Tetlow - worked in the Community and Race Relations Unit in the early 1970s
- John F.V. Nicholson - BCC's Ecumenical Officer for England, 1975-9
- Basil Amey - BCC Assistant General Secretary, 1979-90
- Myra Blyth - BCC Youth Secretary, 1982-8

#### FAITH AND ORDER AND THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES<sup>42</sup>

The WCC was formed in Amsterdam in 1948, but many believe it owes its origin to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference held in 1910. The early work bore fruit in the formation of Faith and Order (F&O) whose first conference was held in Lausanne in 1927. The Life and Work (L&W) movement originated in the work towards peace in the decade 1910-20, and the first L&W conference was held in Stockholm, 1925. The second F&O conference, in Edinburgh in 1937, accepted the proposal from L&W for the formation of the WCC, and a joint committee was formed to achieve this, though World War II prevented its establishment till 1948.

Though the BU was not officially represented at Lausanne, Drs J.E. Roberts and W.T. Whitley attended at their own expense. Roberts was appointed to the Continuation Committee, where Dr Aubrey replaced him after his untimely death in 1929. Whilst British Baptists were not officially involved from the beginning, they quickly became committed to it and have since then made important contributions at all levels of the international ecumenical movement.

- Dr J.E. Roberts - F&O Continuation Committee, 1927-29
- Dr W.T. Whitley<sup>43</sup> - attended first F&O conference, Lausanne 1927
- Dr M.E. Aubrey - F&O Continuation Committee from 1929; Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State, 1937; a member of the Council of fourteen which drafted the WCC Constitution; on Central Committee, 1948-52
- Mr C.T. Le Quesne - F&O Committee, 1937-54; attended First WCC Assembly in Amsterdam, 1948
- Dr Gilbert Laws - attended F&O, Edinburgh 1937
- Dr J.H. Rushbrooke - attended F&O, Edinburgh 1937
- Dr Hugh Martin - attended F&O, Edinburgh 1937

- P.T. Thomson - Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State, 1937
- Dr P.W. Evans - BU representative to First WCC Assembly, Amsterdam 1948; member, F&O section on 'The Universal Church in God's Design'; attended Cambridge F&O Commission on the Church, 1950
- Rt Hon Ernest Brown MP - WCC Central Committee, 1948-54
- Dr Ernest Payne - representative to First WCC Assembly, Amsterdam, 1948; member, F&O Commission from 1948; elected to WCC Central Committee, Vice Chair 1954, retiring as WCC President in Nairobi in 1975, at which he was also a BU representative
- Victor E.W. Hayward - Executive Secretary, WCC Department of Missionary Studies, 1951-68; Associate Secretary, WCC, 1969-72
- Dr W.M.S. West - Youth delegate at the Third Faith and Order Conference, Lund, in 1952; ; from 1964 member of F&O Commission; BU representative at Fifth WCC Assembly, Nairobi 1975; F&O Consultation, Louisville 1979, which was the first time that an equal numbers of believer-baptist and paedobaptist scholars had met together to discuss the issue of Christian initiation.<sup>44</sup> This meeting was part of the process which eventually culminated in the publication of the F&O document, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM)*, 1982) at Lima. With the Anglican, Dr Mary Tanner, Dr West summarized the responses to *BEM's* section on baptism.<sup>45</sup>
- Mr (now Sir) Godfray Le Quesne - shared, unofficially, in the work of the youth delegation to the third F&O Conference, Lund 1952
- Gwyneth Hubble - attended meetings of International Missionary Council (IMC) at Willingen and Ghana, and the WCC Assembly, Evanston 1954, joined the staff of the IMC which was integrated into the WCC in 1961 when she served the Division of World Mission and Evangelism from 1961-8.
- Dr Leonard G. Champion - on WCC's F&O committee, 1954-71, and Chair of BCC F&O Committee
- Principal Kenneth C. Dykes - attended third F&O Conference, Lund 1952
- Ingli James - attended third F&O Conference, Lund 1952

- Dr George Beasley-Murray<sup>46</sup> - from the F&O Commission, St Andrews 1960; F&O, Louisville Consultation, 1979
- Neville Clark - attended F&O Commission, St Andrews 1960
- Dr Glen Garfield Williams - Europe Secretary of the WCC's Inter-Church Aid; became half-time Secretary of CEC in 1961 and full-time 1968-86
- Dr David Russell - member of WCC Central Committee, 1968-83; BU representative to Fifth WCC Assembly, Nairobi 1975, and Sixth Assembly, Vancouver 1983; served on the CEC in the 1970s
- John F.V. Nicholson - attended the F&O Louisville Consultation, 1979
- Simon J. Oxley - WCC's Executive Secretary for Education from 1996
- Professor J.H.Y. Briggs - on the WCC's Executive and Central Committees (the latter from the Sixth Assembly at Vancouver, 1983-98), having been BU representative at Nairobi, 1975, and Canberra, 1991; Moderator of the Audit Committee, and Co-Moderator of General Secretariat Committee
- Dr Keith W. Clements - succeeded Dr West on F&O Plenary Commission in 1983; General Secretary, CEC, from 1997 (remarkably, two of the three General Secretaries of CEC have been British Baptists). Along with Dr Clements, the BU representatives at the CEC Conference at Graz, 1997, were Miss Hilary Bradshaw (BU Ecumenical Administrator since 1997), Tony Peck (at the time Secretary of the Yorkshire Baptist Association; since November 1998 Tutor in Continuing Education, Bristol Baptist College), and Anne Wilkinson-Hayes (BU Secretary for Social Action, 1992-7, and minister of South Oxford from 1997)
- Bernard Green - BU representative at the Sixth WCC Assembly, Vancouver 1983
- Adele Blakebrough-Fairbairn - BU youth representative at Sixth WCC Assembly, Vancouver 1983
- Myra Blyth - Executive Secretary, Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) and Executive Director of Unit IV: Sharing and Service since 1988; WCC Director for Relationships to 1999
- David Coffey - BU representative at Seventh WCC Assembly, Canberra 1991



- Mr Andrew Bubeer (BU - BU representative at Seventh WCC Assembly, Computer Systems Administrator)  
 Ruth Bottoms
- BU representative at Seventh WCC Assembly, Canberra 1991, and since then Commissioner for Unit 2, Churches in Mission: Health, Education and Witness; attended Conference on World Mission and Evangelism (the successor body to the International Missionary Council), Salvador, Brazil, 1996 - previous conferences of this body were attended by Dr Colin Marchant at San Antonio and Philip Clements-Jewery at Melbourne; led the British Baptist delegation to the Eighth WCC Assembly, Harare 1998, accompanied by Miss Hilary Bradshaw, Ian Murdoch-Smith (minister at Romsey), and Mr Hugh Clements-Jewery (a student at Oxford University)
- Dr Michael Taylor
- served on WCC Unit on Sharing and Service; also Commissioner of the Programme on Theological Education

#### ECUMENICAL OFFICERS AND THE INTER-CHURCH PROCESS<sup>47</sup>

One of the key landmarks of British ecumenism was the British F&O conference held in Nottingham, 1964. It was the culmination of so much which preceded it and the inspiration of so much which has followed. Though its call for Church unity by Easter 1980 was never realized, it led to various important official and unofficial Baptist reports, including *Baptists and Unity* (1967), *Baptists for Unity* (1968), *Baptists and Unity (Reviewed)* (1969), *A Statement to the Churches in Membership of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland* (1976), being the official text and commentary on the CUC's *Ten Propositions* (1976), *With Charity and With Conviction* (1984), *Evangelicals and Ecumenism: when Baptists disagree* (1993), and *Believing and being baptized: Baptism, so-called re-baptism, and children in the church* (1996). It was at Nottingham that what are now known as Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) were launched, which over time gave rise to the Consultative Committee for Local Ecumenical Projects in England (CCLEPE), the Churches Unity Commission (CUC), and the Churches' Council for Covenanting in England (CCC), to which Baptists were observers, not participants, the 'Called to be One' process, and the CTE's high level 'Working Party on Baptism and Church Membership'.

The real starting of the Inter-Church Process (ICP) was the BCC's 1984 Spring Assembly, though it was not until May 1985 that the ICP was formally launched. In 1987 this bore fruit in the Swanwick Declaration, which marked a significant shift

in emphasis from declared co-operation between churches towards commitment. The run-up to the 1989 Baptist Assembly at Leicester, at which membership of the ICP was to be voted upon, was tense, but the resolution to join the new ecumenical instruments was passed by a 73.97% majority.<sup>48</sup> On 1 September 1990, Churches Together in England (CTE) was launched, the day after the BCC had ceased to exist. The decision whether to remain within the ecumenical instruments or not was tabled at the 1995 Baptist Assembly at Plymouth. The proposal to remain in them was vigorously opposed and alternative proposals and amendments were tabled only to be defeated. The majority in favour of remaining within CTE rose to 90.21%, with 81.27% voting to stay in the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland (CCBI). Since then a major report, *Called to be One* (1996), has been issued and Baptists continue to play their part within the ecumenical movement, though some continue their opposition or remain outside it.

Baptists have played key roles at local and national levels. These include:

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|-------------------------|--|
| David Savage            | - Merseyside Ecumenical Officer, 1974-81   |
| Simon J. Oxley          | - Ecumenical Chaplaincy at Manchester University, 1975-84; General Secretary, National Christian Education Council, 1984-92; Ecumenical Officer, Greater Manchester Ecumenical Council, 1992-6                                     |
| Dr David Russell        | - much involved in the early days of CUC in 1970s  |
| Dr Morris West          | - CUC; 'Called to be One' Working Party, preparing the paper on 'Christian Initiation and Church Membership'; consultant to CTE's high level 'Working Party on Baptism and Church Membership', 1994-7                              |
| Neville Clark           | - CUC  |
| Douglas Sparkes         | - Moderator of CCLEPE in 1980s. Throughout his time as BU Deputy General Secretary, he was effectively, though never officially, the BU's ecumenical officer. <sup>49</sup>  |
| Gethin Abraham-Williams | - CCLEPE; Ecumenical Officer/Executive Secretary, Milton Keynes Christian Council, 1981-90; General Secretary to the Covenanted Churches in Wales (ENFYS), 1990-8; General Secretary, Churches Together in Wales (CYTUN) from 1998 |
| Ruth Matthews           | - CCLEPE; Ecumenical Officer for Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, 1988-9  |
| John Matthews           | - CCLEPE   |
| John F.V. Nicholson     | - part-time Field Officer for the CUC  |
| Hugh Cross              | - BCC's Ecumenical Officer for England, 1979-90; CCLEPE Secretary on behalf of the BCC; Moderator, Milton Keynes Christian Council, 1991-  |

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- Mr David Lovegrove - CCLEPE
- David Rowland - CCLEPE
- Roger Nunn - CTE's Field Officer (South) from 1990; member of CTE Working Group which produced *Called to be One* (1996)
- Keith Jones - CCLEPE; combined his work as BU Deputy General Secretary with being BU National Ecumenical Officer; on CTE's high level 'Working Party on Baptism and Church Membership', 1994-7
- Miss Hilary Bradshaw - BU Ecumenical Secretary from 1996. This has underscored the importance given to the BU's ecumenical role
- Dr Keith Clements - ICP Co-ordinating Secretary for International Affairs, CCBI, 1990-7
- Dr Hazel Sherman - member of CTE Working Group which produced *Called to be One* (1996)
- Dr Paul Fiddes - on CTE's high level 'Working Party on Baptism and Church Membership', 1994-7
- Dr Roger Hayden - on CTE's high level 'Working Party on Baptism and Church Membership', 1994-7
- Christopher Ellis - Member of Joint Liturgical Group (JLG); on CTE's high level 'Working Party on Baptism and Church Membership', 1994-7
- Dr Haddon Willmer - advisor to the CTE Forum
- Dr David Goodbourn - a member of Canonmills Baptist Church, Edinburgh, is the first layman to be the General Secretary, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI, formerly CCBI) from March 1999

It should also not be overlooked that the General Superintendents represent the BU in the Regional Sponsoring Bodies which oversee all LEPs, though some are now overseen by the local Churches Together, and there are a great many Baptists, particularly at local and regional levels, who have been and are involved in formal LEPs and informal fellowship and mission with other denominations.

#### INTER-DENOMINATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Many inter-denominational organizations originated in the nineteenth century and have grown in their scope and influence, whilst others are more recent. But together they are another expression of the ecumenical dimension of British church-life at the end of the twentieth century. Baptists, again, have played their part within these many and varied organizations, only a few of which can be listed below.

- Dr M.E. Aubrey - Chair, Churches Committee for Christian Reconstruction in Europe, which led to the formation of Christian Aid
- Dr Hugh Martin - founding member, Friends of Reunion (FoR - f.1933); involved in Churches Committee for Christian Reconstruction in Europe
- James Sutton - United Society for Christian Literature, 1959-73; Administrative Secretary, Feed the Minds, 1973-80
- Paul Rowntree Clifford - FoR; President, Selly Oak Colleges, 1965-79
- A. Morgan Derham - Editorial Secretary, Scripture Union, 1947-66; General Secretary, Evangelical Alliance (EA), 1966-8; United Bible Societies, 1969-73; Leprosy Mission, 1973-80
- Edwin H. Robertson - Study Secretary, United Bible Societies, 1956-61; Executive Director, World Association for Christian Broadcasting, 1964-71; Executive Director, World Association for Christian Communication, 1968-71
- Leslie Wenger - FoR
- Jamie Wallace - FoR
- Neville Clark - JLG<sup>50</sup> from its inception in 1963. One of many Baptists whose ecumenical role has been largely behind the scenes (chiefly 1960s-80s), but who has contributed much. For example, he has written and contributed to many documents involving Baptist responses to ecumenical initiatives, e.g. the *Ten Propositions* in 1976;<sup>51</sup> he also chaired the BU Advisory Committee for Church Relations, which under his successor, John H.Y. Briggs, was reformed as the Faith and Unity Executive, subsequently chaired by Ruth Bottoms.
- Stephen Winward - JLG from 1963
- Stanley Browne - Leprosy Mission, 1960s and early 1970s
- Alec Gilmore - Editorial Secretary, United Society for Christian Literature, 1975-6, and then General Secretary, 1976-93; Director, Feed the Minds, 1984-93.
- Dr Michael Taylor - Director, Christian Aid, 1985-97, which has also been supported by a number of Baptists, ministers and lay, on headquarters staff and as Area Secretaries. Whilst Principal of Northern Baptist College, Taylor was involved in the creation of the Manchester Christian Institute and the formation of the Ecumenical Federation for the Training for

- Ministry. President, Selly Oak Colleges, since January 1998.<sup>52</sup>
- Clinton Bennett - Executive Secretary, Committee for Relations with People of Other Faiths, Conference of World Mission, 1987-92
- Dr R.F.G. Burnish - Area Organizer, Leprosy Mission, from 1988
- David Tennant - involved in Birmingham Council of Christian Education from 1977, and through Westhill College, Selly Oak, in 'ecumenical' education work, along with many other Baptists, including the present Principal of Westhill, Professor John Briggs
- Mark Rudall - for some years Southern Area representative for Tear Fund; since 1993 Tear Fund's Area Co-ordinator for Southern and Western England
- Dr David Spriggs - EA Evangelism Secretary from 1993
- Dr Paul Sheppy - JLG

Others have furthered ecumenism by their writing, notably in recent years, David Coffey, John Matthews, Christopher Ellis, Roger Nunn, Keith Jones and forthcoming books by John Briggs and Basil Amey.<sup>53</sup>

Baptists have also been the inspiration behind BUild, the BU initiative with people with learning disabilities, founded in 1983, but now including many from other denominations.<sup>54</sup> This is just one of many examples in which Baptists are sharing in various forms of work with those of other traditions.

Other instances of Baptist involvement in 'ecumenical' settings are Sister Margaret Magdalen (a 'Baptist nun'),<sup>55</sup> and the increasing number of chaplains (many of them in ecumenical contexts) working in education, the health services, armed forces and industry.

## CONCLUSION

Morris West writes, 'It is one of the continued ironies of British church life that Baptists, who on the whole are judged by most of the media to be extremely slow and backward ecumenically, have supplied a number of the leading officers within the organized ecumenical movement, particularly in the British Council of Churches and the Free Church Federal Council'.<sup>56</sup> Yet it is a sad reflection on the Baptist denomination that many of them have never been fully recognized for the role and leadership that they have provided and continue to provide. Instead of pride from their fellow Baptists, many have been overlooked and even derided. Nevertheless, they, with the Baptist ecumenical pioneers, J.H. Shakespeare and Hugh Martin, have served their Lord and his Church with integrity and distinction.

## NOTES

- 1 In this paper all people are to be understood as ministers unless prefixed by Mr, Mrs or Miss. Wherever possible the dates for which the office was held have been included, though in some instances, because of the publication date of sources used, or inadequacies in detail, these have been incomplete or unknown. Details, when not otherwise referenced, are taken from the *Baptist Handbook* or *Baptist Union Directory*, either from the obituaries or details of ministers. Information from personal discussion or personal knowledge, and other sources are detailed in the endnotes. Biographical articles and books have also been noted for general reference. The following have been particularly useful: *Baptists and Unity*, 1967; A.R. Cross, 'The theology and practice of baptism among British Baptists, 1900-1996', Keele University PhD, 1997; E.K.H. Jordan, *Free Church Unity: History of the Free Church Council Movement 1896-1941*, 1956; E.A. Payne, *Thirty Years of the British Council of Churches 1942-1972*, 1972, and *The Baptist Union: A Short History*, 1958; H. Townsend, *Robert Wilson Black*, 1954; A.C. Underwood, *A History of the English Baptists*, 1947; W.M.S. West, 'Baptists in Faith and Order: A study in baptismal convergence', in K.W. Clements (ed.), *Baptists in the Twentieth Century*, 1983, 55-75, and *To Be A Pilgrim: A memoir of Ernest A. Payne*, Guildford 1983. Further details have been obtained from Professor John H.Y. Briggs, Revd Dr W.M.S. West, Revd Basil Amey, Revd Bernard Green, and Revd John Nicholson. Unless otherwise stated, place of publication is London.
- 2 Attempts at correcting such positions have recently been provided in the biographical articles by R. Hayden, W.M.S. West, A.R. Cross, and M. Townsend mentioned below.
- 3 See H.G. Tibbutt (ed.), *The Minutes of the First Independent Church (now Bunyan Meeting) at Bedford 1656-1766*, Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, Vol.55, Bedford 1976, 19; C. Hill, *A Tinker and a Poor Man: John Bunyan and his Church, 1628-1688*, New York 1988, 292-5; R. Hayden (ed.), *The Records of a Church of Christ in Bristol, 1640-1687*, Bristol Record Society, Bristol 1974, *passim*; Underwood, *op.cit.*, 103-4; B.R. White, *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century*, revised edn, Didcot 1996, 10-11.
- 4 See J. Brown, *Centenary Celebration of the Bedfordshire Union of Christians: The story of a hundred years, 1896*, and J. Brown and D. Prothero, *The History of the Bedfordshire Union of Christians (now known as the Bedfordshire Union of Baptist and Congregational Churches)*, 1946.
- 5 See Cross, 'Theology and practice', 109. On Union Churches see the fuller discussion on pp.109-15, 212-8.
- 6 Sir Morton Peto was, for example, Chairman of the Deputies, 1853-5 and 1863-7. See also J.H.Y. Briggs, *The English Baptists of the Nineteenth Century*, Didcot 1994, *passim* but esp. 383-7; B.L. Manning, *The Protestant Dissenting Deputies*, Cambridge 1952, *passim*.
- 7 The first secretary of the Bible Society was the Baptist, Joseph Hughes. See Briggs, *Nineteenth Century*, *passim*. Hughes was also Secretary of the Religious Tract Society, 1799-1833, in whose work many Baptists were involved, see Briggs, p.291.
- 8 See D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A history from the 1730s to the 1980s*, 1989, *passim*, and the recent essays by Clive Calver, 'The rise and fall of the Evangelical Alliance: 1835-1905 ...', 148-62; I. Randall, 'Schism and unity, 1905-1966...', 163-77; and P. Lewis, 'Renewal, recovery and growth: 1966 onwards...', 178-91, all in S. Brady and H. Rowden (eds), *For such a time as this: Perspectives on evangelicalism, past, present and future*, Milton Keynes 1996.
- 9 See B. Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792-1992*, Edinburgh 1992, 22-3.
- 10 On Burls see E.A. Payne, *The Excellent Mr Burls*, n.d. Burls also served the British and Foreign Bible Society from 1809.
- 11 On Wilson see Stanley, *op.cit.*, 369-81 and *passim*.
- 12 See Stanley, *op.cit.*, 388-400 and *passim*.
- 13 I am grateful to the Revd Basil Amey for much of the detail in this paragraph. See also Stanley, *op.cit.*, 376 and *passim*.
- 14 For detailed discussion of this see J.W. Grant, *Free Churchmanship in England 1870-1940*, n.d.; E.K.H. Jordan, *Free Church Unity: History of the Free Church Council Movement 1896-1941*, 1956; Payne, *Baptist Union*, *passim*, and *The Free Church Tradition in the Life of England*, 4th edn 1965; I. Sellars, *Nineteenth-Century*

- Nonconformity*, 1977, 17-9; D.W. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics 1870-1914*, 1982, 61-83; J. Munson, *The Nonconformists: in search of a lost culture*, 1991, 157-84; A. Hastings, *A History of English Christianity 1920-1990*, 3rd edn 1991; Cross, 'Theology and practice', 51-61.
- 15 There is some discussion of both Glover and Aked in Briggs, *Nineteenth Century*, *passim*.
- 16 See D. Williamson, *The Life of Alexander Maclaren: Preacher and Expositor*, n.d.
- 17 See J.C. Carlile, *My Life's Little Day*, 1935.
- 18 On both R. Wilson Black and Sir Cyril Black, see Ernest W. Todd, *The Story of Tavistock Court*, n.d., *passim*, esp. 11-8. See also Hilary Kingsley, *Crusader: the Life and Times of Sir Cyril Black*, privately published by the Black family, to whom I am most grateful for a copy. On Tavistock Square see H. Townsend, *Robert Wilson Black*, 1954, 84-5.
- 19 See C.T. Bateman, *John Clifford: Free Church Leader and Preacher*, 1904; J. Marchant, *Dr John Clifford: Life, Letters and Reminiscences*, 1924; G.W. Byrt, *John Clifford: a Fighting Free Churchman*, 1947.
- 20 See W.Y. Fullerton, *F.B. Meyer: a Biography*, n.d.; I. Randall, 'Mere Denominationalism: F.B. Meyer and Baptist Life', *BQ* 35, 1, January 1993, 19-34.
- 21 See H. Cook, *Charles Brown*, 1939.
- 22 See G. Shakespeare, 'John Howard Shakespeare', *BQ* 17, 2, April 1957, 51-2; M.E. Aubrey, 'John Howard Shakespeare, 1857-1928', *BQ* 17, 3, July 1957, 99-108; R. Hayden, 'Still at the Crossroads? Revd J.H. Shakespeare and Ecumenism', in K.W. Clements (ed.), *Baptists in the Twentieth Century*, 1983, 31-54; M. Townsend, 'John Howard Shakespeare', *BQ* 37, 6, April 1998, 298-312.
- 23 On these discussions see D.M. Thompson, *Let Sects and Parties Fall: a Short History of the Association of the Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland*, Birmingham 1980, *passim*; E. Roberts-Thomson, *Baptists and Disciples of Christ*, n.d. but 1951, *passim*; Cross, 'Theology and practice', 79-80, 177-182.
- 24 See Townsend, *Robert Wilson Black*.
- 25 See M.E. Aubrey, 'James Henry Rushbrooke', *BQ* 15, 8, October 1954, 369-77; E.A. Payne, *James Henry Rushbrooke: a Baptist Greatheart*, 1954; B. Green, *Tomorrow's Man: A Biography of James Henry Rushbrooke*, Didcot 1997.
- 26 Who later came to regard himself as a Congregationalist, so Jordan, *op. cit.*, 248.
- 27 See W.M.S. West, 'The Young Mr Aubrey', *BQ* 33, 8, October 1990, 351-63; 'The Reverend Secretary Aubrey Part I', *BQ* 34, 5, January 1992, 199-213; 'The Reverend Secretary Aubrey Part II', *BQ* 34, 6, April 1992, 263-81; 'The Reverend Secretary Aubrey Part III', *BQ* 34, 7, July 1992, 320-36.
- 28 See F. Cawley, 'Percy William Evans', *BQ* 14, 4, October 1951, 148-52.
- 29 See E.A. Payne, *Henry Wheeler Robinson: Scholar, Teacher, Principal: A Memoir*, 1946.
- 30 See A.R. Cross, 'Revd Dr Hugh Martin: Publisher and Writer. Part 1', *BQ* 37, 1, January 1997, 33-49; 'Revd Dr Hugh Martin: Ecumenist. Part 2', *BQ* 37, 2, April 1997, 71-86, and 'Revd Dr Hugh Martin: Ecumenical Controversialist and Writer. Part 3', *BQ* 37, 3, July 1997, 131-46.
- 31 See W.M.S. West, *To Be A Pilgrim: a memoir of Ernest A. Payne*, Guildford 1983.
- 32 H.W. Janisch, *Roots and Recollections, being an autobiography of the Reverend Hubert William Janisch MA (Cantab), recalling facts, memories and opinions recorded in his 75th year, 1980 in Rustington, Sussex, Sussex* 1980.
- 33 See R. Hayden, 'The stillness and the dancing. An appreciation of Leonard G. Champion', in R. Hayden and B. Haymes (eds), *Bible, History and Ministry: Essays for L.G. Champion on his Ninetieth Birthday*, Bristol 1997, 1-8.
- 34 See G.W. Rusling, 'David Syme Russell: A Life of Service', in J.H.Y. Briggs (ed.), *Bible, Church and World: a Supplement to the Baptist Quarterly published in honour of Dr D.S. Russell*, 1989, 4-20.
- 35 See H. Mowley, 'Morris West - An Appreciation', and N. Clark, 'Servant of the Union', in J.H.Y. Briggs (ed.), *Faith, Heritage and Witness: A Supplement to the Baptist Quarterly published in honour of Dr W.M.S. West*, 1987, 4-12 and 13-20 respectively.
- 36 See F. Bowers, *Henry Howard Williams: Preacher, Pastor - Prophet without honour? Benjamin Henton Lecture 1998*, Didcot 1998; also *BQ* 37, 7, July 1998, 316-35.
- 37 H. Townsend, *The Claims of the Free Churches*, 1949; Payne, *The Free Church Tradition in the Life of England*, 1944, 4th revised edn, 1965, and *Free Churchmen, Unrepentant and Repentant and other papers*, 1965; J.H.Y. Briggs and I. Sellars (eds), *Victorian Nonconformity*, Documents of Modern History, 1973; Bebbington, *Nonconformist Conscience and Victorian Nonconformity*, Headstart History

- Papers, Bangor 1992. See also the earlier Edward Carey Pike, *English Nonconformity, 1895*; and J.W. Ewing, *Talks on Free Church principles addressed to the young people of Nonconformity, 1905*. To these can be added Baptist historians' works on the history of Evangelicalism, which include Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, and D.J. Tidball, *Who are the Evangelicals? Tracing the roots of today's movements, 1994*, both of which deal with material in many ways germane to our subject.
- 38 See Payne, *Thirty Years*.
- 39 E.A. Payne, *A 20th-Century Minister: John Oliver Barrett, 1901-78*, n.d., 14, 16.
- 40 See P.R. Clifford's autobiography, *An Ecumenical Pilgrimage, 1994*.
- 41 See R. Rouse and S.C. Neill (eds), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948 Vol.1*, Geneva, 3rd edn 1986; H.E. Fey (ed.), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement: The Ecumenical Advance, Vol.2*, Geneva, 2nd edn 1986. A third volume is in preparation, edited by J.H.Y. Briggs.
- 42 S.J. Price, 'Dr W.T. Whitley, MA, FRHistS, FTS', *BQ* 12, 10-11, April-July 1948, 357-63.
- 43 On this see the whole issue of *Review and Expositor*, 77, 1, Winter 1980.
- 44 See *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry 1982-1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, F&O Paper no.149, Geneva 1990, 39-55.
- 45 See J.J. Brown, 'A personal appreciation of George Raymond Beasley-Murray', in P. Beasley-Murray (ed.), *Mission to the World: Essays to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ordination of George Raymond Beasley-Murray to the Christian ministry*, *BQ* supplement, Didcot 1991, 9-19.
- 46 For detailed discussion and references to the developments from 1964 to 1996, see Cross, 'Theology and practice', 290-371.
- 47 *Baptist Union Annual Report 1989*, Didcot 1990, 10.
- 48 So described by Bernard Green, BU General Secretary at the time.
- 49 On the origins of the JLG, see R.C.D. Jasper (ed.), *The Renewal of Worship: Essays by Members of the Joint Liturgical Group*, Oxford 1965, vii-viii.
- 50 On which see Cross, 'Theology and practice', 301-15.
- 51 'Michael Taylor to head Selly Oak Colleges', *Free Church Chronicle*, Vol.L no.3, Winter 1997, 13.
- 52 D. Coffey, *Build That Bridge: Conflict and Reconciliation in the Church, 1986*; J. Matthews, *The Unity Scene*, n.d. but 1986; C. Ellis, *Together on the Way: A Theology of Ecumenism, 1990*; R. Nunn, *This Growing Unity: A handbook on ecumenical development in the counties, large cities and new towns of England, 1995*; K.G. Jones, *From Conflict to Communion*, Didcot 1996; J.H.Y. Briggs, joint editor of the forthcoming third volume of *The History of the Ecumenical Movement*; and Basil Amey's history of the FCFC.
- 53 See, e.g., Faith Bowers (ed.), *Let Love Be Genuine: Mental Handicap and the Church, 1985*, and *Who's this sitting in my pew? 1988*, and 'The Story of BUild', *The Fraternal* 242, April 1993, 7-9.
- 54 Details of a Baptist religious community in Carterton, Oxfordshire, known as the Community of the Prince of Peace, which came into being in April 1997, are to be found in Margaret Jarman, 'Baptists in the Monastic Tradition', *Baptist Ministers' Journal*, 263, July 1998, 3-6. The community is under the oversight of the Anglican Benedictine community at Burford Priory, and are 'constantly exploring ... the interface between the Baptist tradition and the religious life', finding 'great resources' in the Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions, p.4. For details of similar communities amongst the Hutterites, Amish, Mennonites and German Baptists, see p.6.
- 55 West, *To Be A Pilgrim*, 128.

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