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EDITORIAL

John Huxtable, Past President of this Society, died 16 November 1990. His ministry began and ended in Newton Abbot, first as minister, latterly as church secretary. In between there was a second pastorate, at Palmers Green, followed by eleven years as Principal of New College London, ten years as Secretary, Ministerial Secretary and Joint General Secretary successively of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, the Congregational Church in England and Wales and the United Reformed Church, and three years as Executive Officer of the Churches' Unity Commission. He was a Vice-President both of the British Council of Churches and of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. He sat on the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. He was Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council and of the United Reformed Church. He had been Chairman of the Congregational Union. He was thus a man who made church history as well as one who read it and wrote about it, and there were obituary notices in the main British newspapers. At his Service of Thanksgiving in Mansfield College Chapel, 25 January 1991, one of the three addresses was by another Past President of this Society, Arthur Macarthur, and the next issue of the *Journal* will include a fuller appreciation.

The present issue reflects both the unity towards which John Huxtable worked and the churchmanship with which he began and ended his ministry, for three of the articles are about local churches or groups of churches: one Congregational, one Presbyterian and one Churches of Christ. The Presbyterian church closed over forty years ago. The other churches survived, but precariously so. Some were the products of immigration and industrial change. All have fallen victim to economic change. Reduced to statistics their story is dismal and threadbare. In fact it is a story of considerable variety and surprising influence. The Castle Camps story, in particular, uncovers a way of life as natural to its village and as much a part of it as that reflected in the parish church.

By contrast, Lord Wharton's life was passed on a national stage although it was of great significance for several local Dissenting communities. Subsequent generations Anglicanised Lord Wharton's memory rather as the present generation ignores or downgrades the Dissent which has vanished from places where once it flourished. Mr. Wadsworth's article was delivered as the Society's Annual Lecture for 1990 during the Weekend School held at the Windermere Centre. Mr. and Mrs Clague's article was also first given at Windermere. Dr. Evans's article in part at least reflects her experience as wife of a recent minister at Castle Camps. Mr. Ollerhead's issues from a Master's thesis on Nonconformity in Crewe. As a reviewer we welcome Dr. David Hill, until recently Reader in Biblical Studies at the University of Sheffield. He is a United Reformed minister whose formation was in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Philip, Lord Wharton - Revolutionary Aristocrat?

Several branches of the Wharton family settled in North Lancashire and Westmorland some time before the Norman Conquest. About the middle of the eleventh century a Sueni de Querton is mentioned.¹ One hundred and fifty years later Gilbert de Querton acquired the manor of Wharton by inheritance from a relative and also the family arms of "a maunch argent on a field sable". (A long silver sleeve on a black ground).² He probably built the first Wharton Hall, much altered and added to in later generations.

His descendant, Sir Thomas Wharton, became the first Baron Wharton. He was raised to the peerage for services to the crown, particularly at the Battle of Solway Moss in November 1542 when the Scots were roundly defeated - though perhaps more by weather and the terrain than by the force or skill of English arms. Wharton was one of the new men chosen by Henry VIII to replace troublesome northern barons who had grown too great and powerful. He served as Warden of the Marches and as Captain of both Carlisle and Berwick Castles and was frequently engaged in forays over the border, sometimes of a rather personal nature. His appointment as Visitor of Monasteries in the northern counties and as Commissioner for the Discontinuance of Chantries and Mass Chapels probably facilitated his purchase of considerable monastic lands at the Dissolution, including property in Westmorland and much of Yorkshire.

The second and third barons made less mark and left little memorial. The third is reputed to have sat in the House of Lords for forty years without ever being moved to address the House.

The fifth baron³ was a creator and leader of the Whig Party in the English Parliament. He served as a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He wrote the words of Lilliburlero with which - he later boasted - he had sung a foolish king (James II) out of three kingdoms, and in the ranks of the peerage progressed to viscount, earl and marquis. Although a nominal Anglican he maintained a friendly attitude towards Nonconformity, perhaps both for political and sentimental reasons. In the House of Lords when the Earl of Oxford spoke bitterly against

1. E.R. Wharton, *The Whartons of Wharton Hall*, 1898, p.20. The principal sources on the Wharton family are -

Bryan Dale, *The Good Lord Wharton*, revised editions, 1906.

G.F. Trevallyn Jones, *Sawpit Wharton*, 1950.

E.R. Wharton, *The Whartons of Wharton Hall*, Oxford U.P., 1898.

On Thomas, Marquis of Wharton -

J. Roberts, *Memoir of Thomas, Marquess of Wharton*, 1715.

John Carswell, *The Old Cause*, 1954.

On Philip, Duke of Wharton -

J.R. Robinson, *Philip Duke of Wharton*, 1896.

L. Melville, *Life and Writings of Philip Duke of Wharton*, 1903.

M. Blackett-Ord, *Hell-fire Duke*, 1982.

2. Bryan Dale, *The Good Lord Wharton*, p.16; E.R. Wharton, pp.20,21.

3. For the Marquis see J. Roberts and J. Carswell.

Dissenters, Thomas Wharton said that he was surprised to hear him speak so, for "though we have none of their grace in our hearts, we have much of their blood in our veins".⁴

The sixth baron⁵ became a duke, joined the Hellfire Club, lost (or so he claimed) £120,000 in the South Sea Bubble, along with most of the family's wealth and possessions, became a Catholic and a fervent supporter of the Old Pretender and the Stuart cause, and was finally condemned for treason after leading Spanish troops in an attack on Gibraltar. A few years later he died at a small monastery at Poblet in Catalonia.

And that was the end - or very nearly the end - of the Wharton family and its story until the present century.

So far I have omitted mention of the fourth baron. He is the subject of our present concern.

Philip, the elder son of Sir Thomas and Lady Philadelphia Wharton,⁶ was born in 1613, not at Wharton Hall (near Kirkby Stephen) but at Aske Hall near Richmond in North Yorkshire. Sir Thomas was the younger son of the third baron. He had purchased Aske from Lady Eleanor Bowes, a distant relative. He and his wife were both devout puritans who passed on their religious persuasions to their two sons. Sir Thomas died in 1622 and, as his elder brother had already been killed in a duel, young Philip inherited the barony when his grandfather died in 1625. At that time the family estates were in the hands of his cousin, Humphrey Wharton of Gilling Wood, who for some years had endeavoured to rescue the old baron's affairs from the disorder and debt into which they had drifted. It took young Philip ten years before he acquired effective control of his patrimony.

During a life which spanned almost the whole of the century (he died in 1696) he had many interests. In addition to the wide-spread northern property which he inherited, he received through his second wife large estates at Winchendon and Wooburn in Buckinghamshire. The lead mines in North Yorkshire brought in a useful income and absorbed time and thought, although he employed agents to manage the industry. He also took an interest in horticulture and architecture and in the collection of works of art, especially portrait paintings. Amidst all this busy life two central passions persisted - in politics and religion; his politics radical, his religion puritan.

The beginning of the Civil War saw Wharton active in a military capacity - with little success and less glory. The family motto, probably devised by the first baron, was "Plaisir en faits d'armes". Suitable enough to the first baron, it had little relevance or appeal to the fourth. At Edgehill in 1642 he commanded a regiment of foot and a troop of horse which was ignominiously swept off the field before Prince Rupert's impetuous charge. Reporting to Parliament

4. J. Roberts, *Memoir of Thomas*, pp.101ff; see also Carswell, ch. 8.

5. For the Duke see Blackett-Ord and J.R. Robinson.

6. For fuller details of the life of the Fourth Lord Wharton see Bryan Dale, E.R. Wharton and G.F.T. Jones.

Wharton stated: "Before there was any near excuse three or four of our regiments fairly ran away - Sir William Fairfax's, Sir Henry Cholmley's, my Lord Kimbolton's and, to say the plain truth, my own." Consequently Wharton was himself accused of cowardice - not merely running away but hiding in a sawpit. In his official report of the engagement to Parliament he accused Prince Rupert of wanton cruelty after the battle was won. In reply Rupert published a pamphlet with the sawpit accusation. Thus started the unpleasant nickname - Sawpit Wharton - which provided his enemies with a taunt for the rest of his life.⁷

After that Wharton withdrew from service in the field and quickly found his true *métier* in the skirmishes and more extended campaigns of Parliamentary struggle. There, says Trevallyn Jones, he supported the constitution but helped to change the constitution from personal rule to parliamentary rule.⁸ The source and ground of his political views was religious. The passage of time and some bitter experience only encouraged their development into more and more radical forms. Jones claims that "he was connected with all the revolutions of the century and always on the revolutionary side".⁹ Although an aristocrat he was ready to see the House of Lords dominated by the Commons. Not that his revolutionary mind approved the mind or the malice of the mob. If the rule he sought was neither royal nor aristocratic, it was not that of the general populace. His desire and aim was the rule of the saints, that is, of those committed like himself to a puritanism inclined towards Independency.

It may be asked whether even such moderate saints are to be trusted with the affairs of this world. They may be so sure of the end in view as to believe it justifies dubious means. This may have been true at times of Wharton. When the Habeas Corpus Bill came before the House of Lords in 1679, Wharton was teller for the Ayes. And the Ayes clearly won the vote. Later Wharton was accused of being less than scrupulously honest in counting. Carswell admits that he "had indeed been much too hard in the numbers for the Lord who was teller on the other side. The story is that he counted one unusually fat peer as ten".¹⁰ Roberts declares that "if it was a fraud it was a pious fraud".¹¹ And Trevallyn Jones agrees that his frauds were as pious as fraudulent, and Wharton himself was not a pious fraud.¹² Politically, it may be claimed, he was more honest than most in that age. More unusual, he was financially honest. Whilst he thought it proper enough to offer inducements to others to ensure the success of particular candidates in elections or to support causes of which he approved, he himself never accepted a bribe. So it was generally agreed, even by his enemies. Like his son - Honest Tom (so called by supporters in his own party but very different names by others) - he was consistent and faithful to his party. The

7. Jones, pp.60ff; Dale, p.66.

8. Jones, p.9.

9. Jones, p.3.

10. Carswell, p.50.

11. Roberts, p.8.

12. Jones, p.6.

son, however, was not so scrupulous as the father in regard to money. As Lord Lieutenant in Ireland he is reputed to have accepted bribes of £40,000 in a single year.

To Philip Wharton politics was never simply a game. Nor was it a polite exercise undertaken with kid gloves. It was a means to an end - the rule of the saints called and chosen to establish and carry out the divine will. Success was not only desirable; it was incumbent on those who were the chosen vessels of the Almighty and instruments of his purpose. It could, where necessary, justify even dubious means. It demanded patient and arduous labour; for Wharton the hours of detailed committee work at which he made himself expert. This was his role rather than the more open and flamboyant art of public oratory. Throughout the war, says Jones, he was a tenacious and indefatigable worker for its prosecution to a swift and decisive end. Towards political opponents he was harsh and unyielding. At the intricacies of administrative and legislative detail he was patiently persistent. He was largely responsible, for example, for the revision in simpler form of the Oath of Allegiance.¹³ In 1643 he was a member of the Committee chosen to treat with the Scots Commissioners for an alliance to make the war against King Charles more effective. This produced the Solemn League and Covenant. Thereafter he attended most of the meetings of the Committee of both Kingdoms for the Prosecution of the War. In Parliament he seconded a motion for the uniformity of religion between the two countries and later he gave useful and careful service as lay-assessor to the Westminster Assembly of Divines.

Wharton's interest in the Habeas Corpus Act was no doubt natural in one who narrowly escaped imprisonment immediately following the Restoration - perhaps thanks to the personal friendship of the Duke of York.

In 1677 he was less fortunate and suffered imprisonment in the Tower.¹⁴ The King's speech in April 1675 referred to the necessity of enforcing the law against Dissenters. When this reference was described in the Lords as "gracious", Wharton, Shaftesbury and others protested. An anonymous letter (possibly written by Shaftesbury) entitled "A Letter from a Person of Quality to a Friend in the Country", described speeches by Wharton and others during April and May especially in opposition to the Test Bill and its requirement that officials should take an oath against attempting in any way to change either Church or State. Wharton is described in the letter as "an old and expert Parliament man of eminent Piety and Abilities, besides a great friend of the Protestant religion and the Interest of England". Wharton and his friends were threatened with the Tower for a breach of privilege. For the time being they escaped.

In November 1675 Parliament was prorogued and was not recalled until February 1677. Wharton and Shaftesbury argued that - because more than a year had elapsed - Parliament had in effect been dissolved, so that the recalled Parliament was in fact no Parliament. Refusing to withdraw and apologise for

13. Roberts, p.8.

14. Jones, p.225; Roberts, p.8; Carswell, p.50.

this claim they were judged guilty of contempt and were committed to the Tower in February 1677. Andrew Marvell, poet and civil servant, noted: "Thus a prorogation without precedent was to be warranted by an imprisonment without example".¹⁵

Wharton eventually pleaded his age and illness and was set free on the 29th July. Others of the group also obtained their freedom after fairly short periods in prison. But Shaftesbury remained in the Tower for the rest of the year. A lampoon of the time declared:

What Cooper designs Sawpit dare not oppose,
And George leads soft Cecil about by the nose;
The first is a statesman, the second his tool,
The third a d---- atheist, the fourth is a fool,

Cooper is Shaftesbury; Sawpit, Wharton; George, Buckingham; Cecil, Salisbury.

The following year there was a further design to commit the group to the Tower once again. But they made their submission to the House and so avoided further imprisonment.

Wharton's political activities, his stubborn determination and, perhaps, his very reputation, endangered his liberty on other occasions also. As well as the threat already referred to in the days immediately following the Restoration when his daughter, who was married to a Royalist peer, discovered plans to arrest him and the good offices of the Duke of York were called on, he was also suspected of direct connection with the Derwentdale or Farnley Wood Plot of 1663.¹⁶ In October of that year, says Trevallyn Jones, Wharton was seriously threatened by an attempt to deal severely with some people of high standing as a deterrent to plotters and opponents of the government. This followed the final collapse of the Farnley Wood Plot, a military rising in the north - in fact near Leeds. Bryan Dale (writing in Leeds, although very much later) cites Hunter as claiming that the whole plot had every appearance of being artificial - a contrivance of the government to strike terror into the disaffected. However that may be, twenty-two people were executed and many Nonconformist ministers and large numbers of other innocent victims were imprisoned.

The rebels were said to have met in Farnley Wood, four miles from Leeds, on the night of October 12th 1663. Sir Thomas Gower, Sheriff of Yorkshire, caught most of them and "wondered whether Lord Wharton might be implicated". Dale notes that a letter in the Public Record Office written by Captain Robert Atkinson of Mallerstang in Westmorland (near Wharton Hall), says that the plotters meant to force the King to fulfil the promises made at Breda with liberty of conscience in religious matters. He also asserts that Lord Wharton was privy to the plot.

Later on, in 1685, after the abortive rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth, the old Lord went abroad. He may himself have been associated with the rebellion.

15. J.D. Hunt, *Andrew Marvell's Life and Writings*, p.181.

16. Jones, p.192; Dale, pp.79,80.

His son Thomas certainly was. It was claimed that there was a large cache of weapons at Thomas's house. Shortly after the débacle of Sedgemoor Wharton made his health an excuse to leave the country for a year or so and so avoided the possibility of arrest.¹⁷ He had intended to take the waters at the spa at Aix but, finding it too late in the season for taking the cure, he went to place himself under the protection of the Elector of Brandenburg. Or so he explains in a long letter of introduction to the Elector's representative, Freiherr von Spaen, with an account of his whole life and ideas and activities. He remained there until September 1686 when he felt it safe to return home.

There were two other occasions when he withdrew from active participation in the affairs of government and the life of Parliament. The former was for an extended period during the Commonwealth. After Pride's Purge he "withdrew from politics to country life and had nothing to do with the events leading up to the execution of Charles I".¹⁸ He himself wrote that "When the Army first invaded the House of Commons in order to his [Charles's] death I declared against the horrid act and never came into the House after". The House of Lords was in fact summoned to attend on 28th December 1648, but only one Peer attended on that day. Others, including Wharton, sent excuses. Thereafter the Rump of the Commons assumed sovereign power, approved the death of Charles and abolished (for the time being) both the monarchy and the House of Lords.

In site of Cromwell's personal pleas that he should return to public life to "complete the great work well begun", Wharton declined to do so and continued to lead the quiet life of a country gentleman on his own estate - happily improving house and gardens - until the Restoration was imminent. On the King's return Wharton, along with his friends Sir Philip Musgrave and Sir Edward Musgrave, went to Greenwich in their coach and came with the King to London. Wharton himself declared, "I spent no small amount in preparing for the event; and was careful to appear in the King's train on the day of his return to London [29th May 1660] and at his coronation". At that time Wharton was still in mourning for the death of his wife Jane but to give his blacks "a look of joy" he added diamond buttons. This display may well have been necessary in spite of Wharton's deep distaste for the execution of Charles I. He has indeed been accused of cowardice for not remaining in London and making more active resistance to the plan to execute the King instead of cultivating his garden at Wooburn. On the whole, and in spite of the Sawpit nickname, it would seem that cowardice was not typical although political manoeuvring was part of his life and nature.

In the last few years of his life he again ceased to attend in person on the affairs of Parliament. His health had begun to give trouble and he was distressed

17. Jones, p.238, quoting a *The Life of Thomas Lord Wharton*. On this visit abroad Lord Wharton wrote his long letter to the Graf von Spaen introducing himself and recounting his life and ideas - a sort of apology.

18. Jones, p.107; Dale, p.74.

by family bereavements and by an unhappy breach with his old friends the Harleys following his stepson's marriage to Brilliana Harley and the domestic and financial troubles associated with that unhappy union.

If politics was one half of Wharton's life, the other half was religion, although indeed the two were combined and intermingled. In this he was no doubt typical of the age in which he lived. Something of this fusion of politics and religion may be seen in the work of the Westminster Assembly. Wharton as one of the lay assessors associated with the 121 "divines" took an active part in the Assembly's work.¹⁹ But at one time, perhaps frustrated by theological and political wrangling, he proposed (in the House of Lords) the suspension of the Assembly. At first, we are told, "he took a zealous interest in its proceedings and appeared to favour the proposals for the establishment of a national Presbyterian Church."

Wharton himself was a Presbyterian but came to sympathise more and more with the Independents whose five representatives were so outnumbered in the Assembly. Trevallyn Jones notes that in Wharton's papers there are many notes on the subject of church government and particularly on the Independents and on toleration. He appeared to sympathise with the ideas of Independents in regard to authority, for example of the whole congregation as against Church Officers and Elders. Jones claims that "he seems to have had none of the rigidity of the true Presbyterian, and none of the fervent religiosity verging on fanaticism common with numerous Independents. He thought that the local Congregation should be advised but not ruled by a higher church body. However he did not believe a local gathering of Christians and their chosen pastor to be a church".²⁰

This kind of half-way position between formal Presbyterian conciliar government and the separatist atomism of pure Independency may have made Wharton unpopular with both parties. Jones says that his close association with leading Independents of both Houses of Parliament hastened the change in his beliefs from Presbyterianism to Independency, and adds that it is impossible to say at what stage he actually became an Independent. It is questionable whether he did in fact ever do so. During the Commonwealth he appointed both Presbyterians and Independents to pastorates and livings. After the Restoration he gave help and encouragement to ejected ministers of both persuasions. In the earlier period of the Civil War Parliament was predominantly Presbyterian and the army Independent. After Parliament was purged, and Cromwell became Protector, Independency became more influential politically. Many Independents, and Wharton certainly, were influenced by the ideal of liberty of conscience and the possibility of toleration. In Parliament most of the leaders of the "godly party" supported the Independents against Scottish influence and the wish to enforce a strict Presbyterianism on England.

19. Dale, p.70. The Westminster Assembly comprised ten Lords and twenty Commoners as well as 121 Divines.

20. Jones, p.86.

Wharton seems to have made a serious attempt to act as peacemaker in bringing together the opposing ecclesiastical factions of the Assembly. Benjamin Hanbury affirms (in his *Historical Memorials relating to Independents*) that Wharton sought to "bring three of the five Independents into agreement with the majority, but that Nye [one of the famous five] spoiled this by seeking to show from Matthew 18 that a Presbyterian National Assembly is a danger to the state".²¹ In the end, when the majority refused to allow toleration for "gathered churches", Wharton supported Goodwin, Nye and other dissenting brethren in their contention for "larger liberty" and was therefore described as "one of the prime leaders of the Independent Juncto". It was at that time (December 1645) that he moved in the Lords the adjournment or suspension of the Assembly. "You know his metal", wrote Baillie, the Scottish Presbyterian, "he is as fully as ever for that party." Baillie continued, "The majority however prevailed and at their advice numerous ordinances were passed for the setting up of classical Presbyteries but, owing to the triumph of the Army, the Presbyterian discipline was never endowed with co-ercive authority and remained a mere Parliamentary project."²² The last meeting of the Assembly took place in February 1649.

Wharton also served on the Commonwealth Committee for removing "scandalous" incumbents and filling the livings with godly and devoted men. In a letter written in February 1645 to Ferdinando, Lord Fairfax,²³ he expressed the desire that "an honest, faithful, godly man - a bold spirit and an able body - be put in" to the Vicarage at Grinton in Swaledale. Most of the dale - he said - was in his hands, and for that reason as well as general principles he would be glad if it could be well supplied. Bryan Dale maintains that Wharton "like Cromwell... was chiefly concerned that ministers of the parish churches, whatever their sentiments might be as to church government and discipline, should be able ministers of the New Testament".²⁴ He had, says Carswell, as many as thirty church livings in his own appointment.²⁵ Among such appointments were John Gunter, an Independent, who went to Waddesdon in Buckinghamshire and later to Bedale in Yorkshire. Matthew Hill went to Healaugh and then to Thirsk. John Rogers to Croglin in Westmorland. All of these were ejected in or about 1662. So also was Thomas Gilbert, the incumbent at Upper Winchendon who, after ejection, often preached privately in Lord Wharton's own house.

After the Restoration Wharton laboured in Parliament to protect Dissenters and to further Puritan interests. He helped many ministers financially, both Presbyterian and Independent. For a time he tried to persuade them to conform, "reluctant to accept the unpalatable fact that the revived Anglican Church

21. Benjamin Hanbury, *Historical Memorials relating to Independents or Congregationalists*, 1839, p.428.

22. Dale, p.70. Dale quotes Thomas Fuller: "The Parliament kept the coercive power in their own hands, not trusting the Presbyterians to carry the keys at their girdle."

23. Dale, p.70.

24. Dale, p.71.

25. Carswell, p.31.

would be fully episcopal and even Laudian in form and doctrine".²⁶ Typically he favoured "comprehension" and is known to have preserved a tract of Richard Baxter who earnestly pursued such a policy.

When it became evident that comprehension was impossible he was active in giving practical help, both financially and in other ways. He made a regular allowance to a number of ministers, including the celebrated Oliver Heywood, who was ejected from the chapelry of Coley near Halifax in West Yorkshire.²⁷ He also maintained six poor scholars at the school started by Heywood, allowing twenty shillings each per year. Heywood dedicated his book, *The Best Entail*, to Wharton and said of him: "His morning star of early piety continued shining bright in good old age, and hath cast many resplendent beams of favour upon indigent persons to spread the savour of divine knowledge amongst ignorant souls."

As well as direct financial gifts Wharton provided employment for several ejected ministers as agents on his estates and managers of the lead mines in Yorkshire. He enabled Christopher Jackson, ejected from Crosby Garrett in Westmorland, to build a meeting house at Ravenstonedale and left £100 in trust to purchase land in the dale to provide an income for him and his successors.²⁸

Similarly he gave two parcels of land near Kirkby Stephen to endow the meeting house which he provided for miners and others at Smarber in Swaledale. The land remains to this day in the hands of the church and provides a useful income.²⁹

Wharton also employed his political and legal skill to help Dissenters. He drew up a plan to show friendly Justices how they could get round the rigours of the law and avoid disturbing or prosecuting Dissenting ministers in spite of information given against them.³⁰ He also drew up a paper to show how fines might be avoided by means of various delaying tactics and similar devices. "After the Restoration", says Jones, "for some years he was the only peer to remain in open opposition on behalf of... dissenters, and he played a leading part in opposition to the Conventicle Acts".³¹ When the Text Act required kissing the Bible on taking the Oath, Wharton objected to such an idolatrous worship of a book, even the Bible. He himself only consented to do this in combination with a solemn declaration that such an act in no way intended or implied the worship which is due only to God.

He was an indefatigable correspondent, although in later years he made use of an amanuensis when troubled by arthritis. Many letters were addressed to

26. Jones, p.192.

27. Dale, p.98.

28. W. Nicholls, *History and Traditions of Ravenstonedale*, Manchester 1877, Vol. 1, p.47.

29. Dale, p.86, p.98. See also T. Whitehead, *History of the Dales Congregational Churches*, Keighley 1930, p.151.

30. Jones, p.216.

31. Jones, p.266.

prominent and learned ejected ministers, such as Owen, Calamy, Mather and Alleine. With them he shared both political and ecclesiastical concerns.³²

As well as direct help to ejected ministers and the endowment of Ravenstonedale and Smarber meeting houses he made numerous other charitable gifts including benevolent provision for poor people near his birthplace in Yorkshire. Calamy states that he left large sums for religious and charitable purposes in his will.³³ John Roberts makes a similar claim. In fact in Lord Wharton's will there was no provision for Nonconformist ministers or similar legatees. Bryan Dale deduces that such provision for ministers and others was made in a separate arrangement through certain trustees, and he mentions a number of particular ministers who did receive annual amounts of money for at least some years after Wharton's death. Such a fund may have existed and was perhaps later diverted to other purposes or was swallowed up in the general dispersal of Wharton funds after the defection and death of the Duke. Roberts baldly states: "Mr Edward Harley was one of the trustees for this charity which was reported in late times to have received a very great interruption if not misapplication". And he adds, "Especially about the time of elections!"

Harley was also a trustee of the Bible Charity which certainly did suffer remarkable changes. I conclude with a brief description of this charity and its surprising later history.³⁴

During the last years of his life Lord Wharton arranged for the distribution of large numbers of Bibles and also catechisms and "reward books" among poor children in the counties especially associated with his family - that is, Westmorland, Cumberland, Yorkshire and Buckinghamshire. His aim in this was at once religious, educational and charitable. As well as the books, "coal money" was to be given to parents of the children who were required to learn and be able to recite the psalms. Two shillings and sixpence was to go to each of the "examiners" and ten shillings to preachers giving appropriate sermons in a number of specified towns. The distribution was in the hands of Nonconformist ministers and a few laymen.

In 1692 - just a few years before he died - he drew up a deed of bequest conveying land at Synithwaite near York to certain trustees who were to use the income to purchase Bibles for children who were required to learn by heart certain psalms (numbers 1, 15, 25, 37, 101, 113, 145). The Bibles were to be bound with calf leather, to be fastened with a strong brass clasp, to be bound up with the "singing psalms" (the metrical version) and to contain a note stating that this was by the will of Lord Wharton. So the trust was established and from the first about a thousand Bibles were distributed, the precise numbers for particular towns throughout the four counties being specified in the trust.

32. Carswell, p.33; Jones, p.212.

33. Roberts, p.11; Jones, pp.104ff.

34. E.R. Wharton gives a brief account of the Bible Charity on p.46. Dale in the third chapter or section of his *Good Lord Wharton*, pp.11-202, gives a full and detailed account of the trust and its story up to the settlement of 1906.

The original trustees were Sir Edward Harley, Sir Thomas Rokeby, John White, Edward Harley MP, Thomas Bendlows, William Taylor and William Mortimer. Most of these were personal friends who, like Wharton himself, were of mature years. Most of them had died before the eighteenth century was much advanced and thereafter the appointment of further trustees was largely in the hands of the Harley family who had turned their backs on Dissent. Before the end of the eighteenth century not only were all the trustees members of the Established Church, the whole distribution was in the hands of Anglican incumbents and all the recipients were children of Anglican communicants. The only exception to this was a score of Bibles which were still sent to Swaledale in North Yorkshire to be distributed by the Presbyterian or Independent minister because of Lord Wharton's association with Swaledale and Smarber. Not only so, but instead of the metrical psalms the Book of Common Prayer was now bound up with the Bibles and a notice within the cover stated that this was by the express will of Lord Wharton. Other "reward books" were still given as well as Bibles and, for a time at least, copies of the Church's catechism - although the catechism Wharton had originally specified was Lye's Commentary on the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly.

In 1871 the "Bible lands", as they were called at Synithwaite, were sold and the capital invested in stock. This was probably a wise move and brought in a higher income.

In 1895 Bryan Dale, Secretary of the Yorkshire Congregational Union, had his attention drawn - by chance - to the Bible trust. With his historical interests and expertise he unearthed the origins of the trust and carefully traced its long and twisted history. After this a memorial was addressed on the subject to the Charity Commissioners. After prolonged legal argument the court of Chancery laid down that a new trust should be made. Nine trustees should be appointed, five being Anglican and one each from Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians. The net income was to be equally divided, half used for Anglican Bibles, half for Nonconformist Bibles; or rather, for distribution to children associated half with the Established Church, half with Nonconformists.

Not all Nonconformists were satisfied with this settlement, but the court held that the long enjoyment of the trust by the Anglican Church constituted a just claim. As Lord Wharton favoured "comprehension" one should no doubt be happy with this wider distribution. It still continues. Modern versions of the Bible are now available and children are now "encouraged" to learn the psalms rather than actually having to give evidence by recital that they have them by heart.

Lord Wharton died at Hampstead on February 4th 1695/6 and was buried in the Parish Church at Wooburn. The Latin inscription above his grave may be translated -

In hope of the resurrection
Here await the second coming of Jesus Christ the remains of Lord

Philip Wharton, Baron of Wharton, who, sprung from the noble race of the Whartons in the County of Westmorland, proved at length their heir and their glory, his honours shedding lustre on his worth, his worth on his honours; for, indeed, about three-and-sixty years he held and graced his place in the House of Lords, was an active supporter of the English constitution, a loyal observer, advocate, and patron of the Reformed Religion, a model alike of good works, and of a true and living faith. His doors stood open to outcast ministers of God's Word, affording them shelter and hospitality; nay more, he dispensed his gifts with liberal hand from year to year to such as toiled in anxiety and want; and setting a noble example of munificence, he directed by his last will that a sufficient share of his estate should be devoted to truly pious uses. Thus he lived, and at length, after manifold troubles endured for God, country and Church, he fell peacefully asleep in Christ on February 4th 1695, aged about eighty-three.³⁵

Such a generous judgment was not shared by all; certainly not by political opponents who called him Sawpit even into his old age. His own family, especially in their youth, found him a stern parent who clearly believed that sparing the rod might spoil the child. In his business affairs he drove a hard bargain. But he acted justly, was never rapacious and he could be generous towards those in genuine need. "Competent and industrious, without greed, vanity or personal ambition" is the judgment of Trevallyn Jones.³⁶ Perhaps the best type of Puritan. Jones thinks that Wharton behaved shabbily towards the Stuart Kings who showed him personal favours on numerous occasions and even presented him with their portraits by the best painters.³⁷ But principle mattered more to Wharton than personal liking and friendship - even of monarchs. He would not approve the execution of Charles, but he was happy enough to see James II ousted from throne and kingdom. He also withdrew his support from Cromwell when Oliver insisted on the death of the king; but he remained a friend.

"A painful and fanatical follower of Master Calvin" (the phrase is Bernard Manning's - of himself) might be aptly enough applied to Lord Wharton. But he loved gardens and flowers, architecture and portrait painting. Even in old age he remembered that in his youth he had loved dancing and his handsome legs had been much admired. A Puritan and also a man of feeling and of taste, yet "connected with all the revolutions of the century and always on the revolutionary side". Perhaps more naturally conservative than revolutionary he spent his life resisting the political and religious innovations of the Stuart monarchs, as he also resisted Cromwell's harsh way with kings. In so doing he was himself pushed into innovations which had far-reaching implications for both religion and politics.

K.W. WADSWORTH

35. Dale, p.103.

36. Jones, p.266.

37. Jones, p.238.

Castle Camps - A Country Church 1813-1989

I

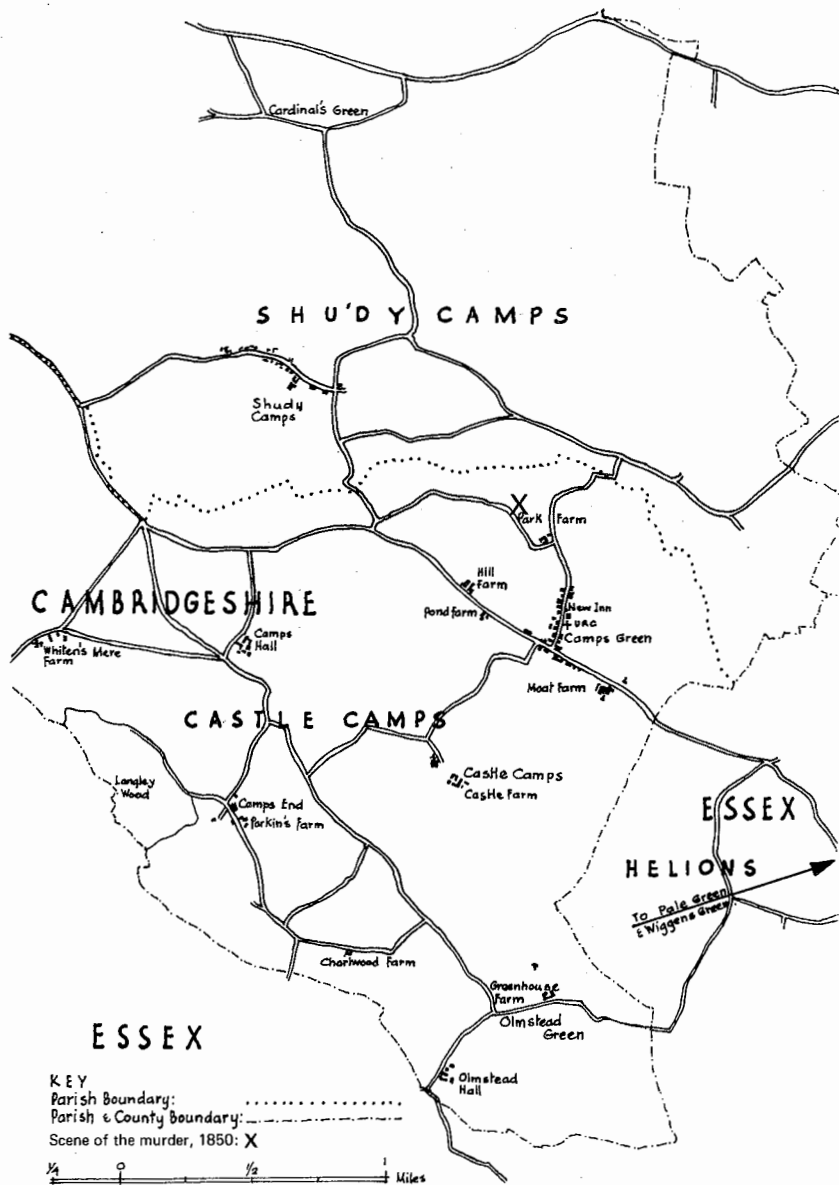
The Parish and the Chapel

The Parish of Castle Camps covers about 3,200 acres, rising to 413 ft, in the extreme south east of Cambridgeshire.¹ The southern half of the parish boundary coincides with that of the county of Essex, whilst Suffolk lies less than a mile away to the north east. The word "camps" refers to clearings made centuries ago in the forest which formerly covered the boulder clay, and of which only Langley Wood remains. The population has fluctuated from 149 in the Domesday Book, to a possible 800 in 1895, with a decline to about 400 at the present day. The most populous area is Camps Green (at the centre of which is the United Reformed chapel), which today is called Castle Camps, the village sign being sited by the war memorial on the tiny green. The other settlements include Camps End, about one and a half miles to the south west, and the original Castle Camps with the parish church of All Saints, Castle Farm and the relics of the once great castle, granted after the Norman conquest to the de Veres, Earls of Oxford.² In the south east are Olmstead Green, and Olmstead Hall, but most other settlements are individual farms, of which "Moat", "Hill" and "Castle" belong to members of the United Reformed Church.³

The land has long been cleared for agriculture, mainly arable, but with some pasture for cattle and the usual corollary of pigs. Farming, now highly mechanised, is still the chief activity, but provides little employment, and most of the working population commute to such places as Haverhill, Cambridge, and even London. Some of the older residents can recall the time when there were many farm labourers, or allied craftsmen, and when most of the women made garments at home for Gurteens of Haverhill.⁴ The nineteenth-century predominance of agricultural labourers may be seen in the census returns, and parish records⁵ and the various records in the possession of the United Reformed Church at Castle Camps.

In spite of the 1871 census, which refers to separate "Independent" and "Particular Baptist" churches, in close proximity, there can be little doubt that only one dissenting congregation existed in the parish of Castle Camps. One source of evidence for this is a hard-backed notebook, with paper pages, hand-written by various ministers and others, and miraculously preserved, containing

-
1. See map.
 2. The de Veres, with occasional reversions to the Dukes of Gloucester, held the castle and manor until the late sixteenth century, but by 1611, Charterhouse of London were the owners. Although most farms and the U.R.C. have long since been freehold, Charterhouse is still the patron of the parish church.
 3. *Victoria County History of Cambs.* Vol. VI, p.38.
 4. They were at first called "slop workers" and later "smock makers" and by 1881 "needlewomen, dressmakers and tailoresses".
 5. Original manuscripts, also transcribed or on microfilm, are in Cambs. County Record Office (C.C.R.O.).



a continuous record from 1813 to 1933.⁶ Both Baptist and Congregational journals made references to the church and the various early ministers named in the Record and, before its admission to the County Congregational Union in 1875, the 1851 description as “Independent and Baptist”⁷ was doubtless correct.

There were many such congregations at that time (and even a South Cambs. Union of Independent and Baptist Churches),⁸ which eventually opted for one denomination, often at the preference of the minister. Baptist claims to the church may be found in the *Baptist Magazine* 1854-62, where “W. Marsh” of Castle Camps is named, and the *Baptist Handbook* which refers to E.A. Marsh in 1861, J. Robertson in 1863, and the name of the church only in 1864, after which there is no further mention of Castle Camps. As for Congregational claims, the *Year Book* of 1855, in the section entitled “South Cambs: Union of Independent and Baptist Churches”, reports an Independent chapel built in 1822, and those of 1856 and subsequently name John Robertson as an Independent minister until 1865 after which Charles Norman is dated 1867-73. The dates quoted in such journals are sometimes erroneous, probably because of lack of statistical returns. One example will suffice: Charles Norman, in the Record, wrote, in his unmistakable flowing hand, details of baptisms from 1862.

Returning to the evidence for one “dissenting meeting house”, we find that the Tithe maps of 1840 and 1879⁹ locate on the present site “chapel and graveyard”, and “meeting and yard” respectively. The Ordnance Survey map of 1885, also locates the “Methodist” church next to the New Inn¹⁰, and other census records of the nineteenth century mention only one chapel on the same site. Various rectors of All Saints in their parish returns to the Bishop of Ely also made reference to only one dissenting body: G. Pearson in 1825, C. Tickling 1877 and E.L. Pearson 1897 (by which time it was called a “Congregational Meeting House”).¹¹

Most ministers between 1813 and 1875 were clearly not Particular Baptists, since they recorded many infant baptisms in their own hand. One exception was William Jobson, the founder (1813-33), of whom it was written in 1817 “A church was formed on anti-pedo baptist principles”, and who merely named about sixteen children. His successor, E.A. Marsh (1833-54), was a self-proclaimed Independent who baptised 142 children during those years, thirty more during 1857-62, and sixteen in the vacancy of 1873-4. He was also mentioned in the

6. Henceforth called the “Record”. There are other notebooks including one of committee meetings 1877-1917.

7. H.O. 129/188/2/8/15.

8. I am indebted to Mr. Kenneth Parsons of Girton for his advice on this subject. All Baptist and Congregational Year Books are in Cambridge University Library (C.U.L.). Many Annual Reports of Cambs. Congregational Union are in C.C.R.O.

9. C.U.L.

10. Denomination wrong, site correct. Sheet LX19 (187).

11. Ely Diocesan Returns (E.D.R.) in C.U.L. 1825 c1/6; 1877 c3/26; 1897 c3/36.

Baptist Reporter of 1847,¹² in a description of the adult baptism of two of his flock at Ashdon Baptist Church by Revd. G. Tubbs. The report referred to "the strict communion Baptist church at Castle Camps... which however incredible or incomprehensible it may seem, has, nevertheless... a paedobaptist minister". Most of the successors of E.A. Marsh also inscribed infant baptisms in the Record, the exception being John Robertson, originally a Presbyterian from Aberdeen. His arrival at Castle Camps remains a mystery, but one is tempted to wonder if he was the minister of that name referred to in the *Baptist Reporter* of 1847, who had been "born again" at Wallsend after which he had established nearby a separate cause with spectacular results. No infant baptisms were recorded by him, and during his ministry E.A. Marsh, after three years at Cockfield (Suffolk), returned and performed that task as "Minister without Pastorate". It is, however, very clear from press reports¹³ about the new building (1856-7) that John Robertson was an active minister "through whose energy and zeal, the congregation has greatly increased" and further in a list of members of 1876, thirty-six were accredited to his ministry. However, the reference in the 1871 census to a Particular Baptist Chapel, and in the Record to Pastors Charles and Stephen Ives in the 1870s, again tempts one to wonder if John Robertson set up a temporary Baptist cause after 1861, although there is no recognition of this in the Baptist records of the day.

II

Some Ministers of Castle Camps

1. William Jobson 1813-33

William Jobson, the first of the ministers, was an itinerant preacher who arrived in November 1813, and in his own words "preached in the open air from Mark 16 v.15, and a few people received the word with joy and many mocked... on the following sabbath I came again, a great number of people attended. I then told them if they could provide a place I would come and preach to them". An old building was procured, and, threats of eviction having been withdrawn with the help of the Anglican rector, Wilfred Clarke, a church was founded in 1817 and by 1822 there was a "clay brick" building and graveyard. There are few details of his ministry, but he named six children of Daniel and Amey Chapman, three Barkers, three Overalls, the daughter of Henry and Ann Chapman and Lawrence and Ann Baynes, and the sons of John and Sarah Jefferies, and Benjamin and Hannah Belsham - all members of this young

12. p.362.

13. *Cambridgeshire Chronicle, and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald and Huntingdon Gazette*. Aug. 2 1856; June 13 1857. Cambridgeshire Collection, Cambridge Public Library.

church. Among his ten burials was that of Ann Chapman in 1826. "Mr Jobson continued to labour among the people with success, till the year 1833, when it pleased the great head of the church to remove him by death".¹⁴

2. Edward Andrew Marsh 1833-54

After the death of William Jobson, "in its destitute state, the congregation was supplied at times by neighbouring ministers and particularly by Mr. Marsh who was then preaching at West Wrattling... the church and congregation approving of his ministry, gave him an invitation to come to them for a few weeks on probation". This led to a call, which he accepted on condition of "open communion at the Table of the Lord", thus proclaiming his Independent views from the outset. His "ordination" in November 1833 was much more formal than that of William Jobson, and there were present named ministers from Duxford, Fowlmere, Newport, 'Bumpstead', Linton, Haverhill and Wickhambrook. As minister, Edward Marsh recorded in his own hand 142 infant or child baptisms, including thirty-five in 1837, of which twenty-six were in November alone, when six of the ten children of Daniel and Amey Chapman, and four of Benjamin and Ann Barker, most already named by William Jobson, were christened, the Chapman children ranging in age from six to fourteen years. In 1854 Marsh moved to the Congregational church at Cockfield (Suffolk) where he baptised local children as well as some of Thorpe Morieux, Felsham, and even Needham Market. Three years later he was back in Castle Camps as "minister without pastorate", who nevertheless baptised a further forty-six children when the need arose.

He was a broad-minded pastor, who christened at least eleven illegitimate children, even naming the "imputed father". He served nonconformists from a wide area who brought their children for baptism, including Charles and Martha, Henry and Ann, and Samuel and Ann Chapman, all of Helions Bumpstead, and from the same village Joseph and Esther Ruse,¹⁵ John and Sarah Carder, William and Harriet Wright and Edmund and Elizabeth Midson.

From Shudy Camps came twenty-one children, including five of Abraham and Charlotte Baynes, seven of Edmund and Harriet Mynott and three of Charles and Mary Root. From Radwinter came nine children of John and Sarah Mizen, and there was an occasional child from "Hemstead", Haverhill and even Saffron Walden. The nineteenth-century exodus to London had already begun, and in 1857-9 John and Emma Jefferies brought their children from "Worlich" and "Plumsted".

Although most fathers were "labourers", there were also farmers, including Daniel and Amey and other Chapmans, the Ruses, Mizens, and Bayneses. Those of other callings were carpenters (John and Sarah and Robert and Mary

14. He was buried at Old Independent Church, Haverhill, where there is a wall plaque in his memory.

15. Daughter of Henry Chapman.

Jefferies), and thatchers (Benjamin, Charles and John Barker and the Belshams, Benjamin, John, Charles and Alfred and their wives). Shoemakers included William and Charlotte, and William and Mary Leonard, and Samuel Smith, father of five children of Sophia French. Among wheelwrights were John and Emma, and William and Mary Jefferies, and Stephen Barker was a blacksmith. There were also shopkeepers, victuallers and publicans including Isaac Chapman, John Wells and Henry Bowyers.

Edward Marsh buried forty-eight people at Castle Camps and ten more at Cockfield, including in 1857 William Tickner whose headstone may still be seen there. Among those at Castle Camps was his wife Jacolina/Jemima in 1860, whose name together with her husband's may be seen on their gravestone by the church. The burial records of Edward Marsh confirm the high incidence of infant mortality in a community where the birth rate was also very high, and included children from more affluent backgrounds such as Mary Ruse in 1849, but by contrast he buried William Cowell aged eighty, and Henry Chapman aged eighty-two.

In his evangelistic work, Edward Marsh travelled within, but also far beyond, the bounds of the parish, where services were held in houses, in barns, and out-of-doors. "Prayer and preaching" was reported at Camps End 1833-42, and at Helions Bumpstead during most of his ministry. Other places where he led worship were Pale Green, "many times to a great number"; Withersfield Green (Suffolk), "to a great number of well-conducted persons"; Wiggins Green, Sayers End, Cardinal's Green, "to 250 persons, June 30th 1850... Jesus cured the blind man" and Horseheath. There were also the homes of "Mrs. Graygoose, James Mallion, Adam Lees, Mr. Wright and Charles Wright". He met with some opposition "principally by professors... many or some have tried to raise a spirit of foolish jangling... this I am glad to say I have been preserved from... treatment of a trying character has been my lot here".

The ministry of Edward Marsh witnessed the most dramatic event of the time in Cambridgeshire; the murder at Castle Camps of Susan Lucas in 1850, by her husband Elias and sister Mary Reader, who administered arsenic in a "water-mess".¹⁶ A very lengthy account of the trial and subsequent hanging may be found in the *Cambridge Press, and Huntingdon, Bedford and Peterborough Gazette* March 30 - April 20th of that year.¹⁷ Although the three lived at Camps Green where the murder took place, both sides of the family also had strong ties with Shudy Camps.¹⁸ Here Elias Lucas was baptised in 1825, the son of Henry (labourer) and Mary, of Castle Camps. Later baptismal records name them Henry and Mary Anne of Shudy Camps, but I have assumed that they are the same people since the names of some of their other children, notably Adam and

16. A mixture of bread and water. The word "mess" is still used locally for bread and milk.

17. C.U.L. on microfilm. Reproduced in full by the writer and available on demand.

18. Parish Records - C.C.R.O.

Jane¹⁹ correspond with the members of the family who visited Elias on his penultimate day. However, whilst from 1825 to 1832 Henry Lucas is described as “labourer”, from 1832 to 1844 he is called “parish clerk and sexton”, an office hinted at by Elias in his final letter to his parents in which he refers to familiarity with “tolling the bell”. The use of biblical names may also be evidence of the ecclesiastical connection of the family. Assuming that Henry Lucas had been thus promoted, he must have been doubly mortified by the events. According to the Press, Elias Lucas himself was a “shrewd and intelligent young man, could converse well and sensibly although his education had been very deficient”. He was certainly literate and able to write two well-constructed letters to his parents and fellow prisoners. We are also told that “he was not in the habit of frequenting public houses but till within the last four years and previously attended a place of worship”.²⁰

Susan Lucas (née Reader) the victim, daughter of Henry and Elizabeth who were married at Shudy Camps in 1827, was born there, baptised in 1828 and buried on February 28, 1850, in the same place as her infant children Elizabeth and Elias. Following the birth of several other children including Mary (the guilty party), and Sarah who visited her in prison, Elizabeth Reader died in 1842 and was buried at Shudy Camps - the Press noting of the prisoner “her mother is dead”.

The public hanging drew from towns and villages around Cambridge an estimated crowd of 30,000 to the site of the county gaol, where the gallows were erected opposite the mound. The streets nearby and even the river Cam were also thronged with people for a good view. E.A. Marsh took the opportunity to preach a sermon based on Psalms 17, v.2 and 50, v.4, since although all those concerned had been baptised in the Anglican Church, it can be assumed that, living at Camps Green, (at Bain’s, now Park, Farm with Thomas “Reeder”, uncle of Susan) the young couple may have attended the chapel. Strong support for the commutation of the death sentence came from the “dissenting churches” of Cambridge, where copies of a petition were left for signatures, as well as at “other places in the town”. Altogether over 1,800 men signed the appeal, and a separate one bearing 1,500 signatures of the “ladies of Cambridge” was also forwarded.

Having spent his retirement years in Castle Camps, Edward Marsh returned to his home in West Wratting where he died in 1883.²¹ He is commemorated at

19. In his final letter to his parents he refers to “dear brothers, Lucius, Adam, Isaiah, Hosea, Cain-Obadiah, and William” and “sister Jane Isabella”.

20. Possibly the Independent Chapel.

21. *Congregational Handbook* 1880-4 C.U.L.

Castle Camps by his gravestone in the yard and the tablet above the rostrum, inscribed:

IN MEMORY OF
THE REVD. EDWARD ANDREW MARSH
(PASTOR OF THIS CHURCH AND CONGREGATION UPWARDS
OF TWENTY ONE YEARS)
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
13th MARCH 1883
AGED 94 YEARS
"LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE, AND THE GLORIOUS
APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD AND OUR SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST"

3. Charles Norman 1861/2-72

It is difficult to establish the exact length of the ministry of Charles Norman since his gravestone records it as nine years, and yet in the Record he inscribed baptisms from 1861 until 1872, commencing with that of his grand-daughter from Newport, Essex. Among the 125 "baptised with water in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost" were names and categories similar to those of Edward Marsh. Perhaps the most interesting baptism was as follows:-

Mr Mark Harris a Converted Polish Jew having made a Public Profession of Faith in Jesus Christ as the true Messiah and the only hope of his Souls Salvation, was Baptised with Water in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost April 2 1865 by C. Norman, Minister of the Gospel.²²

Another interesting case was that of Edmund Hall, baptised in 1866, who sixty-four years later wrote a letter (still extant) to "The Rev. Congranatiel" in search of his baptismal certificate. His intention was to prove his age, in order to qualify for the old age pension, since he had already written to the "London Reg^d but they are hopeless". His letter is indicative of the very low standard of education of the labouring classes in the mid-nineteenth century.

Charles Norman buried ten people in the chapel yard - mainly members of well-known church families including the names Woodley, Jeffery, Belsham, Wenham and Chapman (David son of Daniel, and his own son Henry).

4. George Haigh 1889-1917

The longest and most distinguished ministry in the history of the nonconformist church at Castle Camps was that of George Haigh. He is com-

22. By 1871, Mark Harris "grocer and publican" was living at the New Inn with his wife Eleanor. As a shopkeeper, he was commissioned in 1884 to provide cake at 9d per lb for the ordination tea, at a time when he was serving as church treasurer for four years. He was also a delegate to the County Congregational Union in 1879, 1883 and 1887, and at his death in 1901 he was a district councillor.

memorated by a central plaque above the rostrum "erected by members and friends in loving memory of a faithful ministry" and by the communion table presented in 1950 by his three children. He could not have arrived at a more opportune time since, following the ministry of Charles Norman, there had been a series of changes of pastors, including G. Barber who remained for only one year, 1875-6, marked by ill health and ending in a payment of £10 by the Congregational Union "if he resigns now instead of three months hence". Benjamin Tonkin stayed only two years, J. Brockis lasted four years, and his successor G.A. Suttle three, and W.J. Holder, who appeared in 1886, vacated the pastorate with minimal notice, at a time when the parlous state of the cause had led to a serious discussion by the County Union about the possibility of making Castle Camps a mission station of Haverhill in the Suffolk Union. This proposal was vigorously opposed by Daniel Gurteen of that town, a strong financial supporter of Castle Camps church who had given the Manse in 1884, and who enlisted the help of Cakebread and Cottingham, the Haverhill ministers, in the search for "a young man of energy and musical tastes and limited to a three year pastorate". They persuaded George Haigh of Barrow near Bury to accept the call, the congregation having agreed to raise £40, Daniel Gurteen £15, and "Mr. Bond of Cambridge" £10, towards his salary.

The problems facing George Haigh in this isolated agricultural village were great. Farming was depressed, due largely to the influx of cheap grain from North America and many labourers left, chiefly for London, in search of work. Giving to church funds was depleted, and even the annual grant from the County Union was reduced to £15 because there was work for women at Castle Camps. The First World War not only removed many young men, but several, named on the front of the rostrum, were killed, including some baptised by George Haigh.²³

In spite of these problems, and his own precarious finances, George Haigh presented to the Cambridgeshire Congregational Union the annual report obligatory for all aid-receiving congregations, in a spirit of constant optimism, seen in the following extracts:

1892 "A very hopeful feature is the large attendance of young people at the evening service."

1894 "Sixteen new members joined the church at the beginning of the year."

1896 "The building never looked more beautiful... the money that was required has been raised."

1899 "Heavy losses sustained by the church and congregation through removals" but "there are in the Sunday School, 136 children."

23. Walter Clement, 1897: Frank Pearl, 1891: William Woodley, 1890: Ellis Woodley, 1893. Others who died were church attenders, including Fred Wright, Fred Wenham, Joseph Rooks, Joseph Reader, Walter Barrett, Charles Cowel, Walter Dockerill, William Leonard, W.A. Pettit and R. Rawlinson.

In 1907, the Jubilee was held - "the evening meeting was a truly remarkable one... the congregation filled the chapel to its utmost capacity". In the same year, the now distinguished minister was elected chairman of the County Union for 1908, and he continued on the executive committee until at least 1912. The year 1910 saw the purchase of the freehold from Charterhouse, and the holding of the annual County Meeting at Castle Camps and "a right good time we had - in the interval between the luncheon hour and the afternoon service, reverend pastors and grave deacons indulged in the fine old game of cricket".

In spite of great efforts, the membership declined and in 1917 George Haigh died at the relatively early age of 67. He is still remembered today as "an elderly gentleman with white hair who kept order among the young people in the gallery with the help of a long pole", but he is also remembered with gratitude by those whose former relatives he baptised. Altogether he recorded in his own hand over 230 christenings, including a considerable number brought back to the home church from London²⁴ and elsewhere. There were no longer any burials in the chapel yard, but George Haigh was present at the Anglican graveyard for the burial of his own people, many of whom were children whom he had baptised at home "because it was ill at the time". By contrast he was able to conduct marriages since the chapel was licensed for that purpose, and in 1911 he married his own son Joseph Bernard. The family grave in Castle Camps Parish Church yard indicates that another son, James Harold, was drowned in the *Lusitania* in 1915.

5. Mark Mitchell 1918-33

Following the death of George Haigh the church was again most fortunate in the appointment of Mark Mitchell. He inherited a membership of thirty-one adults and seventy-nine Sunday school scholars and ten years later the membership was forty-five, with sixty-three scholars and eleven teachers, when it was reported to the County Union that

Mr. Mark Mitchell has been in charge of this church since 1918. He is an incurable optimist, and, after ten years spent in a small isolated village, is in love with his people and is agreeably surprised... there is a preaching station at Fleet Farm, Camps End. There are also Bible, Teachers' training, and Choral classes. The church membership shows an increase... The freewill offerings of the people, which in 1917 amounted to £42, last year were £82.

Having worked at Castle Camps for fourteen and a half years as a "wise earnest and faithful pastor... he loved his people and contemplated his approaching severance from them with very keen feelings of regret", he moved to Turvey in Bedfordshire.

In the oral tradition, Mark Mitchell is well remembered for his contribution

24. E.g. 1890, Julia Florence and Louisa Mary Barker; 1903, Frederick Charles Barret; 1905, Walter W. Ives.

to the music of the church. He himself, his wife, son and two daughters were all musically gifted, and during his time the choir grew to thirty members who led the praise, especially on Sunday evenings when the singing has been described as "fantastic".

6. Clifford Taylor 1934-7

Although this ministry was brief, it was in many ways outstanding, and is well remembered by some of the present congregation.

Clifford Taylor organised a railway mission in Cambridge, and was suggested by Mrs. Parkin, daughter of the late George Haigh, as speaker at the Sunday School Anniversary - an event followed by a call to him to fill the vacant pastorate. The Cambridgeshire Congregational Union agreed on condition that he passed its examination. He himself told me that he used to practice preaching in front of a mirror for hours, and he attributed the current decline in the standard of ministers to the lack of emphasis on preaching. His three years at Castle Camps was a time of great uplift in the church, leading Mr. T. Haylock of Moat Farm to remark on one Sunday evening "There are over 500 people in this village and one quarter are in this church". Among his achievements was the founding of the men's club, at first in the Manse, since as a bachelor he chose not to live there. After his marriage to "a young lady from Cambridge" he himself, with mainly voluntary help, built the present structure on land behind the Manse. Also during his ministry in 1935, Mr. T. Haylock gave the land for a burial ground,²⁵ and although this has become the main Castle Camps cemetery, a glance at the headstones reveals that it has mainly served former church members.

Although relationships between the Chapel and All Saints Church, especially when G. Pearson (1825-60) and E.L. Pearson (1879-1911) were rectors, had been cordial, there was little cooperation during the time of Clifford Taylor. He recounted to me that he had to "fight hard" to participate in the Remembrance Day service, although several who had given their lives were members of the Congregational Church. It was also an episode at All Saints which led to provision of a new chapel burying ground.

In spite of having to exist on a salary of £145 per annum, Clifford Taylor "loved the place" and claimed that it was "the best village Congregational church in Cambridgeshire".

After his departure, a number of other lay and ordained ministers were in charge of the Congregational chapel. Among the most noteworthy was Wilfred Monk (1938-44), the war-time minister. He is especially remembered for his work with the armed forces, including the running of a canteen in Cherry Cottage, with the aid of his wife and daughter.

His salary from the congregation was only £75, rising to £104 and only in 1940 was water laid on to the Manse - indicating the frugal life of country pastors at that time. Nevertheless, collections were made for the Red Cross, bomb damage

25. Recently (1989) extended by his son, Mr. P. Haylock.

at Steeple Bumpstead, and for members of the church serving in the forces. The Monks are also remembered for their musical talents, thus continuing the strong tradition of the two previous decades.

It is obvious from the tablet erected on the north wall that although A.J.P. Hodgkins remained for only six and a half years from 1949, he was much appreciated.²⁶ During his time electricity was introduced, to heat and light the church, and improvements were made at the Manse. New Sankey hymn books were purchased since "on Good Friday 1952 there were not enough to go round"; and the new communion table and rail were dedicated.

A lay pastor who officiated from 1961 to 1966 was John B.H. Impey, a poultry keeper of Melbourn. According to Mr. R. Edwards, he drove to and from his home twice on Sundays, a distance of 88 miles, and once in the week. His total remuneration was £3 per week and when it was raised by £1 he returned half of this to the church. Such was the dedication of most of the ministers of this village congregation.

In 1973 following the formation of the United Reformed Church in 1972, Castle Camps was joined with Old Independent Haverhill, Linton and Little Abington, and at the end of the year W. Clements was inducted as the first group minister. He was succeeded in 1982 by R.W. Rooke and S.S.T. Evans, the former of whom moved to the Melbourn Group in 1988. During these years, Castle Camps has participated in many group services and social events, some of which it has hosted. Cooperation with the local Anglican church has also increased to the extent of regular united services. The musical tradition has continued in the form of a monthly evening "Songs of Praise", with occasional guest musicians. The fabric has been greatly improved by the complete refurbishing of the "school room", and the redecoration of the church and installation of a new pipe organ (dedicated 5 March 1989) by the generosity of Mr. P. Haylock and Mrs. C.M. Head. Yet the number of members has declined and the Sunday School has closed.

III

Founder and Early Members and Their Descendants

There were eight founders and altogether fifty-six members in the years 1817-54 under William Jobson and E.A. Marsh. Of these, thirteen were "withdrawn" mainly for "walking disorderly", although Charles and Sarah Wilson and James Suttle returned to the church. Some established dynasties in the chapel,

26. The tablet reads -

ERECTED BY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LATE
REV. A.J.P. HODGKINS
PASTOR AND FRIEND OF THIS CHURCH FOR 6½ YEARS
WHO DIED 23RD MAY 1956
"WELL DONE, THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT"

which in two cases have lasted until the present day, but others had a relatively brief connection. Many of the church families were linked not only by kinship but also by marriage (hence the inclusion of a number of "maiden names").²⁷

The Chapman family

The Chapmans are the most enduring family, Henry Chapman having been a founder, and his great-great-granddaughter being the present church secretary and organist. Those most closely linked to the church were almost all farmers, Henry himself being of "Greenhouse", Daniel of "Pond", "Isons" and later "Perry Appleton". Esther Ruse and her son George were of "Greenhouse", David, Emma and James of "Pond", and Fred and Mary Ada of "Hill" farms.²⁸ Although there are no details of church service by earlier generations, more recent records reveal that George Ruse and James Chapman were members of the finance committee from 1877, and the latter's sons, Fred and James, were deacons. Fred, who died in 1968, represented the church in the Cambridgeshire Congregational Union, worked in the Sunday School, and donated to the village the much-used bowling green.

The Baynes family

Lawrence Baynes, aged thirty-three, son of Richard and Grace, a labourer and later farmer of Shudy Camps, was another of "the eight", and Ann (Hickes), his wife from 1807, was among the "first additions", their last child Charlotte being named in 1818 and "registered" by Edward Marsh in 1837. Their son Abraham and his wife Charlotte (Smith), continued the connection, and all of their seven children were baptised by Edward Marsh between 1838 and 1851, and Isaac and Jeremiah were buried by him in infancy. Jacob, a surviving son also brought his daughter Lucy for baptism in 1867.

Although Malyon Baynes, brother of Lawrence, and his son Moses followed the Anglican tradition, Aaron, another son, and his wife Mary (Bradman) joined the chapel in the 1860s, where their youngest child Frederick was baptised in 1869 (aged 9), following the death of his mother and four sisters 1861-2. Aaron Baynes was reputedly a church member in 1876 and possibly until his death in 1889, after which there are no further chapel records of the family.

The Webbs

John Webb, son of James and Mary, born in 1763, and married to Ann Cooper in 1784, was another founder who died in 1830 and was buried in the chapel yard. His ten children, all born before 1817, had been baptised at the parish church of All Saints, where his wife was buried. None of his sons became chapel members, and the name Webb is only found in the records of George Haigh,

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27. Because of the repetition of Christian names in various families of the same surname, a margin of error must be allowed.
 28. See map. Also plaque on south wall of church. Some farms are outside the present parish.

who in 1892 and 1897 baptised two sons of John Webb and Alice (Mynott) and in 1894 and 1898 christened three sons of Fred and Fanny Webb. However, two daughters of John Webb continued the immediate connection: Ann who married John Belsham in 1802,²⁹ and had seven children baptised at All Saints, of whom Benjamin became an early chapel member, and Harriet who married Joseph Cowel.³⁰ Amey Webb, wife of Daniel Chapman, was also probably part of the larger family.

The Belshams

Benjamin Belsham, born in 1805 and married to Hannah Free in 1826, begat a nineteenth-century dynasty of chapel-goers, with many baptisms and burials. His first two children, Alfred and Priscilla, were baptised at All Saints, but Benjamin was named by William Jobson and Edward Marsh baptised him,³¹ and also John, Betsy, Charles (whom he buried as a young child), William, Arthur and Sampson. Although "suspended for disorderly walking" Benjamin senior was finally buried in the chapel ground in 1870, reputedly aged 74. His brother John married Judith Wenham in 1829, Charles and Mary Ann were baptised in 1837, and their father was buried in the graveyard in 1838 aged only thirty years. Charles, a younger brother, married Rachael (Andrews) in 1840, followed by the baptism of Susan and Jacob, and then his own burial at the chapel in 1867.

Several of the next generation were also christened there, including Julia Susannah, daughter of Alfred and Hannah, who were church members from 1862 until their respective deaths in 1897 and 1904. Five children of John and Mary (Carlton) were christened 1870-82, and three of Arthur (and Jane Harding) who was a member of the finance committee from 1877 until his death and burial in the "yard" in 1879.

Four children of Joseph and Lilian Belsham, another part of the family, were christened about the same time. Virtually all these families were living at Camps Green near to the church in 1881 and may be assumed to have been worshippers in the late nineteenth century.

The Cowels

Among the early members was William Cowel, aged eighty, who was buried in the chapel yard in 1834, and was probably the husband of Lydia Haylock from 1776. Jane Cowel, a founder aged thirty-eight, could have been his daughter born in 1778, who either remained unmarried or was the wife of one of the same name. She was certainly the mother of Ann, wife of Benjamin Barker from 1817. The Barkers are discussed later³² but it is appropriate to include Ann Cowel and her

29. John Belsham born 1784, was the son of Benjamin Belsham and Jane Webb so the family connection was close.

30. See below: "The Cowels".

31. He was rebaptised in the Anglican Church in 1847 as a young adult.

32. See below: "The Barbers".

husband here, since they were among the first worshippers to have their children, Charles, William and Jane named by William Jobson, and later registered or baptised by Edward Marsh, together with Sarah and Stephen. By 1861, Jane Cowel aged eighty-three, whose daughter Ann had been buried in the graveyard in 1849, was still living with her son-in-law and his youngest daughter Ann, in close proximity to the chapel, but there is no evidence of the date or place of her burial.

Susan Cowel née Hall, of Shudy Camps, was among the "first additions" and was the wife of Benjamin Cowel (son of William and Lydia) from 1822 until his death in 1835. Their first three sons were baptised in the Church of England, but in 1833 and 1835, Edward Marsh christened George and Daniel. Since Susan was "withdrawn for disorderly walking" it is no surprise to find Edward Marsh baptising her illegitimate daughter Sarah in 1841. Ten years later she was living "on parish relief" with the three children, and a lodger Charles Malyon whom she married that year. In 1853 Daniel Cowel died; in 1855 George Cowel married Emma Cowel and in 1860 Sarah married Charles Pettit and the family home ceased to exist. However, the last couple continued the church connection by bringing five children for baptism between 1863 and 1876.

Another early relevant Cowel family was that of Joseph and Harriet (Webb) whose son Henry, aged five weeks, was buried by William Jobson, and who brought another son, John, for baptism in 1835.

During the period 1866-1914 other Cowels were christened including Mahala and Emily, daughters of John and Louisa in 1866 and 1868. Three children of George and Mary Ann Cowel were baptised by George Haigh, one of whom, Arthur, is named on the chapel war memorial, and in 1914 Frank and Mary Jane Cowel of London brought back their two infant sons to the family church.

Among church members of the later nineteenth century was "Mrs Cowel" in 1875, possibly Jane or Matilda both of whom had daughters baptised in 1878. Thus for almost a century, various branches of this very large family were involved with the chapel, although even by 1881 many had left the village - doubtless in search of work.

The Mynotts

Richard Mynott of Shudy Camps, married to Sarah Darking in 1794, was a founder member whose wider family were firmly linked to the church for over a century. Although his own baptism, marriage, burial, and the christening of his nine children were all at St. Mary's Shudy Camps, three of his offspring joined the "chapel": Maria (Wilson) buried in 1841 aged thirty in the graveyard, William who joined in 1833 aged thirty-one but was drowned in the millpond at Shudy Camps six years later, and the survivor Edmund who joined in 1838 aged twenty-three. He had married Harriet Osborne the previous year, and together they brought seven children to Edward Marsh for baptism (three of whom he also buried as infants).

William and James Mynott, possibly two of those, brought their children to Charles Norman, who also baptised three each of Thomas and Amelia, and

Henry and Emma Mynott, who joined the church in 1868. William, son of Henry and Emma, continued the connection through the baptism of his eight children by George Haigh, and he himself was finally buried in the new graveyard in 1947 aged eighty-one. Altogether fifteen Mynotts were baptised in the two decades from 1865, and twenty-seven during the ministry of George Haigh, including five children of Esau and Minnie, four each of James and Alice, Charles and Alice, and Charles and Sarah Ann. "H. Mynott", presumably Henry aforesaid, was very active in church affairs during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as Deacon, member of the finance committee, treasurer and then secretary until 1918, and representative in the County Union. After that year there is little evidence of Mynott activity in the church administration, but Mynotts have continued to be buried in the graveyard up to 1986, and the name of Henry Mynott is on the church memorial of World War II.

The Woodleys

Although the Woodleys were not founder members, Charles aged twenty-five was an "early addition" who founded in 1845 a dynasty of Woodleys connected with the chapel to the present day, like the Chapmans with whom they had been linked by marriage from 1769. Of the six children of Charles and Rebecca Woodley, four baptised by Edward Marsh died in infancy or youth, but David and especially Charles, fathered children, grand and some great-grand children, most of whom were baptised, some buried and two married in the Independent church. David Woodley (1834-67) married Betsy Barker, and their son Barnard and his wife Kate Parkin brought four sons to George Haigh for baptism, two of whom, William and Ellis, were killed in the War in 1917 and 1916. A third son Thomas died of war wounds and the youngest, David died aged thirty-one thus ending the male line of that family.

Charles junior (1841-1925) became a Deacon and member of the finance committee, and such was his work as Sunday School Superintendent under George Haigh when numbers rose to 136, that in 1901 he was the recipient of a scroll from the National Sunday School Union for his long service. He and his second wife, Julia Susanna Belsham (daughter of Alfred Belsham), produced eight children, of whom three were especially important in the history of the chapel. Alfred Burton and his wife Hannah brought four children to the church 1898-1907, of whom only Harold James survived as a member in 1956, and whose wife Annie Louise Parkin was church treasurer in 1945. Herbert Ernest Woodley (1875-1968) is remembered as the leading baritone in the choir of the early 1930s, and his daughter Eva as the leading alto. His son Ewart (1898-1970), who married Mabel Agar (of a well known chapel family) had four children, of whom Dinah and Phillip were regular Sunday School scholars in the 1930s. Harry Woodley (1897-1982), who married Daisy Humphries in 1924, produced twelve children, some baptised in the chapel, many of whom attended the Sunday School most regularly in the 1930s and 1940s. Nearly all have moved to

Haverhill, but June (Mrs. Frestone) and Russell Woodley are still to be found in the congregation.³³

The Cowlings

Another founder was Sarah Cowling aged about twenty-five, who was possibly a former Mynott, married to Thomas Cowling in 1810, and so part of a large clan, mainly loyal to the Anglican cause. The most notable exception was Joseph Cowling, who, with his second and much younger wife Jane (Wilson), brought six children for baptism between 1867 and 1883: Joseph Henry, William Charles and Henry Arthur to Charles Norman: Frederick Benjamin, who died in infancy, to George Barber: Alice to Benjamin Tonkin, and Christopher to George Suttle. Joseph was the son of William and Mary of Camps Endway, and Jane was the daughter of Jacob and Mary (Barker) and grand daughter of Joseph Wilson and Elizabeth Webb - all surnames with chapel connections. In 1881 they were living with six children at Camps Endway, a considerable distance from the church, but "Mrs. Cowling" was a member and Joseph was church secretary, 1879-85, until they moved to Haverhill.

The other "chapel" Cowlings were Thomas, (brother of Joseph) and Maria (Wilson), daughter of Joseph and Sarah of Shudy Camps, who also lived at Camps Endway. Married in 1851, they were still there in 1881 with six of their twelve children, of whom Edward and Isaac had been baptised by Charles Norman in 1869 and 1872.

The Wilsons

The Wilsons were another large group with branches in both Shudy and Castle Camps, whence a number supported the Independent chapel. Charles Wilson, born at "Shudy" in 1797 and his wife Sarah (Lister) were married in 1819 at All Saints, and had their early offspring christened at St. Mary's, Shudy. They joined the chapel in 1834 and 1836 respectively and brought Henry, Jemima and Rebecca to Edward Marsh for baptism between 1836 and 1843. In spite of a period of "withdrawal under a spirit of prejudice", they returned to the fold and were recorded as members in 1876, about the time of their deaths. Their children did not emulate them, although Jemima and her husband, Henry Barker, were living next door to the ageing Wilsons between 1861 and 1871, very near to the chapel.

William Wilson, brother of Charles was also baptised at Shudy Camps in 1810, and joined the chapel in 1835. His first wife Maria (Mynott) was an early member, buried by Edward Marsh in 1841 following the baptism and burial of their son Henry. In the same year, William Wilson married another church member, Ann (née Lister) "Taylor, rather Mynott, now Wilson".³⁴ He outlived

33. Herbert Ernest and his wife, Ewart and Harry Woodley are all buried in the present graveyard.

34. Joseph Taylor of "Shudy", her first husband, of 1812-28, was an early member who may have persuaded her to join.

his older wife and remained a church member until at least 1876, and possibly until his death in 1885. His daughter Esther and her husband Robert Barker, with whom he lived for many years, brought Maria in 1865 and Henry in 1870 for baptism. Mercy was christened by Edward Marsh in 1873, and Edith by John Brockis in 1879.

The Barkers

By 1851, there were eight households of Barkers in the area of Camps Green, of which some had been connected with the dissenting church from 1818 when Benjamin and Ann (Cowel) brought Charles to be named. In turn, some of the next generation brought their children to Edward Marsh: Charles and Dudley (Joyce), Stephen and Susan (Barret), and Jane and her farmer husband Robert Bedford of Radwinter who made the journey in 1859 and 1862. From another family came John Barker and his wife Ann (Kidman), who presented four children between 1837 and 1848 followed by church membership for John in 1849. Burials in the chapel yard at that time included two infants, Charlotte and Robert, Ann wife of Benjamin in 1849, and Stephen his son in 1854 aged twenty-seven years.

Later baptisms included the four children of Robert (son of Cornelius Barker - not an attender) and Esther (Wilson) between 1865 and 1879, and the daughters of Jabez and Sarah, and Walter and Sarah in 1865 and 1867. These last two were sons of Moses and Eliza of Shudy Camps, where the family was involved in the Anglican church. In 1881, Benjamin Barker aged eighty-six, Walter and Jabez and their families were all living at Camps Green, so that one can assume continued church attendance in the late nineteenth century.

The Jefferys

Among the early members were two branches of the Jeffery family headed by the sons of John Jeffery (1776-1842) of Shudy Camps, who was buried in the chapel yard in 1842. John, born in 1798, married Sarah Cooper of Castle Camps in 1820, and although their first three children were baptised at All Saints, Joseph, Charles and Charlotte were brought to Edward Marsh, who also buried the last, aged five years. Joseph was later buried by Charles Norman, and Sarah by John Brockis. Robert, born in 1802, married first Charlotte Chapman, twin daughter of Henry and Ann, and together they joined the church where Charlotte was buried in 1834. The following year he married Mary Ann Barret who became a member in 1848 when her husband ("withdrawn for disorderly walking" in 1836) was reclaimed. Their five children were baptised by Edward Marsh 1837-51, Martha was buried at the age of three, Robert himself was buried by Charles Norman in 1867, and Mary Ann two years later.

The next generations were also brought for baptism: Joseph Phillip, grandson of Robert, by Charles Norman in 1865, when Charles and Emma Jeffery of Bethnal Green also returned with Clara Harriet to the family chapel. Even earlier, in 1857-9, John and Emma Jeffery of London had two daughters christened by Edward Marsh, who had baptised Ann, Frances and Arthur,

children of William and Mary. Their son Arthur, who married Eliza Parkin in 1872, brought Charles Arthur to G.R. Barber; Emma to B. Tonkin; Henry to J. Brockis and John to G.A. Suttle, all between 1857 and 1883.

Among the members noted in 1876 were Mrs. W. Jeffery of 1840, probably Rebecca, wife of William, who was living at Camps Green in 1871 aged fifty-three, but was buried in 1877 in the parish graveyard. The list also included Mr. and Mrs. W. Jeffery of 1866 and 1859, doubtless William and Mary aforesaid, who were still at Camps Green in 1881.

Like others connected with the chapel, whose who did not move in search of work lived, at least until 1881, in its vicinity.

There were some founder and early members whose family names are found only briefly in the Record. These included the **Overalls**,³⁵ of whom William was a founder whose death in 1833 was reported by Edward Marsh,³⁶ and Ann, possibly the wife of James "Overhill", an early member. In 1849, Edward Marsh received into membership John and "Melicent" Overall, possibly the John and Emilia of the Census returns of 1851 and 1861. This couple had already brought their children to the chapel long before joining; William Jobson had named Joseph, Mary Ann and James (whom he buried), and Edward Marsh baptised the first two and William in 1837. Mary Overall who was buried in the graveyard in 1828 aged twenty-five, was probably Mary Chapman who had married Richard in 1822. This appears to be the extent of the involvement of this declining family, of which only one household was named in the 1881 Census, and only fifteen burials may be found in the Parish records 1814-1900.

The Listers

Those of this name involved in the early days of the chapel were the children of Shadrach and Ann, married in 1786 at Shudy Camps. Ann Lister, wife of Joseph Taylor in 1812 and Sarah, wife of Charles Wilson in 1819, have already been noted,³⁷ and in 1821 William married Harriet Barker, daughter of John and Martha of Castle Camps. This couple produced six children all baptised at St. Marys', Shudy Camps 1821-35, probably before they joined the chapel under Edward Marsh. Both were withdrawn - William "under a state of jealous feeling between him and his wife", and Harriet who "died November 11 1845, of fever and broken constitution, arising from a fit of jealous feeling". Finally in 1843, both Jane (possibly their daughter aged seventeen) and Susan Lister of Shudy Camps brought their "fatherless" children for baptism - thus ending the records of that name at the chapel.

A final example of an early but transient chapel family is that of **John Adams**, farmer, who joined about 1830, and his second wife Rebecca, who are commemorated by a wall plaque and a gravestone in the old yard. They were married in 1838 aged forty-nine and thirty-eight years and buried in 1848 and

35. Also spelt Overhall and Overhill.

36. I have failed to find any record of his burial.

37. See above: "The Wilsons".

1845 respectively. A son from a former marriage, George Adams, lived at Slough Farm with his wife and many children, but there was no further contact.

These are a few of the many families of whom generations have been loyal to the chapel in the last two centuries. My endeavour has been to describe some involved from the outset.

IV

Fabric and Furnishings

The first chapel was built in 1822 and surrounded by a burial ground, on the site of the present church. In 1848 a vestry was added at a cost of £52 of which the minister himself raised £24, six new pews were made, two "branch candlesticks for the vestry" were given by Mrs. A. Baynes, pulpit candlesticks by Barnabas Webb of Haverhill, and "two cushions for the pulpit by Miss Phebe Andrew". In 1856 the foundation stone of the present building was laid with great ceremony and the following year, by public subscription, the bell tower and clock were added. There was also a burial ground which was used until at least 1875, after which, until 1935, the parish churchyard served. The interior included a gallery, and, beneath a recessed arch at the opposite end, a pulpit, which during the time of Benjamin Tonkin was incorporated in a rostrum, fronted by a harmonium and choir pews. Recent alterations to the church hall have revealed the possibility of a second door into that part of the church, corresponding with the one in present use.³⁸ In 1878, also due largely to the efforts of Benjamin Tonkin, a hall, or school-room (still so called), was added to accommodate the large numbers of children and young people.³⁹ The Record in one part attributes the restoration of the chapel at a cost of £160 to the ministry of G.A. Suttle (1883-6), but on another page it is attributed, together with the erection of the iron fence, to G.A. Barber in 1876.

In 1936, under Clifford Taylor, the present rostrum was built, retaining the old steps and the iron balustrade which was moved to each side, and an oak front was added, on which the names of those who died in the First World War were inscribed.⁴⁰ The old choir stalls were replaced by the present tiered pews, and the harmonium was moved to the rear of the rostrum (being replaced in 1939 by a Reed organ). During the years 1947-54 the rostrum and communion area in front were furnished as they are today. The communion rail (and also the front porch and a seat in the graveyard) was contributed by the "Forces canteen fund" of the Second World War, in gratitude for hospitality and services rendered.

38. Information from Mr. R. Edwards.

39. See minutes of finance committee from 1877 - at the opening, tea was served to 110 and soon afterwards the chapel was insured for £220, the schoolroom for £100, the pews and gallery £70, and the pulpit £10.

40. By Mr. R. Edwards.

The Manse, burial ground and men's club (still standing, but unused) have already been described. By the early 1950s, electric lighting and heating were installed, partly at the expense of the County Union, but also by generous donations of members and friends. Before this, the church was lit by oil lamps, and heated by stoves fuelled by coke at a cost in the 1930s of £2 per annum. Paraffin lamps helped to heat the church, which relied greatly on the dedicated work of members to sustain it in warmth and light.

In more recent years there have been many improvements at the rear of the premises, in the form of a cloakroom, and beautifully furnished kitchen area in the refloored, decorated and carpeted "school-room".

Throughout its history, the present building has been constantly repaired and renovated with loving care, usually by the efforts and at the expense of the members and other villagers.

MABEL EVANS

A Century of Presbyterian Activity in Crewe 1844-1947

Long before the railways, what is now Crewe was a typical civil township of mid-Cheshire, known as Monks Coppenhall. Situated in the Hundred of Nantwich and the diocese of Chester, Monks Coppenhall with its sister community of Church Coppenhall formed an ecclesiastical parish of nearly three thousand acres. Its religious origins are shrouded but it is known that a building was used as a chapel of ease by the mid-thirteenth century. In 1373 the parish was created when Coppenhall was endowed with glebe land and a rector installed.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries once wholly pastoral areas began to vibrate with the energy of newly acquired forms of power. Both landscape and living patterns were transformed as new methods of production and industrial organisation utilised this power. Factories provided the genesis for the urbanisation of England and towns were created where only villages or hamlets had previously existed. The growth and development of Crewe is one example of these town-creating forces at work, for it was solely the will of the Grand Junction Railway Company which called the town into being.

Before the station was built there was nothing in the way of a nucleated settlement, for Monks Coppenhall was typical of rural Cheshire with its complement of scattered farms and cottages. Church Coppenhall, being the more fertile, supported the higher population but Monks Coppenhall became the site of the railway workshops which eventually changed both its name and its character.

By the end of March 1843 all the initial building work was completed and the migration of workmen and their families from Edgehill into the streets of the new town was effected. The seemingly incongruous decision to transfer a community and its trappings from urban Liverpool to rural Cheshire had been

implemented. Henceforth the relative silence of a pastoral parish in which cheese had been the major product, was to reverberate with other noises. The lanes and fields were to give way to the workshop, cottage, public house and chapel. The Board of the Grand Junction Railway Company had created a town.

Amongst the first artisans who migrated to the new Crewe was a contingent of Scotsmen. Accordingly, meetings for Presbyterian worship were organised in a room at the Royal Hotel, very near to the railway station. The nearest congregations were at Liverpool and Manchester; that at Chester was not formed until 1845. Naturally the majority of the original members at Crewe were Scots highly regarded by the Company's management. Typical members of the early congregation were Francis Amos, chief timekeeper in the railway works, whom Trevithick had brought from Liverpool; George Pottie, foreman millwright, Rechabite, diligent temperance reformer and founder member of both the Mechanics' Institute and the local Co-operative Society; and William Williams from Wales, a foreman in the Tender Shop, whose ties to Presbyterianism proved stronger than his loyalty to the Welsh language because he retained his links with this group even when a Welsh-speaking church was commenced.¹

In January 1844 the newly-formed congregation applied to the Presbytery at Manchester for ministerial assistance, but though they were recognised as a preaching station no full-time preacher was sent to them for over two years. Early the same month the leaders also sought the help of the railway company and, unlike other Dissenters, they received an offer of assistance. The directors granted the infant wing of their school for use on the Lord's Day and the "trifling assistance" of £10 per annum towards a minister's stipend. This, though far from liberal when compared with the cost to the company of the Anglican Christ Church, was more than other denominations received. Perhaps this was because so many well-placed, highly-regarded artisans were leaders of Crewe's Presbyterian cause.²

May 1846 saw James Cross, a Scotsman, installed as the first Presbyterian minister in the town. For three years he laboured in the colony which he described as "... one of the most promising stations in England at the present time". He gave four cogent reasons why a full-time minister should be appointed to Crewe-in-Coppenhall. There were many Scottish persons in the town; many devotees of Presbyterianism; many people accustomed to good preaching - and there was also an excellent opportunity of making good converts from "such as Baptists, Independents and even Methodists". Cross further suggested that if the Presbyterians could build an Institution, the upper storey could be used as a

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1. J. Addison, *St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Chester. 1860-1960*. Commemorative Booklet, p.7. *Crewe Guardian*, 13 April 1878, p.4; 8 June 1878, p.4. *Crewe Guardian*, 7 April 1888, p.8.
 2. R.S. Robson, *Notebook of Manuscripts and Cuttings on the Crewe Presbyterian Church*, n.d. *Crewe Guardian*, 13 April 1878, p.4. Grand Junction Railway Co. Board Minutes, 3 January 1844; 7 February 1844; 24 December 1844.

chapel, whilst the lower could answer the needs of the mechanics who keenly desired a building for evening meetings of their own. He saw a double benefit accruing to his denomination in such a dual-purpose hall. The "mechanics of the town would give liberal assistance in building" and it could be used by the Presbyterians during the day as a school. Thus: "... the field would be preoccupied so as to prevent other rival denominations for a long time."³ Such a hall was never built and Cross's schemes for the Presbyterian domination of Crewe were thwarted.

Although Scottish aspirations for their own hall had not been realised, a move was made to different premises for their Sunday services. The infant wing of the National schoolroom though convenient was not ideal. It lacked suitable seating. Consequently in 1847 they received permission to use the Assembly Rooms in the newly built Mechanics' Institute. Here, for seven shillings and sixpence a week, a splendid new hall, seating about five hundred, was obtained. They used it for the next fifteen years.⁴

The Presbyterian cause in Crewe received a double blow in 1849. First, an economic slump led to a depression in trade and a drop in population, and secondly, Cross died at the age of thirty-eight. Within two years thirty-five members petitioned the Manchester Presbytery for another minister. That the young church had managed to retain so many members through a desperately severe slump, when so many workers were redundant, is indicative of the highly skilled nature of many of the Scottish migrants. Their skills had earned them a place in the lower échelons of management, ensuring their retention in employment. It is to the credit of the leaders and elders that in 1851 the congregation could be reported as standing at sixty-two, a figure only exceeded amongst Crewe's Protestant Dissenters by the Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists. Since W.H. Chaloner has calculated that about three per cent of the town's population at this time was of Scottish origin (perhaps one hundred and thirty-five people) it can be seen that the Presbyterian church did not receive the allegiance of all the Scottish migrants.⁵

When the depression began to lift the Revd. David Belloch of Fife was transferred to Crewe. He opened a building fund and began the search for a site. Money-raising schemes and chapel-building plans did not prevent Belloch and other Presbyterians from sharing in the many facets of Crewe's affairs, for Belloch, in company with Nathaniel Worsdell, a Quaker and superintendent of the L.N.W.R. coachbuilding department, agitated for temperance reform. At least two other Presbyterians, George Pottie and the radical James Skeldon, were also actively involved in the crusade against drink. It was as part of this

3. Letter from J. Cross to Manchester Presbytery, 13 December 1847.

4. L.N.W.R. Company Minutes of Loco. Carriage & Crewe Committee, 13 July 1847.

5. W.H. Chaloner, *Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 1950. pp.59, 67-70. Ecclesiastical Census 1851 - Cheshire - Nantwich Union.

crusade that a Band of Hope was commenced in 1856, to join the Temperance Society founded in 1843.⁶

By the beginning of the 'sixties, when *White's Directory* described the Presbyterians in Crewe as forming "... a numerous and influential sect in the town", the denomination's building schemes were about to bear fruit. In 1861 a site was purchased in Hill Street, near to the Market and hard against the main line to Liverpool. The money for this had been provided by James Barbour of Liverpool, a director of the Railway Company and, with his brother Robert, an active Presbyterian. It was Robert Barbour who had helped to take Presbyterianism into Chester in 1845.⁷

On the 3rd September 1861 the foundation stone for the new church was laid in Hill Street, just around the corner from the town's main Primitive Methodist church. In under twelve months building was completed and the church, costing over £2,000, and seating around three hundred and sixty, was opened by the Revd. J. Welch of Liverpool. Over two-thirds of the cost had already been found by the denomination and before 1862 was over only £250 remained to be paid off: a remarkable feat for a church with less than one hundred members. Much of the credit must be given to Blleloch.⁸

The new church, known to the few as the Presbyterian Church in England and to the many as the Scotch Church, was to serve English Presbyterianism for the next eighty years, until its closure in 1947. A necessary concomitant of a new church was an organ, and this was now rapidly obtained, making Skeldon redundant as leader of the congregational singing - a task long accomplished without instrumental help.

Ten years after the chapel's opening, the congregation received its last grant from the Home Mission, and from 1873 the cause was self-supporting, except for a subsidy towards the minister's salary which was paid until the church closed. In the early 'seventies the total annual income averaged around £150, about £35 of which was derived from seat rents, whilst collections amounted to between £1 and £1 7s 0d per week - the balance recouped from gift days and bazaars. Membership did not exceed one hundred until 1869 and then only for that year, dropping afterwards to around eighty-five. In Victorian Crewe it was a general rule that congregations exceeded membership by about fifty per cent, or even seventy-five per cent.⁹

At the age of sixty the energetic David Blleloch retired from the ministry to be replaced by Samuel T. Dickinson who was at Hill Street for the next ten years until 1881. His tenure witnessed a slump in the railway works and he presided over a declining church. When he arrived in 1871, eighty-one persons were

6. Crewe Mechanics' Institute. Hall Committee Minutes. Many entries between 29 January 1855 and 16 October 1863.

7. *Crewe Guardian*, 13 April 1878, p.4. Addison, *op. cit.* p.6.

8. *Cheshire Observer*, 7 September 1861, p.3; 6 September 1862, p.6. *Staffordshire Advertiser*, 6 September 1862, p.5.

9. *Presbyterian Church of England - Synod Minutes*, 1872 ff. (All figures about membership and finance have been obtained from this source).

registered as Presbyterians, compared with seventy-three four years later and sixty in 1881. This drop in membership is even more significant when viewed against a forty per cent increase in Crewe's population during this decade. That more resolution was not shown in stemming the decline must be due in part to Dickinson's weak pastoring. He was fonder of the whisky bottle than his duties should have allowed; his ministrations suffered; the church's performance and morale were affected in every way.¹⁰

Hill Street remained without a pastor for nearly two years until R.W. Roberts arrived in January 1884. For the next thirty-five years he exercised his ministry, the longest pastorate in the church's history.

These years were the high noon of Presbyterianism in Crewe, especially in the field of education. One of the foremost educationalists in the town was William Dishart (1847-1926) who had arrived in Crewe in 1869, quickly becoming headmaster of the Presbyterian day school established in 1866, which met in both the nearby Primitive Methodist Schoolroom and the Presbyterian schoolroom in Hill Street. When Dishart first joined the staff of the school there were one hundred and eighty-four pupils - a number which was always fewer than those wishing to attend. Because of its reputation the waiting list for the "Scotch" school was always long. Some eighteen years after taking up his post at Hill Street, Dishart resigned to commence an academy, the only private educational establishment in Crewe with any semblance of success, either financially or academically. Following Dishart as headmaster of the Presbyterian school was Henry Struthers, who became Crewe's first director of education in 1903. The tally of ten out of eleven passes in 1902 from Struthers's school to the newly-opened grammar school is an index of his success as a teacher.¹¹

It is clear from this that the Presbyterian cause in Crewe, despite its numerical weakness, exerted considerable influence. A comparatively small membership included personalities of weight in politics as well as education. James Skeldon, the temperance advocate, was one of the protagonists in the Intimidation Affair, along with William Urquhart. Urquhart was discharged from the railway works in 1888 (in company with many other Liberals and Temperance advocates) after thirty-two years service. So inflamed were the passions aroused by the Company's alleged manipulations of local politics that it became an issue in the national press. The details of this conflict, in which the Liberal-Temperance-Nonconformist axis fought to secure political and religious freedom from railway management, has been fully treated in W.H. Chaloner's definitive study of Crewe.¹² Suffice it to say that on this occasion the Liberals managed to get Urquhart, who had served as district secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, employed as the borough sanitary inspector, a position he kept until

10. Robson, *op. cit.*

11. A. Geeson, "Development of Elementary Education In Crewe". Unpublished thesis.

12. W.H. Chaloner, *op. cit.* Chapter Ten.

he retired during the Great War. To add to the influence of the educationalists, Liberals and Radicals, at least two of the town's medical men - Dr. Liddell and Dr. Wilson - worshipped at Hill Street.

Before the First World War the membership at Hill Street reached upwards of one hundred and fifty. An impetus to membership had occurred in 1902 when McCorquodale and Company (printers to the L.N.W.R. since 1846) leased an empty factory under the title of Crewe Stationery Company, and with this came an influx of Scottish-born Presbyterians. Income, in addition to membership, was rising, running at about £300 per annum, adequately meeting all expenses save the minister's salary. This was still subsidised from Manchester.¹³

In the summer of 1903 the minister wrote to Andrew Carnegie requesting his help in purchasing a new organ. In accord with his policy of self-help, Carnegie offered half of the cost if the congregation raised the balance. Consequently an organ was installed the following year, the third at Hill Street. This was the only major alteration to the chapel's fabric and fittings during the whole of Roberts's ministry, though the steep-pitched roof was a constant cause of expense because of damage by high winds.

The long ministry of R.W. Roberts closed on the 30th September 1917. He retired to Manchester. His efforts for the Presbyterians must rank with those of J. Thomas of Union Street Baptists as the longest and most successful of any nonconformist pastor in Crewe.

Following the induction of Robert's successor, S.J. Haggis, in February 1918, signs of the ultimate fate of the church began to appear. Membership returns which consistently indicated a roll of one hundred and forty masked the ageing nature of the support. The depressed condition of trade in Crewe during the twenties meant that the majority of apprentices in the railway works (still the sole employer of male labour) were discharged at twenty-one and thus left the town for employment elsewhere. Emigration was a more potent factor in denuding Crewe of its young life than the Great War. This left a community with an ageing workforce and its youth on the dole. This pattern was reflected at Hill Street where the managers and elders were engaged in an unceasing struggle to raise the money for the church to pay its way. Increasingly, as the Presbyterian headquarters were asking for more support, so the church was caught in the dilemma of rising capital expenditure with a declining capacity to pay.¹⁴

Yet it was during this period that an additional Presbyterian church almost appeared at Alsager, about five miles from Crewe, when the Congregational church in that village became the spiritual home of a number of Scottish drapers with premises in Hanley. They organised the church on Presbyterian lines and, though never dropping the Congregational tag, the Scottish mood of the church was further reinforced when A.E. Evans, a Presbyterian at heart, arrived as minister. This change in emphasis, was a passing interlude in Alsager's history, for it reverted to more orthodox Congregationalism when

13. *Ibid.* p.96.

14. Robson, *op. cit.* *Crewe Chronicle*, 2 February 1934.

Evans and the drapers moved elsewhere.

Membership at Hill Street fell only slightly between 1921 and 1931, from one hundred and forty-eight to one hundred and thirty-two, but this hid the brittle composition of the church. The leadership and the committed Presbyterians were now ageing rapidly. In addition, there was now a large occasional membership, which only appeared for communion or special services. Nineteenth-century Crewe, in common with other towns, could usually produce an average congregation about one half higher than the church membership roll. Invariably in the nineteen-twenties and -thirties the average congregation would be about one half of the membership.

A rapid succession of ministers (four in twenty years) did nothing to create confidence or increase morale and an enquiry was initiated in the middle of 'thirties by the Manchester Presbytery to determine the viability, even the desirability, of keeping the church open. Many members opted for closing and it was only the joint pleas of the denomination's general secretary and a national committee member, coupled with a legacy of £500 from an elder at Hill Street which persuaded the local officials and the Manchester Presbytery to keep the church open. Even in its most prosperous days a large part of the minister's salary had been provided by the denomination's sustentation fund. Consequently some of the more realistic local Presbyterians were convinced that closure would be the more intelligent response. The existence of the Matthews legacy dampened the power of the economic argument for a few years, but the deaths of the more ardent Presbyterians during the 'thirties - W. Gladden (1934), W. Kerr (1936), W.D. Struthers (1940) - and migration to other towns or churches brought the cause to a very low ebb. An unavoidable conclusion is that a "national" church must fade when the stream of immigrants dries up and the community becomes settled.¹⁵

The few remaining leaders were reluctant to continue the struggle against closure and so the endeavour to keep the Presbyterian flame flickering in Crewe was concluded in January 1947, when the remnants of the congregation received notice that the Hill Street Church was to be deleted from the roll of member churches. The winds of war had snuffed out any lingering resistance to closure, whether locally or nationally fostered. Hill Street was sold. It became a wholesale greengrocer's warehouse, which perhaps fitted its fabric better than its role as a church had ever done. Crewe's Presbyterian Church of England became the first of Crewe's major denominations to cease its witness.

P. OLLERHEAD

15. Robson, *op. cit.* *Crewe Chronicle*, 2 February 1934.

CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN FURNESS, CUMBRIA 1842-1981

There are two problems in writing about the history of Churches of Christ—the problem of where to begin, and that of when to begin, for these small, scattered and weak churches were part of what was known as the Restoration Movement, that is to say groups of people in different places at different times in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries moving towards Christian unity on what they believed to be a New Testament pattern. Sometimes they called themselves a pilgrim people as they journeyed towards this goal, knowing that to achieve Christian unity their movement might have to die; and this movement (it was never a denomination) in the second half of the present century has had, for such a small group of Christians, a great influence ecumenically in Britain.

Their churches in Cumbria were situated in three isolated groups: first in Carlisle, Wigton and Aspatria, a group which, in its beginnings, had connections with south-west Scotland; secondly, a mid-group centred in Whitehaven and Workington; and thirdly, one in Furness. Originally the first two formed the North-Western Division, while Furness was included in the Lancashire and Cheshire Division. These were church groupings for such administrative purposes as were needed to handle evangelistic, overseas mission or social concerns. In 1933, long before “Cumbria” was envisaged, Furness too became part of the North-Western Division which was known subsequently as the Furness and North-West District of Churches of Christ.

Given Cumbria's strong Anglican traditions and its isolation in the far north-west of England, it seemed unlikely to those of us who grew up in the district that we would see fulfilment of unity within the body of Christ. And yet, in large part, it was leadership and vision from the Furness group of churches, in the persons of, Dr. William Robinson of Askam-in-Furness, (later the first Principal of Overdale College, Selly Oak), William James Clague of Dalton-in-Furness and George Barr of Kirkby-in-Furness (both ministers), which helped to lead Churches of Christ to seek organic union with other church communions. Union talks were held with the Baptist Church before and during the Second World War, which did not come to fruition. Then Churches of Christ observers were present at the union negotiations between the Congregational Union and the Presbyterian Church of England which were to result in 1972 in the United Reformed Church of England and Wales, and consultations were continued with the new church until, in 1979-80, Churches of Christ voted to become the third participant of that union. It was because some of the Churches of Christ were in Scotland that the United Reformed Church became the United Reformed Church *in the United Kingdom*.

It can be said that the Furness churches had more influence on this move towards union than those churches to the north of the county, though there were more tenuous personal links through individuals who served on the Churches of Christ Union Committee during the years of discussion and consultation. These included Arthur Brown, who originally came from Carlisle; Dr. Philip

Morgan, last General Secretary of the British Council of Churches, who was born in Maryport where his father was an Evangelist; James Forster, a member of the Workington church; and Dr. David Thompson, whose wife was a member of the Dalton-in-Furness church.

In the 1886 Year Book there were thirteen congregations reporting in the present county of Cumbria; in 1914 there were still thirteen, though not the same thirteen, losses being balanced by new congregations; in 1939 there were eleven. By 1980 there were five. Of these, Barrow-in-Furness, Dalton-in-Furness and Urswick became United Reformed Churches, the church at Kirkby-in-Furness joined the Fellowship Association of Churches of Christ, a group of churches which remained outside the union, and the Workington church worships as an independent congregation.

This pattern of isolated groups of churches, comparatively unknown except in their immediate vicinity, was the norm for Churches of Christ in Britain, and yet elsewhere, particularly in the United States, the Restoration Movement developed differently. Indeed, it resulted in one of the largest churches in the States. One strand in that development can be traced to 28th June 1804, when the Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery was signed in the old Cane Ridge Meeting House in Bourbon County, Kentucky, by Barton Warren Stone, the minister, and five other Presbyterian ministers. It contains such sentences as: "We are all unanimous in this point, that partyism and party spirit, which have long existed in the world are in direct opposition to the Will of God, to the prayer of Jesus and to the salvation of the world"; and again: "How soon would the world, seeing all Christians united, believe and be saved?" Five years later, a similar movement led by two other seceder Presbyterian ministers, Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander, began in the western part of Pennsylvania. These two groups merged in 1832 to form the body known as the "Christian Church" or the "Disciples of Christ", and as the American pioneer waggon trains moved westward, so too went members of this young church.

Thomas and Alexander Campbell were natives of Northern Ireland. The father, Thomas, emigrated for his health's sake. When Alexander and his family decided to follow they were shipwrecked off the Scottish coast and had to spend the winter in Glasgow. Whilst there Alexander came under the influence of the Scotch Baptists, who in their turn had been influenced by John Glas. So it is mainly from Presbyterian and Scotch Baptist roots that Churches of Christ in Britain developed in isolated groups which found common cause, either through reading Alexander Campbell's writings or from hearing visiting preachers from the U.S.A. This is the seed from which the Churches of Christ sprang. It explains their congregational form of church government, their emphasis on Believer's Baptism and weekly observance of the Lord's Supper and, above all, their stress on Christian Unity.

It is useful for present purposes to begin with Furness even though the oldest church was in Carlisle, founded in 1840. But Furness people claim that it is from a much older Baptist church, Tottlebank, that some members from Kirkby-in-

Furness seceded over the question of open communion in 1842. The first page of Tottlebank's church book reads:

this booke is for that Church of Christ in Broughton, Furness fells and Cartmel, whereof Mr. Gabriel Camelford [a 1662 ejected minister] is Teaching Elder. The 18th day of ye sixth month called August 1669 a Church of Christ was formed in order and sate down together in ye fellowship and order of ye gospel of Jesus Christ. At the house of William Rawlinson of Tott-banke in Coulton-in-Furness. There we are present, and assisted Mr. George Larkham, Pastor of Church of Christ in Cumberland, and Mr. Roger Sawrey of Broughton Tower a member of Christ and of that particlar Church in London of which Mr. George Coackine is teaching Elder.

Two of these men had been clergy ejected from their livings in 1662. Roger Sawrey was an Ironside. Eventually Tottlebank joined the Baptist Union. Certainly it never reported to the Churches of Christ central organisation, and it is very doubtful whether "Church of Christ" in the first page of the "booke" is what was meant by Churches of Christ in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, even though the first written Confession of Faith contains doctrines whose influence, via the Campbells, on Churches of Christ has been indicated. Adult baptism by immersion was practised. The Breaking of Bread, communion, was the chief service every Sunday and was limited to the baptised. Church government was congregational, led by elders and deacons; one elder served as teaching elder appointed and supported by the church.

It would appear that after a long lapse of time, of which there is not much record, members of Tottlebank living in Kirkby-in-Furness, five to six miles away, were not happy with a drift to open communion. They decided to form their own church about 1842/43. They met as a congregation at St. Mary's Well in Kirkby, and from reading Alexander Campbell's writings developed along "Restoration" lines. They did not know of others holding similar views and practices until a visit in 1854 by Francis Hill, an evangelist working in Whitehaven, who reported to the *British Millenial Harbinger* "that in company with Brother Brown we came on to Kirkby-Ireleth where there is a Church of twenty members with an aged brother as their president". This leader was George Barr who before his death in 1860 reported the existence of this church at Kirkby-in-Furness, which was then added to the number of churches co-operating as Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland. William Barr, son of George, continued in leadership. By 1870 there were forty members. In 1876 they left St. Mary's Well and built their own church at Wallend on the main road. Meanwhile in 1873, a Kirkby member moved to Lindal-in-Furness to work in the iron ore mine there, a change of job from Kirkby's slate quarries. He was John Coward, and he was instrumental in starting a church in Lindal, his first convert being Jacob Airey, a workmate in the iron ore mine. Church growth was rapid in both these villages, and well into the twentieth century there were still

some who remembered the great religious revival in Kirkby and Lindal of 1874-75, and spoke with pride of that year, when there were 53 baptisms at Kirkby and 24 at Lindal.

Ulverston, the market town of the area, started a church in 1877, and another was begun at Askam-in-Furness in 1878, whilst the church at Dalton-in-Furness was founded in 1891. A number of members, mainly farmers, from the Lindal church living in the village of Urswick decided to build their own church there in 1910. These five congregations could claim Kirkby as their mother church. By contrast the church at Barrow-in-Furness, Ramsden Street, was established in 1864 by fishermen from the Whitehaven Church of Christ who made their homes on the island of Walney during the fishing season.

There were other attempts at church extension. Joseph Stables moved in 1871 from Kirkby to Langdale, where there was a church until 1877 when he moved on to Broughton Mills. There he started a Sunday School in his cottage. This too resulted in a church, formed in 1879 but extinct in 1880, and then revived by Mrs. Christian in 1886.

At first the church in Dalton-in-Furness met in a room above a cycle shop, owned by a Furness member. About twelve years after foundation the Dalton members purchased a building in Ulverston Road, which had been built in 1868 as a Methodist Chapel and had been successively an auction and sale room and a print works. In 1904, after the installation of a coke boiler and central heating pipes (at a cost of £34 7s 6d) worship began again there, and continued until 1984 when Dalton's two United Reformed Churches came together as one congregation in the Market Street building. The Ulverston Road building is now a Seventh Day Adventist meeting place.

It is reported that on the first Sunday evening when it was again used as a church there were seventeen immersed in the new baptistry. During the eldership of Robert Oxley a mission room was opened in Dalton's Skelgate for evening worship and gospel services which resulted in the addition to the church of a number of able young men, who were working at that time in the local iron ore mines. There was a church at Swarthmoor, too, on Fox Street, during the early part of the new century. All these efforts resulted in a peak membership of 551 in 1920.

The years between the wars showed a decline in membership, attributable in large part to the closing of the iron ore mines, and the post-war depression. Many young men took their families to the United States and Canada where they linked up with the more fundamentalist branch of the church which had developed there. The isolation of Furness contributed to an inward-looking congregationalism: marrying within the church fellowship was encouraged, finding a partner outside it was frowned upon.

Many young people had to go away for further education at college or university and then did not return to work in the district. This contributed to the decline of the local church. Perhaps, too, the lack of training of elders since the mid-1920's and early 1930's, resulted in too few being interested enough to prepare themselves to exercise the ministry of word and sacrament.

Yet, it was during these years that the seeds of local ecumenical involvement were sown. They began in Dalton-in-Furness where from the early 1930's a Council of Churches arranged united services in Holy Week. Over the years a closer fellowship was developed and many more things attempted together. This culminated in Dalton in 1987, with the first Covenant Relationship signed in the county of Cumbria. Similar ecumenical involvement and development has taken place in Barrow-in-Furness and in the village of Urswick. For the time being this is journey's end for these "Old Roots" of Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Churches of Christ in Britain and America, transferred into the "New Shoots" of the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom.

MARJORIE AND J.D. CLAGUE

Note: The following sources have been used in the preparation of this article:

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REVIEWS

Stating the Gospel: Formulations and Declarations of Faith from the Heritage of the United Reformed Church. Edited by David M. Thompson. Pp.267. Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1990. £19.95

Every Christian Church desires to know how it has come to be, and, in particular, how it has come to share in "the faith once delivered to the saints". The United Reformed Church affirms that the Word of God contained in the Bible is the basic authority for its faith and practice, but it also claims that that faith has come to it through the channels of the Creeds of the early Church and through the statements drawn up within the Presbyterian and Congregational traditions and among the Churches of Christ. It has also gathered together its own main affirmations in its basis of union and it has taken its stand firmly on the Trinitarian doctrine of God.

All these statements of the Faith from the early creeds up to the basis of union have been collected in this volume edited by David Thompson.

The Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds are followed by the Westminster Confession of Faith. This confession was produced in 1647 by the Westminster Assembly of Divines in the hope that it would be the doctrinal basis for a programme of reform which would bring the Churches of England and Scotland into accord. This aim was not attained but the Confession became an influential subordinate standard of doctrine in many Presbyterian Churches.

This confession was accompanied by a "Form of Presbyterian Church-Government" which set forth a plan for an integrated system of Church Courts, for the training, testing, ordaining and overseeing of ministers, and for the provision of church-governors or elders in the local churches. These documents had much influence upon the faith and practice of the Presbyterian Church of England.

The Savoy Declaration of 1658 was a statement by the Independent Churches of their stand on matters of faith and practice. It incorporated most of the doctrinal chapters of the Westminster Confession and added a chapter on "the Gospel" in which it gathered various strands so as to emphasise the positive proclamation of the Good News of the grace of God. It was made clear, however, that the Declaration was not to be forcibly imposed upon ministers and members of the churches as a condition of membership; rather, it was intended to be a statement of the substance of the common salvation. In dealing with matters of practice, the Declaration claims that there is Scriptural warrant for the congregational system which regards each local church as fully entitled to govern its own affairs and to call and set apart its minister and officers, though it should not neglect to consult with other churches for their mutual support.

The longest section of the book is Thomas Campbell's Declaration and Address composed in 1809. It became the recognised outline of the principles held by the Churches of Christ. It repeats again and again Campbell's conviction concerning the ills brought about by the divisions and schisms among Christians; people were tired of "the diversity and rancour of party contentions"; there was need of the peace and unity which could only come by following "Christ and his simple word" and taking "the divine word alone for our rule", trusting that the Holy Spirit would lead into all truth. The aim is to end "our sad and lamentable schism", and yet the address leads to the conclusion that those who give heed to it will join to form "the Christian Association" for the purpose of proclaiming "simple evangelical Christianity, free from all mixture of human opinions and inventions of men". Such a plea has usually proved to be a prescription for the rise of another Christian body. Campbell also dealt harshly with the common argument that in seeking unity Christians should concentrate upon essentials of the faith and allow variety on non-essentials; he dismisses this as a trite distinction and he rightly points out that what some regard as non-essential will be regarded as essential by others and there is a duty to hold to what is essential "so far as we know it". Here too has been the justification for many separations. It also raises queries over Campbell's fervent pleas for the end of the folly and sin of division so as to advance "the common cause of simple evangelical Christianity".

In the twentieth century, the Churches of Christ in America and in Britain have taken a large share in building and rebuilding their links with other branches of the Church.

The way towards the formation of the United Reformed Church was opened by "A statement of the Christian Faith" approved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England in 1956; this was first presented to the

Assembly in 1955 when it was highly commended by the Irish Moderator in his greetings to the Assembly. By 1967 the churches in the Congregational Union had become the Congregational Church and its Assembly produced "A Declaration of Faith". These documents were the seed-bed out of which came the Basis of the union of the two Churches in 1972. A further revision was made in 1981 so as to facilitate the union with the Re-formed Association of the Churches of Christ.

This volume brings together all these documents and provides a practical guide to the strands of belief and practice which have gone into the making of the United Reformed Church.

R. BUICK KNOX

A Regimental History of the Covenanting Armies, 1639-1651. By Edward M. Furgol. Pp.xvii, 471, Edinburgh, John Donald, 1990. £25.00

There is a verse in *Revelation* where, in describing the powers of the Beast, the apostle says "He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them". [Rev. 12:7, NIV] The apocalypse was very central to the thinking of the Scottish covenanters of the seventeenth century, and this is a passage with which they would have been familiar. After 1651, one suspects, this verse would have been turned to again and again by those saints who had to endure the humiliating conquest by an army of English sectarians. Even worse was to follow the Restoration in 1660. How could it be that God's chosen people with whom He had made not one covenant but two (The National Covenant of 1538 and the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643) should be so utterly defeated? Like the ancient Israelites, the Scots found their answers in the prophets. God had delivered them into the hands of their enemies because of the sins of the people. What was needed was an even stricter adherence to the covenants.

But even the Israelites recognised that success in war required more than religious faith, and they made little headway against the Philistines as long as the latter had a monopoly of iron production. In the business of war the covenanters too showed a remarkable degree of professional realism. These Scottish saints went into battle inspired by the fiery preaching of their chaplains, singing their metrical psalms, and beneath banners proclaiming "For Christ's Croun and Covenant" or similar mottos, but behind them was a sophisticated and astonishingly efficient military organisation. For a country that had not been at war for seventy-five years the covenanters very quickly established themselves as the military arbiters of Britain between 1638 and 1644. Covenanting armies campaigned in England, Ireland and throughout the length and breadth of Scotland for fourteen years at a cost in men and materials which was greater than at any time since the early fourteenth century and would not be equalled until the Great War of 1914-18. Measured in simple military terms these armies had very mixed fortunes. There were stunning victories in the Bishops' Wars of 1639-40, at Marston Moor in 1644 and Philiphaugh in 1645. There were even more shattering defeats at the hands of the marquis of Montrose at Inverlochy, Auldearn and Kilsyth (to name but three) in 1644-5,

and Oliver Cromwell at Preston in 1648, Dunbar in 1650 and Worcester in 1651. In the end the defeat was complete; manpower was decimated, resources exhausted, and even the confidence of the godly was shaken.

Edward Furgol's doctoral thesis was entitled "Religious aspects of the Scottish covenanting armies, 1639-1651" (Oxford University, D. Phil., 1983), but those hoping to understand the importance of religion in creating this extraordinary military machine will be disappointed. This book is exactly what it says it is in the title, a regimental history. It is therefore very old fashioned, ignoring the current trend towards exploring armies as societies, and providing only a few pages introduction on the military organisation of the covenanters. The rest of the book is a detailed history of individual regiments, an encyclopaedia of names, dates and places. As a source book for anyone studying the military history of the period this will be an invaluable aid. Those who want answers to what made these armies tick will have to look elsewhere.

KEITH M. BROWN

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1840-1990: A Celebration of Presbyterian Witness during 150 Years. Edited by R.F.G. Holmes and R. Buick Knox. Pp.247. Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, Belfast, 1990. £6.95

If any readers of this journal are of the opinion that recent decisions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland only confirm the fact that it had always been a church marked by prejudice and narrowness of outlook they will be quickly disabused of that opinion by reading this book of essays: indeed, withdrawal from the World Council of Churches and the refusal to enter the new Inter-Church Process are significant departures (circumstantially caused, but not thereby excused) from its long tradition of outward-looking witness and vigorous involvement with other churches in Ireland, Britain, Europe, the Commonwealth and throughout the world. The story of these relationships, though tangled, is an honourable one and amply documented here in essays by Derek Bailie, John Barkley and Buick Knox. But the Irish Presbyterian Church was prominent in many other spheres of activity as well - in promoting education (not only of its own young, but also of the Roman Catholic communities in the south and west of Ireland); in social concern (not only on matters of temperance, but also of housing, unemployment and the civil rights of minorities north and south); in recognising and giving to women their rightful place in the ordering of the church (admitted to the eldership from 1926 and to the ministry from 1973); in adapting foreign and home mission work in the light of changing needs. The essays dealing with these topics make very illuminating reading.

The Assembly's stance on the political issues of Home Rule and Partition and its relations with the governments in the North and South of Ireland, as well as its many pronouncements on the current crisis, are well set out by Finlay Holmes. It is a far from inglorious record: the Presbyterians were remarkably far-sighted and fair. Other topics considered by the essayists (all of whom are

involved in the life of the church they write about) include the development of patterns of worship and liturgy (almost always conservative) and the very strong influence on Irish Presbyterianism of evangelical fervour from the 1859 Revival and subsequent American-led missions (Moody and Sankey, W.P. Nicholson).

Some of the essays would have been increased in value and interest if the writers had given more attention to what has been happening in the Irish Presbyterian Church in the last fifteen to twenty years: one feels that one is learning where the church has been and what it was, rather than where it now stands. Balance is, of course, difficult to get right in a book which is endeavouring to review the past: but the immediate past of the Irish church is a matter of genuine concern to many.

This book is a worthy celebration of 150 years of Presbyterian witness in and from the island of Ireland. It is to be hoped that reacquaintance with its history will stabilize and invigorate the Irish church to recover its boldness, sanity and vision. To stand aloof from other Christians in the interests of preserving some kind of doctrinal purity is the characteristic of the sect, not of a church, and certainly not of a church with a history like that presented in this volume.

DAVID HILL

The Chapel in Argyle Street Bath 1789 to 1989. By Mary Ede. Pp.74, 1989. £5.50 including postage and packing, available from Dr. Mary Ede, 12 Springfield Close, Bath, BA1 5RA.

In 1914 Argyle was, Mary Ede suggests, "typical of the urban Congregational Church". It had certainly passed through some typical phases - early proponents of Sunday and day schools in the 1800s, via Home Missions and the Band of Hope to a thriving institutional structure of whist drives, orchestras and debating societies in the 1900s, with a statutory (if late) contribution to city and Liberal politics, personified by Thomas Ball Silcock - church treasurer, twice Mayor of Bath, Liberal MP for Wells from 1906 to 1910.

This disciplined and professional study penetrates to the heart of the typical, exposing the unique flavour of a fashionable, well-to-do church which for all its faults epitomises the subtle strength of nonconformity - the interaction of people, pastor and place under the authority of the Word. Argyle was Jay's Chapel. He occupied its pulpit for sixty-three years (1790-1853). Such longevity makes James Turner-Smith (thirty-two years: 1890-1922) and W.J. Coggan (seventeen years: 1938-1955) seem fly-by-nights. However, far from degenerating into a chronicle of ministerial achievements, this bluntly honest study confronts shortcomings head on. The miracle is that Argyle survived Jay. Strategic errors by the deacons over his successor precipitated secession (not helped by the old man himself who referred to the seceders as "the dearest and best part of my divided church"; the new chapel called itself "Percy" after Jay's home at 4 Percy Way). A lower-key sixty years followed the high profile of the Jay era, years of consolidation and growth, spiced with misjudgement - in 1886 an unpleasant campaign of anonymous letters hastened the departure of Turner-Smith's predecessor, Thomas Stephens, who had been perhaps unwise to accept a 79:55 call some three years previously.

Such misjudgements stand alongside determined service to the community, loving generosity and lives given joyously to God. During an uncharacteristically short pastorate for Argyle (1923-1926) J.C. Harris had these words inscribed on the church notice board: "This church stands for Sincerity of Worship, Freedom of Thought, Catholicity of Faith, Fellowship in Service, of all who desire to do the Will and live in the Spirit of Jesus Christ". Such high ideals expose all too human frailty. That is part of the dynamics of discipleship. The pleasure of this history is that it never becomes hagiography - and therein lies hope for all the saints. Would that all chapel histories were as honest, meticulously researched and annotated and beautifully produced as this.

DAVID CORNICK

"All Muswell Hill and Little Betty Martin: the establishing of a Congregational Church, 1890-1929." By Clyde Binfield. [*Victorian Values: Bulletin No. 31*, Hornsey Historical Society 1990. Obtainable from the Society, The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottenham Lane, London, N8 7EL. £3.00]

This is a reprint of a lecture given to the Hornsey Historical Society and published as one of an illuminating collection of articles in their annual bulletin. It describes the foundation and formative years of Muswell Hill Congregational Church and also tells us a great deal about the church and social life of that part of London during the first quarter of this century.

The opening paragraph of the lecture must have caught the attention of its auditors brilliantly with an amusing account of the church's stonelaying ceremony when a sudden wind overturned the refreshment table in the marquee. This gave the presiding minister, a Welshman, a chance to make a pointed witticism about the devil and suburbs, picked up neatly by Dr. Binfield at the end of his first section.

This is followed by a characteristic account of some of the North London Nonconformist families who were, or might have been, connected with the founding of the new cause. Here he is able to give full play to his gift for tracing family histories and linking them, often unexpectedly, with a wider world beyond church premises. We are introduced to the impressive ramifications of the Collins family, the Pye-Smiths, Mr. Mudie of the Circulating Library, and the family of Arnold and Clifford Bax. In the process, we also learn a great deal about the movement of upwardly socially mobile Dissenting families from the inner to the outer suburbs, a process which continued apace until the Second World War produced further, and devastating, consequences.

As might be expected, the architecture of the church receives detailed attention, especially as the architect was one of the author's favourite characters, "Holy Murder" Morley Horder. All is so splendidly done that one is left with only two small regrets.

One is that the story had to end in 1929, with the opening of new ancillary buildings and the presentation to the Mayor of a bouquet by the little Betty Martin of the title. Perhaps the Hornsey Historical Society can prevail upon Dr. Binfield to bring the story up to date, dealing with the huge recent social changes and the effect of the Congregational-Presbyterian merger.

The other is a less serious regret. Buried in one of his seventy-two footnotes is a speculation that a Congregational Mrs. de Sélincourt may have been the great-grandmother of Christopher Robin. This has left me with the sad recognition that Dr. Binfield's academic integrity would prevent him from doing what he could easily have done with great plausibility; manufacturing evidence that the most well-known, if intermittent, recent resident of a changing Muswell Hill, Fletcher of "Porridge" fame, was a regular member of the Congregational Sunday School.

DANIEL JENKINS