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EDITORIAL

Anniversaries are for Historians what Heritage is for Conservationists – heady opportunities for getting things wrong in high profile, to be enjoyed as popular means to a greater end. This issue might appear to be unusually anniversary-conscious for a normally sober journal. We have the quatercentenary of the deaths of Barrow and Greenwood, the sesquicentenary of the birth of what is now Westminster College, Cambridge, and the seventy-fifth anniversary of English Congregationalism's first moderators. Professor Collinson mildly describes 1593 as a vindictive year. More might be said for 1844, which

also produced the YMCA (in large part a Congregational artefact with Presbyterian dressings) and the Cooperative Movement. In 1919, it has to be said, people were likelier to think of 'flu than moderators. More to the point, each century since the Reformation is touched upon in this issue and the confusing strands which make for the United Reformed Church are explored by scholars who include two Anglicans and a Baptist. Shadings of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism, and the interaction of Scotland and England (and, for the careful reader, of Wales and England), are mixed with politics, education and ecclesiology. Reason and polemic are refracted through temperament.

We welcome as contributors Patrick Collinson, Kenneth Roxburgh and Marilyn Lewis. Patrick Collinson, Regius Professor of History at the University of Cambridge, was the Society's Annual Lecturer at Newport Pagnell in October 1993. Mrs. Lewis is a graduate of the Universities of Seattle and Washington and Mr. Roxburgh is Principal of the Scottish Baptist College. In writing about the Newport Pagnell Academy, Mrs. Lewis (whose husband is Rector of Newport Pagnell), picks up a story aired in *Transactions* of the Congregational Historical Society by F.W. Bull, an early member of the Society; her sources include the late Catherine Bull, last of that family to be locally resident who, though latterly a firm Anglican, had been formed by and remained proud of her family's traditional Congregationalism. Newport Pagnell's Academy merged with Cheshunt College and the Society is grateful to the Cheshunt Foundation for underwriting the publication of Dr. Cornick's lecture on the pre-history of Westminster College, which now houses the Foundation.

Notes: Dr. R.W. Dale - Aspects of His Work and Influence is the title of a seminar to be held on Saturday 11 March 1995 at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham. This seminar, which forms part of the Dale Centenary Celebration, includes lectures by Alan Argent, Clyde Binfield, Eric Mackerness, Donald Norwood and David Thompson. Further details can be obtained from Dale Seminar, Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham, B4 7SX.

The Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries also holds its first conference in Birmingham in 1995. This is to be held at Westhill College from 28-30 July 1995, under the title "Protestant Nonconformists, 'Strangers', and the West Midlands of England". Speakers again include Alan Argent and David Thompson (on "R.W. Dale and the Civic Gospel") as well as scholars from the Baptist, Quaker, Methodist and Unitarian traditions. The inclusive cost is £95; exclusive of accommodation it is £59. Details can be obtained from Dr. E. Dorothy Graham, 34 Spiceland Road, Birmingham, B31 1NJ.

SEPARATION IN AND OUT OF THE CHURCH: THE CONSISTENCY OF BARROW AND GREENWOOD

I

1993 witnessed a cluster of intertwined fourth centenaries, all connected with different and contrary strands of the religious fabric of post-Reformation England. For much of 1993, it appeared to be impossible to escape from the company of the poet and dramatist Christopher Marlowe, who died in violent and still mysterious circumstances at Deptford on 30 May 1593. Marlowe was alleged to have been an atheist and blasphemer, perhaps even the leading evangelist of a covert school or network of Atheism, which, if true, makes him representative of an *irreligious* rather than religious strand; although it must be said that *Dr. Faustus* is the work of a profoundly religious as well as richly stocked mind.¹

On 29 January 1593, a book was registered with the Stationers' Company called *Of the lawes of ecclesiastical polity*, the work of Richard Hooker. Hooker too was remembered in 1993, not least at the Folger Shakespeare Library and the National Cathedral in Washington D.C., where well over a hundred scholars celebrated the completion of a definitive, critical edition of his works.² Hooker had been urged by his friend and sometime pupil George Cranmer (the son of Archbishop Cranmer's nephew) to say something in his Preface about "the cursed crew of Atheism", but failed to do so, although in a later section of his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book 5, published in 1597, Hooker did discuss Atheism as "the extreme opposite to true Religion"; and we know that he had composed that passage before 1593, since Cranmer refers to it.³

What Hooker did deal with at length in his Preface, at Cranmer's suggestion, was a religious type and persona which was already called Barrowist, after Henry Barrow, a man who at the time of the publication of Hooker's great work had only weeks to live. Hooker chose to regard the total renunciation of the established Church of England by Henry Barrow and his associates and followers, the religious persuasion that we shall, following a long tradition, call for convenience Separatism,⁴ as the logical end and outcome of the agitation of

1. The documents implicating Marlowe and Atheism, which survive in British Library, MSS Harleian 6848 and 6849, are printed in C.F. Tucker Brooke, *The Life of Marlowe and the Tragedy of Dido Queen of Carthage* (1930)
2. This occasion was marked by the publication of *Richard Hooker: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, Introductions; Commentary, The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. W. Speed Hill et al. VI (New York, 1993).
3. *Ibid.*, 1. 45.
4. The most recent work is still B.R. White, *The English Separatist Tradition* (Oxford, 1971).
See also Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters from the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1978); and for much of the prime documentation, Champlin Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research (1550-1641)*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1912).

those who were his prime targets, addressed as “those that seek (as they term it) the reformation of Lawes and orders Ecclesiastical, in the Church of England”, the religious tendency which contemporaries sometimes and posterity habitually call “Puritans”. In Chapter 8 of his Preface, Hooker, engaging the Puritans, wrote of those who, “concurring with you in judgment”, had “advanced without more ado to separate themselves from the rest of the Church and to put your speculations in execution”. He went on to invent a speech for these Separatists, who in the form of this *prosopopoeia* tell their non-separated puritan brethren: “From your breasts it is that we have sucked those things which when ye delivered unto us ye tearmed that heavenly, sincere and wholesome milke of Gods word, howsoever ye now abhorre as poison that which the vertue thereof hath wrought and brought forth in us.” “Thus”, observed Hooker, resuming his own voice, “the foolish Barrowist deriveth his schisme by way of conclusion, as to him it seameth, directly and plainely out of your principles. Him therefore we leave to be satisfied by you [scil., the non-separated Puritans] from whom he hath sprung”.⁵

The exact nature of the connections between non-separated and separated puritan “brethren” was, in these early months of 1593, the hottest of hot potatoes. Parliament was in session and was debating new legislation to tighten up the laws against catholic or “popish” dissenters and separatists from the established Church.⁶ On the very day that Hooker sent a presentation copy of his *Ecclesiastical Polity* to the Prime Minister of the day, Lord Burghley, a Mr. Sandys stood up in the House of Commons to propose that these new laws be extended to embrace not only papists but protestant or puritan separatists or sectaries. This M.P. was probably Miles Sandys, the brother of the archbishop of York and uncle of Edwin Sandys, also a Member of this parliament, a close friend and former pupil of Hooker who, with George Cranmer, had encouraged and advised him in the composition of his great book.⁷ The House of Commons, or what looks like majority opinion within it, did not much like what Sandys proposed, and in the lower chamber (but not in the Lords where the bishops were almost in a majority) the proposed legislation ran into difficulties. It was not only that M.P.s may have disliked lumping with catholic recusants men and women who (in their perception) were wrong for not entirely wrong reasons, and who, unlike the papists, combined their eccentric religious convictions with sincere loyalty to the queen and her régime. They seem to have suspected that the real if hidden agenda was to bring into danger of their lives those unseparated Puritans, and especially the puritan ministers, who had agitated and plotted for further reformation of the Church, and especially for presbyterian discipline and government, always referred to in shorthand as “the discipline”. A prominent group of such ministers, headed by the leading presbyterian ideologue Thomas Cartwright, had recently been prosecuted in

5. Richard Hooker: *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, VI.i.48.

6. J.E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584-1601* (1957), pp. 267-79.

7. Richard Hooker: *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, VI.i.34 n.69, 59-60.

Star Chamber for promoting "the discipline" in clandestine conferences and synods. Although by now released from prison, these ministers were under bond to return there at any time.⁸ Hence, perhaps, Hooker's argument, inserted into his Preface at the last moment at the instigation of Cranmer and Edwin Sandys, that "the foolish Barrowist" derived his schism from the puritan ministers "by way of conclusion".

In early April 1593, the members of the London separatist congregation appeared one by one before the Court of High Commission or its committees, and among other evidence confirmed the very circumstances which Hooker had so recently alleged in print. They informed their judges, no doubt in response to a leading question, that they owed the schismatical principles which they had put into separatist practice to the leading puritan preachers in London. For example, the young goldsmith, Christopher Bowman, who as deacon held the purse-strings of the congregation, confessed that "the forward preachers caused him to fall into those assemblies", naming Laurence Chaderton, master of Emmanuel College Cambridge, whom we may characterise as an establishment Puritan.⁹ Chaderton seems to have been the author of a notorious sermon on certain verses of the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, which were considered to be a proof-text for Presbyterianism, a sermon which defenders of the established, episcopal order of things had been put up to confute.¹⁰ It was to this sermon that Bowman alluded.

This was helpful to the cause of anti-puritan reaction headed not so much by Hooker as by the archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, and by the man who would later succeed him in that office, Richard Bancroft. But we are seeing only one aspect of a complex and troubled relationship between separated and non-separated Puritans which would form the agenda on the left flank of English Protestantism for a full century yet to come.¹¹ Three years earlier, it had suited Whitgift and Bancroft and their colleagues to employ those same "forward"

8. Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967), pp. 403-31.
9. British Library, MS Harleian 6848, fols. 32-6. Bowman confessed "that the forward preachers caused him to fall into those assemblies and that Mr Chattertons printed sermon was the cause that made him enter into this Action". (fol.33^r).
10. On Chaderton and his sermon, see Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982), especially Chapter 3, "Chaderton's Puritanism". Remarkable and detailed evidence of the sermons promoted in the country to confute Chaderton's sermon survives in Chicago University Library, MS Codex 109, which relates to the Suffolk minister Thomas Rogers and the Monday combination lecture at Bury St Edmunds, from which Rogers was excluded as the consequence of a sermon attacking Chaderton's sermon. (I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr John Craig).
11. Patrick Collinson, "The English Conventicle", in *Voluntary Religion: Studies in Church History*, xxiii. ed. W.J. Sheils and Diana Wood (Oxford, 1986), pp. 223-59; Patrick Collinson, "The Cohabitation of the Faithful with the Unfaithful", in *From Persecution to Toleration: the Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, ed. O.P. Grell, J.I. Israel and N. Tyacke (Oxford, 1991), pp. 51-76; Patrick Collinson, "Sects and the Evolution of Puritanism", in *Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Faith*, ed. Francis J. Bremer (Boston, 1993), pp. 147-66.

preachers in conferences with the Separatists in their London prisons, and these exchanges had been as unfriendly and unfruitful as any other conferences between religious irreconcilables in this singularly unecumenical epoch of church history.¹²

In those same days of early April the proposed legislation against sectaries was still blocked in the House of Commons. And so it was that on 6 April, early in the morning, Henry Barrow and the other leading separatist controversialist, John Greenwood, were hanged, giving the emergent religious tradition of Congregationalism not its first but its most celebrated martyrs. It was said at the time that this had been done by the bishops, Whitgift was meant, out of mere malice, "to spite the Nether House". Judicial murder is a serious accusation, but the legality of the executions was dubious, and not only Puritans but perhaps Lord Burghley, and, according to pious and perhaps unfounded tradition, Queen Elizabeth herself, were uneasy about what Whitgift had done. In the aftermath of the killings, a Conventicle Act passed through its parliamentary stages and received the royal assent. It was a law in some respects more draconian than the penal statutes against popish recusants, since it provided, as the anti-catholic legislation did not, for banishment. But its terms did not touch those non-separated Puritans, like Cartwright, who continued to attend the parochial Church of England and to recommend that policy.

So it is that in 1993 we remember not only Marlowe and Hooker but Barrow and Greenwood. But it is sad that not many outside Wales, and certainly not his Cambridge college, Peterhouse, have thought fit to commemorate another martyr, or at least victim, of that vindictive year 1593, the fiery and gifted Welsh preacher John Penry, who, after a long-running love-hate relationship with the Separatists, had decided that if he could not beat them he had better join them. In March 1593 Penry was in disguise and on the run in and around London. On 22 March he was taken, down the river at Ratcliffe. And on 29 May, a matter of hours before Marlowe's violent death at Deptford, Penry was hanged, three miles away in Southwark.¹³ The 1590s was a decade of vicious religious street-fighting, the early 1590s especially, and 1593/1993 reminds us that not all centenary occasions are entirely happy, or enlarge our confidence in the positive capacities of mankind in general, or of Christians in particular.

12. Henry Barrow, *A Collection of certain letters and conferences lately passed betwixt certaine preachers and two prisoners in the Fleete* (1590); modern edition in *The Writings of John Greenwood 1587-1590*, ed. Leland H. Carlson, Elizabethan Nonconformist Texts, iv (1962), pp. 175-262.

13. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584-1601*, pp. 290-1; F.J. Powicke, *Henry Barrow and the Exiled Church of Amsterdam* (1900); William Pierce, *John Penry, his Life, Times and Writings* (1923); *The Notebook of John Penry*, ed. Albert Peel, Camden 3rd series, lxxvii (1944).

II

My subject is the consistency of Barrow and Greenwood, and also Barrow's logical strength and incisiveness as it comes at us out of his extraordinarily vigorous and even violent speeches and writings. But to make the case for his rare if not unique consistency (and who can know whether it would have survived another thirty years, if Barrow had not been cut off in his prime?), it will be helpful to set the scene which, for five or six years spent almost entirely in prison, he was to dominate – the separatist scene; and to explore somewhat further that separatist-nonseparatist puritan interface which was of such critical importance in the religious politics of the spring of 1593.

Somewhat over a decade before Barrow's appearance on a public stage, Robert Browne and Robert Harrison, Cambridge men ministering and schoolmastering in and around Norwich, had announced "reformation without tarrying", that is, without tarrying for the magistrate to take action, and had insisted that the true Church must be constituted of true Christians, "be they never so few": two important and connected principles of Separatism. Browne and Harrison and some of those "few" had withdrawn to the comparative safety of the Netherlands, as larger numbers of Separatists would in the 1590s. But in 1585 Browne had embarked on a long, untidy and inconclusive process of reconciliation with the Church of England, within whose broad bosom he would live and exercise his still tempestuous ministry for another forty-seven years. It is strange but true that Robert Browne lived to see the first seven years of the reign of Charles I.¹⁴ It was on account of the inconsistency of Robert Browne that Barrow and Greenwood hated to be called "Brownists"; although that continued to be the name commonly attached to Separatists for much of the seventeenth century.

There continued to be some shadowy continuity of separatist dissent in London, where a refusal to attend the services of what some saw as a fatally compromised, still popish Church anticipated Browne and Harrison, dating from the 1560s.¹⁵ Barrow and Greenwood's prison companions included Margaret Maynerd, in 1587 an "aged" widow of fifty-eight, who had "not bin at church theis ten yeares", and a minister, Nicholas Crane, sixty-five years of age, whose sectarian record was one of the longest. Both Margaret Maynerd and Nicholas Crane died in Newgate, perhaps of typhus.¹⁶ At Cirencester in Gloucestershire in the mid-1570s, disaffected Protestants, inhabiting an incompletely reformed environment, carried their disaffection to extreme and

14. *The Writings of Robert Harrison and Robert Browne*, ed. Albert Peel and Leland H. Carlson, Elizabethan Nonconformist Texts, ii. (1953).

15. Albert Peel, *The First Congregational Churches: New Light on Separatist Congregations in London, 1567-81* (Cambridge, 1920).

16. *The Writings of Henry Barrow 1587-1590*, ed. Leland H. Carlson, Elizabethan Nonconformist Texts, iii (1962), p. 254; *The Writings of John Greenwood and Henry Barrow 1591-1593*, ed. Leland H. Carlson, Elizabethan Nonconformist Texts, vi (1970), pp. 409-10.

separatist lengths. It was said of one of this group that “he hath used himself like a puritane... in absentinge him selfe from churche”. Another, William Drewett of Gloucester, the sharpest of thorns in the side of the local ecclesiastical commissioners in 1574, was in a London prison in 1581, still denouncing “you traditioners”. “Yet had I rather dye in the Lordes trueth for my salvation, then to live in the world with dissimulation and bee confounded”.¹⁷

A stronger separatist tradition seems to have been maintained in East Anglia, in and around such major centres as Norwich, Thetford and Bury St. Edmunds. Bury provided what Congregationalist annals claim as the first of its martyrs, John Copping and Elias Thacker, who were hanged at the assizes of 1583 for distributing Brownist books. Copping and Thacker made a confession in which they acknowledged Christ as “our Kynge, prophet and priest” (the reversal of the conventional order was both idiosyncratic and significant), and affirmed that God “hath a Church wiche is holy (whereof we are members) and he is the head therof, and that [it] is his body to whom he hath granted and given Repentance and to none but her”. Other members of what Copping and Thacker called “the fellowshipp of Sayntes” languished in Bury gaol through the 1580s. When one of them, Edmund Wyther, a haberdasher, made his will in 1588, he repeated the formula about “Christ, our king, priest and prophet”, and defined the church of which he was a member as “a Company of faythefull Belevers scattered over the face of the earthe”. He also left half a mark each to the widows of Copping and Thacker.¹⁸

It was out of this radical East Anglian environment that John Greenwood, a deprived minister, presently emerged; and Henry Barrow too, a son of a minor but well-connected and perhaps prosperous Norfolk gentleman.¹⁹ Barrow was a Cambridge graduate. “Were yow then of Cambridge?” Archbishop Whitgift asked him at his first examination, in November 1587. “Yea”, said Barrow, “I knew yow there”. Whitgift retorted that he was in Cambridge before Barrow was born, which could have been almost true, since Barrow was about thirty-six years of age in 1587. But in Barrow’s time at Clare, Whitgift was newly-installed as master of Trinity. Everyone in the Cambridge of his mastership had reason to

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17. *The Commission for Ecclesiastical Causes Within the Dioceses of Bristol and Gloucester, 1574*, ed. F.D. Price, Publications of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, Records Section x (1972), pp. 103-9; *The Seconde Parte of a Register: Being a Calendar of Manuscripts Under That Title Intended for Publication by the Puritans About 1593*, ed. Albert Peel (Cambridge, 1915), i. pp. 152-3.
 18. Albert Peel, “Congregational Martyrs at Bury St. Edmunds. How Many?”, *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, xv (1946); J.S. Craig, “Reformation, Politics and Polemics in Sixteenth-Century East Anglian Market Towns”, unpublished Cambridge Ph.D. thesis, 1992, pp. 94-7; J.S. Craig, “The Bury Stirs Revisited: An Analysis of the Townsmen”, *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*, xxxvii (1991), pp. 208-24.
 19. Powicke, *Henry Barrow*.

know Whitgift.²⁰ Barrow, like so many other “gentlemen commoners”, sons of the gentry, went on to the Inns of Court. But, as with some other young men in that age, as with the youthful Justice Shallow, study of the law was not perhaps Barrow’s major preoccupation in those London years. “Know yow the law of the land?” asked Whitgift. “Very little, yet was I of Graye’s Inne some yeares”.²¹ (Yet only a lawyer could have argued his brief with the skill which Barrow would demonstrate in his controversial writings).

Traditions of a dissolute life and an unexpected conversion, Barrow drawn off the street by overhearing the powerful voice of a preacher, are pious and conventional and worth no more than many similar stories: for example, that the greatest “practical” theologian of late Elizabethan Cambridge was provoked to repentance by hearing a mother threaten a naughty child with “I will give you to drunken Perkins yonder”.²² But on Barrow’s as it were secondary conversion, from an intensely devout Puritanism (manifest in all his writings) to Separatism, an episode or process on which his biographers have not found much to say, there is rather more solid, if elusive evidence.²³

In 1632, one Stephen Offwood wrote a pamphlet which is now a great rarity (only one copy is known to survive, in Marsh’s Library, Dublin), from which we learn about a certain Thomas Wolsey: no, not *that* Thomas Wolsey but the Wolsey who, it appears from Offwood’s account, was the third member of what was actually a troika of leadership in the East Anglian separatist movement, consisting of Browne, Harrison – and Wolsey. Wolsey, ordained priest in 1569, may have been the man who ministered to those Separatists in and around Bury St. Edmunds, after the departure of Browne and Harrison for Middelburg. (Separatists were more dependent upon an ordained, learned ministry than they cared to admit). In 1584, Wolsey was put into Thetford gaol and appears to have spent the rest of his life, thirty years, in prison, mostly in Norwich. However, he was supplied with a key, to go in and out “as he pleased” at the back gate.

So this mild incarceration did not prevent Wolsey from making separatist converts. According to Offwood, he “perverted” “many zealous professors, of which I knewe twentie”. They included Henry Barrow. After Barrow had been “a zealous professor” for barely eighteen months, he had begun to read Browne’s writings, intending to confute them. But some passages proving “too hard for him”, he sought out Thomas Wolsey. The rest is history. The Wolsey described by Offwood was a “harshe spirit”, a religious loner who finished up as a radical

20. *The Writings of Henry Barrow 1587-1590*, ed. Leland H. Carlson, Elizabethan Nonconformist Texts, iii (1962), 96; H.C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958); Patrick Collinson, “Perne the Turncoat: An Elizabethan Reputation”, in Collinson, *Elizabethan Essays* (1994), pp. 179-217.

21. *Writings of Barrow 1587-1590*, p. 93.

22. Samuel Clarke, *The lives of thirty-two English divines* (1677), p. 168.

23. I am indebted to Dr. Michael Moody for sharing with me an unpublished paper, “Thomas Wolsey: A Forgotten Founding Father of English Separatism and a Judaiser”, which uses the evidence of Stephen Offwood’s *Advertisement to Jhon Delecluse and Henry May the elder* (STC no. 18789) (Amsterdam? 1633?).

judaizer, entertaining and propagating opinions which all other Separatists had renounced and denounced. Offwood remarks: "I dare affi[r]me their was not any of them except M[r] Barrowe, but hee did either excommunicate or reject, ...at one time or another".

III

Prison terms of as much as thirty years, and the deaths in prison of such incorrigibles as the London widow Margaret Maynerd and the Bury haberdasher Edmund Myther, are evidence that Barrow was by no means the only consistent Separatist. But it puts such consistency into context and makes it all the more remarkable if we appreciate that, while Separatism itself was a highly exceptional option, a step which only a very small minority of "zealous professors" seem to have taken, many of those who did separate, far from persisting in their Separatism, came back into the Church of England from out of the cold, like Robert Browne himself, the original separatist apostate. Richard Hooker said, in effect, that Puritans *should* have become Separatists, that that was their logical destination, if the established Church and especially its ministry and government were indeed as defective and deficient as they insisted it was. Hooker was a skilful polemicist with an axe to grind, for all that his polemic was artfully concealed in a rhetorical decorum which has won him the eponym "judicious". But it was not at all the case that most Puritans followed what Hooker held to be the logic of their principles, while many who did take that radical road soon had second thoughts.

Let us first consider those who having separated out of the Church separated back in: for perhaps we may regard the Separatist who separated against Separatism as the ultimate Separatist, and in that sense consistent, for all that he may have subsequently worn the uniform and drawn the wages of the established Church.

There was Thomas White, a Wiltshire minister connected with yet another separatist pocket, in the near West Country, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. After White's apostasy back into Anglicanism, Francis Johnson, the pastor of what came to be known as the ancient church of the separation in its Amsterdam diaspora, the post-Barrow and Greenwood era, wrote of White as:

a man that was himself heretofore separated from the Church of England, holding the Prelacy Ministry worship and confusion thereof to be antichristian. Who also was a joynd member of a Church in the West parts of England professing the same faith with us. And afterward coming over to *Amsterdam*, and desiring to be partaker of the Lords Supper with us, did in our publicke meeting before us all, with his owne mouth, testify his consent with us in the same faith we professe. From which he is now revolted: and of

which he is become a notable adversarie: setting himself tooth and nayle (what he can) against us and our cause: and that both privately and publickly, as now himself hath manifested to the world.²⁴

This refers to White's book, *A discoverie of Brownisme: or, a briefe declaration of some of the errors and abominations, daily practised and increased among the English company of the separation remayning for the present Amsterdam in Holland* (1605). It was not only White but some of his "company" who effected this double separation, out and back in again. In the same year, 1605, the appropriately named Margaret Browne of Slaughterford in Wiltshire found herself part of a group of weavers and their wives who were presented to the archdeacon for being Brownists. Margaret alleged that she was now "better perswaded and doth and will acknowledge her error".²⁵ And then there was another relapsed Brownist, Peter Fairlambe, who recounted his picaresque adventures (the affinity of all this to a kind of "travel literature" is apparent) in Morocco and elsewhere in *The recantation of a Brownist, or a reformed puritane* (1606).

But by far the most remarkable and fully documented case of serial and somersaulting apostasy was that of Henoeh Clapham,²⁶ a failed poet, turned preacher and biblical paraphraser, who reached Separatism by a chequered course: "out of the land I must, as I lov'd my libertie". Clapham tells us (in a series of prefaces which we should not regard as an utterly infallible guide to the pilgrimage of his life) that he was "sometimes haled by this faction, sometimes pulled by that faction". In Amsterdam he experimented with what is now called glossolalia. But a course of reading in the Fathers (perhaps, as with J.H. Newman, concentrating on St. Augustine) convinced Clapham that the Separatists were flat Donatists; and soon he was persuaded that the faith professed and taught in the Church of England was to such an extent true that to separate from it was to commit the sin against the Holy Ghost. But what was Clapham to do? By now he was ministering to a tiny splinter group of six "faithfull brethren" who, with him, had seceded from the "ancient church". Francis Johnson's congregation, described as "a poor remnant of the ever visible Catholick and Apostolick Church". (Were these six sufficiently

24. Francis Johnson, *An inquirie and answer of Thomas White his discoverie of Brownisme* (Amsterdam? 1606), Sig. *2.

25. Collinson, "Sects and the Evolution of Puritanism", p.158.

26. This account of Clapham's odyssey follows the prefaces of several of his works: *A briefe of the Bible drawne first into English poesy* (Edinburgh, 1596), *Bibliotheca theologica* (Amsterdam, 1597), *The syn against the Holy Ghost* (Amsterdam, 1598), *The description of a true visible christian* (Amsterdam?, 1599), *Antidoton: Or a soveraigne remedie against schisme and heresie* (1600), *A manuell of the Bibles doctrine* (1606). I have been helped in my understanding of Clapham by an unpublished Cambridge B.A. dissertation by Mr. John Louw of Sidney Sussex College, "Henoeh Clapham and the Brownist Apostates: An Historical Investigation Into the Theology of Early English Independency", 1994.

prosperous to sustain Clapham in the necessities of life, or do his ordinary needs explain why he wrote so much?) Clapham asked this pathetic little handfule why they should have turned aside, "as if there were no prophet but myself". And yet, something important had happened within this remnant which it was hard to repudiate. "Yow and I have gone a warfare at our own charges".

Presently, Clapham was back in the arms of the Church of England, and a popular London preacher, one of the diarist John Manningham's favourites. Manningham observed of his pulpit manner: "sometymes bluntly witty".²⁷ After various adventures which included a prolonged imprisonment for having preached that those who had died in their tens of thousands in the great plague of 1605 had been deficient in faith (whether saving faith or faith that they could be cured was a matter which the incarcerated Clapham tried in vain to clarify²⁸), Clapham secured the living of Northbourne in Kent, where he wrote two remarkable books, *Error on the right hand* and *Error on the left hand*, a series of recognisable portraits of the turbulent spirits of the age, viewed from the safe, Anglican, middle ground of "mediocritie".²⁹ That he finished up defending himself against charges of having been drunk and disorderly, and in the very parish inhabited by Hooker's friend and supporter, Edwin Sandys, is another story.³⁰

More than one consideration was capable of pulling Separatists back out of the cold. One was certainly the tempting lures hung out by the bishops, which is to say Bancroft, these circumstances being well documented in the case of Clapham.³¹ Another was the scandalous condition of Johnson's Amsterdam church, the scene of a series of unedifying storms in a sectarian teacup, which seem to have begun with Francis Johnson's marriage to the widow of another Separatist, who affected the latest fashions. As these troubles fermented,³²

27. *The Diary of John Manningham of the Middle Temple 1602-1603*, ed. R.P. Sorlien (Hanover, New Hampshire, 1976), p.157.

28. Henoeh Clapham, *An epistle discoursing upon the present pestilence* (1603); *Henoeh Clapham his demaundes and answeres touching the pestilence* (Middleburg, 1604).

29. Henoeh Clapham, *Error on the right hand, through a preposterous zeale. Acted by way of dialogue* (1608); Henoeh Clapham, *Error on the left hand. Through a frozen securitie. Acted by way of dialogue* (1608).

30. Cathedral Archives and Library Canterbury, MS X.II.II, fols. 116-29v. Dr Moody informs me (on the basis of Archbishop Bancroft's Register) that Clapham was deprived of Northbourne in 1614.

31. In addition to what can be inferred from Clapham's works, and the fact that he was presented to his Kent parish by Bancroft as archbishop of Canterbury, there is evidence that he preached in London against the puritan exorcists, against whom Bancroft had mounted a campaign. (*Witchcraft and Hysteria in Elizabethan London: Edward Jorden and the Mary Glover Case*, ed. Michael MacDonald (1991), pp. xxiii-xxiv).

32. George Johnson, *A discourse of some troubles... in the banished English church at Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1603); Michael E. Moody, "A Critical Edition of George Johnson's *A Discourse of Some Troubles and Excommunications in the Banished English Church at Amsterdam 1603*", unpublished Claremont Graduate School thesis, 1979.

Francis Johnson excommunicated his brother George, and his own father, and George wrote a kiss-and-tell book in which we learn of Mrs. Francis Johnson's "busk" and the "whalebone in her breast". "It is abhominable and lothesome... and the Lord make her ashamed to wear it codpeece fashion". The mind boggles.

There were so many excommunications and breaches of charity, mostly involving either sexual or financial misdemeanours, that life in what Clapham called the Amsterdam "parlour" all too accurately mirrored such anti-puritan fictions as Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*. So Henoeh Clapham complained that in these circles, "tell the church" meant: "Tell Tom Tyncker, tell Dick Cullier, tell Jone the Oyster Wench". Thomas White, the Wiltshire renegade, wrote with particular bitterness and violence of "the peoples uncleanes, cousning, disgracing, back-biting and undermining one of another amongst themselves". White had evidence on the deacon Christopher Bowman (whom we have already met) which led him to christen him "*Judas* the purse-bearer". He had cheated the poor of the congregation of half of what the good people of Noorden had given.³³ White quoted one of their own flock: "I thought (said he) that they had beene all Saints, but I have found them all devils". "Yet is this man still a member amongst them".³⁴

Scandals apart, Amsterdam was not at that time, any more than today, the best place to live an austere, puritanical existence, and to bring up children. It was a worldly city which knew nothing of the English Sabbath.

But the disincentives which argued against the separatist way were more principled and powerful than these. Were the Separatists ultimately convinced that their children could be spiritually safe without Anglican baptism?³⁵ Could they contemplate an indefinite future, cut off from the main body of the Church, which was as much as to say, from the commonwealth, from society, from their neighbours?

Inside those "godly" circles within the Church, the much more extensive terrain of non-separatist Puritanism, the debate was long-running, intense, and mostly went against Separatism. There were many conferences, some of them memorable occasions.³⁶ Some "forward" ministers and their people came close to the brink, only to pull back. There were experiments in semi-separatism: which is to say, covenanted groups of the godly who continued to attend the parish churches, but who met with other "brethren" in formalised private meetings, regarded by the bishops as "conventicles" and which, for these

33. Thomas White, *A discoverie of Brownisme: Or, a briefe declaration of some of the errors and abominations, daily practised and increased among the English company of the seperation remayning for the present at Amsterdam in Holland* (1605), p.15.

34. *Ibid.*, p.25.

35. A.C. Carter, *The English Reformed Church in Amsterdam in the Seventeenth Century* (Amsterdam, 1964); A.C. Carter, "John Robinson and the Dutch Reformed Church", in *Studies in Church History*, iii. ed. G.J. Cuming (Leiden, 1966), pp. 232-41.

36. Collinson, "The English Conventicle"; Collinson, "The Cohabitation of the Faithful With the Unfaithful"; Collinson, "Sects and the Evolution of Puritanism".

covenanters, may indeed have contained the essential juice of church fellowship, enjoyed without separation.³⁷ America appeared to some to be an acceptable middle way, something short of separation, a legitimate "secession" which was not meant to condemn England as Antichristian Babel.³⁸ Books were written with titles like *A plaine confutation of a treatise of Brownisme, Disswasions from Brownisme, The unreasonableness of the separation*.³⁹ *Certaine reasons proving the Separation, commonly called Brownist, to be Schismaticques* (1621) was the work of one William Gilgate who "having some yeares since suffered shipwracke in the gulfes of Separation" had "by Gods gracious hand... beene lifted out".⁴⁰

Among the more substantial of anti-separatist arguments was that a proper separation would be to put the ungodly out of the parish churches, as Hagar and Ishmael had been put out of the tent: but that this was the function of those in authority, not a matter for private Christians. For private Christians to make a schism of themselves would be to separate from their brethren within the parish churches, and to repudiate the faith professed and taught in the churches. Where else had that faith been heard and received? Ultimately, non-separatist Puritans stood on their own exegesis of such biblical metaphors as the wheat and the tares, or the barn floor, piled with a mixture of wheat and chaff, the chaff predominating.⁴¹ For non-separatists, the field and the barn floor were equivalent to the visible Church, full of good and bad, the good in the sense of the elect known only to God, to be left until the apocalyptic harvest. Separatists did not claim to know in this world who the elect were. But they could recognise the godly man and distinguish him from the ungodly. The field and the barn floor constituted the world, not the Church, and here and now wheat must be distinguished from tares, corn threshed out from the chaff. In the last resort, for non-separatists this was a rationalisation. When push came to shove, they stood shoulder to shoulder with Richard Hooker in insisting that the commonwealth, consisting of baptised and communicating Christians, was the same thing as the visible Church; although they placed more emphasis than Hooker on the

37. Collinson, "The English Conventicle".

38. See especially John Allin and Thomas Shepard, *A defence of the nine positions* (1648).

39. Richard Alison, *A plaine confutation of a treatise of Brownisme* (1590); Richard Bernard, *Christian advertisements and counsels of peace. Also disswasions from the Separatists schisme commonly called Brownisme* (1608); William Bradshaw, *The unreasonableness of the separation* (1614).

40. William Gilgate, *Certaine reasons, proving the Separation, commonly called Brownists, to be Schismaticques* (1621) Sig. A3r. *The Short-Title Catalogue* reports that the only known copy of this book (STC 11895.5) in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society, is "missing". I am grateful to Dr. Moody for supplying me with a photocopy of this rarity, which was made by Professor Leland H. Carlson.

41. See, for example, the now conforming Henoeh Clapham's *Antidoton* (1600), based on nine sermons preached at Southwark on the Parable of the Tares.

elements of good and bad, elect and reprobate, bad far outweighing good, which the visible Church encompassed.⁴²

The separatist/non-separatist interface confronts us with two contrasted pictures which correspond to each other as a photographic print relates to a negative. According to their teacher, Henry Ainsworth, in a book called *The communion of saints* (Amsterdam, 1607), the Separatists had “no communion with the wicked in their religion”. But “in civill affayres”, which was to say, ordinary social and commercial intercourse, as well as the necessary relations of domestic, civil and political life, “we are taught of God to converse with them in peace”.⁴³

The advice of non-separating Puritans was the exact reverse. We meet and commune with the ungodly in the sacraments and other orders of the Church because (alas!) we have no choice. This was an open, common field, available for every man’s cattle. It should not have been so, but it was so. But in all other, more private matters, we should have as little to do with those deemed to be ungodly and carnal as possible. Certainly we should avoid “needless” company keeping, the ordinary sociability of the alehouse. Since all too soon there would be “an everlasting separation” between the Christian and the profane, why not let it happen now? Since they will then “shake hands for world without end”, let this eternal “disacquaintance” begin in time. “If thou doest as the most doe, thou art utterly undone for ever”.⁴⁴ According to Stephen Bredwell, in an early polemic against Brownism, necessary civil duties were not to be repudiated. We must not be “unnatural”. But such things must be undertaken with “a kind of mourning and affliction for their sakes”: not, one would think, a recipe for the kind of amity and harmony in the neighbourhood to which the Elizabethan and Jacobean generations attached such value.⁴⁵

Many non-separatists agreed with Separatists that true Christians, “Christians indeed”, were few and far between, perhaps one in twenty, even one in a thousand. But this was no reason to separate. How could you be sufficiently confident that you yourself were of the elect few rather than of the reprobate multitude? There was such a thing as counterfeit faith.

Since the Separatists had removed themselves from the scene, they were socially less of a nuisance than the non-separated: less of a nuisance to others, in

42. Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1988), chapters 1 and 5, “The Protestant Nation”, “Wars of Religion”; Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: the Church in English Society 1559-1625* (Oxford, 1982), Chapter 6, “Voluntary Religion: Its Forms and Tendencies”.

43. Henry Ainsworth, *The communion of saints. A treatise of the fellowship that the faithful have with God, and his angels, and one with an other, in this present life* (Amsterdam, 1607), pp. 135-7.

44. Thomas Hooker, “The Carnal Hypocrite; c.1626”, in *Thomas Hooker: Writings in England and Holland, 1626-1633*, ed. G.H. Williams, N. Pettit, W. Herget and S. Bush (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), pp. 89-123; Collinson, “The Cohabitation of the Faithful With the Unfaithful”, pp. 66-7.

45. Stephen Bredwell, *The rasing of the foundations of Brownisme* (1588), pp. 39-40.

that they were no longer involved in those daily acts of shunning and distancing which (in principle) marked out the unseparated. Their absence from the alehouse was no longer noticed since they were not now at that address. They were by comparison with the unseparated less troublesome to themselves, insofar as non-separatists suffered the ostracism which was the popular reaction to and the price to pay for their exclusiveness. One non-separatist wrote: "We suffer for separating *in* the Church". Another told a Separatist of John Robinson's congregation in Leiden that he, and not the people in Leiden, was suffering "the sharp scourge of persecution". Non-separated Puritans were eating their cake and having it, enjoying preferment and patronage within the many mansions of the established Church. One could forgive the Separatist, starving in a Dutch garret, for saying: If that's persecution, please let me enjoy a slice of the action.

IV

We return to the consistency or, as some might see it, obstinacy, arrogance and intemperance of Henry Barrow, which, however we define it, served to perpetuate the Separatist and, ultimately, Congregational tradition and way, in which so many millions would subsequently tread: so that if the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, the death of this martyr, and of his fellow Greenwood, was especially seminal. However, the modern United Reformed Church, in its enjoyment of liberal and enlightened ecumenical principles, might find it hard to recognise its image in the writings of this founding father, which look forward, not to a future of denominational prosperity, but to an apocalyptic end, with but few brands to be plucked from the burning.

It behoveth us therefore, whiles yet God vouchsafeth us time, carefully by the light of Gode's word, to examine our waies, and to ponder our estate, whether we be in that broad way that leadeth to destruction amongst those multitudes over whome the whore sitteth and raineth [reigneth] or in the straight and narrow way which leadeth unto everlasting life, with Christe's litle flock and marked soldiours, whome the lamb leadeth and ruleth...⁴⁶

One is reminded of Albert Schweitzer's sense of the frail links between institutional Christianity, and especially the liberal Protestantism of his own day, and the eschatological expectations he attributed to the founder of Christianity.

Barrow's troubles, which is to say his five-and-a-half years of imprisonment, culminating in his execution, began in bizarre circumstances. He had travelled down to London from Norfolk to visit John Greenwood, his friend in the Lord,

46. *Writings of Barrow, 1587-1590*, p. 278.

who was in the Clink Prison – and was immediately arrested himself. Whitgift had been waiting for him. “He had a long time sought me”. Within hours he was at Lambeth Palace for the first of a series of verbal sparring matches with his judge, which began with the archbishop asking: “Barrowe, is your name Barrowe?”⁴⁷ Barrow always gave as good as he got. When he spoke of the queen, Whitgift asked: “Doth she know you then?” Barrow answered, “I know her”.⁴⁸

Barrow’s ever-ready tongue betrayed him at his fourth examination, eighteen months later, in March 1589. Asked by Lord Chancellor Hatton to define Archbishop Whitgift (pointing to him) Barrow was emboldened in the Lord to answer: “He is a monster, a miserable compound, I know not what to make [call] him: he is neither ecclesiastical nor civil, even that second beast spoken of in the Revelation”. The ever inscrutable Lord Burghley, sitting beside the archbishop, asked Barrow to supply the reference: “Where is that place, shew it”. Unless Whitgift was not at all a vindictive man, this bold but unforgiveable apocalyptic utterance was perhaps quite literally fatal, bringing its author to the scaffold, four years later.⁴⁹

How intolerable were the prison conditions which Barrow and Greenwood suffered in those long years? From some of what the prisoners themselves wrote and said, one gets the impression of an ordeal not unlike that of the hostages in the Lebanon in the 1980s: in Barrow’s words, seclusion “from the air, from all exercise, from all company or conversation with any person, from all means so much as to write....” In the spring of 1592 he wrote of “four years and three months... in most miserable and strait imprisonment”. There have been those (including the late T.S. Eliot) for whom Bishop Lancelot Andrewes could do no wrong. But surely the future bishop spoke with extraordinary insensitivity when he told Barrow in a conference of March 1590: “For close emprisonment you are most happie. The solitarie and contemplative life I hold the most blessed life. It is the life I would chuse”. Barrow was as ever magnificent in his riposte:

You speake philosophically but not christianly. So sweete is the harmonie of God’s grace unto me in the congregation, and the conversation of the saints at all tymes, as I think my self as a sparrow on the howse toppe when I am exiled from them. But could you be content also, Mr. Androes, to be kept from exercise and ayre so long together? These are also necessarie to a naturall bodye.⁵⁰

It was not healthy in the Fleet and other London prisons. By April 1590, ten out of some sixty separatist prisoners had died in their confinement, by 1596 another fifteen.⁵¹

47. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

50. *Writings of Greenwood 1587-1590*, p. 143.

51. *Ibid.*, pp. 333-4.

On the other hand, the key to the back door with which Thomas Wolsey was supplied in Norwich prison represents the other side of Elizabethan custodial conditions, which was critically dependent upon what Victorians called “the ready”, and with this Barrow was always, as it seems, plentifully supplied, perhaps by an indulgent and even sympathetic father. Money could buy an adequate diet and perhaps tolerable accommodation, although no riches on earth could procure the removal of the filth or the open sewer which went under the name of the Fleet River and ran under the walls of the prison. There were marriages conducted in this prison, by Barrow and Greenwood. It was perhaps here that Francis Johnson married that fancy wife with her busks and whalebone. She was a widow, and her first husband, Edward Boyes, like Wyther of Bury a haberdasher and an employer of labour, had died after months of close confinement in the Clink. Once in March 1590, when a London minister called Sperin came into the Fleet to hold formal conference with Barrow, it was open house. “By this time manie being gotten into the parlour and more into the wyndowes, we thought it meete to remoove up to the chamber where I lie”.⁵² Note ‘the chamber where I lie’. Elizabethan prison life is, for us, simply unimaginable. “Prison” ought not to conjure up all the associations which inevitably go with it. On the other hand, “life” in all circumstances and for everybody was not life as we know it. For all that we know, 17% mortality in three years among the separatist prisoners may have been only a notch or two above the ordinary, statistical expectation of death.

And for a modern academic, Barrow’s plea about his seclusion “from all means so much as to write” is particularly rich. Barrow wrote hundreds of pages during his five years of imprisonment, hundreds more than most university teachers can manage to produce, to satisfy the latest Research Assessment Exercise. We might well echo Lancelot Andrewes’s words: “It is the life I would chuse” – until we reflect upon the arduous circumstances in which all this stuff was written, sheet by sheet.

And what “stuff” it is! It is at once repetitive, relentless and turgid in its unrelieved hyperbolic mode of “railing” rhetoric. These characteristics are accentuated for the modern reader by the somewhat unimaginative editorial strategy of Barrow’s editor, my old friend Leland H. Carlson, which offers no relief and little guidance as he fights his way, machete in hand, through a dense jungle of text. Barrow’s longest prison work, *A brief discoverie of the false church* (1590) at 419 closely printed pages is nothing of the kind. This book of some 175,000 words represents about one third of Barrow’s total output. And yet how electrifying it is!

Walking in my youth across Lappland with a companion from Baluchistan, a Parsee, he used to say: “Lappland, lovely land of the Lapps; when you’ve seen a mile you’ve seen the lot”. Barrow’s repetitiveness is the best evidence of his consistency. Having hit upon a formula, he stayed with it, all through those

52. *Ibid.*, p. 184.

hundreds of thousands of words, written in a poor light, with a bad pen, on stray sheets of paper.

The formula depended as much on the denunciation of the false Church as upon the affirmation of the true, although the one was the logical counterpart of the other. The formula, to borrow an idea from the early Lambeth Conferences of the Anglican Communion, consisted of a Quadrilateral. Barrow's principal virtue as the founding father of an ongoing separatist tradition was to reduce his quarrel with the Church of England to its essentials, "four principall and weighty causes for separation". He was, after all, for all his misspent youth and mature prolixity, a lawyer. These four causes were:

1. The fals maner of worshiping the true God. Esaias 66:17; Deuteronomy 17:1.
2. The profane and ungodlie people receved into and retayned in the bozom and bodie of their churches. Esaias 65:11, 12.
3. The false and antichristian ministrie imposed upone ther churches. Numbers 16:21, 35.
4. The false and antichristian government wherwith ther churches ar ruled.⁵³

A statement of this quadrilateral is Barrow's earliest known writing, and he never departed very far from its terms. Moreover, the quadrilateral provided the structure not only for everything which Barrow subsequently wrote but for much of the separatist apologetics which continued after his death, in the Johnson and post-Johnson era. Sixteen years after the execution of Barrow and Greenwood, two English Baptists repeated the fourfold formula, word for word.⁵⁴ In 1611, the future Bishop Joseph Hall remarked that Separatists stood upon these four grounds "as some beast upon four feet".⁵⁵

A quadrilateral has no base-line, and Barrow laid out his "principall and weighty causes" in no order of priority. All four sides of the quadrilateral engage him at length in *A brief discoverie of the false church*. So far as concerned the fourth side, "false and antichristian government", Barrow condemns not only the bishops with their popish principle of diocesan monarchy but the presbyterian Puritans, the "forward men", whose response to the unfavourable Elizabethan, Whitgiftian circumstances was to set up a "counterfeit" discipline, a discipline consisting only of ministers, excluding the "people of the churches".⁵⁶ This was to anticipate Milton's "new Presbyter is but old Priest writ large". Indeed, no other Elizabethan author so effectively pointed towards Milton, and to the ecclesiological struggles of the 1640s.

53. Henry Barrow, "Four Causes of Separation", *Writings of Barrow 1587-1590*, pp. 49-66.

54. Burrage, *Early English Dissenters*, ii. pp. 172-7.

55. Joseph Hall, *A common apologie of the Church of England: Against the uniuist challenges of the over-just Sect, commonly called Brownists* (1610), p. 112.

56. *Writings of Barrow 1587-1590*, pp. 558-9.

Not only does a quadrilateral have no base-line, but exploration of all four sides of Barrow's quadrant involves investigation of the multitude of particular issues which divided Elizabethan nonconformists from conformists: vestments, the cross in baptism, the ring in marriage, the liturgy itself. Hooker in Book 5 of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* used about the same number of words as Barrow, 180,000, to deal with these matters. But the great ground-bass principles which undergirded the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, laid down in Book 1, transformed a mere shopping-list of alleged "abuses" into a coherent structure, which on Hooker's terms was false epistemology, a fundamental misunderstanding which Hooker attributed to Puritans of the nature of law, and of the relations of reason and revelation.⁵⁷ Barrow, too, if very differently, simplified and unified these discrete and scattered issues.

Even if a quadrilateral has no bottom, each side leaning and bearing upon the other three, the core of Barrow's case is to be found in the second side, as he stated the matter in his first publication: "the profane and ungodlie people received into and retayned in the bozom and bodie of their churches". It was, of course, possible to account for the presence in the all-inclusive Church of the ungodly and profane as the consequence of the faulty laws which required their presence and membership, and equally in terms of the false ministry and discipline to which the Church was subjected. But often, for the purpose of his polemic, the visible scandal of the total inclusiveness of the Church was presented as the root of the matter, the essential and fundamental flaw. In a ringing utterance, often repeated with inventive variation, Barrow complained that "all this people, with all these manners, were in one daye, with the blast of Queen Elizabeth's trumpet, of ignorant papists and grosse idolaters, made faithfull Christianes, and true professors".⁵⁸

For much of its length, the *brief discoverie* elaborates this penetrating diagnosis. The Church of England consists not of living stones, "such chosen pretious stones" as were described in Scripture, but refuse, "common pibble chalke stones, which cannot be used to any sownd and sure building". These "pebbles" were "al the profane and wicked of the land, atheistes, papistes, riotours, blasphemers, perjurers, covetous, extortioners, thieves, whores, witches, conjurers, etc." Who, one wonders, was left out of account, to be included in the "etcetera"? This is a good example of Barrow's inclusivist hyperbole. "All without exception or respect of person are received into, and nourished in the bosome of this church, with the word and sacraments. None are here refused, none kept out".⁵⁹

Barrow's lead had many followers. The separatist teacher, Henry Ainsworth, having defined the Church of England in the terms of its Elizabethan settlement as "that constreyned union of Papists and Protestants", and having himself

57. Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (1988), Chapter 4, "Richard Hooker".

58. *Writings of Barrow 1587-1590*, pp. 283.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 281.

defined a true church as a people joined together in the profession of the Gospel, a communion of saints, told his non-separated puritan opponents: "Yet the constitution of your people in your church is not a Communion of Saints, with which wee may participate: but confuse mixture of all sorts of men, from which the godly must separate, as touching the worship of God".⁶⁰ "Question: What fundamental wound is in our doctrine? Answer: This among others, that you teach and mainteyne both by word and practise, that all sorts of people, though profane and wicked, are to be received into and retheyned in the Church, which is contrary to the foundation of the Gospel layd down by God himself..."⁶¹ John Robinson, spiritual father of the Pilgrim Fathers, presently joined in: "The whole communion in the Church of England is so polluted, with profane and scandalous persons, as that even in this respect alone, were there none other, there were just cause of separation from it".⁶² According to the best modern analysis of the conformist position, at root it was the perfect opposite of the Barrow-Ainsworth-Robinson polemic, insisting, as the root of the matter, on the all-inclusiveness, in a Christian polity, of the visible Church, a broad-bottomed Church of England.⁶³

Barrow's relentless logic, the logic to which Hooker paid due tribute, for his own polemical purpose, in the Preface to the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, was best demonstrated in his prison conferences, and best of all in his debates with an otherwise obscure London minister, Thomas Sperin, rector of the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Milk Street. In mortal combat with this admittedly puny opponent, Barrow mercilessly exposed the illogicality of the non-separatist puritan position. Sperin insisted that his parish of Milk Street (a very little parish, as it happens, of no more than thirty households) was part of the true Church. "I will insist upon my parish in Milkstreet". "I know none wicked in all my parish". Barrow affected mock surprise: "What, not one wicked all this while? Sure then you have a more excellent church than ever was on the earth". But wait a moment. "Will you justifie also all the parishes of England?" Sperin: "I will justifie all those parishes that have preaching ministers". Barrow: "And what think you of those that have unpreaching ministers?" Sperin: "I think not such to be true churches". In 1588 that was almost a majority of English parish churches. Write that down, said Barrow. Sperin refused. Sperin claimed to be a true pastor, called by his people. He told Barrow that he considered the calling by bishops to be unlawful. "I make lesse matter of my ordinacion than of my ministerie... I will not stand to justifie the calling of the bishoppes; I have a better calling than the calling of the bishoppes". "Set downe that under your hand".

60. Henry Ainsworth, *Counterpoysion. Considerations touching the points in difference between the Church of England and the seduced brethren of the separation* (Amsterdam, 1608), pp. 228, 27.

61. *Ibid.*, pp. 241-2.

62. *The Works of John Robinson*, ed. R. Ashton (1851), ii, pp. 256-7.

63. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?*; Peter Lake and Maria Dowling, eds., *Protestantism and the National Church* (1987).

Sperin refused. "To what end; that were to bring my self into danger". And since Sperin was so prudent, we rely upon Barrow himself for the accuracy of these exchanges. But Barrow must be allowed the last word: "Are you afraid to witness unto the truth?" Sperin walked out of the Fleet Prison a free man. Barrow stayed behind, waiting for the gallows.⁶⁴

In the security of separatist exile, Henry Ainsworth lobbed the same polemical mortar bombs in the direction of the Gloucestershire minister, John Sprint. Sprint claimed to speak for "the best assemblies of the present Church of England". "Do you not hereby intimate, that there is a worsor sort, which you will not plead for?" Sprint spoke of "the godly Ministers and people of the Church of England"; "whereas our separation is from your church in general, wherein many ungodly ministers and people are to be found, standing in commixture, in confusion rather, as one body with those which are exteemed more godly and religious: and therefore you deal not sincerely, to make out separation to seem but from a part, and those the godly".⁶⁵

In the conclusion of his *brief discoverie*, Barrow denounced what he insisted were the illegal courts and procedures by which he and his brethren were examined and condemned, tossed to and fro between the secular law and the Ecclesiastical Commission, which in his far from unique perception had no secure legal standing. "Thus play they with poore Christians as the catte doth with the mouse".⁶⁶ These were prophetic words. On 23 March 1593, Barrow and Greenwood were sentenced to death. On 24 March, their prison irons were struck off, they were tied into the tumbril and taken to the place of execution: only to be pardoned. On 31 March they were again taken out and this time had the nooses around their necks. They had almost finished their last words when there came another reprieve. On 6 April, it was third time unlucky. Barrow and Greenwood were duly hanged, "so early and secretly as they well could in such a case".⁶⁷ But all those reams of paper, "smuggled" out of the Fleet Prison, made the hangings a waste of time, apart from their immediate and sufficiently cynical political purpose. Barrow and Greenwood, a consistent if unequal pair, being dead yet speak.

PATRICK COLLINSON

64. *Writings of Greenwood 1587-1590*, pp. 182, 187-90.

65. Ainsworth, *Counterpoyson*, pp. 2, 55.

66. *Writings of Barrow 1587-1590*, p. 653.

67. Powicke, *Henry Barrow*, pp. 77-9.

PHILIP HENRY AND LONDON

On 29 May 1665 Philip Henry set out for London. The journey to London from Flintshire was long and arduous, and he did not often undertake it.

Henry was a Londoner born and bred. His birthplace was Whitehall (where, he used to recall, he saw Charles I pass by on his way to execution) and his schooling at Westminster. After acquitting himself well at Christ Church, Oxford, he secured a post in the detached part of Flintshire known as English Maelor, as chaplain and tutor with the Pulestons of Emral. It was a good opening: the Pulestons were a county family, the squire, John Puleston, being a Judge of the Common Pleas and a Commissioner of the Gospel for Wales. When the time came for the two eldest boys to go to university, they were naturally entered at Christ Church, there to continue under Henry's care. A position of influence at Oxford or in London looked promising; but "the lord hath made him willing to lay himselfe in the work of the Gospel so far remote from his Friends in this poor dark corner of the land," as Lady Puleston wrote to her "cosin" John Owen, then Dean of Christ Church and Vice-Chancellor.¹

On 16 September 1657 Henry was ordained, with five others, at Prees in Shropshire by the North Bradford (or Shropshire Fourth) Classis, to become curate at the chapel of Worthenbury to Robert Fogg, Rector of Bangor-is-coed (the ancient capital of English Maelor), Judge Puleston having bought the advowson.² Here during the next twelve months he was caught up in preaching at Worthenbury, Bangor, Prees, Wrexham and elsewhere and in monthly conferences of ministers and frequent days of prayer. He was also able to take a month off, returning to Oxford, where he preached at St. Mary's, Christ Church

1. *Diaries and Letters of Philip Henry* (1883), ed. M.H. Lee, p.31. In what follows, unattributed quotations are from this volume (henceforth *Diaries*) or/and from Matthew Henry's *Life of the Rev. Philip Henry* (1825; henceforth *Life*), ed. J.B. Williams, repr. 1975 by Banner of Truth Trust together with J.B. Williams's *Memoir of ... Matthew Henry* (1828; henceforth *Memoirs*). Williams presented a copy of the latter, with a frontispiece engraving from an original family portrait presented to Lancashire Independent College, Manchester, to New College, London; and Williams's own grangerized copy of the former, containing the original manuscripts and pen and ink sketches, was bought at the sale of his library by John Morley (1808-96: Samuel Morley's elder brother) and presented to New College, London. Both volumes are now in Dr. Williams's Library.

For the Pulestons of Emral see *Dict. of Welsh Biography*; the relationship claimed is likely to have been through John Owen's Welsh ancestry, but was perhaps between his father, curate of Stadhampton, Oxfordshire, and Lady Puleston's mother-in-law, daughter of David Lewis of the neighbouring Burcot (mispr. Bulcot in *Diaries*, p.15, n.4).

2. For elucidation of the ecclesiastical complexities of Henry's position at Worthenbury now and later see *D.N.B.*, s.v. Philip Henry; *Dict. of Welsh Biography*, s.v. John Puleston; and T. Richards, *Religious Developments in Wales (1654-1662)* (1929), pp.128-33.

and Corpus Christi College,³ and had a few days in London, where he preached in Westminster Abbey.⁴ All seemed set fair. But in September 1658 Lady Puleston, "the best friend I had on earth", died; and almost exactly a year later her husband, who had built Henry a parsonage house, also died.

It was the worst possible time to be deprived of patron and protector. In the following May the restoration of the old régime ensued, and, though not at once, Henry lost not only his post at Worthenbury but, as a convinced (though reluctant) Nonconformist, his *locus standi* in the Church and any hope of another cure, let alone preferment. He remained faithful, however, to English Maelor, where on 26 April 1660 he married into a family with both property and an extended kinship in the neighbourhood, Matthews of Broad Oak and Bronington.⁵ He often evinces practical sense in accepting the circumstances in which he found himself, and these practical and personal considerations will have played a part, alongside his pastoral concern, in retaining him for Wales. In 1662 he left Worthenbury for Broad Oak at the other end of the district (close to Whitchurch), which later, after careful measurement, was found to be just beyond the restrictions enforced by the Five Mile Act.

His four sisters were still living "near" London in Chelsea, and later in Kensington - "I saw my sisters, in health, blessed be God, and overjoyed to see me," he wrote to his wife in October 1660 - and at heart, I suspect, Henry thought of himself as a Londoner. At this time, when he had already been presented at Flint Assizes for not reading the Book of Common Prayer, and his stipend had been withheld, he went to London seeking counsel. At Oxford he called on John Fell, once his mentor at college and now Dean of Christ Church. In London he expected Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas and brother of the now restored Rector of Bangor-is-coed, to advise conformity, "wherein yet I shall do as I see cause", he wrote to his wife, adding "The ministers here are generally unanimous and resolved".

His neighbour and close friend, Richard Steele, the ejected Vicar of Hanmer, shared presentations and even a brief imprisonment, but eventually went away and settled in London. Henry stayed put. "God's people may be an out-cast people," he wrote "cast out of men's love, their synagogue, their country"; but his contacts were many, and his influence grew. Locally he was known as Heavenly Henry. His devout steadfastness made him a sort of beacon, and when he died,

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3. For the team ministry in operation in the Oxford parishes at this time see *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934; 2nd edn, 1988), s.vv. Henry Cornish and John Poynter. For the Senior Chaplain at Corpus Christi, Samuel Birch, who preaches there in the same month as Henry, and some of his pupils, see G.F. Nuttall, "A Puritan Prayer-Journal, 1651-1663", in *Der Pietismus in Gestalten und Wirkungen: Martin Schmidt zum 65. Geburtstag* (Bielefeld, 1975), ed. H. Bornkamm, F. Heyer, A. Schindler, pp.343-54.
 4. For the numerous regular preachers at Westminster Abbey, who were paid by the half-year see W.A. Shaw, *History of the English Church ... 1640-1660* (1900), ii.536-7, 590-1; and *Calamy Revised*, s.v. Edward Pearse.
 5. For Katherine Henry's long Welsh ancestry, see George Ormerod, *History of the County Palatine and City of Chester* (2nd edn, 1882), ii.619, note b.

in the hand of his son Matthew, now minister of Chester, the Cheshire ministers recorded "the unexpressible Grief of Multitudes" that "that burning and shining light" had been extinguished, it was no more than the truth.⁶ If Nonconformists tended to look to London for their leaders, Henry was like a London minister in the country.

When Henry left home for London at the end of May 1665 he was away for three weeks, but his diary does not reveal much about the visit. The reason for this is made plain in the entry directly beforehand.

Mr. St[eele] going for London was stopt and searcht. y^e warrant was for mee also. His Diary was taken from him ... I shall take warning & bee more Cautious.

He reached London just in time for the funeral of Sir Thomas Viner, a Presbyterian who had been Lord Mayor of London in 1653-4; but if he did anything worth recording he did not think it wise to put it down; perhaps he thought it best to lie low. "I had sight of all my sisters & of diverse of my Friends, with a great deal of comfort, thanks bee to God": there could be no harm in that. "The plague not yet raging, but increasing gradually - ô london, london, how often?": this might be thought more dangerous.⁷ On his way home he made an unusual diversion via Stanton Fitzwarren, near Swindon, where the Vicar, Thomas Hotchkis, who was a cousin of his wife's, was sufficiently moderate in his conformity to allow him to preach publicly.

When Henry next set out for London, on 14 August 1671, it was at a time much less hostile to Nonconformity, much less dangerous, so that he felt free to record what he did there and whom he saw. On this occasion, in the company of three cousins and the wife of one of them, he took five days over the journey. The first night they lodged at Wolverhampton; thence they travelled via Birmingham to Coventry, and on the next day via Daventry to Stony Stratford; on the 17th they reached Barnet, and on the 18th they were in London - "the wayes fayer and the weather favourable beyond expectation, blessed be God - spent by the way self and horse 20^s". The first three days, which included a Sunday, he spent in Kensington with his sisters. Then it was "back to london again" and, on 24 August, what was perhaps a main object of the journey:-

6. *Cheshire Classis Minutes 1691-1745* (1910), ed. A. Gordon, p.21.

7. Cf. Matt.23.37.

Solemn fast in remembrance of y^e said day of Min^{ts} ejection, kept at Countess of Exeter's, with some measure of holy meltings & inlargem^{ts} lord, hear & heal, Amen! Dr. Jacomb, Mr. Steel, Mr. Mayo, Mr. Bull, Mr. Pool pray'd & preacht alternat^{im} T[exts] Ps.51.4. 39.9.⁸

It was Henry's custom to observe "that fatal day" each year, "the black day of min^{ts} restraynt" (it was also his own birthday: on 24 August 1662 he was thirty-one), exclaiming "how long lord, holy and true!", "lord, in thy time hasten our Freedom", "how long lord!"; but to meet under Lady Exeter's protection with her chaplain, Thomas Jacombe, his own old friend Steele, and other ministers was something special: to the monumental *Synopsis Criticorum* (1669-76, 5 vols) by one of them, Matthew Poole, he was a subscriber and expressed himself "super-abundantly satisfyd with it".

The following Sunday Henry preached "at Mr. Doelittle's meeting place", the first custom-built meeting-house to be built in London and put to regular use (not without interruption).⁹ Three days later he preached for Steele. Then he fell ill - "burning, sweating, in payn". When Sunday came again, he "should have preacht & communicated with Dr. Ansley", but though up he could not leave the house. He consulted the noted physician Nathaniel Hodges, with whom he had been at school, and also Marchamont Nedham, but they did not give the same advice.

At last, on 7 September, he was well enough to attend the funeral of "a non-Conformist min^r of y^e west-countray" who had come to live in Islington, John Burgess: "there were present 100 or 6 score Min^{ts} ... p^t staying y^e office for y^e dead, p^t going out". It may seem improbable that so many would be gathered together, but a funeral provided a welcome opportunity for a meeting unlikely to be broken up. From among the ministers present Henry names three former acquaintances whom he saw, one of them an ejected Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, with whom he had been at school.

The following day he at last had the meeting he desired with Samuel Annesley, the ejected Vicar of St. Giles, Cripplegate. With Annesley were two others, Benjamin Needler, the ejected Rector of St. Margaret Moses, and a

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8. For Elizabeth Cecil, Dowager Countess of Exeter, "to the utmost of her Power a comfort to all suffering, faithful Ministers and People" (*Reliquiae Baxterianae* (1696), ed. M. Sylvester, III.95, §205(2)), to whom Jacombe was chaplain for forty years (William Bates, *The way to the highest honour* (1687; funeral sermon for Jacombe), ep. ded. to Lady Exeter), see *Original Records of Nonconformity under Persecution and Indulgence* (1911-14), ed. G.L. Turner, iii.771-3; and for the arrangement of a related meeting "in Jacombe's chamber" at Lady Exeter's a year later, see *Calendar of the Correspondence of Richard Baxter* (Oxford, 1991), ed. N.H. Keeble and G.F. Nuttall, Letter 760. For the ministers named here and below, see *Cal. Rev.*
 9. "His zeal carried [mispr. for "caused"?] him to build the *first* Meeting-House in London": Daniel Williams, *Christian Sincerity* (1707: funeral sermon for Doelittle), pp.58-9; see further *Freedom after Ejection* (Manchester, 1917), ed. A. Gordon, p.254, s.v. Doelittle.

former minister of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, Robert Chambers, a colourful character, who had been involved in a plot in Ireland and had changed his name to Grimes.¹⁰ Then, after another Sunday with Thomas Doelittle, the ejected Rector of St. Alphage, London Wall, a farewell visit to his sister in Kensington, where the Vicar (his medical friend's father Thomas Hodges, who was also Dean of Hereford) sought to persuade him to conform – "but I dare not on such Termes" – , and a final day in London, Henry "sett forw^d homewards". The journey, on which another cousin accompanied him, again took five days, but the route was different: this time he travelled by Brackley,¹¹ Coventry, and Prestwood near Stourbridge, the home of Philip Foley,¹² a distant connection of his wife's and a patron of Nonconformists, with whom he spent the Sunday. On 18 September, a month after he left, he was "Home, where found all well, blessed be God, who by promise shall be my God".¹³

The meetings in London as Henry records them look innocuous enough, but there may have been more to them than meets the eye. This was the time when Sir Orlando Bridgeman and others were making a first (and fruitless) effort to work out some form of acceptable Comprehension, and meetings of ministers were taking place, leading to addresses to the King, from both the older Presbyterians who still hoped for Comprehension within the Church, the so-called "Dons", such as Jacombe and Thomas Manton, and the so-called "Ducklings", the younger men who, in concert with the Independents, would be content with Indulgence led by Annesley and John Owen.¹⁴ It is more than likely that, when Henry met first with Jacombe and later with Annesley, these issues were discussed. He certainly knew what was afoot. On 9 November he records: "london ministers with the King" and gives five names, headed by that of Annesley. The entry suggests with which party his sympathies lay.

It was nine years before Henry went to London again. By then his son Matthew was seventeen and it was time for him to start his training for the ministry. On Monday 12 July 1680 father and son set off, accompanied by a young cousin who was to be Matthew's fellow-student and by a scion of the Puleston family. By nightfall they were in Wolverhampton; the following nights they spent at Stratford-upon-Avon, Oxford and High Wycombe; and on the Friday they reached London. The route they took can be filled in from an ingenuous and excited letter Matthew wrote home to his sisters – "I never saw so many coaches" – for he tells where they stopped for refreshment: on the first day at Newport, going on via Tong; on the second at Henley-in-Arden; on the third,

10. For Chambers, see (besides *Cal. Rev.*) R.L. Greaves, *Deliver Us from Evil: the radical underground in Britain 1660-1663* (Oxford, 1986), index.

11. In *Diaries*, p.243, mispr. Hockley.

12. For Foley, see J.T. Cliffe, *The Puritan Gentry Besieged, 1650-1700* (1993), p.213, with names of seven Nonconformist ministers whom Foley employed as chaplains.

13. Henry's record of this visit to London is printed both in *Life*, pp.124-6 and more fully but in some disorder in *Diaries*, pp.240-3.

14. Cf. Roger Thomas, "Comprehension and Indulgence", in G.F. Nuttall and O. Chadwick, ed., *From Uniformity to Unity 1662-1962* (1962), p.207-9.

travelling via Shipston-on-Stour and Long Compton, at Enstone (near Chipping Norton); and on the fourth at Uxbridge. In Oxford Matthew watched the Judges' procession and heard the Assize Sermon at St. Mary's.¹⁵

Philip Henry records, as usual, for whom he preached on the three Sundays he was in town: for Thomas Doelittle, to whom Matthew was to be entrusted for his training; for Richard Steele; and for Edward Lawrence, another old friend who, after ejection from Baschurch in Shropshire, had eventually, like Steele, removed to London. Otherwise Henry's observations are limited to the purchase of a few books, the exchange of an old tankard for a new cup, and the buying of a candlestick for Matthew. But when on 2 August he returned home by the Chester coach he could be satisfied that he had accomplished his purpose:

Cosin Robert & Mathew lodg'd first at Islington at Mr. Doolittle's] house, who cheerfully undertook the Care & Tutorage of y^m. Mr. Baxter told mee, I could not have plac'd him better,¹⁶ lord bless. Their Bed, Bedstead, Bed-clothes, &c. cost in all £5.13.10 – for w^{ch} y^{ey} paid equally.

Matthew's letter confirms his father's account. The day after their arrival, while his father went to make the necessary arrangements with Doelittle, Matthew and his cousin went up the Monument and "had a sight of the whole city";¹⁷ but next morning they went to Islington, where they were impressed with Doelittle's meeting-house – "there are several galleries; it is all pewed; and a brave pulpit, a great height above the people" –, and heard Doelittle preach in the morning and Philip Henry in the afternoon; and on Monday they had their first impressions of "the place we are like to abide in":-

our rooms are like to be very straight and little ... Mr. Doolittel is very studious, and diligent ... Mrs. Doolittel and her daughter are very fine, and gallant.

Alas! after only a fortnight news reached Philip Henry that both Matthew and his cousin were ill. On 13 September Cousin Robert died in London; Matthew recovered, but on the 25th returned home by the Chester coach. "Thus in a short time was y^e lord pleas'd to ruffle and overturn what we had long purpos'd & design'd".

In April 1685 Matthew Henry returned to London, to study now at Gray's Inn. This could look like a "sudden change", and was in fact "the talk and wonder of many"; but for a Nonconformist, to whom a university degree was denied, a sojourn at one of the Inns of Court was then reasonably regarded as the best substitute. The Christian ministry was still Matthew's calling and aim.

15. *Memoirs*, pp.10-11; more fully and more correctly in H.D. Roberts, *Matthew Henry and his Chapel 1662-1900* (Liverpool, [1901]; henceforth Roberts), pp.39-42.

16. Doelittle's "was the leading Presbyterian Academy" in London: *Freedom after Ejection*, p.315, s.v. Charles Morton.

17. The Monument (finished in 1678) was then brand new, and the first of the churches built by Wren were to be seen.

For the next two years, with Matthew in London, Philip Henry was naturally much there in his thoughts. He is back in his old home, and wants Matthew to visit it: "have you not taken a turn at Whitehal yet, to see the nest in the Ortyard,¹⁸ whence your poor Father came?" He is back at school – "wee shal begin shortly to doe as the lads at Westm^r were won't to doe, & it may be doe still" – and asks after his old schoolmaster, Richard Busby, "who us'd to be the Principal verb", "whether hee bee yet in vivis".

That summer, following the Monmouth Rebellion, Henry found himself in prison in Chester Castle for three weeks. It was an anxious time. "Your letter escaped opening," he writes to Matthew, in November; "write, but bee cautious what & how".¹⁹ When a letter from Matthew fails to arrive, "we have been in aequilibrio, between hope and fear, not knowing what to think"; when it comes, the family "flock about it, as bees about a honey-comb"; yet Matthew can also be blamed for writing too much on top of going to church (to hear Tillotson), "it being convenient after Blood-letting to be sedate and composed". His father scolds him for getting "wett in the show'r & not shifting more then your shooes". "When you have leasure and conveniently, goe see your Aunts, but not by water, lest you catch cold": the sentence is ordinary enough (as is its testy sequel, "You write no more in this then in your last concer. your Aunts, that is just nothing"); but it conveys not only Henry's concern for his sisters but his remembrance of the river traffic and above all his unconquerable anxiety over his son's health. He wishes Matthew "some of our sweet aire ... instead of your offensive town-smells". "If a wish would doe," he writes, "I would be with you the very next, but it will not", and he can do no more than send affectionate remembrances to Steele and Lawrence "& their yoke-fellows".

On 9 May 1687, privately, in his own house, the minister who thirty years earlier had taken part in the ordination of Philip Henry, Richard Steele, now, with five others, ordained Matthew Henry.²⁰ At Chester, where the young man settled, he was no longer far from Broad Oak.

In August 1690 Philip Henry wrote to his son, "I am going forth this morning to the great city, not knowing but it may be Mount Nebo to me",²¹ but of this visit, if it was accomplished, we know no more. In September 1692 his son wrote, "If you find travelling uneasy, you must resolve to set up your Staff at the Broad-Oke".²² The old man's associations with London now grew weaker; but he noted the death in London in 1691 of Richard Baxter; in 1692 of Richard Steele, "my old and dear friend"; and in 1695 of Edward Lawrence, "my dear and worthy

18. Here as elsewhere, though not invariably, Henry uses an older spelling of "orchard".

19. The remarkably detailed accounts of affairs in London, mainly political and legal, which Matthew Henry sent home between 10 November 1685 and 12 January 1685/6, are printed, from twelve pages of a manuscript copy made by his father and one of his sisters, by Roberts, pp.54-71.

20. *Memoirs*, p.51; Roberts, pp.77-8.

21. *Life*, p.262.

22. Roberts, p.37.

friend"; also in 1695 of Richard Busby – "I believe I have as much reason to bless God for him, as any scholar that ever he had". His own death, at Broad Oak, followed on 24 June 1696. In London three of his sisters were still alive. They were not forgotten in his will.²³

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL

23. *Diaries*, pp.387-9.

THE SCOTTISH EVANGELICAL AWAKENING OF 1742 AND THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES

The revival tradition in Scotland was intimately woven into the experience and expectation of evangelicals in the Church of Scotland. Accounts of the revivals of Stewarton and Irvine in 1625 and Kirk of Shotts in 1630¹ were recalled in the early 1740's as news of a fresh awakening in New England through the ministry of George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards was eagerly received on the Scottish side of the Atlantic, and by 1741 expectations were nourished that Scotland could also experience a similar outpouring of the Holy Spirit.²

William McCulloch, minister of Cambuslang, made frequent references to the Revival in New England, taking the opportunity to "read to his hearers, missives, attestations and journals which he had received from his correspondents, giving an account of conversions which had taken place in different parts of the world, especially under Mr Whitefield's ministry."³ In this way, the minds and hearts of his people were prepared to expect and pray for an outpouring of the Spirit on their own parish.

One of the most significant antecedents of the 1742 revival was the resurgence of interest in societies of prayer. In 1731, when McCulloch became the minister of Cambuslang, a parish which had a population of 934 persons, there were three societies in his parish meeting weekly for prayer, a number which would increase to more than a dozen by the end of 1742.⁴ McCulloch believed that the

1. Accounts of the earlier Scottish revivals can be found in R. Fleming, *The Fulfilling of Scripture*, (Edinburgh, 1850), Volume 2 pp. 95-99. See also W.J. Cooper, *Scottish Revivals*, (Dundee, 1918), pp. 26-39.
2. M.J. Crawford, "New England and the Scottish Religious Revivals of 1742" in *American Presbyterians*, 69:1 (Spring, 1991) p. 25. *The Weekly History* (London, 1741), 22:2f.; 26:2ff.
3. Sir John Sinclair, *The Statistical Account of Scotland*, (EP Publishing, 1973), Vol. VII, pp. 107ff. McCulloch began to publish his own account of the Revival in the *Glasgow Weekly History*, the first number being dated "Nov. 18th. 1741."
4. James Robe, *A Short Narrative of the Extraordinary Work of the Spirit of God at Cambuslang*, (Glasgow, 1790), p. 316. McCulloch himself had "for a considerable time bypast, been praying fervently for a Revival to decay'd Religion." *A True Account of the Wonderful Conversion at Cambuslang*, (Glasgow, 1742), p. 3. During 1742 the number of societies increased to more than a dozen, although by 1752 they had decreased to six. Robe, *Narrative*, *Ibid*.

groups which had met for prayer on three consecutive evenings in February 1742, in the manse at Cambuslang, had been instrumental in engendering a spirit of anticipation for the forthcoming weekly lecture, where the significant spiritual awakening first became manifest.⁵

Religious societies, meeting for prayer, bible reading and Christian fellowship, were encouraged by John Knox as early as 1557. In a letter of 7 July 1557, written from Geneva, he urged his fellow countrymen to hold weekly meetings, and gave many practical suggestions as to how they might arrange the meetings in the absence of any Protestant clergy.⁶ Although they became the subject of controversy during the General Assembly of 1639 when Alexander Henderson,⁷ David Calderwood⁸ and Henry Guthrie,⁹ were concerned that they could become schismatic, they were encouraged by Samuel Rutherford¹⁰ during the General Assembly of 1640 when he put forward a case from scripture for their retention.¹¹

During the troubled years of the "killing times" the Covenanters advocated the use of such house meetings as a means of strengthening the faith and spiritual resolve of their people. James Renwick, in his last speech and testimony, counselled his friends to "be careful in keeping your societies".¹² Many of these societies became the *United Societies* of the Cameronians,

5. James Robe, *A Short Narrative, op. cit.*, p. 3.
6. D. Hay Fleming, "The Praying Society of St. Andrews" *The Original Secession Magazine* XIV, (1879-80), pp. 38-39. The letter is printed in full in *The Life of Knox*, ed. Thomas McCrie, (Edinburgh, 1855), pp. 349-352.
7. Alexander Henderson (1583-1646) was minister of Leuchars (1614-1638), St Giles in Edinburgh (1639-1646), Moderator of the General Assembly in Glasgow in 1638 and in Edinburgh in 1639 and 1643. He was chosen as one of the Scottish representatives of the Westminster Assembly. See Hew Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*, (Edinburgh, 1915), Volume 1, pp. 57-58.
8. David Calderwood (1575-1650), minister of Crailing (1605-1617), Pentcaitland (1641-1650). He was the author of the *History of the Church of Scotland*. See Hew Scott, *Fast, op. cit.*, Volume 1, pp. 384-385.
9. Henry Guthrie (1600?-1676), minister of Stirling (1632-1648), Kilspindie (1655-1665), Bishop of Dunkeld (1665-1676).
10. Samuel Rutherford (1600?-1661), Principal of St Andrews University. He was appointed one of the commissioners of the Church of Scotland to the Westminster Assembly in 1643. See *Dictionary of National Biography*, Volume 17, pp. 496-498.
11. *Records of the Kirk of Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 1838), Volume 1, pp. 285-287, 294, 303, 304.
12. *The Life and Letters of James Renwick*, ed. W.H. Carslaw, (Edinburgh, 1893), p. 261. The original Ms. is in New College Library, Edinburgh. Michael Shield's *Faithful Contendings displayed* has the subtitle of *An historical relation of the State and Actings of the suffering Remnant in the church of Scotland, who subsisted in Select Societies...* (Glasgow, 1770), Frontispiece. John Willison speaks of how "our godly ancestors cleave to their meetings in this land in times of hottest persecutions...to enjoy the sweetness and benefit of Christian fellowship in private meetings." *The Duty and Advantage of Religious Societies*, (Kilmarnock, 1783), p. 8. Walter Smith, another Covenanter, wrote *Rules and Directions anent private Christian Meetings, for Prayer and Conference to mutual edification*, in Patrick Walker, *Six Saints of the Covenant*, (London, 1901), Volume II, pp. 83-96.

although there were many less extreme groups who chose to remain within the Church of Scotland in 1689, and continued to hold their regular meetings in private houses on weekdays.¹³ The meetings were normally regulated by a set of rules to avoid any dangers of divisiveness. In 1714, when Ebenezer Erskine set up a society in Portmoak he sought to govern its activity with a set of fifteen rules.¹⁴ Although it was certainly usual in smaller rural communities for men and women to meet together in these societies, it became the custom for the sexes to be segregated. Further divisions on the basis of age, marital status and even social class were not unusual.¹⁵ John Erskine, during his student days at Edinburgh University, was connected with a society which consisted of about twenty members.¹⁶ One feature of the revival in Kilsyth and elsewhere was the way in which children, between the years of ten and sixteen, often met in their own meetings, under the supervision of the minister.¹⁷

Each society normally met on a weekly basis and if there were several meeting in the same locality, then they would combine their numbers for a special monthly meeting called the "association". Delegates from the associations met on a yearly basis, when the assembled company was called the "correspondence".¹⁸ When the Secession occurred in 1733, it was from many of these groupings that the four "brethren"¹⁹ derived their support, and which eventually formed the basis of new congregations.²⁰ Realising that it was going to be impossible in the short term to supply preachers to all who were requesting them the Associate

13. A. Fawcett, *The Cambuslang Revival*, (Edinburgh, 1971), p. 66.

14. *The Life and Diary of Ebenezer Erskine*, ed. Donald Fraser, (Edinburgh, 1831), pp. 193, 523-526. In 1717 the society was divided into two and by 1732 there were five societies in the parish, which met together on an annual basis. In 1717 a praying society was organised at St Andrews with twelve "laws carefully to be observed and kept by all members of the society" See Fleming, *St Andrews, op. cit.*, pp. 45-46. See also *A Memorial and Proposal concerning Reformation of Manners and for Exciting to Meetings for Religious Exercise among Christians*, (Edinburgh, 1740), pp. 5-6.

15. Fawcett, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-68.

16. *Christian Repository*, (1819) pp. 420-425. The numbers who attended societies probably varied considerably, although a letter from A. Bowre to A. Muire, dated 6 August 1743 from Edinburgh, speaks of "two societies...of twenty five or twenty six persons each," and this may well have been the average number at the height of the revival. *The Christian History for 1743* (Boston, 1744) p. 274.

17. Robe speaks of how he was "informed that several young girls in the town of Kilsyth, from ten to sixteen years of age, had been observed meeting together for prayer." *op. cit.*, p. 72. George Murie from Edinburgh speaks of there being between twenty-four and thirty societies in and around Edinburgh and of how among that number "there are several meetings of boys and girls." *The Christian History for 1743, op. cit.*, p. 271.

18. W. MacKielvie, *The Annals and Statistics of the United Presbyterian Church*, (Edinburgh, 1873), p. 2. See also David Hay Fleming, "The Praying Society of Cameron" in *The Original Secession Magazine* Vol. XX (1892) pp. 797-806, 3rd Series Vol. I (1893) pp. 36-46, 154-65.

19. Ebenezer Erskine, James Fisher, Alexander Moncrieff and William Wilson.

20. A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch, *The Scottish Church 1688-1843*, (Edinburgh, 1973), pp. 48-49. William MacKielvie, *Annals, op. cit.*, pp. 1-4.

Presbytery "recommend to those who have acceded to them, to cast themselves into societies for prayer and christian conference."²¹ Although most of the criticism of societies for prayer came from outside the popular party, John Currie, who would become a supporter of the Cambuslang revival, wrote of his fears that the societies for prayer were becoming schismatic.²² This brought about the republication of *A Vindication of Fellowship-Meetings* by John Brown of Wamphray, a Covenanting minister who had died in 1679.²³ It is probably no coincidence that in 1740 John Willison in Dundee and John Bonar at Torphichen both wrote letters of encouragement and direction to a society in Edinburgh, and in June 1742, George Whitefield reprinted his *Letter to the Religious Societies in England*, first published in 1739, with an additional preface to his readers in Scotland.²⁴

Fellowship meetings were often used as a thermometer to evaluate the spiritual health of the church and community. Willison refers to the attitude of Thomas Boston that "in parishes where the gospel begins to thrive, these meetings are set up as naturally as birds draw together in spring",²⁵ Religious societies flourished during the revival. John Willison was delighted to hear about the increase of societies around Edinburgh in 1740 "especially among college students ... which revives our hopes concerning the church, and the promoting of Christianity in the rising generation."²⁶ As a result of hearing Whitefield preach in Edinburgh, "two soldiers, a fiddler, and an alehouse-keeper have now joined in a Society for Prayer."²⁷ In 1742 James Robe was similarly encouraged that "there were proposals among the hearers of the gospel for setting up societies for prayer which had long been intermitted."²⁸

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21. Associate Presbytery minute of 12 August, 1740 in W. MacKelvie, *Annals, op. cit.*, p.3.
 22. John Currie, *An Essay on Separation*, (Edinburgh, 1738), p. 47.
 23. *A Vindication of Fellowship-Meetings*, (Edinburgh, 1740). In 1756 the Associate Presbytery published a small pamphlet by John Hepburn entitled *Rules and Directions for Fellowship Meetings* (Edinburgh, 1756) to which the minute of the Associate Presbytery of 12 August, 1740 was appended.
 24. John Willison and John Bonar, *The Duty and Advantage of Religious Societies* (Kilmarnock, 1783). G. Whitefield, *A Letter from the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield to the Religious Societies of England*, (Edinburgh, 1742).
 25. Willison, *Religious Societies, op. cit.*, p. 9.
 26. Willison, *Religious Societies, op. cit.*, p. 3.
 27. Letter of a Person in Edinburgh to a friend in Glasgow in *Glasgow Weekly History, op. cit.*, No. 10, p. 6.
 28. James Robe, in giving his description of Kilsyth, before the revival makes the comment that around the years 1733 the state of religion declined and "our societies for prayer came gradually to nothing." *Narrative, op. cit.*, pp. 66, 70. At the height of the revival in Kilsyth there were twenty-two societies. *The Christian History, op. cit.*, pp. 343. Willison speaks of how "there is a great increase of praying societies in Edinburgh and other towns and villages." Letter of 28 February, 1742 in *The Christian History for 1743*, pp. 86-87.

The societies were encouraged to meet regularly during the week,²⁹ for the purpose of scripture reading, prayer, fellowship, discussion of theological and practical subjects, and the sharing of spiritual experiences.³⁰ They were designed for the members' spiritual nourishment and discipline. Membership was taken seriously, and was based on an examination by two or three who would speak with the applicants about "God's work on their souls" as well as inquiring into their performance of "secret and family worship."³¹ Although societies were to take care not to "encroach on the ministry or church-censures", they were to take responsibility for excluding members who were guilty of sinful activity until they were able to satisfy both "the kirk-session and the meeting about it" and give evidence of true repentance.³² The influence of the societies can be measured from the way McCulloch, on receiving the suggestion of holding a second communion, took "care..to acquaint the several meetings for prayer with the motion, who relished it well."³³ It was only after he had sought their approval that he made the suggestion to the kirk session. Before celebrating the second communion several days were set aside "for a general meeting of the several societies for prayer in the parish," the general design of these meetings being "to ask mercy of the God of heaven to ourselves....that the Lord would continue and increase the blessed work of conviction and conversion."³⁴

By 1743, the practice of united prayer had extended beyond the boundaries of any one parish. A report was printed that "a Proposal from the Praying Societies at Edinburgh" desired "to set apart Friday 18th now past for Thanksgiving...and Prayer."³⁵ In these events, a seed was sown, which would eventually grow into the *Concert for Prayer* which was suggested at a meeting of Scottish ministers in October 1744.³⁶ The initial outcome was that for two years individual Christians were encouraged to spend some time on Saturday evening and Sunday morning in prayer for revival, and that the first Tuesday of February, May, August and November would be set aside for special prayer "either in private praying

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29. *The Christian History for 1743, op. cit.*, p. 243. Hepburn commends the practise of meeting on the Lord's day if no sermon has been provided. See *Rules and Directions, op. cit.*, p. 5.
 30. John Hepburn, *Rules and Directions for Fellowship-Meetings*, (Edinburgh, 1756), p. 3. George Whitefield was particularly concerned that the societies did not content themselves with "reading, singing and praying together; but set some time apart to confess your faults and communicate your experiences one to another" for acquainting "each other with the operations of God's Spirit upon their souls...was the great end and intention of those who first began these societies." *A Letter, op. cit.*, p. 16.
 31. Hepburn, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
 32. Hepburn, *ibid.*, p. 6.
 33. Robe, *Narrative, op. cit.*, p. 33.
 34. Robe, *Narrative, op. cit.*, p. 34.
 35. *An Account of the Most Remarkable Particulars Relating to the Present Progress of the Gospel*, Volume 3, no. 1, p. 18.
 36. J. Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, (Yale University Press, 1977), p. 321.

societies, or in public meetings, or alone in secret.”³⁷ The societies for prayer gave the concert for prayer their whole-hearted support.³⁸ When the original two-year period came to an end, a new proposal was signed by twelve Scottish ministers, suggesting that the Concert for Prayer be renewed for a further seven years.³⁹ The proposal was taken up by Jonathan Edwards who published *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer* in 1747.⁴⁰

Thomas Gillespie, (founder of the Presbytery of Relief in 1761) was so useful to James Robe in Kilsyth that Robe later asserted that “of all the others, the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, Minister of the Gospel at Carnock, was most remarkably God’s send to me.”⁴¹ He was totally committed to the concept and continued to hold Quarterly meetings for prayer “for the down pouring of the Spirit” on a regular basis throughout his ministry, both in Carnock and in Dunfermline.⁴² He was convinced that the preaching of the gospel “has so little success” because of the fact that those who listen are “neglecting to pray for their ministers,”⁴³ and so he encouraged his congregation to “attend and join reverently in public prayer”⁴⁴ for the “happy success in conversion of sinners.”⁴⁵ Gillespie believed that “when the Lord God is to do any great and mighty work in the church and the world, he stirs up his people to pray for it and about it.”⁴⁶

Many other places, not only in the immediate vicinity of Cambuslang, but also in more distant parts of Scotland, began to report a significant awakening within their own parishes, including “St Ninians and Gangunock, Muthill...

37. Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 321. The concept of the Concert for Prayer occupied the whole of the *Christian Monthly History* for April 1745. See the *Diary of George Brown*, (Glasgow, 1856) pp. 10-11 for an illustration of a layman who was involved in the Prayer Concert during November 1744.
38. Fawcett, *Revival*, *op. cit.*, p. 224.
39. This was dated 26 August 1746. See James Robe, *A Second Volume of Sermons in Three Parts*, (Edinburgh, 1750), p. xi.
40. Although Edwards acknowledges the initiative taken by the Scottish ministers to set up the Concert for Prayer, the initial idea may well have come from his own book *Some Thoughts concerning the Present Revival*, published in 1742 and widely read in Scotland. In the concluding pages Edwards, giving suggestions as to how to promote the work of revival, specifically mentions the importance of Christians storming “heaven with their humble, fervent and incessant prayers.” See Yale Edition of Edwards’s Works *The Great Awakening* (Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 518ff.
41. Robe, *Narrative*, *op. cit.*, p. 96. News reached Henry Davidson who wrote to Thomas Davidson in Braintree that “our brother Thomas Gillespie was made useful.” *Letter to Christian Friends*, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
42. E.g. Sermon on 2 May 1758 on *Psalms* 94 vv 14-15 and on 3 May 1759 on *Ezekiel* 34 v 16 in Mss. Volume for 1758 in Dunfermline Library. 7 May 1761 on *Isaiah* 60 v 1 in Mss. Volume 1 in New College Library, 2 February 1762 on *Isaiah* 43 vv 5-6 in Volume III, New College.
43. Volume I, *Mss. Sermons* (New College, Edinburgh) p. 21.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
45. *Mss. Sermons*, Volume III (New College, Edinburgh) f56r.
46. *Mss. Sermons*, for 1771 (Aberdeen University Library, MS159) p. 137.

Torryburn and Carnock.”⁴⁷ The message which Whitefield and others preached was well received by several people of “great rank”, particularly Lord Rae, the Earl of Leven and the Marquess of Lothian.⁴⁸ However, it was among the ordinary people of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Dundee that the Revival had its greatest impact. Thomas Davidson spoke of how “many real Christians have been revived by his means....some of the most notorious and abandoned sinners...have a promising concern upon their minds about religion.”⁴⁹ It is hardly surprising, given the extraordinary circumstances, that the youthful John Erskine should draw the conclusion that Scotland was on the verge of the “latter day Millennial glory.”⁵⁰ Although the revival eventually reached a number of towns and villages throughout Scotland, the early hope that it was the herald of some millennial “latter day glory” was never realised. McCulloch and Robe faced several disappointments in the lives of professed converts,⁵¹ although in 1751 James Robe could testify that the vast majority of those who had been converted continued to be “good Christians.”⁵² Indeed, almost twenty years after the revival began, the church at Cambuslang kept a day of fasting and thanksgiving “in commemoration of the Reformation Work...in this place... about twenty years ago.”⁵³

Looking back on the revival, in the midst of the critical days of the '45 rebellion, Thomas Gillespie believed that it had been “one of the most remarkable effusions of the Spirit on some corners of the land...since the Reformation.”⁵⁴ He was equally convinced that the only hope for peace was for

47. Thomas Prince, *Christian History*, (Boston, 1743), pp. 351-355. John Erskine referred the fact that “something of the same kind seems to be beginning at Torryburn” in October 1742. *Signs of the Times Considered, op. cit.*, p. 17. John Currie speaks of Thomas Gillespie being “for sundry days, even a part of three weeks, at and about Cambuslang, conversing with sundry there, and at Glasgow. *A New Testimony unto and Further Vindication of the Extraordinary Work of God at Cambuslang*, (Glasgow, 1743), pp. 50-53.
48. G. Whitefield, *Works, op. cit.*. Vol. 1, pp. 311, 320, 322-3, 324, 333, 335, 338, 340, 345, 347, 369, 400, 455, 467.
49. Letter to a friend in London, dated 24 October 1741 in *Glasgow Weekly History*, No. 9, p. 7. In another letter dated 5 November 1741, a friend in Edinburgh told Whitefield that at the Tolbooth Church there were more than an extra hundred communicants “eighteen of whom were found to be converted by your ministry.” John Lewis, *London Weekly History*, No. 34, p. 3.
50. J. Erskine, *Signs of the Times Considered, or the high PROBABILITY that the present APPEARANCES in New England, and the West of Scotland, are a PRELUDE of the Glorious Things promised to the CHURCH in the latter Ages*, (Edinburgh, October 1742).
51. Fawcett, *Revival, op. cit.*, pp. 166-170. *Minutes of the Cambuslang Kirk Session, S.R.O. CH2/415.2, op. cit.*, p. 120 where we are told that “some opposers have triumphed in the matter of backsliders that were concerned in the work.”
52. *Kilsyth Kirk Session Records*. 19 March 1751 quoted by Fawcett, *Revival*, p. 171. *Minutes of Cambuslang Kirk Session, op. cit.*, p. 120.
53. *Minutes of Cambuslang, Ibid.*, p. 431.
54. *Gillespie Sermons*, (Dunfermline Library), Volume 1, *op. cit.*, f80r.

the Church to turn once again to God in prayer for his blessing upon "King George...the Parliament...our armies...to give us an honourable peace and put an end to the present disturbances and...pour down his Spirit to dwell among us and cause His glory to dwell in our land."⁵⁵

KENNETH B.E. ROXBURGH

55. *Ibid.*, f97v-98r.

THE NEWPORT PAGNELL ACADEMY 1782-1850

The history of the Newport Pagnell Academy is partly the local story of three generations of the Bull family who occupied the pulpit of Newport Pagnell Independent Church for 104 years and who educated young men for Christian ministry for fifty-nine years. It also, however, illustrates several aspects of the wider history of Congregationalism in England. The Newport Pagnell Academy brings to our attention the role of Dissenting academies when Oxford and Cambridge were closed to Dissenters, the impact of the Evangelical revival on education for the Independent ministry, and the clarification of that ministry which issued from both the Oxford Movement and the gradual and partial disestablishment of the Church of England during the nineteenth century. The Academy may also suggest an understanding of Christian vocation which seems to have been largely lost in our preoccupation with professional training for ministry. So this local story is rescued from antiquarianism or sentimentality by its broad historical context, and it has continued bearing on the training of Christian ministers.

William Bull was ordained as pastor of Newport Pagnell Independent Church on 11 October 1764.¹ He was twenty-six years old² and had recently completed his ministerial studies at Dr Caleb Ashworth's Dissenting academy at Daventry.³ His education was arguably the best then available in England. Dissenters had been barred from both universities for just over a century; Oxford required subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles on admission, while candidates for degrees at Cambridge had to declare themselves to be members of the Church of England. In order to educate both ministers and laymen, various Dissenting divines had established small academies which frequently offered instruction superior to that of the universities. Despite persecution, at least twenty such academies were in existence before the Act of Toleration (1689). Early academies had usually been under the personal direction of a

1. *Newport Pagnell Independent Church Record of Members from 1709 to 1844* (MS book with no page numbers). (Hereafter *Record*).
2. *Record* and William Bull's tomb give his age in July 1814 as 76.
3. T.P. Bull, *A Brief Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the Independent Church at Newport-Pagnell; now under the Pastoral Care of the Reverend William Bull and Thomas Palmer Bull.* London: Walter Wilson, 1811, p. 25. (Hereafter T.P. Bull, *Brief Narrative*).

tutor, but after 1689 more were founded, controlled by denominational societies which provided funds.⁴ The Coward Trust, an Independent society founded in 1738, had oversight of the Daventry Academy where Dr Ashworth was tutor from 1752 to 1775. The academy was open to both theological students and laymen preparing for the learned professions, and its main areas of study were dogmatics, philosophy, pneumatology (which included the study of both the Holy Spirit and human psychology), ethics, mathematics and physics. Unusually, there was not too much emphasis on the classical languages although Ashworth was expert in Hebrew grammar. The sub-tutor, Dr Samuel Clark, had the habit of opposing Dr Ashworth's orthodox views on every subject, thus exposing students to a lively view of how to arrive at the truth. William Bull entered this educational milieu when he was twenty and spent six years there. He was one of seventeen students of Dr Ashworth who in turn became tutors at academies.⁵ To Newport Pagnell, William Bull brought a formative experience of serious scholarship and commitment to the education of young Dissenters.

He was also profoundly influenced by the Evangelical Revival. Born in 1738, the year before John Wesley and George Whitefield began their preaching careers, William Bull was reared in the context of their message of redemption by means of personal faith in the saving blood of Christ. The church whose pastor he became in 1764 had fourteen members,⁶ although there had been a congregation of seventy or eighty in 1725.⁷ It was his work to build up and nurture that fellowship. Although he sensibly commented that it was of "no use to talk to people about their souls when they begin to think about their dinner",⁸ he must have had some evangelical warmth in his preaching, for church growth during his pastorate was impressive. By 1779 twenty-nine new members had been admitted. By 1806 their number was 173, although death, removals and expulsions had brought the total size of the church down to eighty-four. By 1812 new members since 1764 stood at 218, and the total of living resident members was 114.⁹ Without forsaking the solid scholarship and disciplined piety of his education, William Bull appears to have taken part in what Alan Gilbert calls the "New Dissent", that evangelical movement which revitalized Congregationalists and Baptists at the same time that Methodism was experiencing

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4. H. McLachlan, *English Education under the Test Acts: Being the History of the Non-conformist Academies 1662-1820*, Manchester University Press, 1931, pp. 1-15 provides an excellent introductory sketch on the academies. (Hereafter McLachlan, *English Education*).
 5. McLachlan, *English Education*, pp. 152-65.
 6. *Record*.
 7. F.W. Bull, *A History of the Independent Church at Newport Pagnell*, Newport Pagnell: James Line, 1910, p. 6. (Hereafter F.W. Bull, *Independent Church*).
 8. R.T. Jones, *Congregationalism in England 1662-1962*, London: Independent Press Ltd., 1962, p. 206. (Hereafter Jones, *Congregationalism*).
 9. *Record*.

dramatic growth.¹⁰ A shared evangelicalism was certainly important in the friendships which William Bull formed in the late 1770s with John Newton, then curate of Olney, and the poet William Cowper, who had moved to Olney so as to be near Newton.

Our best view of Bull as an individual comes through the eyes of John Newton and William Cowper. Newton's letters frequently refer to Bull's health. Newton appears to have found his friend something of a hypochondriac,¹¹ but there is no doubt that he suffered from the stone, that most common complaint of Dissenting ministers,¹² as well as from frequent chesty colds. The early death of four of the five children born to William and Hannah Bull elicited Newton's deep sympathy.¹³ Most of all, Newton valued Bull's conversation; he once wrote to his wife, "I could be silent half a day to listen to him, and am almost unwilling to speak a word for fear of preventing him".¹⁴ He found Bull "so humble, so spiritual, so judicious and so savoury".¹⁵ William Cowper delighted in Bull's flights of imagination when he was with company he really trusted, although he thought that Bull's mind had "an equal mixture of melancholy and vivacity" and was "lively without levity, and pensive without dejection".¹⁶ He remarked that Bull was too much of a genius to have a good memory.¹⁷ Cowper did not share Newton's and Bull's love of pipe smoking, but he immortalized it in a comic ode to the river goddess Orinoco, the brand of tobacco they both favoured:

10. A.D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change 1740-1914*, London: Longman, 1976, pp. 36-42, 47-8. (Hereafter Gilbert, *Religion and Society*).
11. T.P. Bull, editor, *One Hundred and Twenty-nine Letters from the Rev. John Newton, late Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, London, to the Rev. William Bull, of Newport Pagnell (written during a period of thirty-two years, from 1773-1805.)*, London: Hamilton, Adams and Co., 1847, passim. (Hereafter *Newton's Letters*).
12. A.G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised: Being a Revision of Edmund Calamy's "Account" of the Ministers and Others Ejected and Silenced, 1660-2*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934 & 1988, p. xlix.
13. *Newton's Letters*, pp. 30, 62-3. Hannah (Palmer) Bull came from Bedford.
14. B. Martin, *John Newton: a Biography*, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1950, p. 255. (Hereafter Martin, *Newton*).
15. Martin, *Newton*, p. 264.
16. J. Watson, *A Discourse on the Studies of Newport Pagnell College, Delivered October 26th, 1842, with other Proceedings of the Morning Service, and an Appendix Containing the History of the Institution*, London: John Snow, 1842, p. 37. (Hereafter Watson, *Discourse*).
17. Martin, *Newton*, p. 265.

So may thy votaries increase,
 And fumigation never cease,
 May Newton with renew'd delights,
 Perform thine odoriferous rites,
 While clouds of incense half divine,
 Involve thy disappearing shrine,
 And so may smoke-inhaling Bull,
 Be always filling, never full.¹⁸

In April 1782, after John Newton had moved to London to become rector of St Mary Woolnoth, he wrote to Bull saying that he had been approached by John Clayton, minister of The King's Weigh House, who hoped that a new Dissenting academy with evangelical principles might be established. Newport Pagnell was seen to be an excellent site, out of the capital but within reasonable travelling distance of London. William Bull was viewed as an ideal tutor, and Clayton assured Newton that £500 per annum could be easily raised by subscriptions to support the new establishment.¹⁹ Newton himself was asked to draw up a plan of studies,²⁰ and a committee of friends was formed in London to oversee the financial arrangements.²¹ By the summer of 1783, the first students had arrived.²² Bull had previously kept a small school for boys as well as privately preparing a few young men for the Independent ministry;²³ now, a vital part of his own Christian vocation was launched.

John Newton felt considerable hesitation at drawing up a plan of studies, for he was largely self-educated: his youth had been spent in the African slave trade rather than at any sort of academy.²⁴ He also felt some awkwardness, as a clergyman of the Church of England, in recommending a syllabus for Dissenters and Methodists.²⁵ However, Clayton had charged him to develop a plan which placed "the greatest stress... upon truth, life, [and] spirituality, and the least stress upon modes, forms, and non-essentials..."²⁶ The scheme that Newton drew up, which met with the approval of the committee of friends and of William Bull,²⁷ concentrated largely on Bible study.²⁸ Classical languages were to be studied as aids to biblical scholarship,²⁹ church history was to get some

18. Martin, *Newton*, p. 265; H.S. Milford, editor, *The Poetical Works of William Cowper*, Oxford University Press, 1950, pp. 339-40, "To the Rev. William Bull".

19. Watson, *Discourse*, pp. 33-4.

20. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 34.

21. F.W. Bull, *The Newport Pagnell Academy*, reprinted from the *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, May 1910, p. 3. (Hereafter F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*).

22. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 3.

23. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 33; F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 1.

24. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 34.

25. Watson, *Discourse*, pp. 36-8.

26. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 34.

27. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 3.

28. McLachlan, *English Education*, p. 242.

29. McLachlan, *English Education*, p. 242.

attention with a view to avoiding the errors of the past,³⁰ and English literature was to be studied to help develop a good but plain style in preaching.³¹ But rhetoric, science and the study of any particular system of theology were to be excluded because of the deadening effect they might have on spiritual life.³² Unlike earlier academies, the Newport Pagnell Academy was not to provide a substitute for a university education. It was rather to be vocational in character, to produce evangelical preachers, to train ministers who would be capable of founding and building up Independent congregations.³³ However, the training of those ministers was to be sufficiently intellectual as to keep them from becoming the “popular, loud, powerful, preachers” beloved of “staunch tabernacle-folks”.³⁴ William Cowper took a great interest in Newton’s plans and supported them warmly.³⁵

From 1786 to 1789 Samuel Greatheed, who had himself been educated at the Newport Pagnell Academy, joined Bull as co-tutor.³⁶ In a letter to the committee of friends written in 1812, Greatheed explained the philosophy of education at the academy in terms which indicate that it may not have been as narrowly vocational as John Newton had intended. He said that it had been the policy of the academy “to admit young men of promising qualifications for usefulness, in whatever line their future services of Christ may be directed.” Rather than necessarily preparing for the ministry, they were encouraged to search freely for their own calling while developing a biblically-based spirituality:

Their studies and their consciences being thus unfettered, their attention is the more likely to be directed solely to their own advancement in genuine piety and scriptural knowledge, and in qualifications for usefulness to others; and their judgment as to the forms and sentiments by which the Church of Christ is diversified, to be decided by the most mature examination.³⁷

We shall return to Samuel Greatheed’s understanding of the value of a free search for vocation. Despite that emphasis on growth in spirituality unfettered by future professional commitments, the students were also given practical training. They began visiting the sick as soon as they began their studies,³⁸ and they were sent out to villages with decaying Independent congregations to preach and to get congregational life back to a healthy footing. The congregations in Astwood, North Crawley, Stoke Goldington, Sherington, Bow Brickhill, Bradwell and Great Linford were strengthened by the attentions of

30. McLachlan, *English Education*, pp. 242-3.

31. McLachlan, *English Education*, pp. 242-3.

32. McLachlan, *English Education*, p. 243.

33. McLachlan, *English Education*, p. 243.

34. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 38.

35. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 37.

36. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 42.

37. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 4.

38. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 5.

students from the Academy. In 1829 it was recorded that they had covered 3,198 miles on foot serving those congregations during that year.³⁹

In January 1786, the Evangelical philanthropist John Thornton, of Clapham Sect fame, undertook to meet the entire cost of the Newport Pagnell Academy.⁴⁰ He set up a fund which paid William Bull a life income of £200 per annum.⁴¹ In 1812, when Bull was seventy-four years old, it was thought prudent to ensure that the academy should not be closed on his death. The committee of friends met in London and decided to set up a London committee, whose main task would be to raise subscriptions from "the religious public",⁴² and a country committee, whose duty would be the oversight of day-to-day matters of business and discipline.⁴³ The society formed by the two committees was to be called The Newport Pagnell Evangelical Institution.⁴⁴ Bull died on 23 July 1814, having preached his last sermon on 10 July "in his usual health" as the church minute book records.⁴⁵ His text was *Psalm* 27.9: "Hide not thy face from me; put not thy servant away in anger; thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation." He was buried under the pulpit of the new meeting house which had been built in 1808.⁴⁶ His only surviving son, Thomas Palmer Bull, had joined him as co-tutor of the academy in 1790⁴⁷ and as co-pastor of the congregation in 1800.⁴⁸ Thomas Palmer Bull carried on as sole tutor until he was joined by his son Josiah in 1831;⁴⁹ Josiah also became co-pastor in 1833.⁵⁰

With the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828 and subsequent legislation which diminished the established privileges of the Church of England, Congregationalists began to see themselves less as Dissenters and more as members of a denomination rivalling Anglicanism. The Congregational Union was formed in 1831,⁵¹ and it slowly gained the allegiance of Independent congregations throughout the country. It played an increasingly important role, shifting some degree of authority from local, gathered congregations to denominational headquarters. The Newport Pagnell Independent Church supported the Congregational Union at an early stage, and Thomas Palmer Bull served as its chairman in 1835.⁵² One of the great concerns of the new Union was the education of ministers to a high professional standard; Congregationalists

39. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p.6.

40. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 42.

41. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 3.

42. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 42.

43. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 4.

44. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 4.

45. *Record*.

46. F.W. Bull, *Independent Church*, p. 7.

47. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 24.

48. T.P. Bull, *Brief Narrative*, p. 26.

49. Watson, *Discourse*, pp. 42-3.

50. *Record*.

51. C. Binfield, *So Down to Prayers: Studies in English Nonconformity 1780-1920*. London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1977, p. 12. (Hereafter Binfield, *So Down to Prayers*).

52. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 6.

preferred ministers specifically trained for ministry to men ordained because their gifts had been apparent to their local congregations. Between 1840 and 1845, every assembly of the Congregational Union discussed the professional training of ministers.⁵³ The 1846 report of the Newport Pagnell College (as it was called from 1840) continued that discussion:

...while...we altogether dissent from those views which entirely merge the office of the minister in that of the christian, we deem it of the highest consequence that clear views should be entertained as to a ministry best adapted to fulfil its important end, and the best means of raising up such a ministry. That we should have a ministry suited to the growing intelligence of the times in which we live, is matter of common observation, because of common conviction. ...The intelligence, however, of which we speak, is not matter of accident, and the education of our ministry is therefore a matter that demands the most serious attention of the church. ...it may be feared the church is deficient in its feeling towards the subject of the ministry in general. It surely behoves the church to look well to its ministry, and consequently to feel no little anxiety about those institutions which are destined for its instruction. The church must ever be in a great degree dependent on its ministry. What the ministry is, the church will be.⁵⁴

While wishing to distinguish the professionally trained minister from the layman, Congregationalists were also alert to the claims of the Oxford Movement that Christian ministry lay exclusively within the apostolic succession.⁵⁵ It was necessary to assert that true ministerial calling should be judged by its results seen in the salvation of souls. In 1842 both the aged Thomas Palmer Bull and Josiah Bull, who felt that he could not support the offices of both co-pastor and sole tutor, resigned as tutors of the Newport Pagnell College. They were succeeded by John Watson who had been co-pastor at Islington.⁵⁶ In his inaugural address on 26 October 1842, Watson referred to the danger posed by the Oxford Movement:

We live during an unexampled revolution of opinion. Men who have, as it were, sworn over the blood of martyrs to defend their good name and their faith to the end, are consigning them and their principles to contempt. The most Jesuitical measures are taken to

53. Gilbert, *Religion and Society*, p. 156.

54. *The Thirty-fourth Report of the Committee of the Newport Pagnell College; or Evangelical Institution, for the Education of Young Men for the Christian Ministry*, London: J. Teulon, 1846, pp. 7-9. (Hereafter *1846 Report*).

55. Gilbert, *Religion and Society*, p. 157.

56. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 7.

poison the springs of national sentiment, and, at the same time, to beguile the people of this country into the notion that they are drinking the pure waters of salvation.⁵⁷

The 1846 report of the college stated the case against the Oxford Movement even more bluntly:

So far as the priestly assumption of the high church party are (sic) concerned, we are content to leave its advocates to rejoice in the pure and uncorrupted stream of what they are pleased to term the apostolic succession. Or rather, without entering into argument, but pointing at once to the results that are to be seen amongst us, we would ask, Are they ministers of Christ? So are we. Are they of the true succession? We more. This gospel which we preach is not after man; we neither received it of man, nor were thus taught it. Do they boast the proofs of their apostolic commission? We can point to the success of our ministry in the conversion of souls; these are our letters of commendation; our epistles written in our hearts, known and read of all men.⁵⁸

While the Newport Pagnell College demonstrated denominational self-confidence on questions of ministry, it was not radical enough to desire the disestablishment of the Church of England. A dramatic incident in 1847 showed that the country committee and the tutor could not support the views put forward by Edward Miall in his weekly newspaper, *The Nonconformist*, which first appeared in 1841, and the British Anti-State Church Association, which he helped to found in 1844.⁵⁹ Whatever the personal views of the committee members and John Watson may have been, support for disestablishment was not strong enough amongst benefactors of the college to risk alienating any of them, especially as the college's financial situation was increasingly precarious.⁶⁰ In December 1847, it came to Watson's attention that one of his students, Henry Batchelor, was planning to address a meeting of the British Anti-State Church Association at Stony Stratford. Neither the tutor nor the country committee were able to dissuade him from delivering his lecture, which had been advertised on placards all over the district. Rather than submit to the advice of the tutor and committee, Batchelor and three other students resigned from the college. Batchelor then delivered a two-hour address at the meeting which was judged to be "most thrilling and eloquent" by a sympathetic auditor, and the other

57. Watson, *Discourse*, p. 20.

58. 1846 *Report*, pp. 7-9.

59. Binfield, *So Down to Prayers*, pp. 109-15; O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, part I, London: Adam & Charles Black, 1966, p. 151; Jones, *Congregationalism*, pp. 215-18.

60. *The Thirty-sixth Report of the Committee of the Newport Pagnell College; or Evangelical Institution, for the Education of Young Men for the Christian Ministry*, Newport Pagnell: C. Tite's Executors, 1848, p. 10. (Hereafter 1848 *Report*).

students also spoke from the platform. Watson stressed that no student of the college had the right to speak on a controversial issue without permission from the tutor and that Batchelor had signed the college rules to this effect when he began his studies. But Edward Miall's *Nonconformist* backed the rebellious students:

The young men at Newport Pagnell...ask nothing which they could surrender without doing wrong to their own consciences – and the institution which refuses their request, unless it reforms itself, will be looked upon by the next generation as one of the most curious illustrations of the combined benevolence and narrow-mindedness of bygone days.⁶¹

Edward Miall could hardly have known how soon the college itself would become an illustration of bygone days. Already in July 1847, John Watson had given a year's notice in order to become tutor of Hackney College. He was succeeded in 1848 by William Froggatt, who soon had his own problems with rebellious students. This time there was no great issue such as the cause of the British Anti-State Church Association. Froggatt went to London on business for several days in November 1849; in his absence, a student, Charles Williams, was away from the college overnight and subsequently refused to tell his tutor where he had been or what he had been doing. Williams and four other students then resigned. *The British Banner* printed letters from Froggatt and the students on 28 November 1849. A leading article commented on "preposterous notions of their own independence" held by the students and said how "wrong – entirely wrong – most seriously wrong" they were. Edward Miall then jumped to their defence in *The Nonconformist* (5 December 1849), writing that a system which restricts students "with precise regulations intended to shape their conduct ...[is] hurtful to their characters exactly in proportion to the conscientiousness with which such regulations are enforced." A tradition in the Bull family maintained that the real cause of the disturbance was that the students were not allowed to have mustard for breakfast – perhaps an indication of how petty the whole situation was.⁶²

With this unpleasant incident and the fact that the college's annual expenditure was running at about £500 while income was only about £350, the committees were faced with a difficult situation. The combined London and country committees sat all night on 12 June 1850. At the annual meeting on 19 June, they announced their decision to dissolve the college. Two remaining students, a library of 1,700 books, and the assets and debts of the college were sent to Cheshunt College in Hertfordshire.⁶³ Sixty-seven years of an educational experiment had come to a close, but the committees could reflect that 114 young

61. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, pp. 8-9, 17; *1848 Report*, pp. 9-13.

62. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, pp. 9-10, 18.

63. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, pp. 5, 10-11.

men, most of whom had subsequently entered long careers as Congregational ministers,⁶⁴ had received their education in Newport Pagnell.

Samuel Greatheed's letter to the committee of friends in 1812 indicates the value that was placed on a free search for personal vocation at the Newport Pagnell Academy in its early days. The conflict between students and tutors during the College's final years suggests that there had been a marked shift towards authoritarianism, perhaps as a result of the emphasis on professional preparation for ministry. A fruitful area for further research would be a detailed study of the development of its curriculum, involving a careful comparison of John Newton's original plan, the records of the reorganization of 1812 and the resulting *Summary, Statement and Plan* of 1813, the examiners' reports read at the anniversary meetings of 1829 and 1830, and John Watson's *Discourse on the Studies of Newport Pagnell College* of 1842. My own work has taken me only as far as a complete scrutiny of Watson's treatise. The other sources might show a marked development towards preparation for a professional career consonant with the growing self-confidence of the Congregational Churches, especially after 1828. The results might offer suggestive comparisons for our own planning of ministerial training, notwithstanding our different circumstances of ecumenism and dwindling church membership.

In the meantime, however, the story of the Newport Pagnell Academy may warn those who are involved in training ministers. There is a danger that planners of curricula, tutors and ministerial students themselves might be more interested in completing the requirements of a course, with its resultant certificate, than in pursuing a genuine search for vocation and personal spiritual growth. Referring to the free search for vocation, Samuel Greatheed wrote, "Such a liberty would probably be impracticable in most situations, but at Newport it has been tried with success, and sorry should I be if it were abridged."⁶⁵ We must foster that liberty in our training programmes by encouraging those in training to go beyond assigned work along the uncharted paths of spirituality which will lead them to discover their true vocations. A Christ-like ministry will be a self-giving of the minister's vocation to other people and to God, not just the assumption of a particular role within the structure of the church. The Newport Pagnell Academy reminds us that the personal spirituality of true vocation must be found and nurtured before it can be offered.⁶⁶

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64. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, pp. 12-18.

65. F.W. Bull, *N.P. Academy*, p. 4.

66. I am grateful to the late Miss Catherine Bull who allowed me to use her collection of materials on the Newport Pagnell Academy.

**“OUR SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS”¹.
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN ENGLAND
AND ITS COLLEGE 1844-1876**

The Presbyterian Church in England (which in 1876 united with the English Synod of the United Presbyterians to become the Presbyterian Church of England) was a fusion of two traditions. In the far north between the Tyne and the Tweed in small towns like Wooler and ports like Berwick, and villages like Crookham nestling under the Cheviots, there was an indigenous English Presbyterianism whose roots reach back at least to the early eighteenth century. Between 1820 and 1840 it was grafted into a stronger, more dynamic plant, those congregations in connection with the Church of Scotland founded by emigré entrepreneurs, engineers and financiers in cottonopolis and London. It was their dynamism and passion that created the presbyterial and synodical structure of the Presbyterian Church in England.

“We date our prosperity and progress from your great Disruption”, Peter Lorimer told the Free Church of Scotland General Assembly on 25 May 1846.² Lorimer, the thirty-four year-old Professor of Hebrew and Biblical Criticism at the English Presbyterian College, was a member of the English Synod’s deputation to the Free Church of Scotland General Assembly. Those who knew the church knew what he meant. South of the Tweed the disruption had produced a united church, for of seventy-two ministers in pastoral charge in England in 1843, thirty-six left for vacant parishes in the Church of Scotland, two went to join the Free Church of Scotland, and one was dismissed on a disciplinary charge. Thirty-three remained to serve the English Church. Contemporaries interpreted this as time-servers in English pastorates scurrying back across the border in pursuit of preferment.

The disruption clarified the mind, and the Presbyterian Church in England became of necessity an independent, self-consciously English church – “growing up as independently upon the English soil as your Church does on the soil of Scotland, or our sister Church on the soil of Ireland” as Lorimer put it. The disruption severed the umbilical cord, but the discerning had noted the way the wind was blowing during the gathering non-intrusion storm of the late 1830s and realised that the future lay in London, not Edinburgh. Prominent among those who saw an English future for the English Synod were two young ministers who were to give their futures to the English Presbyterian College, Peter Lorimer and Hugh Campbell.

Both came south in the late 1830s, Lorimer to River Terrace, Islington in 1837 and Campbell to Ancoats in Manchester. Campbell, a thirty-four year old Glasgow graduate, had been a town missionary under the auspices of Paisley Abbey; Lorimer, ten years his junior, came straight from the University of

1. The phrase is Peter Lorimer’s – [*English Presbyterian*] *Messenger*, 1855 p. 261f.
2. *M*, 1846 p. 243.

Edinburgh and had been licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh. They came to presbyteries, Lancashire and London, whose ministers and people understood themselves to be part of the established Church of Scotland and whose political agendas were dominated by strategies to persuade the Church of Scotland to grant them legal recognition as such. The English Synod of 1836 was formed in response to cautious encouragement from the Scottish Assembly³ and during 1838 and 1839 the English Synod increased pressure for representation. Campbell dissented, a voice crying in the wilderness. At the 1838 Synod he insisted that his opposition be minuted, on the grounds that it would "...be unconstitutional of the Church of Scotland to grant, and injurious to this church to accept of, the union prayed for."⁴

Campbell was an English Presbyterian – indeed, he almost invented the concept between 1838 and 1843 as he wrote articles and delivered speeches. In 1839 he was appointed as Synod Clerk, and his shrewd judgement, legal acuteness and intellectual agility were evident in the drafting of the church's Declaration of Independence of 1844. He distinguished sharply between Presbyterianism, which he considered the only viable alternative form of polity to popery, ("the contrast must stand between absolute monarchy and a representative republicanism"⁵), and Scottish Presbyterianism, a distinction lost on many of his contemporaries. He considered England his true ecclesiastical mother because she had produced the Westminster Confession, and he wrote under the pseudonym "Scoto-Anglus". "It was indeed astonishing", remarked Lorimer, how soon "Scotus" became "Scoto-Anglus". "Never before, surely, did Scotchman take so rapidly and kindly to English soil."⁶ Campbell was not alone in the 1840s in believing that Presbyterianism had the potential to be an alternative establishment, "...the bulwark of salvation for England, against the invasion of Popery from without and the defection and mutiny of Puseyising traitors from within".⁷ It was therefore incumbent upon them, he told the Church of Scotland General Assembly of 1842 that they become "a native English church".⁸ That could not happen whilst the English churches were dependent on the Church of Scotland for ministry. They therefore needed their own college. R.S. Candlish, who was to be a significant force in the Free Church of Scotland's educational policy, concurred, suggesting that the Synod appoint a professor in London and use the resources of King's College. The roots of the English Presbyterian College reach back into that vision, for it was Campbell's presbytery, the presbytery of Lancashire, that brought an overture to the English

3. *The Principal Acts of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland 1836*, p. 74.

4. Leone Levi, *Digest [of the acting and proceedings of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in England 1836-1876]*, (London 1877) p. 9.

5. Peter Lorimer, *In Memoriam. The late Rev. Professor Campbell of London*, (London 1855), p. 46.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-1.

7. *P[rebyterian] R[evue]*, 1842, pp. 160-1.

8. *Ibid.*

Synod meeting in Carlisle in 1842⁹ that a College be established so that "...natives of this part of the Empire may obtain, at a moderate charge, the benefits of a literary, philosophical, and theological education, to qualify them for the office of the Holy Ministry in the Presbyterian Church." As is the nature of presbyterianism, a committee was appointed and set about its work. Although Campbell was not a member of the college committee,¹⁰ he appears as a creative advocate, urging presbyteries to action).¹¹ Lorimer took over the convenership of the College committee after John Park, the minister of Rodney Street, Liverpool, left to take up the vacant charge of Glencairn parish church following the disruption. A fund-raising committee was organised in London presbytery, convened by Lorimer.¹²

Campbell appears to have been a catalytic thinker in the process. His "Proposal for the Institution of a Theological Seminary in Connexion with the Presbyterian Church of England"¹³ grounds his passionate belief in the necessity of a native ministry in the New Testament (*Acts* 6:3; 14:23; *1 Tim* 1:3 and 3; *Titus* 1:3-14) and in the practice of the Reformers. It would, he felt, be premature to establish a College "with all the full array and apparatus requisite for the education of candidates in all the necessary branches of literature and science". Rather, he proposed a Theological Seminary in London, so that the University of London could be used for preparatory training. He was slightly more in tune with the complexities of the English scene than Candlish whose attention had strayed automatically to the English religious establishment and the Anglican King's. A staff of two would be all that was needed - "Of these Professors, one, who would also be Principal, might teach Systematic or Doctrinal, and also Controversial Theology; while the other might teach Ecclesiastical History, Chronology, and Ecclesiastical Jurisprudence, with Pastoral Theology."

The committee presented their report at the historic Berwick Synod of 1844,¹⁴ when the Presbyterian Church in England claimed her independence from Scotland. Lorimer spoke to it, claiming that an independent English church should not be dependent on Scottish and Irish preachers. The Declaration of Independence which they had just approved had changed the nature of the church. No longer were they part of the establishment, even in their dreams. They would make no progress in England until "like other Dissenting

9. Levi, *Digest*, p. 117.

10. Hugh Campbell, *Abstract of the Four First Meetings of the synod of the Presbyterian Church in England*, (London 1847); 1842, p. 44; 1843, p. 44.

11. Minutes of the Scots Presbytery of London vol. 3. 9.12.1834 - 12.12.1843 - 21.11.1843 - a letter from Campbell was warmly received. These MS minutes are in the URCHS Archive.

12. Rough notes of a meeting, headed "13 Exeter Hall Dec. 26 1843" - in Westminster archive - document 2.

13. Appendix II in Lorimer, *In Memoriam* - "The following paper was drawn up by Professor Campbell about the year 1843 or 1844" - pp. 54-56.

14. Hugh Campbell, *Abstract*, pp. 8-9.

churches", they had their own theological college and educational system. In Campbell's words, "They were no longer Scotchmen by blood or anything else – but henceforth English Presbyterians."¹⁵ However, the mind of Synod was not unanimous. Newcastle is, after all, nearer Edinburgh than London, and the view from the presbytery of Newcastle was rather different from that from the fashionable vestries of Regent Square in London and St Peter's Square in Manchester. They proposed a temporary pattern of local teaching and licensing. The committee resisted the overture, and won the day. Alexander Murdoch of Berwick, who as immediate past Moderator had led the English delegation in the historic procession to Tanfield Hall immediately after the disruption, pointed out that any alternative presbyterial arrangements would neutralise the London College, which was needed because they were now excluded from all universities except London, and it would be disastrous for them to appear to have "an illiterate ministry, with piety uncultivated by judgement and logical understanding."¹⁶

Nonetheless, toddlers still need their parents, and pragmatism if not rhetoric meant that the Presbyterian Church in England would be dependent on the Free Church of Scotland for decades to come. During 1843 they had been enthusiastic fundraisers for and advocates of the Free Church cause, and they expected the support to be mutual. The College committee had therefore decided to invite James Buchanan of the Free High Kirk in Edinburgh to be Primarius Professor at a salary of £500. They had tested the waters before, to be advised by R.S. Candlish, whose influence was second only to Thomas Chalmers's in the Free Church, "Let your Synod empower its committee to appoint him, if he will accept it; or let your Synod resolve formally to request his acceptance of the office. This would make the call the strongest possible, and let him fairly consider it...Let Synod name Buchanan."¹⁷ They did, but were to be disappointed. Buchanan, a Scottish metaphysician of the old school, was not to be prised from Edinburgh, even for such a generous sum, and the following year he was appointed to the chair of apologetics at New College. Never a well man, he refused London "principally on the pleas of indifferent health."¹⁸ In the meantime the committee went about their business of planning the life of the new institution, weighing the merits of variations in syllabus, the problems of entry requirements, necessary staffing levels and possible methods of finance.¹⁹ They were clear from the start that entry could not be restricted to graduates. The "Outline", which is in Lorimer's hand, never reached Synod. It showed them exploring the way in which classics, mathematics and logic might be taught

15. These reports are taken from the pro-English *Berwick Advertiser* April 20 1844, and the pro-Scottish *Berwick and Kelso Warder* 20.4.1844.

16. *Ibid.*

17. R.S. Candlish to Wm Hamilton, Edinburgh 5 April 1844, Westminster College archive document 6.

18. Campbell, *Abstract* 1844, Commission of Synod, p. 37.

19. Minutes of a sub-committee 27 May 1844 and "Outline of a plan for a proposed theological college", Westminster archive documents 4 and 5.

using existing educational resources, particularly University College, London. Later students did take some classes there, but never in the systematic way envisioned here.

The Commission of Synod, which met in London on 21 and 22 August, heard the bad news about Buchanan but, nothing abashed, dropped their proposed salary by £100 and agreed to offer the Primarius Professorship to William Cunningham, the massively intelligent Junior Professor of Divinity of New College – a heady compound of cheek and optimism.²⁰ It is no surprise that he refused, citing as his reason the indifferent health of Thomas Chalmers, the Principal. That was not entirely flannel – within three years Chalmers was dead and Cunningham his successor. However, one suspects that the Committee knew Cunningham was a pipe dream, for they simultaneously asked the Commission to approve Lorimer, Campbell and James Hamilton of Regent Square as interim professors for the forthcoming session.

So, on 5 November 1844, in rooms in Exeter Hall, just off the Strand, rented by James Nisbet the publisher, “The Theological College of the Presbyterian Church in England” began its life under the care of two temporary professors and the multi-talented and hugely busy minister of Regent Square, the most important charge in the presbytery of London. Twenty-three students enrolled, all of them from within the bounds of the presbytery of London – twenty destined for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in England, plus one Welsh Calvinistic Methodist, one Irish Covenanter and one Anglican. Of the twenty whom the college committee considered to be “looking forward to its ministry”, only seven came from English Presbyterian congregations; the others came from the Free Church of Scotland, Ireland, the Church of England, Congregationalism and the United Secession Church: They met during the evenings for five nights a week, and were divided into two classes. A preliminary class busied itself in the study of classics, and the advanced divinity class wrestled with Hebrew, New Testament Greek, Greek grammar, Calvin’s Latin commentaries, “the Authenticity, Integrity and Credibility of the New Testament books”, Church History and Government and Pastoral Theology.²¹

Although plans for a college were an essential component in the vision of English presbyterianism as early as 1842, its eventual shape was determined by an attempt to copy the Free Church of Scotland’s educational policy. Leaders of the Free Church considered the disruption a new reformation and themselves as a new national communion with nationwide responsibilities. Educational provision was a way of demonstrating this. “Any church” that aspired to “the character of national,” stated the 1843 Assembly, must make education available to all children and young people connected with it, “from the lowest

20. Campbell, *Abstract* 1844, p. 38.

21. *M* 1845, pp. 8-10 and R.B. Knox, *Westminster College, Cambridge, its background and history* (nd, but 1978) pp. 3-4.

elementary school to the first institutions of science and learning."²² In October 1843 a subscription scheme was launched to establish 500 congregational schools, and by 1844 over £50,000 had been raised (which met the building costs) and soon after this rose to £60,000.²³ Free Church fundraising and policy in 1843-4 was by any standard astonishing. It did not transpose easily south of the Tweed. Nonetheless it was the standard to which many English Presbyterians aspired. At a meeting of the London Lay Union (a group which existed to promote the new denomination's fortunes) on 11 April 1845, Peter Lorimer noted the importance of day schools "...as *feeders* for [the College]; pipes of supply to replenish the reservoir as its waters were drawn off",²⁴ a concern shared from the chair by Alexander Gillespie, an elder of Regent Square. The founders of the Scottish colleges had soon realised the necessity of parochial and borough schools. Nearer home, King's College London, "did not in any measure, realise the benefits its projectors had calculated on, until they had opened a number of affiliated schools." Day schools would "soon increase" the supply of college students.²⁵

It was no accident that Lorimer was convener of the Schools' committee from 1844 to 1876. In August 1845 his committee lamented the fact that only twenty out of seventy-five congregations had schools attached to them. On the next page the *English Presbyterian Messenger* pointedly reprinted an article from *The Scotsman* noting the phenomenal giving of the Free Church which had raised £725,000 for all its funds, including £60,000 for schools and a college. At the 1845 English Synod and on through the autumn, James Anderson of Morpeth strove to sharpen the church's awareness of the college's English context. He invited its members to look back to the "matchless writings of the English nonconformists" and to the college's role in producing the Richard Baxters and Joseph Alleines of the nineteenth century,²⁶ a task lent urgency by the "desperate conspiracy of Puseyite and High Church clergy to strike at the vitals of Presbyterianism" by seducing the young to their altars through National Schools.²⁷ In Scotland, college and schools belonged together. It was never to be so in Anglican England.

From 1844 to 1852, during its time at Exeter Hall, the college ran on a shoestring, a wing and a prayer. Sixty-three students passed through, full-time and part-time, almost a third (twenty-seven) registering at the opening.²⁸ It was

22. *Proceedings of the Free Church of Scotland General Assembly May 1843* (Edinburgh 1843) p. 146 quoted in D.J. Withrington, "Adrift amongst the reefs of conflicting ideals? Education and the Free Church, 1843-55" in Stewart Brown and Michael Fry (eds), *Scotland in the age of the Disruption* (Edinburgh 1993) pp. 79-97, p. 81.

23. For the Free Church education scheme, see D.J. Withrington, *supra*, and "The Free Church education scheme 1843-50" *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, vol. XV pt 2 1964, pp. 103-115.

24. *M* 1845, p. 5.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *M* 1845, pp. 80-81.

27. *Op cit.* p. 12.

28. *M* 1852, p. 350.

launched on a wave of enthusiastic support – £1,173 15s 4d was given during the first year. By 1848 however, student numbers had fallen by almost a third and receipts were falling short of expenditure by one half.²⁹

The college committee were despondent. There had been little hope of persuading such giants as Buchanan and Cunningham to come south, but during 1847 they had good reason to believe that William Arnot might be persuaded to take the Primarius Professorship. Arnot, then twenty-nine and a rising pulpit star, took the offer seriously. He knew his congregation would object if he moved to another pastorate, but “they have an impression that the Professorship is a greater work”. He liked the idea of London, “I have a strong desire to try it as a mission field (for it is in that point of view that it has its charms)” and the financial package was acceptable – “..as to the matter of Sustentation we just spend all our means here – and if we come to London I suppose we shall do the same.” But he was equally aware that Glasgow Free Church presbytery had different views, and warned William Hamilton that “..the somewhat peculiar composition of my own congregation, the great need of Glasgow, and the feebleness of the Free Church at present for lack of ministers in many important towns” might lead the presbytery to refuse to release him.³⁰ His premonition was correct, and the college committee reported gloomily to the 1848 Assembly, noting that three years of negotiation with the Free Church had resulted in nothing more than “..repeated and more peremptory refusals”, thankful though they were to those Free Church and English Presbyterian ministers who had done temporary service. Indeed, with falling numbers and rising costs, the committee would continue to “feel themselves in a position of disheartening weakness and isolation” unless the congregations of the church identified with the work, recruited students and raised funds.³¹

In 1848, aged four, the college nearly died. The debate on the future of the college at the 1848 Assembly was ostensibly about finance and educational viability. It was actually about ethnic identity. The College committee clung to the belief that the college was “invaluable as a rallying point to our ecclesiastical patriotism”, a “reservoir” of ministry and tool for the extension of the church. Others saw it differently. Ironically, it was a future Principal, William Chalmers, then the minister of fashionable Marylebone, who led the opposition. Chalmers, the son of an old Aberdonian family, belonged to a cousinhood which epitomised the best of the Free Church. He numbered amongst his cousins David Brown, Professor at Aberdeen, William Chalmers Burns, the English Presbyterians’ first missionary to China and his brother Islay, later Professor at the Free Church College at Glasgow, whilst one of his female cousins was married to Dr Thomas Guthrie of Edinburgh. One of his uncles had founded the *Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, the journal on which Hugh

29. M 1848/9, pp. 171-74.

30. Arnot to William Hamilton, Glasgow 6 May 1847; 6 June 1847 (copy on college notepaper) – in Westminster archive, documents 15 and 16.

31. M 1848/9, p. 171.

Campbell had cut his critical teeth, and another was one of the founders of Canadian presbyterianism.³² William was himself a distinguished graduate of Glasgow and Edinburgh, and he preached to a distinguished congregation. Given his background it is scarcely surprising that Chalmers thought the advantages of Scotland dwarfed the possibilities of England. The English Presbyterian College was small beer, inadequately staffed, crippled by the absurdities of the English higher education system, ignored by a church whose mental horizon was Edinburgh rather than London. He deplored reliance on part-time teaching from local ministers. The Independents had tried that and rejected it – that was the origin of Highbury Academy. Better by far to send students north to the sinewy, well-staffed, deeply respected universities of Scotland. Had it not “already been found” that the church preferred “Free Church students over the students of the London college?”³³

It was a powerful case, persuasively if bluntly put. It was countered on the floor of Assembly by two former students, Henderson and Stuart, and by Alexander Munro of Manchester, who dryly pointed out that the church could ill afford to lose an institution which produced ministers of the ability of the previous two speakers. He then turned his attention to the fatal flaw in Chalmers's argument – the assumption that students would return to England once trained. In five out of six cases that would not be so; and he cited examples. That aside, every denomination “worthy the name” had a college, and he failed to see why the Presbyterian Church in England should be any different. “Englishness” had won. The Chalmers resolution was critically holed, and Synod voted 57 to 11 to continue, strengthening the committee. The commitment to native ministry was maintained.

The vote gave the college new confidence. New strategies were employed – bursaries to encourage poorer students and the lengthening of the college year to eight months, “being one fourth longer than in any Presbyterian seminary in the three kingdoms”.³⁴ Still understaffed, still hoping for a third professor, the committee and staff set about fund raising and searching for a more suitable home.

Synod's commitment did not translate into congregational giving. The college continued in debt. The amount raised by the college collection in November almost invariably ran out by the meeting of Synod in May and loans had to be raised from wealthy friends, and the student body averaged twelve between 1848 and 1864. Nonetheless, Campbell, Lorimer and an array of local ministers delivered a comprehensive syllabus which covered classical literature, mathematics, logic, philosophy, ecclesiastical history, systematic theology, pastoral theology, and that most Victorian of subjects, Christian evidences. Lorimer and

32. Reconstructed from material in the envelope files on J.C. Burns and William Chalmers in the URCHS archive; also *DNB* on William Chalmers Burns and Islay Burns.

33. *M* 1848/9, p. 173.

34. *M* 1848/9, p. 342.

Campbell continued to give themselves unstintingly to the work of college and church. They taught, wrote, served on committee, drafted documents, but above all guided their students. Hugh Campbell was a cautious scholar, who read his lectures with deliberate formality.³⁵ He was an abstract thinker, occasionally to the point of incomprehensibility as a teacher. Yet beneath the pedantic, formal manner his students rightly perceived a generous heart. In the midst of the troubles of 1848 he took great pains to guide Samuel Huston, an Irish student with a bad case of scruples about subscription to the Westminster Confession in the precise terms demanded by the Irish Presbyterian Church.³⁶ As his students left the college for license and ministry he told them he felt, "as he supposed a mother felt when her daughter was about to be married – sorry to part with us, but glad to get us off his hands."³⁷ Permanence, albeit penurious permanence, gave the church the confidence to negotiate a move from Exeter Hall to larger leased premises in Bloomsbury in 1852³⁸ at 51 Great Ormond Street "a very central, respectable and quiet locality [which] affords easy access to University and King's Colleges, to the Reading Room of the British Museum, and to other important collections".³⁹

The college was in good heart as it began its Bloomsbury phase. It was to remain there for forty-seven years, in three homes (nos 51, 29 Queen Square, 1859-64 and Queen Square House from 1864 onwards) until 1899 when it moved to Cambridge, and became Westminster, an eloquent testimony in red brick to the removal of university tests by E.T. Hare, an architect who, in the words of Charles Anderson Scott, know how to be "original" yet not "fantastic".⁴⁰ Hugh Campbell died in 1855, and with him a Presbyterian era. The grand struggles of the disruption were fading, the church was growing, and the college to which he had given so much was on the up, part of the bourgeois respectability of Bloomsbury and London academe.

The Bloomsbury years co-incided with the mid-century Nonconformist building boom – between them the Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists built 3,864 chapels between 1851 and 1874,⁴¹ the English Presbyterians 114,⁴² more than doubling the size of the denomination. The mid-Victorian ecclesiastical air was full of expansion and a corresponding exploration of

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35. John Reid "The first decade" in "The College Jubilee Supplement" to *The Presbyterian* November 29, 1894 p. 10; and "The old college, its professors and students"; *M* July 1899, p. 173.
 36. The letters from Campbell to Huston are in the Westminster archive, all numbered 18; for Huston see John Reid "The Old College, its professors and students IV" in *M* October 1899, pp. 257/8.
 37. A.F. Douglas, *Reminiscences of the late Rev. Professor Campbell* London 1864, p. 15.
 38. *M* 1852, p. 179; 316.
 39. *M* 1853, p. 136.
 40. C.A. Anderson Scott, "Westminster College, Cambridge. The New Presbyterian Enterprise" in *The Puritan* Sept. 1899, pp. 642-7.
 41. Kenneth D. Brown, *A social history of the Nonconformist ministry in England and Wales 1800-1930* (Oxford 1988), p. 80.
 42. This figure has been compiled from church and presbytery records.

clerical professionalism. There was a growing awareness that being a B.A. was not an adequate preparation for ministry. Under the influence of the Oxford Movement theological colleges began to appear in cathedral closes, beginning with Chichester in 1839, and then at the bottom of bishops' gardens – at least, so Cuddesdon in 1854.⁴³ Wesleyan Methodism first established its Theological Institution at Hoxton in 1835, and it expanded to Didsbury in 1842, Richmond in 1843 and Headingley in 1869.⁴⁴ The Baptists increased the proportion of trained men in their ministry from 45% to 67% between 1850 and 1879, and in 1871 Congregationalism counted some 16 colleges, 368 students and 38 professors as associated with it.⁴⁵ The English Presbyterian College was not only a sign of denominational *machismo*, it was also proof that the church was taking an increasingly professionalised and literate world seriously.

The late 1850s and 1860s were to be boom years for the Presbyterian Church in England. Between 1850 and 1876 their membership increased by at least 14,000.⁴⁶ The English Presbyterians were a confident community in 1855, and that confidence was reflected in their hunt for Campbell's successor. They began, like all confident people, at the top, with Thomas M'Crie, Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland. A gifted historian himself and the son of Scotland's most distinguished ecclesiastical historian, M'Crie had led the small Original Secession Church, of which he was a minister, into union with the Free Church three years earlier. He had succeeded his father as minister of Davie St, Edinburgh in 1836, and had also acted as the part-time professor of theology at the United Secession Church Theological Hall.⁴⁷ He was a man of exceptional ability. The English Presbyterians, never anything but bold in their approach to the great and good north of the border, had met to consider Campbell's successor. "If only we could get such a man as Dr M'Crie, said one, when another, more bold, responded, And why not Dr M'Crie himself?"⁴⁸ They called him, and he accepted. Even at £400 a year it was a remarkable translation. He had, he told Edinburgh Presbytery, long desired an academic life, and here was an opportunity "...more influential, and more inviting perhaps, than any I could ever expect in connection with the Free Church".⁴⁹ Edinburgh presbytery heard what he was saying, and kicked themselves. M'Crie's announcement was greeted by equal expressions of astonishment that the Free Church had failed to

43. Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* vol. 1 (London 1966), p. 140.

44. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

45. The calculations were those of Henry Allon, quoted by Clyde Binfield, "The Pastor as Professional: some Preliminary Steps in a Victorian Investigation" in W. Conze and J. Kocka (eds), *Bildungsbürgertum in 19. Jahrhundert* Teil 1 (Stuttgart 1985), pp. 279-300.

46. Presbyterian Church in England membership rose from c.15,000 in 1850, which is an estimated figure, to 29,351 in 1875 – General Statistical table 1875, printed with Synod reports.

47. For M'Crie see *DNB* and N. de S. Cameron (ed), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History* (Edinburgh 1993).

48. *M* Dec. 1856, p. 376-9.

49. *M* 1856, p. 345.

use his gifts appropriately and admiration for the "consummate wisdom" of the English Presbyterians - I take this to be an ecclesiastical euphemism for "remarkable cheek". One speaker pronounced it a day of "national and ecclesiastical disgrace". More perceptively and more generously, James Begg, minister of Newington Free Church in Edinburgh and leader of the so-called "Constitutionalist" party in the church, noted that M'Crie had ecumenical, historical and educational gifts that would do good in England and thus benefit Scotland also.

It was the English College's finest hour. They could not believe their good fortune. A fortnight after his inaugural, a fine paper on English Puritanism, they slew the fatted calf with a dinner party in his honour. It is a tribute to Peter Lorimer's decency that, at a salary some £70 less than M'Crie's, he did not play the part of the elder son.⁵⁰ It was a good party. The guest of honour was Lord Panmure, formerly Fox Maule M.P., one of the few Scottish aristocrats to support the Free Church and now Secretary of State for War. The other guests included Scottish M.P.s, academics and businessmen. "We do not wish to be regarded as 'robbers of Churches' ", said Alexander Gillespie as he proposed M'Crie's health, "but we are very glad we have got possession of Dr M'Crie, and what is more, we mean to keep him!" M'Crie, for his part thought the soirée signalled a wish to make the college worthy of the church, proffered the strategy of linking the college with a series of "intermediate schools in some of the large cities in England, on the plan of our higher academies in Scotland", and dreamt of an international presbyterian congress in London, bringing together D'Aubigné from mainland Europe, Hodge from America, Cooke from Ireland and Cunningham from Scotland "to tell Englishmen what Presbytery has done in these parts"⁵¹ and establish once for all the distinction between presbyterianism and Scotland. It was a night for dreams.

M'Crie was a catch. The dreaming continued. College collections rose by over £150. There was agitation for a third professor. The student intake for the year was seven, which was high. Lorimer's *Patrick Hamilton, the first preacher and martyr of the Scottish Reformation* was published in Edinburgh to some critical acclaim, and he was awarded a Princeton D.D.⁵² He and M'Crie were remembered fondly as a fine team. M'Crie's eloquent lectures were delivered with such authority that no student dared contradict him. Lorimer, on the other hand could be easily misled by red herrings, and his students enjoyed planting them.⁵³

In 1858 all was back to normal. The new college treasurer, Archibald Ritchie of Scottish Equitable Life, an elder of Regent Square, bluntly contrasted the ardour of the previous year with the fact that he had £16 1s 8d in hand to pay bills

50. It was actually raised in 1869, after twenty-five years service.

51. *Ibid.*

52. *M* 1857, p. 145; p. 263.

53. David Fotheringham, "The second decade" in "The College Jubilee Supplement" to *The Presbyterian* November 29, 1894 *The Presbyterian*, pp. 10-12.

of £233 6s 8d. 500 circulars had produced five replies. Ritchie was not a man to be trifled with. He promptly persuaded the editor of the *Messenger* to print an analysis of congregational giving in relation to communicant strength.⁵⁴ He was to serve the college with energy and acumen for thirteen years, badgering congregations to increase their giving, living almost yearly with debt and deficit financing, and helping engineer a path of endowment which seemed to hold the promise of financial security.

These were not easy years for college or denomination. The struggle for ethnic identity which had been so evident in 1844 and 1848 manifested itself again in the 1850s in a series of crises over the introduction of hymnbooks and organs, and in the 1860s in divided opinions about the possible shape of a united British Presbyterian Church. These debates were frequently fierce and acrimonious, and threatened the church with new disruptions. Most serious for the college was the question of union between the Free Church of Scotland, the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in England which dominated the agenda of the church from 1859 onwards. M'Crice was already a seasoned and acute ecumenical campaigner, and it was only natural that the Synod should appoint him convener of its negotiating committee in 1859.⁵⁵ However, the division between "British" and "English" factions was so marked that he resigned in 1861 lest his views should cause financial damage to the college.⁵⁶

Nonetheless, it was telling that the college committee decided to launch an Endowment Appeal to commemorate the Bicentenary of the Great Ejection in 1862 rather than the tercentenary of the Scottish Reformation some three years previously. "No church in England has a better title than our own to claim affinity with the 'noble army of martyrs'," proclaimed William Fergusson.⁵⁷ Their theological institutions had dwindled into private academies. An endowment fund would save the English Presbyterian College from such an undignified fate. The wealthiest laymen of the church launched the fund with enormous generosity - Robert Barbour, Mancunian merchant and prince of benefactors gave £500 and promised 10% on everything raised above £5,000, H.M. Matheson whose company was eventually to become Rio Tinto Mining £500, James Stevenson of the Jarrow Chemical Company £250. The church set itself the target of £10,000 in 3 years. Initial enthusiasm waned. Although £2,681 19s had been raised by the opening of the 1862/3 academic year, by the January of 1863 William Fergusson was berating the "marvellous apathy" of the church towards "measures adopted to secure our permanence and success".⁵⁸

54. *M* 1858, p. 320.

55. *M* 1859, p. 188/9.

56. G.B. Bruce, "Sketch of the Union Negotiations in England" in *The Presbyterian Church of England; a memorial of the Union*, p. 49; David Cornick, "Catch a Scotchman becoming an Englishman! Nationalism, theology and ecumenism in the Presbyterian Church in England 1845-1876" in *JURCHS* vol. 3 no. 6 May 1985, Essays in honour of R. Buick Knox, pp. 202-15.

57. *M* 1862, p. 113/4.

58. *M* 1863, p. 14/5.

The college was caught in the wider tensions of the church. A shrewd anonymous letter to the *Messenger* drew attention to the damage caused by factions. Foreign missions were free of them, and foreign missions prospered. Not so the college or the home mission fund: "Some are keen for the College. They see it as the backbone of our English Presbyterianism, and are calling on the church to endow, and fully equip, and support with all her heart her collegiate seminary in London. Some on the other hand, look askance on the College. They still continue to question the wisdom of its very existence; and although silent on that topic, regard Home Mission as of primary importance..."⁵⁹ That was why M'Crie was not in the least happy with the suggestion that the summer of 1862 should be spent touring the churches with a Home Missions deputation to raise money. He and Lorimer did not trust the Home Missions Committee. "My own opinion," he informed Archibald Ritchie, was that the idea had originated with "one or other of our very good friends, who grudges our vacation". He proposed instead printing "a brief touching, and telling address" about the college as a sermon alternative. This could be sent to clergy who might provide students. It was students, not money the college needed, he tartly informed Ritchie. Ritchie, a long-suffering man, sent the letter back to Lorimer with the pained comment "*I cannot say that*" scrawled in the margin.⁶⁰

Money was needed, even if the professorial staff were not the right ones to raise it. As so often, it was benefaction which rescued the church. William Brownley died in 1864 and bequeathed all his property, worth some £47,000, to the college. Brownley, a London businessman and generous benefactor of the church, had been a member of the college committee since 1845. His bequest held out the hope of a sizeable income and security. Sadly, his will was disputed, and although those who purported to be his next of kin were proved to have no case, it took the Court of Chancery at its most Dickensian eight years to decide on the matter, and much of the bequest disappeared into legal and government coffers.⁶¹ The first fruit of the bequest was Queen Square House, "a noble mansion, entered from Guildford Street, Russell Square" the former home of a High Court Judge, Sir Frederick Pollock, "...large and commodious, containing, in addition to a fine library and a spacious lecture hall, classrooms, reception rooms, professors' private rooms, students' common room, and as many apartments for such students as wish to reside in the house".⁶²

The second fruit of the bequest was the appointment of a resident tutor, first, in 1864, Robert Hunter, missionary and later compiler of a famous Encyclopaedic Dictionary,⁶³ followed by John Gibb who joined the college in 1868, and eventually retired from it as Professor of New Testament forty-five years later in 1913.

59. *M* 1863, pp. 36-8 "United action, its value and necessity" by "PT".

60. M'Crie to Ritchie, 3 July 1862 Westminster archive document 27.

61. Report of College committee - letter from Charles Lewis 13 March 1871, p. 46/7 and 1873, p. 65.

62. *M* 1864, p. 169; 354.

63. Synod report 1865, p. 32 and *DNB*.

The college committee greeted the bequest euphorically – solvency was in sight. They reported to the 1865 Synod, “We once heard Dr Lorimer on an important occasion represent the college as a tender sapling that required much careful nursing and exclaim with something like melodramatic effect, HANDS OFF! It was pleasing to hear him at Synod describe it as a firmly rooted and rough trunked tree, and blandly invite all who felt disposed, to shake it as they saw fit.”⁶⁴ The annual college collection was discontinued,⁶⁵ but two years later they were pleading for its re-introduction. In 1869 the committee prudently suggested the setting up of a College Trust. In the year of union (1876) the Treasurer breathed a sigh of relief that he had over £200 in hand.⁶⁶

If financing was a continual problem, replacing M’Crie was an even greater one. He retired in 1867, suffering from failing eyesight. Once again, eyes turned north, but this time not quite to Scotland, for their gaze fell on Berwick and John Cairns, minister of Golden Square United Presbyterian Church and part-time professor in their Theological Hall. Cairns was a deeply influential, saintly man. He was widely read in German theology and philosophy, and wrote widely in journals and magazines. He was also a trusted ecclesiastical statesman, who was at the centre of the union negotiations between the three churches. He felt this precluded him from accepting the chair.⁶⁷ Once Cairns had refused, Synod decided to appoint William Chalmers, and one who twenty years previously had moved that the college be closed became its Principal and Professor of Systematic Theology.⁶⁸

The Queen Square days were fondly remembered – the old Janitor who “spoke as if he were the Principal and the Professors and Tutor his assistants”, Lorimer’s attempts to make his students as much interested in John Knox’s work in England as he was himself, trips botanising in Epping Forest under Hunter’s guidance, John Gibb’s gift of “convenient” blindness and deafness (surely an essential attribute for all theological teachers?), all these made up the texture of an honourable tradition and began to craft the tone and style of what was soon to become the Presbyterian Church of England.⁶⁹

In the background was a continual struggle for financial survival. Supporting the college had neither the romantic allure of foreign missions, nor the visible results of home mission, and it was a partisan act, a symbol of “Englishness”. That it was there at all was a tribute to the far-sightedness of ecclesiastical statesmen and the Christian generosity of the William Brownleys and Robert Barbours of the Presbyterian Church in England.

Yet, for all that, it remained compellingly different from the Dissenting academies and the theological colleges of the Church of England, for it was,

64. *M* 1865, p. 191.

65. 1865 Synod report of college committee, p. 37.

66. Report 1876, p. 89.

67. A.R. MacEwan, *Life and letters of John Cairns* London 1895, pp. 494/5.

68. *M* 1868, p. 81.

69. All taken from *The Presbyterian* supplement cited above.

uniquely, the church's college, its professors synodically appointed, its running theoretically the responsibility of the presbyteries of the church. The nineteenth century was marked by a growth of professionalism amongst the clergy and other learned professions. There were 10,000 more Anglican clergy in England and Wales in 1911 than in 1841,⁷⁰ although their ratio to the total population fell. Nonconformist figures are more difficult to gather, but so far as they can be gathered, they tell a similar tale. In 1841 there were 1,877 Methodist ministers of varying hues, by 1911 4,417. Congregationalists had almost a thousand more ministers in 1911 than in 1863, and the Free Church of Scotland's ministerial strength doubled between the disruption and the end of the century.⁷¹

The Presbyterian Church in England only existed as a separate denomination until 1876. In 1844 the church had been left with just thirty-three ministers. By 1876 that number had increased to 149.⁷² Looking back during his opening lecture at Queen Square in 1852, Hugh Campbell had noted that of the sixty-three students who had passed through his hands, twelve were now English Presbyterian ministers and six licentiates, eleven had taken charges in other British Presbyterian denominations, and twelve with other denominations.⁷³ It was a revealing statistic. Only 19% of students had actually been called to ministry in the Presbyterian Church in England. However, in 1853 the College committee took note that sixteen alumni had now received appointments in the church - "being more than a 1/5th of the whole ministry of the church".⁷⁴ The eyes of most elders still strayed north across the border or west across the sea at times of vacancy, not to London.

Interestingly, in 1880, four years after union, that proportion had almost doubled. Out of a total ministerial roll of 268 in the now united church, fifty-two (19.4%) were former students of the college, and twenty more were licentiates. If it is assumed that that fifty-two were to be found amongst the 149 English Presbyterian ministers at union, then 34.89% of the church's ministry had been trained at the college. In all 226 students had passed through the college. Of these eighty-eight had entered the Presbyterian Church in (of) England, six more had become missionaries in China. That means something like 59% of the students of the College never served the Presbyterian Church in England.⁷⁵ Only one alumnus was called to the Moderator's Chair - John Reid, the minister of Blyth in Northumberland in 1868.⁷⁶ That was indicative of the role of the

70. Alan Haig, *The Victorian clergy* (Beckenham 1984), p. 3.

71. The figures are taken from R. Currie, A.D. Gilbert and L. Horsley, *Churches and churchgoers* (Oxford 1977) pp. 203 ff, tables D2 and D3 and Kenneth Brown, *op. cit.* pp. 11-12.

72. Roll of Synod in 1876, pp. 71 ff.

73. *M* 52, p. 350.

74. *M* 1853, p. 137.

75. Figures from "New Fund for the better endowment of the college of the Presbyterian Church in (sic) England" Statement by the Committee - Westminster College library, ref. W IV 6/77.

76. John Reid, "The Old College: its professors and students - II 1845-50"; *M* August 1899, p. 206.

college. It had its sparkling alumni – like the Smyth brothers who served Irish Presbyterianism with such distinction⁷⁷ – but, as John Reid reflected at the time of the College Jubilee in 1894, they were few, yet no-one could deny that “through it has come a large number of earnest and most *useful* men.”⁷⁸ The college produced “useful” men, and their numbers were growing. Yet even after fifty years of independence the church still wanted Scotsmen. English Presbyterianism’s leadership was still profoundly Scottish. It was to take Cambridge to change that.

DAVID CORNICK

77. R.B. Knox, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

78. College Jubilee Supplement to *The Presbyterian* November 29 1894, copy in Westminster archive, p. 10.

THE FIRST MODERATORS: 1919

In 1919 the Congregational Union took a major step in establishing nine regions each with a Moderator. This receives little attention in Tudur Jones’s history. His very brief account drastically abridges the relevant chapter in J.D. Jones’s autobiography, gives the birth and death dates from the *Year Book* obituaries, and briefly refers to an article in the 1924 *Congregational Quarterly* in which Albert Peel discussed the first five years of the scheme. There is also a rather tart reference to the Assembly’s key-note speaker, who made it clear – indeed provocatively so to some – that he regarded the chosen nine as *episkopoi* in the New Testament sense – that is Bishops. This word, of course, had been avoided in the planning of the scheme: the steering committee had suggested the word “superintendent”, but the Council in March 1919 had changed it to “moderator”.

Peel, in giving grudging approval to the scheme’s first five years described the first appointees as nine men “with wise heads and big hearts”. This paper briefly expands on that, largely by analysing the basic data, for a full history of twentieth-century Congregationalism will need to say much more about them. This basic data is set out in Table A.

The average age was 54.7, with A.J. Viner the oldest at 62 and F.H. Wheeler clearly the youngest, by more than a decade, at 41. As it happened this disparity was also reflected in the terms of office for Viner was the first to go – and the only one to die in office – in 1922, whilst Wheeler continued till 1945. Of the remainder, six were in their 50s, whilst Saxton, who like Viner had been Secretary of the relevant county union, had also passed 60.

Average ministerial experience was 29.5 years, with the extremes being again Viner at 35 and Wheeler at 16. Apart from Viner and Saxton the rest had spent their careers after ordination in churches though Wheeler had been a Chaplain to the Forces from 1915 to 1919 and had won a D.S.O.

	AREA		AGE			Appt in 1919	No. of Churches	End of Term	College	Univ.	Other Churches Served
			in 1919	at Ord	Years in Min						
H.H. CARLISLE	E. Mids	1863-1945	56	24	32	BALHAM	3	1934	Cheshunt	Camb	Maldon; Newland, Lincoln
D. LINCOLN JONES	W.Mids	1867-1962	52	24	28	SUTTON COLDFIELD	3	1939	Lancashire	London St. Andrews	Morley; Grosvenor St. (Roby). Manchester
W.L. LEE	London	1866-1964	53	28	25	EAST HILL	2	1934	Western		London Rd. Kettering
E.P. POWELL	West	1860-1933	59	26	33	SUTTON	4	1924	New	Camb	Shanklin; Rock Ferry; Wellingborough
E.J. SAXTON	N.E.	1858-1943	61	29	32	SEC. YORKS	2	1929	Rotherham		Regent St., Barnsley; Brighouse
A.J. VINER	N.W.	1857-1922	62	27	35	SEC. LANCS	2	1922	Nottingham New		Rectory Place, Woolwich; Hope, Oldham
D. WALTERS	Wales	1863-1931	56	22	34	REDLAND PARK BRISTOL	5	1931	Brecon		Penmenmawr; Mold; Chorlton (McFadyen); Headingley, Leeds
F.H. WHEELER	South	1878-1956	41	25	16	C.F.	3	1945	New		Lowestoft (Asst); Princes St Norwich (Asst); Trinity, St. Albans
H.R. WILLIAMSON	East	1866-1944	53	31	22	HOVE	3	1939	Nottingham		Romsey; Tabernacle, Trowbridge

They were well spread over the Colleges. Viner, Wheeler and Powell had been at New College, Viner and Williamson at Nottingham, Saxton at Rotherham, Carlisle at Cheshunt, Jones at Lancashire, Lee at Western and Walters at Brecon. Carlisle and Powell, who had both been at Mill Hill, were Cambridge graduates from St Johns and Trinity respectively while Jones held degrees from London and St Andrews, which, in a period when B.D. opportunities for Free Churchmen were still limited, allowed those who had completed a course at an approved theological college to sit its papers - he had finished his Lancashire course before Manchester University's theology department was established. None held a research degree or had scholarly publications.

The number of churches each had served ranged from five (Walters) to two (Lee, Saxton and Viner) and only Wheeler had served an assistantship before taking sole pastoral charge. All had held a large church, and the six who moved directly from a pastorate to their moderatorship were with a large church in 1919. Only three (Jones, Lee and Wheeler) - apart from the two county secretaries - were serving in the province to which they were appointed. A further two had previously served in their area. This included Walters, a Welsh speaker, though he had been away from Wales since 1890 (in Manchester, Leeds and Bristol). Williamson, a Scot by birth, had not been in his area since his college days at Nottingham, whilst the London-born Powell, who moved to the West from Sutton in Surrey, had previously had churches in Shanklin and Rock Ferry (he obviously believed in contrasting experiences) and Wellingborough. J.D. Jones claims that whereas it was clear Viner had to go to Lancashire and Saxton to the North-East, and London eventually specified Lee, who held the large church at East Hill in Wandsworth, the allocation of the others was more or less left to the discretion of the planning committee. Clearly they were looking for experienced and proven pastors - with a slight touch of adventure and a concession to the wartime experience in the choice of Wheeler. They were certainly not picking the nine outstanding men in the denomination - nor, despite their longevity, did any of them go on to become so. Only Viner served as national chairman - and died in his year of office - while Walters was preacher at the Assembly of 1928-9. None of them was to receive an article in *D.N.B.* or an entry in *Who's Who*, while only Viner, Jones and Lee received an obituary in *The Times*. Viner clearly owed this to his national chairmanship and Lee and Jones probably to their longevity - both passed 90 - which took them into a more ecumenical age. The contrast with the great mass of middle-ranking Anglican dignitaries who achieved the last two of these accolades is one measure of the extent to which Congregationalism was still outside that other establishment. As J.D. Jones makes clear, the overwhelming reason which had led to the inauguration of the scheme was the constant problem with ministerial settlements, and it was almost always this issue that took up most space in moderatorial reports from 1920 onwards. However, since the principle of Independency was to be preserved, their role was a limited one. In the words of Jones the scheme "Based itself upon trust in personal influence rather than on denominational authority". Inevitably, in practice, the scheme was a stage in the

process which Adrian Hastings recently described as “the movement from the congregational to the denominational model”, which he sees as the characteristic of subsequent Free Church history. After a brief discussion of the work of J.D. Jones, and the comparable work of Shakespeare with the Baptist Union, Hastings concluded that “Nonconformity was rendered viable in large scale modern terms but at the cost of much that was most characteristic to it”. The founders of the moderatorial scheme were well aware of this possible course of events, and wanted to avoid it, and this obviously affected the kind of men they chose – pastoral facilitators rather than authoritarian leaders. J.D. Jones was conscious of this desire to “Have the best of two ecclesiastical worlds” – and he ended the passage “And it cannot be done”. It would be worth further study of the first moderators to test out these hypotheses.

E.P.M. WOLLASTON

Bibliographical Note

The data on the moderators comes from the *Year Book* entries, including their obituaries. Chapter X of J.D. Jones’s autobiography *Three Score Years and Ten* (1940 pp. 106-15) is on the Moderators. He was the brother of D.L. Jones.

REVIEWS

Panorthosia or Universal Reform ch. 19-26. By John Amos Comenius, tr. by A. Dobbie. ISBN 1850754306. Sheffield Academic Press. £30

The role of Jan Comenius in the history of English educational theory has often been noted but students have had no access to his text. For more than twenty years Archie Dobbie has been translating Comenius’s great and systematic work, the *Consultation*, into English. *Pampaeida, or Universal Education*, was the first part to appear in English in 1987, and, following four other volumes, we have the crowning chapters in *Panorthosia, or Universal Reform*, which set out a vision of a society renewed by universal reform. The work is characterised by a reformed protestant piety combined with neo-platonic optimism. In one sense, the vision of Comenius was realised in miniature in groups such as the Czech Brethren and the Pennsylvania Dutch communities. More importantly, he synthesised so much of the insight of the reformed churches of the seventeenth century that his work offers a commentary on what has survived. Family prayers, chapel names and the primacy of the Word in worship are not non-conformist angularities but part of a vision of a transformed society.

The goal Comenius sought was universal reform. The whole world is intended to live in obedience to God’s laws and to be full of his praise. To attain

such an object we must begin as individuals, reforming our own lives on the pattern of Christ. Beyond that families, or households, must be reformed. The next step is to reform schools, followed by the interim reform of churches. There must be political reform to cement the various reforms together. Beyond that lies a World Assembly, or Ecumenical Council, to ensure harmony among the nations. This is no mere polemic. Each chapter is filled with practical advice as to how the reform is to be achieved. Much of this would be described as management or social engineering today. Comenius knew the limits of theoretical discussion. He always returns to a pattern of planning; appointing someone to carry through the plans; equipping and authorising them to act; and seeing that something is done. He constantly summarises his points in pithy aphorisms. So, individual reform means "you must be fully transformed so that you are Everything, Something and Nothing. Everything in yourself, Something in human society of which you are a part, and Nothing in the presence of God." It is being Everything in yourself which requires education and self-improvement.

Some will read this text seeing only the narrow protestant pieties. Others will discover the secret of Comenius's reputation. For his own good reasons he favoured universal education, free to the poor, and stripped of its obscure Latin texts and grammar. He advocated the inclusion of what we would now call the natural sciences in the school curriculum. He valued the arts and music, so long as they were put to religious use. He urged people not to clutter up their homes with unused objects and decorative pieces but to buy the very finest artefacts for essential use. He wanted churches to read and expound the whole Bible each year, which could be done, he suggested, if some of the lists and duplications of the Old Testament were omitted and if the psalms were used in worship. Sermons should be short and to the point.

In both church and state he favoured representative government, using a participative style. Everyone has a right to express an opinion before a decision is reached. He also warned against prejudice and partiality in such assemblies. His was a touching faith in the power of Christian reasoning. Under its influence a new universal language would be agreed, the calendar reformed and a new centre of excellence for Christendom established in London. It is easy to forget that all this was written before 1671, including the proposal that the ecumenical council should hold its meetings in each of the five continents in turn, at ten-year intervals. It is tempting to mock visions; it is much more rewarding to share them. It is good to have this opportunity to view the Promised Land through the eyes of Comenius.

STEPHEN ORCHARD

Hints to Trustees etc. By John Wills. A reprint issued by the Chapels Society 1993. Available from David Barton, Hillcrest, Bent Lane, Darley Hillside, Matlock, DE4 2HN. £3

We have all probably worshipped in one of John Wills's serviceable chapels without realising it. He was a successful jobbing architect with offices in Derby and London who, between 1875 and 1907, designed chapels for Wesleyan Methodists and others which combined clear lines of sight, good acoustics and essential ventilation with enough Gothic trimmings to make people feel it was a proper church. Wills quoted his chapels at pounds per sitting and made it clear that more ornamentation pushed up the rate. Here is his book on the maintenance of such chapels, drains, gas lights, coke stoves and all. The present owners of such buildings would do well to follow his maintenance schedule, with its attention to leaves in the guttering and rubbish bridging the damp course. The students of chapel life at this period will have it vividly set before them, from the need to get the chapel temperature up to 50 degrees before service in the winter to the need to mop up the condensation and fully ventilate the building afterwards. Other gems abound, such as the need to find a chapel keeper who is kind to children, in case he frightens the Sunday School, and the mistaken use of disinfectants to hide smells in urinals when thorough cleaning with water is what is really needed. Cleanliness and godliness meet in this little manual. For those who argue that two generations ago people wore more clothes in church in winter vindication is here. Wills cautions the chapel keeper not to make the place too warm lest "the unfortunate congregation has to sit sweltering in 65 to 70 degrees". David Barton and the Chapels Society have done well to resurrect this little book. Read it and you will catch a whiff of pitch pine in your nostrils and in your mind's eye glimpse the patent ventilators on the walls.

STEPHEN ORCHARD

The Scottish Congregational Ministry 1794-1993. By William D. McNaughton, Glasgow: The Congregational Union of Scotland, 1993. Pp. 34 + 487. £25

The contents of this welcome book can be described in less than a minute, but the Archivist of The Congregational Union of Scotland has spent countless hours gathering the material – much of it elusive – which is now before us. Dr McNaughton provides biographical sketches of more than 2,500 Scottish Congregational and Evangelical Union ministers; a list of those who taught (and teach) at Robert Haldane's Theological Seminary, Glasgow Theological Academy, the Theological Hall of the Congregational Churches in Scotland, the Evangelical Union Academy/Hall, and the Highland College; and almost 200 pages of details concerning Scottish Congregational and Evangelical Union churches.

We learn of ministers who came to Scottish Congregationalism or the Evangelical Union from elsewhere: John Guthrie, for example, whose views on the atonement led to his expulsion from the Secession Church, and to his becoming a leader of the EU. A number of ministers came from England, Wales and Ireland. Of the theological teachers Lovell Cocks was "loaned" to Scotland

by England, while Charles Duthie moved in the opposite direction, as had A.M. Fairbairn before him. Of the thirteen Principals of the Theological Hall from 1854 to the present day, three came from England (D.W. Simon, J.M. Hodgson and H.F. Lovell Cocks) and three from Wales (A.J. Grieve, T.H. Hughes and A.M. Price). Of those who served under the auspices of the London Missionary Society Thomas Smith McKean was killed in Tahiti in 1844, while Brian H. Bailey was awarded the O.B.E. in 1972.

As to the churches, we have the date of formation, the location, the ministerial succession and the present position or the eventual fate. Some, of course, continue; but many have closed; others united with neighbouring Congregational or EU churches; still others ended in other ecclesiastical hands – Tabernacle, Dundee (1801) became Baptist in 1808, for example.

Almost inevitably, there are a few slips. James Muscutt Hodgson is given his degrees on p. 67, but deprived of them on p. 284. The surname of Robert Mackintosh is misspelled on p. 337. The biographies of Lovell Cocks, N.B. Pace and S.M. Watts lack the dates of death. A few items have escaped the compiler's list of sources, among them Smeaton on James Morison, MacWhirter on "The early days of Independentism and Congregationalism in the Northern Islands of Scotland," and the EU Jubilee volumes.

Nevertheless with these diligently – even lovingly – excavated "bones" Dr McNaughton has served his denomination well, and has provided historians and sociologists of religion with a most valuable work of reference. He is warmly to be thanked – as is the publisher for this durable volume celebrating a durable tradition.

ALAN P.F. SELL