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Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

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TWO METHODIST FAMILIES

THE interesting account by the late Rev. Dr. Harold K. Moulton, *Proceedings* xliii, of his family of Methodist Ministers may well have stimulated research into other families with widespread connections in Methodism. Certainly this was so in my own family, and the result may be of some interest beyond the bounds of the family itself. My story covers two Methodist families – OSBORN (my father) and DERRY (my mother). As must be the case with other Methodist families, I find direct links with John Wesley both on my father's and my mother's side.

First, the OSBORN family, though the two families intersect.

Rev. Dr. George Osborn says in his 'Family Memorial', (compiled about 1839, and published for private circulation in 1877), that the home and seat of the family was in Northampton. The earliest reference I have been able to trace is that a Francis Osborn married Dorothea Atterbury about 1725/26. There are so many Francis Osborns and Atterburys in the Registers in the Northampton area that I have found it extremely difficult to get any further, but Francis and Dorothea had at least two sons, James and George. James (1729-1771) was a blockmaker who settled in Rochester, Kent, and became a Freeman of that town. He was the father of George Osborn of Rochester. It hardly needs to be said that it has been not only through Methodism that the family has rendered service to the community. There was, for example, a branch of the family in Northampton, where Francis Osborn (cousin of George Osborn of Rochester) was Mayor in 1798 and Osborns were Mayors of the City in 1799, 1822 and 1864.

When John Wesley visited Chatham in 1784, **George Osborn (1764-1836)** of Rochester, with whom our Methodist story begins, was then a young man of twenty. He took Wesley out to the hills behind the town and on seeing the view Wesley burst into song . . . "Praise ye the Lord, 'tis good to raise . . ." George never forgot this incident and afterwards, when admiring scenery, he would say "Why should we give the scenery all the praise and the Author none?" George left the Church of England when quite young, and used to say that "Methodism is Church of Englandism

FELT". He was one of the prime movers in the building of Bethel Chapel, Rochester, in 1808, which continued in use until after the second world war, but has now been demolished. He was often a visitor at the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, though membership at that time was restricted to ordained Ministers. He kept a draper's shop, and was much respected in the town.

In 1794, George married Hannah Lambly and they had ten children. Of these, one died in infancy, one when only 21, and eight married. One of these last was Jane Osborn, who married (1819) John Bate; one of their sons, Rev. George Osborn Bate, married Elizabeth (daughter of Rev. Dr. Henry J. Pope (c. 1835-1912) who was President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference [W.M.C.] in 1893), and became Principal of Southlands College. A daughter, Jane, married Rev. Joseph Bush (President of the W.M.C. in 1888). His niece, Mary Proctor Bush, was the second wife of Rev. W. Thompson Derry, whose sister Kate Elizabeth Derry, was my mother.

The four youngest children of George and Hannah were George, James, John and Rebekah.

The first of these, **Rev. Dr. George Osborn (1808-1891)** was an influential figure in Methodism over many years. He served in ten circuits before becoming General Secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, a post he held for 17 years before being appointed a Tutor, and later Principal, at Richmond College. He was a prominent figure in some of the Connexional controversies in the Wesleyan Methodist Church in the 1840s; he wrote a number of books and pamphlets, and edited *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, a monumental work in thirteen volumes. He was President of the W.M.C. in 1863 and again in 1891, in which year he was the oldest Minister since Wesley himself to be chosen as President. There is a memorial tablet to him on the wall of Wesley's Chapel. He had the unusual distinction of having a town in South Africa named after him. He married Elizabeth Chubb, thus bringing another well-known Methodist name into the family. Her mother's maiden name was Caldicott, of Huguenot extraction, and she was descended from Ann Caldecote, a class leader in Wesley's time. George and Elizabeth had eleven children.

Their eldest child was Rev. George Richard Osborn who married Eliza Keeling (daughter of Rev. Isaac Keeling, President of the W.M.C. in 1855). Their eldest son George was 17th Wrangler in 1887 and a master at the Leys School, Cambridge, for nearly forty years; their elder daughter, Eliza Keeling Osborn, married Rev. James Hope Moulton, M.A., D.D. (d. 1898), founder of the Leys School and President of the W.M.C. in 1890; and father of the late Rev. Harold Keeling Moulton, M.A., D.D. (d. 1892); their younger daughter Edith married Dr. C.A. Barber, whose brother Rev. W.T.A. Barber, D.D., was Headmaster of the Leys School for 21 years and President of the W.M.C. in 1919.

Another of Dr. George's sons, John Ashton Osborn, took a trip round the world in the 1870s. He crossed America by the new Canadian Pacific Railway, went to Salt Lake City, then across the Pacific (helping to prime the pumps in a storm), visited much of New Zealand, crossed to Melbourne, thence overland to Sydney, and from there came home on the *Cutty Sark*. Throughout his journey he visited many Methodist centres. Bentley Osborn, his son, was a botanist of international reputation, Professor of Botany at Adelaide University, and later at Sydney and Oxford. He had three sons, one of whom was killed in the second world war (1942); the others lived in Australia; the eldest Peter George, had a Naval Command in the War; was an actor of some distinction on the London stage and is still a Governor of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford; he later became an Anglican priest and now has charge of a church in Adelaide; the travel journal of John Ashton is in his custody. Richard, the youngest son, won the D.S.O. and the D.F.C.

The other seven children were all daughters:—Hannah, unmarried, was the first Headmistress of the Perse School for Girls, Cambridge; Elizabeth married Rev. J. C. Barratt who worked for some years in the West Indies and then for nearly 10 years in Germany; Maria married a Mr. Rogers, founder of the Waifs and Strays Society; Esther Margaret married Rev. Edward Martin, missionary in India for 10 years, who will be mentioned later; Edith married John W. Spanton of Buenos Aires; Agnes married Rev. Joseph Berry, a minister in Australia and they had fourteen children; Catherine married Rev. Edward Strutt, a missionary in Ceylon for nine years before ill-health compelled him to return—he died at the early age of 58. Clearly, a high proportion of the daughters married missionaries, but this is hardly surprising when it is remembered that during this time the missionaries were trained at Richmond College, Rev. Dr. George Osborn being the Principal!

Before leaving the family of Dr. George Osborn, a further note must be added regarding his daughter Esther Margaret, who married Rev. Edward Martin. Edward Martin's two grandfathers were *both* members of the first Committee Meeting of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in Leeds in 1813. It is recorded of this Esther Margaret that on one occasion when complimented by the surgeon on her quick recovery from an operation for cancer, she retorted briskly "Well, if five generations of good Methodist blood in your veins won't give you good healing flesh, I don't know what will!" Edward Martin's eldest son, Rev. E. Osborn Martin, M.C., was a missionary in Ceylon and India for 14 years; the next son, Arthur Francis Martin, was a G.P. and distinguished surgeon of Bradford. (One of his daughters, Esther Margaret (M.D.) married Rev. J.W. Waterhouse, O.B.E., Principal of the National Children's Home. She was elected Vice-President of the British Conference in 1977.) The other son was Sir George W. Martin, who became Lord Mayor of Leeds and Chairman of the Methodist Homes for the Aged. Of the daughters, Lily married Rev. F. W. Ambery Smith, K.i.H.,

missionary in India for 27 years (two of whose daughters, Enid and Evelyn ('Pixie'), served as missionaries) ; and the youngest was Irene Martin of Bradford, a polio victim from childhood, a teacher of music, many of whose pupils became famous in the musical world, a gifted local preacher – and a life member of the Yorkshire County Cricket Club, being frequently seen at Headingley for important matches.

Dr. George's younger brother, Rev. James Osborn, was my grandfather. John, the next brother, married Priscilla Rogers, and their son Thomas George Osborn (1843 – 1910) became Headmaster of Kingswood School, Bath, and later founder of Rydal Mount School, Colwyn Bay ; he married Emma, daughter of Rev. F.A. West, who was President of the W.M.C. in 1857. Rebekha, their sister, married Rev. Samuel Wilkinson who travelled in sixteen Circuits and died in 1877.

(to be continued)

H. DERRY OSBORN.

[H. Derry Osborn OBE died in 1987 in his 97th year].

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EDMOND GOUNELLE AND HIS THESIS

FOLLOWING the publication in *Proceedings* (December 1985) of the stimulating article, 'Early Methodism and the Huguenots', I was delighted to receive from the author, Geoffrey Milburn, an invitation, to contribute a note on *Wesley et Ses Rapports avec les Français* by Edmond Gounelle. This thesis, published in 1898 at Nyons in the Drôme where Gounelle began as a probationary minister, provides an interesting contrast in approach and emphasis.

Before examining the work, it is appropriate to say a little on the author and the circumstances of its composition. In acknowledging information kindly provided by Pastor S. Samouélian of Nîmes, it is interesting to note that my correspondent was a student of Edmond Gounelle, history tutor at the Methodist theological school, rue Pierre Demours, Paris, in inter-war France. Edmond Gounelle (1872-1954) was an outstanding minister in the French Methodist Church, editor for many years of *L'Évangéliste*, and with a passionate interest in the story of John Wesley and early Methodism. The thesis itself was the product of study at Richmond College, which he entered as part of his ministerial training in September 1894 staying until June 1896. He often referred to his experiences there in later life. There is ample internal evidence of industrious use of the resources of the library, particularly the Wesley Collection, and also the stimulus of conversation with his tutor, the kindly and greatly respected J. Agar Beet. In passing, attention should be drawn to the value of *Richmond College, 1843-1943*, edited by F. H. Cumbers, in providing context to Gounelle's stay. Reference is there made not only to Gounelle but to other near-contemporary students such as Moïse Alain and Auguste Faure, later to serve the French Methodist Church. Earlier, in the mid-nineteenth century, Emile Cook had been a student.

The thesis is a most interesting and valuable compilation, exhaustively identifying French contacts, whether literary or personal, of John Wesley. The introduction surveys the eighteenth-century scene with Wesley's biting comments on leading writers of the Enlightenment, Rousseau, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Buffon: "Wesley feared lest the ideas of these materialist philosophers might spread in his own country." Then follows relatively brief comment on influential French Protestant writers, extending back into the seventeenth century, such as Jacques Abbadie (1654-1727), La Placette (1629-1718), and particularly Daniel Brévin (1606-95), born in the Channel Islands, one-time chaplain to the French marshal Turenne, and whose writing on the sacrament of Holy Communion was deeply influential upon and propagated by Wesley. Interestingly, there is mention of one Catholic priest, Claude Fleury (1640-1723) whose *Mœurs des Chrétiens* was published by Wesley.

The body of the thesis, however, consists of careful treatment of those French writers who strongly influenced Wesley during the early 1730s at

Oxford, indicating his later reservations, together with comment on Frenchmen known to Wesley.

Within the sphere of French mystics, prime attention is given to Madame Guyon (1648-1717), the acknowledged leader of the Quietist movement. The details of her life are so readily obtained that little need be said except to underline her personal sufferings and passionate Christian devotion, extensive correspondence and publication, the friendship of Fénelon and the opposition of Bossuet. Gounelle draws attention to Wesley's later questionings on the true value of Madame Guyon whose autobiography he published selectively together with an illuminating preface: "I have never seen amongst ancient and modern biographies such an extraordinary mixture of good and bad. There are certainly excellent words which benefit the soul and are useful for spiritual growth. There are also very false, anti-Scriptural, and consequently very dangerous affirmations, ideas which can prevent children of God from progressing in the Christian life, turning them away from the right path into that of imagination and illusion." As Gounelle states, however, Wesley continued to commend the writings, carefully handled, of Madame Guyon, especially in the 1770s. Her writing was not cast aside after Wesley's evangelical conversion of 1738.

Quietism was a characteristically late seventeenth century French form of mystical devotion, although owing much in its origins to a Spanish priest Molinos, with stress on self-negation and total abandonment to God. Apart from Madame Guyon, others deeply affected who are discussed include Fénelon (1651-1715), the sensitive bishop of Cambrai; Antoinette Bourignon (1616-80), known principally through the Protestant Pierre Poiret (1646-1719); and Nicolas Herman of Lorraine, better known as brother Lawrence, the simple Carmelite cook, whose *Practice of the Presence of God* has become a spiritual classic. In each case Gounelle amply illustrates Wesley's appreciation and his concern to publish selections from their work whether in the multi-volume "Christian Library" (1749-55) or separately. Fénelon was for Wesley the poet of charity as John was the apostle. Antoinette Bourignon is best known to Methodists through the hymn, "Come, Saviour Jesus, from above, assist me with Thy heavenly grace." Many of her works were possessed by Wesley and consulted by Gounelle in the Richmond College library. Brother Lawrence was a shining example of God's love active in the most lowly.

Within a broader definition of French mysticism Gounelle indicates the intense and oft-respected admiration of Wesley for Gaston, Chevalier de Renty (1611-49). One of the founders of the "Compagnie du Saint Sacrement" he exemplified "the faith that sweetly works by love". For forty years Wesley never ceased to commend the study of Renty's life especially to pupils at Kingswood. Amongst other French Catholics commended by Wesley are Armelle Nicolas (1606-71) and François de Sales (1567-1622). Amongst the Jansenists can be mentioned Quesnel (1634-1719) and especially Pascal (1623-62) whose *Pensées* were included in the "Christian Library".

In the closing section Gounelle moves to consider French people whom Wesley met or who were his active supporters. With reference to the years spent in Georgia (1735-37) are instanced Antoine Bénézet and Jean Régnier, sons of Huguenot refugees; afterwards, contacts with Huguenots resident in London, the ecstatic "French prophets" newly arrived in England, and French prisoners near Bristol taken during the Seven Years' War (1756-63). More particular attention is given to collaborators of Wesley including the French-speaking Swiss John Fletcher (1729-85), the saintly vicar of Madeley; his wife, née Mary Bosanquet, daughter of Huguenot refugees; Methodist preachers and sympathetic Anglican clergy including Vincent Perronet and William Romaine.

The special merit of Gounelle's work is the impressive range of reference and the generous use of extracts within a specifically French context. It serves as a quarry of information, thought-provoking and suggesting further lines of enquiry. A notable feature is the space given to the French mystical tradition and the relative lack of attention to French Protestant sources. Comment on the extent and nature of the former upon Wesley, especially with regard to justification and sanctification by faith in Christ, is supported by extensive quotation from Methodist theologians J. Agar Beet, W. Burt Pope and T. H. Banks. This section opens up further enquiry and debate. The virtually exclusive attention to the French scene means there is only passing reference to Moravian influences and Wesley's visit to Herrnhut in 1738. Lutheran Pietism is not included. Overall balance is to be found in lives of Wesley, old and new, and critical appraisal in recent works on Wesley's theology, e.g. "The Theological Originality of John Wesley and Continental Spirituality" by Jean Orcibal in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, volume one.

The concluding comments of Gounelle significantly place his work firmly within that strand of indebtedness and commitment to John Wesley and evangelical Arminianism which has been such a potent factor in the story of Methodism in France. This can be readily traced, for example, from the pioneer work of Charles Cook in the early nineteenth century through the lucid *John Wesley: Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre* (1867) by Matthew Lelièvre to the 1986 French edition of Wesley's *Sermons*. As Gounelle states at the very end of the thesis: "Let us not fear to affirm that France still has need of Methodism. Our Church which merits the title of missionary Church more than any other has not completed its work."

JOHN D. WALLER.

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CLIVE D. FIELD.

BOOK NOTICES

Religion in England 1688-1791 (Oxford History of the Christian Church) by Ernest Gordon Rupp (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1986, pp.584, £45.00)

Mark Pattison wrote sarcastically in the 1860s that the "genuine Anglican" omits the eighteenth century from church history altogether and he was almost right. Norman Sykes's rather ponderous volumes brought a new standard of scholarship to the period but left large areas of religious life untouched; and more recent sympathetic work still tends to judge eighteenth century religion by the canons of Anglo-Catholic or Evangelical orthodoxy. Anyone attempting a fresh look at advanced textbook level has the advantage of novelty but the disadvantage of a relative dearth of the building blocks provided by PhDs for more favoured periods. Gordon Rupp may seem to be a surprising choice to tackle the job for he was of course a Luther and Reformation specialist, but he had a great breadth of historical knowledge and good Methodist reasons for an interest in the eighteenth century. There is, indeed, much to be said for approaching the period from the side of the Reformation and its aftermath for eighteenth century English churchmen were haunted by the ghosts of the Interregnum and the Glorious Revolution and this is too easily obscured by the search for "modernity" or by attitudes drawn from nineteenth century ecclesiastical conflicts.

It was courageous for an elderly Reformation scholar to undertake such a difficult task and sad that he barely lived to see his work in print. What did he make of it? He was always at his best in one version or another of the biographical essay — the part of religious history which he clearly enjoyed most. This book is in fact really a series of essays, often focussed on individuals, and one of the weaknesses of the treatment is that although it is informed by a sense of Anglican continuities, the impression is of a number of rather static set pieces, a certain lack of the sense of movement and change. Also, those influenced by current historiographical fashions are bound to observe that Gordon Rupp was not really much interested in the more mundane aspects of church life — organisation administration, finance; the relations of church and state; the patronage and place-seeking which were such prominent features in the lives of contemporary clergy and laity. Nor had he much taste for the newer style of church history drawing liberally from sociology and anthropology to reconstruct past societies and "mentalities". To be fair, we have only just begun to explore areas already exploited for earlier periods — the work of church courts, the life of the parish clergy as revealed by visitation returns, and what happened to "popular religion" in the period following Keith Thomas's classic work on the seventeenth century. One would have expected something to be said about the structures of the church and the character of the clergy and their place in society early in the book but in fact they are dealt with rather perfunctorily towards the end. The sketches of Roman Catholicism and Dissent necessarily suffer from the undeveloped state of research on these areas, though the former incorporates admirable new work by Eamon Duffy and the latter has received much improved treatment by Michael Watts.

But if this is not quite the synthesis and programme for future investigation that might have been wished, what is given is considerable. Gordon Rupp was always a charitable church historian and perhaps nowhere more so than here, in a period which contained much that was not naturally sympathetic to his temperament and outlook. He can find kind (and perceptive) words for the

horrid Hoadly, whose view of church and state made even Sykes baulk; and, more surprising still, for the heterodox and profane Deists. The series of portraits of early eighteenth century divines shows the continuing influence of past orthodoxies. The piece on William Law makes more sense of his Behmenism than almost any other treatment of that rather overrated figure. There is an attractive sketch of Dr Johnson as the profoundly religious man he was behind the bluff mask of tradition.

But Professor Rupp is probably happiest in dealing with the Evangelical Revival and especially with Wesley and Methodism. He concentrates, as one would expect, on the theological and religious significance of the movement and on John Wesley himself, has written with more penetration and balance than perhaps any other Methodist writer this century. Rupp's Wesley was always very much the "Church of England Man" of an earlier essay. He is cool on a number of the supposed "influences" upon Wesley, partly because he perceives that the variety within the Anglican tradition is such that it can be made to account for much that would otherwise seem exotic in Wesley's outlook. On the way he punctures some dubious though often repeated ideas (such as the unprovable and unlikely idea that Methodist separation from the Church of England was due to the increased recruitment of Dissenters into the connexion).

More attention than usual is paid (though still probably not enough) to the character of rank and file Methodists and their effect on Wesley's views and conduct. It could be argued that Wesley remains, in this portrayal, a little too close to Church of England patterns to be entirely credible. The persistent streak of "enthusiastic" supernaturalism in Wesley, the increased emphasis on experimental perfectionism from the 1760s (both very evident in the rank and file) as well as the extent of his ecclesiastical irregularities make Wesley one of the oddest Anglican clergymen to escape formal exclusion. But it remains extremely difficult to strike the right balance here with his more sober and rational and conformist side. On Wesley's personality Gordon Rupp is more candid than most Methodist biographers have been, though he does not quite meet the challenge posed some twenty years ago by Vivian Green's acid appraisal of a very elusive personality whose *Journal* conceals as much as it reveals.

It hardly needs to be added that, like everything Gordon Rupp wrote, this is an eminently readable book, with the customary quips and metaphors to liven the duller patches. For students of Methodism in particular there is helpful material here for assessing its place in the context of eighteenth century religion as a whole. From one point of view the major complaint must be that the price of the book will restrict it largely to libraries which is a sad fate for a work which many individuals would be glad to possess.

HENRY D. RACK

Victorian Sisters by Ina Taylor (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987, pp. xix, 218, £14.95)

The four remarkable daughters of the Rev. George Browne Macdonald (five, if we count the youngest, Edith, who chose to remain in the background, playing a supporting role that we too easily underestimate) were scarcely a typical Victorian family. Yet they do furnish valuable evidence of the interaction between Wesleyanism and middle-class Victorian society in the second half of the nineteenth century. In any case, they more than deserve attention in their own right, both for their own talents and for the associations and achievements that stemmed from their marriages.

Ina Taylor's book is sub-titled on the dust jacket, "The remarkable Macdonalds and the four great men they inspired". Much of the story is already familiar through their brother's autobiography and especially A. W. Baldwin's *The Macdonald Sisters* (1960). But Ina Taylor takes a fresh look at the principal characters, their relationships with one another and with their husbands and families, and the society in which they lived. The picture that emerges is less static and more frank, since she is able to fill some of the gaps discreetly left by her predecessors and to deal more openly with, for example, Edward Burne-Jones's infidelity.

As is particularly essential in a corporate biography, the material is handled skilfully. The characters and their Wesleyan background are treated sympathetically, but without partiality, and the writing is vivid. As a result, this is not a book that is easily put down.

JOHN A. VICKERS

Man of One Book: A Study of John Wesley's Reading by William Leary (Wesley Historical Society, 1987, pp. 36, £1.50)

"Let me be *homo unius libri*, a man of one book." So Wesley declared in the first published collection of his sermons in 1746. The expression was repeated and qualified in a letter to John Newton, written in May 1765, which makes it clear that Wesley's determination pre-dated his evangelical conversion. "In 1730 I began to be *homo unius libri*, to study (comparatively) no book but the Bible." There is a similar reference in *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* and the sermon on "God's Vineyard". Wesley, in fact, read a wide variety of books, as the 1987 Wesley Historical Society Lecturer shows, but it "was all subservient to the supreme knowledge he gained from the Bible" (p. iii).

In a modest disclaimer, Mr. Leary explains that his own concern has lain chiefly within the area of local historical research and considers his attempt to tackle a broader Wesley theme to be perhaps rather bold. The Connexional Archives Liaison Officer had no need to be so diffident and has presented us with an admirably compact survey of his subject, revealing his awareness of the relevant passages in Wesley's *Journal* and *Letters*.

It was, of course, in the rectory at Epworth that Wesley was to acquire his love of reading. At Charterhouse he gained a reputation as a bookworm and at Oxford his range of coverage was remarkable, as V. H. H. Green has demonstrated. Even in the midst of his evangelistic itinerations over the busy years of his ministry, Wesley found time to read eagerly, if on occasion somewhat hurriedly. We continue to be astonished at his ability to ride with a slack rein and bury himself in a book as his horse trotted on without stumbling. His habit of annotation proved to be particularly useful to him when he abridged valuable volumes for the *Christian Library*.

Mr. Leary's chapter headings reflect the scope of Wesley's interests—History and Topography, Natural Philosophy, Theology and Divinity, Miscellaneous Reading, including poetry, biography and educational theory. Wesley's unvarying criterion of judgement was that of fidelity to the Scriptures. "I cannot believe his hypothesis while I believe the Bible" was his verdict on Villette's *Essay on the Happiness of the Life to Come*. That was typical of his general approach and enables us to grasp what Wesley meant when, although a reader of so many books, he described himself as nevertheless a man of one book.

A. SKEVINGTON WOOD

A Thousand Tongues, the Wesley hymns as a guide to Scriptural teaching by John Lawson (The Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1987, pp. 208, £5.95)

Members of the W.H.S. will be aware that John Lawson is one of a handful of British Methodists who can be regarded as experts in Wesley hymnody. Any book written by such an author deserves close attention, and this book is no exception, despite the reservations this reviewer has about the author's method.

There are fifty-three chapters, most of them three or four pages long though one, on the Lord's Supper, extends to sixteen pages. Each chapter deals with a particular doctrine, for example "God the Sovereign Creator", "Original Sin", and "Communion with Christ", and each begins with "a statement of the doctrine under consideration", which is "then illustrated by the most appropriate Wesley verse available". The quotations from the Wesley hymns are adorned with references to the Biblical passages to which Wesley alludes. All this is meant to show how the Wesley hymns are a guide to Scriptural teaching. But does it ?

Inevitably, Mr. Lawson has exercised enormous editorial control. In the first instance, he has chosen the doctrines which are to be illustrated. His knowledge of the Wesley material, not just the hymnody, has of course enabled him to do this so as to illustrate the Wesley emphases, but even so the choice of doctrines is determined by the author, not by the Wesleys nor by the Scriptures. Second, there is an assumption that "the doctrine under consideration" can simply be "stated", so that we get fewer than five full lines each on the Incarnation and the Resurrection, and very rarely any hint that many of these doctrines can be understood in more than one way. Once again, the statements are Mr. Lawson's, though of course they are very faithful to the Wesleys' understanding of Scripture. Third, the Wesley hymns cited illustrate the statement of doctrine which has surely determined their selection. Ought not the process to work in the other direction ? If we are considering what the Wesley hymns teach, we should start with them, not with a statement which we then illustrate from the hymns. What we have in this book is Mr. Lawson's understanding, albeit as a Wesley scholar, of Christian doctrine, illustrated from the Wesley hymns. One can also question the extent to which the Biblical references alongside the hymns illustrate the Wesleys' reliability as guides to Biblical teaching, since some are no more than allusions and many are ripped from their context in a way that any Biblical scholar would deplore. (This is not to say that, taking the broad sweep of New Testament doctrine, the Wesleys were anything other than superb exponents of it ; but it does raise questions about references in virtually every line.)

With regret, I have to record a further misgiving, and this concerns the selection of verses from the hymns cited. Mr. Lawson nowhere makes his policy clear, and some readers will assume that, where they have longer versions of a text than they are accustomed to seeing, they are reading the full, original text. But this is not always so. Why do we get only seven of the eight verses of the Conversion Hymn (pp. 125f), or five out of six in the case of "And can it be," (pp. 128f), or six out of ten for "Hail the day that sees him rise" (pp. 88f), but (p. 171) an extension of "Come, Holy Ghost, thine influence shed" by the addition of two stanzas from another hymn ? It seems a great pity that Mr. Lawson did not give more help to students of these hymns by always citing them in their full and original form, with a note of later changes when appropriate.

Perhaps because I had looked forward so much to reading this book, my disappointment with it was all the greater. Mr. Lawson is not the first author to have been let down by his own methodology, but one is especially sorry to see it happening to such an accomplished Wesley scholar. Despite everything that

has been said above, some very shrewd and illuminating things are said in some of the doctrinal statements and the selection of hymns is usually very appropriate if occasionally surprising.

NEIL DIXON

Disciplines of Faith. Studies in Religion, Politics and Patriarchy edited by Jim Obelkevich, Lyndal Roper and Raphael Samuel (History Workshop Series, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London/New York, 1987, pp. xvi, 581, Paperback £10.95)

Methodists interested in history, their own or anyone else's, should get hold of this fat tome, work their way through it and ponder the experience. It contains things that will inspire a modest pride; much that will interest them very greatly; and also matter for some shame and repentance. The matter of pride is that these young historians who present themselves (not entirely credibly) as men of the Left, have chosen to dedicate their bumper offering as some sort of monstrous *Festschrift* to that doyen of English Methodist studies, John Walsh. No man assists his professional colleagues more selflessly than he, and it is good to see his kindness so generously acknowledged. The book is offered as evidence of a new interest by the intellectual Left, not indeed in ecclesiastical history, or theology or the philosophy of religion, but in religious experience (though on the evidence of his contribution here, that old warrior Christopher Hill has not changed very much) and the agent of the new mood is a fresh concern with Roman Catholicism. Some windows have clearly been opened by liberation theology and feminism, but historians of missions, of nationalism, of fascism and of ethnic minorities are bound to come across Catholicism too frequently to be able to dismiss it with the old shorthand of the rationalist Left.

These essays are fairly evenly divided between studies of religion as repression and of religion as liberation, and there is a good and entertaining piece by Jim Obelkevich to end with on music as a surrogate religion. The best of the studies relating directly to Methodism is in the first class; Henry Abelove shows that among the follies of which conversion did not cure John Wesley was his views on the management of the sexual life. Not for the last time, the Methodist people here showed far more sense than their leaders, though there are dark hints that, for the hothouse pious women, "entire sanctification" involved the cessation of normal matrimonial relations with their spouses. A characteristic example of the second category will also be of special interest to Methodist readers, Terence Ranger's engaging account of religion in the Zimbabwe guerrilla war, which analyses among other things the different social markets catered for by the various church missions in that country. This paper also illustrates the nostalgia-felt by many of the contributors for the successful integration of religion into ordinary life, successful in the sense of conveying power to comprehend, cope and change. Indeed one of the problems thrown up by this volume which its composite structure prevents it from tackling is the question how far successful local integration is compatible with general appeal, with what might be called "catholicism" (in lower case). Inga Glendinnen is quite sure that it is not. "There are no world religions, or world ideologies for that matter, save in the systematized abstraction of translocal individuals, who will typically find the practices of particular locals deplorably confused and lax. Yet if they attempt to preach the Pure Word to those locals, they risk being caught themselves in the 'missionary position'." Perhaps she thinks there is no macro-history either. This question is clearly central to Methodist history and the Methodist present, and to the occasion for repentance which this volume presents. Of the thirty-

five contributions only a handful would have been better omitted; the rest, including many written by scholars with no religious commitment at all, genuinely illuminate aspects of religious belief and practice, some of them the very core of it. Why is it that an English Methodist community whose general ethos is favourable to critical studies sustains an ecclesiastical mechanism which combines extraordinary certainties about the future ("the coming Great Church" and all that) with an incapacity for the much lesser mission of writing its own history to a respectable standard? However this question is resolved, a considerable responsibility rests with members of this Society.

W. R. WARD

Dissent or Conform? *War, Peace and the English Churches 1900-1965* by Alan Wilkinson (SCM Press, 1986, pp. xvii, 361, £10.50)

In 1978 Alan Wilkinson's *The Church of England and the First World War* (SPCK) opened up new perspectives on the effect of war on the English churches and society. The sequel now follows on a much broader front. Three basic themes emerge in this important and timely book—Dissent in early twentieth-century England with particular reference to war; pacifists and pacifiers between the wars; the Second World War and the churches.

The first section draws, with great filial sensitivity, on material from the literary remains of J. T. Wilkinson (1893-1980)—Primitive Methodist and Methodist circuit minister 1917-1946 and later principal of Hartley-Victoria College. He was the very epitome of cultured Dissent. The ethos of English Dissent is subtly conveyed, a Dissent which was never totally alienated from the heart of English culture, desiring recognition and power when linked to political Liberalism. Was the death knell of this style of Dissent its swift approval of the First World War as a "war of righteousness"? There are ominous warnings here. How do we achieve Dissent as a genuinely insurgent Christianity and at the same time achieve a "critical solidarity" with those who hold power, whether of the "right" or the "left"?

Paradox is the key word of the fascinating second section where Canon Wilkinson shows the churches slowly waking up to totalitarianism. We see Headlam appeasing Hitler yet supporting Bell later on "area bombing"; Henson, the high Tory, sees through the dictators long before most politicians, yet the neo-orthodox Hoskyns, influenced by Kittel, did not apparently perceive what was really happening. There was widespread support for Chamberlain and Munich (how easily we forget *that*—as Soper put it, umbrellas are better than battleships!) There are notable analyses of the pacifists—Dick Sheppard, C. J. Cadoux, C. E. Raven and G. H. C. Macgregor with Reinhold Niebuhr on the other side of the theological conflict and Temple and Bell (the "paradigm of creative dissent") in the middle.

The Second World War never produced the euphoria or awful disillusionment of the First. We did not cheer on 3rd September 1939, as on 4th August 1914—we stoically got on digging shelters and few dissented from the need to stop Hitler. Dr. Wilkinson gives a fine and convincing sketch of wartime days, etches in the German church struggle and the awful revelation of the Holocaust with its great question mark over European civilization, not just the Nazis. Then comes the atomic bomb, the "iron curtain" and all the questions loom up again. Is pacifism a viable option for any but the conscientious individual? Is civil disobedience a proper stance in a democracy? What of the Just War or Just

Revolution now? Was the post-war Labour Government putting into political effect the theology of Temple? If so, what now?

We are grateful for the sharp and most readable way in which Dr. Wilkinson raises the issues, punctuated by penetrating analyses of thinkers almost forgotten and the deft use of quotation and anecdote. It is a splendid piece of writing, historically accurate and theologically perceptive.

JOHN MUNSEY TURNER

A Burning and a Shining Light: English Spirituality in the Age of Wesley, by David Lyle Jeffrey. (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1987, pp x, 517, £13.90)

The Gift of Love: Daily Readings with John Wesley Introduced and edited by Arthur Skevington Wood. (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1987, pp. xvii, 62, £1.95).

A Flame of Love: A Personal Choice of Charles Wesley's verse by Timothy Dudley-Smith. (SPCK, 1987, pp. xvi, 160, £2.50).

Of the making of anthologies there seems to be no end! On the one hand, there is evidently a desire to capture the essence of the past (without, perhaps, the drudgery of going through everything that was written!). On the other hand, the coming commemoration of the conversion of the Wesley brothers provides an excellent opportunity to gratify those who wish to dip into the waters without total immersion. Two of the anthologies listed above are prompted by the conversion celebrations, but I begin with the "odd man out", *A Burning and a Shining Light* which is by far the largest of the three. It is an American production which interprets "The Age of Wesley" in terms of Isaac Watts, Elizabeth Singer Rowe, William Law, Philip Doddridge, George Whitefield, Christopher Smart, John Fletcher, John Newton, William Cowper, Hannah More, William Wilberforce and, of course, the Wesleys themselves. There is a lengthy introduction to the whole work, together with separate introductions to each contributor. Bibliographies are headed "Select", but they are extensive, nevertheless. It is good to have large extracts, not mere snippets, from these great spiritual guides of the eighteenth century, together with a glimpse of the historical and theological background. I have only one comment — is it right to use the term "Anglo-Catholic" (heavy with nineteenth-century connotations) of eighteenth century High Churchmen? See the references to Robert Nelson, Thomas Ken, the Oxford Methodists *et al*, on page 30.

With regard to *The Gift of Love*, all those who are familiar with Dr. Wood's extensive writings on John Wesley, with his flair for the apt phrase or quotation, will be prepared for a careful selection of passages for "Daily Readings" — and that is what we get in this little book. Over sixty passages from Wesley's works are chosen to "reflect Wesley's pre-occupation with the quest for scriptural holiness". The extracts are prefaced by an Introduction by Dr. Wood entitled, "John Wesley's Spiritual Pilgrimage" in which Wesley's quest for holiness is traced from Epworth to the heart-warming experience at Aldersgate Street. Here is a book which could well be put in the hands of those who are looking for a spiritual motive behind the 1988 celebrations. Only three nits to pick! — "Susannah" on page vii should be "Susanna"; the publisher's blurb on the outside cover mis-quotes the conversion phrase, and surely our Homer nods when, on page x, he says that the shipwreck turmoil took place on Wesley's return voyage from Georgia — was it not on the outward journey?

A Flame of Love introduces us to the hymns of Charles Wesley. This is

Timothy Dudley-Smith's "personal choice", with an excellent introduction, guiding the reader to further books on the subject. The hymns are grouped under seven sections — "Christ in Experience", "The Christian Year", "Seven Psalms", "Church and Ministry", "The Life of Faith", "One-minute Meditations", "Each Returning Day" and "Death and Heaven", each section with its own introduction. Dudley Smith, who has contributed nine hymns to *Hymns and Psalms*, is a bishop in the Church of England and one can only say "Would that all the Lord's bishops were so knowledgeable and appreciative of Charles Wesley"! His selection goes well beyond those usually included in our hymn books for he has dug deeply into the thirteen volumes of the *Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley* bringing out of his treasure, things new and old.

Whether we want a devotional companion or a study guide, here are three books which, each in its own way, will help us worthily to celebrate, and to fathom the meaning of what happened at Aldersgate Street two hundred and fifty years ago.

JOHN C. BOWMER

Outcast London : A Christian Response by Philip S. Bagwell (Epworth Press, 1987, pp. xii, 174, £9.50)

To write an account in 150 pages of an institution whose history goes back one hundred years, and whose work has involved everything from orchestras to maternity hospitals, open air preaching to second-hand goods depots—to write such a history is a tremendous task. It is this task that Professor Bagwell has achieved with such apparent ease in writing his history of the West London Mission—"Outcast London". He writes with real affection and clarity, tracing the history of the Mission from its beginnings under Hugh Price Hughes right through to the appointment of Leslie Griffiths as Superintendent in 1986.

Professor Bagwell has sifted through a mountainous selection of source material presenting the reader with an account that is compelling and extremely readable. The reviewer knows how hard it is to find objective assessments of the work of the W.L.M. from sources not directly involved in the work. Despite this lack of outside material, and being a member of the Mission himself Professor Bagwell has largely succeeded in presenting us with an unbiased, objective account. No easy task when Hugh Price Hughes himself was so prone to express himself in superlatives when talking of the work of the Mission!

As has already been said the history of the W.L.M. is extraordinarily complex, and the book reflects this by devoting certain chapters to particular areas of the work such as open air witness and the Sisterhood. Although this breaks up the sweep of chronology it gives individual areas of work the detailed and systematic treatment they deserve. It may be that certain aspects of the Mission are passed over rather lightly (the Kingsway Hall deserved rather more perhaps), but limitations of space no doubt had a part to play.

In terms of production the book is very good (although there is a glaring error in the dating of photograph no. 13, which from the fashions must have been taken in the 1920s). Particularly useful and interesting are the map, photographs and chart. This book is surely not only an important volume in terms of Methodist history, but also in terms of social history, the history of London, and also of a wider Christian response to the pressing needs of the urban poor. I commend it warmly.

PAUL GLASS

Daniel Rowland and the Great Evangelical Awakening in Wales by Eifion Evans (Banner of Truth Trust, 1985, pp. xx, 391, £9.95)

Dr. Eifion Evans is well known in Wales as the author of two excellent popular books on the revivals of 1859 and 1904. Both books are written from a committed evangelical standpoint and seek to draw lessons for the church of today from the revivals of the past. Now, in this much more ambitious study, based on a long period of research, Dr. Evans turns his attention to one of the leaders of the eighteenth-century Methodist revival in Wales, Daniel Rowland. The result is a very well researched, extremely readable and most handsomely produced volume which deserves the attention of anyone interested in the origins and early history of the Methodist movement.

Daniel Rowland was born in 1711, ordained deacon in 1734 and priest in 1735. At some time during 1735, too, he had a conversion experience which endowed him with extraordinary power as a preacher. Although his whole ministry was passed in the remote parish of Llangeitho, within three miles of his birthplace, great crowds of people flocked to hear him and his influence and fame spread throughout Wales. In 1737 he met Howel Harris for the first time and during the following years they worked together as leaders of the revival, preaching, organising and travelling, often guided and assisted by Whitefield. During Harris's visits to England Rowland, who was more firmly committed to Llangeitho, Wales and work through the Welsh language, had to assume the major responsibility for leadership. It was he who provided the new movement with much needed stability and cohesion, not least after the distressing break with Harris in 1750.

The great problem for the biographer of Rowland is the almost total loss of his papers. As a result the story of his life has to be constructed from the records of contemporaries. Despite this, Dr. Evans has succeeded in producing an account which brings his subject to life and which also provides a great deal of information about the Methodist revival in Wales. Not surprisingly, in a book by a historian of Calvinist convictions about a leader of the Calvinistic Methodists whose commitment was strongly towards work with Welsh speakers, the Wesleys appear as rather marginal figures, unaccountably unscriptural in their theology and sometimes disruptive in their influence.

This is an informative book, stimulating to read, and written with a passionate conviction of the continuing importance of the events and issues of eighteenth-century Methodism for the church and the individual Christian today.

LIONEL MADDEN

Charles Wesley's Earliest Evangelical Sermons. Six shorthand manuscript sermons now for the first time transcribed from the original by Thomas R. Albin and Oliver A. Beckerlegge (Occasional Publication of the Wesley Historical Society, 1987, pp. iv, 108, £1.50)

This is one of the most important documents ever published by the W.H.S., and both the society and the two editors are heartily to be congratulated on the results of long and arduous labours in making available sermons which enable us to see the post-Aldersgate preaching of Charles Wesley more clearly than has ever before been possible.

Several people were involved in the discovery of these sermons in the Methodist Archives nearly ten years ago, notably Drs. Richard Heitzenrater,

John Tyson, Tom Albin and Oliver Beckerlegge. As they were written in Byrom's shorthand (except for a few words and dates in longhand) they presented a formidable task of decipherment, which was undertaken by the last two named, who pay tribute to the important assistance given by John L. Dawson, Ph.D., of Cambridge, who produced an exhaustive concordance with the aid of the Literary and Linguistic Computing Centre in Cambridge.

A careful introduction supplies full details both of the background and of the sermons themselves, which in brief comprise the following :

1. The Threefold State, I John 3:14, July 16th, 1738.
2. Faith and Good Works, Titus 3:8, Dec. 21st, 1738.
3. Justification by Faith, Rom. 3:23-4, Jan. 21st, 1739.
4. On Justification, Rom. 3:23-5, July 1st, 1739, before the University of Oxford.
5. The Woman taken in Adultery, John 8:1-11, Feb. 20th, 1739.
6. The Pharisee and the Publican, Luke 18:9-14, first known use of the sermon, Aug. 14th, 1743.

The titles alone show that during this early period Charles Wesley was indeed preaching solid evangelical doctrine, but also making sure that it applied to the human situation. These sermons are in fact much less lively and emotional than his best known sermon, included by his brother John as No. 3 in his *Sermons on Several Occasions* of 1746—the “Standard Sermons”. This was on Eph. 5:14, “Awake, thou that sleepest !”, preached April 4th, 1731, before the University. Indeed, before the discovery of these six sermons, very little was known of Charles Wesley's preaching. Most of the sermons published as his by his widow in 1816 were in fact his transcripts from John's sermons after John had dragooned him into Holy Orders as his companion for the Georgia mission. Four sermons in that collection may well have been by Charles, however, on Matt. 5:20, Ps. 126:6, Phil. 3:13-14, and I Kings 18:21. Charles also published a sermon on Ps. 46:8, *The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes* (1750), which was later mistakenly attributed to John.

A glance at the index to this volume will give an inkling how Charles used similar sources to his brother John, especially the Homilies of the Church of England on faith, good works and salvation. There is also a scriptural index. Altogether this is an extremely careful and valuable publication for those who attempt to understand the beginnings of Methodism and its major emphases.

FRANK BAKER

A School Apart : A History of Shebbear College edited by Tony Fairchild (The Old Shebbearians Association, 1987, pp. xv, 220, £14.00)

This is a book which Old Shebbearians and their friends will treasure, and students of Methodist and educational history will want to see on their shelves in more senses than one, for its appearance is as good as its contents. It is a book by a group of writers, not a collection of essays of differing value, but a homogeneous narrative of the life of the school from the days when it could assemble in Mary Thorne's front room to the modern school on its extensive campus. This is a school history in many ways like those of other boarding schools, and yet sufficiently distinctive to justify its title (or should it have been its sub-title?)—*A School Apart*.

The distinctiveness arises from its foundation by the early Bible Christians who for long stamped their image upon it, and from its virtual isolation in North

Devon before the arrival of the motor-car and, as one of the writers says, "the wireless . . . and its awful cousin". The idea of a school at Shebbear "kept by a man who feared God, and would keep the children under subjection" was first formed in the mind of Samuel Thorne as early as 1820, and made a reality by him in 1832 when he set up his school and printing works on the corner of his father's farm at Lake. In 1841, however, he sold his interest in the school to a company of shareholders who, in their turn, later surrendered it to the control of the Bible Christian conference, an arrangement that lasted until the school was gradually brought into the state system in the 1920s. It was not until 1979, when direct grants were withdrawn, that it became once more an independent school.

The affairs of the school were guided by a succession of able headmasters among whom Thomas Ruddle must be regarded as the most outstanding, and not only on account of his long period of office from 1864–1909. The heads' control was shared by governors (under different names) from 1844–1936. Under this dual control the intake of pupils increased, the school buildings multiplied, the curriculum widened and changes in society began to affect first the homes of the boys and then the school itself. Through all these changes the life of the school flowed on, albeit into new channels. Some of the changes are reflected in the illustrations in the book. James and Catherine Thorne ("friendly ghosts" suggests one writer) still look down from their framed portraits on the boys—and girls—in the school today. As the matron, Catherine was familiar with the French, Latin, Greek and Hebrew classes, the commercial studies, the book-keeping, land surveying, grammar, arithmetic, history and geography, and she herself led the Bible class concluding with a lengthy prayer while the boys knelt on the hard floor: but what would she have thought of the arts and science courses of today, the computer club, the cricket and rugby matches, the judo, the photography and stamp clubs, and the swimming pool? At least she would have found the "Christian Fellowship" and a Christian ethos in the school as a whole.

There is a slip, rather than an error, on page 43, where G. P. Dymond is confused with Frank Dymond. More unfortunate are the misstatements on pages xi, 17 and 25 that the Bible Christian Connexion was founded at Lake farm. In this the authors are following the account given by James Thorne and repeated by later writers but Mrs. Samuel Thorne, the first mistress of the school, would have known better.

THOMAS SHAW

Michael J. Crawford, "Origins of the Eighteenth-Century Evangelical Revival: England and New England Compared" in *Journal of British Studies*, (University of Chicago Press) Vol. 26, No. 4, October 1987, pp. 361–97.

This article compares the Methodist Revival in England and the Great Awakening in New England under three main heads: their constituency, their leadership and the conditions that provided a catalyst for revival. The author seeks to determine whether they were local manifestations of a single supra-national Evangelical Revival or "distinct movements separated in time, Character and cause and united only by superficial similarities", and reaches a conclusion midway between these two extremes.

J. A. V.

NOTES AND QUERIES

1403. FEMALE U.M.F.C. LOCAL PREACHERS

Mr. D. C. Dews (Notes and Queries No. 1395) raises the question of how frequently female local preachers are found on Free Methodist plans and he quotes the name of one Ann Marchbank who was a local preacher on the Crosshills plan of 1857. This would appear to be a very early case. I have been through the Free Methodist plans in my collection and have found few instances of female preachers.

The Boston Free Methodist plan of 1882-3 announces revival services to be conducted by Miss Brennen, clearly a visiting evangelist; in common with the other Methodist churches of the period, female evangelists were not uncommon. So the U.M.F.C. were not averse to a woman preacher, though presumably if a woman was employed extensively the circuit could assume she would be acceptable and able. In Matlock in 1906 the plan lists among the auxiliaries both Miss Smith and Mrs. J. Smith from Holloway, which place figures on no U.M.F.C. plan, so it is possible that they were not Free Methodists. "Auxiliaries" presumably may mean "from other denominations" as well as "from other F.M. circuits".

Among a run of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Prudhoe Street) plans 1872-1907, we have to wait until 1893 before we find female preachers listed—and again they appear in the list "From Other Circuits". As the preachers from the other local U.M.F.C. circuit are given separately, it would again seem likely that these females may have been attached to other branches of Methodism. The following quarter a Miss Roper of Newcastle is similarly listed and others followed at intervals. But still no local preachers of their own until a Miss Rodda, who had appeared among those from other circuits in October 1905, appears among the "on trials" in July 1906; in the October quarter she had four appointments.

The rest of my examples are post-1907. In 1923 Bishop Auckland ex-U.M.F.C. circuit had five women visitors. Two of these were from Shildon and Spennymoor, two places appearing on the U.M. plan, so it seems likely that they were from other denominations. The following year, Consett had a visiting preacher in Miss M. Tulip of Annfield Plain. Stratton and Bude, another ex-U.M.F.C. circuit, lists a Mrs. Nicholls as an exhorter in 1920 and Wigan has a Lilian Crawford on trial in 1932. But all these are late dates, suggesting that female local preachers were a late development among the Free Methodists, although we cannot be certain that there were no women hidden under initials in the earlier years.

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE

1404. "THE CABINET"

Dr. John Vickers's query about this phrase (Notes and Queries No. 1385) is answered in part by Dr. Frank Baker in volume one of *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain* (1965). On page 254, he describes the inner circle of preachers who met both before and between the sessions of Conference to assist Wesley in the discharge of the business. This committee first appears as "the Cabinet" in Wesley's shorthand diary for 26th July 1785 (*Journal*, vii, p. 100). In succeeding years other names were used to describe this group; in 1786 it is "Bro Paws[on]&c", other years, simply "Comm[ittee]". Joseph Sutcliffe's account of the 1790 Conference (*Proceedings*, xv, pp. 57-8) describes a "platform" of "about twenty venerable men . . . that had borne the heat and burden of the

day" who sat close to Wesley. As Dr. Baker points out, although he does not use the term, Sutcliffe here was surely portraying "the Cabinet".

EDITOR

1405. METHODIST BUSINESS LEADERS 1900-1960

With the support of the Leverhulme Trust I am writing a study of "Business Leaders and the Churches in Britain, 1900-1960". One of the tests I am making is to see how business involvements in Methodist lay leadership changed between 1900 and 1960. This requires the identification of the occupations of the most active lay people in the denomination at selected dates. For two of these dates, 1935 and 1955, a number of individuals defy occupational identification (though I have checked the 1933/34 *Who's Who in Methodism* and *Who's Who of Methodist Local Preachers* and the 1951 *Who's Who in the Free Churches*. They are listed below and any help members can offer in resolving this problem would be gratefully accepted and acknowledged.

1935: Miss Barlow (Edgeworth, Bolton), Fred Beetham (Cheapside, London), Herbert Brewer (Finsbury Circus, London), Miss Margaret Emily Byrom (Bishopsgate, London), J.W. Callow (Ramsey, I.O.M.), Herbert Crowther LLB (Harrogate), W.R. Davies (South Wales), John Finch (Esher, Surrey), William R. Hesketh (Buxton), Thomas B. Hunter (Leeds), William H. Inskip (New Oxford Street, London), William E. Nelson (Southport), George Parker (Sutton, Surrey), H. Wilmot Peters (North Harrow, Middlesex), Roy Posnett (Norley, Warrington), Rowland W. Scurrah, Charles Wass (Birkenhead).

1955: Mrs Reginald J. Bailey (East Cosham, Portsmouth), Cyril J. Bennett (Worcester Park, Surrey), G. Ronald Birkinshaw (Hillingdon, Middlesex), F. Johnston Carey (Leamington Spa), Gwynfryn Jones, J. E. Jones (Crynant, Neath), William Myatt (London N13), Mrs Eric W. Pendleton (Hampstead Garden Suburb), Arthur John Pilbrow (Beckenham, Kent), Miss Edith L. Shirley Smith (Edgbaston, Birmingham), John A. Stead (Worksop, Notts), D. R. Thomas, C.H. Wicks (Goodmayes, Ilford, Essex).

DAVID J. JEREMY

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1406. AN UNIDENTIFIED METHODIST CHURCH ?

Lucy Archer's exemplary study of her father, Raymond Erith (1904-1973) [*Raymond Erith, Architect*, The Cygnet Press, Burford, 1985], illustrates two designs, neither of them executed, for Methodist churches. The second design was for Maidenburgh Street, Colchester. That design was rejected. It must have seemed too blatantly traditional for 1968. Twenty years on it is less easy to feel so sure. Indeed it might seem that a rare opportunity was missed. As Erith himself put it: "... I do not think our design is merely traditional. I imagine you see it as a reproduction of an 18th century Methodist Chapel rather than as a 20th century Methodist Church. In this I think you are mistaken." [*op.cit.* p. 202]

That was towards the end of a career whose distinction is now generally recognised. In 1931, at that career's beginning, he designed a church and exhibited that design at the Royal Academy in 1932. That building too was eighteenth-century in idiom, its tower making it more New England than Georgian England.

But where was the church to be and for whom was it intended? It is believed to have been "near Sheffield" and in 1956 Erith stated that it was to have been a "Wesleyan" church. Certainly Wesleyan churches were built in and near Sheffield in the 1920s and Methodist churches in the 1930s, but none was in the classical tradition. Perhaps the promoters got cold feet. There is a suggestion that the likeliest benefactor died before work could get under way. But who was that benefactor? Where was that church to be? And how did Erith get (or, rather, not get) the commission? That perhaps is the most interesting question, for in 1931 he was little-known, though he had entered for a variety of municipal competitions; he was a southerner, based at Sutton, Surrey; and he had no obvious Methodist links (his father's family had links with the flourishing Downs Baptist Church, Clapton). So far all enquiries to the obvious places, from the Methodist Property Division onwards, have drawn blanks.

CLYDE BINFIELD



LOCAL HISTORIES

The Methodist Heritage of Altrincham by Catherine Merrell (24pp) : copies, price £1.50 plus postage, from the author at 32 Bower Road, Hale, Altrincham, WA15 9DR.

Trinity Methodist Church, Tonge Fold, Bolton : A Centenary Publication by W. Glyn Jones (67pp) : copies, price £2.50 plus postage, from the author at 31 Blenheim Road, Bolton, BL2 6EA.

Thornliebank (Glasgow) Methodist Church Centenary 1887-1987. Copies, price 50p, from Rev. T. Wilkinson, 34 Ravenswood Drive, Glasgow, G41 3QS.

Church Road Methodist Church, St. Annes on Sea. *Centenary 1888-1988*. (36pp) : copies, price 50p plus postage, from Mr. K. Bleach, 13 St. Patrick's Road North, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs.; FY8 2BJ.

Methodism in the Moorlands, the history of the Wetton and Longnor circuit by J. T. Leach (46pp) : copies, price £1.20 post free, from E. A. Rose, 26 Roe Cross Green, Mottram, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 6LP.

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