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## EDITORIAL

THE 52nd Annual Meeting of the Society was held at Westminster Chapel on 9 May, 1951, at 5-30 p.m. There were present 42 members and 17 non-members. The committee appointed last year was re-elected, with the Rev. R. F. G. Calder added as Chairman; in his absence on this occasion Dr. G. F. Nuttall took the Chair. The Rev. A. G. Matthews had graciously consented to become President of our Society, and was elected to this office with acclamation. Dr. R. S. Paul was elected Associate Editor of these *Transactions*, and Mr. H. G. Wilkinson was elected Honorary Auditor. The other officers were re-elected, with thanks for their continued services. A reassuring report of the gradual rehabilitation of the Congregational Library was received.

The President read himself in with a paper entitled "Church and Dissent in the Reign of Queen Anne," which well expressed the wit and apposite phrasing so characteristic of him, as well as the scholarship underlying but not concealed by these. The Society's thanks were expressed by Dr. Paul, and it was agreed that the paper should be printed in these *Transactions*.

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The symposium on Philip Doddridge's contribution to English religion, to which reference was made earlier, has now appeared and will be reviewed in our next number, along with the lecture for 1951 in the series sponsored by the Friends of Dr. Williams' Library, "Richard Baxter and Philip Doddridge: a study in a tradition." To this lecture, which is arranged for Tuesday, 9 October, at 5-30 p.m. at the Library, all members of our Society are courteously invited. It is intended that our next number, which should appear later this year, shall concentrate on Doddridge, thus contributing to the celebrations which reach their climax at Northampton on the 200th

anniversary of his death, 26 October. Professor Norman Sykes of Cambridge has also kindly promised an article entitled "Albert Peel and Historical Studies."

It would be of interest to know in how many places in Britain during this Festival year the history of the Free Churches is being recalled and re-presented, after the fashion, for instance, of the panels to be on show at the Memorial Hall. At Rowton, in Shropshire, a memorial has been erected on the village green to Richard Baxter. Through his associations with Kidderminster Baxter is commonly thought of as a Worcestershire man but he was born at Rowton of a Shropshire yeoman family, and his first charge was at Bridgnorth. Shropshire does well to honour one of the greatest of her sons.

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During the year we have lost six members by death: the Rev. Alexander Barber, formerly of Stratford-on-Avon, of which church he wrote the history, *A Church of the Ejection*; Mr. F. W. Bull, of Newport Pagnell, a descendant of William Bull of the Newport Pagnell Academy and a senior member of the Society; the Rev. W. A. Freeman, of Bridlington; Mr. Arnold Jeffery, of Northampton; the Rev. W. A. Powicke, of Stockport, son of Dr. F. J. Powicke and brother of Sir Maurice Powicke; and Sir Malcolm Stewart, son of Sir Halley Stewart. There have also been three resignations. We welcome 18 new members, four of them corporate members.

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When a piece of work has been done with the thoroughness which the study of the ejected ministers received in Mr. Matthews' *Calamy Revised*, it seems a pity that there is not some recognized repository for additional information, as this becomes known. Perhaps among the celebrations of 1962 will be the publication of a new edition; for a work of this nature inevitably provokes further research, which in time needs to be incorporated. The bibliographical field is likely to

yield rich finds here. Occasionally, as in the cases of John Galpin and Charles Nichols, the entry 'Publication (*D.W.L.C.*)' may be added at the close of an entry. Sometimes a minister did not publish any separate item, yet something by him may be found printed in another work. Marmaduke Tenant, for instance, as Calamy remarks, published no book of his own but wrote a commendatory epistle for *Invisibles, Realities* (1673), the popular life of John Janeway by his brother, James Janeway. (Since his father was of Starbotton (*sic*) in Wharfedale, Tenant was presumably related to the James Tennant of Scar House near by, who entertained George Fox, as Fox records in his *Journal*.) Again, in Dr. Williams' Library is a small book by John Clifford of Wimborne, *Sound Words* (1699), which appears to be the only copy known to be extant. With Calamy's help, "The Christian's Daily Work" "by another hand," which is bound up with it, can safely be identified as the work, appearing posthumously, of Thomas Rowe, who had been ejected from the neighbouring Lytchett Matravers.

Still another source as yet but rarely used is the type of book which includes private letters from ejected ministers. One example must suffice: Timothy Rogers' *A Discourse Concerning Trouble of Mind, and the Disease of Melancholy* (1691). Between pages xxxiv and lxx of this book are printed letters to the author from Henry Lukin, Ralph Ward and George Nicholson, and to their relations from George Porter and Richard Gilpin, among ministers included in *Calamy Revised*, as well as from a number of others who may be identified from the *Dictionary of National Biography* or from Alexander Gordon's *Freedom after Ejection*. In some cases the letters bear the addresses from which, as well as the dates on which, they were written and thus serve to check the writers' movements. Discoveries of this kind are almost always made 'by the way,' are easily passed over in the search for something of more immediate import and are then quickly forgotten. They deserve better treatment.

## Church and Dissent in the Reign of Queen Anne

THE reigns of the Queens of England are the high-lights of our history. Of this fact, as inexplicable as it is patent, the twelve years of Queen Anne's rule provide an illustration: they were years of spectacular national achievement. To match them we have to go back to the days of Queen Elizabeth, or forward to the days of Queen Victoria. But for Nonconformists they were years of increasing anxiety, which deepened into acute alarm. It was as if the last of the Stuart sovereigns, in conjunction with her Tory ministers, gathered herself up to give final vent to the hereditary hatred of her House for Puritanism and all its associates. The *coup de grâce* of the vendetta, or what was intended to be such, was aimed at Nonconformist education. The Schism Act of 1714 would close their ministerial academies and their schools. Before the threat of such a devastating blow its prospective victims might well tremble for their future, for the spiritual future of their children for the ministry, on whom depended their future as religious bodies. The one ray of hope was the Queen's speedy death. Her health had long been precarious, and she was now thought to be near her end. If her removal might be immediate, then, under the House of Hanover, there was every reason to anticipate that the iniquitous Act would shrivel into a dead letter without ever coming into operation. The ray of hope broadened into a perfect dawn. Her Majesty passed away on the morning of Sunday, 1 August 1714, the very day the Act came into force. The Nonconformists were saved, by a miracle, they declared; by "a crowning mercy," they might have said, had they retained Cromwellian idiom. They were, in fact, along with their fellow-countrymen at large, entering upon a new epoch. The land had rest. After well-nigh a century of division and strife, rising to the height of a civil war, the public execution of one king, the compulsory abdication of another forty years later, England enjoyed some half-a-century of the placidity the caricaturist called "pudding-time," what more discerning spirits prefer to dignify as the Peace of the Augustans.

And now let us try to enter into the feelings of our forefathers as they are reflected in a famous incident familiar to most of you. Perhaps you may enjoy renewing your veneration for what is surely one of the brightest treasures of our reliquary. The drama is in two scenes. The first is set on Smithfield on that Sunday morning, early. Her Majesty has not yet breathed her last; she died at 7-30. Enter the hero of the

story, Thomas Bradbury, a sturdy Yorkshireman, in the prime of life, aged about forty, and at the height of his fame as a political parson, of the whiggish persuasion, naturally. Even Queen Anne paid him what on her lips was perhaps a dubious honour. Bold Bradbury she dubbed him, and the accolade was well chosen. But on this morning as he walks over Smithfield he is under the cloud of the Schism Act. Here, on this ground he treads, Protestant martyrs had some hundred and fifty years before paid the supreme sacrifice of their faith. True, the Nonconformists are not now for the stake, but they may none the less have reluctant heroism thrust upon them. In that predicament would they, would he, Thomas Bradbury, be found as faithful as those brave sufferers of long ago ?

To the downcast preacher there comes relief. Enter Bishop Burnet in his carriage, *deus ex machina*. The Bishop by this time had turned seventy. In less than a year, the word was to go round, "Burnet is dead." Sad news indeed ! for throughout his long and adventurous career Gilbert Burnet had gone out in all weathers to fight for religious liberty, a cause so near and dear to Nonconformist hearts. But this morning the Bishop shows little sign of declining vigour. Not, of course, that he is the man of thirty years ago, the portly prince of Dryden's alliterative portrait, black-browed, broad-backed and brawny. All the same, he is full of bustling energy and shrewd counsel. He descends from his carriage to insist that Bradbury, with whom he is evidently on intimate terms, must not lose heart. The Queen will die any moment; the situation will be saved; the Schism Act wiped off the record. He, Burnet, is on his way to St. James's, and if the fatal event occurs before Bradbury's congregation breaks up, they shall hear of it. Should Her Majesty die thus opportunely, Bradbury must expect to see a man make his way to the front of the gallery and drop a handkerchief. A little piece of finesse this, such as Burnet was well versed in. The two conspirators may have settled on the bearer of the news, for, according to one version of the story, Bradbury's brother, a medico, was cast for the part of the messenger.

The second scene is in the Congregational meeting-house, Fetter Lane. The preliminary exercises are over. Bradbury has got under way with his sermon. In due course the messenger enters and drops his handkerchief. The preacher takes no notice of him. Nor do we, we are too much taken up with him, the man in the pulpit, with his melodious voice, his high-poised head, his lively gesticulations (characteristics vouched for by a contemporary). How different had we been listening to Isaac Watts ! You recall the memorable comment on Watts' statuesque delivery : "As no corporeal actions have any correspondence with theological truth he did not see how they could enforce it." What would Dr. Johnson have to say about Bradbury's

"dancing hands," the same contemporary's satirical phrase for his "corporeal actions" ?

And now Bradbury has finished his sermon. He calls the congregation to prayer. The auspicious moment has come for his tremendous announcement. He gives it out obliquely under cover of the petition, "God bless George, King of Great Britain and Ireland." The congregation gasps with incredulous wonder, while the preacher, did they but know it, is inwardly congratulating himself on being the first to make public proclamation of the new Sovereign. Next Bradbury calls his people to join in the after-psalm, as it was liturgically styled. It is the 89th, telling of King David's establishment on the throne of Israel. None could be more apposite. The singing rises to an overwhelming *crescendo* in the last verse of Part III.

Succession in his family  
From failing I'll secure.  
The Regal Power therein shall last  
While the heavens do endure.

A promise up to the present made good ! What wits ! confident, keen, quick, decisive, this man Bradbury has under his wig. A few minutes' talk on Smithfield, and he has his unique order of service pat, all the i's dotted, all the t's crossed. The law may debar him from Oxford or Cambridge, but in the world's larger university he has graduated with honours as a master of assemblies.

So much for the Nonconformists and their psalm-singing; and now to cross over to the Tory camp, to hear not a *jubilate* but a jeremiad. Party-members were confronted with the bleak prospect of an indefinite loss of power, themselves marking time while the Whigs marched on with flying banners. It may be of interest to learn a little more of what Tories are saying, one of them in particular. He is not a Londoner; we must travel as far as Exeter to scrape acquaintance with him. John Walker, the object of our journey, was by now a man of forty or so, who for the past sixteen years had been Rector of St. Mary More, the church, rebuilt since his day, which encumbers the precinct of the Cathedral. He also, like Bradbury, was under a cloud, albeit of a different composition. He also had a tale of woe, a more personal plaint, to unfold. His voice is shrill, his wig awry (this is *par excellence* the age of the wig), as he enlarges on his doubts and fears. For ten years he has been in the throes of compiling the book to be famed later as Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*. It was, as you recall, a memorial of the men who for their loyalty to King and Church were harried by the Puritans during and after the Civil War. The volume was designed to be a counter-blow to Calamy's memorial of the ministers ejected in 1662, a retort to Calamy's charge that the Establishment was guilty of persecution.

When the prospectus of this publication was first issued, the project received a welcome outdoing all expectation. Subscribers to the order of thirteen hundred and forty entered their names, some of them for several copies. Nothing like it had been known before, or is to be found in the later records of publication by subscription. Pope's *Iliad*, published the next year, and accounted an exceptionally well subscribed for volume, had not half that number of names to its credit. The thirteen hundred and forty on Walker's list are all catalogued with their social standing attached to their names—tradesmen, personages of rank and title of both sexes, to say nothing of clergymen, college dons and booksellers; a most diverting study the list makes, a period handbook of intelligent Torydom. The prospective book had every promise of being the best of party-sellers, and its author of being acclaimed a redoubtable champion of the Church. But all this lively interest belonged to the years when the Tory tide was running strong. Despite the remonstrances of his publishers Walker remained obstinately slow in the output, with consequences that threatened to be disastrous. Time and tide, he had lost them both. Would Tories now console themselves for the reverses of 1714 by poring over "a map of desolation" inscribed with the sorrows of their fathers and grandfathers sixty years back? It was improbable that they would take kindly to this homœopathic remedy for their ills. And now what if subscribers defaulted on their contracts? What if the costly volume was left high and dry on the market? What if after all those ten years of stern toil the bulky tome proved but another of "hope's delusive mines"? No wonder that its author was on tenterhooks, no wonder that his voice was plaintive, his wig ruffled.

Apart from his book, and that is a notable qualification, Walker was not a man of intellectual distinction. Politically he was no deviationist. He toed the party-line, and held the principles and prejudices of what the enemy called a high-flier. That is to say, he responded *ex animo* to the rub-a-dub of the High Church drum, when it beat to the tunes that the Church was in danger, that Sacheverell was a martyr, that the Dissenters must have their wings clipped for abusing the toleration granted them. All the same, Walker was loyal to the Protestant Succession, was no Jacobite but what in the political nomenclature of the time was known as a Hanoverian Tory. This he was careful to advertise in yet one more addition to his interminable preface. He there registers the prayer that "God may long preserve the illustrious House of Hanover to render it a lasting blessing to these nations."

From that pious petition he makes a *volte-face* into one of the abruptly explosive transitions which are among his deplorable foibles, and viciously belabours the Dissenters. They have openly gloated



over the death of the late Queen—could any rumour have reached his ears of the goings-on in Fetter Lane? More, they have boasted that King George would take them into his favour and cold-shoulder the Church of England, whose privileged position was to Tory thinking the hinge on which the stability of the national life turned. Impudent, insolent, arrogant are the adjectives which Walker throws out at those he accuses of this shameless misconduct. Invective he always has ready to hand, and here we have only a milder example of his abusive ability. To indulge in “propaganda by denigration” was then, and not only then, common controversial form. Perhaps an expert in the science of comparative invective would not discover it as a whole to contain any higher percentage of vitriol than the language to be heard in the House of Commons to-day, when the blood of Honourable Members is under pressure, to say nothing of foreign brands. Be that as it may, you must not expect Walker to have any oil for troubled waters. Appeasement is not in his repertoire, nor, for that matter, in his vocabulary. Moderation was the term under which that perfidious spirit then masqueraded. If there was one man more than another who was anathema to Walker, more so even than a Nonconformist, it was a Moderate Churchman, a contemptible creature treacherously indifferent to the safety of his own Church, while eagerly solicitous for the liberties of the Separation.

Here we light on a radical difference in temper between Walker and his Nonconformist opponent, Edmund Calamy. Moderation was a word as entrancing to Calamy’s ear as it was exasperating to Walker’s. “I had moderation instilled into me from my cradle,” Calamy confides to the readers of his autobiography. *A Plea for Moderate Nonconformity* is the title of a book he brought out in 1703. His moderation led him to regret the collapse of the Comprehension Bill of 1688. For its failure he blamed King William’s policy of leaving the preliminary negotiations in the hands of the clergy; that was to foredoom the issue. Henry VIII, Calamy averred, had taken a more excellent way in his management of the Reformation Settlement. He had kept the ecclesiastics in the background till all was decided by himself and his Parliament, and had then called the churchmen in at the eleventh hour to bless a *fait accompli*. He had thus made sure of “carrying his point,” Calamy’s suave euphemism for a piece of Tudor autocracy. As things now stood, Calamy still hoped for what he called “union on Scripture terms,” *i.e.* without the imposition of later observances. In church government he advocated eclecticism, “a prudent mixture of the Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregational principles,” under the surveillance of the civil government.

All this was in a political setting. The churches were not kept out of party politics, very far from it. Calamy, like others of his brethren,

was a staunch upholder of the Dissenter-Whig alliance, which dated back to the Roundhead-Puritan combination of the previous century. The Nonconformists had learned to look to the Whigs, the champions of religious toleration, to protect them from the Tory platform of one nation, one church, and hard terms for recalcitrant religious minorities. That their Whig patrons were many of them free-thinkers and free-livers might be open to objection, the alliance was certainly a strange one; but the Nonconformist conscience was not so squeamish as it became in the next century; or perhaps their blind eye was blinder. Any of you who have to come to think that pure religion and unpolitical is too ethereal diet to make for either the best health of political parties or the practical effectiveness of our religion, will sympathize with our forefathers in their political alinement.

To return to Calamy. Having glanced at his opinions, we may wonder what manner of man their holder was. "Lives and characters are very entertaining," those are his own words. What of himself? will he yield entertainment? To aid me in replying to that question I shall appeal to one who spoke with authority, a master of biography in brief, Alexander Gordon. This year we pay tribute to the memory of the most universally honoured of our eighteenth-century divines, Philip Doddridge. We look forward to reading the *Festschrift*, if it may so be called, prepared under the editorship of Dr. Nuttall. Gordon prepared the way with an illuminating paper entitled *Doddridge and the Catholicity of the Old Dissent*, which has just been reprinted by the Lindsey Press. The essay opens with a character sketch of Calamy, whom Gordon couples with Doddridge as a great liberal unionist in English Nonconformist polity. Some of you will recall Gordon's description of Calamy: "a genial, full-bodied divine, he walked before God in the healthy enjoyment of human life and human liberty." Stalwart in body he was, also stalwart in his well-reasoned and strongly held Nonconformist principles. To this he added a frank and hearty relish for the good things of this life.

We may take him to have been much a man of his time. It was a comfortable, matter-of-fact age with common sense for its watchword, and science, sponsored by the great Newton, for its liveliest intellectual preoccupation; enthusiasm and mysticism for its liveliest aversions. We are, therefore, not surprised to read of Calamy that he shied away from anything quixotic, that in the conduct of public business his flair was for the feasible, the timely, the opportune. Study his autobiography, not published till nearly a century after his death, and you will learn with what aplomb he represented Nonconformity in the great world; how assiduously he cultivated the society of persons "of significance and distinction," as he calls them. Not that you are to write him down for a social hanger-on. So different a man as Bradbury

would have agreed with him that it was highly important to the interests of Nonconformity that its leaders should be in with the right people. He might have admitted, he should have done so, that he could hardly have brought off his 1st of August master-stroke with all that dazzling *éclat*, had he not been on such familiar terms with my Lord of Sarum. Follow Calamy again, to read with what courtly tact he presented a handsomely bound copy of his book on the Doctrine of the Trinity, then the subject of heated controversy, to that stout defender of Trinitarian orthodoxy, King George I, to whom he had dedicated the work. Then go on to read how the author proffered copies of this volume to the little princesses, the King's grandchildren, and how charmingly they received the donor and his gifts. The story has a sequel a few days later, a gift of £50 from the Royal Bounty, to be taken presumably as a reminder of the promise Calamy had made to His Majesty's personal request that he would urge his brethren, the City ministers, to use their utmost influence to secure the return of the right candidates at the forthcoming parliamentary election. All this, and a good deal more of the same nature, its author relates with naive complacency in his revealing autobiography.

From these scattered glimpses we may frame some idea what manner of man the leading Nonconformist divine of his day was. We may rank him among the highly intelligent, the highly successful of his kind; admirably attuned to his day and generation, understood by it, understanding of it; admirably qualified to serve it whether in print or in person; an effective and acceptable preacher, albeit his substance and his style show somewhat commonplace after the more massive thought and rugged eloquence of his predecessors; as a disputant, in a day when controversial ability counted for more than it does with us, he was well-versed in such of the points at issue as were within his chosen range; and when pens began to clash, he was always the cool, collected master of his temper and his subject. But at this length of time Calamy the astute ecclesiastic is a minor figure. Not so Calamy the historian. For us he is the chronicler of the Bartholomean sufferers, and the custodian of the name and fame of the greatest of them. For his achievement as their memorialist, and as the biographer of Richard Baxter, Calamy has every claim to the respect and gratitude of successive generations of readers, ourselves among them.

And now to hazard the more ticklish venture of conjuring up a portrait of Dr. Walker. He was, from what we know helped out by what we conjecture, a man of markedly different character from his Nonconformist opposite; he had not Calamy's robust health and "enjoying nature," nor the confident air of the successful man of the world. His health was poor. More than once he was seriously ill; lung-trouble, we may suspect. Add to which, he impaired his eyesight

with working by candle-light on his *magnum opus*. As to what manner of face and figure he bore we are at a loss to say; for whereas several portraits of Dr. Calamy have come down to us, displaying him handsomely bewigged and begowned, so that we almost involuntarily exclaim what an imposing bishop he would have made, of Walker we have no likeness. It would, we may surmise, have required a good deal of artistic dexterity to turn out an impressive portrait of him. For the rest, Walker left no autobiography, his life was too uneventful for that; no diary registering his day-to-day trivialities. We have not even his promised continuation of the *Sufferings*. No second volume was forthcoming, only bundles of papers, now in the Bodleian, along with draft-notes for the published folio, written in an often indecipherable network of scribbles and scrawls, which constitutes a psychological study in itself. We have, apart from a final document to be looked into later, little to go by for our portrait save the single volume and what it tells us directly, or for the most part indirectly, about its author. We must assume the style to be the man.

It is not an attractive style, not a persuasive style. Walker is not so easy, so lucid, with his pen as Calamy. Add to this, he cumpers his pages, text and margin, with pettifogging pedantries, with diatribes and, of course, with repetitions—he is nothing if not a repeater—, all of which defects are apt to become rather tiresome. Even when we discern him to have to his credit qualities of sterling honesty and industry, he makes such a parade of them that we could wish his virtues less. We must take him as we find him; the style is the man. Yet perhaps not the whole man; the apophthegm leaves something unsaid. We have all known people who are excellent company so long as they keep off their pet aversions or their pet theories or their pet reminiscences. So it may have been with Walker, when he laid down his rasping quill, when he relaxed into forgetfulness of the misdeeds of the Dissenters, and of the unscrupulous falsifications of Dr. Calamy in particular; perhaps then a modicum of sweetness and light took possession of him. Let us hope so, for his own sake, for the sake of those who had to live with him. Be that as it may, take the man as his book reveals him, deal out to him what hard names you will—and he deserves a good many—, call him wrong-headed, obscurantist, unbalanced, ungenerous, bad-tempered; and yet for all your denunciations somehow he holds your attention, somehow he interests you in what he has to say, somehow you find yourself grow to have a sneaking affection for the man behind the page.

At least we cannot but admire his pluck in grappling with the enormity of his self-appointed task, a more exacting one than Calamy's. With what dogged fortitude he plodded on up his Hill Difficulty! Despite his ill-health, despite the fact that research was then in its

most beggarly rudiments, that there was no British Museum, no Public Record Office, that archives, if accessible at all, which was by no means to be taken for granted, were all anyhow, that there were no catalogues, indexes, calendars, and but a scanty supply of standard books of reference—in a word, that the whole outfit of aids which now spring up almost automatically to bear the searcher on his way, lest he dash his foot against a stone, were to all intents and purposes non-existent; when we attempt to envisage “this state of meagre vassalage,” why! we cannot but honour the stout-hearted author who faced such odds. Even if we think him misguided in his endeavour to stiffen the backs of his fellow-churchmen against others of their fellow-christians, we cannot say it was done for filthy lucre or for vainglory. John Walker was an honest man in his loves and in his still more portentous hatreds.

Or to put it in another way. If Gordon was right in asserting that Calamy would touch nothing quixotic, then Walker was his better. We can fancy a resemblance between the Knight of the Doleful Countenance and the obscure, but none the less intrepid, Rector of St. Mary More riding forth astride his unwieldy folio to break a lance for what he fondly named the best of Churches. And then a strange thing happened. The rider slipped from the back of his Rosinante and left her to take her chance on the historical highway. For when once Walker had got the *Sufferings* off his hands he was soon lost to sight. A doctorate from Oxford, not so hackneyed an honour as it has since become, a cathedral prebend from the Bishop of Exeter, a second rectory by presentation from a local magnate, these recognitions of his work and worth he received; they were duly gazetted at their successive dates, and served as public reminders of Dr. Walker's standing. But after these notices he was no more in the news, nor wished to be. He preferred to cultivate obscurity. Indeed as his years advanced (he died in 1747 at the age of 73) obscurity seems to have had an almost morbid fascination for Walker. In his will he directed that no memorial should be placed on his grave, not so much as his name inscribed on it. This in an age so ardently addicted to “the storied urn or animated bust”! At least a friend might have framed an epitaph, with a swell of sonorous Latin superlatives concerning the virtues of the deceased and his eminent services to the Church as the historian of its adversities. But no! “Can flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?” John Walker knew how to reply to that question some years before Gray put it into circulation. His grave was to be nameless. More bewildering still, perhaps, he expressed a wish, common enough now, but at his date a flagrant defiance of universal custom. He hoped that none of his family would wear mourning for him, not so much as a shred of black. Then he summed up his wishes in a blunt sentence: “Let me be buried as cheap and as private as possible.” Was this a final

spasm of self-effacement? or was it nothing more than mere parsimony? Either way it is all very unconventional for a man of the testator's standing. Yet these caprices were in keeping with a characteristic streak in his contemporaries. The age, however loudly it might prate about common sense, was singularly rich in characters, in oddities of major magnitude. And it would appear that this strain was not unrepresented at Exeter, that the city had in Prebendary Walker at least one original, if on a minor scale, yet none the less an unmistakable eccentric.

So much for these two eighteenth-century worthies, their personal characteristics and idiosyncrasies. What are we to say of them as historians? for such they claimed to be, chroniclers of impartial and unimpeachable rectitude. But we, who have been enlightened with superior wisdom as to how history should be written, cannot admit them to have been under this head quite the good men they supposed themselves to be. Wishful thinking, in some form or other, is well-nigh inevitable in our handling of that all too malleable substance, the past. Calamy and Walker practised it like the rest of us. The question to be asked is, whether their, our, selective bias will stand up to cross-examination, and prove itself intellectually and morally respectable.

Perhaps our two doughty doctors would not have been much disconcerted by the charge that they were controversialists. They might have replied that their subject was a controversy, one which had been carried to the length of civil war. That was true enough, and we may add that no other so violently explosive controversy has ever disrupted the peace of this country. Walker and Calamy were looking back to events which had happened some sixty years before, but which were far from having sunk below the horizon. The points of difference between the warring parties had not been fought to a conclusion, nor had they been transcended since. True, in the meantime they had been given a different setting; none the less they were still live issues in the politics of Church and State. For those two entities were then inseparably entangled. Men were political according to the form of their religion, and religious according to the colour of their politics. Such was the public for which our two controversialists wrote.

We must, therefore, anticipate that they would read the history they treated of along certain accepted lines, that they would, for the practical purpose of producing the impression they desired to make, present that history in a simplified form. The actuality was of a much more mixed and complicated character than they gave their readers to suppose. The two writers were, over a large area of their respective works, the parts which aroused the most interest, occupied with sufferings and

sufferers, with persecutors and persecuted, ejections and ejected. There were no doubt reasons for this. The ground had been largely chosen for them. Accounts of individual sufferers, Churchmen or Nonconformists, whom readers had known, or still knew, for a few of them were yet living, personal and local links, traditional reminiscences, the folklore of the subject, had an obvious and immediate appeal. Back of it loomed the perennial conundrum of party arithmetic; on which side of the hedge was to be found the greater unhappiness of the greater number? All this made much more attractive and easily intelligible reading than a wider, more detached, more dispassionate study of the subject would have done, even if any historian could have been found at that date capable of treating his material in such a spirit.

All the same, it was far from being the whole story. To fasten upon a single line of criticism, applicable to Walker's book rather than to Calamy's: it was, of course, true that many ministers were ejected, but, on the other hand, many, perhaps more, were not ejected. For a variety of reasons, personal and local, they did not come under the Puritan ban. There was nothing in their past record to make them marked men, and in face of the prevailing dissensions of the Civil War and its aftermath they took up the non-committal attitude that was natural to them, were neither decisively for, nor decisively against, episcopacy or any other form of church-government then feasible. Not that they were an organized party with a formulated programme. They were just so many isolated individuals scattered up and down the country, often in small and ill-paid benefices. Men such as these lived in possession of their clerical appointments, and died in possession, and that was sometimes not until the Puritan episode had blown over, and the King and his bishops were once more in authority.

Now it would be idle to pretend that men of this stamp exercised an edifying ministry judged by Puritan standards. Their preaching, perfunctory at the best—and the pulpit was the fulcrum of the neo-religious propaganda—was not calculated to wind up their parishioners to the spiritual altitudes of the Holy Utopia which was the Puritans' vision of the brave new England. Then why not eject them? The answer to that question was a second question: who were to take their places? There the reformers were non-plussed. Already the problem of vacancies was assuming alarming proportions. At Norwich in 1646 out of the city's total of thirty-six parish churches all but ten were pastorless. In London two years later forty parishes were in the same sorry plight. If what Bernard Manning called "the going concern," the routine machinery of church life, was to be maintained without more serious breakdown, then the present incumbents, unsatisfactory as some were, must continue to function. In course of time younger men offered themselves for ministerial service. When

once the Universities had been purged of undesirable elements, it might be supposed that the younger generation would be suitably indoctrinated for their calling. Between 1654 and 1660 something like twelve hundred candidates were certified by the Board of Triers to have what Cromwell, adopting Job's phrase, described as the root of the matter in them, and this was without their being required to subscribe to one more than another of the several forms of churchmanship that were then legal. None the less you will find, if you follow up their subsequent careers, that quite a proportion of these ostensibly well-grounded officiants conformed in 1662.

If this had not been so, Calamy would have had more names to inscribe on his roll of honour. As it was, the irreconcilables were comparatively few. About seventeen hundred of his two thousand were beneficed, and there were close on ten thousand livings in England and Wales! His remaining three hundred were lecturers, assistants or held academic posts. Nonconformity did not originate as a movement of big battalions. "A few honest men are better than numbers," Cromwell once said in another context. He might have enforced his thesis with a reference to Gideon's three hundred chosen stalwarts, the prototype of all effective minorities. And of such were the first Nonconformists.

If, then, we are to view the scene as it was, we must bring into focus this rather motley company of ministers I have alluded to, the old stay-hard incumbents and the younger men with a leaning to episcopacy. We must, however, be on our guard against a too sweeping disparagement of them. Among them were some of the Cambridge Platonists, Thomas Fuller too. Of the remainder it is only charitable, or perhaps just, to assume that they were not all time-servers, but that some of them did, in their fashion, voice the sentiments of the great John Hales, ejected from Eton, when he declared himself weary of this uncharitable world. They did genuinely regard the points of difference between the parties as of minor import, not fundamentals of the faith, and therefore not worth quarrelling over, not worth the sacrifice of their livings. That step might lead to the advent of an intruder of the new-light school, whose vagaries might alienate their parishioners from all religion. Therefore, the sitting incumbents chose rather, if possible, to keep their seats, to make not haste in the day of adversity, and let the times go over them.

However that may have been, as a whole their stock did not stand high. Nevertheless, they were not without power of a sort. Negatively, their mere existence was a drag on the Puritan reform; witness the renewed attempt at a clerical purge in the 1650's. More positively, they facilitated the swing-back to the old church order, when the tide turned. We must not scout the possibility that these



tame acquiescents, who, in the contemporary phrase, ran in with the times, achieved as much for the resurrection of Anglicanism as did their more heroic brethren who suffered deprivation. If we see in them yet another illustration of the Pauline paradox that the weak are chosen to confound the strong, it must be with the caveat that the Church of the Restoration was not a good advertisement for this form of resuscitation. It is safer to take lower, secular, ground and to pronounce them a confirmation of the maxim of which political wisecracks deliver themselves at election times—the non-party vote decides the poll.

Be that as it may, the unejected, I submit, have not received the attention they are entitled to. Walker practically ignored them; Calamy saw no reason to mention them; and later historians, despite their freedom from earlier controversial bias, have studiously overlooked them. After a generation or two an anonymous man of genius immortalized the subsequent representatives of this fluid school of churchmen in the Vicar of Bray, who shared with a more eminent and more outrageous figure of fun the opinion that "the better part of valour is discretion." But no one did anything for the earlier vicars. No one wrote a book about them or indeed could. They do not lend themselves to literary treatment, to being written up. Of the ejected, whichever their side, you may make a martyrology, a hagiology. But of the unejected—No, there is nothing in their record to "point a moral, or adorn a tale"; nothing that makes for edification or spiritual uplift; no party capital is accruing from it. In the day when honours were awarded there were no decorations pinned on their coats; no medal from Dr. Walker, no riband from Dr. Calamy. They were pretty much unnoticed in their lifetime, and after death no one had any interest to serve in perpetuating their memories. But history has its own interest to serve, and its representatives should by now have called for the evidence concerning them to be produced. Perhaps you have begun to suspect me of exaggeration. Were these men, you are wondering, so numerous, so important, as I have suggested? Then it is open to me, if my argument needs such aid, to grasp the nettle boldly, and to remind you that, seeing we have it on wisest authority that for everything there is a season, there must therefore be a season for exaggeration, and here is one. The case has by negligence gone so far into default that only by overstating it, only by going beyond what is true, can we arrive near the truth about it; at any rate only so can we force it into court for a judicial hearing.

All of which is tantamount to saying that the history of English religious life during the Interregnum has yet to be written, has yet to find its historian. Perhaps he is here this afternoon. Then let me respectfully urge him to give his most careful consideration to this

question of the unejected. Our man of destiny has much spade work to do on what will be only one chapter of his *magnum opus*. He must compile an exhaustive *liber cleri*, a Crockford call it, accounting for every parish in the land, and every incumbent of the period, showing how he fared under the Troubles. A good deal of the material is already in print, much of it has yet to be unearthed, some of it will be found, after diligent search, and only after that, to have gone to earth beyond hope of recovery. Perhaps in the long-deferred upshot our second Knight of the Doleful Countenance will mop his brow and indignantly accuse me of having sprung a mare's nest on him. Well, that is a charge that has been brought against better men than myself. It was brought by Dr. Calamy against Dr. Walker, and by Dr. Walker against Dr. Calamy, all those many years ago. And I should rely on having the sympathy of one or other of them, perhaps of both. If, on the other hand, having assembled and digested all his data, our man of toil gives it as his considered judgment that the unejected ministers were in fact of the cumulative importance I have suggested, he will not feel under obligation, any more than I do, to sing their praises, to hold them up to his readers to admire and to imitate. Should he frame an epitaph for them it might be to the effect that, in the worst of times, these men were faithful to the Englishman's inveterate belief that the religion of all sensible men is always one of compromise. That is all.

A. G. MATTHEWS.

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# The Controversy concerning Free Admission to the Lord's Supper 1652—1660

WHO may be admitted to the Lord's Table? The question was the subject of bitter controversy during the sixth decade of the 17th century. That controversy is of more than academic interest, for Free Churchmen today are still by no means agreed as to the right answer to the question, and in Congregationalism there is considerable variety of practice. Is the Lord's Table to be "spread like a Table in an Inne for all comers," as Hezekiah Woodward put it? Or should there be a "Barre against Free Admission"? That was the problem—we still differ as to the right answer.

Even before 1652, Puritan writers had concerned themselves with this question, but in that year it became especially prominent by reason of the publication of two sermons,<sup>1</sup> by John Humfrey (or Humphrey), minister of Frome in Somerset.<sup>2</sup> Humfrey belonged to that school of Puritans whose desire it was to reform the Church from within. (Alexander Gordon in the *D.N.B.* notes that he adhered to the monarchy, and never joined any presbyteral association). After the Restoration he at first accepted re-ordination, at the hands of William Piers, Bishop of Wells, but later he rejected it, and was a victim of the 1662 Ejection. Later he gathered a Congregational church, which met first in Duke's Place, London, and afterwards in Petticoat Lane, Whitechapel. Despite this action, however, he was not a separatist at heart. He was noted for the moderation of his views, and, despite the controversy which the publication of his sermons aroused, he was no controversialist by nature. John Sharp, Archbishop of York, in a letter, said that he "was, though a Non-conformist minister, a Conformist parishioner."<sup>3</sup>

It was Humfrey's practice, in regard to the Lord's Supper, to admit communicants without previous examination, and it was this practice which he sought to defend in the two sermons already noted. Like all writers of the period, he supported his arguments with a wealth of Scriptural evidence (drawn from sources as different as *Chronicles* and *Corinthians*). As his starting point he took the words of *Mark* xiv, 23

<sup>1</sup> *An Humble Vindication of a Free Admission unto the Lord's Supper* (1652).

<sup>2</sup> (1621-1719) cf. *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, s.v.; *Calamy Revised*, ed. A. G. Matthews, (hereafter *C.R.*), s.v.

<sup>3</sup> cf. *C.R.*, s.v.

("and they all dranke of it"). He argues, "I do not believe that any, unless first excommunicated (*ipso jure* or *de facto*), ought to be refused the participation of this Sacrament."<sup>4</sup> For proof Humfrey cited the Passover, of which all the Israelites (unless ceremonially unclean) might partake, indeed, were bound to partake. In addition, he used the words of Paul (*I Cor.* x, 17, "For we are all partakers of that one bread") to buttress his argument.

It was not mere right to partake with which Humfrey was concerned. He argued that it was the *duty* of all Christians to sit at the Lord's Table. Thus he asserts, "I hold thus; It is the duty of all church members of age to frequent the Sacrament. A man must examine himself and so eat, he must come and come worthily. If he be not worthy, that will not excuse him from his duty."<sup>5</sup>

In Humfrey's view it was church membership itself which gave right to the Communion. This fact was not always recognised by his opponents, who accused him of opening the way to the Table for such as "Turks and heathens." In his *Rejoynder to Mr. Drake*, this charge is clearly refuted. "He" (*i.e.* Drake) "urges 'Then should heathen be admitted?' Ans.: And so they may, if they come in an orderly way, *I Cor.* xiv, 40, they must first have a right by church membership, and then, being once within the church, they are alike admitted to all privileges."<sup>6</sup> Humfrey's objection was directed against his opponents' attempt to distinguish between worthy members who might partake and unworthy members who should be excluded.

Humfrey defended his own practice as being in accordance with the nature of the Sacraments. "The Sacraments are Verbum visibile, a visible Gospell; A declaring of Christ crucified; . . . that is, the Sacraments set forth Christ to the eye, as the Gospell does to the ear, . . . and therefore the same latitude must be granted to them both in their administration."<sup>7</sup> They are "necessary appendices of the Gospell."<sup>8</sup> He could not see how it was possible to justify the exclusion from the Table of those who, as church members, had the right to all other privileges of membership.

In opposition to the extreme rigorists, he maintained that the visible Church was in fact a mixed Church, consisting of "Saints by calling, whatsoever they are in truth,"<sup>9</sup> and that it was impossible for man to separate the wheat from the tares, which separation must await the Day of Judgement. In fact, as Humfrey acutely suggested, those who would put *A Boundary to the Holy Mount* might well be guilty of a

<sup>4</sup> *An Humble Vindication*, p.4.

<sup>5</sup> *A Rejoynder to Mr. Drake* (1654), Preface.

<sup>6</sup> *ib.*, p.54.

<sup>7</sup> *An Humble Vindication*, pp. 11f.

<sup>8</sup> *ib.*, p.15.

<sup>9</sup> *ib.*, p.17.

form of Pharisaism in turning away poor sinners from the Table. "For my part I must professe the serious acknowledgment of mine owne vilenesse, makes me afraid at heart to turne away others."<sup>10</sup> This was Humfrey's own feeling in regard to this matter, and there is something of real attractiveness in his humility, as there is also in a further comment of his; "O sweet Jesus, did'st thou alive offer thy self and company to the veryest Publicans, and never castedst out any that came to thee, and shall we take stomach that thou art now thus offered at this Sacrament."<sup>11</sup>

His practice was to exclude only "Those that are incapable, are so, either by Nature, as Infants and Distracted persons, or by the Churches censure of Excommunication, and no others."<sup>12</sup> This exclusion he justified on the grounds that such persons are incapable of examining themselves (an essential pre-condition of admission), and incapable of discerning the Lord's Body (an essential condition of receiving benefit from the Sacrament). Apart from these exceptions, Humfrey maintained that all church members should be admitted to the Table.

These sermons were quickly and vigorously answered by Roger Drake,<sup>13</sup> rector of St. Peter Cheap, London, in a book entitled, *A Boundary to the Holy Mount, or a Barre against Free Admission to the Lord's Supper* (1652). Drake, a native of Somerset,<sup>14</sup> trained first as a physician at Cambridge, Leyden, and the College of Physicians—he was "the enlightened advocate of Harveian views." But in 1646 he entered the ministry and quickly showed himself a rigid Presbyterian in both theology and church polity. He was elected a Commissioner at the Savoy Conference, 1661, but did not attend. Richard Baxter called him a wonder of humility and sincerity—one would hardly expect tolerance in addition at that period! Like Humfrey, he revelled in Scriptural quotations, and his books are packed with strange exegesis.

As the text for his attack on Humfrey's position he used *II Chronicles* xxiii, 19 ("And he set porters at the gates of the house of the Lord, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in"). He argues, "It is not simple membership gives an immediate right to the Lord's Supper . . . a priviledge not for every Church member, but for a visibly worthy Church member."<sup>15</sup> His own practice was to examine members before they approached the Table. "Profession, if joyned with sufficiency of knowledge in fundamentals and suitable practice

<sup>10</sup> *ib.*, p.22.

<sup>11</sup> *ib.*, p.21.

<sup>12</sup> *ib.*, p.3.

<sup>13</sup> (1608—1669) *cf. D.N.B.*, *s.v.*; *C.R.*, *s.v.*

<sup>14</sup> Somerset and Gloucestershire seem to have been centres of "Free Admission supporters.

<sup>15</sup> *A Boundary to the Holy Mount*, p.85.

in conversation, at least negatively, that there be no evidence against a person, as living after conviction in a known sin; this is the rule we walk by in admission to the sacraments;"<sup>16</sup> "No unregenerate person ought to receive the Lord's Supper,"<sup>17</sup> he asserts; but, he goes on, "I entreat the Reader to note that though with us, the rule of receiving be real worthiness, yet the rule of admission is visible worthiness, which consists in competent knowledge, profession of piety, and immunity from scandal."<sup>18</sup> In other words, he recognised that the church could not judge the real worthiness of professing christians (*i.e.* it could not exclude "close hypocrites"); it was possible to judge only outward worthiness. He strongly asserted that the church's duty was to save the Table from being profaned by the visibly unworthy.

In defence of their respective points of view, both Humfrey and Drake (and other participants in the controversy) argued at length the case of Judas. Did Judas actually partake of the Last Supper? Did he leave the Upper Room before or after the actual communion? Humfrey emphatically declared that he did partake, and this Drake equally emphatically denied. Not content with his argument, however, the latter maintained that, even if Judas did partake, the fact provided no argument for Free Admission. He had not then in fact betrayed Jesus, and was thus not *visibly* unworthy.<sup>19</sup>

Drake saw in his opponent's principles and practice two errors of profound importance. These had to do with church discipline, and with the nature of the Sacrament itself. In regard to the first matter he suggests, "Doth he not in this deal with the Church as some Anabaptists deal with the State, take away the Sword of Government, and so make a fair bridge for universal Toleration?"<sup>20</sup> "I wonder this man doth not now condemn the civill Magistrate for executing adulterers . . . etc., which Christ and his Apostles would not, *I Cor.* v,1,6,9,11, . . . Shall not man do justice, because Christ shews mercy?"<sup>21</sup> Drake believed strongly in the "power of the Keys", though he admitted that only a properly appointed body of minister and elders could exercise it.

Humfrey, too, believed in church discipline, but he did not believe that it should be used "to sift this visible ecclesiastical body, into a spiritual invisible body . . ."; this "sieve . . . is in the hands of God only."<sup>22</sup>

In regard to the nature of the sacrament, Drake maintained that it was not a "converting ordinance," but was meant only for confirma-

<sup>16</sup> *ib.*, pp.72f.

<sup>17</sup> *The Bar against Free Admission to the Lord's Supper Fixed* (1656), Preface.

<sup>18</sup> *ib.*, Preface.

<sup>19</sup> *A Boundary to the Holy Mount*, pp.5 ff.

<sup>20</sup> *ib.*, p.62.

<sup>21</sup> *ib.*, p.69.

<sup>22</sup> *A Second Vindication* (1656), p.15.

tion and edification of the Saints. Thus, the unregenerate had neither the right nor the duty to partake, because the feast would be meaningless to them. In one sense Humfrey agreed that it was not a converting ordinance, but he went on to distinguish two kinds of conversion. As his limitation of the sacrament to church members had shown, he did not regard the Lord's Supper as effectual for the outward conversion of the heathen; "But there is an inward effectually conversion of such as outwardly professe Christ to the truth of grace in their hearts."<sup>23</sup> In other words, unregenerate church members may be converted by partaking of the Lord's Supper. These could, Humfrey maintained, examine themselves and discern the Lord's Body, as against "Infants and Distracted Persons" who were incapable by nature of doing so. (This point was made in reply to Drake's frequent stress on his inconsistency in excluding any from the Table.)

Drake was not the only writer to reply to Humfrey's sermons, while the latter was not without supporters. One figure stands out among the rest, ostensibly on Drake's side and a vigorous opponent of Free Admission, but, in actual fact, something of a mediator between the two extreme points of view.

Anthony Palmer,<sup>24</sup> who became rector of Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire in 1646, was an Independent and one of the ministers ejected in 1662. He signed the Gloucestershire ministers' *Testimony* in 1648, and six years later became assistant to the Gloucestershire Commission. He was present at the Savoy Conference of 1658. After his ejection he removed to London, and subsequently became pastor of a mixed congregation of Independents and Baptists, meeting at Pinner's Hall, Old Broad Street.

Palmer was noted for his doctrinal tolerance. Indeed his refusal to exclude Baptists (who abounded in Gloucestershire) led some to suggest that he was "Anabaptistically inclined." In this matter of the Lord's Supper, he wrote as the representative of a group of preachers, who met weekly for discussion near Stow-on-the-Wold. The possible effects of Humfrey's sermons on Free Admission disturbed their minds; their reactions Palmer "digested" in his book *A Scripture Rule to the Lord's Table* (1653).

In his preface Palmer noted that he had seen Drake's reply, of which he approved. In actual fact, however, this approval is not very noticeable in the course of the argument, which reveals a considerable measure of real agreement with Humfrey's position. Palmer had failed to grasp that his opponent was defending not "pell-mell"

<sup>23</sup> *An Humble Vindication*, pp.59 f.

<sup>24</sup> (1618 ?-1679) cf. *D.N.B.*, s.v.; *C.R.*, s.v. (Calamy gives 27 Oct. 1616 as the date of his baptism).

admission of all, but only admission of church members who were not under sentence of excommunication *ipso jure* or *de facto*.

Despite this initial misunderstanding of his opponent's position, Palmer's book is marked by much clear argument and sound scriptural exegesis and contains less fanciful interpretation than the writings of most other participants in this controversy. The author opens with a vigorous defence of Congregational polity and practice, in which he and Humfrey were in real disagreement. But in regard to the matter of admission to the Lord's Table, Palmer argues, "If he" (*i.e.* Humfrey) "means by *excommunicated ipso jure*, such as of right ought to be excommunicated by the Church, then the matter is ended."<sup>25</sup> In a sense that was perfectly true, but on closer examination it is possible to detect a cleavage that went deeper than this matter of practice—a cleavage in regard to standards of church membership.

Humfrey had used *I Cor.* x,17 ("for we are all partakers of that one bread"), to substantiate his theory. Palmer retorts, "True . . . But, Sir, were the Parochial Churches in *England* (though we deny them not to be churches in a large sense) so brought in? Will you compare the obstinate ignorance of this age of people, to *professing Saints at Corinth*? "<sup>26</sup> He knew all too well that the English parishes included large numbers of merely nominal Christians, Christians by baptism only. These regarded the communion as one of their natural rights; they had little or no understanding of its significance and often regarded it with something akin to superstition. ". . . there are we fear hundreds of Congregations, may we not say thousands? which consist of little else" (*i.e.* than profane persons) "and yet, through custome, if they have not the Communion once a year, and so go to play in their best cloathes afterwards, they will think themselves greatly wronged."<sup>27</sup> "Church Discipline," Palmer goes on, ". . . excludeth them from the fellowship of the Saints, whose *fellowship* is chiefly in this ordinance, and therefore cal'd the *Communion* . . ."<sup>28</sup>

These words throw a new light upon the controversy. They reveal it in the setting of the contemporary church situation. Church membership (the term used by all parties) meant something different for the Separatist from what it did for the ordinary parishioner, or for his Puritan incumbent. Both Palmer and Humfrey were agreed that the communion was for members only, they differed as to what constituted membership. Palmer asserted that implicit profession (*i.e.* just coming to church), which was accepted by the exponents of "Free Admission," was not sufficient. He urged the necessity of

<sup>25</sup> *A Scripture Rule*, p.27.

<sup>26</sup> *ib.*, p.31; *cf.* pp.174f.

<sup>27</sup> *ib.*, pp.89f.

<sup>28</sup> *ib.*, p.90.



"an explicit profession of repentance and faith, and confessing of Christ, and not denying this in the tenour of their conversations."<sup>29</sup> Externally this may seem to resemble Drake's point of view, but in spirit it is very different; for, Palmer adds, "We do not plead for *rigidness* truly so called; Godly ministers invite the weakest to profess repentance and faith etc., and so to be received into Communion."<sup>30</sup>

Palmer regarded private reproof, examination and exhortation as a necessity. "We believe he" (*i.e.* the pastor) "is bound in this *Corruption of times* to call upon all to come and own the covenant of the Lord their God, and subjection to Christ, and to give up themselves to the Lord in a fellowship together, or else we humbly conceive he doth not the *utmost* of his duty."<sup>31</sup> (These words were written in reply to Humfrey's assertion that he did his utmost to ensure that men came worthily and prepared to the Table.) Palmer's conclusion was that it was desirable (*N.B.* not *essential*) to ask those who came to the Table to make verbal confession before partaking.

Like Drake, Palmer stressed the fact that to partake unworthily of the elements was to be guilty of the Lord's body. "We are violators of charity and guilty of iniquity to suffer men to damn themselves with the Sacrament, which we might suspend from them."<sup>32</sup> This aspect of the question, though referred to by most of the controversialists, seems not to have been among the most prominent.

A man must examine himself; the pastor must ensure that he does, and, in view of the laxness of many churches, should ask him to make an explicit confession of faith. Such was Palmer's general position. Moreover, unlike the Presbyterian Drake, he regarded the local congregation as capable of all necessary disciplinary action.

In 1654, John Timson, "a private Christian of Great Bowden in Leicestershire,"<sup>33</sup> joined in the controversy. He roundly attacked both Drake and Palmer. "I conceive," he writes, "that the visible Church of Christ consists of persons regenerate and unregenerate, professing true religion, and their seed."<sup>34</sup> Taking the Passover as the type of the Lord's Supper, he showed that, as all Jews had both the right and the duty to partake, so all church members had the right and the duty to partake of the Lord's Supper. He claimed that there were in fact two types of church members; (a) adult converts (regenerate), and (b) children of such, baptized and (he claimed) coming naturally under Church obligation when they were of age.

<sup>29</sup> *ib.*, p.78.

<sup>30</sup> *ib.*, p.73.

<sup>31</sup> *ib.*, p.85.

<sup>32</sup> *ib.*, p.132.

<sup>33</sup> *cf.* title page of his book *The Bar to Free Admission to the Lord's Supper Removed* (1654)

(There is no article on Timson in *D.N.B.*)

<sup>34</sup> *The Bar . . . Removed*, p.30.

This was precisely the position which Palmer had attacked, and which, implicitly, Humfrey held. It was, in fact, as already hinted, one of the fundamental points of difference underlying this controversy. Timson argued that it was possible to be a Christian by nature (*i.e.* born so) while Palmer (and Drake) maintained that conversion (or regeneration) was essential.

A further point made by Timson (one with which both Drake and Humfrey agreed) was that discipline could not be exercised by the local congregation—it depended upon the existence of the “proper” church machinery (*i.e.* assemblies and elders), which in turn was dependent upon the action of the civil government. “I must confesse,” says Timson, “I utterly reject as impious and against all rule and order for the common members to claim an interest in the exercise of the keys, either of Doctrine, Sacraments or Discipline.”<sup>35</sup> “I cannot conceive how there should be any true discipline practised in our Churches without the special assistance, countenance and power of the civill Magistrate . . .”<sup>36</sup> It is clear, then, that, in practice, the problem of admission to the Lord's Table was not unconnected in some minds with the doctrine of the Church's relations with the State.

Some ministers were accustomed to preach in the parish churches of which they were the incumbents, but in order to observe the Sacrament gathered congregations of “Saints by calling”. Daniel Cawdrey<sup>37</sup> in his *Church Reformation Promoted* (1657), states: “I knew an Independent Minister . . . that takes a very great Parish, to preach to them, and receives their maintenance, which is large enough, he preaches to them only in the morning, I suppose as a gifted brother, but not as their Pastour, administering neither Sacrament to them (for that he does in his own select Congregation in the afternoon)”<sup>38</sup>

This practice came to the notice of Sir William Morice of Werrington, Devon.<sup>39</sup> Morice, a friend and (through his wife) a relative of General Monk, was elected M.P. for Devonshire in 1648, but he never sat, being excluded by Pride's Purge. He was re-elected in 1654, but still could not sit. In 1651 he became High Sheriff of Devonshire. “A scrupulous censor of orthodox divinity,” he wrote a brief letter of reproof to Humphrey Saunders, a Devon minister who acted in the way described by Cawdrey.

Morice's position was in general similar to that of John Humfrey. He argued that there was no pre-examination in the ancient church except for catechumens, and that explicit confession of faith, though

<sup>35</sup> *ib.*, p.159.

<sup>36</sup> *ib.*, p.164.

<sup>37</sup> (1588-1664) *cf.* *D.N.B.*, *s.v.*; *C.R.*, *s.v.*

<sup>38</sup> *Church Reformation Promoted*, p.107.

<sup>39</sup> (1602-1676) *cf.* *D.N.B.*, *s.v.*

useful, was not essential.<sup>40</sup> With a wealth of classical and patristic evidence, Morice maintained that only the notoriously scandalous (and thus excommunicated) could be excluded from the Lord's Supper. "Between the proper examination of himself and eating and drinking no other thing intervenes,"<sup>41</sup> he asserts, in answer to the claim that pastoral discipline should be exercised.

He seized upon the words of *I Cor.* v,11 ("But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat"), which he called "the darling and champion text of the Separation"<sup>42</sup> (it had been used by both Drake and Palmer to prove that eating of the Lord's Supper with unworthy men was forbidden), and roundly asserted that it had nothing at all to do with the Lord's Table. The visible Church was inevitably a mixed assembly, for "to convert any to the Faith of Christ, though but externally, is to make him a Disciple, he that is baptised is a Disciple, and in this notion we grant, that none but Disciples may partake the Holy Supper, that is, none but Christians."<sup>43</sup>

Morice's original communication was private, but Saunders published it, together with a reply, to which he prefixed an answer to Humfrey's original sermons.<sup>44</sup> Saunders was rector of Holsworthy, Devon, from 1632 to his ejection in 1662. He signed the *Testimony* in 1648, was assistant to the Devon Commissioners in 1654 and was a member of the Devon Association in the following year. Calamy says that he "disgusted some of the Gentry while he was in his living by not admitting them to the Sacrament."<sup>45</sup>

Saunders' contribution to the controversy is in the main an echo of previous arguments, but it is interesting to note that, like Palmer (and unlike Drake), he states, "we can truly averre that we examine none, but such as well may be suspected of incompetent knowledge."<sup>46</sup> He stoutly defended his practice of admitting only disciples (which, he said, followed Jesus' own example at the Last Supper), adding, "we examine none that are taken to be disciples."<sup>47</sup> He quite frankly admits that "It is not in men's power to exclude hypocrites, or secret sinners, but open,"<sup>48</sup> and suggests that Christ as God knew Judas' crime, but as minister did not know it, and thus could not have excluded the traitor from the Last Supper.

<sup>40</sup> *cf. Cena quasi Koine*, pp.181-4 (for 161-4). (This book, first published in 1657, was enlarged and re-issued in 1660).

<sup>41</sup> *ib.*, p.135.

<sup>42</sup> *ib.*, p.146.

<sup>43</sup> *ib.*, p.144.

<sup>44</sup> *An Anti-Diatribē* (1655). This book contains the text of Morice's original Diatribe, which appears in an enlarged form in his *Cena quasi Koine*.

<sup>45</sup> d. 1671, *cf. C.R.*, s.v.

<sup>46</sup> *An Anti-Diatribē*, p.19.

<sup>47</sup> *ib.*, p.28.

<sup>48</sup> *ib.*, p.29.

Saunders, like Palmer, drew attention to the obvious differences between the church referred to by Paul in *I Corinthians* and the parish churches of England. Indeed there is a good deal of likeness between the two writers both in letter and in spirit. Speaking of the Presbyterians, Saunders says, "We think our brethren go beyond their warrant, while they take Saints of the first magnitude only into fellowship . . . . Where we see any measure of true godly fear, any degree of graciousnesse we gladly admit."<sup>49</sup> Yet he was a stickler for discipline, and asserts, "the Lord's Supper cannot be holily transacted by any, unless the scandalous be removed."<sup>50</sup> "While the Church is without enclosure, the Sacrament will need one very much."<sup>51</sup> The problem created for some by the absence of correct church discipline is here very evident.

Morice sums up the position as between the upholders of Free Admission and the extreme exponents of exclusion in these words, "They will admit none whose sanctity may be doubted, I allow only such to be rejected, whose crimes are notorious."<sup>52</sup> That puts the matter tersely, and, on the whole, accurately in so far as Drake and his supporters are concerned, but it does not do justice to the position of Palmer, outlined above.

Thomas Fuller,<sup>53</sup> the broad-minded, peaceloving and impartial (perhaps too impartial) "Chaplain in extraordinary" to Charles II at his Restoration, and the author of *The Church History of Britain*, who did not himself take part in this particular controversy, may be quoted as a moderate pleader for Free Admission. He agrees that "there are some places of Scripture which by proportion and consequence do more than probably insinuate"<sup>54</sup> powers of exclusion from the Lord's Table. Further, he agrees that "Children, Mad-men, Idiots . . . are not to be admitted to the Sacrament . . . because they cannot . . . examine themselves."<sup>55</sup> Likewise, "Persons actually or virtually excommunicated *durante statu*, are to be excluded the Sacrament. For we behold them as no members of the Church at all."<sup>56</sup> But, with quiet humour, Fuller maintains, "The black devil may, but the white devil never will be kept out of Christian Congregations."<sup>57</sup> In connection with this impossibility of keeping away hypocrites, he vigorously denounces the view that the presence of unworthy partakers infects the rest. "The position is most false, that mixt Communions

<sup>49</sup> *ib.*, p.93.

<sup>50</sup> *ib.*, p.169.

<sup>51</sup> *ib.*, p.217.

<sup>52</sup> *Cena quasi Koine*, p.85.

<sup>53</sup> (1608-1661); cf. *D.N.B.*, s.v.

<sup>54</sup> *A Triple Reconciler* (1654), pp.14f.

<sup>55</sup> *ib.*, pp.18f.

<sup>56</sup> *ib.*, p.20.

<sup>57</sup> *ib.*, p.24.

do infect."<sup>58</sup> He insisted on the need for examination prior to a first admission (thus agreeing with both Drake and Palmer), but argued that there should be no re-examination without an obvious cause.

Such are the main strands of this complicated web of controversy. Though sometimes obscured by the spate of wordy bitterness, the importance of some of the truths at stake is evident. On the one hand, it was maintained that ministers ought to "admit all baptised persons of years, not excommunicated, to the Sacrament promiscuously, though ignorant and scandalous."<sup>59</sup> Such writers as John Humfrey and John Timson argued that ministers had neither the right nor the duty to judge the worthiness of those who would partake of the Lord's Supper; their duty was to invite all, having first warned them of the danger of unworthy observance.

On the other hand, it was maintained that ministers ought to "exclude all from it, that are not at least visibly regenerate, though knowing people and of civil conversation."<sup>60</sup> Roger Drake, for example, was quite convinced that it was both possible and necessary to preserve the sacrament from visibly unworthy participants.

Midway between these two extremes was the position of Anthony Palmer and the Gloucestershire ministers whose spokesman he was. It is true that his practice was similar to that of Drake in that he recognised the need for examination; but if only the churches of England had been composed of members who were Christians by calling, and not just by birth, he would willingly have followed Humfrey's lead in admitting them to the Lord's Table, without further examination.

In modern Congregationalism, candidates for church membership are usually, though not always, "examined" by the minister and by representatives of church meeting, prior to acceptance into membership with its privileges. Few churches follow up this initial "examination" in the way urged by Roger Drake and his friends, but this may be due not so much to theological objections as to the marked decline (or should it be "virtual absence"?) of that discipline which was assumed and exercised by the 17th century church meeting. It may well be that our "Freedom of Admission to the Lord's Table" is the outcome, not of theological conviction, but of a low view of both the Church and the Sacrament.

Though few would be prepared to follow Drake in setting up a "Boundary to the Holy Mount," in the sense of excluding "visibly unworthy" members, some, sympathizing with men like Palmer and Saunders in regard to standards of church membership, may rightly

<sup>58</sup> *ib.*, p.39.

<sup>59</sup> D. Cawdrey, *Church Reformation Promoted*, pref.

<sup>60</sup> *ib.*

feel that often too little stress is laid upon the faith which alone enables us to partake of the Sacrament in spirit and in truth.

Is there any warrant for the frequent practice of inviting to the Lord's Table those who are not members of the church, *e.g.* adherents, and those being prepared for membership? Should it not be emphasized more strongly than is often the case that partaking of this sacrament is the duty, right, and privilege of those who, as members of Christ's Church are able to enjoy, in a real sense, communion with one another and with the Lord? Richard Baxter maintained, "Those without saving faith have no right to Sacraments"; though he went on to say, "If they claim them we may lawfully administer them."<sup>61</sup>

Writers like Palmer and Saunders have much to teach our generation in regard to church membership and the Holy Communion as one of its high privileges and duties. At the same time there is need to bear in mind the fact that the Church of the saints is the home of forgiven sinners. Thus any attempt to make visible worthiness a condition of certain church privileges must be unhesitatingly rejected. Some words of Palmer, already quoted, will find an echo in many hearts: "We do not plead for rigidness truly so called; Godly ministers invite the weakest to profess repentance and faith etc., and so to be received into Communion."<sup>62</sup>

WILFRED W. BIGGS.

<sup>61</sup> *Certain Disputations of Right to Sacraments* (1657), p.356.

<sup>62</sup> *A Scripture Rule*, p.73.

## From the Guestwick Church Book 1692—1732

**F**OR this paper I have selected from the Guestwick Church Book three outstanding instances of the support and counsel asked from and given to each other by the Congregational Churches in Norfolk, about the beginning of the 18th century.

The Guestwick Church Book as a contemporary record dates from 1694, but there are at the beginning brief summaries of the first two pastorates.

“The Church of Christ in and about Guestwick sate down in Gospel order in the latter end of the year 1652 and chose Mr. Richard Worts<sup>1</sup> for their pastor.” This can be more definitely dated by the following extract from the Yarmouth Church Book, dated 5th September 1652: “This day a letter was received from the Christians in at and near unto Guestwick of their intention to gather into Church fellowship upon the 20th day of October 1652. Bro. Timothy Norwich and Bro. George Steward desired as messengers to be present at the time of their gathering.” Thus at the very outset is outlined the pattern of the co-operation between the churches which becomes clearer and more definite in the later entries.

Between 1692 and 1732 the following churches are on record as “having invited the Minister of Guestwick and messengers from the Church, to witness their order in the Gospel and the setting apart of a Minister to the office of Pastor”: Yarmouth (3 times), Tunstead (3 times), Woodbridge, Beccles, Norwich, Bradfield (on becoming by agreement separate from Tunstead) and Wymondham (then spelt Windham).

1. The first of the three instances, and the first related in much detail in the Guestwick Church Book, is that of the call of Mr. George Mills<sup>2</sup> to the pastorate at Guestwick in 1694.

The church had suffered much from divisions since the death of Giles Say<sup>3</sup> in April 1692, so that their hopes rose high when Mr. Mills, a member of Miles Lane church, recommended by the elders in London, Mr. Lawrence and Mr. James, and by Mr. Stackhouse,<sup>4</sup> the minister of the church in Norwich, came in July 1694 and preached with general acceptance. But he refused their pressing invitation and desired them “to write no more to him about that affair”. The church was greatly concerned but considered though they were

<sup>1</sup> For notes of identification, see the end of this paper.

“forbidden writing, yet not sending, otherwise”, so two of the brethren went to London and thence to Chalfont, Bucks., where Mr. Mills was pastor, and effectively persuaded him to come.

But it was not until November of the year following that letters were sent to Norwich, Wymondham, Tunstead, Yarmouth and Southrepps, inviting them to send messengers “to behold our order in the Gospel”. It appears from the letter to Southrepps that that church was passing through a similar crisis of divisions. The church at Guestwick offers sisterly counsel to hold fast and seek a similar way out of their difficulties.

2. Five years later, the church at Norwich (Old Meeting) was in difficulties arising from a dispute over the appointment of an assistant minister. Two names were before the church and the supporters of neither would give way. Pastors and messengers from eight neighbouring churches were invited by the minister and the majority party to meet in Norwich, which they did, and advised that both candidates should withdraw and another assistant should be agreed upon. The majority party reluctantly accepted this advice but the other party rejected it, and the dispute continued. A further meeting of pastors and messengers was held and the advice was given to the majority party to withdraw from their schismatic brethren, “and to renew their covenant engagements to the Lord and to one another”.

This advice was followed, and, according to a marginal note by Robert Drane,<sup>5</sup> they continued to meet first under John Stackhouse and afterwards under Thomas Scott,<sup>6</sup> within the walls of Black-Friars Convent until they were able to return to the Old Meeting House in 1717.

3. In 1729 the Guestwick church chose Joseph Astley<sup>7</sup>, for its minister, but it was not long before trouble arose in connection with his extravagant way of living. The matter was dealt with according to gospel teaching. One of the deacons first approached him privately, without effect. Both deacons then saw him together, with no better result. He was then asked to meet the church, but though he acknowledged his faults he showed no sign of amendment. The church therefore asked the counsel and advice of neighbouring pastors and churches. This was that Mr. Astley was bound to satisfy the church that he was penitent, that in the meantime the church should take no drastic action, but that Mr. Astley should seek another charge. But the feeling against Mr. Astley was so strong that the members of the church and congregation would not attend services which he conducted, and he himself was so recalcitrant that, after resigning the pulpit, he conducted opposition services in the manse. He further repudiated the authority of the church, by disowning his membership. This was decisive evidence of impenitence, and on the advice, parti-



cularly of Mr. Scott of Norwich, and Mr. Coveney<sup>a</sup> of Oulton, the church proceeded to cast him out. Robert Drane records that Mr. Astley subsequently received episcopal ordination at the hands of the Bishop of Norwich.

Two points in the letters of Mr. Scott are of interest. The meeting at which sentence was passed upon Mr. Astley was attended by brethren only, although they constituted only 35% of the membership, and it was held in a private house still licensed for preaching, although there had been a chapel in the village for at least forty years. Of more general interest is the opinion that the church, of its own authority, had power to reject Mr. Astley from membership, and from the pastorate, as it was from them that he had received both, but that they did not, and presumably could not, take from him the ministry for he was in it before; yet they declared him to be unfit, without repentance, for membership in any church. The problem seems to have been unresolved then, as it is now, by what means, if any, an unworthy minister may be removed from being a minister.

A. F. THORPE.

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### I. The Induction of George Mills.

1692. The church, being again destitute, fell into divisions occasioned by some who endeavoured to bring in one Mr. Hasbourd,<sup>b</sup> the design of which others foreseeing would prove destruction to the church and interest of Christ among them, would by no means yield unto that motion, which occasioned great heats and divisions, yet the majority of the church kept up their assemblies, spent many hours in prayer to God for one to go in and out before them, and procured what helps and assistance they could from other hands to carry on the Lord's Day work amongst them.

Then again the church made their application unto Mr. Laurence,<sup>c</sup> Mr. James,<sup>d</sup> Mr. Mentz and others, the elders in London, for help and supply. After the mentioning of several which came to nothing, at last Mr. Lawrence and Mr. James sent to the church, signifying that they had in their thoughts fixed upon one, Mr. George Mills, whom they did judge fit and suitable for the church's circumstances and with whom they would use their interest to come down at the church's request.

Accordingly, the church sent a letter to Mr. Lawrence and Mr. James, as likewise to Mr. Mills, desiring him to come down and give them a visit, and afterwards requested Mr. Stackhouse to discourse with him at London, in order thereunto which he accordingly did and about the latter end of July 1694, he came down and continued three or four Lord's Days whose work and service was to the general acceptance of the whole.

To the Church of Christ at Norwich, the Church of Christ at Guestwick sendeth greeting in our Lord Jesus.

Signifying the good hand of our God upon us (as we hope) in hearing our cries in the day of our distress and seeing our tears which were mingled with many fears (by reason of our divisions) that God would have broken up house and laid us waste, but we have experienced much of the goodness of God towards us in healing our breaches and adding to us both members and hearers, as also in sending one to go in and out before us and to take the care and oversight of us (which is Mr. Geo. Mills by name) and now a beloved brother with us, who is to be set apart to office work amongst us on the 6th November next, in which good work we earnestly desire your concurrence and assistance by appointing and sending such messengers as unto you shall seem meet to behold our order in the gospel.

We rest, your brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel  
in the name of the whole Church.

Sam Durrant	}	Deacons
Edw. Peartree		

Wymondham      Tunstead      Denton      Yarmouth.

To the Church of Christ in and about Southrepps, the Church of Christ in and about Guestwick sendeth greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Signifying the good hand of our God upon us in hearing our cries and seeing our tears in the day of our distress, which have mingled with many fears (by reason of our divisions) that God would have broken up house, and have left us desolate, but God whose mercy endures for ever, was graciously pleased to remember us in our low estate and in healing of our breaches hath already added several members to us as also many hearers who daily attend upon the ministration of the gospel amongst us, which cannot but fill our hearts with wonderment and our lips with praises for so great a mercy, nor can we forbear taking hold of this opportunity to signify our tender sympathy with you, and if it might be to provoke you to emulation in pressing you to importune the Father of mercy and Lord of the harvest for bestowing the like favours; he has mercy in store, and is greatly delighted with the importunity of his children for the bestowment of it; but (alas!) though it be a day of great liberty yet there's too much ground to fear that it is also a day of great security upon churches and professors; (dear brethren) have a care of negligence by an increase of which you may lose again your little strength and dwindle your light; look to the matters of Christ's house in your hand; he cannot, he will not take it well at the hands of those churches who shall suffer the affairs of his house to run to ruin without hearty endeavours to repair the breaches;

we do a little wonder how churches can satisfy themselves with one breast when God has provided two. We hope you will bear with and pardon our plainness; 'tis the honour of Christ and love to your souls with desires of the flourishing of the cause of Christ in your hands that causes us to take the liberty thus to speak. These are further to let you know that the 6th day of November next is concluded upon for the setting apart of Mr. Geo. Mills (who is now a beloved brother with us) to the office and work of pastor among us, in which good work we desire your concurrence by appointing and sending such messengers as unto you shall seem meet to behold our order in the gospel.

We rest,

your brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.  
subscribed in the name of the whole Church

Sam Durrant

Edw. Peartree

} Deacons

On the 6th of November was a general and solemn meeting for the setting apart of Mr. Mills to the office of pastor amongst us. The messengers of the several churches met together at Mr. Mills's in the morning where it was agreed upon how the work of the day should be managed.

The names of the pastors and other ministers that were present that day were Mr. John Stackhouse, Pastor, Norwich; Mr. John Green,<sup>12</sup> Pastor, Tunstall; Mr. Wright<sup>13</sup> Minister and assistant at Yarmouth; Mr. Killingham,<sup>14</sup> Minister, Beccles; Mr. Thos. Worts,<sup>15</sup> Mr. John Hammond,<sup>16</sup> Mr. John Asty,<sup>17</sup> preachers of the gospel. Mr. Green began, opening the occasion of the meeting, and the work of the day, then prayed, after which he desired the church to signify their calling of Mr. Mills to office work by holding up or stretching forth of their hands, which accordingly they did, unto which call Mr. Mills returned the following answer.

[This is given in full in the Church Book]

Then Mr. Green proposed to the church whether they would submit unto him whom they had now chosen in all things in the Lord, which accordingly the church did again promise or signify by lifting up of their hands; then Mr. John Stackhouse prayed, afterwards preached an excellent sermon from the 3rd Chapter of Jeremiah and the 15th verse. "I will give them pastors after my own heart who shall feed them with knowledge and understanding." After sermon was done, Mr. Green prayed again, and Mr. Mills concluded the work of the day with prayer.

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## II. A Division in the Church at Norwich.

1699. In this year there arose a difference and a division in the church at Norwich, about one Mr. Geo. Smith whom some of the

brethren would have called to be an assistant to the Rev. Mr. Stackhouse, but others (and the most) were dissatisfied both with his doctrine and discipline, that his doctrine was Arminian and his discipline Presbyterian, upon which such heats and contentions did arise, as could not be allayed and composed among themselves. Upon which, the Rev. pastor with the majority of the brethren agreed to call in the help and assistance of the pastors and messengers of neighbouring churches for their advice and counsel in order to compose the difference, and accordingly the following letter was sent and directed to the several pastors and churches.

To the Reverend Mr. George Mills and the Church of Christ at Guestwick, whereof he is pastor.

Dearly beloved and honoured brethren in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The strife and divisions wherewith our poor church hath been long exercised are a great grief of heart to us and we trust that you are not unaffected with the report that you have had thereof. We can obtain no healing of our divisions among ourselves and need that sister churches should help us with their advice which we trust that your love to Christ and his gospel, and your desire of the peace and prosperity of the Churches of Christ, will incline you willingly to give unto us. We therefore desire and pray that the Reverend Pastor and such messengers as you shall think fit to send, may meet the elders and messengers of other churches in Norfolk, on the 8th day of August next in this our City of Norwich, that you may have a full account of the whole matter truly and distinctly laid before you and may consider of it and give us faithful advice and counsel about it, if peradventure God may shew mercy to us and bless your advice to our church that it may be a means of restoring to us peace and order which we humbly beg of the God of Peace.

Signed at the desire of above half the brethren  
Norwich July 22 1699. by John Stackhouse, Pastor.

This letter was read to the church, and the two messengers agreed upon to be sent with the pastor were the two deacons, Samuel Durrant and Edward Peartree, who according to appointment met the rest of the pastors and messengers at Norwich Meeting House, on the 8th August, where after a hearing on both sides, the advice given was that they should part both with Mr. Will Noaks<sup>18</sup> and Mr. Geo. Smith,<sup>19</sup> and agree upon another to assist Mr. Stackhouse. In compliance with which, Mr. Noaks friends, though sorely troubled, consented to part with him for peace sake, but the other party would not part with Mr. Smith, though his continuance is like to prove the ruin and breach of that once famous church.

1701. The Church at Norwich to the Church at Guestwick, and seven others. [Extracts]

We have desired and obtained and been willing to follow the advice of neighbour churches by their elders and messengers, but they who have went from us, refused, and when the elders of neighbouring churches did write a letter to press us to put their advice into execution speedily, yet still they refused. We have lately offered to them that we are willing to have the advice upon the whole matter of any Congregational elders in England, indifferently chosen, the one half by them, and the other half by us, but they rejected the proposal, calling it a project that gives a sad prospect of confusion not of union, giving this reason because we will not be for keeping Mr. Smith. We have endeavoured by letters to convince them of their schism and covenant breaking, and of many other sins whereby they have greatly offended. As to the charge of schism, they positively deny it and recriminate that we are guilty of it because we will not have Mr. Smith, whom they would impose upon us.

\* \* \*

The only way that we can see to be left to us is to withdraw from them until they repent according to 2 *Thess.* iii, 6, *Rom.* xvi, 17 and afterwards to renew our holy covenant and that we may not mistake in the manner of our doing it we humbly and earnestly desire your plain and full answer to this question.

Whether in our calling church meetings to consult of the proper way and means of our returning to gospel order, we are obliged to own them as members with us who have broke covenant with us and made an open and notorious schism in and from the church, and have aggravated it by many unchristian carriages, and, whether it be proper and necessary for us to take any further notice of them than to declare that we withdraw from them until they repent and to send them a written copy of our declaration.

1701. The Church at Guestwick to the Church at Norwich. [Extracts]

Now our thought as to this is that as the case stands with you, it is not advisable to call these brethren before the church, there to charge them with breach of covenant, and the rent and schism which they have made, for seeing that most of them have turned their backs upon and declined the ministry of Christ in the church and your church assemblies, and in practice (at least) have gone off from the principles owned and professed in all Congregational churches, we think they have virtually cut themselves off from the church of which they are members and that no more is necessary for you to do, but to pursue the Apostle's advice to the church of the Thessalonians 2, iii, 6 with

that in Rom. xvi, 17, to withdraw yourselves from them as disorderly persons and with as much mildness and moderation as the case will possibly bear, declare your resolutions to them, of such a withdrawalment until they repent and that you appoint a day for solemn prayer to humble yourselves before the Lord for those sins which are or have been even amongst you, for the which God has made so great a breach upon you, and to renew your covenant engagements to the Lord and to one another.

But yet we would further propose to your consideration what we think may be expedient, and that is that if your purpose and intention were made known to them, or at least to some of the more moderate among them, with entreaties that they would not persist in their way and course, but return to their place and duty, else you must proceed to withdraw from them, it may be a means to reclaim and recall some of them. However by this, their mouths will be stopped, and you the more fully justified in your proceedings.

1702. About 25th March 1702, the Rev. Mr. Stackhouse sent a letter signed by several of the brethren of that church to the pastor Mr. Mills, to desire him to assist at a solemn meeting appointed by them on the 31st of the month for humiliation and renewing their covenant with the Lord and one another, after they had withdrawn from several of those who had made a schism pursuant to the advice given by several churches.

The work of the day was managed as follows :— . .

Mr. Stackhouse opened the occasion of the meeting and then prayed. Mr. Mills preached a suitable sermon to the occasion from 2 Chron. xxix, 10, about the renewing of their covenant, wherein the nature necessity and manner of the duty was opened and applied. Then Mr. Green prayed, and after him Mr. Bert<sup>20</sup> preached from 1 Cor. vi, 1. After him, Mr. Hurrion<sup>21</sup> prayed. Then they renewed their covenant, and each of the four pastors then present signified their approbation of their proceeding, and gave them the right hand of fellowship. Then Mr. Stackhouse concluded with prayer. In which meeting there was much of the presence of God discovered and thus this poor church which had once been flourishing but wasted and torn with division and schism, came once more to a settlement, which the Lord continue.

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### III. The Case of Joseph Astley.

1731. The following letter was sent with a copy of the charge to several churches viz.: to the Church of Christ at Norwich, Yarmouth, Denton, Bradfield and Oughton (Oulton ?) with the church's request that their pastors and messengers might meet at Mr. Scott's at Norwich on 3rd November to give them their advice and judgement thereon.

The Church of Christ at Guestwick to the Church of Christ at Norwich wisheth grace mercy and peace.

Honoured and beloved Brethren.

Whereas all churches walking in the same order and fellowship of the gospel are mutually debtors to each other for their advice and counsel in cases of difficulty, we humbly beg this debt of you for your advice and counsel in an extraordinary case which has happened with us, namely, the disorderly walk of our pastor, with whom the previous process in and by private and public admonition as stated in *Matt. x* has been duly observed as will appear to you by the charge brought against him by us, a copy of which you have enclosed as also a copy of his answer to the same; which was not satisfactory to us because we judged it to be inconsistent with the glory of God and honour of the church for us to accept of a bare confession of the fault though for the present he seemed to express some degree of sorrow for his crime. We therefore insisted upon further satisfaction, and particularly upon two things as prerequisite thereunto, namely, the payment of all his just debts and some visible signs of repentance for his crime. In order to his accomplishing the former, he proposed taking a journey to his father's, hoping to raise such a sum of money as would pay them and accordingly proceeded thereon, and, at his return, being asked what success he had, he replied that he should answer that question only by asking another, so that he has refused to give the church any satisfaction that way, neither have there appeared any signs of repentance for his crime.

These things appear to us to be a plain discovery of the insincerity of his professed subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ which was the ground and reason of his being admitted into that relation which he appears now to have forfeited so that he is deemed by us unworthy of the office of a pastor and also of the privileges which he was admitted to partake of as a member. But we being desirous to have better judgements in the case than our own, we refer it to your consideration desiring your advice and judgement therein.

We are, in the name of the whole Church

Your brethren in Christ.

Ben Seel

Jn. Armor

} Deacons

According to appointment the pastors and messengers of the several churches met on 3rd November at the Rev. Mr. Scott's at Norwich and Mr. Astley also where four of our brethren gave their attendance also, who in a little time after being there received a message from Mr. Astley by Rev. Mr. Scott to request that they would admit Rev. Mr. Finch<sup>22</sup> and Mr. Brooks<sup>23</sup> into the assembly which was granted him, after which the brethren were sent for upstairs into Mr. Scott's study where

the ministers were assembled, and a lawyer which Mr. Astley had brought with him to manage his affair (a piece of conduct in an affair of this nature which wants precedent).

The next morning the following advices were drawn up by the ministers and delivered to the brethren and a counterpart to Mr. Astley.

We the pastors of churches who have been desired to give our advice in relation to the affairs of the Church of Christ in Guestwick think that Mr. Astley has grievously sinned in the particulars included in it and confessed by himself and that he is obliged to convince the offended church, by his care to pay his debts, and by the frugality of his expenses and by his whole deportment, that he is a penitent man, without which, the public admonition ought to take effect.

If his future conduct be agreeable to his profession of repentance we, out of compassion to the said Mr. Astley and his family, think that the church would do well (and we earnestly advise it) to continue him amongst them until next Lady Day, and do their utmost for his subsistence till then, that he be not distressed either by a diminution of his salary or an immediate parting.

Out of the same spirit of tenderness for the church whose interest lies a bleeding under the unhappy miscarriages of the said Mr. Astley, we think he ought to improve this time in looking out for another place and not to stay any longer at Guestwick without the full satisfaction of the church.

Peter Finch

Ab. Coveney

John Brooke

Julius Sanders<sup>24</sup>

Thos. Scott

John Fletcher<sup>25</sup>

[However, none of the church would hear Mr. Astley and few would contribute while he stayed, so three weeks later this further letter was written.]

To Mr. Seel and Mr. Armor, Deacons of the Church of Christ at Guestwick.

Gentlemen,

Mr. Astley has declared himself a friend to the peace of your community and as he is sensible that your resentment of his conduct runs so high as to allow no prospect of a coalescence, rather than that you should suffer by his keeping the pulpit, is willing to resign it to such as you think proper to employ, provided you are willing to pay him till Lady Day without deduction or give him twenty pounds at once which he rather chooses. This proposal we whose names are subscribed, approve of and advise you to.

Witness our hands.

Norwich Dec. 1. 1731

Peter Finch.

John Brooke.

Thomas Scott.

Abraham Coveney.

Heydon Dec. 3.



Mr. Astley accepted the proposals and resigned the pulpit immediately and gave a note under his hand to quit the dwelling house at Lady Day, and on the Lords Day following began to preach at the dwelling house and continued so doing until Lady Day, and also began in a short time to revile reproach and falsely to accuse the church, and upon the 17th day of February he sent the following letter to the church at a church meeting upon the same day at Guestwick.

To the people who call themselves the Church of Christ at Guestwick. Though I have been a member and pastor of your society, yet now being disengaged from the ministerial office amongst you, I cannot but judge it very improper to continue my relation to you as a brother and a member.

Therefore I do hereby actually and publicly withdraw myself from all brotherhood and communion with you, disowning your care, watch and pretended authority over me, but at the same time, maintaining christian charity towards you and all others who profess the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity.

In witness whereof I set my hand.  
Guestwick Feb. 17th 1732.

Jo. Astley.

[On receipt of this letter the deacons consulted Mr. Scott, Mr. Coveney and Mr. Fletcher, and two passages from Mr. Scott's replies follow.]

1732. I must therefore declare, if after so long waiting you can perceive no positive tokens of repentance, the church ought to proceed agreeably to their admonition and especially if they can fasten on him any positive evidences of impenitence and I think that this letter would be no bar in the way. For at this rate, it is but any offender's renouncing his station in the church, and all church proceedings are at a stop, and the discipline of Jesus Christ is utterly defeated. This is so flagrant an absurdity that a greater can't easily be imagined. I conclude therefore that this renunciation by Mr. Astley does not make his membership void in such a circumstance especially as it is made plainly to shelter himself from the discipline of Jesus Christ and therefore your proceedings ought to be just as if no such renunciation had been made. Nay, as it ought not to prevent your going on so I can't but be of opinion it is a call to go on, for it is a plain mark of his non-repentance for what is past. He treats the church and its authority with contempt, and by a public overt act refuses to hear the church and you know the rule in that case in the 10 of Matthew so that upon the whole it is my judgement that Mr. Astley for the crimes for which you laid him under admonition and for any other positive marks of impenitence you may know he has given and for this undeniable one should be put out from among you.

I do think as we ministers were not concerned in putting this man into the Ministry (for he was in it before) but only in ushering him into his office, imploring a blessing etc., I don't see but that the church may proceed without us. As indeed, to say the truth, they might in the other case, as with respect to office, they take not from him the ministry but pastorship, and then as to his membership which is the other part of the work of the day, there we have plainly nothing to do. I think, therefore there's nothing in the whole affair but what may be done by yourselves alone, and I'd advise to have it done privately, none present but the church, and if you thought good, the brethren only, and in a private house, licensed; the sentence pronounced by a deacon after the vote of the church whereby after prayer and the suffrage, he declares solemnly the offences of the man and the rules broken, some passages concerning the qualifications of officers and members violated by his behaviour, and then declares the church's rejecting him from his office and relation purely for these crimes. I think indeed it would be too noisy to have the elders convened on the occasion, but you may if you please, mention the hearty approbation of neighbouring elders in relation to your proceedings.

Agreeable to these advices, the church met on 22nd of March at a private house, none present but the brethren and proceeded against Mr. Astley in the following method.

[A deacon addressed the meeting, summarizing the proceedings hitherto and concluding:—]

Therefore, notwithstanding his renunciation of his membership which is plain was made to shelter himself from the discipline of Jesus Christ, it is necessary unto the church as to the discharge of its duty for his crimes and impenitence to proceed to the casting him out from amongst them, to the end they may preserve themselves pure, and whereas our Lord Jesus Christ when he gave unto his church the power of binding and loosing, directed them in the exercise of that power to ask assistance by prayer when they are gathered together. Matt. x, 10. We therefore shall proceed agreeable thereto with a solemn invocation of the name of Christ to ask his guidance and direction, to enquire his mind and will in the case, and to engage his presence and authority in what we do, that what is done on earth may be ratified in heaven by the approbation of Jesus Christ and be made effectual to its proper end.

Then several of the brethren prayed after which the church voted Mr. Astley unworthy of the office of a pastor and also of his membership and then the deacon proceeded (concluding).

We therefore according to the institution of Jesus Christ, and the power committed to us as a Church of Christ, do in the name and with the power of the Lord Jesus reject him, the said Mr. Joseph

Astley, as an unworthy pastor and member and pronounce him cut off from the communion of this church, for his crimes which unfit him for the communion of any church in the world without repentance, and deliver him unto the world again according to the direction of the Holy Ghost. Matt. x, 17. 1 Cor. v, 4.

Then one of the deacons concluded with prayer.

Notes, kindly supplied by C. E. Surman.

- <sup>1</sup> RICHARD WORTS, ej. Rector of Foulsham with Themelthorpe, NF. 1660 : V. of Guestwick in 1649/50 and pastor of Congregational Church there 1652-86, d. (CR, 547).
- <sup>2</sup> GEORGE MILLS, b. c. 1651; no regular education for ministry; supplying Staines, Middx. in 1690 (Gordon, 73,312); invited to Guestwick 1694, where ordained 6 Nov. 1695: died minister there, 6 Dec., 1723, *æt.* 72. Reputed to come to Guestwick from Chalfont, Bucks., but not noted by W. H. Summers as minister there, though there is a gap in pastoral succession. (Browne, 325).
- <sup>3</sup> GILES SAY, ej. V. of St. Michael's, Southampton, where continued to preach: removed to London c. 1685, and on recommendation of 'the elders at London' settled at Guestwick, Nov. 1687. Died April, 1692. (CR. 428, Gordon 347, Browne 325.) Father of Samuel, *D.N.B.*
- <sup>4</sup> JOHN STACKHOUSE, b. 1648/9, s. of Roger, of London, gent. New Inn Hall, Oxford, mc. 1664. Lic.(C) at Greenwich, Kent, 1672; poss. supply at Castle Green, Bristol before 1688 (Caston, *Indocy. in Bristol*, 56): 'In ye old Artillery preacheth with mr. Cocktain,' 1690 (Gordon, 4,263,358): Co-pastor with Martin Finch at Norwich 1691, and successor: secession under him in 1699; died 14 Sept., 1707. (Browne 266.)
- <sup>5</sup> ROBERT DRANE, b. Dickleburgh, NF., 1798; Wymondley Academy; minister Bristol and Guestwick 1824-72, when retired. Died Cardiff 25 Aug., 1877. (C.Y.B., 1878, 313; Browne, 327,617).
- <sup>6</sup> THOMAS SCOTT, minister Back Street, Hitchin 1700-09 (Urwick, *Herits.*, 650; Wilson iii. 175); Norwich 1709-46. Died 15 Nov., 1746. (Browne 267ff.) 'The death of Mr. Scott of Norwich touched me very nearly: I believe he was one of the holiest and most benevolent men upon the earth' (Ph. Doddridge). Father of Thomas, minister Lowestoft, Ipswich and Hapton, and of Dr. Joseph Nicol, asst. to his father 1727-37-. (G. E. Evans, *Vestiges*, 114).
- <sup>7</sup> JOSEPH ASTLEY—possibly man of those names entered in *Evans MSS.* as minister at Tadcaster and Clifford, Yorks c. 1717-; asst. at York Buildings, Strand, London—1727-29 (W. Wilson, iv. 19); Guestwick 1729-1732; discharged for irregularity and afterwards conformed: re-ordained by Bp. of Norwich. (Browne, 314,326; *C.H.S.Trans.*, ii. 52).
- <sup>8</sup> ABRAHAM COVENEY, educ. by Dr. Isaac Chauncy (*DNB*); adm. mem. of Cong. Church, Bury St. Edmunds, 11 March, 1709; Chaplain Armingland Hall Norfolk 1709-24 and first pastor of Cong. Church, Oulton 1724-72 (Church formed 4 March 1724/5 at Armingland, rem. to new meeting place at Oulton 7 April 1731.) ord. pastor 30 June, 1725; died Dec. 1772, *æt.* 86. Married one of the Fleetwood family. (Browne, 329ff.)
- <sup>9</sup> HASBOURD—probably JOHN HASBERT, stated by Calamy to be ejected at Norwich, for which A. G. Matthews finds no evidence (CR. 252), in 1690 was at East Dereham, with a newly erected meeting (Gordon, 74,73,280). 'Mr. Hasbord baptized child without incumbent's leave at Holt, NF. in Aug. 1700. 'I have heard that he was a very rousing, awakening preacher' (Browne, 593). Meeting-house at Dereham probably for Mattishall congregation.
- <sup>10</sup> MR. LAWRENCE—might be RICHARD LAWRENCE, ej. R. of Trunch, NF. 1660, subsequently pastor of congregation at Amsterdam, returning to England and becoming asst. to Matthew Mead at Steppney 1669, where preached until 1696. Two unsuccessful attempts to induce him to accept pastorate at Yarmouth in 1669 and 1687. Died 17 Nov., 1702. (CR. 318f; Gordon, 300.)
- <sup>11</sup> MR. JAMES—perhaps JOHN JAMES, ej. Lecturer, Newark, Notts, 1660, where imprisoned for six years. Removed to London and after a time became pastor to congregation in Wapping (where Rich. Lawrence, above, was also accustomed to preach). A Manager of the Common Fund, 1692, and an original Manager of the Congregational Fund, 1695. Died 1696. (CR. 294f; Gordon, 291.)
- <sup>12</sup> JOHN GREEN, Vicar of Tunstead, NF., ej. 1660; son of John, ej. Rector of Fritton, NF. (CR. 233); pastor of Cong. Church Tunstead 1659/60, also preaching Bradfield 1697-1707. Died North Walsham 17 Feb., 1709/10. (Gordon, 274; Browne, 303, 309; *E.M.*, 1818, 146).
- <sup>13</sup> SAMUEL WRIGHT, asst. Yarmouth 1690-1709; Wrentham 1709- and pastor 1716-19; Southwold 1719-27 res. (Gordon, 74, 177, 392; G. E. Evans, *Vestiges*, 261; Browne, 244)

- 14 JOHN KILLINGHALL, minister Beccles, SF., Oct. 1697-1699, when dismissed. Unhappily fell into sin which called for the severest discipline of the Church . . . became deeply penitent and was restored to fellowship.' (Browne, 463). In secular business till 1702; then minister Deadman's Place, Southwark 1702-40; died Jan. 1740. (W. Wilson, iv. 147). *cf. The Journeys of Celia Fiennes* (ed. C. Morris, 1949), 145; Beccles: 'a good Meeting place at least 400 hearers and they have a very good minister in Mr. Killinghall: he is but a young man, but seemed very serious . . . Sir Robert Rich is a great supporter of them and contributed to the building of the Meeting Place, which is very neat.'
- 15 THOMAS WORTS, ej. R. of Barningham, NF. 1660, bro. of Richard, *supra*. Received grants from Common Fund for East Ruston, NF. 1692-96 (Gordon, 74). Prob. buried Trunch, NF., 1 April 1697. (CR. 547).
- 16 JOHN HAMMOND, *cf.* W. M. Jones and A. J. Grieve, *op. cit. inf.*, 33: "John Hammond, a member (at Bury St. Edmunds) had sought dismission that he might become minister at Colchester, and when the church refused it, 'being not wholly satisfied,' he nevertheless went to be their pastor, until division arose among them. Unity being restored, the Colchester folk asked Bury for his dismission and submitted their covenant for approbation . . . received letter of recommendation, October 1st, 1693." He appears to have been minister of the Baptist Church in Colchester (Moor Lane, now Eld Lane) 1690-94, about which time he died (T. W. Davids, *Annals of Evangelical Nonconformity in Essex*, 376; *cf.* E. A. Blaxill, *The Nonconf. Churches of Colchester*, 1948, 15f.).
- 17 JOHN ASTY, b. 12 Sept., 1675, son of Robert, minister Norwich (d. 1681) and grandson of Robert, ej. R. of Stratford St. Mary, SF. 1660 (CR.) Educ. in London by T. Rowe and at Newington Green: Chaplain to Smith Fleetwood Esq., Armingland Hall, NF. 1695-1710 (*cf.* A. COVENEY, *supra*); minister Ropemakers' Alley, London, 1713-1729; d. 20 Jan., 1729/30. (*cf.* D.N.B.) His mother, Lydia, was dau. of John Sammes, ej. Coggshall. (Gordon, 13; W. Wilson, ii. 537; Browne, 328, 615; *Trans. C.H.S.* ii. 272; iv. 37.)
- 18 WILLIAM NOAKS, or NOKES, educ. at University of Utrecht; minister Beccles 1703-1709; Ropemakers' Alley, London 1709-12, where succeeded by J. ASTY (*supra*). He then 'left the Dissenters, and took the gown in the Church of England, after which we hear nothing further concerning him.' (W. Wilson, ii. 536). Prob. the person to whom Is. Watts dedicated one of his lyric poems on Friendship. Calamy, *Own Life*, i. 139, 142; ii. 508 notes his conformity 'in Suffolk,' that he was 'scandalous,' 'became disordered in his mind and died in one of the streets of London, some think on the steps of St. Andrew's, Holborn.'
- 19 GEORGE SMITH, minister at Framlingham c. 1698-99; Norwich 1699. (Browne 267 and n. vague as to dates, but seemingly remained pastor over the majority party of the Norwich Church at Old Meeting when Stackhouse and his adherents removed to Blackfriars.) Was ultimately 'dismissed by the Norwich Church and died under reproach for immorality.' (n.d.) (*Harmar MS.* Browne 538 and n.2.)
- 20 JOHN BERT or BEART, adm. member of Cong. Ch., Ipswich, 3 May, 1693, dismissed to become pastor at Church at Bury St. Edmunds, 1699, after supplying there for some five years. Ord. 1701, died 24 Dec. 1716, *aet* 43. (*cf.* Browne, 411 and n. 2, where some uncertainty as to date of death—possibly (?) Jan. 1716/17.) Abraham Coveney, *supra*, admitted a member under him in March 1709. W. M. Jones and A. J. Grieve, *These Three Hundred Years, Bury St. Edmunds*, 1946, 34ff.
- 21 JOHN HURRION, b. Nov. 1676, son of John (poss. lic. Sibton, SF. 1672) and grandson of Edmund Whincop, ej. C. of Leiston, SF. (CR. 523); educ. at Walpole; minister at Denton, NF. c. 1696-1724 (ord. 29 July, 1701); Hare Court, London 1724-31; died 31 Dec. 1731. (DNE., W. Wilson, iii. 288). Sons, John, min. Gosport, d. 1750; Samuel, min. Guestwick, d. 1763.
- 22 PETER FINCH, s. Henry, ej. V. of Walton on the Hill, Lancs., 1662 (CR. 195); educ. by R. Frankland, Natland, 1678 (Nicholson and Axon, 548); Edinburgh Univ., M.A., 1680; Chaplain to Sir Wm. Ashurst; min. Norwich 1691/2-1754; d. 6 Oct., 1754, his 93rd birthday. Not related to Martin Finch or Fynch, of Norwich. (Gordon, 263; Browne, 280; Toulmin, 578.)
- 23 JOHN BROOKE, educ. at Attercliffe Academy (C.H.S. *Trans.*, iv. 340); min. Swanland, Yorks 1703-11; Yarmouth 1711-1718/9; Norwich 1719-32; co-pastor St. Saviourgate, York, 1732-35; d. 22 Oct., 1735. (Gordon, 160, 174; G. E. Evans, *Vestiges*, 189, 261, 264; J. G. Miall, 369, 387; Browne, 245, 280.)
- 24 JULIUS SAUNDERS, second son of Julius, min. Bedworth, WA. 1686-1730; educ. Sulby Academy and Bedworth; asst. Coventry; min. Denton 1725-49. d. unmarried, 28 Jan., 1749/50, *aet* 58. (Sibree and Caston, *Indepcy. in Warwick.*, 160; Browne 337; Gordon, 346.) His nephew, Julius *tertius*, succeeded him in the Denton pastorate (d. 1757).
- 25 JOHN FLETCHER, s. of Thomas, min. Dagger Lane, Hull (d. 1773); b. Hull, 17 May, 1705; educ. Attercliffe (?) and London (Dr. Thos. Ridgley); asst. York Buildings, Strand, London, 1727 (?) (*cf.* Jos. Astley, *supra*); Bradfield, NF. 1728-73; ord. 6 Aug., 1729; also preached freq. at Tunstead, Southrepps and Guestwick. d. 30 June, 1773. (W. Wilson, iv. 19; Browne, 306, 311, 318; *E.M.*, 1818, 57, 145.)

## Philip Doddridge's Letters to Samuel Clark

The members of our Society will warmly applaud the decision of the Friends of Dr. Williams' Library to present the library with a microfilm of Philip Doddridge's letters to Samuel Clark, the minister at St. Albans and Doddridge's life-long adviser and friend. The manuscript volume containing many of these letters is preserved at New College, London, where the Principal gladly gave permission for the microfilm to be made. It contains 90 letters, 89 of which are from Doddridge to Clark, the one remaining being from Clark to Doddridge. Of these 89 letters, 59 appear in J. D. Humphreys' edition of Doddridge's *Correspondence* (1829—31, 5 vols.), in whole or in part, but 30 appear not to have been published. Humphreys' edition also includes 32 letters which are not in the MS. volume. The table printed below shows which letters are in which of these three categories.

1. 3 Jan. 1721. H., i. 34.
2. 13 Dec. 1721. H., i. 40.
3. 1721. H., i. 59.
4. 1721. H., i. 67.
5. 1722. H., i. 115.
6. May 1722. H., i. 129.
7. 6 July 1722. H., i. 138.
8. Sept. 1722. H., i. 152.
9. 1 Dec. 1722. H., i. 171.
10. 28 Jan. 1723. H., i. 187.
11. 27 Feb. 1723. H., i. 213.
12. 6 Apr. 1723. MS., 1. H., i. 215.
13. 4 May 1723. MS., 2. H., i. 226.
14. 25 May 1723. MS., 3. H., i. 234.
15. 6 July 1723. H., i. 250.
16. 15 Nov. 1723. H., i. 287.
17. 2 Dec. 1723. MS., 4. H., i. 294.
18. 21 Jan. 1724. H., i. 333.
19. 4 Feb. 1724. H., i. 335.
20. 5 May 1724. H., i. 373.
21. 24 June 1724. H., i. 400.
22. 22 Oct. 1724. H., i. 425.
23. 17 Feb. 1724/5. MS., 5. H., ii. 7.
24. 29 May 1725. MS., 6. H., ii. 27.
25. 17 Nov. 1725. H., ii. 66.
26. 6 Mar. 1726. H., ii. 86.
27. 26 Apr. 1726. MS., 7. H., ii. 108 (as 27 Apr.)
28. 11 June 1726. H., ii. 118.
29. 30 June 1726. H., ii. 140.
30. 20 Sept. 1726. H., ii. 163.

31. Dec. 1726. H., ii. 228.  
 32. 12 Dec. 1726. MS., 8. H., ii. 234.  
 33. 10 Apr. 1727. H., ii. 292.  
 34. 20 July 1727. H., ii. 319.  
 35. 26 Oct. 1727. MS., 10. H., ii. 363 (as 30 Oct.)  
 36. 21 Jan. 1728. MS., 11. H., ii. 408 (out of order).  
 37. 6 Feb. 1727/8. MS., 12. H., ii. 396 (as 1727).  
 38. 10 Apr. 1728. MS., 13. H., ii. 439.  
 39. 19 Apr. 172[8]¹. MS., 9.  
 40. 13 May 1728. MS., 14.  
 41. 22 May 1728. MS., 15. H., ii. 454.  
 42. 4 Oct. 1728. MS., 16. H., ii. 459.  
 43. 12 Mar. 1728/9. MS., 17. H., ii. 448 (as Apr. 1728).  
 44. MS., 18. H., ii. 487 (as 7 Aug. 1729).  
 45. 23 Dec. 1729. MS., 19. H., ii. 518.  
 46. 26 Oct. 1734. MS., 31. H., iii. 177.  
 47. 17 Jan. 1734/5. MS., 32. H., iii. 180.  
 48. 24 Mar. 1735/6. MS., 38. H., iii. 218 (as 10 Nov. 1736).  
 49. 1 Jan. 1736/7. MS., 20. H., iii. 220.  
 50. 22 Jan. 1736/7. MS., 21. H., iii. 230.  
 51. 17 Apr. 1737. MS., 22. H., iii. 234.  
 52. 8 May 1737. H., iii. 239.  
 53. 12 June 1737. MS., 34. H., iii. 248 (as July).  
 54. 20 July 1737. MS., 35. H., iii. 257.  
 55. 8 Sept. 1737. MS., 36. H., iii. 272.  
 56. 30 Oct. 1737. MS., 43. H., iii. 278.  
 57. 9 Nov. 1737. MS., 44.  
 58. 21 Nov. 1737. MS., 23. H., iii. 284.  
 59. 15 Dec. 1737. H., iii. 288.  
 60. 28 Dec. 1737. MS., 24. H., iii. 292.  
 [60.\* 6 Jan. 1737/8. MS., 33. FROM Clark.]  
 61. 25 Mar. 1738. MS., 37.  
 62. 2 Apr. 1738. MS., 39. H., iii. 316.  
 63. 17 May 1738. MS., 45. H., iii. 323.  
 64. 15 June 1738. MS., 40. H., iii. 329 (as 13 June).  
 65. 23 June 1738. MS., 25. H., iii. 331.  
 66. 23 Sept. 1738. MS., 41.  
 67. 7 Oct. 1738. MS., 42. H., iii. 345.  
 68. Dec. 1738. MS., 46. H., iii. 347.  
 69. 27 Feb. 1738/9. MS., 47. H., iii. 358.  
 70. 16 Apr. 1739. MS., 48. H., iii. 368 (as 25 Apr.).  
 71. 8 May 1739. MS., 50.  
 72. 16 June 1739. MS., 49. H., iii. 382.  
 73. 30 Aug. 1739. MS., 51. H., iii. 397.  
 74. 24 Nov. 1739. MS., 52. H., iii. 403.  
 75. 8 Feb. 1739/40. MS., 26.  
 76. 25 Feb. [1739/40]². MS., 27. H., iii. 260 (as 4 Aug. 1737).  
 77. 2 Apr. 1740. MS., 54. }  
 78. 2 May 1740. H., iii. 458. } *the same*  
 79. 14 Oct. 1740. MS., 55.  
 80. 21 Feb. 1741. H., iii. 540.  
 81. 14 Mar. 1740/1. MS., 53. H., iii. 545.  
 82. 12 May 1741. MS., 56.

¹ 1727 in error; endorsed by Clark 19 Apr. 1728; contents confirm 1728.

² Year-date from date of letter to Doddridge from Zinzendorf here copied, which is 9 Dec. 1739.

83. 9 June 1741. MS., 28.  
 84. 10 June 1741. MS., 57.  
 85. 19 Dec. 1741. MS., 58.  
 86. 8 Jan. 1742. H., iv. 66.  
 87. 19 Mar. 1742/3. MS., 59. H., iv. 220.  
 88. 5 Apr. 1743. MS., 60. H., iv. 232.  
 89. 10 Apr. 1743. MS., 71.  
 90. 14 May 1743. MS., 64.  
 91. 13 Oct. 1743. MS., 62.  
 92. 5 Dec. 1743. MS., 63. H., iv. 297 (as 15 Dec.)  
 93. 23 Jan. 1743/4. MS., 65. H., iv. 306.  
 94. 2 Apr. 1744. MS., 66. H., iv. 323.  
 95. 16 Apr. 1744. MS., 67.  
 96. 19 May 1744. MS., 68.  
 97. 6 Oct. 1744. MS., 69. H., iv. 360.  
 98. 22 Nov. 1744. MS., 70.  
 99. 17 Feb. 1744/5. MS., 72. H., iv. 376.  
 100. 24 Feb. 1744/5. MS., 29.  
 101. 22 Mar. 1744/5. MS., 73. H., iv. 391.  
 102. 23 Apr. 1745. MS., 61. H., iv. 403.  
 103. 13 Oct. 1745. H., iv. 442.  
 104. 2 Mar. 1745/6. MS., 74.  
 105. [15 May 1746.]<sup>1</sup> MS., 30.  
 106. 16 June 1746. MS., 75. H., iv. 482.  
 107. 30 Nov. 1746. MS., 76. H., iv. 515.  
 108. 27 Dec. 1746. MS., 77.  
 109. 30 Mar. 1747. MS., 79.  
 110. 23 Apr. 1747. MS., 78.  
 111. 14 June 1747. MS., 80.  
 112. 30 Aug. 1747. MS., 81. H., iv. 550.  
 113. 22 Oct. 1747. MS., 82. H., iv. 568.  
 114. 1 Jan. 1747/8. MS., 83. H., v. 36.  
 115. 6 Feb. 1747/8. MS., 84.  
 116. 30 Apr. 1748. MS., 86.  
 117. 18 June 1748. MS., 87.  
 118. 2 Oct. 1748. MS., 88. H., v. 78.  
 119. 22 Dec. 1748. MS., 89.  
 120. 1 Mar. 1748/9. MS., 85. H., v. 108.  
 121. June 1750. MS., 90. H., v. 169.

From this table it will be apparent that the dates printed by Humphreys are by no means always reliable. Humphreys also frequently, almost regularly, omits postscripts; even when he prints one, he often omits a second postscript; and postscripts often contain matters of personal and domestic interest. Furthermore, Humphreys often omits the place of writing: thus, letters 13 and 14 were written from Hinckley and Letters 35 and 37 from (Market) Harborough; and Letter 48 was written not from Northampton but from Newport.

Humphreys' omissions and deprivations in the text of the letters are too many and various to be easily described in brief. Perhaps the best way of indicating them is to give a few illustrations.

<sup>1</sup> So endorsed, with 'Tore off a shorthand P.S. and lent Dr. Rippon to get it decipher'd'.

In Letters 13 and 14 'Mr. R.' is 'Mr. Rogerson,' and in Letter 13 'Mr. Some' should be 'Mr. Statham.' In Letter 14 the last two words of 'I should in all probability have been tied down to some dull formal duties' should be 'mechanick Business.' In Letter 17 Humphreys omits the description of Massey as '(Sope Maker on ye Artillery Ground)' and inserts 'David' before 'Jennings'; in the phrase 'It would certainly be very uncomfortable to be dismissed there,' 'dismissed' should be 'despised,' with which 'admired' in the phrase following contrasts. In Letter 23 'without any ceremony' should be 'without that Ceremony which great Tradesmen (perhaps above any other Sort of People) seem to me to require'; and 'Mr. Arthur' should be 'Mr. Auther.' In Letter 35, in the postscript relating to Mr. Hardy's conforming, 'last Saturday' should be 'last Thursday'; and a passage is omitted describing how Hardy bowed to the altar, knelt for his secret devotions before service, turned to the east at the creed and bowed at the name of Jesus every time it was mentioned. In Letter 38 Humphreys omits a passage in which Doddridge says that he has promised Mr. Hughes' friends at Nottingham "at their request that I will not be ordained at Kibworth till I hear further from them."

These examples will be sufficient to indicate how desirable it is to consult the MS. volume, almost as much for the letters printed by Humphreys as for those which have not been published. In future this can be done in Dr. Williams' Library, or in any library or home possessing a microfilm projector. One very effective way of encouraging further microfilming (and there are nine other MS. volumes of Doddridge correspondence preserved at New College, London) will be to join the Friends of Dr. Williams' Library.

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL.

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# Correspondence

20th April, 1951.

Editor, *Transactions*,  
Congregational Historical Society.

Dear Sir,

Two documents in Dr. Williams's Library likely to be of interest to members of your Historical Society and frequently in demand by research workers are now available on loan from the Library in microfilm form. They are :—

1. (Dr. Williams's Library MS. 35.4.) a list written by Dr. John Evans (1680-1730) and bearing the date '1715' (with corrections and additions down to 1729) and giving lists of Dissenting congregations in England and Wales by counties with the names of ministers and some additional information.
2. (Dr. Williams's Library MS. 35.5.) compiled by Josiah Thompson and giving similar lists of congregations by counties for the years 1715 and 1773.

References to one or both lists are to be found in (a) James (T.S.), *The history of the litigation and legislation respecting Presbyterian chapels and charities in England and Ireland between 1816 and 1849* (1867); (b) Bebb (E.D.), *Nonconformity and social and economic life, 1660-1800* (1935); (c) *Monthly Repository*, vi. 723. The list given in the Congregational Historical Society's *Transactions*, Vol. v., is from another similar list prepared by Josiah Thompson (also in D.W.L., MS. 35.6.) That these lists are now available without a visit to London may be of interest to some of your readers, if they have access to the apparatus needed for microfilm reading.

Dr. Williams's Library,  
14, Gordon Square,  
London, W.C.1.

Yours faithfully,

ROGER THOMAS,  
*Librarian.*