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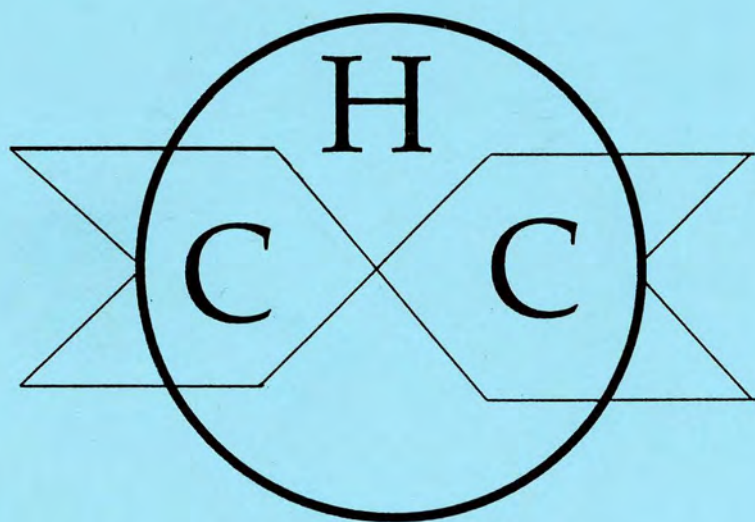
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Volume 3 Number 2



Spring 1994

The Congregational History Circle Magazine

Volume 3 No 2 Spring 1994

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EDITORIAL

Ian Sellers has written a fascinating article about several small country churches in Cheshire. We should welcome other such contributions and are grateful to him for this paper. Derek Watson, the organist of Highbury Congregational Church, Cheltenham, has returned to his roots for his article. He intends to publish a much fuller account of Muriel Paulden's work in Liverpool in book form soon. Dr Watson's article represents for the CHC a belated centenary tribute to this notable Congregational minister. Trevor Watts, writing from his Shrewsbury home, has contributed some notes on one leading Dissenter from that city.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Many of you will be aware that next year, 1995, will present Congregationalists with several causes to commemorate, including the London Missionary Society's founding in 1795 and, of course, R.W.Dale's death in 1895. Dr Dale's former church, Carr's Lane (now United Reformed Church), is planning a series of events to celebrate Dale's life and work. Mansfield College, Oxford is also planning to commemorate Dale during the year.

An event to mark in your diaries is the conference of the recently formed Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries to be held at Westhill College, Selly Oak, Birmingham from 28-30 July 1995. Speakers, drawn from member societies (including the CHC), will discuss the contribution of the several traditions to Birmingham and the West Midlands. The CHC magazine editor hopes to attend and commends this conference to you.

The archivist of the Congregational Union of Scotland, Rev. Dr. William D.McNaughton, has recently published a detailed record of the Congregational ministers of Scotland. It is described as "a labour of love" and of "considerable scholarship" and contains outline lives of over 2500 pastors, preachers and teachers. At £35 + £3 p and p, The Scottish Congregational Ministry: 1794-1993, 520pp, is available from the CUS, PO Box 189, Glasgow, G1 2BX.

Some of you will recall the International Congregational Fellowship Meetings which were held at Bangor, Gwynedd, north Wales in July 1981. One of the more controversial speakers there was the former US Congressman, Walter Judd, who died

on February 13th 1994 in Mitcheville, Maryland aged 95. Judd, a loyal Republican, was fiercely opposed to the Communist regime in China. He was the son of devout parents and had an early ambition to be a missionary. In 1925 he achieved this aim when, after qualifying as a doctor, he was sent by the Congregationalists to Nanking. He encountered bandits in China and suffered 46 serious bouts of malaria before returning to the USA. He was in China again 1934-8, being present when the Japanese captured his mission hospital and remaining some months there during the occupation. Subsequently in the USA, he campaigned to awaken the Americans from isolationism. In 1942 he was elected to Congress and in time became one of the most admired among right-wing American politicians.

You may also have heard the BBC Radio 4 programme on Alfred Sadd, the LMS missionary who was killed by the Japanese in 1942. "Missing Believed Immortal" was broadcast only a short time after Bill Ashley Smith's article on "Cambridge Congregationalism in the 1930s" appeared in our last issue. Curiously the programme's presenter, June Knox Mawer, managed to narrate Sadd's story without mentioning his Congregational adherence even once.

Our secretary, Colin Price, has written enthusiastically of a recent lecture given by Prof Frank Thistlethwaite, the first Vice-Chancellor of the University of East Anglia, about the migration of Cambridge university men to New England in the early 17th century. These 'adventurers', through the Massachusetts Bay Company, provided the capital for the 'planters' - see a previous 'News and Views' on this topic. John Winthrop, a religious refugee, was among those providing venture capital although he also turned planter. He took with him to the colonies the company's royal charter so that the settlement should be governed immediately by its officers. Thistlethwaite, a leading historian of America, commented, "This is the first and arguably the most momentous document in American constitutional law". From it came a self-governing colony and eventually the independent USA.

Marion Beales recommends two books on the Waldensians, You Are my Witnesses: The Waldensians across 800 Years (Turin 1989) by G. Tourn and others and The Waldensians: The First Protestants (1990) edited by R. Cowhig and R. Cranfield. Tourn's book incorporates translations of his 1981 revision of I Valdesi, G. Bouchard's chapter on the Waldensians in Argentina and Uruguay, and G. Spini's chapter on post-war Methodist experiences in Italy. This is "an action-adventure story which the reader will not leave on a coffee table for long", she writes. Cranfield and Cowhig's little book is based on a lecture given by Cranfield in Durham and stresses the 19th century links with England. Both books are available from Dr Ruth Cowhig, URC Waldensian Fellowship, 21 Priory Road, Sale, Cheshire, M33 2BS.

Friends of the C.H.C. will be saddened to learn of the death of Geoffrey Neil Sheppard who suffered from cancer of the pancreas and died, aged 48, last autumn. 'Joff', a Welshman, lived at Bridgwater in Somerset for many years. He and his wife, Margaret, became members of North Street Congregational Church, Taunton which they missed greatly when they moved to Surrey a few years ago. Both Joff and Margaret regularly came on the C.H.C. chapel crawls. Our prayers and sympathy are for Margaret and their daughters, Susan and Jane.

CHAPEL CRAWL 1993

Inspired by the 400th anniversary of the martyrdoms of Henry Barrow, John Greenwood and John Penry, the chapel crawl took in some history of the late Elizabethan period. Within a very small part of Southwark, in the shadow of what is now the cathedral and right by the Thames, we wound our way through narrow streets dominated by towering former warehouses. Cars, of course, are almost totally banished from this area, so it is easy to imagine oneself back in time. The market at the Borough claims to be the oldest fruit and vegetable market in London, dating from the 13th century, though not on this exact site. We began at Southwark Cathedral where we saw the tomb of John Harvard (born 1607), who founded the university in New England.

In recent years, some of the warehouses have been carefully demolished, laying bare the ruins, with a beautiful rose window, of the former palace of the Bishops of Winchester (whose diocese until the turn of the century extended as far as Southwark). Walking west from there along the winding alleys we soon arrived at the site of the Clink prison where Barrow and Greenwood and many other early Separatists were imprisoned. Emerging onto the quayside itself, we were very near the construction site for the replica Globe Theatre, visible through the hoardings. The Elizabethan-style wooden O structure is taking shape nicely, despite the recent death of Sam Wanamaker, whose dream it was to reconstruct Shakespeare's Globe. Just along the cobbled street from there is the tall narrow house where Catherine of Aragon lived briefly, and, in the next century, Sir Christopher Wren, from where he had an excellent view of the newly rising St Paul's Cathedral. The house next door, grander by far, is occupied now by the Provost of Southwark Cathedral and, between the two houses, lies Cardinal Cap Alley, hardly wider than two people yet surely typical of many alleys in the Elizabethan era. Moving up onto Southwark Bridge we saw the excavations of the Rose Theatre under a construction site, opposite the smart new offices of The Financial Times.

Our last call was to follow the Old Kent Road, for many centuries one of the main highways of England, as far as Penry St which marks the place where John Penry was martyred. How unlikely it is that any of the residents of this part of London has any idea who John Penry was or of his importance?

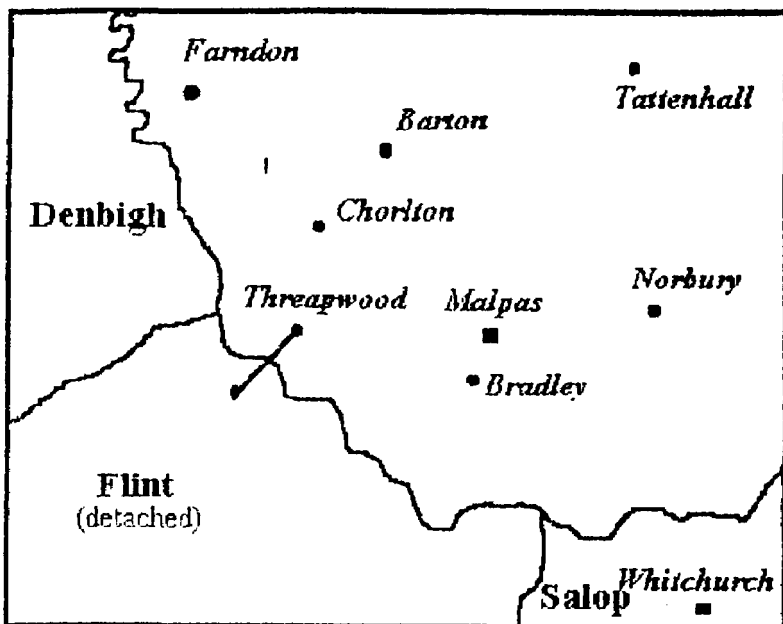
E.C.Denwood.

THE THREAPWOOD STORY

The medieval parishes of Cheshire were very large in size, with one dominant village in which stood the parish church and many - sometimes twenty or more - outlying townships with no place of worship. If in addition the parish was overwhelmingly rural in character and lay alongside or even across county boundaries the sense of isolation and freedom from control could be very strong indeed. Such was the case with Threapwood in the extreme south-west of Cheshire, an extra-parochial liberty partly in Cheshire and partly in Flint. The name itself means 'disputed wood'(1) ie. disputed between two shires, and a traveller reported in 1773 that the place was really in no county, parish town or hamlet at all, no land taxes or rates were payable and no sheriff or constable or J.P. had jurisdiction therein. Certainly this 'forgottenness' was a source of pride and profit. Names such as Frontier House, Holy Land and Paradise Brook suggest an idyllic way of life.

Conditions here were ripe for the growth of radical nonconformity, though, oddly enough, the first Congregational lodgement was secured in Malpas itself which was planted from Chester in 1814, a church being founded seven years later. Another thrust of evangelistic activity came through the efforts of Thomas Hitchin, a disciple of the great Cheshire evangelist Job Wilson who planted Tattenhall in 1810 and Barton in 1816. The Malpas church enjoyed the powerful ministry of the Rev H Birch (1828-34) and it was during his pastorate that missionary work was extended to Threapwood in 1833. In June of that year the upper room of an unoccupied malt kiln was taken at a rental of £1 a year. A congregation of about fifty was quickly gathered, together with a Sunday School of a similar number. Threapwood obviously liked round numbers, for in July 1850 a room known as 'The Wood Chapel' was erected for £120, to seat 120 persons. The work had progressed slowly: by this date average attendances of sixty were being reported.

Threapwood was worked jointly with Malpas, and very generous subventions from the County Union, one of whose 'stations' or 'aided churches' it became. F.J. Powicke remarks a propos these south-west Cheshire churches (2) that the Union was



prepared to be particularly generous, as it recognised that they lay in wholly agricultural districts where bad harvests and social or ecclesiastical influence could militate against success or even survival. It is interesting to note that the minutes of the Malpas church show that the pastor in the later 19th century enjoyed a special perk in addition to his stipend - a pony and trap to convey him to Threapwood and back.

In the year 1874, a date when unusually the membership at Threapwood was actually larger than that at Malpas, a new, enlarged freehold church was erected on the site of the 1850 building. By this date a Congregational layman of wealth, industry and great generosity was beginning to make his mark on the local scene. Mr Thomas Huxley of Malpas came from a family well-known in the farming, wheelwrighting and building life of the community. Not only did Mr Huxley give generously to Malpas and Threapwood: he founded at his own expense several new churches. Norbury Common, a very remote spot, was planted in 1868: this too received considerable help from the County Union. Bradley where cottage meetings had been held since 1851 was presented with its neat, Gothic-style chapel in 1891.(3) The Rock, Farndon, had been founded two years earlier (4) and cottage meetings in Chorlton Lane, mainly for children's work, were similarly encouraged, though premises were not erected here till

five years after Mr Huxley's death. The latter which occurred on August 11th 1903 was a severe blow not only to Congregationalism but also to the Free and Primitive Methodists to whom he was similarly well disposed.

Malpas, Threapwood, Norbury, Bradley and Chorlton formed a neat circuit of churches, the first two customarily linked, the other three less intimately associated with their two sisters of older foundation. From the 1890s in fact the Congregational Year Book often records them as under 'lay agency', or as 'supplied'. That all five churches were maintaining a vigorous witness during the Edwardian period is shown by the returns of 1912: Malpas 49 members plus 43 children, Threapwood 40 members and 35 children, Bradley 20 members and 35 children, Chorlton no members but 45 children, Norbury 12 members and 50 children.

The First World War imposed strains on the relationship between Malpas and Threapwood, and after 1918 the two causes went their separate ways. Threapwood brought the three smaller chapels within its orbit, and secured the services of a number of very energetic lay pastors - Mr L Everett from 1919 to 1935, Mr J.A.Hopwood (actually a retired minister) from 1938 to 1940, and Mr E.T.Griffiths from 1941 till his death in 1955. Conditions now were becoming difficult. By 1939 Threapwood and Chorlton Lane had only 23 members between them, Bradley and Norbury a mere ten. Somehow they all survived the Second World War and into the 1950s, but thereafter decline was rapid. Threapwood and Bradley bravely held on, largely thanks to the faithful service of lay preachers, Congregational and Methodist alike. Those who took services still recall being rewarded for their labours with gifts of eggs, fruit, potatoes etc. Chorlton and Norbury were lost however, the former closing in 1956, the latter ten years later.

Malpas, Threapwood and Bradley, with 31,5 and 12 members respectively, were all confronted in 1972 with the painful choice as to whether their future lay inside or outside the new United Reformed Church. All three chose differently. Malpas, after changing its collective mind at least twice, eventually chose the UR option. It is now a joint URC/Methodist church, the one free church in what is still a very Anglican parish,(5) though the Methodists now far outnumber the surviving Reformed element. Bradley decided to become an unaffiliated church, which it remains to this day, though unusually it appears on the Methodist circuit plan (as had Norbury for its last few years) and appears also to accept the pastoral oversight of the Methodist minister. Threapwood opted for the Congregational Federation. It was now in a rather weakened state subsisting largely on the income from hiring out its premises for local community functions. Services ended in the early 1980s, and the building was sold and converted

for domestic use in 1988. This caused some local resentment on the part of the villagers who regarded it as 'their' hall. Unfortunately it was simply too remote and its congregation too aged and scattered to sustain a viable church presence any longer. Bradley alone and in somewhat unusual circumstances continues to hold up the banner of Congregationalism in this remote area.(6)

Ian Sellers.

- 1) J.McN. Dodgson The Place Names of Cheshire (1972) 61.
- 2) F.J.Powicke A History of the Cheshire County Union of Congregational Churches (1907) 134 f.
- 3) Bradley Congregational Chapel Centenary Souvenir Handbook (Bradley,1991)
- 4) The United Reformed Church, Rock Chapel, Farndon. Centenary Souvenir (Farndon, 1989).
- 5) Malpas will be forever associated with Bishop Heber of "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" fame.
- 6) I am greatly indebted to the Revs Ian Latto, Nigel Lemon and Harold Swindells for help in writing this paper.

REVD MURIEL OLYMPIA PAULDEN MA (1892-1975)

HER LIFE AND WORK IN TOXTETH, LIVERPOOL

Early Life

Muriel Paulden was born in Knaresborough, north Yorkshire. Here in a terrace house on the south side of the High Street her paternal great-grandfather and successive generations of Pauldens and their servants had lived. Here also, next door to their wines and spirits shop, and next door to 'The Vaults' - her father's public house - Muriel was born to Florence Olympia and Henry Morley Paulden on 2nd February 1892. The last of six children, Muriel was presented, shortly after birth, to the assembled siblings by the nurse saying, "This will be the blossom of the family". Next morning at breakfast, her brother enquired, "Well, nurse, how's the blossom?" and for the rest of her life Muriel was known to the family as 'Bloss'.(1)

The Pauldens had built up a thriving victualler's business and owned more than half the properties in their part of the High Street. They also had workshops and stables in Back Lane. Muriel was only three when her father died. He had colonic cancer, and consulted an eminent surgeon in Leeds who carried out a laparotomy and colectomy. Henry Morley died 22 hours after surgery.

Apart from infant baptisms at St John's and Holy Trinity churches, there are no records of any Paulden attending a Knaresborough church or chapel. Nor did Muriel or her brothers, sisters or cousins attend the Grammar School nearby. Grandfather Henry Morton, who lived above The Vaults, died in 1900 and her mother sold the pub, warehouses and licensee business to Ind Coope and Co. Muriel may have had a private governess. In adult life she never spoke of her mother, nor of Knaresborough, though she particularly loved Yorkshire and holidayed with friends in Ilkley and Leeds. It seems likely that much of her early life was spent in the homes of two of her mother's married sisters. Aunt Ann was married to Dr Walter Grogono and they had six children paralleling in ages the six Paulden children. They lived in Stratford, near Leytonstone, Essex, where Muriel's mother died in 1904.

The nature and whereabouts of Muriel's schooling, probably somewhere in Essex 1900-04, aged 8-12 years, is not known. In 1904 her eldest brother Henry Morton was well established as a gas engineer, brother Walter Cecil had emigrated to New Zealand, one sister was working in Germany and another in Scotland, when it was decided to send her to a boarding school. Her family chose a select ladies day and boarding school at Hunstanton-on-sea, Norfolk. This was Rhianva College, a large

house situated on Cliff Parade. In 1904 it was described as “newly erected with perfect sanitary arrangements and very pleasantly located facing the sea, being two minutes’ walk from the beach” having “a school orchestra, library, paper club, debating society, tennis club, swimming club and a spacious and beautifully sheltered playing field for cricket, tennis, hockey and a bicycle house”.

In her early years there she counted the days for each term to end. During her fourth year she enjoyed a visit from her eldest sister on vacation from British Columbia. A year later (1909) she passed the London Matriculation Examination and obtained in 1911 the Intermediate BA Certificate in English Language and Literature, History, Latin and Greek. At Rhianva Sundays were special. Two crocodiles of uniformed young ladies walked to church, both mornings and evenings. One went to Union Church, the other to St Edmund’s (Anglican) Church. Miss Paulden strongly disliked the hour at St Edmund’s and therefore tried the Union Church. The college principal, Mrs Hackney, known to the girls as “Hattie”, was a member of Union Church and, unless parents expressed a firm opinion, their children went to it. It was a spiritual home for folk of many denominations in Hunstanton and was led by the authority of the church meeting. Thus from its foundation the Baptist-Congregational principle of churchmanship was the chief element in the church’s life.(2) Union always had a “succession of people” who cared that children should hear the story of God’s love in Christ. Muriel and her friend, Edna Thompson, were influenced and challenged. They continued for the next two years to attend Union after Richard Cliff’s retirement when James Amos MA was minister.(3)

Despite her early feelings about boarding-school life, Muriel Paulden accepted a post on Rhianva’s staff before her 21st birthday teaching English. During this time she accepted Christ as her Saviour, and felt a call to teach and preach the Gospel to the outcast in India. Rhianva College took in many children whose parents worked overseas and there is little doubt that Muriel was well-informed about the extremes of life in India and was concerned about the plight of its people. Before long she was learning the ancient language of the Hindus.

Carey Hall Days

Miss Paulden began her two years of training as a missionary in September 1915 . At 23, she was the youngest of 25 students entering Carey Hall, a united Missionary Training College newly planted in Selly Oak, Birmingham. The college, opened in 1912 and originally an old manor house with grounds, was close to three existing colleges - Woodbrooke (Society of Friends, for religious, social and international study), Kingswood (Methodist Missionary training) and Westhill (youth

and Sunday School teacher training) - the group forming a kind of Christian university. Her fellow students at Carey Hall included Danish and Belgian refugees installed as guests and paid for by British friends.

The students' scheme of study was wide-ranging. In addition to the usual Biblical and theological subjects(including Greek and Hebrew) there were short courses for those going to Africa, India or China, miscellaneous courses on linguistics and phonetics , mid-wifery and general hygiene, singing and story-telling as well as a start being made on the necessary Urdu, Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali, Mandarin etc. All students shared in the running of a play centre held in Carey Hall gardens and in a hay field in the summer and in a small mission room in the winter.

Of great influence on Muriel Paulden was the teaching and example of the resident staff - principal, Miss Christina Irvine from Birkenhead and vice-principals, Miss Mary Maxwell from Liverpool and Miss Margaret Cook MA. Miss Irvine taught Clarke's "Outlines of Christian Theology" and prepared students for their part in regular women's meetings at Dawlish Road (where they gave addresses) and also for work with the YWCA. At morning prayers she gave short devotional talks and the students chose their own line of thought for evening prayer. Home visits were frequently made by the students in connection with the play centre and cottage meetings. Consequently lasting friendships were formed and many Selly Oak folk returned the calls, paid by students, and a new interest was brought into lives whose outlook had previously been bounded by the streets of Birmingham. Carey Hall awoke not only a personal interest but also a theological, as shown by a friend's remark when told the college really belonged to three societies. "It's just like the Trinity then, three societies under one roof".(4)

At that time, 1915, the college was under the auspices of the Baptist Missionary Society, the Women's Missionary Association of the Presbyterian Church of England, and the London Missionary Society - which accepted Muriel Paulden as its prospective missionary. But from the start Carey Hall accepted candidates for work with other sponsors such as the Methodist Missionary Society, the Welsh Missionary Association, and the Colonial Missionary Society. Also thanks to the War, the professors and students of Westminster College, Cambridge were compelled to leave their home and the Woodbrooke Council gave hospitality to them. Professors Oman and Anderson Scott threw open most of their lectures to students of Carey Hall. Years later Oman's lectures on theology and Anderson Scott's' on Paulinism, the Apocalypse and the Holy Spirit were still remembered with gratitude. Other teachers at Woodbrooke introduced Miss Paulden to the thoughts and writings of Rendel Harris (1852-1941), the famous Quaker teacher and archaeologist. His teaching that the

Christian life is to be joyous she accepted and lived. To appreciate the success of the principal's aim for Muriel and her fellow students it is worth quoting her. "Our aim", she said, "is to provide such conditions as will conduce to the development of a fully consecrated personality such as can only be attained in and through Jesus Christ: to help the ordinary girl to become a woman of vision.....to foster in her a self-reliance that is God-reliance and will fit her to meet any situation wisely".(5)

In June 1917, the college notice board listed the graduates' names and destinations. Headed "Allocation of students - to sail as soon as possible", the LMS list showed all three candidates: Dorothy Wyon, Shanghai, China; Muriel O Paulden, Bellary, India; Nellie Creese, Peking, China. Aware of her calling since her teens and now appointed by the LMS to go to Bellary in Karnataka, south India she had in her mind, if not in practice, packed her bags when the news came that she was considered medically unfit. On the grounds of a minor degree of kyphosis (hunchback) she was turned down, suspected of inadequate strength for the job. An avalanche had slipped, blocking the path of a lifestream which simply had to find another way.(6)

Muriel had made many friends at Selly Oak, especially "Dave", Miss E.B.Davies bound for China the following year, and Barbara Simpson off to China in 1920. In this dark summer Carey Hall was a sheet anchor enabling her to see that ministry and mission were still possible. With no immediate family at hand, it was a relief to find that "mother Carey", as the principal was known, wanted her to continue her studies. "Paul", as she was to her closest friends, had still much to gain from Selly Oak and was happy to find herself in September 1917 one of 11 returning students, 6 of whom would have sailed if possible in wartime.

Carey Hall students attended a week of intensive social study. Visits were made to homes, the Salvation Army, those under the Board of Governors, the children's Courts, a workhouse and a Shaftesbury Society girls' hostel. Any feeling Muriel Paulden may have had that her destination was among the poor at home was strengthened by this week's study. In spring 1918 the vice-principal's health broke down. She took 6 months leave and Muriel was asked to remain at Carey Hall to help Miss Irvine. It was later reported that she "rendered valuable assistance in the oversight of practical work and in taking ... some.... classes". (7) Muriel was anxious to fit herself for a pastoral and teaching ministry, so she continued at Carey Hall, completing a further two year course in Biblical theology and education. A student's success was judged through on-going assessments by both fellow students and the college staff. Her double course was a unique qualification but too unorthodox for recognition on the List B grade of Congregational Union of England and Wales ministers in October 1922.

In her last year at Carey Hall, Miss Irvine invited Muriel to join the college staff as an assistant. She undertook special work on the Old Testament, did some tutoring and helped in the organisation of the social work studies. The minutes of the House meetings record she took part in tennis, cricket, and netball and helped arrange concerts for wounded soldiers. All students were required to help in the garden and in the cultivation of the college field for vegetables. In spite of an anatomical deviation from normal, the young woman was beginning to show she had more than adequate reserves of physical and mental energy.

Superintendent and Teacher: Christian Training Centre

In a testimony to Muriel Paulden who had just been invited to initiate a new project on Merseyside, the principal of Carey Hall wrote, "The thing which fits her best for the work is her personality and power of getting in touch with all sorts and conditions of people and ages, also her perfectly fearless way of tackling difficulties, intellectual or otherwise". It was spring 1919 and the Merseyside Congregational Council had decided to reopen their church buildings in Berkley Street, Liverpool 8, for the formation and development of a training centre. These premises had closed in 1915 for lack of support and were to be the home of a unique experiment in inter-denominational cooperation - a Christian training centre for Sunday School teachers, youth leaders and others. Its formal opening was part of the programme of the Lancashire Congregational Union's spring assembly (March 1920). Supporting the project was the Merseyside Council under the leadership of prominent laymen like James Barnes, F.G.Thomas and F.Fletcher Hunt.(8)

Muriel Paulden knew Christ had called her to this work and she immediately embarked on the arranging of curricula for all the courses, with the help of Miss Margaret K.Scott, a recently retired infant school head teacher with whom she developed a lifelong friendship. Berkley Street centre was to become "a kind of night school" for Biblical studies and for methodology in Christian teaching. Students would have opportunities to gain experience in all the many facets of church work including nursery school, youth work, Sunday School and leading worship. It was all available at the cost of 5 shillings a year and free to members of Congregational churches and to teachers in schools affiliated to the Liverpool Sunday School Union.(9)

The course was planned in 3 terms of 11 weeks each, and work was done in small groups, and all students were graded as far as possible to meet their individual needs. Miss Paulden gave lectures within two 60 minute sessions (6.30-7.30, 7.45-8.45) on 4 evenings a week. At the beginning of the second year (September 1921), a fifth evening was added to the timetable, a Monday group which for its first few years met

at Newtown, St Helen's. All students were required to send in their session notes at the end of each term for examination, and to produce the necessary recommendations for their practical work from their own churches. At the end of the second year (June 1922) the question of future expansion and finance was addressed by the Liverpool and District Congregational Young People's Council. This body, chaired by James Barnes of Crosby, set up a permanent fund for donations and canvassed subscribers in aid of the training centre. In order to develop a corporate spirit, united meetings were held during the year - in September before the term opened, old and new students met together for a day in the open, the annual ramble. In January, all met together for a united evening communion and dedication service. Periodic conferences were also held.

In 1928, a remarkable editorial in the Liverpool Echo denied the instability of modern youth, and confidently stated "No other city in England can show a place like Berkley Street, where 100 young men and maidens are prepared to undertake a course of study, extending over 4 years, in order that they may be fitted for voluntary service in the churches". Over the years many teachers and ministers received their first taste of higher education from Muriel Paulden. For those who otherwise would have had no opportunity to engage in higher education Berkley Street was "our university".

Miss Paulden frequently expressed her appreciation of the voluntary assistance of Margaret Scott of Chadwick Mount, and of her own assistant Margaret Bradley. In 1931 she had the added cooperation of Miss Crossett of Toxteth, Miss Davenport of Crosby and Mr Alwyn Pritchard of Martins Lane, whose training at the centre over 5 or 6 years enabled them to act as deputies to Miss Paulden. The developing organisations of Berkley Street church gladly cooperated with the centre by providing opportunities for students to relate theory to practice. Placements with other Merseyside churches were also introduced.

By 1940 about a thousand students from Lancashire and Cheshire had completed more than one year's training. From time to time Miss Paulden held one-off short courses and revision classes were started for those taking examinations for the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in Divinity, or for the London University Certificate in Religious Knowledge. Other classes included public speaking, introduction to N.T. Greek, and some social psychology. The writer recalls being introduced to Christian psychology versus Freudian theory (when the subject was new to university courses). Miss Paulden's personal concern for every student ensured the success of Berkley Street's Training Centre. Alongside her teaching went great patience. She had time for anyone who really wanted to know. Early on a lay preachers' course had started with five young men enrolled. A minister from

Merseyside was nominated as tutor but, after two weeks, he reported to Miss Paulden that none would make lay preachers and to continue would be a waste of time. Miss Paulden took over the class and, of the five, one became a minister, one a missionary, one a missionary doctor, and another a lay preacher.

At the end of World War 2, student numbers were down to 50 attending lectures etc on 3 or 4 evenings a week. From 1947 onwards the groups were held in St Paul's House and the average attendance that year was noted as "exceedingly good". In 1948 Fletcher Hunt reported "Since the Training Centre commenced in 1920 we have expended £21,416 on this Merseyside experiment.....We shall be moved to fresh efforts to serve the young people growing up in our city and hope that by the blessing of God we shall accomplish the work to which we have set our hands". In 1951 an appeal was made to former students and others to help towards the cost of restoring the war-damaged Berkley St property. The appeal stated "It is a matter of pride to us all that during the past 30 years over 2000 young men and women, trained under the leadership of Revd Muriel Paulden MA, have beyond measure strengthened the life of our Sunday Schools and Churches". By this time most of the Centre's courses had closed for it had become clear during the war that an end to the project was in sight.

In 1945 Miss Paulden had addressed the Lancashire Congregational Union. "We began with the idea of training teachers. We thought of organisation methods and these have their place and function, they are channels through which the living water flows--- but only channels. It is the treasure, the living water we must put first. We have todrink of this fountain of living water which comes to us through the Bible and through our fellowship of God in Christ." Earlier that year she had started a weekly lay-preachers course for young people over 16, several of whom later sat the CUEW lay preachers examination. In her "Foundations" address to the Lancashire County Union she boldly proposed, "It seems to me the time is ripe for launching out into a new venture, a new field, particularly for women". However let us first look at the church at Berkley St.

Minister, Pastor and Friend: Berkley Street Church

An impressive Victorian Gothic building with adjacent steepled tower, Berkley St Congregational Church was located where Berkley St met Upper Hill St. It was situated within the boundary of Princes Park, Liverpool 8, and between Toxteth and Granby St, bordering on Liverpool's inner-city. Within 500 metres there were eleven places of worship.(10) Built in 1857, the church thrived in the Victorian era, especially during the ministry of Thomas Keyworth. Elegant houses, built on profits

from the slave trade, the homes of cotton merchants, traders, and others rich enough to have 2 or 3 servants, lined each side of Berkley St. During the Edwardian period their inhabitants began to move outside the city and the houses were divided into flats. These housed almost all the families to whom Miss Paulden ministered in the inter-war years.(11)

The sanctuary was large and oblong with a gallery on three sides. It was one storey above ground level and was approached by a stone staircase, which went on up to a bell tower. At the east end stood a central high-platformed pulpit; on each side below it were doors to small vestries, to organ and to hall below; while at the gallery level was a handsomely cased organ and console with bench and space for a small choir. At the west end a section of the then unused public worship space was heavily curtained off and furnished with comfortable chairs, bookcase, dark blue felted-top table and a harmonium. It became known as the Bible Room.

When Miss Paulden arrived in May 1919 to view it, the whole place, closed since January 1915, was in a sorry state of disrepair. Within a few months she had the hall and rooms refurbished and the deterioration halted. An early key appointment was that of caretaker/cleaner/stoker. Arthur and Edith Cottrell did this job for over 20 years. Boiler stoking was most important as the premises were used most mornings and evenings and competed with the public houses nearby. Miss Paulden found lodgings at 85 Upper Hill St, less than 40 yards away, and among the first church members was Archie Gill, a window cleaner who had had a fearful accident with his nose and wore a shield over it, who lived at 79.

One afternoon a week M.O.P.(her nickname to Berkley St members) walked to the University to do postgraduate study in Hebrew and Egyptian history. After 2 academic years she had no time for this luxury but she loved the Hebrew scriptures and in 1922 spent 3 weeks in Palestine to see for herself--- as she put it. Much later M.O.P. resumed her studies at the University --- Hebrew, Egyptian, Assyrian and Babylonian history, with a research dissertation on "The Hebrew conquest of Canaan", for which in June 1931she gained her Master of Arts degree. The following month her sister Jessie arrived from Canada with her daughter Joan. They had not seen each other for 20 years. Joan was to stay for 5 years studying entomology on a small grant and holiday earnings. She came to Liverpool for the University and because Aunt Bloss was there "to keep an eye on her". She was a welcome companion to those at Berkley St who enjoyed the outings and rambles in the Wirral.

In 1927 M.O.P. moved into a flat near the Women's Hospital, 109b Bedford St South, living there until 1932 when she rented more spacious accommodation in

Upper Canning St. In the early 1930s Liverpool had many families on "parish relief" and infant mortality rates were among the highest in the country. M.O.P. suggested to the City Corporation that the skimmed milk which was poured down the drains by the dairies might be given to children in the schools. the idea was unacceptable. Many families resorted to the second-hand clothes shop and Berkley St was fortunate in having Leah's opposite. Mrs Leah Copeland was a popular church helper. Despite the difficulties Miss Paulden ministered to a very happy fellowship. On occasions to save embarrassment the collection during Sunday worship was not taken up but a plate was provided on leaving the church.

Church Beginnings and membership growth

In 1920, six months after starting the Training Centre, M.O.P. invited several students and friends to join her for Sunday worship and from this regular services developed (in the Bible Reading Room on Sunday evenings). In 1921 the church roll was re-opened and on Sunday, 7 May 1922 three men and four women professed their faith in Jesus Christ and committed themselves to the work and worship at Berkley St. Thus the buildings "became again the centre of a church fellowship for the neighbourhood".(12) The dual tasks of teaching and administering the Training Centre and ministering to a local congregation were clearly beyond the capacity of any one person, so the Lancashire Congregational Union authorised the appointment in 1921 of a full-time assistant, Margaret Sarah Bradley B.A. of Dover.(13)

On 8 October 1922 M.O.P., Margaret Bradley, Doris Hamer and Fletcher Hunt were admitted to church membership. After the service a meeting for members was held in which an act of recognition and commitment (ordination) took place. According to Ena Staidler, a founder member, this ordination was judged effective when the whole church of 11 members applauded the words of their representative, Fletcher Hunt (acting church secretary and treasurer), who said to M.O.P., "We invite you" to be "our minister, pastor and teacher". No more formal ordination service was ever held.(14) Muriel Paulden thus became "the first woman minister in Lancashire" although she thought the spiritual leader was not different from the members but was set apart for leading and enabling. Church meetings following that communion service were held sporadically until Easter 1924 when it was decided to hold the church meeting on the Wednesday preceding the first Sunday of the month.(15)

In the 1920s and '30s about three-quarters of the membership attended the church meetings. From 11 founders in 1922, church membership rose to 54 in 1930 and to 108 in 1936, with 19 under the age of 21. For the next 4 years numbers remained around 110, with over 120 attending the Sunday evening service. In the mid-1930s the morning service became popular, the gallery being used for the festivals

when nearly 300 adults and children attended. The church's growth was the result of the immense effort of Muriel Paulden. She inspired great loyalty and communicated enthusiasm. For example she took some of her own members to worship at Knotty Ash Congregational Church on Sunday mornings because this church was without a minister and Berkley St had only an evening service at this time. Similarly she put some work into the re-opening of the Congregational Church at Seacombe, Wirral, inviting families to witness there, after crossing the Mersey by ferry with her. She helped many local Sunday schools, like Crosby and Woolton, often taking younger church members with her. Such outreach brightened the lives of those sharing the work and contributed greatly to the growth in members.(16)

Sunday School and Uniformed Organisations

Two Sunday morning classes for Primary School children (5-8 years) were begun in 1921. From the start Miss Paulden taught, sang, and played with them like a mother. Various helpers came and went, including Margaret Bradley. Within 18 months over 30 children were attending an hour's religious instruction on Sunday afternoons. Wolf Cubs started early in 1922 and to begin with M.O.P. was "Akela". In 1925 a Boy Scout troop was started and later Girl Guides and Brownies began. All the Sunday School children were encouraged to join the uniformed organisations. During the period 1923-25 M.O.P. persuaded a number of Liverpool University girls to help in the Sunday School and with the Cubs and Brownies. From 1924 onwards the uniformed organisations all had summer camps which for many children were uniquely rewarding.

In 1927 another teacher lured to Berkley St was Miss E. Maisie Williams of Orrell Park who gave 10 years service to the Middle Sunday School. Margaret Bradley left in September 1927 to go to Mansfield College, Oxford to work for a London BD. Her place was taken by Miss Barbara Simpson, a Wesleyan Methodist originally from Leeds, who had been a fellow student of M.O.P.'s at Carey Hall. She had served as a missionary in China since 1920 and now shared with Miss Paulden the Sunday School teaching and preaching in worship. When she left 2 years later many Berkley St folk accompanied her to the Pier Head and some even boarded the R.M.S. Samaria.

In 1929 Sister Doris Nicholson, a Wesleyan deaconess, came to Liverpool and she was to be M.O.P.'s longest-serving assistant. The church in 1930 had 20 Scouts, 12 Cubs, 16 Guides and 17 Brownies and, in general, there was no shortage of helpers. However at the end of 1937 Doris Nicholson became ill and, after 5 months leave, she felt obliged to resign. In 1924 a mid-week morning nursery was opened by M.O.P with the help of Margaret Scott. It had a definite scheme of religious training through play, song, story and prayer and was one of the first nursery schools in Lancashire. The

mothers were expected to help and to attend church with their babies. M.O.P. later said, "I know of nothing which has been of more value in building up the church".

M.O.P. rated highly the role of music in worship. She led the singing with a pleasant and true voice. Even when less than 12 people attended evening worship she insisted that the harmonium (in the Bible Reading Room) should be played before and during the service and that the singing should be hearty. Later when worship was held in the sanctuary use was made of the Gray and Davison two-manual and pedal pipe organ. Miss Paulden took a special interest in the junior choir, as did Elsie Chamberlain when she came to help in September 1939.

Other groups also met at Berkley St. The Watchers' Prayer Union prayed for all who used the premises. M.O.P.'s regard for the London Missionary Society was high and the Missionary Guild was composed of enthusiasts like her. There was also a Women's Guild of Christian Service with a large membership, a weekly Girls' Club, a Young People's Fellowship, and an evening Recreational Club.

War-Time in Toxteth

A month before the outbreak of World War 2, a new graduate from King's College, London came to work in Liverpool. This was Elsie Dorothea Chamberlain BD, LRAM. Almost immediately many of the Sunday School children were evacuated to homes in the country which M.O.P. and her new assistant then visited to see that they had settled down. But, before March 1940, most had returned and the schools re-opened. Then in September the bombing began. Liverpool suffered almost continuous air attack for 50 nights and many had no sleep for weeks on end. Then came the land-mines and the May 1941 blitz on the dock area, only a little more than a mile from Berkley St. The church and its organisations worked on undeterred.

One church member who later served with the Royal Navy, on the convoys to Russia, recalls the black-out. 'I was carrying a large jug of hot milk, others had containers of black tea, black coffee and hot soup. We were set to tour the air-raid shelters in the Windsor St area. As we all trooped out of the church with quite a heavy raid in progress, there was the sound of a land-mine descending with a faulty parachute. We could hear the loose 'chute flapping, and it seemed directly overhead. One of us shouted, "Get down", an order she (M.O.P.) immediately countermanded with "Don't you dare spill a drop" and she quite deliberately continued and completed our mission. After that she returned to the church to do her fire-watching stint. She certainly put heart into us all that night; never have I seen such bravery under fire.'(17)

M.O.P. knew and taught the security of God's presence with us. A prayer room, open morning and evening, was devised by furnishing a disused entrance hall

behind the Reading Room. She also knew the value of a change of scene especially for those with children. She took over a large house in Llandegla, N.Wales for six weeks, during which families and young adults went for a week at a time to enjoy a very economical holiday. In the summers of 1940 and 1941, camping activities were well organised by Miss Paulden and Miss Chamberlain whether it was making beds by filling sack palliasses with hay, cooking, washing up or prayers. M.O.P. continued for many years with this annual event, taking children to Llangollen, Parkgate, Prestatyn, and Blackpool. Leaving Berkley St in November 1941, Miss (now Rev) E.D.Chamberlain answered a call to the Congregational church in Friern Barnet, London to begin her long career.

Her place was taken for 7 months only by Rev John Cook, an ex-student of the Training Centre and of Yorkshire United College, Bradford. During his term the church's 20th anniversary services in May 1942 were well supported.(18) During the war M.O.P. determined to keep each of the church's young men and women in uniform in touch with Berkley St. Also she upheld each of them in prayer to the Lord between 9 and 10am every morning. About the middle of each month, beginning in March 1940, she posted a duplicated letter to those in the forces or the Land Army. 5 years later, on 14th August, one day before VJ day, she composed the last and 66th issue. Each was a gem of encouragement. Many recollect how they looked forward to receiving the 'fellowship letter' but, as one man said, "The letters were fine but I always read the bit at the end first". Each letter concluded with a hand written personal note to each of her "boys and girls".

In spite of many being on war service, Sunday worship was well attended and the Sunday School expanded. The Sunday School Festival held in 1943 had the help of M.O.P.'s assistant, Miss Winifred Saunders from Bournemouth, and 170 young people attended. M.O.P. gave pastoral care to soldiers in the local barracks and organised an allocation of rations from the Ministry of Food. She opened a canteen at Warwick St which for 4 years was staffed nightly 5-10.30pm and on Sundays 8.30-10.30pm. In previous years troops, living in a transit camp opposite the church, had used the church's schoolrooms for table tennis, billiards and letter writing.

Throughout the war Miss Paulden regularly visited the children who had, often for the second time, been evacuated. She also visited the sick and elderly and many testify to the help she gave to teenagers in trouble with the police, those with money problems and anxiety, and the unemployed. She herself found relaxation through travel and walking holidays in the Lake District, often with Joan, her niece. In September 1944 she spent a full week away, having preached every Sunday for the

previous 5 years. The last of her wartime colleagues was Jessie Elaine Plowright who arrived from Carey Hall and stayed 3 months before sailing for South India.(19)

In 1945 M.O.P. was honoured by her election to the chair of the Lancashire Congregational Union. She was the first and only woman to receive this honour and had to travel about the county union territory which included Cumberland and Westmorland, and to preach away at least once a month. When away, her place was taken by a student, Mr J.H.E. Hull BA of the Lancashire Congregational College, Manchester. Also in 1945 Miss Paulden shared with her fellow ministers at the Blackpool L.C.U. assembly her plans for an academy for missionaries. 6 months later the aptly named St Paul's House was founded. (20)

Post-War Ministry at Berkley St

The post-war years were ones of change and new organisations were started. Old faces were welcomed home and the prevailing mood of indecision was countered by Miss Paulden's faith and hope. A boys' club (including a football team) was opened for those not in the Cubs or the Scouts. Eventually the church called the Rev J.Norman Battersby of Tatton St Church, Manchester to be the assistant minister but in July 1946 the church buildings were condemned as unsafe because of bomb damage.(21) 2 years later the church moved to share the premises of the conservative evangelical City Temple. In this temporary home the church benefited from much practical work given by St Paul's House students. The students were invited to become associate members of Berkley St. Building reconstruction work began in May 1948 and was completed nearly 2 years later so that the members returned to Berkley St in March 1950.

Norman Battersby, the last of M.O.P.'s ministerial colleagues, left Berkley St in 1953 to help with a church in Tasmania. In 1954 M.O.P. and Joan, her niece, and Alice Platts enjoyed a fortnight's holiday in Switzerland. Joan recalled her aunt was still capable of long walks but was slowing down on the steeper hills. About this time the missionary fervour at Berkley St began to wane. Former deacons, church officers, lay preachers etc left for other parts. The congregation, always drawn from a wide spectrum of humanity, began to dwindle. In July 1955 the average number at the evening service was about 50.

St Paul's House Community 1946-65

During 1944-45 M.O.P. visited many churches and saw the problems caused by the war. The need for trained Christian leadership was clear. "We need", she wrote "women who are ready to give themselves to the Home Field as for the last 150

years they have given themselves to the Foreign. I am thinking of a lay ministry, a community, women who would live together, train for service, and then be ready to go out to the churches as they are needed". M.O.P. believed young women might welcome the challenge if training for this work could be found, ie. training "not overloaded with theological lore". (22)

She was offered spacious accommodation at a nominal rent by Robert Smith, a prominent Methodist, and manager of a carpet shop in Liverpool. 10 Sunnyside, Devonshire Rd was to be used as a training centre for full time church servants . M.O.P. proposed that training should cover 2 years, aiming at the London University Certificate for proficiency in religious knowledge, and the London Diploma in Theology, but ,alongside this course, students would be required to gain practical experience in church life, pastoral work etc by serving for some months in different churches. From many areas churches applied to M.O.P. for such a student. Although the house could accommodate 10 students, never more than 7 were resident in any one year. At the same time St Paul's House was never able to meet all the demands for workers.

The first 2 students arrived in October 1945 but the official opening of St Paul's House was held in May 1946. Each student was required to do domestic chores and attend morning prayers at 8am. Lectures were from 9am to 1pm on weekdays and students worked in their church placements for 2 afternoons a week. Some students saw life in the house as very strict and monastic, others have happy memories of purposeful energy alongside the disciplined life. Miss Paulden encouraged the students to gain as wide an experience as possible. Some went to a Christian work camp in post-war Germany for instance. At Great George St Congregational Church speakers such as Gladys Aylward and Toyohiko Kagawa were listened to with rapt attention. In the summer the whole community toured a county union area, 'camping' in each district and seeking to understand the life and needs of rural churches. Occasional visits to the theatre were made and a regular pilgrimage to London for the CUEW annual assembly. Retired or returned missionaries sometimes stayed at the house and shared the community life. In 1948-49 4 students had complete charge of the work at Seacombe, starting pilots, a women's meeting, visiting and arranging services with support from M.O.P. and Norman Battersby.(23)

M.O.P. believed a trained woman, a Home Missionary, should stay at a church for up to 3 years, during which its life and witness should be built up and that by then a church would be able to call a full time minister, thus releasing the missionary to answer a request from another church. This did happen, although experience showed that 3 rather than 2 years was needed for training, and often more

than 3 years was needed at the church. The denomination actively supported St Paul's House from the outset. Its management committee had an equal number of representatives from CUEW, the Merseyside Congregational Council, and Berkley St C.C. At present 20 Home Missionaries are still serving up and down the country - 8 are ordained ministers in pastorates, others serve in a lay capacity with their local churches, some have retired. In mid-20th century England there was almost no support, outside the free churches, for training women to lead public worship. M.O.P.'s work was both innovatory and inspiring. The House became "the centre of a community of Home Missionaries with a regular status who..... carried through some excellent work of a pioneering nature" and achieved "real success". (24)

At least 40 churches were served by Home Missionaries trained by Miss Paulden. St Paul's House trained women "primarily for short emergency ministries, and such ministries in newly founded churches, or by way of reviving dying causes, have..... been singularly blessed". After her retirement from Liverpool in 1957 the work continued for 7 years, during which Alice Platts was Warden. The House closed early in 1965. Members were invited to appear before the Ministerial Status Committee of CUEW and most proceeded to ordination. M.O.P. was disappointed but made no public statement on the subject. Some thought there was no longer any immediate need for the ministry she had pioneered as now all theological colleges accepted women for ministerial training. Nevertheless Erik Routley saw the "foundation of St Paul's House" as "one of the historic acts of modern Congregationalism". (25)

After Berkley St

Shortly before her 65th birthday, M.O.P. withdrew from the Berkley St fellowship and she retired from Liverpool. She had lived there for 38 years. In July 1957 she went to stay with her sister, Jessie, and niece, Joan, in Brighton. For 3 years from January 1958 she worked for Christian Aid, visiting refugee centres in India. Then commuting between Brighton and London weekly, she helped at a women's hostel, often staying for long periods before finally retiring from paid work in December 1960. She revisited Liverpool often in the early 60s for reunions. In 1966 M.O.P. moved to Clacton-on-sea, Essex, firstly sharing with her friend Gwen Bush, and then in 1968 moving to a retirement home. In 1971 her health deteriorated noticeably (she was suffering from cerebral atherosclerosis) and she died in 1975 in Heath Hospital, Tendring. At her funeral service in Clacton United Reformed Church Gwen Bush spoke of her as a "pioneer missionary through whom one could very often see Christ".

The Dispersal

After M.O.P. left Berkley St an old friend, Stanley J.Cain, supplied the pulpit.

The active life of the church sadly ended during the ministry of Pastor Arthur C. Whitley BA who was inducted in 1959 and resigned in March 1963. 3 small fellowships, those of Berkley St, Great George St and Toxteth Congregational Church were lovingly cared for by Rev Freda Gerner (a St Paul's House graduate 1949-52) with a view to uniting them. In November 1965 Rev Alwyn Pritchard, a former student of the Training Centre, led a "hail and farewell" service uttering the final blessing before the doors were closed for the last time.

A well attended thanksgiving service for the life and witness of M.O.P. was held on the afternoon of 20th April 1975, by courtesy of Rev Walter Houston at his church in Garston, Liverpool. Tributes were paid by Arthur Aston, representing both Berkley St CC and the Training Centre, by Rev Alice Platts on behalf of St Paul's House, and Rev J. Norman Beard, moderator URC Yorkshire Province on behalf of Lancashire Congregational Union.

Conclusion

M.O.P. was no isolationist but advocated and followed the Congregational Way. In the 1940s she did not favour union with the Presbyterians knowing there was only one English Presbyterian church building for every 8 Congregational ones, yet the proposed basis for union was the Presbyterian, hierarchical, centralised form of church government. M.O.P.'s continued influence may have affected Elsie Chamberlain's position about the United Reformed Church in 1972.

It could be said of M.O.P. that she tried to live a Christian life in which love casts out fear. One Sunday morning, a mother and her young daughter and son accompanied M.O.P. to Knotty Ash CC. They had alighted from a tram and were walking down a (then) country lane towards the church when they came face to face with a herd of cows. The daughter continues the story. "Shielding us and exhorting us not to be afraid, Miss Paulden led the way, holding in front of her the small attache case in which she carried her Bible and gown. Suddenly one cow broke away and headed straight for her, gored her thumb and left a horn-sized hole in the leather case. We finally reached the safety of the church where she tied a hanky around her blooded thumb and took the service as though nothing had happened. The Bible was scored where it had prevented the horn from penetrating any further. At ages about 6 and 8 years, Bobby and I thought Miss Paulden very brave; it was only later that I realised, had it not been for the case and the Bible, the Berkley St story might have been very different!"

Muriel Paulden served in a near-slum area for 38 years, 1919-57, and did "a unique piece of work". In addition to serving as chairman of the Lancashire Congregational Union in 1945 and sitting on its executive committee, she had been a

member of the Liverpool and District Congregational Council and its President 1932-33, and had also served on the Council of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. In 1949 she travelled to Wellesley College, Massachusetts as a delegate of the CUEW at the International Congregational Council meetings there. Yet she had humility and loved her flock and taught them the meaning of God's love in her pastoral work and in her leading of worship. Her sermons reflected prayerful preparation but always truly came from her heart. She analysed a text in a lucid and logical way and tried to place it in a modern setting. Her congregation often came away inspired with aspirations to do God's work in the coming week. As one of her church members has said, "Muriel Paulden's life and ministry made Sundays something to look forward to". (26)

Derek Watson.

1. This article relies heavily on information supplied by friends, relations, former colleagues and church members of Miss Paulden, and on personal knowledge. Letter of Mrs Joan Heriot.
2. Letter Mrs Heriot *ibid.* These Hundred Years, A Picture of Union Church, Hunstanton 1870-1970 (Hunstanton 1970)
3. For Richard Cliff see Congregational Year Book (1922) 101.
4. Report for Carey Hall Board of Studies, February 1918. Kindly supplied by Rev David Grainger, St Andrew's Hall, Birmingham.
5. Carey Hall was founded in 1912 as a training college for women missionaries. N.Goodall A History of the London Missionary Society 1895-1945 (1954) 546. For Oman and Harris see D.N.B.
6. Dorothy Wyon served in China 1919-24, *ibid* 623.
7. Report for Carey Hall Board of Studies *op.cit.*
8. Fletcher Hunt was to be one of the Congregational representatives in 1945 in talks with the Presbyterians. He was also district commissioner for the Liverpool churches for the Reconstruction Fund 1942-45. R. Tudur Jones Congregationalism in England 1662-1962 (1962) 432, W.G.Robinson A History of the Lancashire Congregational Union 1806-1956 (Manchester 1956) 183.
9. W.G.Robinson A History of the Lancashire Congregational Union 1806-1956 (1956) 149.

10. Greek Orthodox (Berkley St), Roman Catholic (Catherine St), English Presbyterian (later Protestant Reformers), Welsh Presbyterian (Upper Warwick St), Synagogue (Princes Rd), German Evangelical (Canning St), Baptist (Toxteth), Methodist (Princes Park), St Margaret's C.E., St Bride's C.E., St James C.E.
11. CYB (1857) 252.
12. Messrs Harry Day, Archie Gill, John McPhail, Mrs McPhail, Misses Ena Staidler, Elsie Hind, Mrs Julia Evans.
13. Robinson *ibid*.
14. Those listed at 12 plus Misses M.S.Bradley, D.Hamer, Paulden, Mr Fletcher Hunt.
15. Robinson 149.
16. The CYBs state that Muriel Paulden was minister of Knotty Ash C.C. 1932-34 but in truth she gave this church ministerial oversight.
17. Verbatim, Mr Guy Hamilton.
18. For Cook see Charles Surman's index of Congregational ministers, Dr Williams's Library, London.
19. For Jessie Plowright see Goodall *op cit* 615.
20. Robinson *op cit* 149, for John Hull see United Reformed Church Year Book (1979) 260.
21. For Battersby see Surman's index.
22. E. Routley The Story of Congregationalism (1961) 99.
23. For Aylward see D.N.B. and for Kagawa see A Lion Handbook: The History of Christianity (1977) 615.
24. Robinson *op cit*. 149-150.
25. Routley *op cit* .
26. Robinson *op cit*., Who's Who in Congregationalism (1932) 75, Who's Who in the Free Churches (1951) 146, for Muriel Paulden's obituary see URCYB

(1976) 305.

JOB ORTON, THE FRIEND AND BIOGRAPHER OF PHILIP DODDRIDGE; SOME BACKGROUND NOTES.

Job Orton (1717-83) wished to be buried alongside the Puritan John Bryan in St Chad's, Shrewsbury. Had Philip Doddridge been buried in England perhaps Orton's resting place would have been with him for he was Doddridge's close friend and biographer, and he greatly aided his family after Doddridge's death in 1751. Orton was Doddridge's assistant pastor in Northampton and helped at his Academy. He often quoted the words of Hugh Latimer, the Protestant martyr, "Remember that preaching is of God's own appointment".

Orton left a brief account of his own life in a note for his nephew, preserved by Andrew Kippis. "They will find", he writes, "no lords or knights or persons of distinguished rank, wealth or station among their progenitors. They will learn that there is no one.... but have been truly serious, pious and good and filled up some useful station in society with honour".(1) Among the "pious and good" Orton ancestors was also a Job Orton who hailed from Swepstone, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch, west of Leicester, an area noted for its nonconformist antecedents (including Wycliffe and George Fox).(2) This Job Orton however moved to Shropshire and his son Thomas fought with the Parliamentary army, obtaining a royal pardon at the Restoration, a document preserved by our subject. Thomas was the source of the family fortune, adding properties to his own through marriage with Ann Felton. This fortune flowed eventually into the hands of the Rev Job Orton, although he was the last of these Ortons to carry the family name.

Shrewsbury had gained a reputation for Puritanism during the 1650s with 4 leading Puritan clerics ministering at St Mary's, St Alkmund's, St Julian's and the Abbey, while others served country parishes. 20 and 16 miles north respectively were Richard Baxter at Kidderminster and Philip Henry at Whitchurch. A letter from Baxter persuaded Francis Tallents to come "to those that are godly, very serious, sober Christians, as most ever I knew".(3) 20 years later Philip Henry stated that he was in a quandary whether to join the Independents or not. On 30th April 1673 Baxter wrote to a leading minister in Shrewsbury to "persuade your able ministers to go about preaching hard where there is most need, and not confine themselves to those that best accept".(4)

The troubles which beset the nonconformists after 1660 are touched upon by

Orton in his brief history, attached to the register of the High St Church, now Unitarian. He wrote "A Congregation of Protestant Dissenters in the town of the Independent persuasion..... had the Rev James Quarrell, the Rev Dr. Titus Thomas, John Allen, and John Dobson as their ministers". James Quarrell was a Welshman (with a Welsh name meaning slater or glazier) and is sometimes claimed as a Baptist.(5) The 3 main dissenting churches of Shrewsbury have few records preserved from this time. We only have Orton's "Memoirs" and the church registers he started (continued by others) which bear witness to Orton's respect for Christians of other views. The Presbyterian classis, active in the 1640s and 50s, included the 3 ministers, Francis Tallents, John Bryan and Richard Heath who were all ejected. Tallents, who presented a purse of gold to the king when he visited the town, practised occasional conformity, attending St Mary's morning service and meeting his own congregation later that day.

The 3 sons of Job Orton of Sweptstone, Job, Thomas and Jonathan, were members of the Kings Head Shut Meeting (Independent) being engaged in trade. The first pastor of this church, James Quarrell, had close ties with Vavasor Powell, the Welsh Independent.(6) Quarrell had been placed by the Triers, under the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales of 1653, at Forden, Montgomeryshire. He was ejected in 1660 and imprisoned at Welshpool later for breaching the Five Mile Act. In Shrewsbury Quarrell met Henry Maurice, a preacher and evangelist, who was to work with Quarrell at the Kings Head Meeting after his removal from his living at Church Stretton. Imprisoned in Shrewsbury about 1666 for debt, Maurice converted the gaoler's wife and was released when Job Orton's grandfather stood bail on his behalf.

While Maurice waited to be licensed as a preacher and for his house as a meeting place in 1672, under the Declaration of Indulgence, he visited with his wife their home in Lleyn, Caernarvonshire, preaching on the way at Newtown, Llanbrynmair and Brony Clydwr. He returned to Shrewsbury in September having formed links with north Wales Independent churches (introducing James Owen to Pwllhelli) and gathered material for his report on Welsh affairs which later appeared in the records of the church at Broadmead, Bristol.(7)

Nearby at West Felton lived Samuel Hildersham, son of Arthur Hildersham, of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, both noted Puritans.(8) Arthur sheltered the family of Oliver Thomas (1598-1653), author of several Welsh devotional works(9) and assisted Rowland Nevet at Oswestry. Quarrell married Abigail Thomas, Oliver's daughter in 1673 in St Mary's, Shrewsbury and this may explain why the chapel built in Mr Price's garden in 1691 was to be called "Oliver's Chapel".

Andrew Kippis wrote of Job Orton's father, "he added to his other valuable qualities the benefit of a liberal education and an extensive knowledge of books". (10) Job was born on 4th September 1717 and baptized on the 11th. His mother Mary, a descendant of William Perkins, the Elizabethan Puritan, brought up Job as a strict Dissenter. His father kept open house for ministers at his home on the Stone (English) Bridge and this gave rise to a local proverb that a thing was "as certain as Job Orton being in his shop". Job was close to his parents and was sent in 1725 aged 8 to Shrewsbury School. (11) The school registers of this time do not survive but J.E.Auden includes him as a scholar on the evidence of the printed dedication Orton attached in 1783 to the volumes of Kennicott's Bible he presented to the school library.

Kippis records that "he went through the whole course of grammatical education but suffered by the example of some boys who were very wicked and profane". Isaac Watts met Doddridge while engaged on work for the Congregational Fund Board and recommended to him the young Job Orton. By 1734 arrangements were made for Orton's admission to the Northampton Academy. Orton, however, went first to Warrington under Charles Owen, brother of James who assisted Tallents at Oliver's Chapel. Another student also there was John, brother of Caleb Ashworth who succeeded Doddridge after his death in 1751. After 9 months at Warrington Orton spent 3 as assistant to Thomas Colthurst at Whitchurch where Orton became a church member. Warrington showed signs even then of latent Unitarianism (John Allen was there 1757-85 and Joseph Priestley was later to be a student).(12) By 1734 Orton had moved to Northampton, one of 10 new students to be welcomed by Doddridge at tea or supper when he commended them to the Lord in word and prayer.(13)

The introductory meeting for new students included family prayers with the students reading a chapter from Hebrew into English. In addition to Hebrew and Greek, Orton mastered that system of shorthand devised by Jeremy Rich and revised by Doddridge. In later life Orton wrote most of his letters using that system which he stated "had added ten years to his life". (14) Orton, wrote R. Tudur Jones, "came under the influence of the one who did more than any other man to unite 18th century Nonconformists on a common ground, standing as he did on the frontiers of two religious ages.(15) Doddridge taught some of Baxter's catholicity at Northampton from 1729, and this was continued at Daventry by Caleb Ashworth. He also trained his students to consider without prejudice the views of all theological schools.

Orton helped Doddridge both at the academy and also at the Castle Hill Meeting, being later appointed assistant pastor.(16) Nuttall wrote of the academies at Kibworth (Doddridge's first teaching position) and Northampton that Doddridge built on "the teaching method provided by John Jennings".Doddridge's interest in

community health influenced Orton and his friend Sir John Stonehouse in establishing hospitals at Northampton and Shrewsbury. Orton asked after Doddridge's death, "When the king is gone, what can we do?", referring to the loss felt by all who knew him. (17)

In 1739 Doddridge wrote that Orton "is the darling of our congregation, and indeed of the whole country". In 1740 writing to the deacons of Market Harborough Congregational Church he wrote he would not oppose their invitation to Orton but "cannot support it". In March 1740/1 Doddridge described Orton as "one of the best of preachers and of men". Yet in July 1741 Doddridge was dismayed at Orton's resignation and removal to Shrewsbury. "Is he so cruel as to leave us? Pray tell me all you know of him, I had not the least fear of his engaging for Salop".(18)

At Northampton Orton had become familiar with the current theological debate concerning Arianism. He probably favoured Doddridge's Sabellian view, accepting Christ's deity yet maintaining the unity of the godhead and considering the 3 persons as revelations of God the Father and not co-ordinated personalities.(19) Doddridge's hymns which do not testify to any Sabellianism were first published posthumously by Job Orton at Shrewsbury in 1755. Orton lamented Doddridge's "unhappy inclination to publish so much" and "his almost entirely neglecting to compose sermons and his preaching extempore".

Orton's sick and aging parents and his own health (he suffered from aphasia and bronchial troubles) probably prompted his return to Shrewsbury. He had received several invitations to preach as a candidate - from Welford, Rowell, Harborough and Salter's Hall, London - but always refused. (20) In April 1741 Mr Berry, the Presbyterian minister at Shrewsbury died and about this time Mr Dobson, the Independent pastor there moved to Walsall. "These two societies being thus vacant concurred in an invitation to Mr Orton..... promising..... they would unite together in one congregation."(21) Orton moved in October 1741 and 2 weeks later his father died aged 52. He was ordained 4 years later in September 1745.(22)

At Northampton Orton had gained a reputation for scholarship and application to duty. Aged 22 he returned to Shrewsbury and spent the next 25 years serving the local churches . The most important of his writings was his *Memoirs of the Life, Character and Writings of ... Philip Doddridge (1766)* although he also produced devotional works. He remains Shrewsbury's most prolific author before Charles Darwin.

Trevor Watts.

1. A.Kippis (ed) Biographia Britannica (1793) V, 308.
2. DNB
3. Baxter urged Tallents to settle at St Mary's. N.Keeble and G.F.Nuttall (eds) The Calendar of the Correspondence of Richard Baxter, letter 93.
4. The quotation comes in a letter presumed to have been addressed to Francis Tallents. He was however travelling on the continent 1670-73. See Journal of Tallents' Ms, referred to in H.Owen and J.B.Blakeway History of Shrewsbury. (1825) II, 382 .
5. Bywgraffiadur Cwmraeg 771.
6. DNB, R.T. Jones Vavasor Powell (1971).
7. T. Richards "Henry Maurice", Y Cofiadur (1928) No 5-6.
8. DNB, R.F.Skinner Nonconformity in Shropshire 1662-1816 (1964).
9. O. Thomas Carwr Y Cymry (1631).
10. Kippis op.cit. 309
11. J.E.Auden Transactions of the Shropshire Archeological Society.
12. DNB
13. J.W. Ashley Smith The Birth of Modern Education (1954) 208-9.
14. M. Deacon Philip Doddridge of Northampton 1702-51 (Northampton 1980) 180-1
15. R.T. Jones Congregationalism in England 1662-1962 (1962) 141-142.
16. G.F. Nuttall (ed) Calendar of the Correspondence of Philip Doddridge DD 1702-51 (1979) 147.
17. Ibid. L. 1/8/14. Letter to Mercy Doddridge from Orton in which he expresses concern at the vacancy at Northampton after Doddridge's death. He writes, "For what can a man do who cometh after the king?"
18. Nuttall op.cit. Letters 575, 651, 691.
19. For Sabellianism see Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church.
20. Kippis op.cit. 309.

21. *ibid.*
22. Charge preached by Samuel Bourn of Birmingham. See DNB.

BOOK REVIEWS

Some Separatists - The Martyrs of 1593 (Congregational Studies Conference Papers 1993) By R. Tudur Jones and A. Tovey Pp58. Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches, 1993.£2 .

Whatever Happened to the Separatists? A Commemoration of the Martyrdom of Barrow, Greenwood and Penry 1593 (The Congregational Lecture 1993) By A. Tovey Pp21. The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust (1978) Limited, Carroone House, 14 Farringdon Street, London EC4 4DX. 1993 £2.

In our age of ecumenism, separatism looks like a dirty word. Why then celebrate these our forefathers? The Times, indeed, characterized them in 1893, the tercentenary of their executions, as "misguided men". We know better. The past century has seen a great, if slow, movement towards Congregational ideals. In the 1980s Churches Together in England was founded on the basis of mutual recognition of differing denominations as each a part - in many cases a necessary part - of the true Church. With them we must enjoy co-operation in the work of the Kingdom of God. No doubt there will still be efforts to eliminate denominational differences and possibly even to amalgamate. These efforts will, however, no longer be regarded as a test of ecumenicity.

But the work of Barrow, Greenwood and Penry was not in this direction. They were Separatists, scandalizing their contemporaries by insisting on separation in order to practise correct patterns of churchmanship. These two pamphlets help us to understand their position and its fundamental importance. Barrow and Greenwood dissented from the Church of England on several grounds; prayer book worship, inclusion in the church (and admission to communion) of all inhabitants of the country, a deficient and invalidly appointed ministry and church establishment, and wrongly aimed and wrongly administered discipline. Not only should Christians leave this church; its buildings should be destroyed to eliminate the possibility of return to papism.

We may remark one small gap in this rejection - baptism, even by a Roman Catholic, is recognized and not to be repeated. Thus condemnation of another Church does not deny that specific members of it may be true Christians; a first significant step towards that ecumenical inter-recognition which Congregationalists have done much to foster.

But what were the positive assertions of our three martyrs? They called for a church in which the Lordship of Christ can manifest itself. It must therefore consist of only those who are brought by Christ to repentance and faith. It appoints officers, but not to exclude any member from exercise of a God-given gift. There is no distinction between clergy and laity. Worship is free - neither preaching nor praying can involve reading. Not even the "Our Father" is said - it is a pattern prayer, linked (Matthew 6:7) with a warning against repetition. The Bible reading is a long passage - a whole chapter.

Who shall reform the church? Penry, in particular, sought at first and in vain for state intervention, in the first place in his native Wales. Experience there and later in Scotland seems to have persuaded him of the futility of depending upon the civil ruler, and he passed from Presbyterianism to Congregationalism.

Alan Tovey remarks that the Separatist distinctives are today found not only in many (by no means all) Congregational churches but also among the newer dissenting groups which are in very few cases linked with historic Congregationalism. Tudur Jones gives us a masterly account of Penry and the Welsh situation; Alan Tovey an overview of the careers of Barrow and Greenwood and an analysis of their programme. In reviewing, in our 1993 issue, the reprint of the Adeney and Lewis 1893 pamphlet, *True Heroes*, we wished for a more substantial study. Thanks to the Congregational Studies Conference (for the annual organization of which we are indebted to An Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches) and the Congregational Memorial Hall Trust, which is responsible for the Congregational Lecture - that wish is now very effectively granted.

J.W. Ashley Smith

First Lady of the Pulpit: A Biography of Elsie Chamberlain By J. Williams Pp93. The Book Guild Ltd, 25 High Street, Lewes, Sussex. 1993. £5. 99p.

Janette Williams' biography of the Rev. Elsie Chamberlain provides an interesting insight into the early days of one of the great characters of twentieth century nonconformity. It is perhaps this part of the book that gives the most coherent account of any period of Elsie's life. Much of the remainder of the work is episodic in nature with individual chapters dealing with a particular phase of activity rather than a chronological progression of events. This sometimes made the inevitable question, "What happened next?" rather more difficult to answer than need be. Elsie's wit and good humour are amply demonstrated. Mrs. Williams writes, "Her views and thoughts allowed little room for compromise with others. She was adamant, if not obstinate,

with little room for manoeuvre or negotiation''. The reader may wonder how this may be reconciled with the lasting happiness that resulted from her marriage to one from whom she apparently differed on several matters of importance. The fact that Mrs. Williams (Elsie's adopted daughter) had available all the biographical notes that Elsie had prepared in anticipation of writing her autobiography has ensured the accuracy of her account yet one wonders whether such a work is best written by one so closely and personally involved. It is not possible in the course of a brief review to do justice to a work which has clearly been a labour of love. If a good biography provides the relevant facts whilst a great biography interprets the character of the subject perhaps this book might fairly be described as good and well worth reading.

A. R. White

Dissenting Thought and the Life of the Churches :Studies in an English Tradition. By Alan P. F. Sell. ISBN 0-7734-9931-8, Pp. 732, 1992, Mellen Press, San Francisco, £59.95.

The author is one of the stars in the firmament of Dissenting scholars today. This volume brings together many of his contributions to the journals of the Baptist, Unitarian, United Reformed Church and other historical societies. It includes studies of particular individuals and movements deriving from Dissent in its many aspects. This is a book one may read or browse through with a pleasure which increases with use. Each chapter introduces the reader to a personality or period or a school of thought, and to read the whole is to immerse oneself in the romance of the Dissenting traditions which have enlivened and enriched British society for four centuries. It contains twenty-two chapters including studies of Priestley, the Rooker family at Walsall and the riots there, and the connection between Walsall and Shrewsbury which fascinated the present writer. The opening chapter examines the faith of the English Congregational churches of the 16th century, their covenants and traces a development from this period until the formation of the United Reformed Church in 1972. He lifts the veil to display his debt to Richard Fitz, Robert Browne, and Henry Barrowe, with examples of church covenants at Angel Street, Worcester and Rothwell. The full and valuable footnotes and the detailed indexes to persons, places and churches will greatly assist.

The whole undertaking is a tribute to the author's industry, and the generosity also of the Calgary Endowment Fund. I recommend this book to all those interested in the history of Dissent.

Trevor Watts.

My Exit Visa: an Autobiography. By Margaret Stansgate. With an afterword by Tony Benn. Pp. 234,1992, Hutchinson, £17.99.

One afternoon four years ago I made one of the most memorable visits of my pastoral ministry. I had been to a meeting at the Free Church Federal Council which had finished earlier than I had anticipated. Making the most of an unexpected opportunity I called on Lady Stansgate who was then living in a nursing home. Frail in body, she was as alert in mind as ever. For the next couple of hours she regaled me with anecdotes of a lifetime spent in the pursuit of Christian values at home, through the church and in the world of politics and international affairs. President Emeritus of the Congregational Federation, Margaret Stansgate had a wonderful enthusiasm which was contagious. In her company you couldn't help but feel that Christianity and the church mattered. A member of one of the great parliamentary families of the century, her enthusiasm left its mark on her father, her husband William and her son Tony Benn. In conversation that afternoon she made me realise again how important it is for the Christian to be concerned at the way society works.

The afternoon ended all too quickly. I spent the train journey home to Shrewsbury scribbling down all I could recall of our conversation. She told me of how she had discovered 'the mystery of the numinous', the wonder of 'the presence' in a convent church in France and ever afterwards her commitment was to Christ. She told, with relish, the story of the visit she had made with her husband to the USSR and on the Sunday of their visit they had insisted on attending church despite warnings to the contrary. The service was broken up by an anti-church mob. With even greater relish she recalled a second visit to Moscow after the War when she had preached in a Baptist church, taking Ephesians 2 as her text.

She recalled learning Hebrew at King's College, London and joining her husband on an official visit to Jerusalem where they met Ben-Gurion. Left out of the conversation, her eye fell on the Hebrew scriptures on the desk: there was a glint in her eye as she recalled Ben-Gurion's delight as Margaret Stansgate read and understood the Hebrew text. "We'll never make a Zionist of you," he told her, "You know too much Hebrew!"

Lady Stansgate also spoke of her frustration at being forbidden to watch her father from the Visitors' Gallery when he took his seat. With other women she had had to peer through a grille in the roof of the Commons. How delighted she had been to play her part in the women's movement and to have known well so many women MPs. It was disenchantment with the Church of England's refusal to recognise women

in the ministry that led her to Congregationalism. Her friendship with Elsie Chamberlain went back to King's College days. Lady Stansgate's sense of fun bubbled to the surface as she recalled the day of Elsie's appointment as the first woman chaplain. The RAF handbook was delivered to William Stansgate's air ministry office: when he saw Elsie was recorded as a welfare officer, he insisted every copy of the handbook be pulped and a new one published correctly designating Elsie as chaplain.

My Exit Visa is not so much an autobiography, far less a detailed analysis of the politics or church life of this century. It has been put together by Gill Shepherd on the basis of Lady Stansgate's own written recollections and on the basis of conversations she had with Lady Stansgate. If you were looking for theological reflection or in-depth portraits of the political leaders of the 20th century you will be disappointed. What Shepherd has achieved is in one sense more significant - enabling the reader to sit in on a conversation with Margaret Stansgate and hear at first hand those anecdotes. As I read the book, I returned to my notes and discovered I hadn't made a bad record of our afternoon's talk. One thing only was missing. Every now and then Lady Stansgate would stop in mid-flow to ask, "What do you think about that?" She was genuinely interested to know what others felt, where they stood. To be true to her, when you read the book don't just enjoy the stories, think again about where you stand in your Christian faith in your view of politics and the world situation. That's the way Lady Stansgate would have expected you to read My Exit Visa.

Richard Cleaves.

Oliver Franks Founding Father by A. Danchev Pp XVI, 234, 1993, Oxford, Clarendon Press £25.

Lord Franks was the very model of a 20th century public servant, unfailingly dependable and ready to offer a sure touch at moments of crisis. Yet this most Establishment of men, universally respected and admired, never really belonged, was never an insider.

He was the son of Robert Sleightholme Franks (1871-1964), the Congregational minister and theologian who was principal of Western College, Bristol from 1910 to 1939. Oliver attended Bristol Grammar School where he won a scholarship to Oxford. There he was nicknamed "Father Franks", was taught by Gilbert Ryle, the philosopher, and in 1935 became a university lecturer in philosophy. He taught briefly in Chicago also in 1935 before moving in 1937 to Glasgow as Professor of moral philosophy. At the outbreak of war he was seconded to the Ministry of Supply, rising rapidly to be permanent secretary there in his 30s. In 1946 he returned to Oxford as

provost of Queen's College but was soon in Paris, discussing the post-war European economy and Marshall Aid, and in 1948 was in Washington as British ambassador where he was involved in setting up NATO. It was said that Franks had "the most brilliant mind in Britain" yet in 1952 he returned to Oxford as head of Worcester College, and held no public office after the age of 47.

The title of this book implies that Franks was a founding father, a creator of the post-war world. Certainly he surfaced again with public enquiries into tribunals, the monetary system, Oxford University (in 1966), ministerial memoirs, and later the Falklands (1982), and his untouchable moral rectitude, a legacy of Dissent, served the State well.

Franks married a Quaker and shared her faith. He was seen at Oxford as "a thin man more a walking moral imperative", the embodiment of integrity, and the Establishment needed and used these qualities. Yet as a Nonconformist his impulse was to hold back from its embrace. Prof. Danchev's book is a fascinating account of

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the life of a political trouble-shooter.

OBITUARY

**John Marsh (1904-94). Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford
1953-70.**

Marsh was born on 5th November, 1904 in Brighton and brought up at East Grinstead. He attended the Skinners' Company School at Tunbridge Wells and at first went to the parish church where as a boy he sang in the choir. Later he joined the Congregational church at East Grinstead and trained for the ministry at the Yorkshire United College at Bradford. Through its long-established links with Edinburgh University, Bradford students went there first to take an arts degree. Marsh studied at Edinburgh under the eminent Platonist philosopher, Prof A. E. Taylor, becoming his assistant in his final year.

After theology in Bradford Marsh went to Mansfield College, Oxford, and then studied for a year at Marburg. In 1932 he became a lecturer at Westhill College, Selly Oak, Birmingham where he was to meet his future wife, Gladys Walker, whom he married in 1934. She came from a Quaker family in Cumberland. Also in 1934 Marsh became minister of Otley Congregational church, Yorkshire where, despite some months of illness, he was very happy. In 1938 he returned to Oxford as chaplain and tutor at Mansfield where he taught several subjects but came to specialise in Biblical studies.

In 1949 Nottingham University appointed him to be its first professor of theology but in 1953 he returned to Mansfield to succeed Nathaniel Micklem as Principal. During his term of office Mansfield began to be transformed from a ministerial training college to a permanent private hall of the university, at which subjects other than theology were taught. This development culminated in the granting of full college status to Mansfield in 1993. In the 1960s new buildings to accommodate the increased number of students were erected and college life absorbed much of his energy.

However Marsh served as chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales 1962-3 and Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council 1970-1. He attended the first four assemblies of the World Council of Churches (serving as secretary of the Commission on Inter-communion in the Faith and Order movement) and was influential in the discussions which led to the formation of the United Reformed Church in 1972. He was concerned also with religious broadcasting, serving as religious adviser to the Independent Television Authority from 1954 to 1965 and sitting on the BBC's Central Religious Advisory Committee. In 1964 he was appointed CBE and he also had honorary doctorates from the universities of Edinburgh and Nottingham .

Marsh's chief writings were in Biblical theology. He published The Fullness of Time (1952), several Biblical commentaries, including the Pelican commentary on The Gospel of St John (1968), and Jesus in his Lifetime (1981) among others. He also translated Bultmann and Tauffer from the original German. In addition he was secretary of the group which produced A Book of Public Worship (1948) and wrote the introduction to it.

He was a warm and humble man, with many interesting tales to tell, among them some concerning the struggles he witnessed in Germany of those Christians who resisted Hitler and the Nazis. He was a keen fell walker and cyclist although he was lame from childhood as a result of poliomyelitis. He and his wife retired firstly to Cockermonth and then later to Oxford. She survives him, as do

also their two sons and a daughter.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

The Baptist Quarterly (XXXV Jan 1994 no.5)

F.L.Mauldin "Truth, Heritage, and 18th century English Baptists, J.Y. Hooyer "Continuity and Discontinuity between the Medieval Mystics and the Spirituals of the Radical Reformation", B.M. Doyle "Business, Liberalism and Dissent in Norwich 1900-1930" which refers to the continuing support for the Liberal party among Dissenters after 1919, contrary to the received wisdom of a wholesale defection to the Conservatives. He mentions also the Colman family's membership of Princes St Congregational Church and that half the post-1918 Liberal councillors were members of it. P. Shepherd "The Baptist Ministers' Journal 1946-1992"

Y Cofiadur (Rhifyn 58, Mai 1993)

R. Tudur Jones "Mantoli Cyfraniad John Penri"

The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society (Vol. 56, no 4,1993)

M. Grubb "Abraham Shackleton and the Irish Separation of 1797-1803", R.S. Harrison "Cork Mutual Improvement Association (1859-84) and its Antecedents", V.A. Rowe "A Quaker in Local Politics: William Graveson of Hertford 1862-1939", J. and A. Brodie "The Spiritual Ferment- Lucy Violet Hodgkin in Havelock North, New Zealand", D.E.W. Holden "Will the Inward Light go out in Ireland?"

The Strict Baptist Historical Society Bulletin (No. 20, 1993)

R.W. Oliver "The Significance of Strict Baptist Attitudes towards Duty Faith in the 19th Century".

Transactions of the Unitarian Society (XX, No 4, April 1994)

A. Lang "What did Mr Gladstone say in 1844? The Dissenters Chapel Act after 150 years", A. Ruston "W.E. Gladstone and the Dissenters' Chapel Bill", P.N. Tindall "Roman Catholics and Unitarians: An Account of Reciprocal Help and Comfort" part 2, R.S. Ropes and A. Ruston "The Rochdale Pioneers- 150th Anniversary", L. Smith "Unitarians and the Second Phase of Co-operation", L. Smith "A Failed Utopia: H.U. Mills and the Westmorland Commune".

The Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society (Vol.5, No 2, July 1993)

M. Spufford "The Importance of the Lord's Supper to 17th Century Dissenters", G.F. Nuttall "Homerton Academy and the Beginnings of Sub Rosa", C. Binfield "Hymns

and an Orthodox Dissenter: In Commemoration of Bernard Lord Manning 1892-1941”.

(Vol. 5, No 3, October 1993)

D.L. Wykes ‘The Settling of Meetings and the Preaching of the Gospel’ : The Development of the Dissenting Interest, 1690-1715”, C.D. Gilbert ” ‘God Preserve New England’: Richard Baxter and his American Friends”, P.B.H. Ackers “Who Speaks for the Christians? The Great War and Conscientious Objection in the Churches of Christ: A View from the Wigan Coalfield

Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society (Vol 49, Part 3, October 1993)

E.D. Graham “Chosen by God: The Female Travelling Preachers of Early Primitive Methodism”, B.L. Manning “Childhood Memories of Wesley’s Hymns” (This is an unpublished fragment by Manning originally intended for his *The Hymns of Wesley and Watts* (1942) but later discarded.),

(Vol 49, Part 4, February 1994)

D.H. Tripp “Clement of Alexandria and the Wesley Brothers”, G. Lawton “Three Puffs from Wesley and Virginia Woolf”, C.C. Short “William Udy Bassett and the 1902 Education Act”, J.A. Dolan “The Archives of the Independent Methodists”, D. Nuttall “Bourne’s Press Prints Again”, C.J. Spittal “A Cumulative Index to W.H.S. Branch Publications”.

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