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ISSN 0965-6235

Congregational  
History Society  
*Magazine*

Volume 6 Number 6  
Autumn 2012

**THE  
CONGREGATIONAL  
HISTORY  
SOCIETY  
MAGAZINE**

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**Volume 6 No 6 Autumn 2012**

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## EDITORIAL

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Our articles in this issue extend in their interests from the Isle of Wight and Hampshire north to Angus, moving geographically and chronologically from the Commonwealth to the Edwardian period. We welcome Paul Hooper's paper on the churches of the Isle of Wight in the second half of the seventeenth century. He is a tireless chronicler of the island's religious history and here offers his timely account of the sufferings of the island's nonconformist ministers of 1662 and after. Roger Ottewill's researches into the nonconformists of central southern England have thrown great shafts of light into their lively chapel activities and attitudes. Here he turns his scholarly attention to the neglected and eminently respectable wives of Congregational ministers in Edwardian Hampshire—just when the first waves of feminism were breaking on the establishment, with bluestockings and others calling for votes for women and equal rights. Gordon Campbell has delved into the history of the Congregational churches in Angus, stimulated by the founding of a new cause in that county.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

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The bicentenary of the founding of the **Congregational Union of Scotland** falls this year. The spread of Congregationalism to Scotland may be owed in part to views seeping north from England. In 1647 the Church of Scotland had barred all those holding independent views from taking communion in the kirk. However between 1650 and 1790 the number of independent churches in Scotland increased, fuelled by those fleeing persecution for their beliefs in England. From 1797 to 1808 the missionary minded brothers Robert Haldane (1764–1842) and James Haldane (1768–1851) stimulated the growth of Congregationalism in Scotland. Their first tabernacle was founded in Edinburgh in 1799. However Greville Ewing (1767–1841) proved inspirational. He had left the Church of Scotland and associated himself with the Haldanes, becoming pastor of the Glasgow Tabernacle. A split between Ewing and James Haldane in 1808 led to many infant churches being dispossessed, with the Haldanes becoming Baptists. In 1811 the Glasgow Theological Academy was founded, with Ewing the prime mover.

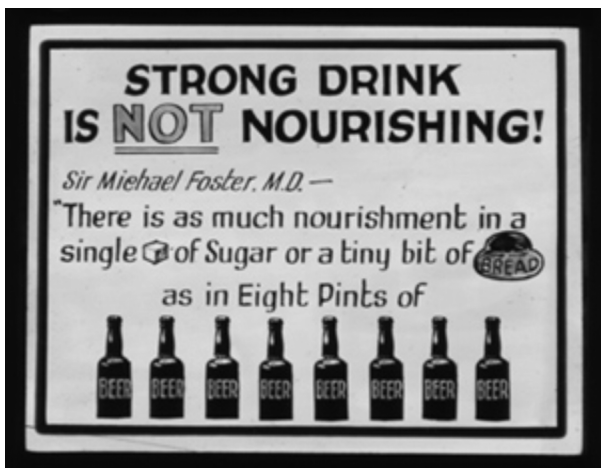
The **Congregational Union of Scotland** was formed in 1812, again mainly through Ewing's efforts. It aimed to give financial support to the churches and to assist home mission. With supporters coming from several Independent traditions, it originally comprised 55 churches, some resulting from the Haldanes'

evangelism. There were 96 member churches in 1896 when the CUS merged with the Evangelical Union. The EU had been formed, after the Disruption of 1843 in the Church of Scotland (with some Congregationalists moving to the Free Church), by followers of James Morison (1816–93), a former United Secession minister who had theological objections to some tenets of Calvinism. The name Congregational Union of Scotland was retained by the new body, although local churches might call themselves Evangelical Union Congregational (EU Congregational). The merger brought the Presbyterian system of two courts—one for deacons and one for elders—into Congregationalism.

The CUS was in essence a fellowship of churches, with each church guided by meetings of church members and deacons. In 1993 the CUS changed its constitution to become the Scottish Congregational Church and in 2000 the United Reformed Church and the Scottish Congregational Church united. However, a number of Congregational churches, 39 in 2003, still adhering to the principle that each church is independent and therefore no national Congregational church can exist, declined to join the SCC, and chose rather to affiliate to the Congregational Federation.

The **temperance movement**, in which people took the pledge not to drink alcohol, effectively began in north-west England and played an important part in the lives of many. Despite this, it is a little remembered aspect of British history. An exhibition, *Demon Drink? Temperance and the Working Class*, is being held at the People's History Museum, Left Bank, Spinningfields, Manchester, M3 3ER. It runs until 24 February 2013 and is open Monday to Sunday, 10am to 5pm, including bank holidays.

[www.phm.org.uk/whatson/demon-drink-temperance-and-the-working-class](http://www.phm.org.uk/whatson/demon-drink-temperance-and-the-working-class)





*Demon Drink?* draws on local and national collections and focuses on the everyday experiences of working families around drink and abstinence. Combining unique historical artefacts, archive film footage and oral histories this story is recalled. Visitors may explore the movement, take part in social activities that those involved would have enjoyed and even teach a temperance lesson.

Displays explore the need for the Temperance Movement, how society viewed it, its key messages and how people were encouraged to join. The exhibition concentrates on the importance of children and social activities in promoting the movement; providing an alternative to the public house by looking at temperance sporting events, parades, lessons, games, quizzes and children's entertainments.

Visitors may play on a human-scale temperance-related snakes and ladders game and tell their own families' stories. A range of public events

accompanies the exhibition, including illustrated talks, city centre trails, craft and family activities and a magic lantern show.

This exhibition is part of a research project, led by Dr Annemarie McAllister of the University of Central Lancashire. If you have memories of temperance bodies (like the Band of Hope, Rechabites, Orders of Good Templars or Phoenix, or church-linked temperance societies) or family traditions or stories, please contact Dr McAllister by email ([amcallister1@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:amcallister1@uclan.ac.uk)) or ring 01772 893799. You may follow the progress of the research project on Facebook and Twitter. The exhibition will also be accompanied by a virtual exhibition which the public can access via the internet—[demondrink.co.uk](http://demondrink.co.uk)

## CORRESPONDENCE

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Roger Ottewill has written of his interest aroused by “the reference to W T Stead in the last edition of the Congregational History Society Magazine”. Roger stated of Stead, “Apart from his campaigning role and his untimely death on board the Titanic, what is perhaps less well known are his links with Congregationalism on Hayling Island, where he owned a property. Below is an extract from the summary of a report submitted by the South Hayling Congregational Church to the Hampshire Congregational Union for 1913:

‘The loss of Mr. W.T. Stead by death is severely felt; his interest in the Church was very deep and sincere. Land has been purchased and a fund started for building a new Church, to be called the Stead Memorial Church. A strong appeal is made for help.’

These reports were a condition of receiving financial support from the HCU.

Roger went on to comment that to the best of his knowledge, due to the intervention of the First World War, the new church was never built. However, Hayling URC continues to this day and, from the information on its website, it appears to be thriving.

## THE CHURCHES OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT DURING AND AFTER THE COMMONWEALTH

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In 1603, the end of Queen Elizabeth I's reign, the church in England was mostly Calvinistic. The communion table was often placed in the middle of the church building, the service was in English, the vestments ('this comical dress') were replaced by the simple Geneva gown and the emphasis was on the sermon rather than the liturgy. And yet one Cambridge don claimed that the church was 'but halfly reformed'.<sup>1</sup> The puritan movement aimed to 'purify' the church of every vestige of Romanism and establish a 'godly' preaching ministry. Meetings were held up and down the country to discuss the meaning of the 'reformation' and how it applied to the lives of ordinary Christians. "My dear Ned", wrote Lady Harley to her son at Oxford, "look to that precious part of you, your soul; be not wanting to keep it in a spirituall heate by prayer and let the love of God be the motif". Her husband told the House of Commons that the adoration of the host in the mass was nothing short of idolatry. After Charles I's accession in 1625, and Laud's appointment as Archbishop of Canterbury, a reaction set in with the emphasis on liturgy and the 'beauty of holiness'; the altar was placed at the east end and railed off, vestments were restored, chanting encouraged and episcopal discipline enforced. From 1640 the Long Parliament attempted to restore something like the Elizabethan church. The Laudian clergy were removed and replaced by 'godly' ministers; pluralities were stopped; Charles and Laud were beheaded and the Commonwealth established.

With Charles II's return in 1660 another reaction set in; the Cavalier Parliament (1661–79) passed a series of acts designed to persecute the puritans in revenge for ills suffered under the Commonwealth. In 1661 the Act of Uniformity provided 1) that only the book of common prayer may be used; 2) all clergy and schoolmasters must take the oath of non-resistance and renounce the 'solemn league and covenant'; 3) that all clergy must be ordained by a bishop.

This statute became effective on St Bartholomew's day, 24th August 1662, when almost 2,000 clergy were ejected and the church lost many fine clerics. Other repressive statutes included the Conventicle Act of 1664, prohibiting the meeting of more than five people, other than the family, for worship, not using the prayer book, and in 1665 the Five Mile Act prohibited any minister or schoolmaster from coming within five miles of any town where he had previously held office.

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1 P Collinson *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967) 29.



On the Isle of Wight eight clergy were ejected in 1662. Of these the most eminent was Robert Tutchin. The church in Newport, Isle of Wight, was a daughter church of Carisbrooke whose rector was Alexander Rosse who also had curates in St Nicholas in Castro, Northwood and St Mary's, Carisbrooke; a typical case of 'plurality'.<sup>2</sup> Rosse had been sequestered in 1645 and at the same time Harby, the curate in Newport, moved to Gatcombe, leaving Newport without a minister, and despite many efforts it was not until March 1654 that Tutchin became the permanent minister. Tutchin was ordained in Bristol in 1625, became rector of Bridport in 1646 and was in Dorchester in 1654 when he was asked to come to Newport. He "was so beloved of the inhabitants that when he was turned out they allowed him the same stipend as when he was their minister" and from this time dates the origin of the Congregational church in Newport.

In the hearth tax returns of 1664 for Lugley Street, Newport, there is a Mr Robert 'Tats(hi)m' having a house of 2 hearths and paying 4 shillings tax. This is almost certainly our Robert Tutchin. By contrast Sir William Meux of Kingston was paying £1-14s for 17 hearths. Thus it is odd that Tutchin was living four houses away from Col Walter Slingsby in the same street, the chief prosecutor of the dissenters! With the passage of the Five Mile Act in 1665 he had to move out of the town and is not recorded in the 1665 returns. His successor, Goldsmith, seems to have been a kind man and it is probable that Tutchin was not persecuted. When he died in 1671, he was buried beside St Thomas' church and Goldsmith preached the funeral sermon. From 1664 tradition has it that, to comply with the Act, Tutchin led his congregation to the fields near Godshill or Cowes; where he and his wife lived after 1665 is unknown. He had three sons who all became ministers. John was vicar of Fowey until ejected, imprisoned at the Launceston assizes in March 1682 and released in August. Robert was curate in Brockenhurst 1658-62 and ejected, and Samuel the vicar of Odiham 1657-61, then becoming chaplain to the East India Company and dying in Madras in 1673.

Others were Heath of Arreton, Buckler of Calbourne, Pole of Cowes, Creswick of Freshwater, Newnham of St Lawrence, Grunshey of Thorley (in 1663) and Wells of Yaverland. There was certainly a Presbyterian 'classis' (a local Presbyterian assembly) active in Newport during the Commonwealth for we know that Thomas Newnham, Martin Wells, Thomas Pittis and possibly John Barnes were all "ordained by the Presbyters in Newport Church".<sup>3</sup> John Smith of St Nicholas looked after Tutchin's flock for a few years, it is not known how

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<sup>2</sup> P Hooper *Our Island the War and Commonwealth. The Isle of Wight 1640-1660* (Chale, IOW 1998) 83.

<sup>3</sup> A G Matthews *Calamy Revised* (1934) 363, 519.

long. He lived, apparently undisturbed, in the Castlehold in a house of 4 or 5 hearths and is recorded in all the tax returns until 1674. John Martin followed him. He had been minister in Newport for a short while but left because he “had not a voice large enough for a large audience” but became rector of Yarmouth 1654–60. Martin Wells was rector of Yaverland 1656–62 and was still looking after the Newport flock in 1689, when he reported to the borough session that they used a barn in Lower Pyle Street for their meetings. In 1672 he obtained a licence to preach in Newport, we do not know where. James Creswick was minister at Freshwater from May 1654 until ejected in 1662 but continued to preach “after the time the law confined him to; two of his parishioners informed against him and he was hauled before the Bishop (Morley) of Winchester who was making a visitation”. Creswick produced his licence from St John’s College, Cambridge, and asked the bishop “whether it was invalidate by the Act of Uniformity?”. The bishop thought not, but the next Sunday the bishop “ordered the church wardens to keep the doors shut against him and there was no preaching at all”.<sup>4</sup> “He was one of great piety and very exemplar patience under the tormenting pains of the stone. His executor, Mr Jonathan Priestly, had a box containing above six hundred stones some of which were above an inch and a half long, others round and very rugged. He had a very notable library which he shipped from the Isle of Wight in casks to Yorkshire. By mistake they were shipped to the wrong port where he heard nothing of them till all or most of the books were spoiled or rotten”. Buckler of Calbourne was on the Hampshire commission in 1654 and a chaplain to Cromwell; on ejection he retired to Bradford Abbas and became a maltster.<sup>5</sup>

Cowes had no church until 1656 when parliament ordered the “erecting of a Meeting House for religious worship (on the site of the present St Mary’s Church) they be allowed £50 from the proceeds of decayed trees in the New Forest” towards it.<sup>6</sup> In 1657 Simon Pole became minister and was ejected in 1662. The next year he was indicted at Somerset assizes on an unknown charge, bound over for £40 and two sureties. He was imprisoned for seven years. “He had a considerable family and was very poor”. In his will, written at Mottistone in 1671, “to the society I am related to fortie shillings to buy them a cup for the church’s use”.<sup>7</sup> Thomas Newnham, was born at Gotten, in the parish of Chale, gained his MA at Christ Church, Oxford in 1658, was ordained by the Newport presbytery and appointed to the parish of St Lawrence that year. On ejection in 1662, “some of his parishioners showed a particular respect for him by carting in their corn before St Bartholomew’s day on purpose that he might have the tythe

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4 Ibid 142–3, 341.

5 Ibid 84–5.

6 Calendar of State Papers Domestic (hereafter CSPD) 24 June 1656

7 Matthews *Calamy Revised* 393.

of it, while some others not so well affected to him that they would not carry the corn till afterwards". At times he attended the church at Whitwell—"Some times preached at Roslin, Yard and other places. But more constantly to the congregation committed to his care at Roud, Bridge Court and Stroud Green. He met with much trouble on account of his nonconformity and was bound over and fined. When the Act came forth that not more than four persons beside the minister should meet in any house for religious exercises, he did for some time preach in an house by the roadside, where the auditory, without fear of incurring the Penalty of the said Act, came boldly to hear him, standing in the highway during the time of the exercise".<sup>8</sup> He married his cousin, Elizabeth, had two sons and three daughters, and was buried with his wife at Whitwell in 1689. One wonders if he survived from the charity of friends and 'auditors'. Of Heath of Arreton and Grunshey of Thorley we know nothing, except that the latter stayed at Thorley in a house of 5 hearths until 1663.

There was no lack of official persecutors of nonconformists after 1660, chief of whom was the self-appointed deputy governor, Col Walter Slingsby. An ardent royalist, he had acted as a spy for the king during the war. On 28th October 1663 he wrote to Williamson (one of the secretaries in London) that "he had searched for a scandalous libel fixed on the Town House ... has seized an Anabaptist's letter; yesterday was appointed for the separate Church of Christ to meet and fast".<sup>9</sup> On 29th October 1664, he wrote that he "fined a conventicle of Quakers who met against the Act, but they did the same next Sunday and several strangers came from the mainland to seduce and pervert them".<sup>10</sup> The Justices will deal with the Islanders and as for the strangers, Lord Colepeper will give a very good account of them having orders to press men for Guinea or sea service. In December Slingsby reported "a great meeting of Quakers to be held, seized two strangers, desperate and profane canters, sent to the Castle ... some refusing to pay fines were sent to Bridewell and one of them, Priscilla Moseley, died there rather than pay the fine. He sent the strangers the Koran in English to read; if it should make them turn Turks it would be a great blow to the whole sect!".<sup>11</sup>

I suspect that the term 'Quaker' was probably applied indiscriminately to any nonconformist, people like Slingsby not having the wit to distinguish them. On 10th November 1666, John Lysle, writing from Cowes to Williamson, reported "a rumour that the papists in the Island have a design on the Protestants which may be, unless timely prevented, many of them (papists) being in offices of trust and several in the Island on military affairs".<sup>12</sup>

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8 Matthews *Calamy Revised* 363-4.

9 CSPD vol 82, 28 October 1663.

10 CSPD vol 103, 29 October 1664.

11 CSPD vol 106, 10 December 1664.

12 CSPD vol 170, 10 November 1666.

The year 1672 was momentous for in March Charles issued a “Declaration of Indulgence”, allowing dissenters and papists to meet for worship in certain licensed premises; this while parliament was not sitting. Immediately hundreds of applications flooded into London for licences. Martin Wells of Newport, who later looked after Tutchin’s flock, applied for a licence on 16th April for the house of William Slater<sup>13</sup> a small house of one hearth in the town. He was said to “have a small estate of his own in Newport and an allowance from the people of £20 p.a.” In May William Carslake applied for one for the house of John Smith in the parish of St Nicholas (Castlehold), a house of five hearths, big enough to hold several people. Smith had difficulty in getting his licence, for he applied again on 15th June and 25th July.<sup>14</sup> On 15th June, licences were asked for the houses of William Whitehead and David Wavell, both of “Westcourt”. A Whitehead had a house of 3 hearths in Cowes; a Wavell had the manor house of South Shorwell of 8 hearths; both are possibles. These were all labelled ‘Congregationalist’. In December a Baptist, Mark Wight, applied for his house of two hearths in the priory in Carisbrooke. John Martin, who had succeeded John Smith in looking after Tutchin’s flock, received a licence for Grace Byles’ house of five hearths in Yarmouth, where he had been the rector. On 19th February 1673, Richard Davis obtained a licence, at long last, for John Smith’s house in Castlehold. Richard Chidell applied for a place in Roud, in the parish of Godshill.<sup>15</sup> The truce did not last long. Parliament reconvened in February and promptly told the king he could not abrogate the law and Charles had to rescind his declaration. Persecution was resumed.

The result was the Test Act of 1673, stating that all persons holding any civil or military office must take communion, according to the rites of the established church and abjure transubstantiation, thus excluding papists. On 10 July John Haycock and his wife, Mrs Ladd and Mr Hayle’s wife were accused of being ‘popish recusants’. Sacramental certificates were issued<sup>16</sup> to those who received the sacrament in June and on the Isle of Wight some 30 names were included, including Hopkins the mayor, Goldsmith the minister and many companies of militia. Similar measures were recorded for Mottistone. At the same time some 30 people were accused of ‘deserting the discipline of the church and frequenting other assemblies’; these included William Smith, surgeon, Anthony Maynard the apothecary, Richard Fuckett the brewer,<sup>17</sup> all prominent people.

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13 CSPD Entry Book 27, 16 April 1672. Wells is licensed as a Presbyterian. Matthews *Calamy Revised* 519.

14 CSPD Car II 321: 248; Entry Book 38A: 183, 210.

15 CSPD Entry Book 38A: 183, 184, 279 (three other Baptists applied from West Cowes); Car II 321: 378.

16 Isle of Wight Record Office (hereafter IWRO) Newport NCB 10.

17 IWRO Newport 45/59.

Since 1662 Dr Thomas Pittis had been the rector of Gatcombe. On 18 September 1677, it was ordered that “that with the rectory of Gatcombe whereof he is now possessed, he may hold the rectory of Lutterworth”. Then a year later, on 16th September 1678, the king at Windsor, gave a warrant “to Thomas Pittis, D.D. chaplain-in-ordinary to the King, to hold, together with the rectory of Gatcombe, the rectory of St Botolph’s, Bishopgate, notwithstanding they are above 30 miles distant”. This appears a disgraceful example of ‘plurality’ and the avarice to which clergy were prone at this period. On 12th November 1682, John Bowker, the mayor of Newport, reported to the council how, on hearing of a conventicle in the house of Jane Adams, widow, in Castlehold, he collected the constables and went to the house. The doors being locked, they “forced open some and so got in, in order to disperse the meeting. The meeters dispersed themselves, some getting into a room, others getting over a hedge so they could not be discovered”.<sup>18</sup> About 25 people were identified and most of these seldom or never attended the parish church, but went to conventicles for religious exercise (or under cover of religious exercise). Thomas Cave, asked by the mayor why he hid, said “he had suffered for it once already and was loath to suffer again”. Richard Troope swore “he found 50 or 60 in one room, having the candles out, and when he came in they forced themselves out against him”. Jane Adams was fined £20 as per the Act, but being poor the fine was imposed upon others present, who were fined 5s each. They were tried on 7th April 1683 but lodged an appeal. On 21st August Tobias Pocock, Anna Wilson and Richard Hickman were bailed for £10 each to appear at the next general sessions, “then and there to give evidence concerning the Conventicle”.<sup>19</sup> On the 4th July 1689, Martin Wells appeared before the quarter sessions to “settle all questions and disputes concerning Assemblies, to subscribe to the statute to prevent papists from sitting in either house of parliament, and to declare his approbation of and subscribe to the Articles of Religion mentioned in the Statute made in the 13th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, except the 34th, 35th, 36th and part of the 20th” giving the church power to decide rites and ceremonies; a return to the Elizabethan church. He also said that a barn and outhouse, standing on the north side of the lower end of Pyle Street, is the place for “the Assembly for Religious Worship whereof he is the Minister or teacher within the Borough. All which things are ...registered in the Court”.<sup>20</sup> So it looks as though Tutchin’s flock had a home before 1694 when they took a lease of a building in Lower St James’ Street and March 1704 when 14 of them signed a deed (still extant) appointing 17 trustees and Mr William Leigh minister. To go forward to the next century,

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18 IWRO Newport 45/59 (Borough Sessions).

19 IWRO Newport 45/59.

20 IWRO Newport 45/59.

another Independent chapel opened in 1711, in the house of William Cooke in Carisbrooke, with John Foster as minister, and in the house of Anthony Howsen “for carrying on the worship of God by Protestant Dissenters”. In 1753 William Seame requested a licence for his house near the pound for the Baptists who also asked for a licence for the house of Ann Sanger in Key Street. In 1748 six parishioners in Carisbrooke wanted a place “as the minister of our parish is an utter enemy to all dissenters”. Dissent has never been lacking in the Isle of Wight, but neither was there much persecution.

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*Paul Hooper*

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# THE WOMAN OF THE MANSE: RECOGNISING THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE WIVES OF CONGREGATIONAL PASTORS IN EDWARDIAN HAMPSHIRE

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## Introduction

**A**s evidence from the official obituaries of pastors who served Hampshire Congregational churches during the period 1901 to 1914 testifies, wives often made a greatly appreciated and heartfelt contribution to their husbands' ministries. Thus George Charrett's 'life ... of self-sacrifice and service, [was] shared almost to the end by his devoted wife, the saintliest of women.'<sup>1</sup> Robert Skinner was 'at all times ably upheld by his dear and devoted wife'.<sup>2</sup> Arthur Marler's wife, Alice, was described as 'his helper in all his varied activities'<sup>3</sup> and Albert Hawes' wife, Emma, was 'an active partner in his ministry'.<sup>4</sup> Walter Talbot, 'was inspired and cheered by the faithful and loving devotion of his wife ... throughout the whole of his ministry'<sup>5</sup> and, in what today would be regarded as somewhat quaint language, Nicholas Richards' wife, Doris, was 'a true helpmeet and yokefellow'.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, these tributes are not confined to obituaries. For example, speaking at the recognition service for Willie Lawrence, at the commencement of his ministry in Lyminster in 1903, Mr Wellby, 'an old friend of the pastor and his wife', commented that: 'In Mrs Lawrence they would find their pastor's most able helper, and consequently he felt justified in congratulating them upon having such a man and woman to help them forward in their spiritual life'.<sup>7</sup>

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1 *Congregational Year Book* (hereafter *CYB*) (1933) 250. Charrett was pastor of Emsworth Congregational Church from 1892 to 1913.

2 *CYB* (1961) 450. Skinner was pastor of Ringwood Congregational Church from 1912 to 1915.

3 *CYB* (1926) 170. Marler was pastor of Fordingbridge Congregational Church from 1902 to 1909.

4 *CYB* (1956) 514. Hawes was pastor of Jewry Street Congregational Church in Winchester from 1912 to 1917.

5 *CYB* (1943) 439. Talbot was pastor of Buckland Congregational Church in Portsmouth from 1888 to 1902.

6 *CYB* (1958) 427. Richards was pastor of Jewry Street Congregational Church in Winchester from 1907 to 1910.

7 *Lyminster Chronicle* November 5, 1903.

Likewise, at the public recognition in 1908 of Henry Coley, the new pastor of Christchurch Congregational Church, a member of his previous church in Ryde referred to Mrs and indeed Miss Coley, 'as having been among their most energetic and capable workers ... [and] they almost despaired of filling Mrs Coley's place.'<sup>8</sup> Lewis Lasseter, the remembrancer of Havant Congregational Church, wrote in glowing terms of Edward Kirby's wife. She 'was the pastor's ideal wife and helpmeet ... compact of courage, good sense, keen wit and good humour, all wrapped up in the kindest of hearts.'<sup>9</sup> At Overton, Mary Ann, the wife of the renowned pastor, James Richards, was frequently praised for her various contributions to her husband's ministry. In 1906 at a meeting to celebrate the fourteenth anniversary of their arrival in the village, one of the speakers, a missionary, Miss Tull, observed that 'Mrs Richards toiled incessantly for the good of the church, and her influence was always exerted in the direction of peace.' Indeed, she went further and struck a cautionary note by favourably contrasting Mrs Richards with some ministers' wives who 'were not constructive ... [but] destructive.'<sup>10</sup> As a final example, at the recognition of Richard Baldwin Brindley as pastor of Immanuel Church, Southbourne, in 1912, a speaker from the church at Finchley where he had previously ministered observed that they would not forget how he had been 'constantly sustained and helped by Mrs Brindley whose radiance of spirit endeared her to all who knew her.'<sup>11</sup> Such tributes could, of course, be dismissed as mere rhetorical flourishes. However, their frequent occurrence and the fact that they appear in a variety of sources would suggest that they were, on the whole, genuine.

Their validity is also reinforced by the fact that at farewell gatherings for pastors, the contributions that had been made by their wives were duly acknowledged in not only what was said but also in personal gifts. Mrs Humphrey Davies, for example, the wife of Alton's pastor, was 'the recipient of a special present, consisting of a pair of silver candlesticks and a silver photograph frame'.<sup>12</sup> Mrs Robert Teasdale, the wife of Gosport's pastor, was presented 'with a handsome silver-plated tea and coffee service'.<sup>13</sup> Mrs Richard Wells, the wife of Havant's pastor, was given 'a diamond and ruby ring ... on behalf of the congregation and friends, to mark the esteem' in which she was held.<sup>14</sup> While

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8 *Christchurch Times* February 8, 1908. In the case of Miss Coley 'it was a fact that they had no lady left who should take ... [her] place in their Sunday school.'

9 L Lasseter *These Fifty Years 1891-1941 Some Reminiscences of Havant Congregational Church* (Havant 1991) 19.

10 *Andover Advertiser* (hereafter *AA*) May 11, 1906.

11 *Bournemouth Guardian* February 10, 1912.

12 *Hampshire Herald* (hereafter *HH*) December 10, 1910.

13 *Portsmouth Evening News* March 13, 1908.

14 *Hampshire Telegraph* (hereafter *HT*) November 25, 1905.



Mrs Leonard Dowsett, the wife of another of Havant's pastors, was presented with a suitably engraved 'silver salver.'<sup>15</sup>

As further confirmation of their indispensability, it is noteworthy that pastors themselves were very aware of the debt owed to their wives. The previously mentioned Edward Kirby 'was always the first to pay tribute to ... [his wife's] sane Scottish judgement to which he would constantly defer.'<sup>16</sup> Hugh Ross Williamson on leaving Abbey Congregational Church in Romsey for Trowbridge, thanked his congregation 'very kindly for the references they had made to Mrs Williamson. Without her he could never have been enabled to do what he had been privileged to do.'<sup>17</sup> While one of the fullest and most moving tributes, paid by a pastor to the part played by his wife in the ministry of the church, comes from Alfred Capes Tarbolton's farewell address to the members of London Street Congregational Church in Basingstoke:

In all that I have tried to do for the Church during these many years I should like to say—what I can never fully express—what splendid help, particularly in the younger years, was rendered by my dear wife. What she has been nobody knows as I know. Some of you know better than others what she was in her going in and out among the people in the years when it was possible to do so ... I know how the troubles that have come into the homes of members of the Church have pressed upon her heart as though they were her own troubles. Year after year I have seen her bear the burden of the troubles of others in the Church. I told her sometimes jokingly that it did not do to go away even into a boarding house, because somehow people found her out and came and poured out their sorrows to her. Some of you know this better than others, but there are many here to-night that do know it, and I thank God for what she has been—a true helper.<sup>18</sup>

Clearly, this was recognition that without Mrs Tarbolton's involvement her husband's ministry would have been diminished.

In this article due recognition is given to the various contributions which pastors' wives made and to the qualities which they brought to what was a demanding and multi-faceted role. For source material a heavy reliance has been placed on newspaper reports of church events, in which the references to pastors' wives are invariably positive ones. The extent to which they would have wanted to qualify or, indeed, embellish the accolades bestowed upon them is not known. Indeed, seeking direct testimony from pastors' wives remains a particular research challenge and is undoubtedly a field in which there is more work to be done. In carrying out the information gathering for this paper, evidence in the form of

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<sup>15</sup> *Congregational Church First Church Minute Book 1847-1910* Hampshire Record Office (hereafter HRO) 10A05/A1/1 296.

<sup>16</sup> Lasseter *Havant* 19.

<sup>17</sup> *Romsey Advertiser* (hereafter RA) September 23, 1904.

<sup>18</sup> *Hants and Berks Gazette* (hereafter HBG) February 2, 1907.

diaries and letters of pastors' wives has not been unearthed. However, from what has already been said it is clear that without their contribution something of considerable value would have been lacking. As has been mentioned elsewhere, pastors' wives could be said to have had their distinctive niches within the overall ministry of their husband's churches.<sup>19</sup> In this respect it is striking that in a number of instances they have been accurately described as 'co-worker[s]' with their husbands.<sup>20</sup> However, the part played by pastors' wives has often been hidden or overlooked and it deserves to receive greater recognition.

### All Quiet on the Home Front

Most pastors were married. For those who were single securing a suitable wife was often regarded as a priority. At least four pastors married while ministering at churches in Hampshire during the Edwardian era. One of these was Reginald Thompson, Alfred Capes Tarbolton's successor at London Street who served from 1907 to 1911. A souvenir photograph of his wedding to Miss Dorothy Holmes in July 1908 was even included in the church magazine. There was a tragic postscript to this marriage. In 1912, not long after the Thompsons had moved from Basingstoke to Wolverhampton, Dorothy died as a result of complications arising from the birth of their second child. This was duly reported in the *British Congregationalist* together with a brief acknowledgement of her contribution:

Both at Basingstoke and at Wolverhampton Mrs Thompson had played an admirable and important part in Congregational Church life, and her engaging personality had endeared her to all with whom she came into contact.<sup>21</sup>

Two other ministers who married while in Hampshire were Robert Teasdale, pastor of Gosport Congregational Church from 1902 to 1908, and Ieuan Maldwyn Jones, pastor of Albion Congregational Church in Southampton from 1904 to 1917. Lastly, while minister of Pear Tree Green Congregational Church near Southampton, Reuben Drew 'married Miss Anderson Hughes of New Zealand, a missionary and lecturer of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union', a reminder that even in the Edwardian era some wives had prestigious roles prior to their marriage.<sup>22</sup> For bachelors such as Harry Lewis, pastor of

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<sup>19</sup> R. Ottewill, " 'A Time of Joyful Anticipation': The Public Recognition Of Congregational Pastors in Edwardian Hampshire" *Congregational History Society Magazine* 6(1) (2010) 12–13.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, the obituaries of William Bennett, pastor of Warsash Congregational Church from 1898 to 1903, and William Clarkson, pastor of Above Bar Congregational Church in Southampton, from 1896 to 1903. *CYB* (1935) 267 and *CYB* (1936) 849.

<sup>21</sup> *British Congregationalist* (hereafter *BC*) July 25, 1912 333.

<sup>22</sup> *CYB* (1944) 425.

Alton Congregational Church from 1911 to 1925, having a female member of the family resident in the manse, in his case a sister, was seen as an acceptable alternative to marriage.

The need for a female presence was, first and foremost, to ensure that the home life of the pastor was such that it facilitated his wider ministry. In the words of Herbert Jesse Hayward, pastor of Whitchurch Congregational Church, when speaking at the celebrations to mark the tenth anniversary of James Richards' settlement as pastor of the neighbouring Congregational church in Overton:

... in all the congratulations to Mr Richards, Mrs Richards must not be forgotten. Much of the success of his ministry was doubtless due to her tender care and solicitude for his welfare.<sup>23</sup>

In a similar manner, in the obituary of Richard Wells, who became secretary to the Congregational Union of England and Wales following his pastorate of Havant Congregational Church from 1882 to 1905, it was acknowledged that 'his ideally happy home life was one of the chief sources of his successful career'.<sup>24</sup> While Humphrey Davies, who ministered at Alton Congregational Church from 1904 to 1910, in response to a vote of thanks at an annual church meeting for his 'devoted work during the year' explained that 'he owed a great deal of what he was able to do, to his quiet, happy home life and that Mrs Davies was responsible for this'.<sup>25</sup>

One aspect of what a 'quiet, happy home life' might mean in practice can be gained from the autobiography of Hugh Ross Williamson's son, who had the same name as his father. He was born in 1901 while his father was ministering in Romsey. Reflecting, many years later, on what it was like to grow up in a manse, Williamson observed that:

The week leads up to Sunday. For the long, learned sermons, the recondite extempore prayers to be delivered that day, your father has laboured during the week. To facilitate the composition of these, he has been guarded in the Olympian detachment of his study and you have been prevented from making a noise near it or from entering it except for disciplinary reasons when your exasperated mother has at last fulfilled the threat: 'You'll have to go to Father in the Study'.<sup>26</sup>

Although not explicitly stated it is clear that it was the mother's duty to guard her husband's sanctuary and to ensure that he had the peace and tranquillity he required and indeed expected. As was the norm in the vast majority of middle

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23 HBG May 17, 1902.

24 CYB (1924), 108.

25 *Minute Book of Alton Independent Church Meetings Mar 1892–Nov 1912* January 27, 1909 HRO 31M93/9.

26 H R Williamson *The Walled Garden: an autobiography* by Hugh Ross Williamson (London, 1956) 30.

class Edwardian homes, she was expected to play a major role in bringing up the children, made all the more difficult when much of her husband's work was undertaken at home.

For some wives managing the household budget was an additional challenge, especially in cases where their husband's stipend was not particularly generous. James Richards had this to say at the 21st anniversary of his ministry in Overton on receiving a purse of £26 in recognition of the service he had rendered:

He was very glad they had recognised the help given him by his better three quarters (his wife), and the better three quarters of the purse would go to her, because she was his Chancellor of the Exchequer. They had come to Overton on a very much lower income than they had been used to, and it was difficult to keep out of debt, but his wife had managed it (applause).<sup>27</sup>

Of course, not all Congregational pastors were as financially stretched as Mr and Mrs Richards, but it was still important for them to behave responsibly where financial matters were concerned.

This was because, in sustaining the home life of pastors, their wives were not only providing support for their husbands but also demonstrating the virtues of Christian family life. With the pastor and his wife being very much in the public eye, there was a need to ensure that their relationship and what went on in their home was exemplary in terms of Christian values and practices, not only with regard to the rearing of children and the household budget but also in respect of family prayers and bible reading. One can only speculate on some of the tensions to which this might have given rise. In making the point, it is recognised that the evidence on which this article is based is biased towards those marriages where the pastor's home life was harmonious. If there were marital tensions it is very unlikely that they would have been aired, especially in public. It is therefore impossible to provide a full assessment of the extent to which the home lives of pastors were happy or otherwise.

While the domestic sphere loomed large it was, of course, by no means the only realm in which the contribution of pastors' wives was evident. In many instances, their presence and influence was felt throughout the church family and beyond.

## **A Source of Solace**

As might be expected, and as the earlier quotation concerning the wife of Alfred Capes Tarbolton illustrates, it was in sharing and enriching their husbands' pastoral role that many wives excelled. In a similar manner to Mrs Tarbolton, Mrs Hugh Ross Williamson, was praised for being 'solicitous for the welfare of every member of the church and congregation.'<sup>28</sup> At a time when

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<sup>27</sup> *AA* May 30, 1913.

<sup>28</sup> *RA* September 23, 1904.

gender divisions were more sharply drawn than they are today, it is probable that women who constituted the majority of church members and congregations would have felt far more comfortable in discussing certain of their problems and concerns with the pastor's wife rather than with the pastor himself, however approachable and understanding he might be. Examples of such problems might well have included matters of a sexual nature, child rearing and bereavement.

Ideally, the pastor and his wife needed to be partners in the pastoral sphere of the church's ministry. An example of such a partnership at work can be seen, once again, in the following assessment of the ministry of Mr and Mrs James Richards:

the Pastor and his no less estimable wife are the ideal of what a country parson and his wife should be. They have won a well-merited renown for hospitality, geniality, and better still, for the sweet words of comfort and faith with which they have solaced the afflicted and troubled.<sup>29</sup>

James and his wife appear to have been an exemplary couple in the joint care that they exercised for the wellbeing of 'their flock'. This may have been due to the fact, at least in part, that they had had twelve children, with a number of them dying in infancy. That said, it is almost certainly the case that other clerical couples were as diligent in visiting and empathising with those experiencing difficulties.

## **Making their Mark**

In addition to being a source of comfort, pastors' wives often made their mark in one or more of the organisations which Congregational churches spawned. Indeed, as will be seen, some were instrumental in their establishment.

Of these organisations, the most significant was the Sunday school and wives could often be found in the ranks of those teaching scholars. Furthermore, if they had a background in education they might well be called upon to apply their expertise and experience by taking on additional responsibilities, such as helping Sunday school teachers prepare for classes and in training and nurturing them in the application of what were known as 'new methods'. These were intended to serve as an antidote to the potential boredom induced by traditional methods which included rote learning in large groups covering a wide age range. A more progressive approach involved the grading of scholars and making the instruction as bright and attractive as possible. One of those with expertise in this field was Mrs Ernest Franks, wife of Gosport's Congregational pastor, who had been 'the superintendent of a large Christian Girls' Boarding School in Calcutta' before her marriage, and while at Gosport 'rendered much appreciated

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29 HBG May 4, 1901.

service in connection with the training of teachers.<sup>30</sup> Along with her husband, she also contributed a great deal to the promotion of work amongst the young throughout the county. Nevertheless, while the proficiency of women was valued, it was generally left to men to oversee and superintend work of this kind.

Apart from the Sunday school the wives of pastors were active in outreach activities of other kinds. At Overton, for example, various initiatives were attributable to Mrs Richards, thereby confirming that she and her husband were true partners in the ministry. One of these was to set up and run a juvenile sewing class. Another was 'the idea of a bazaar to provide a bath-chair for the aged and infirm of the parish.'<sup>31</sup> Not surprisingly, perhaps, wives were often called upon and indeed expected to play a leading role in organising bazaars and other fund raising events, such as sales of work. Thus, their names frequently appeared in the lists of stallholders. At a bazaar organised by Christchurch Congregational Church in 1902, Mrs Learmount, the wife of the pastor, headed the list and there was even a photograph of her and her husband in the bazaar brochure. While at the farewell event for her husband, Mrs Williamson was praised more broadly as someone who had 'always been so ready to help in any good work.'<sup>32</sup>

A number of wives were accomplished musically and thus took a particular interest in this sphere of church life. For Mrs Humphrey Davies at Alton it was the Children's Band that received her special attention<sup>33</sup> and for Mrs Reginald Thompson at Basingstoke it was 'establishing and fostering ... the Children's Missionary Band', in addition to a Girls' Guild.<sup>34</sup> While in 1902 the senior deacon of Ringwood Congregational Church thanked Mrs Martin Taylor 'for her valuable services as organist for the last eighteen months.'<sup>35</sup> The musical talents of some wives were also on display in social settings. In the case of Mrs Reginald Thompson one of these was the popular Pleasant Saturday Evening entertainments, arranged by London Street Congregational Church. In January 1909, she was not only praised for organising an 'excellent programme' but also sang two songs 'The woman that shops' and 'A milk-maid's song' with an encore 'Dear little star'. According to the press report, her singing and that of the other contributors 'excited the greatest pleasure, as was evident by the hearty and prolonged applause which followed each in turn.'<sup>36</sup>

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30 *HT* January 16, 1914. As Miss Lloyd, she had been appointed superintendent in 1897. She also had charge of similar educational work in the villages nearby.

31 *AA* October 16, 1908.

32 *RA* September 23, 1904.

33 *HH* December 10, 1910.

34 *HBG* February 25, 1911

35 *Hampshire Independent* September 20, 1902.

36 *HBG* January 30, 1909.

To complete the picture, pastors' wives were often expected to identify with some or all of the church organisations specifically for women by serving as office holders. Thus, 'in all things connected with women's work in the Church ... [Mrs Edward Kirby] took her rightful place as president and leader.'<sup>37</sup> At the prestigious Avenue Congregational Church in Southampton, Mrs George Startup was, in 1906, President of the Ladies' Working Society; Girls' Missionary Working Society; and The Tea Committee; and Vice-President of The London Missionary Society—Women's Auxiliary.<sup>38</sup> Such office holding is likely to have been replicated at other churches for which equivalent information is not available. How far it implied active engagement is difficult to judge but even at a symbolic level it demonstrated something of the aura attached to the wives of pastors.

## Conclusion

Some pastors' wives were in the public eye and received due credit for the work that they did at church events and more widely. Others, however, were content to remain in the background. This does not mean that their contributions were of any less consequence simply that, in keeping with the conventions of the period, they were happy to leave the limelight to their husbands.

As has been demonstrated the demands made of a pastor's wife were often considerable. In the words of Godden, she was 'expected to support and encourage her husband at home, and also perhaps to work alongside him, taking an active role in the work of the chapel and its many associated groups and endeavours.'<sup>39</sup> This was potentially a gruelling mix of responsibilities, requiring a particular blend of domestic, organisational and people skills if they were to be exercised effectively and sensitively. In this context a comment of Charles Sylvester Horne, the esteemed pastor of Whitefield's Tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road, which he made during a sermon at the autumnal gathering of the Hampshire Congregational Union [HCU] held at Basingstoke in 1909 is particularly apposite; 'I can say that my father was a minister in this county, in the town of Odiham; and my mother, who was as good a minister as he was, was there to.'<sup>40</sup> Although intended as a humorous remark, it was almost certainly insightful. Humour was also used by Ernest Franks to make a similar point at Fareham Congregational Church's anniversary meeting in 1912. He argued that it 'was an injustice for a church to look upon a minister's wife as the pastor's

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37 Lasseter Havant 19.

38 *The Avenue Congregational Church, Southampton, Record for 1906.*

39 R. Godden *The Women of Winchester's Chapels 1851–1901*, unpublished MA dissertation (University of Winchester, 2007) 27.

40 *HBG*, October 2, 1909. Horne's father Charles Horne was pastor of Odiham Congregational Church from 1859 to 1862. Sylvester was born in 1865.

curate, while he admitted that in his own case Mrs Franks was his bishop.<sup>41</sup> In eliciting the intended laughter, such comments revealed something of the unresolved ambiguity lying at the heart of Congregational ministry. How should the intrinsic worth and value of the contribution of the wives of pastors be recognised? It is noticeable that during the Edwardian era this question was never discussed or debated at meetings of the HCU nor was the contribution of women to the life of the church more generally.

At national level, however, there were stirrings. For example, in 1912 the following letter appeared in the *British Congregationalist*:

Sir—I see that there is to be again this year a meeting for minister's wives in connection with the Congregational Union Assembly. So far as can be found from the programme published in your issue of this week, this appears to be the only women's meeting arranged for. There is, it seems a meeting for Young People, but women as a class appear to be unrepresented. This has struck me as something of an anomaly for several years and I think that I may claim in this that I speak for many of the women in our churches. Congregationalism has never been lacking in able and devoted women, and is at the present time well represented in the multifarious branches of women's work, in the mission field, in the slum settlement, and in all kinds of social, educational, and evangelical labours. Do our women workers receive quite adequate recognition at our denominational gatherings?<sup>42</sup>

At the meeting for minister's wives the new Chairman of the Congregational Union, Dr Walter Adeney, duly acknowledged the dependence of the Church on their contribution. Nonetheless, in his eyes, the first priority of a wife must remain the home since it needed to be for the minister 'a refuge and a place of rest, in which he can gather strength, both spiritual and physical for his work.'<sup>43</sup>

Even though such a view was still commonplace, it was increasingly open to question, not least by what was happening in wider Edwardian society. Here the impact of what has become known as 'the first wave of feminism' was becoming more overt. Moreover, as highlighted in this article, the domestic sphere was only one of a number in which pastors' wives could excel. Thus, a strong case can be made for recognising and celebrating their multifaceted contribution to the wellbeing of Congregational churches.

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*Roger Ottewill*

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<sup>41</sup> *Hampshire Post*, October 25, 1912.

<sup>42</sup> *BC* May 9, 1912 318.

<sup>43</sup> *TBC* May 16, 1912 359.



## CONGREGATIONALISM IN ANGUS

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### Angus

The Scottish writer and historical novelist, Nigel Tranter,<sup>1</sup> noted that the county of Angus has long had an influence far beyond its size and population.

The fact that it contained Dundee—before this became a county in itself—the fourth city of the land, helped of course; but Angus was important before Dundee was. From the earliest recorded times this was a vital area of the country, the centre of the main Pictish power; and though, with the growing supremacy of the Scottish monarchy, neighbouring Perthshire tended to become the focus of government, largely for strategic reasons ... nevertheless Angus remained of major status ... its marmaorship and later earldom always amongst the most influential; and when agriculture, industry and fisheries superseded the earlier manifestations of power and authority, it was still to the fore.<sup>2</sup>

In the 40 years after 1755, the population of the Angus parish of Clova and Cortachy fell by over 18%—attributed to the thriving state of manufacturing in urban centres in the county, and the higher wages available there.<sup>3</sup> Between 1795 and 1841, the population would fall by a further 15%.<sup>4</sup>

Yet the story in the burghs was very different. Between 1801 and 1831 the population of Montrose increased by 51%.<sup>5</sup> Forfar grew by over 60% between the 1801 and 1841 censuses.<sup>6</sup> Scotland was changing—and not just numerically. The parish minister of Forfar reckoned that in the 1730s and 1740s there were no more than seven kettles, bellows or watches in the parish. By the 1790s, in contrast:

tea-kettles and hand-bellows are the necessary furniture of the poorest home in the parish, and almost the meanest menial servant must have his watch.<sup>7</sup>

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1 Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (hereafter ODNB)

2 N Tranter *The Queen's Scotland: The Eastern Counties* (1972) 176

3 W Haldane 'United Parishes of Cortachy and Clova' in *Statistical Account of Scotland Vol 10* (Edinburgh 1791–1799) 573

4 W Ogilvy 'Parish of Cortachy and Clova' in *New Statistical Account of Scotland Vol 11* (Edinburgh 1834–1845) 447

5 R Smith & J Paterson 'Parish of Montrose' in *New Statistical Account of Scotland Vol 11* (Edinburgh 1834–1845) 278

6 W Clugston 'Parish of Forfar' in *New Statistical Account of Scotland Vol 11* (Edinburgh 1834–1845) 697

7 J Bruce 'Parish of Forfar' in *Statistical Account of Scotland Vol 6* (Edinburgh 1791–1799) 516

## Some history

At the end of the 18th century, all the inhabitants of the parish of Clova and Cortachy were members of the Church of Scotland, “except 4 families of Episcopalians”.<sup>8</sup> This is a very rural parish—which even now contains no real village. A hundred years earlier, all the Angus parish ministers would have reported in similar terms. Yet in the 18th century new Christian communities sprouted in burghs and villages—across the county as well as the country:

by the 1820s<sup>9</sup> ... nearly one third of Scots no longer belonged to the Established Church”.<sup>10</sup>

The established church alternated between Presbyterianism and Episcopalianism. It was:

not until the toleration act of 1712 that there was legal recognition that the Episcopalians were a religious group separate from the Presbyterians, holding different views with respect to ordination and worshipping in a different way.<sup>11</sup>

When Presbyterianism was eventually restored, mobs in the south and west of Scotland evicted (in 1688) the Episcopal ministers. Yet north of the River Tay, “the people clung to their old ministers and their old regime”.<sup>12</sup> In Forfar, the county town of Angus, the Episcopalian minister remained in place at the parish church until the early 18th century—and as late as 1721 communion was being administered there at Christmas and at Easter according to Episcopalian rites. Angus was actually the only synod in the whole kirk which “tamely submitted” (in 1607) to the King’s “imposition” of a constant moderator. This was against the Presbyterian principle of ministerial parity—and looked suspiciously like diocesan episcopacy!<sup>13</sup>

Undoubtedly in some cases, urbanisation led people to be less under the “inquisition of churches”.<sup>14</sup> Yet:

Scottish labouring people ... were intensely interested in theology. Women found in religion an intellectual outlet denied them in politics.<sup>15</sup>

It may be fair to say that the hold of the established church was more tying in

8 Haldane ‘Cortachy and Clova’ 516

9 In the 1820s, Irish immigration (with its impact on the Roman Catholic population) had not yet peaked, and the Disruption (which led to the formation of the Free Church of Scotland) was still some two decades in the future.

10 T M Devine *The Scottish Nation 1700–2000* (1999) 199

11 A Raffé ‘Presbyterians and Episcopalians: the Formation of Confessional Cultures in Scotland 1660–1715’ in *English Historical Review* (Oxford 2010) 570

12 H G Graham *The Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* (1906) 267

13 W Marshall *Historic Scenes in Forfarshire* (Edinburgh 1875) 171

14 G *Social Life of Scotland* 348

15 A Clark *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (1995) 93

the countryside, and dissent easier in the towns. Dissent seemed to appeal particularly to artisans—and they gathered in the towns, where a new middle class developed. The success of the first secession from the Church of Scotland (in 1733)<sup>16</sup> perhaps lay not in:

the theological aspects of the patronage question but because patronage exercised by heritors produced ministers who had nothing in common with the bulk of their parishioners”.<sup>17</sup>

## Congregationalism

Robert Browne<sup>18</sup> (generally credited with being the founder of Congregationalism in England<sup>19</sup>) landed at Dundee in 1583.<sup>20</sup> Driven from England to Flanders—he decided to venture to Scotland to see if his views would be more favourably received. Arriving with four or five friends and their families, he did find some support in Dundee—but he quickly moved (via St Andrews) on to Edinburgh.<sup>21</sup> Certainly no Congregational church was established in Angus as a result of Browne’s fleeting visit—indeed it would have been nothing short of a miracle had it been!

In 1650 Scotland was invaded by the English army—which remained for 8 years.

Many of these troops, officers and men, were Congregationalists and were imbued with the missionary spirit and eager to win the Scots among whom they dwelt to their way of thinking.<sup>22</sup>

Yet whatever worshipping communities there may have been in Angus, there seems little evidence that they continued after the soldiers left.

## Glasites

It was from his Angus parish of Tealing in Angus that John Glas<sup>23</sup> was deposed in 1730 by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.<sup>24</sup> Glas concluded that the “New Testament speaks nothing of a national church: so that there is no such thing instituted by Christ”.<sup>25</sup>

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16 Forming the Associate Presbytery or Secession Church.

17 T C Smout *A History of the Scottish People 1560–1830* (1969) 218

18 ODNB

19 H Escott *A History of Scottish Congregationalism* (Glasgow 1960) 3

20 D C Smith ‘Robert Browne, Independent’ in *Church History* (Cambridge 1937)

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21 J Ross *A History of Congregational Independency in Scotland* (Glasgow 1900) 15

22 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 10

23 ODNB

24 W B Selbie *Congregationalism* (1927) 150

25 J Glas ‘The Testimony of the King of Martyrs’ (1729) in *The Works of Mr John Glas in Four Volumes* (Edinburgh 1761) 34

In 1790 the Glasites were actually the second largest denomination in Dundee after the Church of Scotland.<sup>26</sup> Impressive though that sounds, it probably says more about the lack of religious diversity in Scotland at the time. In 1768, there were 149 Glasite members in Dundee—and in 1782 there were 205.<sup>27</sup>

In 1843, a London Glasite endured a 43 hour boat passage from London, suffering from sea-sickness and a fellow-passenger announced (entirely falsely) that the “ship was sinking fast”.<sup>28</sup>

On seeing the Glasite chapel in Dundee for the first time, the visitor was:

struck by its public situation ... in one of the principal streets ... though apparently hardly so large as the London Meeting house, yet according to its form, the arrangement of its seats, and its large and deep gallery must be capable of accommodating a greater number of persons than ours ... was particularly struck with the superiority of the singing ... melodious, harmonious and lightsome.<sup>29</sup>

Between the morning and afternoon services, Glasites ate together—“an opportunity for the rich to share with the poor as a sign of brotherly love”.<sup>30</sup> The visitor’s assessment of lunch seems a little faint-hearted:

the broth rather thin but pleasant & not likely to disagree with the stomach having little or no vegetables in it.<sup>31</sup>

Arbroath was the site of the second Glasite church to be opened (after Dundee)—and a congregation was later established at Montrose. In 1768 there were 57 members at Arbroath and 35 at Montrose.<sup>32</sup> Around 1770 there is a record of a “group of Glasites” in Montrose becoming Baptists.<sup>33</sup>

Some argue that English Congregationalists lost a great opportunity to promote Congregationalism in Scotland by neglecting the Glasites.

Many who later became leaders of the seceding Presbyterians ... would have been favourably disposed towards a similar kind of independency.<sup>34</sup>

26 C G Brown *Religion and Society in Scotland Since 1707* (Edinburgh 1997) 29

27 ‘List of the Christian Churches Commonly Called Glassite Church members in 1768’ (copied 1877 by F Barnard from a MS in possession of Mr J F Deacon, Newcastle) (hereafter LCC) (Unpublished—University of Dundee Archives)

28 T Boasey ‘Notebook’ (hereafter TBN) (Unpublished—University of Dundee Archives) 126

29 TBN 140–141

30 H Sefton ‘Revolution to Disruption’ in D Forrester & D Murray *Studies in the History of Worship in Scotland* (Edinburgh 1996) 76–77

31 TBN 141

32 LCC

33 D B Murray ‘The Scotch Baptist Tradition in Great Britain’ in *The Baptist Quarterly, Journal of the Baptist Historical Society Vol XXXIII* (1989) 4

34 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 22 (quoting J T Hornsby, who was Congregational minister at Arbroath from 1943 until 1953)

## Old Scots Independents

There were also two congregations of Old Scots Independents in the area.<sup>35</sup> The first such church had been formed in Fife in 1768. The one in Dundee was established in 1769 by the minister of an Anti-burgher congregation there, who had protested against his denomination's views on swearing covenants. Suspended and then deposed, he presided over the Old Scots Independents in Dundee for twenty years. The other local congregation was in Montrose. John Lyall (a shoemaker) and David Milne (a flax dresser and merchant) were pastors there for a time.<sup>36</sup>

In the early 19th Century, many members were lost “to the Baptists”<sup>37</sup>—but also to the new Congregational Churches which would emerge. In Dundee, the Old Scots Independent Church became Congregational around 1803 on the death of the second minister—and it was to the Old Scots Independents also that Montrose Congregational Church owed its origins.

In 1843, there were just twelve congregations, but the Old Scots Independents had certainly disappeared from Angus by 1835.<sup>38</sup>

## Bereans

There were also Berean congregations at Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose and Brechin. In 1843, the Bereans had just four ordained ministers (one of whom was based in Dundee)—and the denomination died out soon after.<sup>39</sup>

## The emergence of Congregational churches in Angus

In July 1797 James Alexander Haldane<sup>40</sup> and John Aikman preached in Montrose (in the north-east of the county) as part of their evangelistic tour of the north of Scotland. No doubt Haldane smiled when he recalled joining a ship of the East India Company twelve years earlier, aged just seventeen.<sup>41</sup> The ship Haldane joined as a midshipman was called *Duke of Montrose!*<sup>42</sup>

On hearing them preach, a local man, George Cowie, declared:

These appear to combine purity of doctrine and discipline, with zeal to preach the gospel to all men ... I will go with them for I perceive God is in them of a truth.<sup>43</sup>

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35 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 33

36 *Dundee Courier and Argus* (hereafter *DCA*) 5 September 1900

37 Ross *Congregational Independency* 37

38 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 35

39 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 39

40 ODNB

41 Haldane was actually born in Dundee—and educated briefly at Dundee Grammar School—predecessor of the High School of Dundee, attended by the current author.

42 J Kay *A Series of Original Portraits and Caricature Etchings* (Edinburgh 1877) 37

43 W D McNaughton *Early Congregational Independency in Lowland Scotland* (Glasgow 2004) 181

SPGH<sup>44</sup> agents preached in the town in April and August 1798—and in May 1799, Haldane and Aikman returned—this time accompanied by William Innes, who had recently resigned from the Church of Scotland.<sup>45</sup>

Cowie had taught English<sup>46</sup> for a while at Montrose Academy.<sup>47</sup> Born in the burgh in 1761 (the son of a shipmaster), he trained for the ministry of the Church of Scotland and was licensed to preach<sup>48</sup> by the Presbytery of Brechin in 1789. He served as assistant to the aged minister at Dun.<sup>49</sup>

In July 1799, Cowie resigned from the Church of Scotland, unhappy with “both the administration and the constitution” of the national church.<sup>50</sup> Initially he worshipped with the Old Scots Independents in their garret room in New Wynd. When one of the pastors died, half the members placed themselves under Cowie’s pastoral care. Meeting initially in a private house, they then moved to Cowie’s own home. Gathered by his evangelistic efforts, others joined.

Cowie was ordained pastor on 28 August 1801.<sup>51</sup> The first Congregational church in Angus had started. There were just 16 members initially—but another 12 soon joined from the Secession Church. The congregation converted a large, stone barn (60 feet by 22 feet<sup>52</sup>) which was nicknamed the “Tabernacle Kirk”. The distance from the front of the pulpit to the front of the gallery was just 7½ feet.<sup>53</sup>

The May 1799 evangelistic tour also bore fruit thirteen miles to the south. The royal burgh of Arbroath prides itself on being the smallest large burgh in Scotland—and was the place, of course, where the Scots Declaration of Independence was drawn up in 1320. Just a month after Haldane and Innes, Rowland Hill<sup>54</sup> and Greville Ewing<sup>55</sup> visited. The destruction of church records

44 Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Home

45 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 182

46 D Mitchell *A History of Montrose* (Montrose 1868) 44

47 Montrose Grammar School, the predecessor to the Academy, is thought to be the first school in Scotland to teach Classical Greek—sometime between 1480 and 1490. The Protestant reformer, George Wishart, was a pupil here before becoming the teacher himself. Wishart, in fact, taught and circulated the Greek New Testament so widely that he was summoned before the Bishop of Brechin—and to escape the Episcopal sentence imposed, fled to England for nearly six years. A later headmaster of the school was David Lindsay—better known as the Bishop of Edinburgh at whom Jenny Geddes allegedly threw her stool in St Giles’ Cathedral. The reformers Andrew and James Melville also studied here—as did John Stuart Mill’s father.

48 But not ordained to conduct the sacraments.

49 Mitchell *Montrose* 108

50 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 270

51 Ross *Congregational Independency* 224

52 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 182

53 *DCA* 5 September 1900

54 ODNB

55 ODNB

in a fire of 1849 makes dates a little hazy—but in 1800 or 1801 a congregation was formed.<sup>56</sup> Preachers from Dundee conducted services, initially in the Masons' Hall, before a new chapel was built at Gravesend. Robert Haldane<sup>57</sup> contributed £100 towards the costs.<sup>58</sup>

Fifteen miles south-west of Montrose, students from Innes' classes in Dundee were regularly preaching. Conducting worship in Dunnichen parish involved a round trip of some 36 miles. Their labours were rewarded by the constitution of a Congregational church in Letham in 1803.<sup>59</sup> The first pastor was William Lindsay, and the congregation worshipped in a building<sup>60</sup> originally built by the Burgher Presbytery of Perth. Lindsay was the same age as Cowie—and had also been a schoolmaster. His appointment at Letham was originally for 6 months—but in the end he held office for nearly forty years.

Innes's students also travelled to Kirriemuir (another round trip of 36 miles). The catalyst for the formation of a Congregational church here was rather different. Haldane had visited here in 1797<sup>61</sup> but Congregationalism grew out of an unhappy Relief Congregation.<sup>62</sup> The first Relief minister in the town had resigned in 1794 (following the investigation of charges made about his teaching) and the congregation never rallied under his successor. For some reason it was to Congregationalism that the members went in search of pulpit supply. In 1804, David Dunbar, a student from Ewing's class in Glasgow, was settled as pastor.<sup>63</sup>

By 1805 there were four Congregational churches in Angus. None of them were large—and one of them would be short-lived—but a new chapter in the story of Christian witness in the area had begun.

## Itinerant and evangelistic

Nowadays it seems that Christians of other traditions often misuse the word *congregational* when they mean *parochial* or *inward-looking*. The early Angus Congregationalists were far from that.

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56 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 270

57 ODNB

58 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 194

59 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 271

60 Church Place, Letham

61 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 208

62 The Presbytery of Relief was formed in 1761 by three Church of Scotland ministers, deposed for refusing to take part in the intrusion of unacceptable ministers. Unusually for the time, the Relief Church issued a formal declaration allowing occasional communion with those of Episcopal or Independent persuasion. The Relief Presbytery of Perth approved the formation of a congregation in Kirriemuir in 1792, and a church was built in 1793.

63 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 272

In a letter to the *Missionary Magazine* on 18 May 1797, Cowie set out his conviction that missionaries should itinerate in Scotland:

while societies are honourably exerting themselves to convey the knowledge of the Gospel to distant countries, they should at the same time, look a little into state of their own.<sup>64</sup>

The editor replied that such a scheme was indeed in hand. It was just two months later that Haldane and Aikman had appeared in Montrose—a visit planned long before Cowie penned his letter!

Congregational churches (then as now) had independence in the administration of their affairs. It is clear, however, that there was a clear sense of shared endeavour—as well as a commitment to reaching far beyond the walls of an individual chapel building.

When the Arbroath church was built, the original trustees included Cowie—and Innes from Dundee.<sup>65</sup> When Richard Penman was ordained to the Arbroath pastorate in June 1805, he became known locally as ‘the Missionary Minister’ as he used to:

extend his ministrations on week-days into the neighbouring villages, from some of which, Barry, Carnoustie, and other places, persons attended the Sunday services in his chapel at Arbroath.<sup>66</sup>

Penman was not alone. Many of the early Congregational churches conducted worship far beyond their own church buildings.

As an example, the small congregation at Letham provided monthly Sunday evening sermons at Carnyllie (2½ miles distant) and Dunnichen (4½ miles distant)—and also, in the summer months, in Guthrie parish.<sup>67</sup> Haldane had visited Forfar in 1797 and 1799<sup>68</sup>, but it was on the initiative of Letham members also that a Congregational presence started at Forfar. The first regular service there was held in 1832<sup>69</sup> in the Town Hall. The Provost had granted permission to meet here—but the decision proved controversial with other councillors—and after just two services, approval was withdrawn! Services were then held in a hall which was used for theatrical performances.<sup>70</sup> In 1833, the 6 members at Forfar appear to have rejoined the Letham church—but this seems to have been a regrouping, for in 1835 a new chapel was built in Forfar.<sup>71</sup>

In 1825, the Angus, Mearns, and Perthshire Itinerant Society was formed. This

64 *Missionary Magazine* (Edinburgh 1797) 315

65 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 194

66 G Hay *A History of Arbroath to the Present Time* (Arbroath 1876) 256

67 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 204

68 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 212

69 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 271

70 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 212–213

71 Osnaburg Street, Forfar.



enhanced the witness of the Congregational churches in the area by supporting ministers and agents for varying periods of time to tour outlying areas. One itinerant in 1830 preached about 30 sermons and walked 170 miles, in a 4 week period.<sup>72</sup>

Brechin Congregational Church appears to have begun as a preaching station in 1831—supplied from Dundee.<sup>73</sup> James Haldane, John Aikman, and Joseph Rae visited Brechin on their tour of the north of Scotland in 1797. The Commissioners of Religious Instruction indicate a start date in Brechin of 1800<sup>74</sup> but this does not seem to tally with the other records. In 1836 around 600 people were in the habit of attending—four-fifths of whom were from the poor and working classes.<sup>75</sup> A congregation would not be formed until October 1839—a lesson in patience indeed.<sup>76</sup>

Details from Arbroath give a fascinating glimpse into church life. In 1838 there were three services each Sunday in the Congregational church, and one on a Wednesday evening. On Tuesday evenings the minister conducted worship in a private house attended by members of various denominations—and on Thursday evenings in another private house, attended mainly by members of the Church of Scotland.<sup>77</sup> He also visited the sick of all denominations who called upon him.

## 19th Century—growth

In 1805 there had been 4 Congregational churches in the county. By 1840, two more churches had opened—but the closure at Kirriemuir brought the total to 5. That small group of churches had encouraged 10 young men to undertake theological training—and had inspired its first overseas missionary. William Mills of the Arbroath church was amongst the first team of six missionaries sent to Samoa by the London Missionary Society. They sailed from the UK on 7 November 1835 and reached Samoa 6 months later. At once they were plunged into “hard and congenial labour ... by 1838 not less than 23,000 (Samoans) were under instruction”.<sup>78</sup>

The founding members of the Congregational Church in Kirriemuir had been from the Relief Church and the Congregational church met in the former

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72 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 226–227

73 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 271

74 *Reports from the Commissioners of Religious Instruction, Scotland Vol 24* (hereafter RCRI) (Edinburgh 1839) 452

75 RCRI 452

76 From 1841 the congregation met in the former Methodist Church in City Road, Brechin.

77 RCRI 49

78 R Lovett *The History of the London Missionary Society 1795–1895 Vol 1* (1899) 375.

Relief Church building. It is perhaps no surprise, then, that the restarting of a Relief congregation in 1828<sup>79</sup> led to the Congregational church ceasing to meet in 1829.

On 19 December 1841 the Montrose congregation opened a new church building.<sup>80</sup> Looking back on that momentous occasion, the preacher at the golden jubilee service reflected that:

Their forefathers were neither driven nor frightened nor starved out of the old building. They were crowded out.<sup>81</sup>

Between 1835 and 1844, membership at Montrose grew from 69 to 157. Membership figures, however, tell only part of the story. In 1836, weekly attendance was reckoned to be 350 in the forenoon, 450 in the afternoon, and 450 in the evening. A Memorial Hall was opened (on the site of the former church) in March 1878.<sup>82</sup> A second Memorial Hall opened in 1896.<sup>83</sup> By 1900 there were 316 members—and a pastor's bible class of nearly 100 young men and women.<sup>84</sup>

Other churches also had their encouraging stories. In 1899 Sir John Leng MP opened a three day bazaar which raised £620<sup>85</sup> to effect necessary repairs and structural alterations on the Arbroath church and manse, and to clear all outstanding debts on the church halls.<sup>86</sup>

## The 19th Century—Evangelical Union

In 1805 there had been 4 Congregational churches in Angus. In 1875 there were 8. The increase can be attributed to the development of the Evangelical Union. The story of the Union has been told elsewhere, but:

Let not the founders ... be thought divisive and schismatic ... They wished to remain in the church of their fathers, preaching the truth as God had revealed it to them; but that privilege was denied them. And now what can they do but draw closely together to one another, and form a new association of their own—few, but fervent; lonely but loving; frowned on by men; but smiled on by God; poor, but destined to make many rich.<sup>87</sup>

There was a church at Frioockheim from 1843 until 1889. The congregation joined the Evangelical Union in 1861.<sup>88</sup>

79 After failed attempts in 1802 and 1812.

80 Baltic Street.

81 *DCA* 21 December 1891.

82 *Evening Telegraph (Dundee)* 22 March 1878.

83 *DCA* 5 September 1900.

84 *DCA* 5 September 1900.

85 *DCA* 19 March 1900.

86 *DCA* 6 October 1899.

87 F Ferguson *A History of the Evangelical Union* (Glasgow 1876) 262.

88 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 222–223.

A second congregation was formed in Montrose in 1847 (by members from Montrose Congregational Church) meeting initially in the Thistle Hall. A church building<sup>89</sup> (with seating for around 400) opened in 1849—with the congregation joining the Evangelical Union in 1859.<sup>90</sup>

The EU church in Arbroath started in October 1863 when some members from Friockheim moved to the burgh with work. A year later a church of 51 members was formed. Worship was conducted initially in a hired hall<sup>91</sup> with the congregation joining the Evangelical Union in 1869.<sup>92</sup> A new church<sup>93</sup> was opened in 1879. In 1872 the congregation gained 11 new members but lost 21 due to emigration to the United States, removal to neighbouring towns, and death. In 1873 17 members left (mainly by emigration) and only 5 new members joined.<sup>94</sup>

Another congregation started in Brechin in the Temperance Hall in 1867, this hall having been converted from the First Secession Church. It is interesting how the stories are interlinked—as the Brechin Total Abstinence Society actually met in the other Brechin Congregational Church, until it was large enough to acquire its own premises.<sup>95</sup> The congregation met in the New City Hall from 1868 (in which year the congregation had 59 members) and joined the Evangelical Union in 1869.<sup>96</sup> A new chapel was opened in 1888.<sup>97</sup>

## The 19th Century—challenges

It would be wrong to pretend that Congregational history in Angus was all steady growth. There were also setbacks, divisions and disappointments. The details which follow are not comprehensive—but give just a flavour!

Brechin Congregational Church proved short-lived, and ceased meeting around 1850.<sup>98</sup> In Montrose a break-away faction worshipped for a while in the Court Room—but this breach seemed to have been healed shortly after 1872.<sup>99</sup>

In 1897 a case was called at Forfar Sheriff Court against David Clark, a draper's assistant—about his handling of the church funds and his failure to return financial records to the church.<sup>100</sup>

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89 John Street, Montrose.

90 Ferguson *Evangelical Union* 375.

91 John Street, Arbroath.

92 Ferguson *Evangelical Union* 374.

93 Keptie Street Arbroath—at first floor level with shop units on the ground floor.

94. McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 197.

95. Southesk Street, Brechin.

96. Ferguson *Evangelical Union* 374.

97. Southesk Street, Brechin.

98. McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 220.

99. McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 191.

100 DCA 22 October 1897.

The minister at Forfar claimed in the 1890s that he was forced to live on 13 shillings a week.<sup>101</sup> At the annual general meeting of the congregation in 1898, he charged a section of the congregation “with the intention of starving him out and persistently and steadily refraining from paying pew rents and from contributing to voluntary offerings”.

The Montrose minister resigned in 1872 due to divisions in the congregation. Under his successor, the congregation appeared to unite. Yet later on, anonymous letters were sent, one of which the minister contemptuously ripped up in the pulpit. A local newspaper was sympathetic to the pastor, and severe about the behaviour of the congregation.

The moral of the story is that although it may be a point of honour to undertake the pastorate of such a congregation, there is no doubt that it is one of great danger, and apt to make a wreck of any young clergyman’s reputation who may be foolish as to undertake it.<sup>102</sup>

Even Cowie, the first Angus Congregational minister, behaved in a less than gentlemanly manner. Cowie had been invited to become tutor in Robert Haldane’s theological seminary in Edinburgh in 1805. One Sunday in 1813, he was invited back by his successor to preach. At the afternoon service in his old church, Cowie deliberately chose to preach on Isaiah 31:5—the very same verse that his successor (John Black) had preached upon in the morning.<sup>103</sup>

If any coolness, as it is to be feared, had arisen betwixt the pastor and the brethren his connection was likely to be rendered still more uncomfortable, especially when interference of this kind could be suffered, much more approved and admired by the church.<sup>104</sup>

Black left and Cowie returned to Montrose, ministering in the town until 1824. It is pleasing to note that Black re-established the Congregational Church at Dunkeld—and went on to minister there for over 40 years.<sup>105</sup>

The minister at Letham had to work as a teacher to supplement his meagre stipend. He even kept a shop—until an annual contribution (from 1815) from a Mrs Puget from England (who visited relatives in the town) allowed him to relinquish shop-keeping.<sup>106</sup> The church’s fourth minister served in Letham for some 21 years. Miss Mary Anne Baxter (founder of University College Dundee and benefactress of the Theological Hall of the Congregational Church in Scotland) “attended his ministrations in Letham every summer”. Miss Baxter

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101 *Aberdeen Weekly Journal* 6 July 1897.

102 *DCA* 28 October 1875.

103 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 183.

104 ‘General Account of Congregationalism in Scotland from 1798 to 1848’ 25–27 in McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 183.

105 Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 350.

106 McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 203.

died in 1884. The loss of a benefactress and rural depopulation led the congregation to dissolve around 1886.<sup>107</sup> Her death in 1884, and the general drift towards the city, were more than the congregation could stand, and it dissolved around 1886.

Statistics from 1823<sup>108</sup> appear to show Congregationalism as a very minor force in Arbroath—accounting for just 1.01% of those professing a religious faith. Congregationalists also accounted for just 8.02% of the various shades of reformed dissent (i.e. excluding the Established Church of Scotland and the Episcopal Church). Valuable as the *Statistical Account* is as a snapshot of social life in Scotland, it does carry inherent bias as the parish profiles were penned by Church of Scotland ministers! Arbroath's writer was particularly dismissive of dissenters. After setting out the respective capacities of the Church of Scotland (2680 seats) and dissenting places of worship (2700 seats), he stressed that:

It must be borne in mind, that most of the dissenting places of worship are miserably attended ... (the late minister of the second Secession Church) was supported, in a great manner, by the voluntary contributions of members of the Established Church who attended that (evening) service and pitied his cause ... (three dissenting ministers were) literally starved out of the town ... all that can be said of the emoluments of the Congregational or Independent minister is that they must be miserably poor.<sup>109</sup>

Yet even this correspondent acknowledges that kirk members attended dissenting chapels—especially for their evening diet of worship. What did they find there that they did not find in their own churches? It is surely patronising to suggest that they attended simply because they pitied the cause!

A local MP, speaking in 1882, perhaps summed up rather well the contribution Congregationalists made. Speaking in Forfar, he declared:

It gives me great pleasure to ... testify my good feeling to the Congregational Church in this town ... You need not be told what important services the Independents have rendered to the cause of civil and religious liberty ... Scotland stand indebted to them ... for holding aloft the banner of spiritual life ... when the national church had gone to sleep.<sup>110</sup>

These sentiments could be applied across Angus.

## 20th Century decline

In Arbroath the Congregational and Evangelical Union congregations united in

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<sup>107</sup> McNaughton *Lowland Scotland* 206.

<sup>108</sup> T Doig 'Parish of Arbroath' in the *New Statistical Account of Scotland No 1* (Edinburgh 1834–1845) 97.

<sup>109</sup> Doig 'Arbroath' 96.

<sup>110</sup> *Dundee Courier and Argus and Northern Wärdar* hereafter *DCANW*) 12 September 1882.

1908/09.<sup>111</sup> By this time, of course, the Congregational Union and the Evangelical Union had united to form the Congregational Union of Scotland. Fifty years later the united Congregational church joined with the Maule Street Original Secession Church—but still only survived a further ten years before dissolving in 1968.<sup>112</sup>

The Montrose EU congregation closed in 1916.<sup>113</sup> In Brechin, the EU congregation joined with the Bank Street United Free Church of Scotland<sup>114</sup> in 1920<sup>115</sup> when their minister of 40 years retired.<sup>116</sup> Forfar Congregational Church continued until 1974. The church at Montrose—a congregation of the United Reformed Church from 1972—was the sole remaining (former) Congregational church in Angus as the 20th century closed.

## 21st Century

The earliest record of a church in Glen Clova is in 1010<sup>117</sup> but the current building dates back to 1855. By the late 20th Century, the Church of Scotland was holding only occasional services at Clova. In 2003 it was clear that substantial work would be required if the building was to continue to be usable. In 2004 the church was sold by the Church of Scotland to the Clova Kirk Trust.

In 2011 approaches were made to the trustees about the possibility of Congregational worship in the Glen. The inaugural service of Clova Congregational Church meeting at Clova Kirk was held on Saturday 3 September 2011. In March 2012 members agreed to a new name—Esk Congregational Church.

## Conclusion

In 1868 149 Presbyterian or Congregational ministers were recorded in Angus<sup>118</sup>—but this included Dundee, and categorised United Presbyterian and Congregational ministers together. Whilst the United Presbyterians and Congregational traditions had very different organisational structures, both (in contrast to both the Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland) were

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<sup>111</sup> Worshipping at Queen Street, Arbroath—the former Congregational Church. The former EU Church in Keptie Street Street was used as billiards hall until around 1979—and then converted into small flatted dwellings by a housing association.

<sup>112</sup> Worshipping at Queen Street, Arbroath. The former Secession Church in Maule Street was demolished in the 1960s when a ring road was built through the town.

<sup>113</sup> Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 270.

<sup>114</sup> Escott *Scottish Congregationalism* 271.

<sup>115</sup> Worshipping in the United Free Church building—which is now the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>116</sup> *The Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow 9 January 1940) 9.

<sup>117</sup> Haldane 'Cortachy and Clova' 574.

<sup>118</sup> *The National Gazetteer, A Topographical Dictionary of the British Islands* (1868).

“Voluntaries, absolutely opposed to the idea of an established National Church”.<sup>119</sup>

In 2012 there are ten congregations of the United Free, United Reformed and Congregational churches—with six of these being in Angus as opposed to Dundee.<sup>120</sup> It is easier to count church buildings or congregations than ministers. Part-time (retired or non-stipendiary) ministers do not always fit neatly into the records. In 2012, however, there are no inducted Congregational ministers in the entire county—whether in Congregational Federation or United Reformed congregations, or in independent churches calling themselves Congregational.

**Figure 1**—Inducted Presbyterian and Congregational Ministers in Angus and Dundee

	<b>1868</b>	<b>2012</b>
Church of Scotland	73	55 <sup>121</sup>
Free Church of Scotland	50	1
United Presbyterian/Congregational	26	
United Free Church of Scotland		1
United Reformed		1
Congregational		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>60</b>

Suspicious as the community in Forfar had been when the church started, the “festival” for its golden jubilee was attended by many dignitaries. The Right Hon W E Baxter MP presided. As already noted, he spoke of the great service given by Congregationalists. Yet he continued:

Happily the need for wakening up Presbyterianism has long passed away, and with it the desirability of any extension of church government outside of large towns.<sup>122</sup>

Why is a new Congregational church starting in the 21st century in a depopulated glen, when the national church (with all its resources) has centralised? Esk Congregational Church is an experiment—small—but established. Meeting monthly at present, the congregation gather on a Saturday evening. This is not on any point of theological principle—but in simple

<sup>119</sup> J M Reid *Kirk and Nation, The Story of the Reformed Church of Scotland* (1960) 121.

<sup>120</sup> 5 United Free Church of Scotland (Arbroath, Carnoustie, Dundee, Ferryden and Montrose), 2 United Reformed Church (Dundee, Montrose), 2 independent Congregational (Dundee, Gilfillan Dundee) and 1 Congregational Federation (Clova).

<sup>121</sup> 28 Dundee & 24 Angus parish ministers, 2 full time university chaplains, 1 workplace chaplain.

<sup>122</sup> *DCANW* 12 September 1882.

recognition of the fact that this is when the Glen is busiest with the many visitors who come to the area for recreation. Glen Clova is one of the entrances to the Cairngorms National Park—where a whole range of outdoor activities can be enjoyed. This is a different kind of church—trying to reach out as much to a transient visitor population as to local residents.

Other Congregational churches in Angus all arose as an alternative to established local churches. Esk Congregational Church does not exist to wake up Presbyterianism—or any other form of churchmanship. It just seeks to witness! Before Congregationalism started in Clova, there were just 3 public acts of worship in the Glen per annum—with the nearest alternative church being 9 miles away.

The inaugural service of the Congregational church meeting at Clova Kirk (by kind permission of the trustees of the building) was something of a milestone. It had been 144 years since a Congregational church was last constituted in the county.

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*Gordon A Campbell*

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## **Books for Congregationalists**

**Manual of Congregational Principles** by RW Dale,

**The Atonement** by RW Dale,

**Visible Saints: The Congregational Way 1640–1660** by Geoffrey F Nuttall

**Studies in English Dissent** by Geoffrey F Nuttall

**Christian Fellowship or The Church Member's Guide** by John Angell James

**The Anxious Inquirer** by John Angell James

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Readers of this journal will be interested in some of the draft books being worked on. If you visit the web-site and click on the PDF Books link you will find draft versions of many books by important Congregationalists of the past, including John Cotton, Richard Mather, William Jay, John Angell James, RW Dale and PT Forsyth.

Also Edmund Calamy's 1702, 1713 and 1727 volumes of Richard Baxter's *Life and Times* detailing the ministers ejected in 1662 (these 5 volumes were the basis of AG Matthew Calamy Revised).

Click on the Whitefield link and there are further links to sermons of George Whitefield never yet reprinted and a new edition of his Journals that is more complete than that currently available.

There are many other titles too numerous to mention.



## REVIEWS

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***English Nonconformist Poetry, 1660–1700.* 3 vols. Ed George Southcombe. Pp 338 + 422 + 346. Pickering and Chatto, 2012. Hardback £275.00 ISBN 978 1 85196 965 4.**

George Southcombe's three-volume collection of nonconformist poetry has appeared amid a bumper few months for the scholarly study of puritan and early nonconformist literature; highlights have included Elizabeth Clarke's *Politics, Religion and the Song of Songs* (2011), *Dissenting Praise*, ed. Isabel Rivers and David Wykes (2011), and *The Works of Lucy Hutchinson, Vol. I: The Translation of Lucretius*, ed. Reid Barbour and David Norbrook (2011). Southcombe's collection is a worthy and very welcome addition to the field, reminding scholars and general readers that the majority of the poetry written by nonconformists during the period is remarkably understudied. In his general introduction Southcombe explores some of the complex relations between nonconformist poetry and printing; his is a very print-orientated collection—perhaps something of a foil to recent scholarship into early modern dissenting manuscript literature, although this approach does run the risk of criticism by avoiding manuscript poetry entirely. Southcombe admits that the decision by nonconformists to write poetry 'required thought and justification', but is also keen to point out that the notion of 'killjoy puritans' is a myth. This is, of course, not a new argument, although Southcombe would no doubt concede that there were broad differences between typical poetic writings by nonconformists, and those of court libertines such as Buckingham and Rochester. Southcombe also reminds readers that the 'poetic word' was a 'mode of political action' throughout the period, and that nonconformist poetry by, among others, the Presbyterian Robert Wild, contributed significantly to political discourse at crucial moments for the Restoration regime, such as the Exclusion Crisis.

More interestingly, Southcombe contends that poetry as a political act frequently involved the adoption of partisan readings of history. For a writer like Benjamin Keach, for instance, poetry was a vehicle for situating oneself within a tradition of martyrology, and for exploring what he viewed as the age-old atrocity of popery. In other contexts, poetry could provide a means to assist nonconformists in their spiritual journeys, with individual poems progressing from 'uncertainty' to 'empowerment', and adopting a 'didactic purpose' which frequently made them suitable for young readers. Furthermore, Southcombe recognises that early nonconformist poetry was 'profoundly intertextual'—in other words, poets borrowed words, phrases and ideas from each other in

complex webs of assimilation and echo. Hence, although Southcombe deliberately avoids printing any of Milton's poems, he has found many persuasive echoes in the texts which he has selected. More importantly, he quite correctly claims that nonconformists were reading widely in other seventeenth-century poets, including Francis Quarles, Andrew Marvell, Edmund Waller, and John Dryden. In this respect they were, as he suggests, 'participants in a wider early modern literary culture'. On the other hand, this very intertextuality, which appears to cause problems for any simple definition of 'early nonconformist poetry', surely leads to a couple of significant and interrelated questions: what, aside from the historical circumstances, is 'nonconformist' about the poetry selected, and how precisely do each of the writers reuse the literary tropes and images which they inherit?

In order to answer such questions, considerable further research will be required into the poets which Southcombe has so usefully highlighted in his collection. Although there are a small number of brief poems by Martin Mason, Katherine Sutton, and Nathaniel Wanley, the heart of the text lies in editions of selected works by Wild, Keach, John Perrot, Vavasor Powell, Thomas Grantham, Hercules Collins, and Mary Mollineux. Each poem is introduced fairly briefly, with a discussion of its date, copy text, variant editions, context, and sources. Southcombe, whose work as a historian is well known, is clearly very much at home in his discussion of context, and his sections on sources are also helpful. One of the most intellectually impressive features is the collation, much of it undertaken by Catherine Wright, of all variants across all early modern printed editions of each poem. Also interesting is the inclusion of much of the paratextual detail to each publication, including original appendices. Southcombe also provides a useful set of explanatory notes to accompany each poem; again, these are strongest when he is discussing the context of the works.

Where the edition is slightly less comprehensive is in its treatment of the texts as literature. Important allusions to other poems are not always recorded, and at times readers may have benefited from a clearer discussion of each poem's genre and literary inheritance: important aspects of a text's meaning. Such criticisms are perhaps not entirely fair, given that the primary emphasis of the volumes is on historical context. However, it is certainly the case that there is a huge amount of close textual research which can now be undertaken into these poems, exploring each author's style, technique, purpose, poetic occasion, and audience. There seems little reason to doubt that Southcombe's work will encourage such readings to emerge in the near future.

***The Oxford Handbook of The Early Modern Sermon.* Ed Peter McCullough, Hugh Adlington and Emma Rhatigan. Pp 624. Oxford University Press, 2012. Hardback £95 ISBN 978-0-19-923753-1.**

The sermon, whether shorter or longer, spontaneous or formal, has an honoured place within Christian worship, such that even in the age of visual communication most Christian traditions still retain some recognisable type of spoken address.

These twenty five essays explore the role that preachers and sermons played in the early modern period, as they offered an outlet for political propaganda, moral instruction and theological discourse. Taking an interdisciplinary approach allows insights from literary, theological, historical and sociological angles.

The experience of the sermon is universal: each has a preacher, content and an audience (or more than one). For the early period, a framework was provided by medieval precedents and guidelines about style and rhetoric. Some sermons were produced in a textbook and delivered verbatim—Elizabeth I preferred these approved homilies. For some these instant sermons must have been a godsend. Homilies presumed a literate delivery and one wonders what some country parishes must have experienced from ill-prepared or poorly educated preachers.

Several essays look at the aids available to the preacher: scripture, the doctors and fathers of the early church, and contemporary learning—particularly as the influence of humanism and biblical analysis grew. There is reference to the Elizabethan practice of prophesyings among the ‘hotter sort of Protestants’—shared study and exposition of scripture. In all of this, the reader is reminded of the significance of the pulpit in a society where other channels of communicating ideas were still in relative infancy or were restricted in their reach. Whether willing or no, church attendance delivered a captive audience.

Sermons were multi-layered events—ecclesiastical, ethical, political, educational and literary. They were mimetic and didactic. Through the use of scripture, preachers might reflect on some topical political event, remind listeners of a major feature of faith or inculcate a moral lesson. Some sermons were theological disquisitions lasting an hour or two that must have challenged the endurance of the hearers.

Some articles deal with sermons preached at a significant event or to an important audience and subsequently published, finding a second audience at least in the capital and environs. Countless others were not. As Ian Green notes, there is a lack of material other than printed sermons and so an awareness of this selection is necessary. This should be borne in mind. Not all were words spoken in the corridors of power or on the threshold.

The Civil War was a watershed. Foundations were shaken. Sermons were the artillery that assaulted the strong places of theological opponents and offered a means to deliver the truth claims of each competing tradition. Class antagonism became a factor as clergymen, accustomed to deference, were outraged to find

themselves challenged by 'rude mechanics'. Women and men who had run the risk of prosecution by the authorities for not attending church were able to gather and worship as they thought right, with preaching a key feature of the gathered churches. Little record of this spontaneous activity is available to the historian and so eludes the detailed discussion of the printed sermon here.

The book seeks to show how the sermon was received, although there is not a lot of direct evidence available and neither is it easy to identify what people actually thought about the preacher or to assess the impact of weekly catechising by sermon. The puritan practice of notating sermons extended its reach into the intimacy of family, servants and friends. The contexts of the parish church, royal court or cathedral are examined. Another essay deals with the role of women as patrons, audience and, very occasionally, author of sermons.

This is a handbook and not an encyclopaedia. Nonetheless it is disappointing not to have a section or chapter devoted to dissenting congregations. In Civil War England, new congregations often gathered around the preacher who was free to express ideas through the pulpit. The farewell sermons of the St Bartholomew's men were hugely formative for the dissenting mind. Preaching became a key factor in bolstering the congregation in the period of persecution, shaping identity and offering assurance and exhorting to perseverance. This area is not really explored, leaving rather an establishment feel to the book.

The collection covers ca 1500 to 1720 and whilst the bulk is concerned with England, a section is reserved for Wales, Scotland and Ireland. A companion volume is forthcoming for the later period.

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*Stephen Copson*

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***The Book of Common Prayer. The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662.* Ed Brian Cummings. Pp. lxxiv + 820. Oxford University Press, 2011. Hardback £16.99 ISBN 978-0-19-920717-6.**

Brian Cummings is Professor of English at Sussex University and specialises in the literary culture of the Reformation. He repeats here the claim that the prayer book has reached more listeners than Shakespeare and states that its prose has seeped into the collective consciousness more profoundly even than the English Bible. Nor is its influence limited to England for it has traversed the world with English colonists, merchants and missionaries and been translated into many different languages, including three types of Inuit. Cummings comments that by any standard it is a global publishing phenomenon.

This handsome and inexpensive book presents the prayer book in three important versions. The first is Cranmer's creation, his prayer book produced in 1549, two years after Henry VIII's death, when the English Reformation was beginning to become more obviously Protestant. The second of 1559 emerged after Elizabeth I's accession in the previous year when her resolve that the Church of England should drive a middle way between Rome and Geneva was becoming apparent. The third is that of the Restoration church settlement of

1662 which resulted in the nonconformists leaving the Church of England, the version which held sway for 300 years.

Cummings is at pains to demonstrate that the prayer book, though familiar, is by no means bland but has a nervous energy and vibrancy which emerged from the controversies raging when it was spawned. This edition is intended to make widely available a true classic but also to add a “sense of its complexity, mystery, and wonder”. He points out that with its daily round of prayer and the “occasional services” of christenings, weddings and funerals, this is a book “to live, love and die to”. He proposes “to present a religious book to the common reader” so that religion is “revealed as a much bigger, less private phenomenon than many modern secular readers assume”.

The prayer book began life as “a physical embodiment of a revolution in religious practice and in the politics of religion”, i.e. the Reformation, although, writes Cummings, that term is itself “a ragged shorthand for the domino of personal, communal, and national transformations which it provoked”. Although the Reformation brought with it war and civil conflict, it also created “the conditions for extraordinary kinds of piety, literary activity, and philosophical originality”. Cranmer’s prayer book is then a Reformation document, “an engine of change”, forced on churches, destroying the old ways of worship, but bringing new forms of devotion and a “brilliant literary achievement in its own right”. This work presents The Book of Common Prayer in three distinct texts; Cranmer’s of 1549, Elizabeth’s of 1559 (which incorporated much of Cranmer’s revision of 1552) and the 1662 version.

Cranmer wrote in the preface to the 1549 version that “common prayers in the Church” are “for the great advancement of godlines”. He noted that “heretofore, there hath been great diversitie in saying and synging in churches within this realme: some folowyng Salsbury use, some Herford use, some the use of Bangor, some of Yorke, and some of Lincolne: Now from henceforth, all the whole realme shall have but one use.” By 1662 this means of uniting the country and its churches had become a cause of division but the prayers are still impressive.

“Dearly beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge, and confess our manifold sins and wickedness, and that we should not dissemble nor cloak them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father, but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end, that we may obtain forgiveness of the same by his infinite goodness and mercy.”

And, let us not begrudge the epithet but the prose, though now familiar, is simple but magnificent.

“I ... take thee ... to my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God’s holy ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth”.

In many ways Cummings succeeds in his aims. Yet I am already convinced of the argument. I admire Cranmer and his fine works of devotion which my

forebears in the faith honoured and loved and literally swore by. But will the common reader, or the modern secular reader, open this work so that their assumptions may be tested and found wanting? I can only urge any CHS members who have their appetites whetted to read this work. Perhaps it will enrich your own private devotions and some of its language spill over into your Sunday worship. The Book of Common Prayer always had power and this book, if read carefully, articulates English devotion over almost five centuries. These prayers still have the power to move.

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*Nicola Page*

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***Calvin and His Influence, 1509–2009* Ed Irena Backus and Philip Benedict. Pp xiii + 336. Oxford University Press, 2011. Hardback £65.00 ISBN 978-0-19-975184-6. Paperback £27.50 ISBN 978-0-19-975185-3.**

This collection of 15 essays, plus an introduction, began life as a series of addresses given at an international conference held in Geneva in May 2009, organised by the Institute for Reformation History of the University of Geneva, and other bodies linked to the university. The scholars from a variety of backgrounds—ecclesiastical, national and disciplinary—demonstrate the pervasive influence of the reformer. The conference commemorated the 500th anniversary of Calvin's birth and these essays attempt to illuminate the nature and extent of his influence, concentrating on the intellectual, cultural and religious dimensions, rather than on politics and capitalism, although the political repercussions of Calvin's thinking are explored in a number of essays.

The editors provide a helpful introduction, discussing Calvinism as a concept (a designation which the reformer himself protested against), exploring features of his thought and action, and examining the transmission of his ideas to subsequent generations. Diarmaid MacCulloch writes of Calvin as heir to the teachings of the four great Latin doctors of the Church—Ambrose, Jerome, Gregory and Augustine. He sees Calvin as an Augustinian, the authentic voice of Catholicity in his time, who refers 1708 times to Augustine in his works. Indeed he sees the burning of Servetus as strengthening Calvin's position in Geneva and throughout Europe. From this event, Calvin was seen not merely as one reformer among many but rather as the dominant voice in Reformation Protestantism. He had shown that he was a serious defender of Catholic Christianity, a Latin doctor whose cool, measured Latin and French prose in the *Institutes* and other works offers a precise distillation of the western Christian tradition.

In addition, we have papers on Calvin's treatment of aristocracy as an orienting principle in his thought and ecclesiology (Harro M Hopfl), on the reformer as a workaholic (Max Engammare), on his self-awareness in his writings (Olivier Millet). I enjoyed reading William Naphy's paper on whether his church in Geneva was constructed or gathered, local or foreign, French or

Swiss, and learning of the relation of the Swiss Reformed Churches to the wider European Reformation (Emidio Campi). Herman Selderhuis's paper offers a helpful study of Calvin's treatment in life and since his death, given that he was buried in an unmarked grave, at his own request, which is still undetected, and that he feared posthumous veneration.

The book then moves to discussion of Calvinism in several aspects which papers on the whole I found less satisfactory. We have an address on Calvinism as an actor in the state systems of early modern Europe (Heinz Schilling), and one on the reception of his thought by, and the response to it of, 17th century reformed theologians (Richard A Muller). Calvin's distant role in the Dutch enlightenment (Ernestine van der Wall) is dealt with, as is Calvin in French Protestantism 1830–1940 (Andre Encreve). Friedrich Wilhelm Graf surveys the diversity of modern interpretations of Calvinism in Germany and the English speaking world. The appropriation of Calvin and Calvinism in the Low Countries (Cornelis van der Kooi) and Calvin's influence on British Evangelicalism in the 19th and 20th centuries (David Bebbington) are also scrutinised. The last contribution, by John de Gruchy, addresses Calvinism and apartheid in South Africa.

The volume's editors make no claim to have exhausted the subject of Calvin's influence across the centuries. As they state, the non-partisan and non-hostile study of Calvin is relatively new and theologians rarely seem to communicate with literary historians, thus perpetuating myths and propaganda.

This is an impressive collection and, as with any such volume, the essays vary in quality. Clearly Calvin scholars will need to study it and those whose interests lie in any of the topics covered will benefit from it. At the least the collection serves to show the variety and continuing liveliness of this powerful tradition.

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*George M Jones*

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***The Great Ejectment of 1662: Its Antecedents, Aftermath, and Ecumenical Significance.* Ed Alan Sell. Pp xii + 296. Pickwick Publications, Eugene, Oregon. Paperback £22.00 ISBN 978-1-61097-388-5.**

This book and the associated symposium, organised by the Friends of the Congregational Library, and held at Dr Williams's Library are among several ways the 350 years since 1662 have been marked this year. The book contains four sizeable chapters which were each presented in summary form at Dr Williams's on 9th June 2012.

The three historical chapters form part 1. The first by John Gwynfor Jones tells a somewhat rambling story of the puritans in England and Wales from the reign of Elizabeth I to 1662. Being defined as those who wanted reform in the Church of England whilst remaining within it, we learn how they were generally kept at bay by the tactics of monarchs and bishops and undermined by their suspected affinity with the more radical separatists and others who acted outside the established church.

Charles I's defeat in the civil war brought the puritans to the fore and their desire to rid their parishes of sin is described. We are told also of the growth of sects, like the Quakers, alongside the Congregationalists and varieties of Baptists. The organisation of church affairs during the interregnum is not so clearly delineated. Perhaps this reflects a lack of systematic organisation at that time but we are not told. After the death of Cromwell, most Presbyterians supported the restoration of Charles II whose 1660 Declaration of Breda promised 'liberty to tender consciences'. But hopes of toleration faded as the Anglican majority in Parliament passed a series of statutes, the most notable being the Act of Uniformity 1662, which brought the puritan period to a close.

An unfortunate result of this date separating the first chapter from the next two is that those ministers who were ejected in 1660, through former incumbents reclaiming their livings, are hardly mentioned, either in chapter 1 or in chapters 2 and 3. It seems their ejections fall into obscurity through not having taken place around a specific date or legislation.

Chapter 2 by David J Appleby tells the story of the ejected and dissenters in England from 1662 until the accession of William and Mary and the beginning of toleration in 1689. He relates how Charles II and his chief minister, Lord Clarendon, wanted to give toleration to dissenters but found it impossible to persuade the 'Cavalier Parliament' away from vindictive legislation. Having dismissed parliament in 1672 there was a brief period of toleration as Charles's Declaration of Indulgence allowed ministers and meeting places to be licensed. Appleby suggests that this showed Charles's true intentions. However parliament soon put an end to the Indulgence and Charles turned against the dissenters after they supported moves against allowing his Roman Catholic brother, James, to accede to the throne. The ups and downs of persecution are described, noting that Quakers often suffered far more than other dissenters as they did not practise subterfuge to conceal their activities.

Chapter 3 by Eryn M White relates the 1662–1689 period in Wales. Puritanism had largely been an English movement and its main influence and that of dissent was in those counties nearest to England. As in England, persecution waxed and waned according to who the bishop or magistrate happened to be and sometimes even the most vehement of persecutors seemed to protect dissenters with whom they had a family connection. Sometimes the fear of latent Catholicism among the Welsh led to a degree of co-operation between Anglicans and dissenters to combat it. A striking initiative that took place was that of Thomas Gouge, an Englishman who founded the Welsh Trust. Working with Stephen Hughes and other dissenting Welsh ministers, the trust translated and published many English protestant (not only dissenting) works and also an edition of the Bible in the Welsh language, distributing them with a degree of subsidy. This initiative was the more striking as we are reminded that printing was tightly controlled and could only take place in London, Oxford or Cambridge. A Welsh speaker needed to be on hand for proof-reading.

Finally, part 2, the theological section, consists solely of chapter 4 by Alan P F Sell, discussing the doctrinal and ecumenical significance of the ejection. He



starts with a description of the various commemorations of the ejection. These commenced with the bicentenary and occurred at fifty year intervals. He observes that over the years the issues raised by the ejection have been 'distilled', in that the progress of thought has led us to emphasize some of the issues of 1662, most relevant to our time, whilst all but ignoring others (such as the requirement in 1662 to abjure the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643). He moves on to discuss what he considers the key ecumenical question, namely 'who are the saints and whence do they come?' The answer, he says, is bound up with the work of the Holy Spirit and is essentially those who dedicate themselves to following Jesus Christ. Thus he opposes the imposition of creeds and confessions as tests on believers. His point is well made but I suspect he is largely preaching either to the converted or to deaf ears.

There are some surprising errors in this book. We are told on p36 that the 'Pilgrim Fathers' departed Plymouth on the Mayflower for the Netherlands and America. (Of course they had been living in the Netherlands for some time and were on their way to America via Plymouth.) On pp113 and 119 Richard Frankland's north Yorkshire academy is said to be at Rathwell when it was at Rathmell. On pp 242 and 265 Richard Baxter is described as a moderate episcopalian, which is not quite accurate but is more correct than calling him a Presbyterian.

Nevertheless an important story is told here. Whilst it may not be very significant in the broad sweep of world Christianity, it is a tale of heroism against the odds by those who would follow Christ rather than men.

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*Peter Young*

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***Victorian Religious Revivals: Culture and Piety in Local and Global Contexts.* By David Bebbington. Pp. xii + 307. Oxford University Press, 2012. Hardback £60 ISBN 978-0-19-957548-0.**

This new study offers a fresh examination and an original evaluation of religious revivals. Professor Bebbington's thesis is based on meticulous research and careful analysis of the historiography of revival in general and the detailed investigation of seven revivals which occurred during the Victorian period in specific localities throughout the world. His conclusions are sound and suggest that there has been too much emphasis, in the past, on drawing out similarities and making general points to the detriment of an understanding of the particularity of local events. In that sense the author offers not only an evaluation of revival but he also makes the appeal that historians should evaluate local events without rushing too quickly to draw more wide-ranging and general pronouncements. That, in itself, is a welcome point.

The book opens with two chapters which set the academic context and present a theoretical framework for the study. These chapters draw both on the primary research undertaken specifically for this book and on a careful assessment of other appraisals of religious revival. The results make for

fascinating reading. In his first chapter, the author assesses how 'revival' changed 'trajectory' from the seventeenth through to the twenty-first centuries. In it we read how denominational adherence, not to mention ecclesiastical structures and even ministerial and bureaucratic interference, contributed to constructing particular forms of revival and how, over time, there was a synthesis of these differences leading to revival as a phenomenon which drew support, and adherents, from a variety of denominations. The analysis here is penetrating, demonstrating that the local was all-important during the Victorian era, but arguing that this gave way to global, and non-denominational practice and understanding certainly from the 1930s. The chapter wisely warns the reader that whatever may be found to be locally significant later, there remains a sense of the global and the general which may be drawn from the very particular examples which are to come.

The second chapter assesses the 'interpretation of revival' in modern historiography. This is a thorough and enlightening account which shows the weaknesses and strengths of the analyses of the past, showing how most of them were context-bound, tending to run out of steam as social and economic factors, and even fashion, changed. Bebbington's major criticism of the analyses of the past is that general points were made at the expense of an understanding of the particular. He goes on to delineate his own framework for analysis which he characterizes as a model which highlights 'culture' and 'piety', and he goes on to employ his model effectively in what follows.

The subsequent chapters offer detailed but readable and fascinating accounts of revivals that took place in particular locations between 1841 and 1880. These include Washington-on-the-Brazos in Texas, Penzance and Mousehole in Cornwall, Weardale in County Durham, Moore County, North Carolina, Ferryden in Scotland, the north of Yorke's Peninsula, South Australia and around St Mary's Bay, Nova Scotia. They include Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian revivals. The format of each chapter is more or less the same, but this enables the demonstration of the unique character of the events at each location to shine all the more clearly. Professor Bebbington's primary concern is to say that each deserves to be looked at as a particular event in a defined location. His analysis presents the people and their social and economic communities as well as their religious beliefs and practices and each chapter displays a familiarity with the geography, demography, religious life and even the principal players which is truly remarkable. Bebbington's descriptions come vividly to life for the reader. He closes by demonstrating the importance of recognising the particularity of each local event while also drawing out the similarities between them.

The result is a fascinating account which highlights the inevitable tension between the local and the global, the organised and the spontaneous. This study should be commended not only for the meticulousness with which the subject is treated—it is a *tour de force* of historical research and analysis—but also for the major substantive point that is made: historians should be as keen to look at the specific historical events as they are to draw general and global

conclusions. The genius of the book is that it shows how inextricably linked those two points really are.

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*Robert Pope, University of Wales, Trinity St David*

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**Documents of the Christian Church 4th edition, original editions selected and edited by Henry Bettenson, third and fourth editions ed by Chris Maunder. Pp xi + 529. Oxford University Press, 2011. Paperback £16.99 ISBN 978-0-19-956898-7.**

Any teacher and student of history will realise the value of gaining access to the original documents which help to explain the changing situation and also must inform their critical judgments. Henry Bettenson understood that he needed to make a judicious selection of such documents in order to illustrate the Church's development and her doctrines, producing the first edition of this work, in the midst of the Second World War, when the Church and its values were under savage attack. Bettenson realised that there were large gaps in his final selection, expressly citing the omission of any reference to eastern Christianity between the Great Schism of the 11th century and 1922. As might be expected, the book was weighted towards a British (more correctly an English) and establishment readership, although Chris Maunder, Bettenson's successor as editor, tempered this bias by adding to the original material in 1999 a selection of more recent writings, touching on liberation theology, the Second Vatican Council, black and feminist theology, ecumenism and inter-faith dialogue.

The success of their endeavour is obvious, in that, after the second edition of 1963, and the third in 1999 (twenty years after Bettenson's death), a fourth edition is needed, when the Church in the west, at least, is under attack from secularism, materialism and indifference and when other faiths are seemingly thriving—although Christianity worldwide is still growing numerically. The third edition had included discussions of sexuality and procreation, touching on contraception, divorce, abortion, homosexuality and Aids.

Maunder's additions in this new edition deal with 21st century issues like global poverty, social justice, international migration, disability, domestic violence and child abuse, addiction, climate change, mission, genetic engineering, the use of the internet, and progress on Christian unity.

The book is a marvellous teaching aid and is to be welcomed. Yet it reflects its editors' expertise in Anglican and Roman Catholic history and doctrine and readers of this magazine may be disappointed at the paucity of material relating to the separatists, Congregationalists (only one explicit reference and that to the Savoy Declaration of 1658), John Glas, the Haldanes, the missionary movement and the London Missionary Society, and, more recently, the lack of any direct allusion to the ordination of women before 1975, or of the coming into being of the United Reformed Church in 1972 and its subsequent failure to inspire wider unions. They may be pleased at the inclusion of the Welsh Covenant of 1975 and the Swanwick Declaration of 1987.

***A People of One Book The Bible and the Victorians* by Timothy Larsen. Pp 326. Oxford University Press, 2011. Hardback £34 ISBN 978 0 19 957009 6. (Paperback due in 2012 £18.99 ISBN 978-0-19-966781-9).**

In this work, Timothy Larsen argues that the Victorians were dominated by the Bible, the “presence and reach” of which extended into every aspect of life. Larsen supports this claim about Victorian England, which I accept, with a series of case studies, devoting a chapter to each. In this way, he treats with E B Pusey and the Anglo-Catholics, Wiseman and the Roman Catholics, Elizabeth Fry and the Quakers and so on. Significantly, he chooses as his representative figures several women, so that, as well as Fry, we have here Catherine Booth, with William Cooke, to sum up Methodist and Holiness attitudes, Mary Carpenter battling for the Unitarians, Florence Nightingale for the Liberal Anglicans, and Josephine Butler for the Evangelical Anglicans.

Larsen’s thesis demands that he also take into his thinking the Atheists, for whom Annie Besant appears alongside Charles Bradlaugh, and the Agnostics who are represented, as is fitting, by Thomas Huxley. Finally, and also predictably, Charles Haddon Spurgeon is chosen to represent Orthodox Old Dissent, rather than the Baptists, or more correctly a conservative wing of the Baptists. Larsen has Spurgeon, who was the son of a Congregational minister, as the representative figure not only of the Baptists but also of the Congregationalists.

The weakness of Larsen’s approach is found in his choice of representatives. Although all of them are significant figures in their own right (indeed some are more significant than others, and Elizabeth Fry was not a Victorian for long, dying in 1845, just eight years into the queen’s long reign), do they in truth stand for a wider position than that which they themselves held? Readers of this magazine in particular, may question whether Spurgeon the glorious individualist, aloof from the Baptist Union, in his fortress the Metropolitan Tabernacle, can justifiably stand for the prevailing view in Baptist and Congregational churches. Indeed was there really only one prevailing view in any of the traditions which Larsen identifies? Given that, increasingly in the late 19th century, Congregational ministers were absorbing the advanced arguments of German biblical critics, his thesis looks a mite suspect, at least in this grouping.

In his conclusion, Larsen turns his attention to some movements which might have easily been overlooked, that is Spiritualism, Judaism and the Brethren, perhaps uneasy bedfellows in the same chapter. Nevertheless, my reservations aside, Larsen’s position is unassailable. The scriptures were central to Victorian thinking and invaded every aspect of life, from education to politics, from social reform to novels and the arts literature in general.

This is a scholarly book, with full bibliography and index.

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*Alan Argent*

***The Church and Humanity The Life and Work of George Bell, 1883–1958.* Ed Andrew Chandler. Pp xvi + 227. Ashgate, Farnham, Surrey, 2012. Hardback £55.00 ISBN 978-1-409425-56-4. E-book ISBN 978-1-409425-57-1.**

George Bell (1883–1958) retains a fine reputation for his independence from the establishment at a critical time in the Second World War, and explicitly for his public comments about the way the war was being conducted by the allies. His moral courage in questioning the blanket bombing of German cities, which was justified by many contemporaries as a form of revenge, is the more remarkable in that it was most memorably expressed by this Anglican bishop in a speech in February 1944 in the House of Lords, itself hardly a bastion of critical judgment of government policy. In addition to his participation in political life, Bell sought to give moral support to the German opposition to Hitler, he welcomed those fleeing from oppressive dictatorships throughout the world, and he had a lifelong devotion to the ecumenical movement.

Bell himself provides a starting point for this series of essays with this quotation from his *Christianity and the World Order* of 1940.

“The church ... ought to be a rallying ground ... Indeed, I would say that in times like the present all those who stand for the things that cannot be shaken should give support to one another. Believers in justice and truth, in mercy and love, in art and poetry and music, have this as common ground: that the things they believe in are indestructible.”

The essays in this volume arise from a conference held at the University of Chichester in 2008 to mark the 50th anniversary of Bell’s death, although Rowan Williams’ contribution was given separately as a public lecture in that year. Apart from Williams’ short essay, in which he expresses an admiration of Bell’s dual sensitivity to art and politics, that is an ability to hold in balance an attention to contemporary culture with criticism of it, only a minority of the eleven essayists are obviously professional theologians. They are Joseph Muthuraj who is a professor of New Testament in Bangalore and offers an Indian scholar’s insight to Bell’s promotion of self-rule for India and the union of churches there, especially in south India, and Jaako Rusama who teaches ecumenical theology in Helsinki and writes fluently and persuasively of Bell’s contacts with Lutherans, especially in northern Europe. In addition, Charlotte Methuen, who writes here of Bell’s ecumenical work as chaplain to the archbishop of Canterbury and as dean of Canterbury 1914–29, when he was secretary of the Church of England’s discussions with the Free Churches, lectures in church history at Glasgow University and is canon theologian of Gloucester Cathedral. Peter Webster, of the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, considers the context and significance of John Masefield’s nativity play, ‘The Coming of Christ’, being performed in Canterbury Cathedral over Whitsun in 1928. With costumes designed by Charles Ricketts and music composed and directed by Gustav Holst, it was Bell’s first successful attempt, as dean of Canterbury, to commission a new work of art for the church.

The editor, Andrew Chandler, is the director of the George Bell Institute and reader in modern history at the University of Chichester. He supplies an introductory paper on Bell and his importance for the 20th century church, as well as a consideration of resistance in Germany during the Second World War. His colleague, Philip Coupland, who discusses Germany and the unity of Europe 1939–1950, is a fellow of that same institute. Bell, of course, was Bishop of Chichester from 1929. Gerhard Besier, who is professor in European Studies at the University of Dresden, writes of the intimate association of Bell and Willem Adolf Visser't Hooft (1900–85), the diplomatic general secretary of the World Council of Churches, and of the benefits each acquired from this friendship.

Other contributors include Charmian Brinson, professor of German at Imperial College, London who reflects on Bell's response to the internment of German-speaking exiles from National Socialism in 1940, including some of the 33 pastors of the German Confessional Church and some of their wives whom Bell had brought to England. Bell denounced the internment of such refugees, in the House of Lords, stating "the refugees are not Hitlerism; they are the enemies of Hitlerism". Tom Lawson, reader in history at the University of Winchester, examines the moral history of Bell and the trial of Nazi war criminals, which Bell opposed, while Dianne Kirby, who teaches at the University of Ulster, turns to Bell's later years and his support for a foreign policy, informed by a narrow anti-communist view at the beginning of the Cold War.

This collection of papers provides informed and scholarly perspectives on a number of moral, political and cultural issues with which Bell was involved. However casual readers of the book might be misled into thinking that Bell was a lone voice, rather than one of several who had similar views. For instance, other British Christians, several of them Congregationalists, like Nathaniel Micklem, took a very active interest in those German church folk, like Bonhoeffer, who resisted Hitler. Nevertheless this volume of essays, from an international group of scholars, with a range of varied expertise drawing on different disciplines, offers much that a serious student of 20th century English Christianity, and its relations with the state, with war and morality, must reflect upon.

Given that Bell's witness was undeniably outstanding, this work helps the reader to discover how he lived out his high principles and his faith in the most trying and tempestuous times. Having learned more of Bell, however, will the modern Christian better engage with the social and political questions of our day? Will contemporary Christians find the prophetic voice, as Bell did, in confronting political simplifications that threaten the poor and the marginalised, rather than offer a transformation of society on gospel lines?

The five page chronology, at the beginning of the book, is a considerable help to those less aware of the events and their dating.

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*Simon Drake*

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***The Nature of the Household of Faith—some principles of Congregationalism A Primer for the Congregational Federation.* By Alan Argent. Pp 86. Congregational Federation, Nottingham, 2012. Paperback £5.00 ISBN 978-190408-001-5.**

This is an ideal primer—to pick up a word from the title—for anyone wanting to know what Congregationalism is all about. It's also a useful reminder for others who may know a little, of what it is in this ecumenical age of political sameness, that makes Congregationalism distinctive.

Highlighted here is the *polity* of Congregationalism, or the way the churches are ordered, or organised—a Congregational church is not episcopalian (having bishops and priests), neither are the individual churches organised by a national conference like the Methodists, nor as a hierarchy of councils, like the United Reformed Church. In this sense the churches are correctly described as independent.

Then there are the *principles* of Congregationalism: the first one of which is the “gathered church” in the gospel sense: *Where two or three are gathered, there am I in the midst of them* (Matt 18:20). There is an explanation of the importance of the church meeting and “the priesthood of all believers”—which underlines the belief that there is no distinction between what other denominations describe as “clergy and laity”.

That's quite a lot to get through. And Alan Argent does it very well. He presents a series of questions which take the reader through the history, personalities and nature (not forgetting some of the problems) of being a being a Congregational church. These cover the role of the pastor, minister, deacons, other church officers and the responsibilities of church members; the devotional aspects, such as prayer and worship, including the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism. Churches are encouraged to be mindful of the importance of mission and the training needs of people and outreach into the community.

For those with a thirst to know more there is a useful list of references for further reading.

In these days when so many of the folk moving into local churches come from other traditions (or none) with very little knowledge of what it means to be part of a Congregational fellowship, this should be a “must”. It should be placed into the hand of every newcomer.

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*Val Price*

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**Secretary:**

Rev. Dr Richard Cleaves  
17 Carlton Street  
Cheltenham  
GL52 6AG  
richard.cleaves@blueyonder.co.uk

**Editor and Reviews Editor:**

Dr A Argent  
125 Sudbourne Road  
London  
SW2 5AF  
alan.argent1@btopenworld.com

**Treasurer:**

Rev. C J Damp  
Bunyan Meeting  
Mill Street  
Bedford  
MK40 3EU

**Librarian**

Pat Hurry  
Bunyan Meeting  
Mill Street  
Bedford  
MK40 3EU  
pathurry@fsmail.net

**Distribution:**

Peter I Young  
24 Daisy Dormer Court  
Trinity Gardens  
London  
SW9 8DW  
piy@live.co.uk

Contributions to the *Magazine* should be addressed to the Editor.  
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