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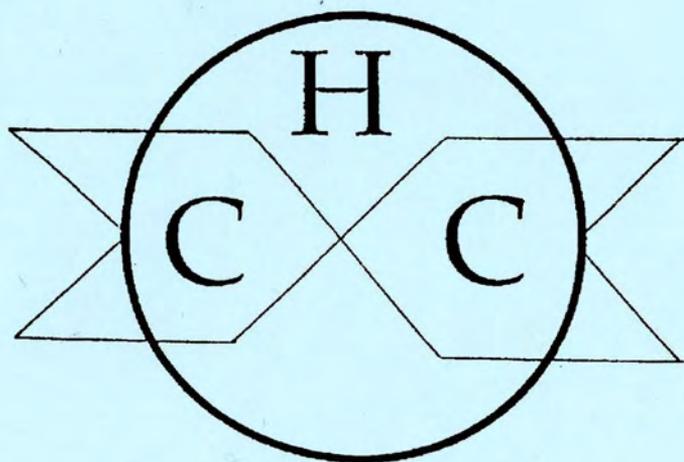
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Congregational History Circle

Volume 3 Number 5



Spring 1997

The Congregational History Circle Magazine

Volume 3 No 5 Spring 1997

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EDITORIAL

The CHC Magazine this Spring contains articles dealing with the genesis of modern Congregationalism in Henry Jacob's thought and action, the faith of, and its working, in the life and work of a major eighteenth century English artist, Thomas Gainsborough, and then conveys the reader to twentieth century Wales and the religious upbringing of a modern Congregational minister. We welcome the contributions of both Christopher Damp, our treasurer, and Yvonne A. Evans who are writing for us for the first time.

NEWS AND VIEWS

G.F.Nuttall

All serious students of Congregationalism will be grateful for the life and learning of Geoffrey Nuttall who has been engaged in research and writing the history of Nonconformity in general, but especially of Congregationalism, since 1925 and is still producing articles of scholarly depth and erudition. At the age of fourteen he took part in a national competition, held within the Congregational Union of England and Wales, which resulted eventually in the publication of Albert Peel's One Hundred Eminent Congregationalists (1927) which itself later led to Peel's The Congregational Two Hundred (1948). In this competition the young Nuttall, a precocious schoolboy, won a third part of the second prize and thus he came to the notice of many prominent figures in CUEW.

Since then he has studied at Oxford (Balliol and Mansfield) and taught at New College, London. His publications include The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience (1947 and reprinted by the University of Chicago in 1992), Philip Doddridge 1702-51: His Contribution to English Religion (1951) which he edited, Visible Saints: The Congregational Way 1640-1660 (1957), The Welsh Saints 1640-1660(Cardiff 1957), Christian Pacifism in History (Oxford 1958), Howel Harris 1714-1773: The Last Enthusiast (Cardiff 1965), Richard Baxter (1965), The Puritan Spirit (1967), and The Faith of Dante Alighieri (1969) . He has edited the correspondence of Doddridge and of Baxter (the latter with Neil Keeble) - Calendar of the Correspondence of Philip Doddridge DD 1702-1751 (1979) and Calendar of the Correspondence of Richard Baxter (Oxford 1991) -

and has written many articles on subjects ranging from Bunyan and George Fox to Erasmus, Virginia Woolf and Chartres Cathedral.

To mark Dr. Nuttall's eighty-fifth birthday in November 1996, the United Reformed Church History Society's Journal, edited by Dr. Clyde Binfield, celebrated his work as historian, pastor, teacher, lecturer, librarian, scholar and humanist. In addition this issue of the JURCHS contains a remarkable tribute to Dr. Nuttall's "ministry of friendship" for which he has a "rare genius" as several of our own CHC members can testify. He is discriminating but generous with his help and encouragement to those he deems serious in their study and research. He is also, as he delights to recall, in the words of Dr. Binfield, "a living archive", of whom all friends of Congregationalism should be proud.

Patrick Collinson, formerly Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, writes of Dr. Nuttall's helpful criticism of other people's draft work. "Many daylight hours have been spent, in reviews and in correspondence, correcting historical and factual errors in the work of others. We have all known what a dreadful thing it is for our slipshod scholarship to fall into the hands of the living Nuttall. (I shall never forget being told that one of my own lectures was 'good rather than very good')." The CHC wishes Geoffrey Nuttall many more happy years of productive research and writing, and many more of inspirational friendship.

It is worth recalling that Geoffrey Nuttall's first contribution to the Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society, which he later edited, was published in 1931 when he was an undergraduate at Balliol College, Oxford. We should be pleased to receive contributions from young historians also for our CHC Magazine, as indeed from those not so young, but who may be similarly inexperienced. We wish to encourage historical research of all kinds, especially that connected with Congregationalists, ministers, church members and churches. If you have ideas and possible research topics and need further help and encouragement then contact the CHC Magazine editor. We should always be happy to hear of chapel histories and those with work in progress.

The Diaries of Rev. Joshua Pedlar 1884-1885

We have received a letter from Rev. Angela Robinson, minister of Wivenhoe Congregational Church, near Colchester, in Essex. She wishes to inform members of the CHC, and all others who may be interested, that her grandfather's diaries, and the transcript of the shorthand he wrote them in, are now deposited in Dr. Williams's Library, 14 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0AG (tel. 0171-387-3737).

Joshua Pedlar's life in the diaries is a fascinating progress from rural Cornwall to Merseyside. He records the first eighteen months of his ministry - straight from life on a Cornish farm and plunged into the life of the Randle Street Mission at Rock Ferry, Tranmere, a tough area. There Joshua Pedlar proceeded to deal, as best he could, with his senior minister ("not to mention solicitous wife and daughters", writes Angela). He established a Band of Hope at the mission, read the classics voraciously in an attempt to 'improve' himself, visited London to see Irving and Ellen Terry in his first visit to any theatre, and found time to break off one engagement and make another - all within three months!

Angela Robinson reports that "all human life is there", in her grandfather's diaries, and states that she hopes researchers will find them useful. She would be pleased if any CHC member would be able to write an article, based upon them, for our magazine.

Miscellaneous

Sadly the United Reformed Church at Tooting, in south west London, which claims to have been founded in 1688, has suffered from a fire which, among other damage, has caused the loss of irreplaceable church records, some dating from 1750. The church secretary, Margaret Bean, has asked that anyone who may have memories and/or material relating to Tooting URC's varied past should contact her by telephone on 0181-672-1373. She hopes thereby to rescue some of the church's history for future generations.

This unfortunate incident highlights the urgent need for local churches to take adequate steps to safeguard their property and premises and, especially from the CHC's perspective, their archives. Such archives are an invaluable source for

the study of Protestant Nonconformity and should be kept where they are safe from excessive damp and where heat and deterioration can be minimized. Often it is advisable to deposit church records in county record offices or their equivalents where modern conservation techniques may be employed.

Cecil Lewis

The death of Cecil Lewis, the writer, broadcaster and celebrated First World War airman, on January 27, 1997 is perhaps not an event many would expect to find noticed in our CHC Magazine. Indeed Lewis' life story reads like the adventures of John Buchan here and, like Buchan, he was a son of the manse. Cecil Arthur Lewis's "father was a Congregational minister" which itself is the first sentence on page one of Lewis's recent autobiography, All My Yesterdays (1993). Edward Lewis was considered "advanced" in his religious views, having "reduced the rituals to zero", but he "preached most beautifully" and, after a pastorate in Clapham in south London, he moved to the ministry of the King's Weigh House Church in the fashionable west end of London in 1909.

There he worked in collaboration with R.J.Campbell of The City Temple with whose much vaunted New Theology he had considerable sympathy. Edward Lewis remained at the Weigh House until the spring of 1914, as Elaine Kaye recounts in her History of the King's Weigh House Church (1968), 115-117, and eventually, when on holiday, he wrote from Assisi to resign his ministry - becoming an agnostic and a journalist.

Cecil Lewis was born in 1898 and, aged 16, he stood 6ft 4 inches tall. Lying about his age he joined the Royal Flying Corps in 1915 and, in a very short time and after only twenty hours flying, he was flying lone patrols over the western front. He was awarded the MC and was mentioned in despatches . He described this period of his life in the poignant and mournful Sagittarius Rising(1936) which, when published, received immediate rave reviews. This book inspired, among other works, the film Aces High. After the 1914-18 war Lewis was one of the four founders of the BBC in 1922, working alongside John Reith for some years. In the 1930s Lewis accepted an offer to work in Hollywood where he wrote the script for the film of George Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion which starred Wendy Hiller and Leslie Howard. Lewis received an Oscar for his screenplay.

After the Second World War, in which again Lewis served in the RAF, he became very influenced by the teachings of the emigré Russian mystic, Georgi Gurdjieff. In the 1950s he wrote for the Daily Mail, finally retiring to Corfu. Lewis' long life was full of exciting incident and offers the historian of Congregationalism a fascinating case-study of the fortunes of the children of Congregationalists in the twentieth century. Like his father, he left behind him the faith of his youth but then, late in life, embraced a strange religious philosophy and vision which he felt taught him the laws of God and how to live by them.

Christopher Driver

Another death to note is that of the author and former editor of The Good Food Guide, Christopher Driver, who was a long-standing member of Highgate Congregational Church, in north London, and of its successor, Highgate United Reformed Church. Driver died on February 18, 1997 aged sixty-four. He succeeded Raymond Postgate as the editor of The Good Food Guide in 1970 and remained in that office until 1982.

Driver was born in south India where his father was a medical missionary. His father eventually ran a book shop in Shaftesbury in Dorset and Christopher Driver kept this shop going until recently. He attended the Dragon School, Oxford and then Rugby School where he became head boy. He then went up to Christ Church, Oxford to read Greats. Driver was a conscientious objector and spent his national service with the Friends Ambulance Corps where he learned to cook and was also involved with Hungarian refugees who had fled after the failure of the 1956 uprising against Communism.

He became a journalist with the Liverpool Daily Post in 1958 and moved to the Guardian in 1960. His first book, A Future for the Free Churches?(1962), caused a few ripples, especially in Congregational circles, by advocating organic unity, as the only serious way for English Protestant Nonconformity to survive. In 1964 he published The Disarmers: A Study in Protest about the work of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. In addition he wrote other books, on food mainly, but also on music, on universities, and published a volume of poems. He served as a member of the board of Christian Aid 1972-84.

In 1987 he suffered a stroke while walking with his wife in the Lake District. Fortunately she was able to hail a passing helicopter and he was taken to hospital. In 1993 a brain tumour was diagnosed which eventually proved fatal.

V.S. Pritchett

CHC magazine readers may have noticed recently the death of Sir Victor Pritchett (1900-97), the novelist, critic but, above all, short story writer. His writing is suffused with warmth and sympathy and he was never censorious. His first volume of autobiography, A Cab at the Door (1968), was so called because of his family's frequent moves, flitting from one home to another and is full of gaslight, fog, chapels and breweries. They moved home eighteen times during VSP's first twelve years of life. However Victor, his sister and two brothers were often sent to stay with their grandfather, a former soldier who became a Congregational minister, and who would at times write sermons in the outside loo, while smoking a cigar!

John Ross

The death of John Macdonald Ross (1908-97) deserves the attention of CHC members also. He was a devout Presbyterian who lived in north London and had been by profession a civil servant until retirement in 1968. Yet his interests lay in classics and New Testament studies and also in Scottish church history. In 1972 he published Four Centuries of Scottish Worship.

David Gilroy Bevan

A less notable person, but noteworthy in his chosen field, who was also the son of a Congregational minister, and who has died recently (October 1996) was David Gilroy Bevan who was the Conservative member of parliament for the Yardley constituency of Birmingham 1979-92. Bevan was born in Birmingham in 1928 where his father, a Welshman from Penrhiwceibr, in Glamorganshire, Thomas John Bevan, was minister of the Digbeth Institute from 1919 onwards and who served also as chairman of the Warwickshire Congregational Union. Thomas Bevan's preaching was regarded as the source and inspiration of his politician son's forceful public speaking.

Arvel Steece

Dr. Arvel Steece has written from Massachusetts, in the United States of America, to ask if a gathering of history enthusiasts will be held at York in July 1997 during the meetings of the International Congregational Fellowship. The answer, of course, is that Dr. Bill Ashley Smith is organizing just such a gathering. Contact him for further information at

2 North Kelsey Road, Caistor, Lincoln, LN7 6QH
Tel. 01472-851021

Dr. Steece's enquiry is a welcome reminder that a considerable contingent of American Congregationalists and others interested in history may be expected to attend the conference at the university of York between 21-26 July.

Advance Notices

We have received notice of the following meetings.

The United Reformed Church History Society Study Day is to be held on 20 September, 1997 at Dr. Williams's Library, 14 Gordon Square, London, WC1, where John Creasey, the DWL librarian, will speak on "Joshua Wilson and Dr. Williams's Library". The meeting starts at 10.30am and in the afternoon there will be a tour of churches. All details from the URCHS secretary, Rev. E.J. Brown, 7 Castle Grove Avenue, Leeds, LS6 4BS, or telephone 0013-275-4950.

The Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries is to hold its annual general meeting on Thursday, 30 October 1997 also at Dr. Williams's Library, at 2.00pm. The CHC is a member body of the ADHSCL and all interested persons are invited to hear Dr. David Cornick of Westminster College, Cambridge who would be speaking on "Widows, Wadis and Westminster: a Tale of Two Victorian Sisters" at the AGM.

Book News

Among recently published books we should note are Diarmaid MacCulloch's Thomas Cranmer: A Life (Yale University Press, 1996, £29.95, pp692, ISBN 0-300-06688-0) which has been highly praised, not only for its

historical accuracy and detail, but also for its personal insight into Cranmer's character, his weakness and fear, and ultimately his courage at the death. The writing is also direct, lucid and well-expressed.

The five volumes of Horton Davies's Worship and Theology in England have been re-issued in 1996 in paperback form in three volumes, the last of which includes a new section, entitled Volume VI, "Crisis and Creativity, 1965 - Present". The subtitles of the three paperbacks are "From Cranmer to Baxter and Fox, 1534-1690", ISBN 0-8028-0891-3, "From Watts and Wesley to Martineau, 1690-1900" ISBN 0-8028-0892-1 and "The Ecumenical Century, 1900 to the Present" ISBN 0-8028-0893-X. They are published by Eerdmans and distributed by Alban Books, 79 Park Street, Bristol, BS1 5PF. The paperbacks are £35 each or £100 the set. Horton Davies is, of course, a Mansfield College trained Welsh Congregationalist by upbringing who has pursued his distinguished academic career, mostly in the USA, and is one of the leading authorities on the history of Christian worship (see the book review by Alan Tovey). The new volume includes consideration of developments in worship, and occasional services, inclusive language, music, architecture and art.

Dr. Barrie White's The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century, first published in the 1980s, has been revised and enlarged by John F.W. Nicholson. It is very useful for Congregationalists who share so much history with the Baptists in the gathered churches of the seventeenth century. The new edition was published in 1996 by the Baptist Historical Society and is priced at £10 hardback, and £7 paperback - ISBN 0-903166-22-4.

Notes from the Secretary

Colin Price has written to say that Harold Wright reports that his church at Kibworth Harcourt, near Market Harborough, in Leicestershire, is in danger of closing and asks for help. Of course, Kibworth has many associations with Philip Doddridge (1702-1751), one of the most attractive figures in eighteenth century Congregationalism. Doddridge studied at Kibworth at the academy of John Jennings and later became the minister at Kibworth before moving to Market Harborough, and later to Northampton. However Kibworth has one further claim to fame. The holiday pioneer and temperance worker, Thomas Cook, (1808-1892)

pinpoints the exact moment the 'idea of popular travel came to him on 9 June 1841 ".....on the way to Leicester just after passing Kibworth Congregational Chapel and Parsonage..... a thought passed through my brain - what a glorious thing it would be if the newly developed powers of railways and locomotion could be made subservient to the promotion of Temperance." Thomas Cook's first railway excursion - a temperance one - was made from Leicester to Loughborough in 1841.

Thomas Cook's enterprise paved the way for popular travel, though as Harold points out, it is a shade ironic that locally they have named a pub after him (a pub!) while the Chapel of the memory of his inspiration may be allowed to close, without a murmur of protest. Colin states that he will write to Thomas Cook and ask for help.

Colin also notes that our editor, Alan Argent, has been asked to write a biography of Elsie Chamberlain whose contribution to Congregationalism in this century has been remarkable. This should prove a worthwhile project and is one, Colin comments, Alan Argent "is well qualified to take up." He sensibly points out that finding a publisher for the biography, when completed, may prove awkward and, therefore, asks that CHC members who may be able to help should volunteer assistance. Dr. Argent himself would be happy to hear from any friends and former colleagues of Elsie who may have information and recollections which may help him completing his task. Please write to him at:

The Flat, Trinity Congregational Church,
St. Matthew's Road,
London, SW2 1NF.
Or telephone 0181-640-8192 or 0171-274-5541

Rev. Ian Gregory of Newcastle-under-Lyme has written to Colin Price and reminded him that 1998 marks the 250th anniversary of the death of Isaac Watts. He asks if the CHC might have any plans to commemorate this anniversary and suggests that an appropriate leaflet might be fitting. Does any CHC member have other suitable suggestions? Comments should be directed to Colin Price, the CHC secretary, at his address on the back cover of our magazine.

Colin Price.

CHAPEL CRAWL 1996

Chapels in North London

It was an unlikely start for a Chapel Crawl for people who are not pop stars or other professional musicians. We were fortunate that a small gap had been found in the busy recording schedule of Sir George Martin's studio, formerly Lyndhurst Road Congregational Church, Hampstead, a masterpiece by Alfred Waterhouse, dated 1883, once the largest Congregational church in London, north of the Thames. Millions of pounds have been spent on sensitive refurbishment and soundproofing (unfortunately the pews have gone downstairs but the original windows, mostly pink and blue stained glass, though bulging, have been preserved, including the window commemorating Dr Robert Moffat who laid the foundation stone). The chapel is designed as a huge polygon in best red brick with terracotta, with galleries on three sides. Viewed from different angles, it presents, like all Waterhouse buildings, dramatic and splendid vistas. The yard between the church halls and chapel is now roofed in glass to provide a light and airy reception space.

Dr Robert Horton exercised a very influential ministry at Lyndhurst Road and in its heyday the Church started a mission in Kentish Town; an institute was erected in Warden Road, known as Lyndhurst Hall. At one time there were 200 workers from the church involved in the activities there. Dr Horton left Lyndhurst Road in 1930. It was in this chapel in 1972 that a "conference of Congregationalists" met to discuss the future, and the name, Congregational Federation, was chosen. Six years after joining the United Reformed Church, Lyndhurst Road Congregational Church closed.

The chapel crawl party turned to Kentish Town Congregational Church for lunch. The present building was opened in 1991. It incorporates a small chapel, with scope for extension into the church hall, various meeting rooms, a kitchen and accommodation, a loggia and an attractive garden. The original chapel on this site, replacing an earlier building on the opposite side of Kentish Town Road, was opened in 1847, a handsome Gothic structure with twin pinnacles. Unfortunately, after suffering war damage, it became difficult to maintain and was pulled down in 1958, to be replaced by a Reama building, which served until redevelopment and erection of the new church.

Our afternoon began with a visit to the oldest nonconformist place of worship still in regular use in London, the Unitarian Chapel at Newington Green. It is a charming building and still retains box pews. The area is rich in nonconformist history.

A short walk from the chapel is Abney Cemetery, which we had briefly visited on a chapel crawl some years ago. It was George Collinson, son of the Rev. George Collinson (1772 - 1847), President of Hackney College, who inspired the creation of the cemetery for the burial of dissenters, preserving the traditions of Bunhill Fields, and when the management company was set up in 1839, all the directors were Congregationalists. The cemetery occupies part of the Abney Estate and the mansion, where Isaac Watts resided, stood where the Stoke Newington Church Street entrance to the cemetery is now situated, opposite the former Abney Congregational Chapel. At the other end of the cemetery is Dr. Watts' Mound where it is said that Watts sat and meditated. A statue of Watts was erected by public subscription and stands near the cemetery chapel.

Many of the leading Congregationalists of the nineteenth century are buried in Abney Park - Thomas Toke Lynch, Thomas Binney, Dr Pye-Smith, Dr Reed, to name but a few and we commemorated those who had written hymns we know by singing lustily around the graves. Today the cemetery is also an important haven for urban wildlife - birds, insects and flowers - having areas which are not scrupulously tidy.

A major improvement since our previous tour in the area was the reopened Harecourt Chapel, Islington, rebuilt in 1993 following a fire. It dates back to 1660, originally meeting in the house of Rev. George Cokayn, in Red Cross Street. A chapel was then built in Aldersgate Street in the City of London, to be replaced by a Victorian building in 1857 when the church moved to Canonbury. The last time we visited the site, the burnt out ruin of this large Victorian polygonal chapel was still standing. The new building, imaginatively designed on lines reminiscent of Wren, with solid plain white walls, has a room upstairs with a cupola where the deacons hold their meetings. We were pleased to see it has a lively and welcoming congregation, and that some of the archives have survived the fire. The welcome tea added, no doubt, to our favourable impression of the place.

The last delight of the day was the United Reformed Church in Camden Town, a multi-purpose church of the arts and crafts period, very much unaltered, with original panelled partitions, dividing the chapel from the hall, and containing early twentieth century stained glass. This was built for the Presbyterians originally.

Our 1996 chapel crawl provided us with many pleasures and we are grateful to our treasurer, Christopher Damp, for its preparation and the notes he distributed. We had a refreshing and a fascinating day.

Christine Denwood

The Development of Henry Jacob's Ecclesiology

An examination of his development from A Defence of the Churches and Ministry of Englande to the writing of The Divine Beginning and Institution of Christ's true, visible or Ministeriall Church.

Between the years 1596 and 1599 Henry Jacob (1563-1624) was engaged in a debate with Francis Johnson(1562-1618), the Separatist, concerning the validity of the Church of England as it existed under the Elizabethan settlement. Jacob argued that, even though the English Church still contained many Roman forms and practices, it was still a true church, and within it were many true Christians.

This debate culminated in the printing of A Defence of the Churches and Ministry of Englande at Middelburg in 1599. Here Jacob reproduces Johnson's arguments with his replies to them. Johnson replied the following year with An Answer to Maister H Jacob. We will examine Jacob's ecclesiology and its development, making reference to Jacob's Defence of the Churches and Ministry, and comparing this with Jacob's later book of 1610, The Divine Beginning and Institution of Christs true visible or Ministeriall Church.

Henry Jacob (1563-1624) was a graduate of Oxford University and a former precentor of Corpus Christi College. In 1596 he had visited Francis Johnson (1562-1618), the Separatist, in prison to persuade him if possible that separation from the Church of England was both unlawful and revealed clear errors in Biblical understanding. Jacob later published his arguments against Johnson, in particular, and Separatism, in general, in A Defence of the Churches and Ministry of Englande (Middelburg 1599). However some of Johnson's carefully weighted replies made an impression on Jacob who eventually moved from his moderate Puritan position to one halfway between the Separatists and the traditional Puritans.

Jacob was to be a prime mover in 1603 of the Millenary Petition, which represented the views of the Puritan party within the Church of England. From

London he sent circulars to laymen and ministers throughout England urging them to send complaints to the king about the oppressive ecclesiastical authorities. The petition had been handed to the new King James I of England on his way south from Scotland to his new capital, London. However the petition and the subsequent Hampton Court Conference failed to convince James to effect any major reforms in the established Church and the offending ceremonies and rites remained in the prayer book. Yet Jacob shared the common Puritan revulsion of Separatism but this revulsion lessened and Jacob himself came to occupy a position, to many, not far removed from Separatism and this has been characterized by some as semi-Separatism, a halfway house.

In 1604 Jacob published his Reasons taken out of God's Word..... proving a necessitie for reforming our Churches in England. The book revealed that Jacob now agreed with Johnson that a true church was not universal, national, provincial nor diocesan in nature. Jacob commented that, "Only a particular ordinary constant congregation of Christians in Christ's testament is appointed and reckoned a visible church". He also stated that such a visible church ought to be constituted and gathered..... by a free mutual consent of believers joining and covenanting to live as members of a holy society". This would have been quite acceptable to the Separatists. Yet Jacob, unlike the Separatists, held the conviction that a gathered church was not bound to renounce communion with the English parish churches. He argued that "every particular ordinary congregation of faithful people in England is a true and proper visible church" and that "every pastor of each particular church in England is truly and properly a pastor of some church whereof he is."⁽¹⁾

Geoffrey Nuttall has called Jacob's views semi-Separatist while others have seen him as a moderate Separatist. He advocated a policy which later Nonconformists would have recognized as occasional conformity. For his Reasons taken out of God's Word, Jacob was invited in 1604 to discuss his views with the Bishop of London. The bishop failed to convince Jacob of his errors and therefore placed him in the Clink prison for eight months.⁽²⁾

In 1605 Jacob and his friends petitioned the king for permission "to assemble together somewhere publicly to the service and worship of God, to use and enjoy peaceably among ourselves above the whole exercise of God's worship and of church government", and affirming that, unlike the English Separatists,

they would “keep brotherly communion with the rest of our English churches as they are now established, according as the French and Dutch churches” in exile in England do. This petition was unsuccessful.

By 1606 Jacob had fled into exile at Middelburg in the Netherlands. Here his publications still defended the Puritan position, pleading for further reforms in the Church of England. Jacob petitioned once more in 1609 from exile in An Humble Supplication for Toleration and libertie to enjoy and observe the ordinances of Christ Jesus and pleaded for “some churches to be gathered by your majesty’s special grace in some parts of the kingdom”, free from episcopal control but under the oversight of “your subordinate civil magistrates”. James I replied to this petition that “the too great toleration of you in Queen Elizabeth’s time hath made you now to be prickles in our sides”.⁽³⁾

In 1610 Henry Jacob declared his acceptance of much of the Separatist position in his small treatise, The Divine Beginning and Institution of Christs True Visible or Ministerial Church which was published at Leyden where John Robinson lived and worshipped with his exiled English Separatist church. The publication of this work marked a considerable change in Jacob’s position from that he defended against Francis Johnson 1599.

Johnson himself was pastor of the “ancient” English Separatist church in Amsterdam where he arrived in 1597, having been released from prison to join a projected settlement in Canada. The voyage proved a failure so Johnson and his brother travelled to the Netherlands to be re-united with their church. There the members declined into bickering and some excommunications.

The main thrust of Jacob's argument, in his Defence, is that there are corrupt vestiges of Roman forms practised in the English Church, but that matters of church order are “indifferent and not prescribed”.⁽⁴⁾ Jacob claimed that Johnson's argument erred by failing to recognize that there was a different soteriological value between theological doctrine and ecclesiastical doctrine. The theological doctrines such as justification, sanctification, the resurrection and the Trinity were 'written' ordinances of Christ. These things formed the “foundation of saving faith” and “must be written in the Word or else be none of Christ's”. Obedience to these written ordinances was necessary for salvation because in these matters alone “Christ is our prophet, priest and King”. On the other hand this was

not true of 'unwritten' ordinances such as the "outward orders in the church". Jacob stated that outward reform of the church was of little consequence because it was "not simply of the foundation" of faith nor written in scripture. In 1599 Jacob seemed to attach little significance to ecclesiology as he did not see it as one of the foundations of the faith. Matters of church polity were not certain or perpetual, but at the arbitrary appointment of the church and magistrate, yet were still Christ's own as he had left the choice to the church "any reasonable kinde of Church government and rites, and orders, are arbitrary and changeable, no matters of faith, nor written in the scriptures".⁽⁵⁾

Church government, therefore, was not uppermost in Jacob's thoughts. "As for the outward Church order, our state holdeth that it is arbitrary to bee appointed and abrogated againe at the liking of the Church and magistrate, And that the worde no where forbiddeth this libertie".⁽⁶⁾ He added that the church hierarchy was not fundamental to one's faith but was "an indifferent thing in itself".⁽⁷⁾ Improper polity may be simply like "a wodden legge, an eye of glasse" or a "nose deformed" and a church that suffered under it is still a true church as a man who possesses such things is a true man."⁽⁸⁾ A person may err in practice in serving God through the hierarchy and external ceremonies, but these imperfections in no way prevented him from being a true Christian.⁽⁹⁾ Jacob argues that "now this sinne of outward church orders is not the most heynous nor extreamest disobedience".⁽¹⁰⁾ He added that "our assemblies. . . [are] companies of faithfull men" but realized that there were corruptions in the English church and admits "even that onely they ought to be reformed".⁽¹¹⁾

Jacob admits that he is not trying to justify the "whole Ministry, estate, & manner of worship" which was practised in England.⁽¹²⁾ He goes further and says that the prelacy had discontinued the New Testament offices of pastors, teachers and elders, yet these errors did not invalidate the English church.

By 1604, Jacob appears to have made a complete reversal in his views on the relationship between soteriology and ecclesiology. Jacob now sees ecclesiology as important and necessary for salvation. He wrote "all human inventions or unwritten traditions ecclesiastical are directly contrary to God's Word" because the second commandment made all ecclesiastical activities not founded on scripture unlawful.⁽¹³⁾

Jacob had argued from within the established church against Johnson and his separatism, yet by 1616 Jacob formed “the first continuing Congregational church on English soil”.⁽¹⁴⁾ At first glance it appears that Jacob had changed his mind and had become a Separatist himself.

In Jacob's writings following the Hampton Court Conference of 1604 there appears to be a marked change in his stance, as he seems to have adopted a Congregational view of the church.

In The Divine Beginning, Jacob addresses two types of men. The first are “those who do not hold and maintaine that Christ Jesus in the New Testament hath instituted no certain forme of a Visible Church nor Church government for us but hath left the same arbitrary and free”. He addresses the first group to warn them of their grave error. The second group addressed are those who accept that “Christ is King, Lord and Lawgiver of his Church as it is visible and outward and that he hath instituted in the New Testament as well as in the old a certaine forme of his Visible Church and government for us everywhere and for ever, not to be altered or changed by any man or men whatsoever they be”. He writes to this second group to encourage them and assure them that they are correct. For those who “submit and stand subject unto a Provinciaall and Diocisan Lord Bishops Ecclesiastical Government and remayn apparant members of a Provinciaall church which in the New Testament never instituted” are ignoring the scriptures. “Therefore he [Christ] is not King and Lord of such a church, neither hath he promised, nor we can ordinarily have assurance of any spirituall blessing therein”.⁽¹⁵⁾

Francis Johnson or others, appear to have won Jacob for Separatism. Indeed Johnson himself was converted by reading one of Henry Barrow's books which he had saved from the Separatist literature he was publicly burning. Ecclesiology is now important in Jacob's thinking. How can a person be sure of their salvation without working out this salvation within a true church?

Jacob now argues against those people who say “the Church Ministerie and Ceremonies in respect of Gods Law are things Indifferent”. The type of church established in England is not the church “that Christ Jesus hath instituted in his New Testament”.⁽¹⁶⁾ Jacob quotes from scripture and writes “not the heerers or talkers but the doers of Christs Law shall be justified”^(Romans 2 v. 18), We,

when we know the truth, “do not consult with flesh” (Galatians 1 v 16), but “follow the heavenly calling” (Acts 26 v 19). Jacob refers to Malachi when he writes, “If we confess him to be our Lord and master, then where is his feare, that is, where is our obedience”, and to 1 Samuel writing, “obedience (specially present obedience) is better than a fat fayre and well seeming sacrifice”.⁽¹⁷⁾

Jacob says that some will no doubt call him schismatic for this type of writing but “it is not the part of a schismatike to labour. . . to prove against all gain sayers (and thereby to advance and maintaine) the special honor of Jesus Christ our Mighty Lord and Saviour. It is to his special Honor and Glory and Maiestie to have a Visible Kingdom on earth. To say that he hath now no Visible Kingdom or administration on earth, or that he instituted not any for us; but hath left it to mens discretion both to institute and to order: this truly doth very much impayre his Honor and diminish his Glory, and lesson his Majestie among men”. Schismatics are rather those “who willfully divide themselves from and possess not the true holy Outward Ordinances of Christ Jesus, sufficient and duly ordered, given us in his Unchangable Testament, which only are the Ordinary assured meanes both of worshipping him and of saving our soules”.⁽¹⁸⁾

Jacob attacks the prelates for refusing to consider a conference to discuss church polity. He believed that the Hampton Court Conference was not a “sufficient deciding of these controversies”. Until such a debate is held to discuss church polity “let them [the prelates] never say their Church state, Government and ordinances are of God”. Of those who say there was no perpetual or particular form of church polity prescribed in scripture, Jacob says, “I suppose they believe not that Christ did appoint in the New Testament that there should be a visible church at all”. Christ has appointed the church and he has “appointed it under a certain particular forme. . . no Divine authoritie hath changed this forme of Christs Visible Church, wherein he and his Apostles did primitively institute it”.⁽¹⁹⁾

Jacob still admits “that profession of true faith indeed is found in many 1000 among them” in the English Church, “not withstanding the disordered church estate there”. Yet none of these people should presume “nor rest themselves in assurance of this mercy who willfully continue in those crooked and unsure by-ways which they are walking in”.⁽²⁰⁾

There does appear to be a distinct change in the emphasis placed by Jacob upon the importance of ecclesiastical policy and its relationship with salvation. Historians have traditionally seen Jacob as having been converted to Separatism. Daniel Neal was one of the first to state that Jacob had been converted to Separatism and the source of this conversion to Congregationalism was John Robinson. Neal believed that Jacob had met Robinson at Leyden in 1610 and was persuaded to adopt Separatism. There is no conclusive evidence to support this view although many later historians accepted it.⁽²¹⁾

John Waddington and R. W. Dale, both followed Neal's belief that Jacob was converted to Separatism.⁽²²⁾ Henry Martyn Dexter writes that Jacob was "so far persuaded to adopt the views which he had before combated". Dexter, like Neal, believes that Jacob spent a few months in 1610 in Leyden with John Robinson (giving no evidence to support this) "where, it is said under Mr. Robinson's influence, he modified his previous theories to the full acceptance of that meliorated phase of Barrowism which there prevailed". Dexter refers us to Neal as his source in his footnote.⁽²³⁾ Dale believes that Jacob was in full membership with Robinson's church at Leyden from 1610 to 1616, but there is no evidence to support this.

Benjamin Hanbury seems to be more perceptive than other historians of the last century. Hanbury quotes from Jacob's Reasons taken out of Gods Word(1604) and quotes evidence from this book, illustrating that he held to a congregational ecclesiology as early as 1604. Jacob is "no longer the defender of The Churches and Ministry of England. . . some credit must be attributed to Francis Johnson's Answer". Jacob "had certainly suffered a transition, anterior to the date of his conference at Leyden with the judicious Robinson. His progress is apparent from the titles of successive fruits of his pen".⁽²⁴⁾ Hanbury adds "we have not found the authority for this conference but it may be inferred from the imprint to his Divine Beginning. . . and from John Paget's Defence of Church Government, 1641".⁽²⁵⁾ Hanbury, unlike Neal and Waddington does note a gradual development in Jacob's ecclesiology from 1604. Hanbury quotes at great length from Jacob's writings to illustrate this change.⁽²⁶⁾

The view that Jacob was converted by Robinson to Separatism still continued well into this century. Albert Peel states, "In 1610 he [Jacob] went to Leyden, where he accepted John Robinson's views".⁽²⁷⁾

Champlin Burrage noted that Jacob's Congregationalism could be traced back before 1610 to 1604.⁽²⁸⁾ Burrage writes that there is a mistaken belief amongst scholars that Congregational Puritans grew out of Brownism or Barrowism “and have even confused them with separatists. . . early Congregationalists, were merely a certain type of Puritans, and not separatists from the church of England, also that the independents did not directly obtain their opinions from either Brownists or Barrowists”.⁽²⁹⁾ Burrage is the first to state that early Congregationalism did not gain its opinions entirely from Separatism, yet he fails to suggest an origin for their Congregational polity. He identifies a small group of Puritans who hold Congregational views of the church, yet, who unlike the Separatists, try to avoid a deliberate secession from the established church. Burrage includes Ames, Parker, Bradshaw and Baynes in this group. He notes that they were not Separatists because they did not feel the need to separate from the parish congregation, but they saw the church as a covenanted community of the godly existing in autonomous congregations. William Ames (1576-1633) was a fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge who fled to the Low Countries in 1610 and was a noted theologian. Robert Parker (1564-1614), a Wiltshire vicar, went with Jacob and Ames into exile to the Netherlands. William Bradshaw (1571-1618) was removed from his preaching appointment or lectureship at Chatham in 1602 and published the book, English Puritanisme, in 1605. Paul Baynes (d.1617), also a lecturer, was suspended in 1604 from his past at Great St. Andrew's in Cambridge. Burrage calls Jacob and this group non-separating Congregationalists.

Burrage suggests that Jacob's debate with Johnson “certainly did not convert him to Separatism, but it may have made him more conscious of the defects of the Established Church”.⁽³⁰⁾ He also challenged the view that Jacob had been converted by Robinson at Leyden in 1610. “According to the accepted traditional view Robinson met Jacob in 1610 and converted him to the ways of Independency. How baseless this tradition really is, though accepted by historians”.⁽³¹⁾ Jacob had been influencing Congregational polity in his writings at least five years prior to 1610. Burrage believes that it was probably Jacob who converted Robinson to more moderate views. There is no doubt that Jacob and Robinson met, but Burrage believes, it was probably not in 1610. The earliest account we have, the Jessey Memorandum, says that a meeting took place somewhere between 1610 and 1616 but no date is given.⁽³²⁾

Burrage suggests that Robinson remained a Separatist for in 1610 he published the book, A Justification of Separation from the Church of England. Meanwhile Jacob published his Divine Beginning and Institution where he continues to advocate his Congregational principles which Burrage believed first appeared in 1604.

Perry Miller follows Burrage's theory that Jacob accepted a form of Congregational polity in 1604. Miller believes that Jacob was converted yet gives no source for this conversion. "How much of his conversion he owed to Johnson cannot be determined, but the fact remains that he was converted."⁽³³⁾ Miller, like Burrage, believes that Jacob and other non-separating Congregationalists were "something quite apart from the dynasty of the Separatists".⁽³⁴⁾

B. R. White writes of Francis Johnson, "It must be remembered that it was partly his influence which moved such men as John Smyth, John Robinson and Henry Jacob towards a Separatist position."⁽³⁵⁾ White believes that "Jacob . . . seems also to have owed a considerable debt to the earlier, stricter Separatist tradition."⁽³⁶⁾ White says that Jacob first encountered the concept of the gathered church through his debate with Johnson and that the only difference between Jacob's church of 1616 and older Separatism was one of the policy towards the parish church. White argues that the policy of the older Separatism towards the parish church was not as strict as that of Johnson and Ainsworth. White believes that before Jacob formed his church he had discussed his plans not only with other Puritan leaders, but also with John Robinson. "It seems probable that Champlin Burrage, in his desire to stress the likelihood that John Robinson learned his own later, milder principles from Henry Jacob, underestimated the reality of the dialogue between the two men and, hence, of Jacob's debt to Robinson and to Separatism."⁽³⁷⁾

John von Rohr, like White, suggested that Jacob "moved a long way toward . . . Separatist views" following the debate with Johnson in the 1590s. Von Rohr suggests that Jacob, the moderate Puritan, was suddenly transformed into an exponent of radical ideas through the arguments of Francis Johnson. Von Rohr believes that "the victor's laurels went to Johnson".⁽³⁸⁾ He concludes that Jacob had "moved a long way toward earlier separatist views. . . There is only one true church, he was convinced, that which follows a Congregational pattern, and one must live within it."⁽³⁹⁾

Von Rohr writes, "it seems possible to conclude that the roots of Henry Jacob's Congregationalism go back into the years of his defence of the Church of England against the Separatists culminating in the publications of 1599. By 1604 his Congregationalism was clear cut and courageous. In 1599 it was still circumspect and cautious. But even in that early year it held conviction."⁽⁴⁰⁾ Von Rohr hints that Jacob held his Congregational views whilst in debate with Johnson. Attached to Jacob's Defence of the Churches and Ministry is A Treatise of a Pastorall Calling. . .where Jacob suggests that the ministry of the church is only valid, if the minister is chosen by the people's free consent. This theme was taken up again in The Divine Beginning and Institution in 1610. Indeed this theme of the people's free consent runs throughout Jacob's writings.

Slayden A. Yarborough believes that the debate with Francis Johnson was the stimulus for Jacob to start thinking about church polity seriously.⁽⁴¹⁾ He sees Jacob converting eventually to Separatism of a moderate type.

Murray Tolmie explains Jacob's semi-Separatism as a "result of a shift of emphasis in several aspects of Jacob's Congregational theory rather than a conversion to Separatism."⁽⁴²⁾ He explains that Jacob believed schism was wrong and so remained in the Church of England and argued this point with Johnson. Tolmie believes that the temporary nature of the gathered church which Jacob had proposed, now "began to fade for a more positive conception of the non-parochial gathered church as a true visible church in its own right"⁽⁴³⁾ This led to Jacob in 1610 beginning to emphasise the kingly rule of Christ over his church - a powerful concept to the Separatists. "In discussions with the Separatist John Robinson in Leyden in the course of this year he began to grasp the idea in a new light, to see that the kingly office of Christ could serve to liberate the gathered church from its subordination to the magistrate's consent for its very existence."⁽⁴⁴⁾ Tolmie believes that Jacob does change his mind on the role of the people's free consent. As the idea of the gathered church began to dominate Jacob's thinking, the concept of free consent grew from acts of church government, such as the election of church officers or a minister, to include the more fundamental issue of the church being a people, joined by willing consent into a visible church. Membership of this gathered church was voluntary, whilst in a territorial parish church membership was involuntary.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Tolmie believes that Robinson's influence on Jacob has been underestimated, but he does not accept that Jacob became a Separatist. On the other hand, Jacob's influence on Robinson has been

exaggerated. Robinson drew the line at intercommunion with the parish churches, where Jacob permitted such intercommunion. ⁽⁴⁶⁾

Michael Watts writes, "some of Johnson's arguments left their mark on him and the position Jacob finally arrived at was midway between that of the Separatists and of the traditional Puritans". ⁽⁴⁷⁾ Watts sees Jacob's views as a compromise. He mentions Bradshaw, Baynes, Parker and Ames and says that these men also held a similar ecclesiology to Jacob but "how they arrived at their views on church government is not known". ⁽⁴⁸⁾ Earlier in his book, Watts suggests that Jacob gained his ecclesiology from John Robinson and cites as support John Cotton's book of 1648, The Way of the Congregational Churches Clear'd. He uses this as proof that the Ames - Jacob party had been influenced by the Separatists. ⁽⁴⁹⁾

The most recent work on Jacob has been done by Stephen Brachlow. ⁽⁵⁰⁾ Brachlow writes: "While his [Jacob's] shift into a more progressive, democratic ecclesiological mode has appeared self-evident to many historians, those scholars intrigued by Jacob's churchmanship have often puzzled over the source of his new polity". ⁽⁵¹⁾ Earlier historians and some recent historians seem to think he had borrowed from the Separatists. This conclusion arose primarily from the assumption that before Jacob formed his church, Congregationalism was the preserve of late Tudor and early Stuart Separatists. The problem with this solution, that the Separatists converted Jacob, is that there is simply no conclusive evidence to prove that Jacob is indebted to the Separatists. Brachlow agrees that there are similarities but says that these do not prove a link.

The traditional solution does not take seriously the denunciation of the ecclesiastical narrowness Jacob observed amongst Separatists, and his own disavowal of ever having ties with them. If the Separatists did not influence Jacob, then who did? There does appear to be a great shift between Jacob's Defence of the Churches and Ministry and later writings such as The Divine Beginning. As we have seen many historians have written much about the change in Jacob's ecclesiology and especially the change in the importance that Jacob attached to it, in relation to soteriology.

Brachlow looks not to any Separatist influence but rather to the radical Elizabethan Puritans. Scholars have not really examined this, believing that

Jacob's Congregationalism deviated from the Presbyterianism of the previous generation of Puritans. Ames made the statement that seemed to indicate the semi-Separatists were as opposed to Puritanism as they were to episcopacy; "what a terrible Popedome and rigid primacy these rigid Presbyterians desire".⁽⁵²⁾ Perry Miller supposed from this that the Ames-Jacob circle was opposed to Puritanism. But Brachlow believes that Ames did not have the Elizabethan Puritans in mind when he wrote this but rather the reference was to Ames' repetition of a common criticism made by the prelates against himself and other like minded Jacobean radicals. Ames wished to make the point that he was convinced that Bradshaw's treatise, English Puritanisme, provided a substantial rebuttal of that and he hoped to lay to rest this criticism. Brachlow claims that Miller's interpretation of these words of Ames demonstrates the way in which "the focusing of the historiographical lens by earlier denominational historians has subtly blurred our reading of the sources and precipitated the enigma over the sources of non-Separating Congregational polity."⁽⁵³⁾

Brachlow believes that Puritanism has been divided up into neat parties by historians who looked at history from a narrow denominational perspective, years after the events took place. He seeks, both in his book and in the article on Jacob, to re-examine Jacob's thought in the light of the Elizabethan Puritan background. He tries to demonstrate the compatibility of Jacob's ideas with those expressed during the Cartwright era. Brachlow seeks to demonstrate that the source of Jacob's ecclesiology is to be found in the writings of an earlier generation of radical Puritans rather than in the Separatists. Jacobean radicals held such men as Thomas Cartwright, Dudley Fenner, William Fulke, Lawrence Chaderton, Walter Travers and John Udall in great esteem. Did the ideas of these men develop into the Congregationalism that we find in Jacob? In the preface to Bradshaw's English Puritanisme, William Ames wrote "Cartwright, Fenner, Fulke, Whitaker, Reynolds and Perkins" walked in "the same way and steps" as Bradshaw.

Brachlow acknowledges that between the writing of Jacob's Defence of the Churches and 1604, "a significant shift appears to have taken place about the relationship between ecclesiology and salvation, though he never acknowledges it".⁽⁵⁴⁾ Brachlow offers an interesting explanation for this change in Jacob's thinking about the relationship between ecclesiology and soteriology. In all of Jacob's writings following 1604, Jacob appears to place much more stress on the

importance of a right church order than he did during his debate with Johnson. Historians have believed that Jacob had changed his mind for some reason. But Brachlow challenges this and suggests that Jacob was not altogether honest about his position when he was debating with Johnson. Brachlow says that “while publicly condemning the Separatist position during his pamphlet war with Johnson, Jacob privately embraced the same views all along. Jacob apparently found the Separatist polemic useful when he confronted the champions of the establishment, as in 1604, but not when squaring off the more radical Separatists for whom the legalistic rhetoric of conditional churchmanship worked more to their advantage.”⁽⁵⁵⁾

Brachlow believes that his position of 1604 was not a change of mind but was, rather, a public expression of convictions he had only previously expressed in private. Brachlow suggests that Jacob inherited these convictions from an earlier generation of Puritan extremists who had articulated the same conditional covenant theology during the fierce campaign for reform in the 1570s and 1580s, a decade before the Separatists had begun developing their platform. White rejects this view, saying that the ‘mutualist’ interpretation was not characteristic of Elizabethan Puritan thinking.⁽⁵⁶⁾

Thomas Cartwright, John Field and Thomas Wilcox all shared a militant attitude towards church polity in opposition to the more moderate Puritans who favoured the established structure on the basis of Calvin's conviction that matters of church structure were adiaphora. Other less tolerant Puritans followed a path first trod by Theodore Beza, arguing that Christ had prescribed a single pattern for the church, which was perpetual.

Although the radical Puritans of the late sixteenth century believed that many matters of church order were indifferent, they still believed that there was a pattern for church order set out in scripture. The Bible was the ecclesiastical law-book for the Puritans and they made a link between salvation and churchmanship as Jacob later did. Cartwright insisted that “matters of ceremonies, orders, discipline and government. . . are. . . of faith and of salvation”.⁽⁵⁷⁾

Brachlow believes that Cartwright's convictions reveal something about modifications taking place within Reformed soteriology regarding the nature of saving grace and assurance. Radical Puritans now searched for soteriological

assurance in a rigorous and sometimes introspective obedience to scriptural laws. This forced the more narrowly dogmatic Puritans to forge links between soteriology and ecclesiology when they claimed that ecclesiastical matters were prescribed in the second commandment. They reasoned that any breach of this commandment dissolved the covenant between God and his children. This link between ecclesiology is not found in Calvin's works but rather grew out of Beza's influence.

This was the driving force behind the Puritanism of the 1570s and 1580s and it again appeared in the writings of people such as Jacob, Ames and Bradshaw. Indeed Jacob turned not to Separatist writings to justify his conviction that matters of church government were necessary to salvation and faith, but to the writings of Cartwright.⁽⁵⁸⁾

Stephen Brachlow does present a convincing argument about Jacob's being influenced by an earlier generation of Puritans. He takes into account Jacob's early repudiation of the Separatists and his claim that he had never been a Separatist. Jacob does refer back to Cartwright and indeed attacks the Separatists. It is possible that Jacob did argue against Johnson whilst holding some sort of Congregational policy himself. There is clear evidence that Jacob's Congregationalism goes back before the publication of his Defence in 1599, as A Treatise of a Pastorall Calling, attached to his Defence, demonstrates.

Jacob's Defence, unacceptable as it was to Johnson, would have been just as unacceptable to the ecclesiastical authorities. Jacob was clearly very uncertain of the established church and did see the need for reformation.⁽⁵⁹⁾ He said that he was not attempting to justify the "whole Ministry, estate and manner of worship" which was practised in England.⁽⁶⁰⁾ But he was afraid of schism and defends himself in his Divine Beginning by saying that it is not schismatic to maintain Christ's "speciall Honor and Glory and maiestie to have a Visible Kingdom on earth."⁽⁶¹⁾

Jacob formed his Congregational church in Southwark in 1616 and following the formation of this church, those assembled went off to the parish church for communion. Jacob was certainly not a Separatist. I believe Brachlow is correct about the development of Jacob's Congregationalism and its development from the older Elizabethan Puritanism. Yet I would not totally discount

Johnson's influence. Having debated with Johnson, and carefully considered his arguments for three years, Jacob's thought must have been influenced to a degree by those arguments.

Jacob held a partly developed Congregational view of the church whilst writing his Defence. For example he held that the people's free consent was important when choosing a minister.⁽⁶²⁾ This Congregational polity slowly grew and developed, possibly helped along by Johnson, until Jacob clearly states it in his writings immediately following the failed Hampton Court Conference. This gradual development continued and led in 1616 to the formation of his Southwark church.

Even though Jacob did not appear to link ecclesiology and soteriology before 1604, the beginnings of his Congregationalism go back probably even further than his debate with Johnson. Jacob was clearly not a Separatist but was one of the first to hold a clearly Congregational view of the church. His importance lies in his providing a bridge between the complete Separatism of Francis Johnson, and the Elizabethan Separatist position he defended and embodied, and the later development of the main English Nonconformist churches - most specifically English Congregationalism. He sowed the seeds which grew and blossomed during the 1640s and the years following.

- 1 M. Watts The Dissenters I (Oxford 1978) 51-2.
- 2 *ibid*, G.F. Nuttall Visible Saints (Oxford 1957) 10.
- 3 Watts *ibid.* 54, M. Tolmie Triumph of the Saints (Cambridge 1977) 8.
4. Henry Jacob A Defence of the Churches and Ministry of Englande. Written in two Treatises against the Reasons and Objections of Maister Francis Johnson, and others of the separation commonly called Brownists (Middelburg, 1599) 12.
5. *Ibid.* 12 - 14.
6. *Ibid.* 19.
7. *Ibid.* 41.
8. *Ibid.* 24.
9. *Ibid.* 54.
10. *Ibid.* 88.
11. *Ibid.* 9.
12. *Ibid.* 56.

13. Henry Jacob Reasons taken out of Gods Word, (Middelburg 1604) 4
14. John von Rohr 'The Congregationalism of Henry Jacob', Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society vol. 19 (1962) 107.
15. Henry Jacob The Divine Beginning and Institution of Christs true Visible Ministeriall Church. Also the unchangableness of the same by men; viz. in the forme and essentiall constitution therof, (Leyden 1610 n.p.) 2.
16. Ibid.3.
17. Ibid.3.
18. Ibid. B.
19. Ibid. B.
20. Ibid. B.
21. Daniel Neal History of the Puritans (London 1822) 5 vols. vol. 2, 44 and 92. Neal cites no direct evidence to support the view that Jacob met with Robinson, although his Divine Beginning was published at Leyden in 1610. See later note.
22. John Waddington Congregational History 1567 - 1700, (London 1874) 174 - 176. R. W. Dale History of English Congregationalism (London 1898) 213 - 218.
23. Henry Martyn Dexter The Congregationalism of the Last Three Hundred Years as seen through its literature (London 1879) 635.
24. Benjamin Hanbury Historical Memorials relating to the Independents (London 1839 - 1845) 3 vols. vol. 1 220.
25. Ibid. 220 footnote.
26. Ibid.. 227ff.
27. A. Peel The Congregational Two Hundred (London 1948), 34.
28. It is usually assumed that Burrage was the first to trace Jacob's Congregationalism back to 1604. But Hanbury in 1839 clearly states that Jacob's Congregationalism goes back to 1604 and believes that he was influenced by his debate with Johnson.
29. Champlin Burrage The Early English Dissenters (Cambridge 1912) 281.
30. Ibid. 283.
31. Ibid. 291.
32. The full text of the Jessey Memorandum can be found in the Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society vol.1. (May 1910).
33. Perry Miller Orthodoxy in Massachusetts (Gloucester, Mass. 1965), 75 - 76. Miller in the preface to this book acknowledges that it "has in reality

- been a development of the hints" he received from Burrage's earlier work. xxix.
34. Perry Miller Errand into the Wilderness (New York 1964) 17.
 35. B. R. White The English Separatist Tradition (Oxford 1971) 91.
 36. Ibid. 165.
 37. Ibid. 166 - 167. White refers to the Jessey Memorandum. It is clear from this that Jacob met with Robinson, yet there is no evidence to suggest that Jacob consulted Robinson specifically about the formation of his church in Southwark.
 38. John Von Rohr "Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus: An early Congregational Version", Church History, vol. 36 (1967) 117.
 39. Ibid. 119.
 40. John Von Rohr The Congregationalism of Henry Jacob 110 - 111.
 41. Slayden A. Yarborough "Henry Jacob," "A Moderate Separatist and his influence on early English Congregationalism", Phd Thesis, Baylor University 1972.
 42. Murray Tolmie The Triumph of the Saints (Cambridge, 1977) 9.
 43. Ibid. 7 - 8.
 44. Ibid. 9. Tolmie believes that as Jacob's works of 1610 were published in Leyden, it is probable that Jacob spent time with Robinson in Leyden prior to their publication. Tolmie believes that The Divine Beginning was heavily influenced by Robinson.
 45. Ibid. 9.
 46. Ibid. 199, footnote 19.
 47. M.R. Watts The Dissenters I (Oxford 1978) 51.
 48. Ibid. 53.
 49. Stephen Brachlow "The Elizabethan Roots of Henry Jacob's Churchmanship" Journal of Ecclesiastical History vol.36 (1985) 230, footnote 10. Brachlow writes: "It is true that Cotton said Ames and Robert Parker had 'received. . . some things' from John Robinson during their Leyden talks in 1610, but one should be careful not to make too much of this since Cotton did not indicate the extent or significance of what they had learned from the Separatists. More importantly, Ames, Jacob and probably Parker had already developed their polity in full before meeting Robinson."
 50. Stephen Brachlow The Communion of Saints: Radical Puritan and Separatist Ecclesiology 1570 - 1625 (Oxford 1988) 56, 101, 136, 185, 220, 256.

51. Brachlow The Elizabethan Roots 228.
52. William Bradshaw English Puritanisme, containing the main opinions of the rigidest sort of those that are called Puritans (n.p. 1604) The preface is written by Ames.
53. Brachlow, Elizabethan Roots... 231.
54. Ibid. 241.
55. Ibid. 241 - 242.
56. White English Separatist Tradition 55 - 56.
57. Thomas Cartwright A reply to an answer made of M. Doctor Whitgifte (1574) 14.
58. Brachlow "The Elizabethan Roots of Henry Jacob's Churchmanship" 242 - 244.
59. Jacob Defence 9.
60. Jacob Defence 56.
61. Jacob Divine Beginning B.
62. Ibid. A.

Christopher Damp

Thomas Gainsborough: The Congregational Inheritance

In 1994, the National Gallery acquired the Portrait of the artist with his wife and daughter which Thomas Gainsborough painted in about 1748, a bequest from the Dowager Marchioness of Cholmondeley in memory of her brother, the painting's erstwhile owner, Sir Philip Sassoon, sometime Chairman of the National Gallery. It added, therefore, to the interesting and important collection of paintings in the gallery, executed by Gainsborough before he was thirty. These works display an “astonishing precocity” and, as Neil McGregor, Director of the National Gallery, points out, one of them, Mr and Mrs Andrews, has become “one of the epitomes of eighteenth-century Englishness”. Consequently it was decided to mount a travelling exhibition of them in conjunction with some works owned by the Louvre.⁽¹⁾ This has led to renewed interest in his work, his gifted siblings and brought to the attention of researchers his family's Congregationalism.

Hugh Belsey, in his book Gainsborough's Family notes that “the Gainsboroughs' close links with non-conformity ... provided ... such a very important, though as yet underestimated influence on the young painter's character”⁽²⁾ From the first mention of the family, in the 1544 Subsidy Roll of Billingborough in Lincolnshire where “John Gaynsborowe” is recorded, the family was not only of some financial standing but continued to become wealthier throughout the sixteenth century. In 1611, another John Gainsborough (c1580-c1645), and his wife Susance Armested, moved to the nearby village of Horbling. All his younger children, four sons and two daughters, including Robert (1617-1644), were baptized at St. Andrew's, Horbling, by Simon Bradstreet, a former Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge and “a notable non-conforming member of the Lincoln Diocese”. With Belsey, we may speculate on whether the move to Horbling was on economic or religious grounds. Whatever the case, it shows that from this period the Gainsboroughs were familiar with Puritanism, which was so important in this area. By 1638 Robert (1617-1644), his wife, Martha Wolferston, and his brother, Mathias, were living in Suffolk. Robert's will appointed as administrators his wife and a Presbyterian minister, Robert Stansbye of Ipswich. His son, Robert (1643-1717), mentioned in the Sudbury records as “Robertus Gainsbrow”, was the first of the family to manufacture and trade in fine worsted cloth (bays) and funerary crape (says). He was, for some years, “Capital Burgess

on the Corporation” and Chief Constable at Sudbury, Suffolk in 1681 and 1682.⁽³⁾ Although Charles II had stated, in the declaration of Breda, his support for toleration, “for difference in religious matters not disturbing the peace of the Kingdom”, civil and religious liberty for Protestant dissenters had been curtailed by a series of repressive statutes.⁽⁴⁾

The Act of Uniformity, implemented on Black Bartholomew's Day 1662, the Conventicle Acts of 1664 and 1670, and the Five Mile Act 1667 inhibited dissenting congregations and their ministers from holding public worship in their own way. A first offence led to a fine or imprisonment which was doubled if caught a second time. A third offence led to a fine of a hundred pounds or banishment to America which, if evaded, could lead to the death penalty.⁽⁵⁾ Although the Declaration of Indulgence in 1672 allowed the licensing of some places for worship, the Mayor, Mr Catesby, and officers of the Corporation in Sudbury were under duress “to put by conventicles upon the notoriety of ye evill influence they had upon ye publicke”. Catesby prevaricated, saying he required 'sworn information'. When a quo warranto was served on him and the Corporation he had to convict “one conventicle and make out warrants against a few poor persons”.⁽⁶⁾ In 1672 William Folkes of Great Cornard, a Presbyterian who had been ejected from a lectureship in Sudbury, had been licensed to preach for a congregation of Sudbury Nonconformists at the house of John Parish, a wealthy merchant.⁽⁷⁾ Also a barn had been licensed for Congregational worship and Samuel Blower of Sudbury had been licensed to be “a general Congregational teacher”. In the years “1676, 1677 and 1678 Mr Samuel Petto was settled among the Dissenters”. In 1681 “Mr Petto the Nonconformist Preacher in the Barn”, with others, were presented at Quarter Sessions for not attending their parish church. Nothing was done to them. John Catesby, therefore, was sympathetic to the worshippers at the Barn, giving some protection to their meetings, In similar fashion, Robert Gainsborough used his position as Capital Burgess and Chief Constable (he was also 'Ballius', meaning bailiff) to defend the Great Meeting House in Friars Street.⁽⁸⁾ He appears to have been an occasional conformist, a practice necessary at that time to keep his position as a borough official, i.e. he sometimes attended and took communion, with the prescribed oaths of office, in the parish church.⁽⁹⁾ (Daniel Defoe (1660-1731), the novelist, who himself had been educated with a view to the dissenting ministry at Morton's Academy for Dissenters at Newington Green, called it peek-a-boeing with God and thought it a contemptible practice.)⁽¹⁰⁾ However, as soon as

persecution of dissenters eased, Robert and his wife, Frances Maynard, had their second son and fifth child, Thomas (1678-1739), baptized at the Old Meeting on 14 November 1678. Thomas is buried at All Saints', Sudbury, in the family vault of his second wife, Elizabeth Fenn (c1676-1753).⁽¹¹⁾ This was a more secure resting place than the Gainsborough family vault at the Old Meeting House, "nine feet from the street palisades, in a direct line to the centre of the chapel front", as in 1966 "the remains of several members of the Gainsborough family ... in a family vault in the site of an old chapel were removed by a mechanical excavator" and were buried "in the cemetery".⁽¹²⁾ Their sons, Thomas (1709-1738) and John (1711-1772), with John's first wife Mary English, are buried in the vault at All Saints'. The latter's burial there is also noted in the burial list of Friars Street chapel, where several of the Fenns -- a rich cloth family from Essex - are also buried.⁽¹³⁾ Thomas gave liberally to the cause at Friars Street. In 1756, "the yearly subscription of sum paid to minister" included £6 from Thomas out of a total of £62 from 60 subscribers.⁽¹⁴⁾ A little is known of Thomas' elder brother, Robert (1673-1754). He was baptized, as had been the older children of Robert and Frances, in the Church of England (in this case, St. Peter's Sudbury), was a Freeman of the Town and his portrait was painted by Robert Cardinal (c1730), who was reported to be a pupil of Sir Godfrey Kneller. John (1783-1748), the artist's father, like his brother, Thomas, was a Congregationalist. All of Thomas' children were baptized at Friar's Street. His second son, John (baptized 13 September 1711, died 1772), was the only son to marry. His wife, Mary, whom he married in Saffron Walden in 1747, was the daughter of Edward English, a "considerable Bays factor worth 30,000L". He, also a Congregationalist, was extremely kind to the painter's father, John, in buying what is now Gainsborough House so that the family could continue to live there. His youngest grandchild, Emily Gainsborough (1786-1852), who left Friars Street Chapel in 1837, giving much of the money to build Trinity Chapel School Street, is the Emily whose actions are mentioned in Vine's article (see below). She was, however, buried in the family vault at Friars Street. Emily's father, John (baptized 1 December 1752, died 1791), was also an active Congregationalist, as was her mother Susanna Reymes (1752-1826). Hodson comments on both her parents' generosity and notes the subscription of £100 which Susanna gave to the new chapel of her day.⁽¹⁵⁾

Charles H. Vine (1865-1930), in his article, "The Gainsborough Bible", wrongfully attributes the inscription in the bible, "Thomas Gainsborough 1718 Ex dono Patris suo", to the painter Thomas Gainsborough's father.⁽¹⁶⁾ The reference

could be to the artist's uncle, Thomas, or his son, also Thomas (1709-38). Vine was told that the second signature in the bible was that of Thomas Gainsborough the artist which the last survivor of the family, Miss Emily Gainsborough, had, in 1851, removed and destroyed with some of his paintings in her possession. Vine believed the third signature, "John Gainsborough, 1769", was that of the painter's brother, John (b1711).⁽¹⁷⁾ Vine's suggestion is theoretically possible, as he did not die until 1789.⁽¹⁸⁾ However, the elder (Uncle) Thomas' son was also called John (1711-72). Perhaps, as Emily was the youngest grandchild, this may be the reason she at one time had possession of the bible. Vine was told that she was a devout Congregationalist. He is an unreliable source as he is, at times, incorrect even when plagiarizing accurate information.⁽¹⁹⁾ All the elder Thomas' children were baptized at Friars Street by Petto's son-in-law, Josias Maultby, as were his brother John's elder children. No name is given for who administered the ordinance to either Mathias, Susan or Thomas the artist.⁽²⁰⁾

John Gainsborough, like his brother Thomas, was a member of the old chapel in Friars Street. He was also a subscriber to the new Sudbury Meeting House, begun in December 1709. He had been a wealthy man, having discovered the secret of making woollen shrouds on a visit to Coventry, which town until then had virtually held the monopoly in producing this essential garment. He was designated in various deeds as milliner, clothier and finally crape maker. His kindly disposition and perhaps his Christian beliefs made him incapable of levying "a toll of a third of their weekly wages" from his workforce. His generosity and weakness in pressing his creditors led to his becoming bankrupt in 1733. His business took him to France and Holland (perhaps this gave the young Thomas an early introduction to the paintings and drawings of those countries). John was also a skillful ambidextrous sword fencer. Both Thomas and Humphrey seem to have inherited his kindly and generous disposition and his concern for the poor and needy.⁽²¹⁾ John's wife, Mary Burroughs, was said to be of an "old standing family" and of unblemished character. She encouraged her children to pursue their various interests as she had a well-cultured mind and, "amongst other accomplishments, excelled in flower painting". Her brother, the Rev. Humphrey Burroughs, was a Church of England clergyman, a curate at St Gregory's, Sudbury. (His father in law, Nathaniel Bisbie, rector of Long Melford, wrote many anti-nonconformist tracts.) As master at Sudbury Grammar School (founded 1491), he taught all his nephews who often led him a merry dance.⁽²²⁾ John and Mary had nine children, five sons and four daughters. Their dates of

birth are unknown. John, the eldest son, baptized 1 April 1711, was known as "scheming Jack" because of his hare-brained inventions which included, amongst other things, a self rocking cradle and wings for flying. He was always impecunious and often borrowed money from his family. Humphrey Gainsborough, baptized on April 13th 1718, was not only an extremely talented inventor, but also Independent (Congregational) minister at Henley Congregational Church for twenty-eight years until his death in 1776.⁽²³⁾ Thomas, the artist, fifth and youngest son, the best known of the children, was baptized on May 14th 1727. Mathias (b1725) died as a youth in an accident involving a table fork. All the daughters married. Mary (baptized 26 April 1715) married a minister, Rev Christopher Gibbon. Little is known of him. Some sources state that he was a dissenter, others that he was an Anglican. Sarah (Sally) was baptized 28 August 1715 and married a carpenter, Philip Dupont. They settled in Sudbury. Their son Gainsborough Dupont became Thomas Gainsborough's only apprentice and is buried with him in Kew churchyard. Elizabeth (Betsy) was baptized on 26 May 1723 and married John Bird, a 'carrier' of Sudbury. Susan (b1726) married Richard Gardiner of Tollesbury. She spent her married life in Sudbury.⁽²⁴⁾

John's loss of money led his brother, Thomas, to take an interest in all his nephews and nieces but especially in Humphrey. His will emphasizes the importance of "the Meeting Place where I myself do attend to hear the Word of God preacht, and (the minister) who is now Mr John Ford". He also left ten pounds "to the poor that shall be in Communion and esteemed members of the dissenting Church of which I myself am a member". He also gave money to the poor not in membership who attended worship. Interestingly he gave twenty pounds so that Thomas "may be brought up to some light handicraft trade". The importance of Congregationalism to Thomas, the artist's uncle, can also be seen in the stress he places on Humphrey Gainsborough, whom he has looked after for some years and who is "a pupil at the Academy where Mr Emes is Master in order to be trained up for the Ministry", and the importance he laid on his maintenance during his period of study.⁽²⁵⁾

We know that Humphrey was a theological student in 1736, studying for the ministry at the Congregational Fund Board Academy at Moorfields. London (founded December 1695), when he was about eighteen, because he received a grant from the Throckmorton Trotman Trust. John Eames, his tutor, was

described by Isaac Watts (1674-1748) as “the most learned man I ever knew”. A friend of Sir Isaac Newton, through whose influence he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, he is probably the only layman to lecture in theology in a dissenting academy.⁽²⁶⁾ Humphrey's ability in science must have been greatly helped by such teaching. In 1737 a book on Rules and Orders states that the qualifications essential for a minister to become an exhibitioner are to have “the approbation” of his church and to be “Sound in the Faith, Particularly as to the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity”. Humphrey's theological education was therefore orthodox and Trinitarian, as was common in eighteenth century Congregationalism which was not as influenced as Presbyterianism by the influx of Socinianism.⁽²⁷⁾

Hodson has written, perhaps fancifully, of the Sabbath observances of the Gainsborough family when they were conducted “in orderly procession ... to the Old Chapel”. All the children had an orthodox, if lively, religious education in the eighteenth century Independent manner.⁽²⁸⁾ Humphrey always combined the life of an important inventor with the life of an Independent minister, first at Newport Pagnell (1738?-1747), and later at Henley (1748-1776). When pressed to become a minister in the Church of England, he replied, “I shall dwell among my people”. Philip Thicknesse, in the Gentleman's Magazine 1785, reiterates that Humphrey could not conform to the established church, “while his conscience disapproved of the terms”.⁽²⁹⁾ Thomas, although he felt that he was sometimes “liberal, thoughtless and dissipated”, always attempted to follow the precepts of his childhood. For example, although a fashionable artist, throughout his life he never painted on a Sunday.⁽³⁰⁾ He occasionally visited Sudbury when his brother was preaching and reported that Humphrey “Delighted the people hugely”. In 1775, Thomas, writing to his wife, after visiting the chapel, described Mr Ray as “a very worthy Minister” but continued that “the Meeting is at a low ebb”.⁽³¹⁾

John Mead Ray, a student of Dr John Conder (1714-1781), helped to return part of the congregation, which had seceded in 1765, to the main body in 1785, ten years after the brothers' visit. Ray baptized many of the Gainsborough family including John (1781), Maria (1783) and Thomas (1784), the children of the eldest son, John (1752-1791), of the artist's first cousin, John.⁽³²⁾ There were reciprocal visits between Thomas and his brother throughout their lives. In November 12th 1775, whilst living in London, Thomas wrote to his sister, Mary, at Bath, where she kept a lodging house, thanking her for the “excellent present of

fish”, which he had shared with his family and Humphrey who had recently lost his wife. He continued, “we did all we could to comfort him and wish him every possible happiness, as he is a good creature”. He then teased her about her running of a lodging house, writing, “I know you would willingly keep the cart upon the wheels till you go to heaven, though you deserve to ride there in something better.” He continues, “I told Humphrey you were a rank Methodist who says you had better be a Presbyterian, but I say Church of England.” He ends with this confession of faith. “It does not signify what, if you are but free from hypocrisy and don't get your heart upon worldly honours and wealth.”⁽³³⁾ On his deathbed he sought reconciliation with Sir Joshua Reynolds (with whom he had not always agreed). His parting words to Reynolds being, “we are all going to heaven and Vandyck is of the party”.⁽³⁴⁾ The day before his death he wrote, asking that he might be buried near the grave of his friend Kirby.⁽³⁵⁾ John Joshua Kirby (1716-1774), a friend since his Ipswich days, where Thomas Gainsborough lived after his father's death in 1748, was a man of “the highest moral integrity”, who became Clerk of the Works at Kew Gardens.⁽³⁶⁾ Following the simplicity of his family, he requested that his gravestone be “without either arms or ornament”⁽³⁷⁾ He lies in the small, delightful graveyard of Kew Parish Church, surrounded by lilac trees, a fate not given to many of his family whose last resting place has almost always been disturbed. Even Humphrey and his wife had to be relocated to the new church at Henley when it was rebuilt.

Many of the Gainsborough family were, from the last quarter of the seventeenth century, members in the strictest and the most faithful sense of Congregational churches. They displayed, not only the talents which brought them worldly fame, but also the Christian virtues which arose from consistent, quiet devotion. They all looked forward to heaven and, although sometimes wealthy, never forgot their duty to relieve the wants of those less fortunate than themselves.

1. N.McGregor in foreword to Young Gainsborough catalogue (1997) 2.
2. H Belsey Gainsborough's Family (Sudbury 1988) 13.
3. *ibid.* 10-11, W.W.Hodson The Meeting House and the Manse (1893) 57.
4. *ibid.* 45.
5. *ibid.* 45, M Watts The Dissenters I (Oxford 1985) 225.

6. Hodson op.cit. 46,56.
7. ibid. 46, A.G.Matthews Calamy Revised (Oxford 1934) 204.
8. Hodson op.cit. 46,53,55,58, Belsey op.cit. 13, for Petto see DNB.
9. Hodson op.cit. 58.
10. M.Drabble (ed.) The Oxford Companion to English Literature (Oxford 1985) 262.
11. Belsey op.cit. 14.
12. Hodson op.cit. 98, Eastern Daily Press 2 March 1966.
13. Belsey op.cit. 14, Suffolk County Record Office (SCRO) document FK3501/2/1.
14. SCRO FK3501/4/3.
15. Belsey op.cit. 11-13, SCRO FK3501/2/1, Hodson op.cit. 99.
16. C.H.Vine "The Gainsborough Bible" in Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society (1916-18) VII 164.
17. Vine op.cit. 164,165.
18. Belsey op.cit. 20.
19. cf. Hodson op.cit. 97 and Vine op.cit. 164.
20. Hodson, op.cit. 97, SCRO FK3501/2/1.
21. Christian World 13 September 1934, Peters, op.cit. 9, The Times 5 August 1788.
22. E.Waterhouse Gainsborough (1958) 8, Christian World op.cit., Belsey op.cit. 15, DNB, Peters op.cit. 10.
23. Peters op.cit. 9.
24. Belsey op.cit. 21, Waterhouse op.cit. 8.
25. Peters op.cit. 13.
26. ibid., for Eames see DNB.
27. J.H.Taylor The Congregational Fund Board 1695-1995 (1995) 7.
28. Hodson op.cit. 98-99.
29. Peters op.cit. 29.
30. L.Doeser The Life and Works of Gainsborough (1995) 20, Gainsborough's sabbatarianism is in an anecdote from Dr Daniel Jenkins.
31. Peters op.cit. 31, Hodson op.cit. 99.
32. ibid. 78, SCRO FK3501/2/1, for Conder see H.McLachlan English Education Under the Test Acts (Manchester 1931) 177.
33. Christian World op.cit.

34. DNB.
35. The Times 12 August 1788.
36. Doerer op.cit.
- 37 The Times op.cit.

Yvonne A. Evans

How Beautiful Upon the Mountains are the Feet.... Some memories of Twentieth Century Evangelists

I was born in the year before the outbreak of the First World War. My earliest memory is that of my mother pointing out to me the glare of fire and steam from a steam engine, and saying that the glare should have been shielded "because there was a war on".

Like other children at that time we were brought up in Chapel and Sunday School. Ours was the Bryn Welsh Independent Chapel, where the Rev. John Evans, a follower of Karl Barth, was minister, for over half a century. The name Bryn, means 'Hill', as it is set on a hill, with its members drawn from the villages around, to this day.

My Sunday School teacher bore with us boys in our lack of enthusiasm for serious study. At Llwynhendy ('Llwyn' means grove or bush, "yr hen dy" means (of) the old house) we attended day school, and, although our parents were in regular employment, we saw something of the effects of unemployment that was so general in the 1920s. There was a refrain which we sang as boys to the annoyance of our teachers which ran, "Are you working? No, are you?"

Llwynhendy our village was two miles from Llanelly. Tinopolis as it was known for its many tinplate and enamel works, as well as mines. We saw a little of the poverty on account of the depression after the First World War. Llanelly is the largest town in Wales bearing the prefix 'Llan' meaning church or hamlet. I recall drinking tea from a tin mug bearing the picture of King George Vth on some special occasion. On one occasion Gareth Hughes, or Brother David, as he was known after he had forsaken his work as a 'film-star' in Hollywood, on becoming a missionary to the Nevada Indians, called in at school. His mother was known to be a very godly and prayerful Christian, but she did not live long enough to see her prayers for 'Gareth' answered. Two or three miles away, Evan Roberts (1878-1951) the famous Welsh revivalist, was born. Roberts was the leader of that revival in the years 1904-6 which left its mark on the religious life of Wales and England, and far beyond.⁽¹⁾ When the International Congregational Fellowship met in 1989 in Leiden, Holland, after a great service at which Dr. Tudur Jones preached in the great Pieterkirk, my wife Huldah and I strolled along the 'Kracht' or canal, and turned in to a little church where preparations were

being made for a funeral service on the following day. When I asked what denomination it was, I got the reply that, during the years 1904/6 some members had gone to witness the extraordinary scenes of the Welsh revival and had taken the message back to Leiden where a similar revival occurred. The church we had entered and its lively following was the result. Evan Roberts was born at a house named 'Ty'r Ynys' (house on the island) a house built on a little headland which was flooded when the tide swept in from the bay.

When I was in my teens news spread one day that Evan Roberts had come to visit his old home, and it was understood that he would be present at Moriah Chapel, in Loughor, Glamorgan, the other church of the branch that the 'Roberts' family attended. We went along hoping to see and perhaps hear Evan Roberts preach, but we were all disappointed. The people gathered on such occasions of his homecoming in the hope of another outbreak of revival. So I saw him there but never heard him speak, and I attended his solemn funeral at Moriah in 1951. How can we explain the silence that descended upon so great a servant? The answer is that he, like John the Baptist, had fallen into a great depression and silence, through which he was nursed at Leicester by Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Penn Lewis, a business man and his wife, who wrote in the Overcomer, a devotional magazine.⁽²⁾

Mrs. J.Penn Lewis spoke at the Cyrddau Mawr, or Welsh Keswick meetings, which I attended during the first week of August at Llandrindod Wells, with a friend and attended the Convention held in a large tent in Duffryn road. There I heard W.Graham Scroogie, Tydeman Chilvers, E. Talbot Rice, W.E. Lewis, friends of Evan Roberts and others.⁽³⁾

Other evangelists I heard at my home town, Llanelly, include Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, famed as a Harley Street specialist. People came to him after the service to consult him concerning their health. His custom in Wales (he had been minister at Sandfields, Aberavon) was to preach in English at an afternoon service and in Welsh at the evening service.⁽⁴⁾ Another quite different missionary was Raymond Preston, a Methodist, who preached a sort of temperance and moral crusade and having special services for men only. The Rev. Tom Nefyn of the Presbyterian Church in Wales, who was charged with unorthodox preaching, was dismissed from its ministry. In his services he encouraged the ladies to knit or repair garments during the address in the ladies' mid-week services. In this he

was meeting the needs of the very depressed state of the congregation. He was an earlier edition of Donald Soper of 'Hyde Park Corner' fame.

London was the centre of all things Christian, or so we thought, in those days. The very popular May Meetings I attended were not those at Westminster Chapel we attended annually from 1949-71 as Congregational Union ministers, until the URC emerged and the Congregational Federation, E.F.C.C. and the U.C.C. appeared in 1972. The May meetings I have referred to included those of the Bible Society and other events held in the great London auditoriums. The largest I have attended was the Bible Day at the Crystal Palace where I heard Gypsy Smith preach and sing his favourite solos, including 'Jesus satisfies'. I got his Book of Solos for 1s 6d and secured his autograph in my Samuel Baxter reference Bible.... The Archbishop of Canterbury was chairman at the main events, and Bishop J. Taylor Smith was another in great demand. Lindsey Glegg, a Plymouth Brother, and the two Goodman brothers were with Lindsey Glegg regularly on the platforms. Prominent were the LMS, CMS, Barnardo's, CSSM and many others.

Nearer home I attended the Welsh CyRDDau Mawr I referred to. Those were the days when you had to be early to gain a seat. The greatest congregations were those for Philip Jones, Jiwbili Young etc.minister of Seion Baptist, Llanelli.⁽⁵⁾ An orator of outstanding ability, he went to no college. He told of his awaiting the arrival of the minister at Rhondda station on Saturday night and offering to carry the minister's bag saying "I want to be a preacher myself". He started as a tailor's apprentice and is well described as the Welsh Spurgeon. At his induction at Seion, the great Dr. Gwili Jenkins took the text "A' I yn ddiachos y mae Job yn ofni Duw?" - Satan speaks in Job, "Does Job serve God for naught?" Those were the days of the sermon-lecture. Gwili won the chair at Pontypool Eisteddfod in 1924 for his poem, 'To The Unknown God'. I also heard J.J. Jones, head of the Memorial College, Brecon. The Rev. R. B. Jones was founder of the Bible College, Porth, in the Rhondda. Many of his students, who were maintained by 'faith' and the 'charity' of Christians, found their way to Angola, Rwanda and China under the China Inland Mission.⁽⁶⁾

Two other Bible colleges of note were the Barry Bible College, still going strong at Bridgend, and the Swansea Bible College at Blackpill, founded by Rees Howells, and run on the same 'faith' lines which trained men and women for the

mission field. He had a school for missionaries' children, a medical and dental clinic. I went to its Open Day, pre-war, and saw and heard Haile Selassie the Emperor of Abyssinia, recently overrun by Mussolini. The Emperor fled and settled at Bath and sent Samuel, his son, to this school. Between them Rees Howells and Selassie published a book, The Death of Hitler and the Defeat of the Nazis. Later I was inducted to my first church, Canaan Chapel, Swansea, having under my belt a Diploma in Theology. I had passed the Methodist Local Preachers' examination before entering the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen, and gaining the University of Wales' Diploma in Theology in 1951.

It is of little wonder that my parents came under the influence of the Welsh revival. I can just recall the large congregations, and David Matthews D.Mus. who conducted missions and I have his booklet with hymns in English and Welsh. A few years later, at a time of crisis, I was led to commit my life to the Lord Jesus Christ and the study of the scriptures became central, and the love of God won my affection. About that time I heard Christabel Pankhurst, the Women's Movement leader. At the age of fifteen I got my first tinplate job. My daily work was monotonous but all spare time was spent at evening classes, punctuated by spells of shorthand, German, correspondence Bible courses, and finally the Methodist examinations for recognized lay preachers. I served the local circuit for ten years until in 1947 I returned to my father's home church, at the Bryn, and was sent by it to the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen. After taking the Diploma in Theology, being ordained at Canaan, Swansea and serving at Abersychan and the Erwood group, until 1972 when the URC split the group, I was invited to the English Swan Hill and Tabernacle Welsh Churches at Shrewsbury.

I should like to conclude with a few notes on the types of evangelism I have encountered. Frank Penfold came to the Baptist Church at Dafen, near my home. He accompanied the organ and congregational singing with his cornet. Peter Connolly from Belfast was a powerful and eloquent preacher. Among the Convention preachers were R.B.Jones of Porth, a gracious saintly figure, reminiscent of John Wesley.

There were others, but two stand head and shoulders above them all. First is Dr. Billy Graham whose mission in the mid fifties left a deep impression on church life in Britain. The other is George Jefferies, who was brought up in

Siloh, Nantyllyllon, Maesteg, South Wales, where he came under the influence of the Rev. Glasnant Jones at Siloh Welsh Independent Chapel. He had, by 1920, taken charge of a Belfast mission and about 1926 commenced a ministry which led to the founding of the Elim Foursquare Gospel Church as a result of his missions. Again we note the succession from the influence exerted by the Welsh Revival of 1904-5. Billy Graham and George Jefferies were impressive figures and at their best in great congregations. Both chose the largest modern halls for their missions. Both were impressive personalities. Graham was of the great American Baptist and southern U.S. tradition. Jefferies followed the Welsh tradition of the large Welsh congregations. Both addressed their thousands and there the comparisons end. Billy came to this country and was to address the London clergy and ministers as well as to meet and have lunch with the Queen. He brought over two hundred staff to organize the mission and brought the greetings of the American President to Queen and country. With such support the material side of the missions was assured. We shall not take anything away from the great Graham missions by comparing George Jefferies with him. Jefferies had his humble beginnings and a handful of Elim pastors scarcely compares with the majority of British churches and ministers who would not wish to be seen as supporting such a revivalist venture. Jefferies got a bad press from the start. John Bull, the popular weekly, discredited his claims as preacher and healer. It published scurrilous articles bordering on defamation. No Anglican or Free churchman dared offer support. In spite of all this George Jefferies succeeded in filling the largest auditoriums in the country. the Bingley Hall, Birmingham, the Albert Hall, the Crystal Palace etc. Jefferies was born on the 28 February 1889 eleven years after Evan Roberts, the great revivalist. Rom Landau wrote in his book, God is My Adventure, speaking very highly of George Jefferies and comparing him with Tagore, Gandhi and David Lloyd George among his charismatic heroes. His team consisted of A.W. Edsor, R.E. Darragh and himself. At the end of and during the Second World War the British Israel theory captured his imagination, and later the autonomy of the local church led to the setting up of the Bible Pattern Fellowship. Like Evan Roberts dark clouds had gathered over the career of perhaps Britain's great revivalist since the last century. He was laid to rest alongside his team partner, R.E.Darragh in Streatham cemetery, South London, on February 1, 1962 after the funeral service in Kensington Temple.

- 1 E. Evans The Welsh Revival of 1904 (1969)
- 2 K. O. Morgan Wales 1880-1980 (1982) 134, 135, writes that Roberts “from 1907... gave himself almost exclusively to a ministry of intercessory prayer. During his later years, he became a recluse and lived obscurely in Cardiff from 1930 until his death in 1951.” Roberts himself was “a strange mystical figure of doubtful sanity at the end” but became a “major national influence” to whom even Lloyd George had to make obeisance.
- 3 Murray D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty Years 1899-1939 (Edinburgh 1982), D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith 1939-1981 (Edinburgh 1990).
For Llandrindod, “the ideal centre for the innumerable conferences “ held there, see K. O. Morgan Wales 1880-1980(1982) 128-9. It was a popular centre for holiness conventions. H. Tydeman Chilvers was minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle (Spurgeon’s) in south London. I.Murray D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones 1899-1939 192. Dr. W.G. Scroggie was Director of Studies at London Bible College from its beginning in 1943 and minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. H.H. Rowdon London Bible College, the First Twenty-Five Years (1968)
- 4 M. Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981) gave up a brilliant medical career to follow his calling to preach at Sandfields, Aberavon and later at Westminster Chapel. I.Murray D.Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty Years 1899-1939 (Edinburgh 1982), D.Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith 1939-1981 (Edinburgh 1990).
- 5 Philip Jones (1855-1945) of Porthcawl was a Calvinistic Methodist preacher. M. Stephens The Oxford Companion to the Literature of Wales(Oxford 1986) 317. Jiwibili (Jubilee) Young (1887-1962) was a Baptist minister who gained fame at Seion, Llanelli, where he preached 1931-57. Stephens 672.
- 6 John (Gwili) Jenkins (1872-1936) was a theologian and poet. He was a Baptist and lectured in New Testament at Bangor from 1923 onwards. He was a friend of the poet, Edward Thomas (1878-1917). M.Stephens *ibid.* 292, Dictionary of Welsh Biography (1959) 435-6. R.B. Jones, a Baptist, was a notable preacher during the revival of 1904. He withdrew from the Baptist Union in objection to modernism. I.Murray D.Martyn Lloyd-Jones 1899-1939 (1982) 192,3.

Trevor Watts

Obituary

Pennar Davies (1911-96)

A Welsh novelist, poet, theologian, and minister Pennar Davies adorned Congregationalism in Wales. Although his childhood home was English speaking Pennar Davies became a passionate writer in Welsh and a strong advocate of Welsh nationalism. He was born in Mountain Ash (In Welsh, Aberpennar) in the Cynon valley and given the name William Thomas Davies. Both his parents' families derived from Pembrokeshire and his father, a miner, spoke Welsh but, like so many in earlier generations, he saw no future for the language which was then being used less and less, especially in south Wales.

Pennar attended Mountain Ash Grammar School where he began to learn Welsh and then University College, Cardiff. There he attained first class degrees in Latin in 1932, and in English in 1933. From Cardiff he went to Oxford where at Balliol College he took a B. Litt. In English. In 1936 he studied at Yale University as a Commonwealth Scholar but in 1940 was back in Oxford, at Mansfield College, to read theology. Declining all invitations to remain in Oxford, he returned to Wales to serve as the minister of Minster Road Congregational Church, Cardiff 1943-6. The decision alarmed some friends, like Dylan Thomas, who felt his talents lay in the field of literature. Pennar had since 1939 been involved with Cylch Cadwgan, a group of poets which tended to meet at the home of J. Gwyn Griffiths, himself later Professor of Classics and Egyptology at University College, Swansea. The name Cylch Cadwgan literally means the Cadwgan circle and took its name from Griffiths' house at Pentre in the Rhondda valley. The group shared similar pacifist and Welsh nationalistic ideals and aesthetic interests. Some of Pennar Davies' early poems were published in the group's volume *Cerddi Cadwgan* (1953).

On returning from Yale in 1943 Pennar married Rosemarie Woolf who had fled from Nazi Germany to this country. She and her fellow German refugee, Dr. Kathe Bosse, who married J. Gwyn Griffiths, learned Welsh sufficiently for it to be the language of their homes.

Pennar Davies became in 1946 Professor of Church History at Bala-Bangor Independent College where he remained until 1950. Then he moved to the Memorial College, Brecon to take on a similar post and in 1952 he was appointed college Principal. In 1959 the college moved to Swansea and Pennar served as both Professor of Church History and Principal until 1981 when he retired.

His early poetry had been written in Welsh and English under the name Davies Aberpennar but, abandoning this pseudonym in 1948, from then onwards, he wrote almost entirely in Welsh. This was when he took the name Pennar. His first collection of verse *Cinio'r Cythraul* was published in 1946 and he produced five more such works. He also wrote short stories, novels, a spiritual journal and a number of theological works. *Rhwrg Chwedl a Chredo* (1966) traces the direction of early Christianity in Wales in the time of the ancient Celtic gods and *Y Brenin Alltud* (1974) is a series of studies of Jesus and of poets and philosophers.

Pennar was a mild, modest Welshman but passionate in his advocacy of Wales and, especially, the Welsh language. He joined his fellow academics, Ned Thomas and Meredydd Evans, in 1980 in cutting off the power at the Pencarreg television transmitter, as part of the campaign for a much improved Welsh language service. The campaign resulted in 1982 in S4C, the Welsh language Channel 4. Davies stood unsuccessfully for election to Parliament in 1946 and 1966 for Plaid Cymru.

Pennar Davies was a man of deep learning and wide culture, a humble Christian and an erudite scholar. His writing reveals a calm sensitivity and is touched with mysticism. His love of Wales, his faith and goodness pervade all his work.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Shaping of American Congregationalism 1620-1957, by John Von Rohr. Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press. Pp.xi + 499. \$29.95.

Wearing his considerable learning lightly, John Von Rohr, Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology and History of Christianity at the Pacific School of Religion, has written a book which admirably captures the spirit of his subject, and may be read with profit by a wide readership. It may be read either straight through, with the recurrent themes - history, theology, polity, worship and mission - jostling one another within each successive period; or by pursuing the five topics in a more single minded way.

All the great events are here: the arrival of the Pilgrims; the establishment of the Massachusetts colony; the Cambridge Synod; the Great Awakening; the Unitarian separation and the Second Great Awakening; the establishment of missions at home and abroad; the Congregational and Christian union of 1931, and the joining of this united body with the Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1957. The great people are here too: from William Brewster and John Cotton, through Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney, to Douglas Horton and Wilhelm Pauck. The events and people are sensitively set within their socio-political-economic context, and due account is taken of Congregationalism's ecumenical contribution.

The thematic sections on polity and worship are particularly illuminating. The former clearly establishes the fact that American Congregational polity was never monochrome, but displayed in varying degrees local autonomy, consociation and (as Roger Williams and some Quakers found to their cost) religious establishments of various kinds and durations. The decreasing rigour in examining candidates for church membership is highlighted, but the place of the church meeting (which has no index entry) in the modern period - its importance, the degree to which it was honoured, its theology - is left vague. The development of worship is traced from the Puritan emphasis upon the importance of preaching to the influence of the modern liturgical movement. The changing fortunes of baptism, from its location within covenant theology, through its relative demise under revivalist conversion-orientated fervour, to its re-emergence

in the twentieth-century as a family occasion are charted -as if in fulfillment of John Cotton's seventeenth century injunction, "sit loose from the Ordinances."

Professor Von Rohr excels in providing lucid accounts of theological topics as complicated and various as Jonathan Edwards and the New Divinity (the story of the modification of Calvinism); the new Theology (wherein the cross attracts as being the supreme revelation of self-giving and suffering for others); Social Gospel theology; neo-orthodoxy; and neo-liberalism. The steps taken to fulfil the missionary obligation at home and abroad, and the challenge posed to that enterprise by a church culture imbued with local autonomy are likewise competently described.

Among many points of detail, it is interesting to note that even in New England's establishment Congregationalism the Lord's table was fenced against those who were not members of a Congregational church. The importance attached to theological education is revealed in the story of Harvard and (consequent upon that institution's increasing theological liberalism) Andover, and space is rightly accorded to the significant contribution of such frontier colleges as Oberlin. Divergent Congregationalist reactions to the revivalist Finney's "new measures" are noted, as is James Davenport's self-proclaimed ability to distinguish infallibly between the saved and the damned. As the old practice of allocating pews in church by reference to social standing and the size of subscriptions was being undermined by the increasing democratization of society, the saints at Acton, Massachusetts in 1757 advanced an additional motive for reform, namely, that the seats closest to the pulpit should be occupied by the town's leading sinners, who most needed to hear the preaching. The quest of freedom from the English yoke is well treated, as is the place of the laity in general and of women in particular. When exhorted to save her strength and forsake religious for more womanly pursuits, Sarah Osborn, a mid-eighteenth century church member at Newport, Rhode Island, retorted, "Needlework overpowers me vastly more than the duties I am engaged in." In 1853 Antoinette Brown became the first ordained woman in American Congregationalism. The variety and enrichment brought by successive waves of immigrants; the challenges posed by industrialization - these are among many other strands in the story. The abortive attempt at union with the Presbyterians in the early 1800s was eventually followed by increasing co-operation with other Christians through para-church organizations, fellowship with other Congregationalists through the International

Congregational Council, and union with like minded denominations in the twentieth century (though with those who constituted the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches and the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference declining to unite).

Many random questions are suggested along the way. How many votes would Thomas Hooker receive today for his view that "Take away a Sabbath, who can defend us from atheism, barbarism, and all manner of profaneness?" How would the "placement" services of today's denominational strategists accommodate a Moses Noyes, who was on trial at Lyme, Connecticut, for twenty-seven years before being ordained? In a time of financial constraint, what price a polity which proclaims that "A little church with great godliness is far to be preferred to a great church (I mean for number) and small purity"? Do any of our present churches need recourse to the policy of two in 1889 which, "as a relief from the strain of attention and the weariness of sitting still, have singing in the middle of the sermon"? Despite a century of universal education and the increasing "professionalization of the ministry," do we have a solution to Henry Ward Beecher's fear expressed in 1872, that "the intelligent part of society [may] go past us"? Finally, recalling the widespread shock occasioned by the defection of a number of Yale professors to Anglicanism in 1772, one cannot but ruefully wonder what a late twentieth-century theological professor would have to do to shock, or even mildly to nudge, anyone at all.

Alan P.F. Sell

Bedfordshire Chapels and Meeting Houses: Official Registration 1672-1901. Edited by Edwin Welch, Pp x + 231. The Bedfordshire Historical Record Society Volume 75. 1996.

£15. B.H.R.S. Publications, 10 Kimbolton Avenue, Bedford, MK40 3AD, ISBN 0-85155-058-4

This is a handsomely produced, sturdy paperback on the most Nonconformist of counties and Edwin Welch is an expert and assiduous researcher. Scholars, architectural historians, family historians, enthusiasts and chapel crawlers alike will appreciate the fourteen page introduction with its fifty-eight end-notes, the carefully chosen forty-nine illustrations, the five appendices (detailing dissenting congregations in the early eighteenth century, and then in

1772, chapels in 1842, places of worship in 1908, and nonconformist trust deeds 1736-1865), and also the lengthy index.

This book provides information on the origins of each chapel and meeting house, with the dates of registration and the names of those who registered the buildings (i.e. usually the most eminent members of the church or congregation which worshipped there) from 1672 to 1901. Charles II issued his royal proclamation to permit limited religious toleration in 1672, usually called the Declaration of Indulgence. A "number of places" were to be allowed to Protestant Dissenters for their worship, as long as both the preacher and the meeting house were registered and approved by the authorities. Petitions were received and licences issued for England and Wales. In 1687 James II issued a similar declaration. William III allowed, through the Toleration Act of 1689, Nonconformist preachers to be licensed at quarter sessions and meetings to be certified by the bishop, archdeacon, or local justices of the peace.

Over the years this principle of registration has been followed in various statutes, extending toleration to Baptists and Quakers and others who originally were excluded or made special provision for. Concessions have been made for later Dissenters, like the various Methodist bodies who often had itinerant ministers. However the various certificates of registration and petitions from churches and congregations are a valuable historical resource.

Edwin Welch gives details of every registered chapel, listed in date order by parish. As well as the well-known Nonconformist denominations, Congregational, Baptist, Wesleyan, Primitive Methodist, Presbyterian, and Quaker we have also many references to the Salvation Army, to Moravian churches and even some to the Mormons (at Dunstable, registered June 1853), unsectarian, Roman Catholic, and lesser known religious groupings.

CHC Magazine readers may especially like to read of the Congregational chapel at Roxton, now in the Congregational Federation. We are supplied with a photograph, c.1914, of this chapel which was established in 1808 by the local squire, Charles James Metcalfe of Roxton House. The still beautifully thatched chapel was given its rustic appearance about 1825 when the premises were enlarged.

The plate illustrating the John Howard Memorial Chapel in Mill Street, Bedford is fine but on the opposite page is a very attractive picture of the Moravian church, school and houses in St. Peter's Street, as they were in 1851.

This is a useful book for Bedfordshire historians or those with interests in the country's chapels. It would perhaps be improved if it also stated what church books and records survive and where they are. In addition the mention of church histories, printed and in manuscript, and county histories would help the enquiring reader. Without these aids the historians of Nonconformity may find the book not quite so useful. A detailed bibliography would also have been an asset.

A Manual of Congregational Principles by R.W. Dale. Edited by Digby L. James. Pp 248. Quinta Press 1996. £13 + £2 p+p. Quinta Press, Meadow View, Quinta Crescent, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 7RN. ISBN 1-897856-03-01

First published in 1884, Dale's Manual is an acknowledged "classic", as Alan Tovey writes in his foreword to this welcome new edition of the work. Many CHC members will already have copies of the Manual but many also will not and, scour the second-hand book shops and the religious book lists as they may, they may wait a long time to find it. Now Quinta Press have produced a substantial, solid hardback edition and it is a pleasure to have and to handle. At £13 it is not overpriced.

In addition to Alan Tovey's foreword, the book also contains a brief biographical note on Dale, and an appendix by Gordon Booth in which he comments on Dale's views of baptism, specifically Matthew 28:18-20. It is true that the Manual had a mixed reception on publication and did not enjoy universal acclaim, especially with regard to the section on baptism. However, although some later Congregationalists have given us their own "manuals", none have been as detailed as Dale's and no others are in print.

Readers might wish to note that Quinta Press intend to publish other titles of interest to Congregationalists, such as the works of John Cotton, and George Whitefield, as well as John Angell James' Christian Fellowship or The Church Member's Manual.

Mansfield College, Oxford: Its Origin, History, and Significance by Elaine Kaye. Pp x + 347. Oxford University Press 1996. £40. ISBN 0-19-920180-3

After her biographies of C.J.Cadoux (1988) and W.E. Orchard (1990), with Ross Mackenzie, Elaine Kaye has turned her time and talents to the biography of Mansfield College, Oxford. She has given us institutional histories before also - the King's Weigh House Church, in London (1968) and Queen's College, London (1972). We must be grateful for her industry, her application and her exactitude for this handsome book, - well produced, well written and well researched. It will prove indispensable to students and historians working on nineteenth and twentieth century Congregationalism in particular, and Nonconformity, in general, as well as those with an interest in Oxford and its university, for many years to come. The bibliography reveals the depth of scholarship involved with manuscript archives, tape recordings of interviews, printed college archives and periodicals, as well as theses and other modern published material. The upshot is an impressive achievement both for Mansfield College and for Elaine Kaye.

She gives her readers sixteen chapters, moving from the college's beginnings at Spring Hill, Birmingham through the debate about theology, education and ministry in the 1870s, and the move to Oxford where we arrive at the college's opening in 1886 in chapter IV. We have learned that Andrew Martin Fairbairn, the first principal, and, perhaps, the finest (although Elaine Kaye would not agree) described, in a letter to R.W.Dale, the scheme, to open such a college at Oxford, as "the greatest work done for and by Independency since 1662" (pp 43 and 57). We have discovered also that Robert Forman Horton, later the Congregational sage and mystic of Hampstead, and then the Oxford embodiment of Congregationalism's hopes for its young men (the women were not so far behind), left Oxford for good in 1883- when Mansfield was coming but had not arrived. Whatever it was to be it was to be without its unique qualities.

The college opened amid great optimism and enthusiasm with Benjamin Jowett, the university Vice-Chancellor, warmly welcoming those whom Oxford "once spurned". We are treated to a fascinating profile of Fairbairn, who served as principal from 1886 to 1909 and who was a man with no secondary school education at all, but who raised himself by sheer hard work and dedication. He

was awarded not only an Oxford D.Litt. but also seven honorary doctorates and won for Mansfield a deserved reputation for scholarship and learning. His own distinguished intellectual record is surely unrivaled in Congregationalism.

Elaine Kaye then directs our attention to others who made a telling contribution to the formation and development of the new Oxford institution - the first students and the teaching staff especially. She reminds us of the work of Mansfield students at Canning Town in east London, at the Mansfield House settlement which emerged from an idea among the students themselves.

The period 1909-20 she designates "The End of Optimism", dealing with Fairbairn's successor as principal, one of the first five students at Mansfield, William Boothby Selbie and his first eleven years in office which include the 1914-18 War. Selbie was a preacher and pastor as well as scholar, and brought different gifts to his task from those of his mentor, Fairbairn. His sermons were "challenging, fortifying, a tonic to the spirit" and Selbie expected that his students could preach the gospel. In 1920 he was given a DD by decree, the first Nonconformist to receive such a doctorate since 1662.

The 1920s were a more questioning decade and Elaine Kaye entitles her chapter on them "Whither Congregationalism?", implying that Mansfield's fortunes were caught up in the uncertainties which beset the churches. Indeed she quotes extensively here from that non-Oxford Congregational layman, Bernard Lord Manning, to support her argument that Nonconformity had lost its "zest".(pp171-2). However John Whale joined the staff in 1929 to teach church history and, unlike Selbie, he took the Reformation as the "defining element of and justification for Congregationalism" and in 1932 Nathaniel Micklem, Selbie's former student, became his successor as college principal.

Micklem detected a "general, spiritual malaise" in Congregationalism, evident in the complacency of the 1931 centenary celebrations of the Congregational Union and he set about remedying matters, leading to tension with the vice-principal, C.J. Cadoux, and at times even the students. Mansfield was not ignorant of the German church struggle against the Nazis and the story of this episode reads at times like the screenplay of a Hitchcock film. During the Second World War Mansfield's buildings were largely used by those engaged in government and military work and in the late 1940s the college needed money for

repairs. John Marsh, the chaplain and tutor, proposed, in 1947, that the college should explore the possibility of becoming a hall of the university and in the post-war period the Congregational-Presbyterian discussions on unity were revived, with Mansfield men to the fore. In 1953 Micklem's retirement left the new principal, John Marsh, to face the problems.

He decided Mansfield needed a "re-foundation" within, rather than without, the university and in 1955 the college became a permanent private hall of Oxford University, with consequent financial gains. In 1960 the first non-theological members of staff were appointed, following the arrival in 1956 of the first non-ministerial student. In 1962 the new student accommodation was formally opened in the presence of the Queen Mother and this new stage in the college's life owed much to John Marsh. However much was also owed to creditors and college accounts did not break even until 1968!

In the later 1960s and 1970s Mansfield faced the question of what it was to be - an ordinary Oxford college or a theological college with some students reading other subjects? Change and, even, protest were in the air. In 1964 Charles Brock was appointed tutor in ethics and part-time chaplain and, thirty-three years later, he is still there, though with slightly different duties. The appointment of more college fellows, in subjects other than theology, meant that the future lay increasingly in the accepted Oxford mould. George Caird's appointment as principal in 1970 brought a first rate scholar to that post while the formation of the United Reformed Church in 1972 provided a fresh stimulus to rethink the college's relation to the churches.

However in 1977 Caird left Mansfield to become the university's leading professor in New Testament, holding the Dean Ireland chair of exegesis of holy scripture. Donald Sykes served as principal 1977-84, Jan Womer 1986-88, Michael Mahony was acting principal 1988-89, and since 1989 Dennis Trevelyan has occupied the post. The more recent history of the college is well-known - a major appeal for funds in the 1980s, new developments, a new constitution and the final triumphant achievement of full college status, within the university in April 1995, when Mansfield became the first undergraduate college at Oxford to be granted a royal charter for over thirty years.

However is it a triumph or rather a story of retrenchment, loss of vision and decline? The new college (formerly in truth it was a dissenting academy)

guarantees “a permanent place for ministerial training in the Reformed tradition”. (Should that read traditions? Was there only one?) But how long will that last? The story of twentieth century Congregationalism can be interpreted through the closure of its colleges - New College, London, Western College, Bristol, Yorkshire United, Bradford, not to mention Cheshunt at Cambridge. Elaine Kaye quotes the American historian, Mark Johnson, who suggested that, in founding Mansfield, “Nonconformists had no other well-defined purpose than to find an acceptable place for themselves in the mainstream”.(p112).

Certainly Mansfield has shared in Oxford’s culture, and contributed to it, but has it retained or lost its distinctive identity and remained loyal to the principles of its founders, and of the Dissenters?

This is a book for Congregationalist to own and read and reflect upon. Its subtitle, Its Origin, History, and Significance, is addressed in Elaine Kaye’s text to a great extent. However I wonder about the significance of Mansfield. We know its founders were influenced by good motives, to provide a home for Dissenters, their thought and learning in the Anglican city whose university had only recently admitted their sons. Yet, in achieving this, have they not simply embraced the world-accepting, secular culture they found around them?

As a young student I was warned by an older friend about Mansfield men. “Mansfield has a certain cachet. Its men in the churches wear long, showy gowns, smoke cheroots, drink sherry and have accounts at the bar.” Of course, it’s a caricature but what Congregational, or even Reformed, tradition does it represent?

I warmly recommend this book. I should have liked more on the Mansfield Baptists, although we learn something of their involvement in the college since its inception in 1886, until the move of Regent’s Park College to Oxford in 1938. I should have liked more on certain distinguished alumni such as G.F. Nuttall, Pennar Davies, Ernest Payne, Daniel Jenkins, W.A. Whitehouse, R.S.Paul, R.S. Franks and Horton Davies to mention just a few - many of them Welsh! Modern Congregationalists might ponder the fact that at Spring Hill in Birmingham there was no chapel because the students, including R.W.Dale, were expected to attend the local Congregational churches.

On page 27 Mill Hill school is given as founded in 1818 but it should read 1807, and why is Bishop's Stortford school (founded 1868) not included in this list? But these are minor criticisms. With seventeen illustrations, four appendices and a substantial index the book has much to recommend it to the interested reader.

Alan Argent

The Congregational Lecture 1996. A Congregational Formation: An Edwardian Prime Minister's Victorian Education by Dr. Clyde Binfield OBE FSA, ISSN 0963-181X Pp 23 1997, £2.00. The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust (1987) Limited, Carroone House, 14 Farringdon St., London EC4A 4EB.

Education includes not only schooling but the influence of people met, of books read, of plays seen. Binfield concentrates on the people as well as the schools. We are treated to a procession of eminent Congregationalists and others, and shown how their influence affected the choice of schools.

The deaths of his father (1860) and his grandfather (1863) and ill-health left Herbert Asquith's schooling in the hands of other members of the family. The result was a kaleidoscope of schools. Day schools at Mirfield (Moravian) and Huddersfield (the College) were followed by boarding at Fulneck (Moravian again), where Herbert wished that the boys could enjoy equal treatment with the girls. Lastly, City of London School, founded as recently as 1834 and described by the Schools Inquiry Commission in 1868 as "the best secondary school in London", led the following year to a Balliol classics scholarship.

We learn not only of the schools just mentioned, but also of various schools not selected by the uncles, aunts and cousins of the young Asquith. In particular, over a page is devoted to Mill Hill whose headmaster's voice had failed to satisfy the demands of a pastorate. Clifton gets half a page:

These details are filled out, illustrated by references, mainly brief, to numerous Congregationalists and a few others. We have in outline the courtship of Asquith and Helen Melland.

Ample footnotes enable us to follow up any of the innumerable characters who occupy, or flit across, these pages.

J. W. Ashley Smith

Commemorations: Studies in Christian Thought and History by Alan P.F. Sell. ISBN 0-7083-1229-2, Pp 394 1993, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, £19.95

Alan Sell is a prolific writer in a variety of fields ranging from Church Planting. A Study of Westmorland Nonconformity (Worthing 1986) to The Philosophy of Religion 1875-1980 (1988) and from his study of Congregational thought and churchmanship in Saints: Visible, Orderly and Catholic (Geneva, World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1986) to Philosophical Idealism and Catholic Belief (University of Wales Press, 1995). He is also the moving spirit behind the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries.

In Commemorations Dr. Sell has drawn together a number of scholarly papers and lectures mostly written during his time as Professor of Christian Thought in the University of Calgary from 1988 to 1992. These consist of certain anniversary addresses on "Newman, Spurgeon, Martineau and the Problem of Authority", "Richard Baxter and the Unity of the Church", "Fox and Wesley: Experience and Evangelism" and the Elizabethan Separatists, Barrow, Greenwood and Penry in "The Martyrs of 1593, the Church and the State". He believes that a study of these leading Christians raises "questions which the churches need to address with renewed zeal as they anticipate Christianity's third millenium" and, in this, he is surely right. These four lectures comprise Part I of the book.

Part II consists of seven papers, previously published in a variety of journals, and three previously unpublished. They also continue the theme of commemoration. We have his talk to the Waldensian Protestants of northern Italy on the tercentenary of the Toleration Act of 1689 and on the strong links of support and encouragement which existed between the English and the Vaudois - a little-known but fascinating subject. He offers a reappraisal of Robert Barclay (1648-1690), the early Quaker theologian and apologist, and also finds a message

in the brothers Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, eighteenth century Scottish Presbyterians and “earnest contenders for the faith”.

Dr. Sell marks his period of office, with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Geneva, with a consideration of nineteenth-century developments in Genevan Christianity and the British involvement with these. We have a brief appreciation of “The Pembrokeshire Congregational Magazine” to mark the 150th anniversary of its founding in 1837 and also a paper on James Martineau and Alexander Campbell Fraser, two important figures, now little considered. Among other topics, he turns to the Congregational links with Harley College or, as it was earlier known, Guinness’s Training Institute - a valuable study, again of a little known institution and its important contribution to international Congregationalism. The life and work of H.F. Lovell Cocks, Principal of the Scottish Congregational College 1937-41, and Principal of Western College, Bristol 1941-60, are properly recalled. Amid the seriousness here, Alan Sell also recounts quite properly that his own daughter and Dr. Cocks spent two hours together, although separated in age by seventy years, watching the wrestling on television together to their obvious mutual delight! Lastly Dr. Sell reprints in this book his Congregational lecture for 1991, “Rhetoric and Reality: Theological Reflections on Congregationalism and its Heirs”.

This is a handsomely produced book, with a full and helpful index, which, nowadays, at almost £20 is surely not overpriced. It contains the produce of a wide-ranging mind, much of which should interest the enquiring historian and the student of Congregationalism alike. The 1593 martyrs, the Waldensians, Harley College, Richard Baxter and Lovell Cocks especially deserve to be studied by modern Congregationalists who will be amply repaid for their labours.

Alan Argent

A Church Historian's Odyssey: A Memoir by Horton Davies, Pp208. William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, 1993. £14.99. ISBN 0-8028-0712-7

My path briefly crossed Horton Davies's when I was a humble undergraduate at Mansfield College and he was a Professor at Princeton

University. Horton Davies was a visitor to the Mansfield Senior Common Room, living in John Marsh's house, while engaged on the research for Volume 5 of his series Worship and Theology in England (see pp.142-3 of the Memoir and Worship and Theology in England , volume 5 p.vii). Several incidents at the time made me aware of his eminence, his industry and his Welsh background.

These reminiscences make an enjoyable and illuminating read and the book has, as a frontispiece, a very fine photograph of the author. It reads something like a Cook's Tour - with recollections of various periods of the author's life, his former students, their researches and publications, and his own formidable output. We trace him from his childhood in Cwmavon, south Wales, through Yorkshire and Edinburgh, Yorkshire again, Oxford, a Congregational pastorate in Surrey, and teaching in South Africa, at Oxford and at Princeton; then finally we are given an account of his activities in retirement, including his work as an artist.

There are moments when we get very near the man - as with his discreet but frank admission of the failure of his first marriage (p.147). There are pen portraits of family and friends - and touches of humour - like the Oxford viva where he was co-examiner with Norman Sykes. They were unable to agree on their verdict on the thesis. He recalls: "Our discussion was taking place in the Oxford streets in a small Austin convertible I was driving, and as I became excited in the discussion, my fellow examiner began to worry about our safety and, I believe, for that reason, concurred reluctantly with my judgment!"(pp.111-112). Again, he recalls one of his brightest students and the oral examination for the doctorate. "This was in 1973. I well remember how he enjoyed his Final Public Oral Examination for the doctorate, in which after answering questions with relish and wit, he proceeded to pepper his examiners with his own questions" (p.167)! Then there is his delight in exotic cars and his facility in obtaining research studentships and fellowships.

Horton Davies offers no formal Credo, though we are given the substance of some sermons preached during the ministry at Wallington and of the author's Cambridge University sermon on the Ascension. When, in his conclusion, he asks what is the thread that holds all his multi-faceted life together he answers "Christianity" (p.207). Horton Davies's interpretation of Christianity would certainly be more liberal and ecumenical than my own, but he ends his book,

appropriately, on a highly theological note: "My next phase of painting expressed my joy in the creation, rarely in landscapes, but frequently in the rich variety and vivid splendour of flowers. More recently, I have represented the central events of Christianity, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection of Christ, proofs of the sacrificial love of the Incarnate Son of God, and the Eternal Father's vindication of Him, which are fundamental sources of faith, compassion and hope in this life and the next. My Odyssey without the direction of the Christian faith would have been merely pointless wandering from Europe to Africa and North America. As I look back, its purpose has been to mirror, however inadequately, the Light of the World, the Source of all my contentment and profound gratitude" (pp.207-8).

Candle on a Hill: A History of Sun Hill Congregational Church, Union Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight 1742-1992 by Peggy Morton. Published by the church. Pp.16 1992. £2.00

This booklet is well researched, well written, and beautifully produced. It traces the origin of Sun Hill Church from 1742 with the purchase of a property by Richard Barrett, a tallow-chandler; hence the title for this history.

The church has had distinguished associations. David Bogue and Thomas Binney were frequent preachers, and it developed quite a close connection with Bogue's Gosport Academy. The history brings us right up to the modern day, including a section on the redoubtable Thomas Mann (minister from 1822-1864) who, among many other attributes, carefully kept the record books. In general, the church is blessed by amazingly well kept records. A list of past ministers and the dates of their pastorates is provided.

The booklet is available from Peggy Morton, "Yvery", The Grove, Cowes, Isle of Wight, or from the Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches.

Alan Tovey

"Stewards of God's Bounty". The History of the Unaffiliated Congregational Churches Charities by Rev. John Franks, (2 Bedford Ave., Worsley, Manchester M28 7GG) Pp 37 1996, £2.00

This pamphlet is both necessary and interesting. Forewords by Stan Guest and John Wilcox set the scene for the significant minority of Congregational churches not included in either the Congregational Federation or An Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches. They were determined to remain completely independent. But they missed this goal! The Charity Commissioners decreed that the appropriate fraction of assets of the pre-existing Congregational bodies must be allocated between all the churches which did not join the URC, EFCC, or CF.

The resultant Unaffiliated Congregational Churches Charities (UCCC) comprise seven funds, with total assets £1,140,000 together with definitions of their objects. These are stated in such ways that if and when the needs of the unaffiliated churches do not absorb the whole income for a year, help may be given to EFCC or CF churches.

The first task of the resultant UCCC was to compile a list of such churches, and to determine their memberships. This list of 148 churches is printed for us together with changes which bring the 1995 total to 73.

This total membership divided by the total for all four sections equals m . A similar calculation of numbers of churches divided by total for all four sections equals c . $\frac{1}{2}(m + c)$ is the fraction of the national fund. The unaffiliateds' share came to just under 4%.

The same formula was used to determine proportions for each county union or other defined group of churches. Suitable schemes were also set up for the Congregational Fund Board, Trotman Trust and New College Foundation.

A representative committee was convened for each county union. This had a valuable side effect. It brought together people who, in some cases, had, shall we say, unfriendly feelings towards others who were regarded as either traitors to Congregationalism or as obstructors of unity. One Congregationalist utilized an innocent trick to overcome these feelings. He feigned ineptitude, and

pointed out that one small sum must be included in the accounts in a certain way, otherwise it would reduce the URC's share. An elderly URC representative was immediately won over!

But we follow the much more significant story of the use of the money. Details are given of numerous grants and loans but the imaginative device by the UCCC was to appoint an administrator - plus - peripatetic - minister and to choose the right person for the job. That person was John Franks. His help, by phone or correspondence, was invaluable to the churches. He was warmly welcomed on his occasional visits. Indeed, the UCCC seemed to have re-invented what one imagines to be the ideal, early medieval bishop, providing encouragement, support and advice, but without coercive power.

In the final paragraph of the pamphlet, John Franks pays tribute to the trustees, one third each appointed by EFCC and CF, one third elected by the unaffiliated churches. But those of us who have been connected with the unaffiliated churches know how well the Lord provided by putting John Franks in the right place at the right moment. His peripatetic mantle has now passed to Rev. R.W.Michel.

J.W. Ashley Smith

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