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(incorporating the Congregational Historical Society, founded 1899,  
and the Presbyterian Historical Society of England, founded 1913)

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## Editorial

We record with gratitude the great service to the Church and to our Society of the Rev. Roy Drummond Whitehorn, M.A., D.D., M.B.E., who died in November 1976. He made his mark as professor and principal in Westminster College, Cambridge, and as a leading figure in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England of which he was Moderator in 1950. He was also Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council and was one of the early architects of the United Reformed Church. He was President of the Presbyterian Historical Society and was for a time editor of its Journal. He was unable to take much part in the formation of our Society but it had his full support and good wishes.

We record with equal gratitude the service of the Rev. William Gordon Robinson, M.A., Ph.D., who died in February 1977. Gordon Robinson ministered in Gatley and Oldham, but it was as Principal of Lancashire (later Northern) College in Manchester, from 1943 to 1968, that he became most widely known. In 1955-6 he was Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and from 1955 to 1965 he was President of the Congregational Historical Society. His *William Roby (1766-1830) and the Revival of Independency in the North (1954)* and his *History of the Lancashire Congregational Union, 1806-1956* will be known and valued by readers of this Journal.

In September 1976 the Society's first Week-end School at Westminster College, Cambridge, was attended by almost forty people.

The main lectures were given by the President, by Rev. Professor E. G. Rupp, F.B.A., and by Dr. Binfield. Dr. Knox lectured on the history of Westminster College and preached at a service specially arranged for the School in the church at Melbourn. Short papers were read by several members and we hope to publish some of them in due course; the paper by Rev. J. E. Newport appears in this issue as does the President's lecture. Tours were made to the Cromwell country and to the city of Cambridge. The Society is indebted to Dr. S. H. Mayor for making the local arrangements. It is intended to hold a further School in Manchester in 1978.

The Rev. J. R. Plowman has intimated his desire to resign from the Joint-Secretaryship of the Society. We are much indebted to him for his work during the fusion of the Societies of our two traditions into our present Society.

*Notes:* Mr. David Barton, who is working on 19th century non-conformity in Derbyshire, is particularly anxious to locate the minute books of the extinct Matlock Bath (Lady Glenorchy's) Congregational Church. His address is Hillcrest, Bent Lane, Darley Hillside, Matlock.

Dr. Binfield would be grateful for any information about P. Morley Horder (1870-1944), architect of Cheshunt College and of Congregational churches at Brondesbury, Penge, Ealing and Mill Hill.

The U.R.C. Committee on Doctrine and Worship asks us to make known that printed copies of the Presbyterian Statement of Faith (1956) are no longer available. This Statement is referred to in the Basis of Union and it is hoped to include it in the next edition of the U.R.C. Manual. Meanwhile, photostat copies can be obtained from the Librarian of our Society.

The archives of the following have been placed in the Dr Williams's Library, 14 Gordon Square, London W.C.1.

Throckmorton Trotman Trust (formed 1664)

Congregational Fund Board (formed 1695)

Protestant Union (formed 1798)

Hitherto these have been held privately by the organisations concerned. Now they may be consulted in the Library. The Congregational Fund Board deposit includes Minute Books from 1695 (one missing), and the Protestant Union printed Reports from 1814. The Trotman Trust deposit is unfortunately slight.

These archives provide considerable information as to the location of ministers and their financial conditions. They also provide information about students in training for the ministry and the institutions at which they were trained.

## CAMBRIDGE NONCONFORMITY 1660-1710:

### FROM HOLCROFT TO HUSSEY<sup>1</sup>

Cambridge was always the home of radical religion. But when one says this, one thinks of the University and of pioneer, heretical, ways of thinking. The story of Cambridge Nonconformity is a humbler thing. True, for its first fifty years we begin with a posse of Fellows and Scholars of Colleges, and we end with a minister who so valued learning and the practice of verifying your references that he often gives not only his sources but the editions he used, with the place and date of publication; but in the main it is more ordinary people who are our subject — ordinary except that they are radicals. They will not conform to rites and ceremonies like decent Englishmen. They want a faith and a worship with more edge to it, and they will not have anything less. If for not going to church or for going to meeting they are threatened with fine or imprisonment, then fined or imprisoned they will be. They are descendants, at only two removes or even one, of Cromwell's men, who made some conscience of what they did. 'I had rather have a plain russet-coated Captain that knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows,' Cromwell wrote, back in 1643, 'than that which you call a Gentleman and is nothing else'. Cambridgeshire is not a gentleman's county: no county has fewer gentlemen's seats. By the same token, no county had fewer Presbyterians. If in 1669 you take Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists and Quakers, then 'for the country as a whole,' Dr. Spufford observes, 'the Presbyterians, with well over 40,000 adherents, were by far the strongest'; but in Cambridgeshire, she says, 'the pitifully small group of thirty-odd Presbyterians put the county lowest among those which had Presbyterians at all'.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, 'there cannot have been any other county in England at this period (1660-90) where Congregationalism within so short and so extraordinarily difficult a time took such lasting root':<sup>3</sup> so writes A. G. Matthews. Cambridge Nonconformity, that is to say, is radical in the denominational spectrum also.

Our subject is Cambridge; but though we may start in Cambridge, we cannot stay in it. 'The church of Jesus Christ in Cambridge-shire' is what our friends called themselves. In our ears this rings strange: it claims both too much and too little; for this is neither the church Catholic nor the church of a nation nor yet the local church or congregation. There was then greater flexibility: not only in no more tying the church to a particular place than to a particular building, but in linguistic usage also. The church is the people whom

<sup>1</sup>President's Lecture, United Reformed Church History Society Summer School, Cambridge, September 1976.

<sup>2</sup>M. Spufford, 'The Dissenting Churches in Cambridgeshire from 1660 to 1700', *Proc. Camb. Ant. Soc.*, lxi (1968), 67-95.

<sup>3</sup>*Congregationalism through the Centuries*, 1937, p. 54.

Christ has purchased with his own blood, and is recognizably a fellowship, a community. What have its members in common? Their calling in Christ. This is their fellowship, the means of livelihood in which they all have a share, life in a state of grace; this is the basis of their mutual covenants, and by it they know one another as saints. The geographical boundaries and the place, or number of places, of their meeting matter little. Such an ecclesiology, bursting the limits of civil parishes as well as ecclesiastical, draws naturally on a Calvinist theology of election: let the redeemed say so, whom God has gathered from the north and from the south, from the east and from the west. In Wales the usage was common: men spoke of the church in Carmarthenshire, the church in Cardiganshire; and Wales, Thomas Richards claims, 'was the most Independent part of the British Isles'.<sup>4</sup> The phrase 'the church of Jesus Christ in Cambridge-shire' also assumes a spirit of evangelism, to go out and about in the county, in order to gather in: in, to what, in however many parishes its members live, in however many places they meet for worship, is in essence a single community and church.

The evangelists were a group of men whose life in the University had been cut short with the Restoration. Francis Holcroft had been a Fellow of Clare, Joseph Oddy a Fellow of Trinity. Samuel Corbyn, Thomas Lock, Robert Ekins and Samuel Ponder were also of Trinity College. James Day was of Emmanuel, Abraham Janeway of St. Catharine's, Thomas Windress of St. John's.<sup>5</sup> As to age, they were a band of brothers: Holcroft, Corbyn, Lock and Ekins were all born in about 1629-30 and by the time of the Restoration were in their energetic thirties. Janeway and Windress were younger, Janeway indeed no more than twenty-six at his death in 1665, only a year after resigning his living in the Church of England and joining himself to the church of Christ in Cambridgeshire. In a list of its members drawn up in 1675 and preserved in the Bodleian Library<sup>6</sup> his name, with those of Windress and of Corbyn, who died in 1673, stands among those itemized as 'the Saints gathered by our Lord Jesus out of this his Garden to the Heavenly Countrey'. All three names have the word 'minister' written against them, as does that of another deceased member, Arthur Williams, who seems otherwise unknown.

Joseph Oddy's fame, on the other hand, reached as far as Stepney Meeting, which in 1667 voted 40s. 'towards his relief'. Calamy says Oddy 'was so much follow'd (Persons travelling twenty Miles to hear him) that he was sometimes constrain'd by the Numbers, that attended, to preach in the open Fields'.<sup>7</sup> This is confirmed by the

<sup>4</sup>T. Richards, *Wales under the Indulgence 1672-1675*, 1928, p. 228.

<sup>5</sup>For all these, see *Calamy Revised*, ed. A. G. Matthews, Oxford 1934, s.vv., the basic authority for much of what follows.

<sup>6</sup>Bodleian Rawlinson MS. D.1480.123; photostat at Dr. Williams's Library, R.1046.

<sup>7</sup>E. Calamy, *Continuation*, 1727, p. 123.

Willingham church book which adds that 'in persecuting times he preached a nights in the Fields under a Tree'; on one occasion he 'was taken by the informers Just before he began to preach and was carried . . . to Cambridge Castle where he found several prisoners of his own Church-members'.<sup>8</sup> I wish we knew more of these men. They have never been entirely forgotten. The windows in the apse of Emmanuel church are part of a long tradition. In 1819 it was recorded that the pulpit and table used by Holcroft and Oddy at Cottenham had been preserved 'till within these few years'.<sup>9</sup> Their fine tombs, protected by massive railings, are still to be seen in a plot of ground among cottage back-gardens at Oakington. In 1969 the Rev. L. J. Ballard of St. Ives told me that he knew of someone living in the town who was a descendant of Oddy's.

Of published works they left little. Corbyn issued *An Awakening Call from the Eternal God to the Unconverted. Or, seasonable advice to them that are under Convictions, to prevent their miscarrying in Conversion; and some scruples of the tempted resolved*.<sup>10</sup> The title is redolent of Corbyn's evangelistic zeal: it looks back to Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted* and forward to the Great Awakening of the following century. In a letter of c. 1656 to Baxter preserved in Dr. Williams's Library which he sent while still at Trinity Corbyn writes, 'The Lord hath much awakened me by some passages in your' *Reformed Pastor*, and laments 'the monstrous sin of taking up the ministry without experimental acquaintance with Christ; 'tis the crying sin of the university, for which I who see it could even break my heart. Men make no conscience of an inward call,' he continues, 'but if they are formal professors and of parts, they intrude inconsiderately; divinity is made a superstructure, and the work of nature the foundation; but discourse with such, there's more of God will appear in a Christian of the weakest capacity than in them, who abound with seraphicall contemplations'<sup>11</sup> — a reference, I think, to the Cambridge Platonists.

Only Francis Holcroft was a man of consequence. During the Interregnum he had been on the Committee for the Reformation of the University, a member of the Cambridge Voluntary Association which brought Presbyterian and Congregational ministers together, and an Assistant to the Commission for ejecting insufficient clergy in the counties of Cambridge and Huntingdon. When in prison after the Restoration he was visited by both London merchants and

<sup>8</sup>*C.H.S.T.*, xii.125, 127; the tradition was preserved independently by a great-grandson of Oddy's host: *Nonconformist's Memorial*, 2nd edn. 1802, ed. S. Palmer, i.276.

<sup>9</sup>*London Christian Instructor or Congregational Magazine*, ii (1819). 439.

<sup>10</sup>This appeared in 1672, and again in 1677; the only recorded copies are both in the Congregational Library. There are slight variants in the title, but not in the contents (pp. 91); the 1672 edition includes a subtitlepage.

<sup>11</sup>D.W.L. Baxter MSS., 5.220.

country gentlemen. At his death he left books valued at £40.<sup>12</sup> From his own pen he left little: a skirmish with the Quakers; *A Word to the Saints from the Watch Tower*, published in 1668; and *A Word of Counsel to England, taken from the Word of God, and sent in the name of Christ, by one of his servants, not meet to be so called*, published in 1670. All these pieces are excessively rare, if indeed all are extant. A copy of *A Word to the Saints* is preserved in the Bodleian Library.<sup>13</sup> Although himself in prison here in Cambridge, Holcroft wrote it during a temporary lull in the persecution of Nonconformists generally.<sup>14</sup> He was concerned that their witness and faith should not be weakened. Composed as a letter 'To the Faithful Brethren in London', its epistolary form barely conceals a sermon. The text is Ezra ix.8, 9: 'and now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to . . . give us a little reviving in our bondage'. In the application Holcroft stresses the words repeated here, 'a little': 'the fiery Tryal that waits yet for us is not yet over . . .', he writes; 'I am prone to think the night comes again'. He was not wrong.

Respect and reverence for Holcroft were widespread. In October 1660 the church (today Baptist) at Keysoe Brook End, Bedfordshire, recorded the reception of seven members, 'Mr. Holcroft, that dear servant of Christ, being present'.<sup>15</sup> The churches at Bedford<sup>16</sup> and Rothwell<sup>17</sup> in Northamptonshire invited him to preach. When in 1692 the Rothwell minister, Richard Davis, was attacked for administering the Lord's Supper while itinerating, he retorted that 'Holy Mr. Holdcraft and his Church Practised this for many Years, and found the Blessing of God attending their Practice'.<sup>18</sup> Further afield still, the Congregational church at Bedworth in Warwickshire, when in 1687 it wished to persuade Julius Saunders to become its minister, sent a messenger to 'the Church of Christ in Cambridgeshire, over which Mr. Holcroft and Mr. Odey were Co-pastours'. 'It was the unanimous judgment of that Church', Saunders records in the Bedworth church book 'that I should take the pastorall charge of the Church in Bedworth. This was the ioynt counsell, declared by that holy man of

<sup>12</sup>*C.H.S.T.*, xx.296.

<sup>13</sup>For the loan of a photocopy I have to thank Mr. K. W. H. Howard, of Stamford, who has reprinted the tract verbatim in *Gospel Tidings*, v (1975), 276-82.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. Roger Thomas, in *From Uniformity to Unity 1662-1962*, 1962, ed. G. F. Nuttall and Owen Chadwick, pp. 195-200.

<sup>15</sup>*Keysoe Brook End and Keysoe Row Baptist Churches*, 1959, ed. H. G. Tibbutt, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup>*Church Book of Bunyan Meeting, Bedford, 1650-1821*, 1928, ed. G. B. Harrison, p. 26.

<sup>17</sup>N. Glass, *Early History of the Independent Church at Rothwell*, 1871, p. 30.

<sup>18</sup>R. Davis, *Truth and Innocency Vindicated*, [1692], p. 80.

God, Mr. Odey, the last thing he did before his death, as Gods servant Mr. Holcroft told me for my encouragement'.<sup>19</sup>

Locally, Holcroft lost no time. Within months of his ejection from his Fellowship and his living, still in 1662, he called a General Meeting at Great Eversden, to elect elders to assist him in the work of the ministry; four men were chosen, Oddy and Corbyn being two of them. In the following year Holcroft is reported as meeting in Cambridge, and 'many hundreds with him' and his assistants Oddy and Lock, 'who takes turnes to ride into harfordshire Cambridgeshire and Beffordshire'. Hitchin and St. Paul's Walden in Hertfordshire, Shefford in Bedfordshire and Bedford itself are mentioned as places where 'dwells many that are Joyned to Houlcraft'. Oddy was also reported as meeting 'many hundreds both Independents & Baptists' at Meldreth, and Holcroft as having meetings of three hundred 'at Widdow Haukes at Barly in Harfordshire'.<sup>20</sup> The name of 'Mother Hawk' of Chishill (the next village to Barley) duly stands in the 1675 list of members. The numbers of those meeting look exaggerated, but the church of Christ in Cambridgeshire and beyond is clearly active. The ripples spread. In 1669 Holcroft is reported as preaching at Haddenham, Willingham, Over, Oakington, Histon and Stow-cum-Quy; Oddy at four of these places and also at Orwell and Milton, and in 1672 at March; Corbyn at six of these places, Lock at one of them and at Meldreth, and Day at three of them.

The church was not short of preachers. Nor was it short of members. No fewer than 541 of them, 363 women and 178 men, are named in the 1675 list, which conveniently gives the districts from which they came. These include several villages not already mentioned, such as Trumpington, Chesterton, Landbeach, Waterbeach, Cottenham, Burwell, Snailwell and Soham; Wilbraham; Swavesey; Toft; Bassingbourn (the parish from which Holcroft had been ejected), Croydon, Barrington, Thriplow, Ickleton and Chishill; also Houghton and Needingworth in Huntingdonshire; and Elmdon, Berden, Audley End, Radwinter, Hempstead, Debden and Thaxted in Essex. This was evangelism indeed! In 1775 Samuel Palmer, Calamy's editor, could still say, 'There is scarce a village in Cambridgeshire but some old person can shew you the barn where Holcroft preached'.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, where the Christian name of a member is given as well as the surname (several are named simply Brother or Sister So-and-so), the member in the list can frequently be identified with someone known from other sources as a sufferer for conscience sake or as a

<sup>19</sup>Cf. G. F. Nuttall, 'The Beginnings of Old Meeting, Bedworth', in *C.H.S.T.* xx.255-64.

<sup>20</sup>*Original Records of Nonconformity under Persecution and Indulgence*, 1911, ed. G. L. Turner, iii.295.

<sup>21</sup>*Nonconformist's Memorial, 1775*, ed. S. Palmer, i.203, cf. J. Stoughton, *History of Religion in England*, 2nd edn. 1881, v.137: 'Old Barns in which he ministered were pointed out a few years ago.'

welcomer of Holcroft and his assistants by the provision of a house where they might preach. Sometimes the identification is clear even without the Christian name. Sister Evans, for instance, whose name is in the list of members from the Bassingbourn-Meldreth district, can hardly be other than the Widow Evans of Meldreth who in 1665 was convicted at Cambridge for absence for more than three months from the parish church; for whose house in Meldreth in 1672 Holcroft applied for a license, that Lock might preach there; and who in 1686 was still in trouble with the ecclesiastical court for neglecting her duties at church. Her house, we know from the Hearth Tax Roll for 1674, had three hearths. This, and similar information about a number of other members, with their homes, at Bassingbourn, Melbourn, Meldreth, Shepreth and Harston is provided in a book published in 1895 entitled *The Puritan in Melbourn*. In 1679 twelve of the seventy families in Melbourn were said to be Holcroft's disciples.<sup>22</sup> After Holcroft's death Melbourn became a church independent of Cambridge, but it was originally part of the church of Christ in Cambridge-shire.

The 1675 list invites extended study along these lines. Dr. Spufford has recently done splendid work on the members living at Orwell and Willingham, two of three villages on which she has concentrated. At Orwell the house where in 1669 Oddy, Corbyn and Lock were all reported as preaching was a 'modest house with only two hearths'. Their host, John Adams, 'when he died, as an old man, in 1691, . . . left £91, a barely adequate estate by yeoman standards'. Richard Barnard, who 'was constantly in trouble . . . for not going to the parish church' and whose 'orchard was commonly used for Congregationalists' burials' — his name does not, actually, appear in the list of members, but two Sister Barnards from this district are included — 'had a cottage with one hearth' only, and, when he died in 1693, left only £15. From other evidence Dr. Spufford argues that 'Nonconformist opinions, and prosperity, bore no relationship at all to each other in Orwell'. Why should they? Perhaps these people had lost a good deal through dstraint. They remained faithful. In 1685 it was reported to the bishop that Orwell had 'many Dissenters, about 30 Holdcrofts and Oddyes Disciples'.<sup>23</sup> But at Willingham things were different. 'Every single one of the nine men named in the list of members, who is identifiable in the tax list of 1674, lived in a house with two or three hearths'. They were 'the relatively comfortable and substantial middle section of this village community. All but one of them were also literate, in the sense that they could sign their names', including Francis Duckins, the owner of the house with three hearths in which

<sup>22</sup>M. Spufford, *Contrasting Communities; English Villagers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Cambridge 1974, p. 296, reading Holcroft for Wolcroft. In my review (*supra*, p. 154) the last sentence of the 2nd paragraph is incorrect and should be deleted. Sincere apologies to Dr. Spufford.

<sup>23</sup>B. Nutter, *Story of the Cambridge Baptists*, Cambridge 1912, p. 67.

Holcroft, Oddy and Corbyn were meeting in 1669 and which three years later was licensed for worship by Holcroft. These people, Dr. Spufford sums up, though described by the bishop or his officials as 'all very meane', 'were nothing of the kind: they were the small yeomen-graziers who formed the backbone of Willingham society'.<sup>24</sup>

The fullest and most moving account of Holcroft and his fellow evangelists is the record by the minister of the church at Croydoncum-Clopton, Richard Conder, in the Croydon church book now in the hands of the Strict Baptist church at Great Gransden in Huntingdonshire, and printed by Mr. Tibbutt a few years ago in the *Transactions* of the Congregational Historical Society. It is from this source that we learn how 'the lord's hand was seen in that day in calling seaverall of the yong scollers in the unifarciti which did preach about in the cuntri towns' and how elders were chosen at Great Eversden.<sup>25</sup> Conder also records how in 1694, following Holcroft's death, 'wee read over the cofenant that was last renwed by God's servant and the church, deploring and lamenting our casse that wee had not God's servant to goe befoar us, but being refixed with the thoughts of this that the lord Jeasus was allwais readi to goo befoar his peopell'.<sup>26</sup> The covenant which follows,<sup>27</sup> with signatures — several of them those of men and women whose names are in the 1675 list of members — and which in 1733 was entered afresh, though now with limitation to baptized believers, in the Great Gransden church book, repeats, with minor variants, the covenant originally drawn up by Holcroft in 1655 at Bassingbourn.<sup>28</sup> Later it was copied by Robert Robinson from the Great Gransden church book into the church book of Stone Yard (now St. Andrew's Street) Baptist church in Cambridge.<sup>29</sup>

There are thus families, and generations, of church covenants. The same covenant, in essentials, reappears, incorporated in a much longer one, in the records of a church many miles distant from Great Gransden, the church at Clavering in Essex, which, with its daughter church at Stansted Mountfitchet,<sup>30</sup> also owes its origins to Holcroft's labours, as it long proudly remembered. In 1750 its two deacons and seven other members despatched a letter to the London Congregational Board requesting assistance for the support of their minister, Francis Petchey. Their letter begins: 'Reverend Gentelmen we are an ancient church of Christ as ware a branch of the church of which the Great & Reverend Mr. Holcraft and Odey were Pastors who in

<sup>24</sup>*Contrasting Communities*, pp. 301-3.

<sup>25</sup>*C.H.S.T.*, xx.297-8.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, xx.171-2.

<sup>27</sup>Croydon church book: I am indebted to Mr. Tibbutt for a transcript.

<sup>28</sup>Robert Robinson, *Works*, vi. (Harlow 1812). 258.

<sup>29</sup>Cf. G. F. Nuttall, 'The First Seventy Years: from the origins to Robert Robinson, 1721-1790', in *St. Andrew's Street Baptist Church Cambridge 250th Anniversary*, Cambridge 1971, ed. K. A. C. Parsons, pp. 1-18.

<sup>30</sup>Stansted Mountfitchet church book: I am indebted to the Essex County Archivist for a photocopy.

the year 1682 sett down the Reverend Mr. Day Pastor . . .<sup>31</sup> The covenant, 'first entred into at Woodhall<sup>32</sup> the 22th. day of the twelfth month 1682/3', 'we having obtained mercy to be planted in the house of our God & his blessing on his word & law going forth out of Sion, now multiplyed in these parts where the Lord hath Bounded our habitations', is transcribed in the church book. In this case there are no signatures; but on another page the names of the members, with the villages where they resided, are entered, with the amounts promised by several of them 'to be given for the Rent of the Meeting places'<sup>33</sup> (still in the plural, note). The origin of the church is confirmed, once again, by the identity of a number of the names with those in the 1675 list. The original covenant records, indeed, that the members had 'lately desired an orderly dismissal from this beloved church to whom in heart & brotherly love we desire to be for ever united in order to our walking closely with our Lord in the order of the Gosple & our having his house built amongst us & for the propagation of the Gospel in our families & Country'; and Clavering continued in close touch with Cambridge.

Memories of Holcroft's preaching were recorded in her old age by a member of this church at Clavering, Mary Churchman of Saffron Walden, whose faithful subscription of 6s. is entered over a number of years in the church book. In the first sermon she heard by him, 'he preached powerfully of hell and judgement', she writes; 'every time he named the name of Christ it was as terrible as the thunder upon Mount Sinai'. This was in about 1672, when she was eighteen. Like his contemporary Giles Firmin, the ejected minister of Shalford, Essex, Holcroft evidently held that it was necessary 'to preach the Law, in order to Christ' and that 'to convince men of sin by the Gospel *first*' was 'very irrational and immethodical'.<sup>34</sup> But as a preacher of the gospel Holcroft was no less powerful. When Mary Churchman heard him the second time, his text was 'My beloved is mine, and I am his'; and now, with something like Agnes Beaumont's feeling for Bunyan — Mary too was turned out of doors by her father for going to meeting, but nothing could keep her from her 'beloved pastor' —, she says of Holcroft, 'He was a good Samaritan to me. . . . O then I saw the Lord Jesus become my husband. . . . O happy day

<sup>31</sup>Clavering church book: for its loan I am indebted to Mrs. Caton, of Stevens Farm, Clavering, and, for his good offices, to Mr. C. A. Clark, now of March. This church book is foliated from one end and paginated from the other. The Board granted £5. See further H. Bromley, *Brief History of the Congregational Church, Clavering, Essex*, 1873.

<sup>32</sup>Wood Hall, then the home of the Cutts family, still stands.

<sup>33</sup>Cf. T. W. Davids, *Annals of Evangelical Nonconformity in . . . Essex*, 1867, pp. 607-8, where extracts from the Clavering church covenant are printed and the names of about half of the villages where members resided are recorded.

<sup>34</sup>Giles Firmin, *The Real Christian*, 1670, p. 52.

indeed. . . . O inexpressible joy!'.<sup>35</sup> The ecstatic phrases are not of our generation; yet here the ages blend:

O happy day that fixed my choice

On Thee, my Saviour and my God. . .

I nothing lack if I am His,

And He is mine, for ever.

We must now leave the outposts and return to Cambridge, and to the two men who succeeded Holcroft, one immediately but briefly, the other at a remove but more effectively: Thomas Taylor who in Holcroft's declining years had come to Cambridge as his assistant, and Joseph Hussey, who in November 1691 came to Cambridge from Hitchin as the minister of a new Presbyterian church here.<sup>36</sup>

What Rabbies said of Moses's verifi'd,

God kissed Francis Holcroft, and he di'd. . . .

Luther ne're di'd till now; glorious free Grace

Engraven was in's heart, in's head, in's face:

When in January 1692 Holcroft died, the *Funeral Sermon* for him as *Late Pastor of a Congregational Church in Cambridgeshire* — the couplets just quoted are from anonymous elegies printed with it — was preached by neither Taylor nor Hussey but by Thomas Milway, the minister at Bury St. Edmunds, with an epitaph in verse by William Haworth, the minister at Hertford. In a joint Epistle to Christian Readers<sup>37</sup> Taylor and Hussey explain that the preaching of the sermon 'by Divine Lot devolved upon our Worthy Brother Mr. Milway'. Milway was a young friend of Holcroft, who in 1674 had taken part with Oddy in Milway's ordination at Bury,<sup>38</sup> whither he had removed from Hitchin. Haworth also was a protégé of Holcroft's. It was at Holcroft's request that in 1673 he had become the first minister of the church at Hertford, and more recently had added pastoral oversight of some Hitchin people as well.<sup>39</sup>

The collaboration of the four men looks promising. Hussey,

<sup>35</sup>Mary Churchman also heard Oddy preach from the 'voluntarist' text Ps.cx.3, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power': *Abstract of the Gracious Dealings of God*, 4th edn. 1774, ed. Samuel James, pp. 68, 70, 75, 78; reprinted by Mr. Howard in the same number of *Gospel Tidings*, pp. 294-9.

<sup>36</sup>For summary histories of the two churches, see *C.H.S.T.*, iv.183-203, 223-9; *P.H.S.E.J.*, xiv.59-66.

<sup>37</sup>The fact that the 'notion some had of the death of Moses' (Deut. xxxiv.5) is applied to Holcroft in this Epistle, and again by Hussey to his wife in his funeral sermon for her, *The Stroke of Divine Sovereignty*, 1704, p. 24, suggests that Hussey was the author of one of the elegies and perhaps, since the unusual elisions in them are identical, of both.

<sup>38</sup>John Browne, *History of Congregationalism . . . in Norfolk and Suffolk*, 1877, p. 405.

<sup>39</sup>That Haworth was at Hertford in 1673, the year in which the church there was formed, appears from his ep. ded. 'To the Church of Christ at Hartford' in [William Dimsdale], *The Quaker Converted*, which was licensed for publication on 9 Feb. 1674 (*Term Catalogue*, i.164); it is confirmed by his *Absolute Election*, 1694, p.iii.

Milway and Haworth all had links with Hitchin, and Hitchin, once again, was a church which originated from Holcroft's evangelism. But seeds of disruption were already present. In Holcroft's eyes one of his original elders, John Waite, had disgraced the cause by escaping from prison and had been disowned.<sup>40</sup> When the Bedford church received Waite as a member, Holcroft took offence; and when Waite continued to preach at Hitchin, Holcroft was further displeased. Five members at Hitchin stood by Holcroft and strife ensued. There was correspondence between Cambridge and Bedford,<sup>41</sup> there was even correspondence between Cambridge and London in the persons of John Owen and George Griffith;<sup>42</sup> but the trouble was not resolved. This was in 1669. When, eight years later, in 1677, the Hitchin people (to-day Tilehouse Street Baptist church) developed Baptist convictions and took John Wilson, again from Bedford, to be their minister, the recalcitrant members<sup>43</sup> transferred their membership back to Cambridge, and were later placed under Haworth's care at Hertford. In the years that followed they grew to form a second congregation at Hitchin, meeting at first outside the town, at a farm in the parish of Ippollits named Maiden Croft (which still stands), and later in Back Street, Hitchin, the modern Christ Church.<sup>44</sup> It was to this church that Hussey ministered for three years before removing to Cambridge. For 1683 he had acted as chaplain at The Hoo in the parish of St. Paul's Walden in Hertfordshire, the home of Sir Jonathan Keate, Bt., M.P., and in 1665-6 Sheriff for the county,<sup>45</sup> and had also preached

<sup>40</sup>*C.H.S.T.*, xx.299.

<sup>41</sup>G. B. Harrison, pp. 32-9.

<sup>42</sup>Mentioned in the letter from Owen and Griffith to Hitchin, now reprinted in P. Toon's edn. of Owen's *Correspondence*, 1970, pp. 146-8 (with reference to the Hitchin, not the Hertford, church book).

<sup>43</sup>Isaac James of Bristol, in a history of the church given in a letter to Joshua Thomas of Leominster, dated 5 June 1790 (D.W.L. Wilson MSS., L.2), writes: 'I take them to be the Five before mentioned and therefore look upon this to be the Commencement of the Independant Congregation. Mr. John Foster who joined the church about 1722 always Asserted' this.

<sup>44</sup>William Urwick, *Nonconformity in Herts.*, 1884, pp. 542, 645-6, 649. The name of George Wilkinson, who was involved in the double transfer and was later a trustee of the Back Street property, is in the 1675 list of members. Isaac James transcribes from the Hitchin church book a letter of 1677 (not 1667, as J. Ivimey, *History of the English Baptists*, 1814, ii.193) dismissing Wilkinson to Cambridge 'upon som scruples of conscience'.

<sup>45</sup>Hussey MS., Emmanuel church, Cambridge; for the loan of a typescript copy of extracts by the late A. G. Matthews I am most grateful to the church secretary. For Keate, to whom John Peachy, the ejected Vicar of St. Paul's Walden, had also acted as chaplain, see D. R. Lacey, *Dissent and Parliamentary Politics in England, 1661-1689*, Rutgers Univ. Press, 1969, p. 417; he bequeathed Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* and Baxter's *Christian Directory* to his daughter.

in other houses in the neighbourhood.<sup>46</sup> In 1668 he took charge at Hitchin, and there and at an old house which still stands, in the parish of Codicote, with the strange name of Sissevernes, he was reported by 1690 to have 'a great people'.<sup>47</sup> Haworth, however, found this Hitchin Presbyterian congregation no more satisfactory than the Baptist church in Tilehouse Street, and proceeded to recover for his own Congregational church at Hertford some 'gone off with Mr. Terry',<sup>48</sup> Hussey's successor at Hitchin.

Only three years after Holcroft's death a disruption more complex than at Hitchin took place here in Cambridge. Hussey and the majority of his Presbyterian congregation in Hog Hill (now Downing Place) began 'to practise the Order of the Gospel in the Congregational way', as Hussey puts it. The minority transferred to Taylor's church in Green Street. Later, a number of Taylor's members transferred to Hussey, and the remainder became a Presbyterian congregation (now extinct). Later still, when Hussey left Cambridge for London, a number of those in membership with him seceded to form the Stone Yard (now St. Andrew's Street) Baptist church. The facts are well known, but the cause of the original disruption — from one point of view the mutual exchange was surely sensible? — has been left unexplained except insofar as it reflects a change in Hussey. Hussey certainly had a personality capable of carrying all before him. I can think of no other divine of his time with so swashbuckling a style or such positive delight in overkill. He had his own ideas, as we shall see, of what turned him into a Congregationalist. Possibly his tutor in the Academy, who was himself Congregational, had sown seeds that only later came to flower. But a part in the schism in Cambridge, if not the initiative, is to be traced to the church at Rothwell and its new minister, Richard Davis.

Relations between Cambridge and Rothwell had been friendly from the beginning, as we saw. If Rothwell's evangelistic zeal now extended into Cambridgeshire, as when it gathered in 'a handful of

<sup>46</sup>Other houses in north-west Herts. in which Hussey preached, and which still stand, are: Bendish, in the parish of St. Paul's Walden, where Bunyan and an ejected Fellow of Trinity, John Hutchinson, a member of Tilehouse Street (Palmer, 2nd edn. 1802, i.278; in *Cal. Rev.* Bendish has escaped the Index Locorum) also preached; Leygreen, in the parish of King's Walden, the home of a member of the Godfrey family; Nup End, in the parish of Codicote, the home of another ejected minister, Robert Torey, the 'Pastor there'; and Pepsal End in the parish of Flamstead, the home of 'Mr. Eales (a Lawyer)', probably one of the seven sons of Nathaniel Eeles, the ejected Curate of Harpenden, who was buried at Flamstead in 1678.

<sup>47</sup>*Freedom after Ejection*, Manchester 1917, ed. A. Gordon, p. 50. In 1689 both Hussey and its occupier, Thomas Godfrey, registered 'Sissaferns' for Dissenting worship (Urwick, p. 275). For its Dissenting owners over two hundred years, cf. *Cal. Rev.*, s.v. Jeremy Burwell, and Gordon, p. 353. The present house is modern but contains an old fireplace and a (supposed) 'priest's hole'. The name is now pronounced as four syllables.

<sup>48</sup>Hertford church book, in R. L. Hine, *History of Hitchin*, 1929, ii.105.

late converts in the Fens' who in due course were embodied as the church (later Baptist and now extinct) at Guyhirn (near Wisbech), this was in principle no more than the Bedford church's outreach into Cambridgeshire at Gamlingay or the Cambridge church's own evangelism beyond the county. At the embodying of the church at Burwell in August 1692 messengers were happily present from both Cambridge and Bury as well as from Rothwell.<sup>49</sup> But that autumn Davis was charged with setting up a meeting in Cambridge itself, and he did not deny it; neither by Act of Parliament nor by any Law of God, he said, could he see that Cambridge was 'peculiarly appropriated . . . to Mr. Taylor and Mr. Hussey'. One of a number of accusations against him was 'Mr. Taylor's Church in Cambridge broken'.<sup>50</sup>

An inquiry into his behaviour held at Kettering sharply divided the four ministers who had recently co-operated to produce Holcroft's *Funeral Sermon*. Taylor and Hussey appeared as witnesses against Davis, as did Terry, Hussey's successor at Hitchin — another place where Davis had preached —,<sup>51</sup> and Milway gave notable assistance to those who attacked Davis;<sup>52</sup> but Haworth repudiated the inquiry as without authority and supported Davis, as did the minister at Bedworth,<sup>53</sup> the man who had gone there with Holcroft's encouragement. Holcroft himself, it was claimed, had said shortly before his death, 'I am sorry that I did not publicly oppose Mr. Davis',<sup>54</sup> but this, Davis asserted, 'is a Fiction . . . his Judgment was of a contrary Nature, concerning me . . . ; but he is now in Glory'.<sup>55</sup>

Davis's account of the visits to Cambridge paid by himself and others from Rothwell was that they had gone by invitation from Taylor and some of the members, and that he had preached by Taylor's consent and in his presence; that, far from disrupting the church, he had endeavoured to bring reconciliation into a situation already tense with disagreement; but that, after meetings at which Haworth and Milway were present and also involving Hussey, there was so much 'Railery, Rage and Reproach' that 'the Majority . . . at last withdrew' from Taylor and 'desired our further Assistance, which we could not in Conscience deny them'.<sup>56</sup> Taylor's part in all this

<sup>49</sup>C.H.S.T., vi. 417.

<sup>50</sup>R. Davis, *Truth and Innocency Vindicated*, [1692], pp. 44-5, 78, 81. Carlton, Beds., may be added to the tally of churches disrupted: 'the church brake all to peices through our pastor's disagreeing and differing with Rothwell men': *Some Early Nonconformist Church Books*, ed. H. G. Tibbutt, Beds. Hist. Rec. Soc., II (1972). 47.

<sup>51</sup>R. Davis, pp. 44-5, 43, 20, 39.

<sup>52</sup>Gordon, p. 186.

<sup>53</sup>R. Davis, p. 39.

<sup>54</sup>P. Rehakosht [John King], *Plain and Just Account*, 1692, p. 5.

<sup>55</sup>R. Davis, p. 9.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., pp. 81-2.

remains obscure. He was an old man, older than Holcroft would have been, and he had been ill. In 1700 he died, and the fact that Hussey preached his funeral sermon suggests that Hussey had nothing against Taylor personally.

Of Hussey's congregation Davis had written contemptuously, 'he hath no Church, but a part of the Church of England'.<sup>57</sup> But now the wheel suddenly turned. Hussey changed sides and publicly announced his regret at opposing Davis. Hussey and Hog Hill adopted 'the Congregational way', accepted members by dismissal from Rothwell, and also welcomed some of 'Mr. Holcroft's former members'. Rothwell likewise resolved 'to hold communion with those of Mr. Holcroft's church that had renewed covenant'.<sup>58</sup> The changed situation is reflected in the church book at Burwell,<sup>59</sup> and in London the Congregational Board began to support Hussey, granting him £5 towards the maintenance and education of a young convert.<sup>60</sup> Hussey came to regard Green Street as what he termed 'an Anti-Church'. 'After a various Succession of their Teachers', he wrote with relish, it 'wither'd away, & in Process of Time came to nothing'. This was looking ahead: Green Street did not actually close till 1772. In about 1718 it still had about two hundred 'Hearers'; but by then Hussey could boast of over a thousand.<sup>61</sup>

Hussey is a fascinating character to pursue. He writes, not like Johnson, but as you might expect Boswell's Johnson would write. He is both learned and devout, at once unconscionably opinionated and convincingly common-sensible. The change in his position went on over a number of years: he was probably ripe for Davis' picking; yet he ends with views of the consistently extreme kind that are commonly the consequence of a conversion.

Born in Somerset<sup>62</sup> of pious parents but growing up in Hampshire at Fordingbridge, he trained for the ministry in the pioneer Academy kept by Charles Morton at Newington Green, where Defoe, Samuel Wesley and other notabilities — most of them Presbyterians — were also students.<sup>63</sup> Most of his early preaching was under

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>58</sup>Glass, p. 124.

<sup>59</sup>*C.H.S.T.*, vi.425: James Coolidge, a representative from Cambridge at the settlement of the Burwell minister in 1694 (ibid., 421), is in the 1675 list of members; he was also a supporter of Davis (R. Davis, pp. 19-20).

<sup>60</sup>*C.H.S.T.*, v.141; the pupil, James Watson, became minister of the church at Witham, Essex.

<sup>61</sup>*London Christian Instructor or Congregational Magazine*, ii. (1819).185, iii. (1820).170.

<sup>62</sup>*A Warning from the Winds*, p.54 ('my native Country Somersetshire'); the repeated assertion that he was born at Fordingbridge needs correction.

<sup>63</sup>The names of about a dozen of Morton's pupils are known, but which of them were at the Academy with Hussey remains conjectural. *C.H.S.T.*, iii, 280-1.

Presbyterian auspices.<sup>64</sup> So was both his ordination in London in 1688<sup>65</sup> and his 'setting apart' here in Cambridge three years later.<sup>66</sup>

He always had an eye for essentials, and was early concerned for salvation and assurance about salvation. In about 1684 he 'Preach'd in London at the Morning-Lecture on these Words, Heb. 2.3, How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation!', and stressed 'the Greatness of the Gospel-Salvation. One of the ministers present . . . coming in among us afterwards to Breakfast saluted me with this Discouragement; I had rather you had Preach'd upon the other Part of the Words, How shall we escape if we neglect. Which (the rather because it came from a Minister whose face I had never seen before) made me Legal enough for them the next Bout'. Some two years later he was smitten with the words in Jeremiah xxxi.3, 'I have loved thee with an Everlasting Love'. 'It was this Everlasting Kindness drew me, won me, melted me,' he writes, 'broke a whole Heart of Stone at once, and made quite another Man of me!' 'What Encouragements! What Experiences! What Sweetning Views of the King in his Beauty have I enjoy'd thro' the fleeting Moments of presenting it!' 'I have had the Experience of its Power, and Guidance, and Supports almost these Twenty Years' — he is writing in 1706 — 'though it was divers Years', he confesses, 'before I Preach'd it'. His first book, *The Gospel-Feast Opened* (1693), thirty sermons preached in 1688 in Hertfordshire and repeated in Cambridge in 1692, he was 'prevail'd on' to publish, he says, 'by an enticing Letter of a Presbyterian Brother', and he later regretted doing so: the book was marred, he held, by 'a sinful Exclusion of the Work of the Holy Spirit, in the Doctrine of Invitation to come to Christ; insisting more upon the Act of coming . . . than upon creating Grace, in the Operation of God upon the Comer'.<sup>67</sup>

In the margin in one of his books Hussey prints the phrase 'Sense of everlasting Love found a great Help in cleaving to Church-Order'.<sup>68</sup> To put it more flatly, it was his religious experience that, in his own eyes, led him to adopt Congregationalism, which he believed to be

<sup>64</sup>E.g. Daniel Alexander, Timothy Cruso, Robert Franklyn, John Jackson of Brentford, William Jenkyn, Philip Lamb, John Turner of Hatton Garden.

<sup>65</sup>'With Examinations, Confessions, Fasting and Prayer, and Imposition of Hands of the Presbytery', by Samuel Annesley, Franklyn, John Quick, Samuel Slater, Turner and one who, because of the risk of persecution, declined to enter his name on the ordination certificate.

<sup>66</sup>By Stephen Scandrett, an ejected Conduct of Trinity, who was preaching in Cambridge once a month before Hussey came; Robert Billio, minister at St. Ives, who was also preaching in Cambridge by rotation; and John King, minister at Silver Street, Wellingborough, another former student at Morton's Academy, who was Congregational but an opponent of Davis, as was Billio also.

<sup>67</sup>*The Glory of Christ unveil'd*, pp. 141, 120, 122, 162, 7; the identity of the discouraging minister, John James, of Staines, is provided in the 'Table', s.v. 'Terror'.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 123.

'that Church-Government which by the Holy Strictness of it in its close Dependance upon Christ, wherein the Prince of this World is still most judg'd, is a Church-Order most of God and of Christ'.<sup>69</sup> 'Now I love . . . Christ's Yoke, Church-Order', he writes, 'which I find all my Old Religion a meer Stranger to, being cut out more for the Gentleman, than the Believer!'.<sup>70</sup> The believer could depend on the Spirit's enabling, whether in church meeting or in preaching and public prayer, and accusations of enthusiasm should not deflect him. 'Twenty Two Years ago', Hussey admits, 'I us'd to read my Notes in Preaching'; but 'if Men speak to one Another about Trade or News, they can speak without Notes'. 'Hath not flying to Notes upon every Sentence almost to be utter'd, under a Colour of refreshing Memory, griev'd the Spirit, in a deadning both the Pulpit and Auditory, that we may almost fear he is gone?'.<sup>71</sup> 'How many vain Sermons have we, filled up with words, (I was once, to my Shame, just such a Preacher of the times my self) and empty of the Holy Ghost? . . . There were Preachers of this Puff-past Divinity in the Apostle Peter's Time'. But 'a Beau-Preacher, and a Powdered Wigg upon the House-tops, or the Starch Preacher in the Congregation (I will maintain it) are inconsistent with such a Practical Transformation in the renewing of our Minds, as the Apostle speaks of, Rom.12.2'.<sup>72</sup> He writes with equal force of public prayer. 'The Practise of ridiculing extemporary Prayer, as the manner of some is, is enough for God to Blow down your Houses and your Churches too, and then Laugh at you when he has done. For it is written, I also will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh. Prov.1.26'.<sup>73</sup>

Besides *The Gospel Feast*, Hussey published three substantial works. *The Glory of Christ unveil'd* (1706) is the longest: it runs to 918 pages, apart from extensive indexes. The book through which he secured his niche in historical theology is called *God's Operations of Grace: but No Offers of his Grace* (1707). In this Hussey established himself as a pioneer in the High Calvinism which so stresses divine election that for the preacher to attempt to interfere with evangelistic invitations is irrelevant folly. The argument is sympathetically expounded in a chapter on Hussey in Dr. Toon's recent book on the subject.<sup>74</sup> The position Hussey adopts is often regarded as repulsive and self-defeating, a prime cause, even, of the Older Dissent's decay; but it could arise from genuine pastoral concern. 'I am for going upon Fundamental Efficacies and Assurances,' Hussey writes, 'and not

<sup>69</sup>*God's Operations of Grace*, pp. 385-6.

<sup>70</sup>*The Glory of Christ unveil'd*, p. 123.

<sup>71</sup>*God's Operations of Grace*, pp. 453, 456.

<sup>72</sup>*A Warning from the Winds*, p. 40.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>74</sup>P. Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity 1689-1765*, 1967, ch. iv., reprinting (in part) 'Joseph Hussey: architect of hyper-Calvinism', in *Free Grace Record*, iv. 5 (1966-7). 221-32.

making all the main Things of the Gospel doubtful', 'As if God's Love was born out of our Faith, and not our Faith born out of God's Love'. 'Ah!' he apostrophizes the preachers of his day, 'It had been better you had preach'd God's Everlasting Settlements of *Christ* for poor Sinners, than their own Palsy-Acts of *Faith* to build Christ on for their Help . . . and press and pull them into Churches under early Stirrings, before they are ripe to sit down in the Kingdom of God'.<sup>75</sup>

*A Warning from the Winds* (1704), a shorter book than either of the others, is both more eccentric and more revealing. Its origin was in a sermon on 'the late Dreadful Storm' of the previous November, in which the Bishop of Bath and Wells<sup>76</sup> 'was killed by the terrible Blast in his Episcopal Palace, without any regard to his Dignity or Service'. Hussey believed the Storm to be God's 'Punishment of that General Contempt, in England under Gospel-Light, Cast upon the Work of the Holy Ghost . . . as to His Divine Breathings upon the Souls of Men': 'how agreeably did God punish our Sins against the Spirit by a Wind!'<sup>77</sup> It is a remarkable example of what we might nowadays call existential preaching. It is also Hussey's most learned piece, for though he deplored what he terms 'the Luxuriances of Academick Youth',<sup>78</sup> he did not forget that he was in Cambridge. The margins are packed with abstruse references. Yet its Preface concludes thus: —

As to my Faith in Christ Jesus, I bear upon the Scriptures, and do not Pin it upon Human Sleeves, whether Fathers, Councils, Classes, or Commentatours: . . . To Conclude, I Esteem One Hour's Heavenly Communion with the Lord, Ten Thousand Times more than an Age spent in Ransacking of Books: . . . I can feel Delights ('tis granted) in Books, and in Communion with Christ too Successively: But how? With very unequal Pleasures! In the Former, there is a sensible Sweetness to the Natural, Psychical, or Soul-Part within me: Yet, still in these Delights, I feel not my self so actually fit to Pray, or to Die; in the latter Delights, I can feel how I Die daily, and nevertheless live at the Gates of Heaven, next Door to the Intercessour: 'Tis in this Frame and Spirit I can Believe, no more Sweat when the Burden of the Day is over! No more Toil, no more Trials for ever! Farewel'.

If through these words we come closest to the heart of the preacher who held so large a congregation, we feel his stamina in

<sup>75</sup>*The Glory of Christ unveil'd*, pp. 381, 143, 140.

<sup>76</sup>Hussey may have known the bishop, Richard Kidder, originally an ejected minister, for like Hussey Kidder had been chaplain at The Hoo; in 1673 he preached a funeral sermon for Lady Keate, *The Vanity of Man*, with an ep. ded. to Sir Jonathan.

<sup>77</sup>P. 54, titlepage, p. 53.

<sup>78</sup>P. 30.

*The Stroke of Divine Sovereignty* (1704), the funeral sermon for his wife which he published after preaching it 'in our Meeting-House at Cambridge, over her Grave, just under my Pulpit'. He tells of her singing during her last illness 'some Fragments' from 'Barton's Version of David's Psalms, with a smiling Countenance, and full of secret Joy'. The New College, London, copy of this book is followed by seven manuscript pages containing 'Some of Hussey's' own 'last words when dying' in London in 1726 aged 66, with an elegy in six verses by P[eter] A[nderton], then the owner of the volume.<sup>79</sup> Hussey's dying words were 'More faith and patience'. The final verse of the elegy runs thus: —

Great Hussey's gone to the Sweet Realms above  
Perpetual Praises there his Soul Employ  
Perpetual Motives from Perpetual Love  
Which make Eternity perpetual Joy.

In the fifty years from Holcroft to Hussey we have come a long way: from expansion to exclusivism; from evangelism to a particular brand of orthodoxy. The constant is enthusiasm: a certain earnestness and intensity which have a way of reappearing in the history of Dissent. Nor should the differences between the two men be exaggerated. Calamy says that Holcroft 'fell in with the Old Brownists, and was angry with his Dissenting Brethren that were more Catholic-spirited', and that some of those to whom he ministered 'would go very far, rather than they would hear Mr. Scandret',<sup>80</sup> one of the Presbyterians who ordained Hussey. Hussey, on the other hand, did not confine himself to the elect in Cambridge. We find him preaching at Sutton, Stretham and Soham; Willingham, Cottenham and Burwell; Bottisham and Fulbourn; Oakington and Dry Drayton; Great and Little Eversden and Barrington; and Linton. His books, also, were in their own way his witness to saving truth and his endeavour to convince men of it.

Hussey's convinced Calvinism is not at all like the Congregationalism we have known, any more than incipient rationalism is like recent Presbyterianism; but as the eighteenth century went on, the two positions were usual enough and quickly sharpened: Presbyterianism grew more openly rationalist, Congregationalism more stridently Calvinist.<sup>81</sup> Even if we think that Hussey reacted too sharply, he deserves credit for perceiving the way things were going. 'Every Arminian in the Kingdom', he writes, 'that creeps into the Separation is a Scandal to the Meeting House'. 'General and National Religion

<sup>79</sup>The 'last words' are in print in William Bentley, *The Lord the Helper of his People*, 1733, but not the elegy.

<sup>80</sup>E. Calamy, *Continuation*, p. 118; in 1672 Scandrett was preaching in the house where the Green Street church then met.

<sup>81</sup>Cf. G. F. Nuttall, 'Calvinism in Free Church History', in *Baptist Quarterly*, xxii.8 (Oct., 1968), esp. pp. 421-3.

better fits him'.<sup>82</sup> He was perhaps alerted by the presence in Cambridge as minister of Green Street from 1701 to 1706 of James Peirce — he certainly knew him;<sup>83</sup> for it was Peirce who, later, at Exeter, was at the centre of the dispute which led to disruption at Salters' Hall and to the beginnings of Unitarianism in England; and the foundations for the learning with which Peirce then justified his refusal to subscribe to anything not in New Testament terminology he laid during his years in Cambridge.

Cambridge, as usual, was showing the way forward — whichever way you chose to go. And when, much later in the century, Calvinism was 'moderated' and the modern missionary movement initiated, even then the influence of the church of Christ in Cambridgeshire, and even of Holcroft, was still at work — through Andrew Fuller. Fuller was a native of Wicken, who began his ministry in 1774 as the first pastor of the Baptist church at Soham (a daughter of the Burwell/Soham church at whose foundation in 1692 representatives were present from Cambridge). This is remembered: an appropriately simple plaque was put up at Soham in 1974. The link with Holcroft has been forgotten; but when in 1818 John Ryland preached Fuller's funeral sermon, it was still part of the story. 'According to tradition preserved in the family', Ryland relates, Fuller's great-grandfather on his father's side, Robert Hart, of Swaffham Prior, a member at Isleham, 'was converted in a wood near Burwell, under the preaching of Mr. Francis Holcroft'; his great-great-grandparents on his mother's side also, John and Joan Malden, of Soham, 'objects of ridicule and persecution, on account of their nonconformity . . . were friends of Mr. Holcroft and Mr. Oddy, and were buried near them, in . . . the . . . burying-ground at Oakington'.<sup>84</sup> Whether their tomb-stones too are still preserved, I do not know; but, looking back over our story as a whole, we may say that, in the end, it was Holcroft, not Hussey, who prevailed.

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL

<sup>82</sup>*The Glory of Christ unveil'd*, p.627.

<sup>83</sup>Peirce, who, contrary to Hussey, moved from Congregationalism to Presbyterianism, was a trustee of Hog Hill.

<sup>84</sup>John Ryland, *The Work of Faith*, 1818, pp. 9-10.

## SAINT JOHN OF REDENHALL: A UNIQUE TOMBSTONE?<sup>1</sup>

If you travel along the borders of Norfolk and Suffolk from Diss to Bungay, you cannot fail to admire the parish church of Redenhall. Travelling from Diss, you pass through Harleston, and soon afterwards see its graceful tower two miles away, lifting itself clear of the intervening trees. Then you lose it until, suddenly, it is there right beside you and above you, set on a little hill, inviting the traveller to enter and explore. The interior is as attractive as the exterior, with its wide perpendicular windows and lofty roof. The church is beautifully cared for, and its brazen eagle lectern glistens in the sun. There is a curious fifteenth century chest from Venice, its lid painted with galleons. And there are four seventeenth-century memorials.

Two concern the Frere family, which may be connected with the Freres of Roydon, twelve miles away, who became well-known in the next two centuries. On the south wall of the nave, near the tower, is a handsome monument to Tobias Frere Esquire, who died in 1655, erected by his widow Susanna and his son Tobias. At the east end of the nave, in the floor below the lectern, is the black marble tablet to his grandson, also Tobias, "who dyed the 18th of May 1660 and in the second yere of his age and on his left hand was buried Elizabeth his sister who dyed Aug. the 4th 1658 being a yere and 9 monthes old". Next to this tablet is another, even sadder, which also seems to mark the end of a family line:

"Here lyes y<sup>e</sup> Bodys of Henry Fenn y<sup>e</sup> first Sonn, and Henry Fenn y<sup>e</sup> second both sonns of Henry Fenn of Rednall". The former died in 1661 aged five, the latter in 1675 aged ten. Below is the cryptic verse:

"When time hath mard this Marble and defaced

The kind Memoriall by Sister MARY Tracd

Twill loose y<sup>e</sup> Vertue of her first Intent

No longer Overs but its owne Monument".

The fourth memorial must be sought beneath a blue carpet at the foot of the sanctuary steps. Unlike the beautifully preserved stones in the nave, time has marred this marble, but not completely defaced it, and the eye is at once caught by the phrase "painfull preacher of the gospel". We see two stones side by side, but the inscription runs across them, and needs a little working out. It is the verse at the foot

<sup>1</sup>I gratefully acknowledge the help given by the Revd. E. Wynn-Jones, Rector of Redenhall; Dr. F. Stubbings, Librarian of Emmanuel College; and my photographer brother-in-law, Mr. W. A. Wentworth. My curiosity was originally aroused by Dr. G. F. Nuttall's *Visible Saints*, and I am grateful for his own interest in John Rand.

which I find of special interest, posing the question, "Is this phraseology unique?"

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THE OF BODYES

JOHN RAND M A late painful preacher of the gospel at REDNALL cum HARLESTON Here expect Sep. 27 Three temples of the Holy Ghost Ruind by death ly here as 1659

AND of ANNE his wife and ELIZABETH their daughter the Resurrection

lost

St Johns fell first St Anns next year then St Elizabeth fell here  
Yet a few dayes and thes again Christ will rebuild and in them  
reigne

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"Painfull preacher of the gospel" suggests that John Rand had a Puritan background but the titles "St. John, St. Anne and St. Elizabeth" speak of the "Visible Saints" of whom Dr. Nuttall has written.

"It is unto us clear as the shining light, that a Church formed unto fellowship in New-Testament-Ordinances . . . is a particular company of Saints in mutual union for mutual fellowship in the means of worship appointed by Christ, for the glory of God, the edification of their own souls, and the good of others".<sup>2</sup> That sentence from *The Preacher Sent* of 1658 echoes a number of church covenants of the period whose members affirm that they are "called to be saints"<sup>3</sup>, that "they only are worthy that are Saints visible to the eye of rational charity".<sup>4</sup> There is no doubt about the use of the term "saints" to designate corporately the members of a gathered church. But was the title "Saint" used in connection with the name of an individual member of such a church, as we find it here? Is this tomb an evidence of a common way of speaking among the saints, or no more than a figure of funerary speech? Even if it is no more than that, are there other monuments with the same parlance?

I cannot answer those questions, and would be grateful for further information. But in one sense this is jumping too far ahead, for it has yet to be demonstrated that John Rand had a connection with the men of the Congregational way. All evidence about him is meagre, and that concerning his churchmanship is circumstantial.

"John Rand of Essex" was admitted a Pensioner of Emmanuel College, Cambridge on 14 January 1630/31, proceeding B.A. in 1634 and M.A. in 1638. Emmanuel was a school of Puritanism; among the Independents, Jeremiah Burroughes and William Bridge had matriculated in 1617 and 1619 respectively. Rand became Curate of

<sup>2</sup>G. F. Nuttall, *Visible Saints*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1957: cited from p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>Cockermouth 1651; *ibid.* p. 79.

<sup>4</sup>Altham, Lancs., c. 1650; *ibid.* p. 131.

West Bergholt in Essex in 1637. For further information it is necessary to turn to the Burial Register at Redenhall, which he kept meticulously. The first entry signed "John Rand Pastor" comes at the end of 1644; his predecessor's last entry was on 10 December, and John Rand then added further entries with the note "These names were forgotten". His own first burial at Redenhall was on 10 January 1644/5, and his entries continue to 1653.

There is only one interruption in them. In 1648/9 he wrote:

"King Charles the First of England was arraigned and Beheaded in the pallace yard at Westminster upon tuesday the 30th of January 1648 having reigned march the 27. following 24 years compleat; after which the Comons of England in Parliament did for ever vote downe Kingly government, and the house of Lords, as needless, and prejudiciall to the good of this Comonwealth".

Thereafter he dates his entries, in 1649 "Anno Reipub. Angl. 1.°", and so on.

The designation "pastor", and the clear sympathy with the Parliamentary cause, points to a Puritan if not a Congregational background.

The burial register bears out the tombstone inscription concerning the deaths of John and his wife.

In 1659, "John Rand Clerke was buried the third of October" following his death, according to the stone, on 27 September. In 1660 the register reads:

"Anne Rand widdowe (the relict of John Rand clerke deceased) was buried the sixteenth of October".

"St Johns fell first St Anns next year".

But there is no entry for "St Elizabeth". Instead there is, in 1660, an entry:

"May 29            Reduce Rege,            Omnia Restituta  
                         Hinc Inviolata Sepulchra  
                         Et  
                         Inferiae rite celebratae"

Thereafter the whole of 1661 is blank, and the first entry comes in October 1662. No doubt by that time "St. Elizabeth" was dead and buried.

No more can be said of John Rand with certainty. It may be supposed that he was born about 1612-14, and was under fifty years old when he died. With his Puritan-Parliamentary sympathies, he would no doubt have been ejected from Redenhall had he lived until 1662, and would have merited an entry by Calamy. By dying when he did, he lost that opportunity, but instead was rewarded with his peculiar marble monument. Presumably this was in place by 24 August

<sup>54</sup>"The King brought back, everything restored. Henceforth tombs are inviolable, and funereal rites duly solemnized".

1662, after which the authorities would be unsympathetic to the commemoration of Puritan saints.<sup>6</sup>

Who was responsible for the inscription? Here evidence becomes frank speculation.

As *The Preacher Sent* puts it, "a Church is a particular company of Saints". That book was published in 1658 by Samuel Petto, John Martin and Frederick Woodall. Samuel Petto was the incumbent of South Elmham St. Cross (or Sancroft) and pastor of the Congregational church there from 1648 until he was ejected in 1662. South Elmham St. Cross is only five miles from Redenhall across the Suffolk border (at this point the River Waveney). When Petto was ejected, he is said to have resided in Wortwell, on the Norfolk side of the border, four miles from South Elmham and one mile from Redenhall — indeed, the Redenhall church tower is a prominent feature in the Wortwell skyline. Petto seems to have retained his house at Wortwell until 1672, when it was licensed for use by a congregation, as was the house of John Wesgate at Redenhall. During his period at Wortwell, Petto was "helpful to the Church at Denton", four miles further on.<sup>7</sup> Even if there is no evidence of a church meeting at Redenhall until 1672, it is clear that there were lively fellowships at Denton and South Elmham, each five miles away in different directions and active from the 1650s onwards. Petto was a link between them, and one surmises that he must have known John Rand.

Another link may be traced through Petto's publications; Dr. Nuttall says that he was "given to literary collaboration with neighbouring Congregational ministers"<sup>8</sup>. He wrote *The Preacher Sent* in 1658 (the last year of Rand's life) with Frederick Woodall, who matriculated at Corpus the year after Rand came up to Emmanuel — had they met in Cambridge? The previous year, 1657, Petto had edited Tillinghast's *Six Severall Treatises* in co-operation with John Manning, who matriculated at Emmanuel in 1634, the year in which Rand took his B.A. In 1658 Petto edited a further work by Tillinghast, *Elijah's Mantle*, in co-operation with Samuel Habergham, who matriculated at Emmanuel in 1641.<sup>9</sup> Petto himself did not hail from Emmanuel, but if he or his collaborators were responsible for designing the tombstone of John Rand, there need be no surprise that, surmounting it, balancing the obligatory death's head design, is portrayed the Lion Azure Rampant, the arms of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.

J. E. NEWPORT

<sup>6</sup>However, Samuel Habergham was buried in the chancel of the parish church at Syleham as late as January 1664/5, and described in the burial register as "pastor of the Church at Syleham": *Calamy Revised*, ed. A. G. Matthews, Oxford, 1934, p. 240.

<sup>7</sup>John Browne, *History of Congregationalism . . . in Norfolk and Suffolk*, 1877, pp. 488-9 and 445.

<sup>8</sup>Nuttall, *op. cit.* p. 95.

<sup>9</sup>cf. Nuttall, *op. cit.*, pp. 73, 95, and the respective entries for Woodall, Manning and Habergham in *Calamy Revised op. cit.*

## REVIEWS

*The Dissenting Tradition: essays for Leland H. Carlson.* Edited by C. Robert Cole and Michael E. Moody. Pp. xxiv+272. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1975. n.p.

The Elizabethan Nonconformist Texts continue with unhurried, majestic pace. The series opened in 1951; its final volumes have yet to appear. Professor Carlson worked over the material for the first volume after Dr. Albert Peel's death and saw it through the press, and with great devotion has been responsible alone for the later volumes. It is a remarkable achievement. One result is that Browne, Harrison, Barrow, Greenwood and Penry receive much more attention in scholarly circles than was the case twenty-five years ago. The reproduction of crabbed texts, with a minimum of apparatus, may be thought of as dry-as-dust work; but members of our Society who heard Professor Carlson address the Congregational Historical Society on problems in the identification of Martin Marprelate will remember how exciting in his hands the pursuit became.

A number of Professor Carlson's friends, some of them formerly his pupils, have now combined to honour him with this *Festschrift*. As with most such works, its 'collective theme', *The Dissenting Tradition*, is conceived broadly — in this case with the justification that Professor Carlson's own interests have never been narrow. It includes both studies of individuals, ranging from Sir Francis Knollys to A. J. P. Taylor, and historiographical surveys. Pieces on Sir Henry Vane and Lord Acton are only six pages long; another runs to nearly forty.

Two contributions are outstanding: 'Sir Francis Knollys' campaign against the *jure divino* theory of episcopacy', by Professor W. D. J. Cargill Thompson of King's College, London; and 'Towards a broader understanding of the early dissenting tradition', by Professor Patrick Collinson, now of the University of Kent at Canterbury. With masterly elucidation of 'the changes which were taking place in the Anglican theory of episcopacy during the 1570s and 1580s' and of Knollys' defensive tactics in maintaining 'that he was not interfering in matters of religion, but was defending a principle of the constitution', Professor Cargill Thompson establishes 'the fact that it was Knollys, the so-called Puritan, who was defending the traditional Tudor order in church and state, whereas it was Whitgift and his colleagues of the establishment who were the innovators with their claim that episcopacy was in some sense a divine institution'.

Professor Collinson portrays early seventeenth-century Puritanism as 'embodying the mainstream of English Protestantism', 'an evolved but still in some vital respects primitive and fresh Protestantism': 'we are still in the full flush of the Reformation'. 'Inasmuch as the godly were in some degree from the beginning a people apart, their situation

had always been one of *de facto* Independency'. 'The religious exercises which were distinctive of Puritanism' also 'exerted a strong if unintended separatist pull'. In the South-East, moreover, 'Lollardy, that older dissenting tradition, persisted': there was a 'strongly innate tendency to sectarianism' and 'ferment beneath the surface'. 'An impressively homogeneous religious world is disclosed'. For all his modest description of himself as no more than 'an extensive forager in the sources', an impressively authoritative historian is also disclosed.

The volume includes a biographical account of Professor Carlson, a bibliography of his writings and a pleasing photograph of him. As is regrettably usual with *Festschriften*, it has no index.

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL

*John Calvin*. By T. H. L. Parker, Pp. xviii, 190, J. M. Dent, London, 1975. £5.95.

Is there much new to say about Calvin? Can we hope to get any nearer to understanding him as a person? Questions like these are bound to cross one's mind as one takes up a new biography. If anyone could give positive answers to such questions Dr. Parker, who has spent so much of his life on Calvin, is the man. Yes, he has new materials to show us and in two appendices he posits a new chronology for Calvin's early life and a new dating for his conversion. Indeed, about a fifth of the book is taken up with detail about Calvin's early years. Yes, we come closer, in my view, than before to Calvin as a man. We are taken into his household, introduced to its members, and told on the quiet about the great man's domestic sorrows. We look over his shoulder as he receives and writes letters. We join his congregation and get told to sing up and in unison, and we hear him from the pulpit — his 'audible eucharist'. Nevertheless, Calvin remains aloof and inscrutable. It is not Dr. Parker's fault. Calvin was that kind of man.

On Calvin's thought the author is succinct and clear; he does not attempt to rival Mackinnon or Wendel. Where Calvin has been most severely criticized, say over his vital part in the Servetus persecution, Dr. Parker handles some very awkward facts with all the skill of an able defence barrister pleading for a client who is guilty yet unashamed. This is an enjoyable, informative, sumptuous book, well illustrated, worthy of a place alongside the many fruits of Calvin study in the past.

JOHN H. TAYLOR

*The Axminster Ecclesiastica 1660-1698*. Edited by K. W. H. Howard. Pp. 280. Gospel Tidings Publications, Sheffield, 1976. £3.80.

We are indebted to Gospel Tidings Publications for reprinting this remarkable 17th century record of a West Country Nonconformist Church.

This book enables us to enter into the experience of these early

dissenters. They saw themselves as a faithful people of God, separating themselves from "a polluted national way of worship". They were not primarily engaged in making a political point (though their action had considerable political implications), but they claimed to stand for pure Biblical religion and for freedom to order their church affairs in obedience to the Holy Spirit.

They paid a high price for their obedience. They were constantly on the move in the worst years, worshipping in private houses, in barns, in woods and in a cave. Many were fined, imprisoned and exiled and some were killed when they joined Monmouth's ill-fated rebellion.

What supported them was faith in the living God. They took the Scriptures intensely seriously and identified themselves with the pilgrim People of God in the desert or in captivity. The book itself was written to record "the most Remarkable Occurrences and signall Providences" which have attended this Church "from the first foundation thereof."

There are two excellent maps, and the editor has added much useful material. The whole book will be of particular interest to Westcountrymen and incomers.

CHARLES HAIG

*The Minutes of the First Independent Church (now Bunyan Meeting) at Bedford 1656-1766.* Ed. H. G. Tibbutt. Pp. 232. Vol. 55 in Bedfordshire Historical Record Series, 1976. £4.50.

This is a splendidly edited and produced volume. The records of this Church are not unlike those of many other Independent churches, but this Church has a special interest because of its links with John Bunyan. The members came from a wide area and from many trades and callings. The name of Whitbread may be noted, later to be associated with brewing and politics; an early Whitbread was at odds with the Church for many months and he refused to bow before allegations that he had walked unworthily. The frequency and variety of offences, the demands for humiliation, the obstinate reluctance of both men and women to acknowledge their miscarriage and to repent, and the continuing pressure upon offenders, make compulsive and melancholy reading. Even allowing for the great care taken to investigate charges, the inquisition was a practice which probably encouraged informers to make exaggerated accusations.

It may be some consolation to present-day churches to note that attendance at church meetings rarely exceeded twenty out of a membership of about one hundred and fifty.

The Church was also at odds for some time with the Church at Cambridge over the treatment of Brother Dixe who had been put out of the Church at Cambridge but had been received into membership at Bedford. The Church at Bedford insisted that he displayed manifest

fruits of the Spirit, but the Church at Cambridge told the Church at Bedford that 'it needed the seasoning of the salt of the grace of God'.

The tensions with the Church of England are revealed in these pages; there were severe rebukes for several who refused to make a clean break with the Church of England and were even willing to be confirmed, that is, 'bishopt after the Antichristian guise of the Church of England'. Yet, there was a high doctrine of the Church and the first minister, John Gifford, warned the members not to be guilty of the great evil of splitting the Church; some, 'through a zeal for God, yet not according to knowledge, have erred from the law of the love of Christ, and have made a rent from the true Church which is but one'.

R.B.K.

*Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change 1740-1914.* By A. D. Gilbert Pp. ix, 251, Longmans, London, 1976. £3.50.

In recent years there have been several notable studies dealing with aspects of nineteenth century religious history; Dr. Gilbert has made an outstanding contribution which is wide in chronological scope but particular in intention. His work is analytic rather than descriptive; the great figures and controversies which have occupied other writers have for him only a secondary importance. This is a study of the ways in which religious issues and trends were bound up with the general social and political adjustments which were part of England's development from an agricultural to an industrial society. For the first time the insights and methods of sociology are applied in a systematic way to a broad sweep of religious history. Section headings such as "The Amelioration of Anomie" and "The Dysfunction of the Unreformed Establishment" will perhaps deter those without some grounding in the concepts and terminology of sociology, but although compact Dr Gilbert's style is always lucid and perseverance is amply rewarded. The treatment of the Established Church and of Nonconformity is well balanced and the development of the Roman Catholic Church through the period, although peripheral to the main argument, is adequately covered. Although stronger in the first part of his period, Dr. Gilbert has carried through his main themes most convincingly. The compendium of British and Irish religious statistics which the bibliographical note mentions as under preparation by the author, in co-operation with R. Currie and L. H. Horsley, will be welcomed by those who wish to develop further some of the lines of argument which this study has opened up.

This is undoubtedly a most important book which, by the adoption of a radically new approach, will provide many fresh insights. It deserves a wide readership and certainly no serious student of the religious history of this period should miss it.

NIGEL APPLETON

*The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians.* By Ian Bradley. Pp. 224. Jonathan Cape, London, 1976. £4.95.

Ian Bradley's concern is with Anglicans caught by vital religion — that "Gospel of definite and personal change of heart and consequent devotion of life" as Bishop Moule later put it — in Victorian England's formative years. He deals with their dynamic call to Seriousness before 1860, rather than its divisive results thereafter, although a good book is needed on the latter and several have already appeared on the former.

The theme is full of goodies. "Give to the poor contentment with their lot", prayed Henry Thornton, "and to the rich a spirit of compassion and benevolence". "We are here through our moral superiority, by the force of circumstances, by the will of Providence", said General Lawrence; "This alone constitutes our charter to govern India. In doing the best we can for the people we are bound by our conscience and not theirs". Then there was the Vice Society, whose prosecution of thirty-nine fortune-tellers (their lies might promote improvident marriages among the lower classes) allows one to sympathise with Sydney Smith's view of it as a "Society for Suppressing the Vices of persons whose income does not exceed £500 per annum". But Bradley is surely right amidst such expertise in pressure politics and social engineering to remind us that the corollary of the Evangelicals' "insistence on man's helplessness and worthlessness when in an unregenerate state was an unlimited confidence in his potential and power to do good when charged with the animating force of vital Christianity".

Here, then, is a handy introduction to an important subject. It is brief, clear, well-produced, logically constructed and disappointing. Bradley does not go far beyond F. K. Brown's *Fathers of the Victorians* (1961) or Kathleen Heasman's *Evangelicals in Action* (1962), and he has not been able to incorporate recent work by Alan Gilbert, W. R. Ward or Edward Norman.

Readers of this Journal will feel that a chapter on the differences between Anglican Evangelicals and Evangelical Nonconformists would have been a strength. Why was it that the two strands of evangelicalism developed so differently? Was it the fact of Establishment, with its social and political implications? Was it churchmanship? Or personality? Or class? Such a chapter might have saved Bradley from distressing ambiguities, as when he lists Evangelical firms and ignores their Quaker origins, or when he places G. C. Smith (the Seamen's Friend), C. E. Mudie (of the Circulating Library), Rowland Hill and Henry Havelock among his sort of Evangelicals when Baptists and Congregationalists might have claimed part of them.

Sometimes ambiguity slides into error. It is arguable as to whether T. H. Green was an agnostic, George Eliot an atheist, W. H. Smith a

staunch Methodist, or as to whether the Y.M.C.A.'s constituency was working class or Mill's *On Liberty* written in 1855 (I would doubt all of these); but Lord Palmerston and Henry Manning were not the sons-in-law of Shaftesbury and Wilberforce respectively, Marquess Wellesley was not Wellington's younger brother, Prime Minister Liverpool was not the first Earl, Archbishop Tait was not reared as an Anglican neither did Andrew Reed become one, Cuddesdon was not "the first purpose-built theological college" and the brief reference to the London Missionary Society is misleading.

These are not just quibbles. Some could easily have been rectified and the phrasing of others suggests that the generalisations which abound in the book are not sustained by the wide reading and bold intellect which alone would justify them. Consequently readers may not care to accept large assertions that Evangelicalism changed the attitudes and customs of the entire population, that all puritans are obsessed with loose behaviour, or even that Charles James Fox's failure to achieve office was largely due to popular disapproval of his playboy ways.

Or is it that Dr. Bradley lacks sympathy for his subject and so can neither be very perceptive about its vagaries (how few seem to understand that puritanism's apparent preoccupation with sex — notably prostitution — has something to do with the perception that Life literally depends on it) nor truly make fun of it, as those who love it might? His book's flaw, obscuring its usefulness and its author's ability, is that it lacks the delicacy of touch which a truly serious study should have. Here, too, it is no Serious Call.

J.C.G.B.

*Church and Society in England 1770-1970.* By E. R. Norman. Pp. 507. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976. £15.00.

This book is fairly large, very expensive and a useful corrective to what has recently come to be called 'Radical *chic*': the adoption of radical views and support of radical causes out of a desire to atone for an upper-class upbringing.

It is not as useful as it might be. Roughly speaking 'the Church' means the Church of England, the Church of England the clergy, and the clergy the bishops. Nonconformists appear only as noises off: agitators for disestablishment or, more rarely, as guilty themselves of trendy radicalism. Dr. Norman does not believe in being fair to his victims. It is true that contemporary radicals who oppose censorship of pornography often want to forbid racialist propaganda; but it is also true that they have answers (not noted here) to the charge of inconsistency.

Maurice, Westcott, Temple — these are the major targets of the author's indictment; partly because they thought they were Socialists but were not. But we are offered no definition of that term of infinite

flexibility. Nor does Dr. Norman tell us what their social teaching ought to have been; but only that it was wrong.

Is it true that the *Extraordinary Black Book*, the exposé of alleged corruptions published in 1831 is still quoted uncritically by historians? Is it just to classify boards of arbitration and conciliation as 'State collectivist agencies'? Is there really evidence that Hensley Henson's onslaughts on impracticable idealism were in line with the 'common assumptions of most Englishmen'; or only that Dr Norman agrees with them?

A pity that the account is so one-sided. Of course, a great deal that is said by theological radicals — on Capitalism, for example, or on Liberation — is nonsense. But that is demonstrated more clearly in their own writings than in Dr. Norman's book.

STEPHEN MAYOR

*The Central Records of the Church of England: A Report and Survey presented to The Pilgrim and Radcliffe Trustees.* Pp. 100, C10 Publishing, London, 1976, £3.00.

This report is the first fruit of an enquiry conducted by Christopher Kitching, an Assistant Keeper of Public Records, into the scope, location and accessibility of the records of central bodies administering the policy and property of the Church of England, and of the communities and societies promoting its causes. It is not directly concerned with the papers of individual Churchmen, nor of inter-denominational organisations. It is only concerned with extinct bodies if their records survive in the care of the living. Those most vulnerable of archive holders, the theological colleges, are barely mentioned, for reasons which are unclear.

By any standards, however, what remains is of an importance far beyond what some conceive to be ecclesiastical bounds.

Readers of this Journal will find the appendix, with its list of sources and societies, an invaluable guide; it has already provided this reviewer with the answer to a query about a Dorset man who died in Uruguay. It offers a first checklist to searchers who may need to consult such major bodies as the National Society or the Industrial Christian Fellowship (which incorporates the records of the famous Christian Social Union). It reminds us of the J. N. Figgis papers (at York's Borthwick Institute) and of papers on Russian emigrés (at Nashdom Abbey). It is also a telling memorial to the variety, devotion and sanctified dottiness of English Christian endeavour — the Winchester Mission to Mandalay, the Clothing Society for Poor Pious Clergymen, the Anglican Group for the Ordination of Women to the Historic Ministry of the Church, the Society of Royal Cumberland

Youths (bellringers, whose secretary is a maiden lady, in Essex). It also reminds us of the researcher's occupational hazards — the Melanesian Mission, which considered sending its archives to the Solomon Islands; the Church Duty Money Movement ("no records have ever been kept"); the Society of King Charles the Martyr ("no reply received"); the Guild of the Love of God, which became extinct during the survey, ("records destroyed"). And it will be noted that the Mothers' Union is not prepared to make any of its records generally available.

But our readers should be concerned with the report as well as its appendix, for the records of all our churches are as vulnerable as ever they were. The Anglicans still lack a qualified archivist at Church House; of other bodies, only the Friends approach a central record management system, and recent Methodist difficulties are barely resolved by the transfer of their archives to the Rylands Library. Should the Public Record Office be seen as a depository for such records, which are national in scope but non-governmental in nature? Should there be a concerted sharing of storage space and of qualified staff? As Dr. Kitching remarks: "specialists are already employed in other fields of the Church's work such as accountancy and legal business: indeed it would be a matter of surprise . . . if this were not so. But record management if it exists at all is still entrusted to those without professional training".

J.C.G.B.

*Architects of Dissent, Some Nonconformist Patrons and their Architects.* By Christopher Stell, Pp. 33, Dr. Williams's Trust, 14 Gordon Square, London, 1976. 50p.

This is the thirtieth lecture promoted by the Friends of Dr. Williams's Library. It is to be bought and enjoyed by all who relished Mr. Stell's lecture to our own Society in 1975 and by all others who wish to be informed about a largely unconsidered aspect of chapel architecture by a Nonconformist who is both a sound architect and a sensitive historian.

The *Journal* is always happy to draw attention to histories of local churches. Copies of W. D. Haggard *Holly Mount United Reformed Church Malvern 1876-1976* Pp. 16, and E. W. Moxey *The Independent Chapel in Liscard. Foundation and Early Years.* Wallasey 1976, Pp. 12, 30p., a duplicated, full, account of a most interesting church, may be obtained on application to the secretaries of those churches. *The History of Little Baddow United Reformed Church in Essex* has been written by R. Buick Knox and is available at 30p. and contains 24 pages.

J.C.G.B.