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EDITORIAL AND NOTES

In 1853 Benjamin Hanbury published an edition of extracts from the diary and other papers of his great-grandfather, Joseph Williams of Kidderminster (1692-1755). Selections from Williams's journal and letters had been improving reading since their first publication in 1779; in 1853 they were given a new title – *The Christian Merchant: A Practical Way to Make "The Best of Both Worlds"*. Was it a coincidence or was it shrewd (and hopeful) opportunism that the new title echoed the titles of two contemporary bestsellers? One was William Arthur's *The Successful Merchant* (1852) and the other was Thomas Binney's *Is it possible to make the best of both worlds?* (1853). The former, about the Bristol Wesleyan grocer, Samuel Budgett (who unlike Joseph Williams is in the *DNB*), reached its forty-third edition and eighty-ninth thousand sale by 1878. The latter sold 3,000 copies in its first year and reached its fifteenth edition by 1865. Joseph Williams, by contrast, was not reissued.

Arthur was, among other things, a supporter of the YMCA and *The Successful Merchant* was “cordially dedicated” to “The Young Men of Commerce”. The YMCA’s founder, George Williams (no relation to Joseph Williams) was a member of Binney’s Weigh House when the YMCA began in 1844 and Binney’s *Best of both worlds* was originally one of the celebrated YMCA Exeter Hall lectures. Like much of what Binney wrote, it caused a stir and in a later YMCA lecture Prebendary Goulburn of St Paul’s (who like most people thought its title was “How to make the best of both worlds”) was at pains to criticise it.

It may all have been coincidence but Arthur and Binney knew to whom to direct their books and young evangelicals like George Williams had been reared on James’s *Anxious Enquirer*, “Night Thoughts” Young, *Saints Everlasting Rest*; theirs, though several generations on, was recognisably the spirituality which formed Joseph Williams. So, if it were no coincidence, it suggests a remarkable and influential continuity.

Isabel Rivers’s paper on Joseph Williams was originally delivered at the Society’s Annual Lecture at Mansfield College, Oxford, in September 2004. Williams’s journal is with the Congregational Library collections now held at Dr Williams’s Library and Professor Rivers, who is an Emeritus Fellow of St Hugh’s College, Oxford and Professor of Eighteenth-century English Literature and Culture at Queen Mary, University of London, is Director with Dr David Wykes of The Dr Williams’s Centre for Dissenting Studies (14 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0AR), launched formally in March 2005.

One of Thomas Binney’s executors was the East London soapmaker and politician Edward Rider Cook, whose sister-on-law was the recipient of the letters printed in this issue from the Japanese scholar, Tadao Yanaihara. Susan Townsend, Yanaihara’s biographer, refers in her doctoral dissertation to Mrs Cook of Woodford Green, with whom the scholar lodged. That rang bells with one of Dr Townsend’s examiners, who was convinced that Mrs Cook was rather more than a student’s landlady. We are grateful to Mrs Cook’s granddaughter, Mrs Jean Gill, for permission to print the letters and to Dr Gordon Daniels, formerly of the Department of History, University of Sheffield, for placing the letters in context.

We welcome as reviewers Professor J Gwynfor Jones of Cardiff University, Gareth Lloyd Jones and E Gwynn Matthews both former staff members at Bangor University. Mr Grace’s paper was originally given at the Society’s weekend School at Ditchingham in September 2003.

WHAT DOES THE PICTURE TELL US? Edward VI, John à Lasco, Zinzendorf, and the Presbyterians

One of the seminal events in the formation of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England was the banding together of several influential English Presbyterians to buy a large oil painting of Edward VI granting letters patent to John à Lasco for a church for Protestant foreigners in London in 1550. The painting was sold at Christie's in 1908 from the estate of the collector William John Braikenridge of Clevedon, Bristol. The purchasers believed that this picture illustrated the foundation of the first Presbyterian Church in England. Accompanying Edward VI are Cranmer, Ridley, the Earl of Northumberland, John Knox, and other worthies. So intent were these Presbyterians to demonstrate that this was an icon of the denomination that it appeared in black and white reproduction as the frontispiece to the *Journal of the new Society* in 1914. William Carruthers provided an article describing the historical event and offering the opinion from several experts who had been consulted that the picture was a seventeenth-century original.¹ From this Carruthers offered the interpretation that it had been painted as a propaganda piece in the struggles between the Puritans of the Church of England and Archbishop Laud, who had sought to close the Dutch Church in London in 1636. For English Presbyterians in 1908 it was a powerful symbol that their denomination was not simply a Scottish export. English citizens, admittedly naturalized ones, had been granted letters patent for a non-episcopal church in London by a Protestant king.

As far as can now be told from the original article and subsequent folklore associated with the picture no serious investigation into its provenance was attempted. Lilian Kelley, for long curator of the Presbyterian Historical Society collections, held the Carruthers theory for the rest of her life and speculated whether the Braikenridges had Dutch connections, though she owned that the painting was unknown in the records of the Dutch Church in London.² The picture hung in the museum of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England and survived the flying bomb attack on 86 Tavistock Place in 1945 because it was stored underground.³ It hung still in the rebuilt offices at the time of the formation of the United Reformed Church in 1972 and it was a familiar companion to those who met for committees in the room on the top floor, which had been the Library in Presbyterian times. When David Cornick wrote his account of the United Reformed Church and its antecedents he used the picture as a cover illustration.⁴

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1. W. Carruthers, "Edward VI granting a charter to the Presbyterians", *Journal Presbyterian History Society of England*, Vol 1, No 1, pp 14 *et seq.* See also a longer article by Carruthers in *The Presbyterian Messenger*, February 1912. For some reason Carruthers always called Braikenridge "Brackenridge".
 2. Lilian Kelley to Gordon Esslemont 11 March 1970, URCHS archives.
 3. Lilian Kelley to Launcelot Surry 7 October 1954, URCHS archives. Surry had expressed great scepticism about the Carruthers theory and thought the painting was the work of a nineteenth-century amateur.
 4. D.G. Cornick, *In God's Good Hands*, (London, United Reformed Church, 1998).



Edward VI granting letters patent to John à Lasco

When meeting rooms in Tavistock Place were re-ordered, the picture was decanted with the United Reformed Church History Society library to Westminster College. David Cornick had scarcely time to enjoy it there as Principal before he removed to London to work as General Secretary.

That cover illustration did its work. Not only was it admired by hundreds of church members, along with the book, but it travelled the world. Copies of the picture were requested for exhibitions. It came to the attention of Vernon H. Nelson, the curator of Moravian collections at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and he recognised it as something to the loss of which he had long ago resigned himself. He made a special visit to Westminster College, in his European travels of the summer of 2002, to satisfy himself that it was the picture he had recognised and that it was the original work and not a copy. The icon of Presbyterianism was not what it seemed.

We need to turn to a part of church history better represented at Westminster by the archives and artefacts of the Cheshunt Foundation, the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival. So let us shift the scene to J. E. Hutton's *A History of the Moravian Church*, (1909). The Moravians secured legal recognition in England by Act of Parliament in 1749.

As soon as the Act of Parliament was passed, and the settlement at Herrnhag had been broken up, the Count [Zinzendorf] resolved that the headquarters of the Brethren's Church should henceforward be in London; and to this intent he now leased a block of buildings at Chelsea, known as Lindsey House. The great house, in altered form, is standing still. It is at the corner of Cheyne Walk and Beaufort Street, and is close to the Thames Embankment. It had once belonged to Sir Thomas More, and also to the ducal family of Ancaster. The designs of Zinzendorf were ambitious. He leased the adjoining Beaufort grounds and gardens, spent £12,000 on the property, had the house remodelled in grandiose style, erected, close by, the "Clock" chapel and a minister's house, laid out a cemetery, known to this day as "Sharon," and thus made preliminary arrangements for the establishment in Chelsea of a Moravian settlement in full working order. In those days Chelsea was a charming London suburb. From the house to the river side lay a terrace, used as a grand parade; from the bank to the water there ran a short flight of steps; and from there the pleasure-boats, with banners flying, took trippers up and down the shining river. For five years this Paradise was the headquarters of the Brethren's Church. There, in grand style, lived the Count himself, with the members of his Pilgrim Band; there the Brethren met in conference; there the archives of the Church were preserved; and there letters and reports were received from all parts of the rapidly extending mission field.⁵

Lindsey House was built on land which had belonged to Sir Thomas More and is now in the ownership of the National Trust, though broken up into several

5. Hutton's book is available on the internet as a Gutenberg Etext (2099, Book 2 Chapter XIII). It is ironic that just as the picture was being purchased, the second edition of the book was being prepared which helps to illuminate its origins.

dwellings. The Moravian chapel and burial ground are still to be found nearby but the gardens are much shrunk. Amongst Zinzendorf's improvements to the house was the commissioning of a set of pictures for the great staircase. The design of this is kept at Bethlehem and central to the ensemble is a great painting of Edward VI and John à Lasco. One of Zinzendorf's converts was a travelling Pole called John Valentine Haidt (1700-1780), a watchcase chaser by trade. Zinzendorf encouraged Haidt to develop his skills as a painter and commissioned from him a great many paintings on religious and historical themes. Some of them survive, but none as large or as ambitious as the Edward VI and John à Lasco set piece. Dr Nelson confirmed that the painting at Westminster was the original Haidt composition, although it may have lost a section at the foot of the picture at some time. Haidt was brought to London from Germany in June 1752, while Lindsey House was being prepared for Moravian occupation. He left for America in 1754 and never returned.⁶

Why should Zinzendorf have wanted this subject at the heart of his London house? The Moravians had an uneasy relationship with Methodism. From one point of view they were contributors to the Evangelical Revival. It was in Fetter Lane Moravian meeting that John Wesley's heart was strangely warmed. George Whitefield and the Countess of Huntingdon were friends of Zinzendorf and his preachers. However, there was always a suspicion that Moravian piety was not doctrinally sound. It was also foreign. The centre of Moravian enterprise was their settlement at Herrnhut, on Zinzendorf's Bohemian estate. It is true that for five years Zinzendorf made Lindsey House the headquarters of the Moravians, but their actual presence in England was small, especially as Moravians were encouraged to remain within their national church or denomination. After Zinzendorf's death a reaction set in against Moravians and Whitefield and Wesley wrote against them. Church historians therefore tend to see the Moravians within the history of Methodism and Dissent. However, Zinzendorf had been at pains to claim an Episcopal succession in the Moravian Church and historic links with the Czech Brethren. In the 1750s the question of Methodists withdrawing from the Church of England and taking advantage of the Toleration Act had not assumed the significance it came to have in the 1770s. As far as Zinzendorf was concerned his was a sister church of the Church of England. Some bishops, such as Thomas Wilson of Sodor and Man, were happy to return the compliment.

Although Carruthers and his friends chose to stress the Presbyterian ordering of à Lasco's church at Austin Friars it was technically a church for Strangers, i.e. foreigners, and à Lasco was given its leadership in relation to a range of Reformed Churches, including the Czech Brethren. Some of these continental Protestants still used the office of bishop in their structures. It was W.A.J. Archbold's article on John à Lasco in the *Dictionary of National Biography* which unequivocally

6. See P. Kroyer, *The Story of Lindsey House, Chelsea*, (London 1956) p.50 footnote. See also the catalogue of an exhibition of Haidt's work at the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Collection, Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1968 with text by Vernon Nelson, Lib of Congress 66-18561.

described his church at Austin Friars as Presbyterian. That was in 1886. In 1753 Zinzendorf was able to stake a claim for à Lasco as a proto-Moravian. The letters patent created a Protestant congregation outside the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London. John à Lasco was, in effect, a Reformed Bishop. The Moravian episcopate of the eighteenth century stood in succession to that of the Czech Brethren and was so recognised by some Anglicans.⁷ This claim is made quite explicit in the painting for à Lasco is portrayed in the liturgical costume of a Moravian presbyter of the 1750s, with a white cassock alb gathered in a scarlet sash. The great picture was not a Presbyterian icon but part of Zinzendorf's vision of the Moravian Church as the legitimate successor of the Czech Brethren and, through them, a child of the Reformation. Consciousness of the Reformation among the leaders of the Evangelical Revival has not been much studied in recent years, possibly because it is not a Wesleyan theme. However, the Calvinistic Methodists always operated with their Reformation predecessors in mind. Even Howell Harris in Wales argued against Methodists quitting the Church of England, convenient as it would be for them to operate under the laws tolerating Dissenters.⁸

But why should Zinzendorf commission this subject to dominate his grand staircase at Lindsey House.? The answer may lie in the determined opposition the Moravians had met from Anglican High Church men, such as Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London. Gibson was unimpressed by the Protestant connections with England which the Moravians so valued, from his first meeting with Spangenberg in 1735.⁹ Connections between Wycliffe and Hus cut no ice with him. He took the view from the first that Moravian pastors would need re-ordination before they could officiate in the Church of England. His implacable opposition to Methodist Enthusiasm confirmed his view that Moravians were essentially Dissenters and if they were to stay within the law they should register their meetings under the Toleration Act. By 1746 he was questioning the episcopal credentials of the Moravians.¹⁰ In 1749 the Moravians managed to secure an Act of Parliament recognising their status as a religious group and allowing them to send missionaries to British territories abroad. They did this to side step the provisions of the Toleration Act and the Bill was carried in spite of weighty opposition. It was in this context that Zinzendorf commissioned the tableau painting of John à Lasco receiving letters patent from Edward VI in the presence of bishops. He was claiming both religious and civil legitimacy for his church. Far from being a propaganda piece for Presbyterianism it was a claim for episcopal parity.

The staircase at Lindsey House was the showcase for Moravian claims. The twenty-first century has nothing to teach Zinzendorf in the field of public

7. See Colin Podmore, *The Moravian Church in England*, (OUP 1998), esp pp. 205 *et seq.*

8. For instance in a letter to [Edmund?] Jones, who was urging Methodists to become Independents, Trevecka Letters, National Library of Wales, 1695.

9. Podmore, *op cit* p.216.

10 Podmore, *op cit* p.220.

relations. Moravian artists, of whom Haidt was a leader, portrayed religious scenes reflecting their beliefs. Contemporary Moravians were shown standing around the bleeding Saviour on the Cross, collecting his blood for their salvation. Zinzendorf was portrayed lit by the radiance which flowed from the wounded side of Jesus. None of these religious themes was shown on the staircase at Lindsey House. The emphasis was on the historic claims of the Moravians and their current missionary work. The sufferings of Moravians imprisoned for their beliefs was one theme. Sites of Moravian significance, such as Herrnhut, were displayed. Converts from around the world featured, such as the Persian woman Cristina, also represented in a picture at Herrnhut itself, called "the First Fruits". The activities of missionaries were portrayed in pictures such as "Nitschmann leaping over a crocodile" and "Schmitt teaching Hottentots to dig". Pride of place was given to the painting of Edward VI and John à Lasco. It was the largest painting and held the premier position on the widest wall. It was flanked by paintings which underlined other aspects of the Moravian argument for legitimacy. To its left hung a portrait of Svatopluc, King of Moravia in 860, asserting Moravian nationhood. Below him hung Stephanus, a Waldensian elder burnt at the stake in Vienna in 1467 as a heretic. This underlined the Moravian claims to be linked with John Hus who, like Wycliffe, was portrayed elsewhere on the stairs. To the right of Edward VI hung a portrait of the Patriarch of Constantinople, no doubt representative of the links Zinzendorf had attempted to establish with the Orthodox when he sent Arved Graf as an Ambassador to the Patriarch in 1739. Finally there was a portrait of Comenius, there not simply as a great Czech Protestant but also as a link in the Episcopal succession which Zinzendorf claimed through him. This wall of pictures proclaimed to all who visited Lindsey House that the Moravians were an ancient Protestant episcopal church whose claims had been recognised by no less a person than the first Protestant King of England.¹¹

Lindsey House was all show. Zinzendorf knew even as his carpenters and painters worked on it in 1752 that he could not afford it. The house was vested in Thomas Hutton, a loyal English disciple of Zinzendorf, who was totally reliant on the Moravians for funds. It was originally intended to add further buildings, to be known as Sharon, for Moravian activities. These would occupy some of the land bought from the Beaufort House estate, which stretched away to the new chapel formed out of the Beaufort stables.¹² The chapel and graveyard remain in Chelsea, now quite detached from Lindsey House. Not only were the plans for extension deferred and eventually abandoned but from about 1770 onwards building plots were sold out of the estate to raise cash. By 1774 it became apparent that the international Moravian community would not bail out the Lindsey House debts. Zinzendorf had died in 1760. The house had been his project and he had invested how own money in it as well as that of the community. However much they may have wanted to keep faith with his vision of Lindsey House the English Moravians

11. For a complete list of the pictures and a copy of the document in Herrnhut Archives A I 90 which shows how they were hung see Kroyer, *op cit*.

12. Kroyer, *op cit* p. 43.

gave it up for sale in 1774. The house was split into a terrace of dwellings by speculative builders, who took out the grand staircase as part of their alteration of the building. The only staircase that survives from Zinzendorf's time is the subsidiary one he had built in what is now 97 Cheyne Walk, owned by the National Trust. Quite what happened to the pictures in 1774 is not clear, although it is known that some were transferred to the Moravian Church in Fetter Lane. Dr Nelson believes that some historic paintings, including ones by Haidt, were destroyed when the building was bombed in the London Blitz. It was assumed that if the large painting had survived until then that it had met its end at that point. The fact that it was exposed to enemy bombing in quite different church premises was not known to Moravian historians.

We must therefore approach the provenance of the painting from the other end, through the Braikenridge connection. In 1881 William Jerdone Braikenridge was living at Newton House, Hill Road, Clevedon, with his wife and five servants.¹³ Hill Road was a street of middle-class villas, with a hotel and bank at the town end. Clevedon Congregational Church was also on this road and J.J. Gurney lived in one of the villas. Visiting Braikenridge was George Ayscough Boothe, an Anglican clergyman without a parish, and his daughter Katherine, a British subject who had been born in Schulbach, Nassau. The Bootheres were a Hampshire family and George had been at Exeter College, Oxford, with William in the 1830s. Braikenridge's father was George Weare Braikenridge, an antiquarian and picture collector, who had made his money in his father's West India trading company. William was the second son but inherited the family pictures on the death of his elder brother George Weare Braikenridge II (1815-1882), Perpetual Curate of Christ Church, Clevedon from 1839 to 1874. The family collection was dispersed in various sales, of which the one at Christies in 1908 was the most significant. Many of the Braikenridge paintings and drawings had Bristol associations and were bought for the city. Sheena Stoddard of the Bristol Museums and Art Gallery has made a special study of Braikenridge and saw the Edward VI painting in Tavistock Place in 1978 when the artist was still unknown. She is able to identify the picture as one which hung over the fireplace in the library of Broomwell House, Brislington, George Weare Braikenridge's residence, around 1825.¹⁴ The proportions of the picture then, in a contemporary sketch, are much as they are now. The Bethlehem sketch shows a larger picture, designed to fit the staircase display. If it was actually painted to the original design then a foot or more of the canvas has been cut off some time between 1754 and 1825.

But why did Braikenridge have the picture? Over the doorway in the same room hung a portrait of Colonel Adrian Scrope, the Parliamentary Governor of Bristol from 1649 to 1657. This cannot be taken as evidence of Braikenridge's Reformed enthusiasms. He had many Bristol portraits, including bishops. What we know of him suggests that far from being an old Whig Dissenter, he was Tory in his politics

13. 1881 Census RG11 2461 f17 p12.

14. I am grateful to Sheena Stoddard for her ready assistance in correspondence while this article was in preparation.

and a staunch Anglican. He served a turn as churchwarden. The picture reflects his obsessive collecting of artefacts and pictures from the "Gothick" period. He was interested in all things Tudor. The stone chimneypiece in his Library came from an old house in Small Street, Bristol and he valued it especially because royalty had been entertained there.¹⁵ There are no obvious Bristol connections for the Haidt picture but it is undoubtedly royal. It is probable that Braikenridge purchased the picture from Horatio Rodd of London in the 1820s when he built up his collection by purchases from that dealer. That would move the picture from London to Bristol. The subject, Edward VI, would have appealed to Braikenridge far more than anything else on the canvas. He would have been experienced enough to know that it was not a contemporary portrayal and that may have allowed him a certain freedom with it. Reducing the picture in size to hang over his "royal" fireplace seems the kind of plan Braikenridge might have conceived. He hacked about various Tudor carvings he bought from Rodd to incorporate them in fittings and furnishings for his library.

While it is to Carruthers and his Presbyterian friends, with their enthusiasm for all things Presbyterian in sixteenth-century England, that we owe the present prominence of the picture within the collections of the United Reformed Church, it is to Braikenridge that we owe its preservation in the nineteenth century. Carruthers was looking for a symbol of early Presbyterianism, Braikenridge for the romance of the Middle Ages. Beyond them both lies, somewhat improbably, the exotic Count Zinzendorf, recreating the Protestant Reformation under the Lamb and Flag of Moravianism and exercising his artistic patronage not on a portrait by Gainsborough but a tableau by Haidt.

So we see how the work of artists and writers carries attributed meanings far beyond what they may have intended. I paint my picture – you fill it with meaning. For Zinzendorf the accent was on Edward VI, giving what he called the charter, and John à Lasco. The king at the centre of the picture is his overriding concern. Combined with the historic episcopate which he claimed, the picture showed why Moravians should have recognition by Church and State in England. Perhaps the picture continued to carry this message wherever it hung after it was taken from Lindsey House in 1774. The potency of the message must have lessened at some point before it came into the hands of the dealer Rodd, for whom it was a way of making a profit. For Braikenridge the picture stopped with the king, possibly embracing the Anglican bishops around him. Kings of England are supreme, representing the nation and its church, and making gracious gestures to foreigners. For Carruthers and the Presbyterian Historical Society, who began to refer to "the John à Lasco" painting, the focus shifts to the Reformer and proto-Presbyterian, securing royal recognition for what they still hoped might be seen as the proper order for the whole Church catholic. Now we know more about its history, with what meaning may we invest it?

STEPHEN ORCHARD

15 See Sheena Stoddard, *Mr Braikenridge's Brislington*, (Bristol 1981), p.41.

THE PATH TO DISSENT IPSWICH PURITANS DURING THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

In the early 1630s there was, for the godly Protestant, a growing sense of danger that the further reformation of the still imperfect English Church for which the puritan tendency had long hoped – that longing to build the puritan Jerusalem in England, the shining city on a hill, which both John Milton and John Bunyan later evoked – was under threat. Across Europe, the Catholic Counter-Reformation and the onset of the Thirty Years War in 1618 intensified the earlier moments of danger for English Protestantism (the fires of Smithfield in Mary's reign, 1588 and the Gunpowder Plot) and helped to create that fear of "Popery" which was so dominant a factor in the history of religion and politics in the seventeenth century. From within, and more immediately, the church policy of Charles I, the rise of Arminianism and the implementation of Laudian High Anglican church policy after 1633 threatened the central pillar of Calvinist theology, predestination, and sought to curtail the extempore preaching of the word, that mighty instrument for promoting godliness. In particular Caroline church policy aimed to restore the central episcopal authority and rein in that diversity of practice in the church which exemplified the widespread puritan nonconformity to the order of the Elizabethan Settlement.

How did those of strong puritan conscience in the towns and villages react to these threats? What led them from an uneasy and nonconformist adherence to the established church within which they pursued a more purely reformed government and practice, to a radical break with that church – to dissent from it? This critical moment in the history of English religion occurs, of course, in the years that led in 1642 to civil war, and it will be argued that for a number of the godly of one town, Ipswich, it was direct experience of these events which was fundamental in determining their religious allegiances.

By the early seventeenth century Ipswich had become one of a number of towns, like Dorchester and Northampton, noted for their godliness. The first radical iconoclasm of the Reformation during Edward VI's reign was particularly evident in the town, as were its Marian martyrs, burnt on the town's Cornhill during Mary's Catholic restoration. After the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559 Ipswich was amongst the first places to appoint a town preacher, funded by the magistracy, and by the end of the century many of the clergy of its twelve parishes were admonished by the bishop of Norwich for practices which did not conform to the statutes. Set forms of worship were neglected in eight of the parishes, some clergy did not wear the surplice for the celebration of communion, parts of the service were left out because the minister was anxious to preach the sermon, and in the town church, St Mary Tower, set exercises for the discussion of scriptural points in which lay churchwardens took part were held contrary to orders. All of this defines the puritan tendency in the Elizabethan church and the emergence of a godly ministry.

Parallel with this, the authority of the puritan lay magistracy in church matters was increasingly evident. Not only was the town preacher hired and fired by the

corporation, but in 1571 a statute gave the townsmen the power to raise a rate for the maintenance of ministers. A number of parishes exercised the right to nominate their ministers and the churchwardens in two parishes, St Clement's in 1612 and St Peter's in 1618, were able to dismiss their clergyman for misconduct. In another parish, St Lawrence, feoffees were established to supplement the minister's stipend. The collapse of the effective authority of church courts meant that the laity also came to exercise control of manners and morals: sabbath breaking, profanity, absence from church, houses of ill-repute, all were dealt with by the town's Sessions of the Peace, not the church courts, and it was the magistracy that introduced strict sabbatarianism through the orders of its Assembly in 1592 and again in 1606. Ipswich thus became largely autonomous and self-disciplining in its religious life, since episcopal authority was remote and often ineffective: a godly town in the model of Bucer's Strasbourg, Calvin's Geneva and the Dutch reformed churches of Amsterdam.

In 1603, the godly corporation appointed a new town preacher, Samuel Ward, and for the next thirty years he was to have an enormous influence. A charismatic preacher of the gospel he was also not afraid to express views that were contrary to authority in both church and state. It is not surprising, then, that he was an early and vociferous opponent of the church policies that Laud in 1633 began to implement with the purpose of asserting centralised episcopal control and forcing puritan ministers and their communities to conform. In the early 1630s Ward's sermons warned his hearers to "beware of a relapse into popery and superstition, there wanting not endeavour to introduce it into this kingdom". He attacked Laudian insistence on worshippers using the sign of the cross and bowing or kneeling at the name of Jesus as "popish gesticulations and cringings" and defended the practice of extemporising both prayer and sermons against the attempt to impose set forms. He argued, in the context of the mass emigration of puritans to New England at this time, that their flight was lawful "in times of persecution".

Inevitably, Ward was one of the first targets at which Laud's authoritarian policy took aim. He was reported on in 1634, charges were drawn up against him in the ecclesiastical Court of High Commission, he was brought before Star Chamber and silenced. Ipswich had lost its "ancient, famous, good and painful man, Master Ward", but had gained a martyr for the puritan cause. A damning archiepiscopal visitation of the town in 1635 reported that Ipswich was "exceedingly factious", especially its "precise" churchwardens, and this was followed a year later by another visitation, by the new bishop of Norwich, Matthew Wren. It was the arrival of Wren's officers in the town in 1636 that brought about a series of violent and tumultuous incidents that culminated in a riot that forced Wren to flee because of threats to "knocke the Bishoppes braynes out". Ipswich, it was said "would not be domineered over by a bishop".

In 1637 Wren filed a bill in Star Chamber against the town's governors accusing them of endeavouring "to vilifie his Majesty's government", and some of the officers were ordered to appear before the King. Ipswich was forced to conform, but the matter had reached the very top of government and in the process had

radicalised the puritans in the town. A notorious pamphlet, *Newes from Ipswich*, attacking all bishops, also drew attention to the events in Ipswich. It was printed in Edinburgh, linking the Scottish Covenanters with their English brethren, Dutch and French translations were prepared, and the puritan settlers in Massachusetts heard of Ward's fate. Godly puritans everywhere would have linked Ward with those other outspoken puritans who suffered under Laud at this time, Prynne, Burton, Bastwick, and Lilburne. 1636 can thus be seen as a defining moment in determining the religious allegiances of some of the men involved. For the Ipswich puritans their experience of public affairs began with the confrontation with bishop Matthew Wren, one of the key instruments of the king's religious policies, and thereafter they were projected onto the wider arena of politics and religion and came to play a part in the unfolding crisis that led to the collapse of Charles I's government in 1640 and the ensuing twenty years of civil war and revolutionary political change. They became deeply involved in events and committed to an active support of the parliamentary puritan cause, at the centre of which cause was the desire for godly reformation. Samuel Ward's thundering sermons, in which he deplored the "want of reformation" and warned his listeners that God was "at the door and knocks...his locks are wet with waiting" for the godly to throw off the "profane dissoluteness of the times", were published that year. In the epistle dedicatory he declared that "what is now the top of all my ambition but to make you Doers of what you have been hearers". An unordained preacher who came to Ipswich during the riots against Wren told the townsmen that it was their duty "to labour to maintain the gospel and the liberty of their ministers: now is the time for fighting when superstition and idolatry with such stuff is thrust upon them". 1636 was a call to arms. A consideration of the careers of some of the Ipswich puritans after 1636 suggests that they all came to take up positions on conscientious grounds which led them from their nominal adherence to the established church to total dissent from it.¹

Peter Fisher was one of these. He was a mercer, the son of a wealthy ship-owner, who had risen to a place in the town's Assembly by 1630, and thereafter held minor offices as Chamberlain, surveyor of the highways and treasurer of Christ's Hospital. He became deeply involved in the aftermath of the confrontations with Matthew Wren's officers in 1636, being deputed to draw up a Remonstrance against Wren's accusations against the townsmen which he personally delivered to the King's Court. He, with William Cage, the puritan father figure in the town, also initiated a Petition to the King in 1637 requesting the restoration of the rights of some of the parishes to appoint their ministers. Again, Fisher was ordered to present this to the King, and when it was predictably refused, he was accused of deliberately concealing the answer from his fellow townsmen. His part in the defence of Ipswich's right to govern its own parochial

1. For a full discussion of the rise of Puritanism in Ipswich and the ecclesiastical riots of 1636, see F. Grace, "Schismaticall and Factious Humours: Opposition in Ipswich to Laudian Church Government in the 1630s" in *Religious Dissent in East Anglia III*, ed. D.Chadd (UEA, Norwich 1996) p.97-119.

affairs is clear, and when in early 1640 the King was forced to call the Short Parliament Fisher attended to assist their MP, Cage, in presenting their town's grievances. There is little doubt that he also fully agreed with Cage's vocal support in the Commons for the root and branch abolition of episcopacy in 1641, or that that antagonism had been confirmed by Wren's visitation. Fisher was also active at the time in seeking the appointment of another town preacher when the collapse of ecclesiastical order made this possible.

Fisher's strong support of the Parliamentary cause is evident also. He had confronted riotous supporters of the King during the county election held in Ipswich in 1640, and was instrumental in the removal of John Lany, the royalist town clerk in 1642 and in his replacement by the strong puritan, Nicholas Bacon. Fisher had been the Ipswich town treasurer since 1639, and oversaw the financing of the fortification and arming of the town during the first crisis of the civil war in mid-1643.

Fisher finally emerges as an active puritan during the first Civil War. In 1644 he was appointed to two significant posts. As High Collector of monies for the Committee of Suffolk that organised parliament's affairs in the county, a position he held for over four years, he had a crucial role in the administration of the war, whilst he also acted as the "busy and peremptory" secretary of that zealous persecutor of "popish" clergy the Committee for Scandalous Ministers of 1644-5. When Suffolk puritans acted upon the parliamentary ordinance of 1646 that sought to replace episcopacy with a system of Presbyterian assemblies, Fisher was one of those appointed as an elder in Ipswich.

Fisher thus became an important figure in the political, religious and administrative affairs of Ipswich and of Suffolk during the 1640s, and at critical moments during the Commonwealth and Protectorate he held high office as a Bailiff of his town, in 1650-1, 1655-6 and 1656-7. He was also, during the first of these, appointed to a High Court of Justice set up in Norwich to deal with Royalist risings. There is no doubting but that he was the archetypal puritan, active and dedicated to the cause.²

Closely paralleling Fisher's career throughout these years was that of Robert Duncon. He was excommunicated during Wren's visitation in 1636, accompanied Fisher to parliament in 1640 to present Ipswich's grievances over religion and was active in seeking suitable men as town preachers in 1641 and again in 1650. He also rose to be a Bailiff of the town on three occasions, sat on the Committee of Suffolk and the Militia Committee, was a member of the Scandalous Ministers Committee and was chosen as one of the presbyters for Ipswich in 1646. By the

2. For Fisher see Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich Borough Archives, Assembly Books, C/4/3/1/5 and 6, Great Court Books, C/2/2/2, and Treasurer's Accounts C/3/4/1 *passim*; C.Holmes, *The Eastern Association and the English Civil War* (Cambridge 1974) p.23, 187; C.Holmes, ed., *The Suffolk Committee for Scandalous Ministers 1644-46* (Suffolk Record Society XIII 1970) p.15, 25; British Library, Thomason Tracts, E448 (13); J.Browne, *History of Congregationalism in Norfolk and Suffolk* (London 1877) p.608.

1650s, however, his religious allegiances became more radical. In 1652 he acted as the patron of a separatist congregation in his parish, St Helen's, Ipswich. His godliness led to him being nominated as a member of the Parliament of Saints in 1653, where he sat as one of the Triers and Ejectors that approved the appointment of ministers. By the time of the Restoration Duncon, who met George Whitehead, had become a Quaker. He requested his discharge from the Assembly in Ipswich and was imprisoned with his wife for refusing the Oath of Allegiance to Charles II, but released as not "notorious or dangerous". He died in 1670.³

Duncon's son, Samuel, was one of the most militant in reaction to the events of 1636. He openly defied the Laudian requirement to come to kneel at the communion rail to take the sacrament in a farcical scene that nonetheless reveals how vital such matters of individual conscience were. The minister offered to come down from the altar when Duncon refused to leave his seat, whereupon Duncon walked out of the church. He was excommunicated. The following year he refused to pay the Ship Money Tax, and in 1640, on conscientious grounds, he refused his draft into the army Charles I was raising against the Scots Covenanters. He helped to draw up a strongly worded petition in 1642 which criticised the King for not negotiating with parliament, was active in arguing for the fortification of Ipswich and was probably the initiator of the idea that the Eastern Counties should associate together to prosecute the war effectively. He raised a foot company in Suffolk and spent £300 raising a troop of seventy-five horse for Oliver Cromwell's forces at Huntingdon. Cromwell asked Duncon to stay and recruit for him. He was one of the "russet coated captains" who thus helped to create the Ironsides. He was also active in the "dangerous and troublesome" office of High Collector of parliamentary assessments during the civil wars, and was a supplier of provisions to the armies in Ireland and Scotland in 1649 and 1650.

Samuel Duncon's religious and political outlook led him even further in its radicalism than that of his father. By 1649 he petitioned Cromwell on behalf of the Particular Baptists in Ipswich. In 1652, in the first of two important tracts he urged Cromwell to press the Commonwealth parliament to pursue godly reform. In particular Duncon argued that all gathered churches should be granted liberty to meet in any convenient place, that tithes should be abolished and that bishops', deans' and chapter lands should be sold off. The next year, during the Parliament of Saints, he was in London sharing lodgings with one of the members, his fellow townsman Jacob Caley. By the late 1650s Duncon acted as a "friend in compassion" on behalf of imprisoned Quakers. His second pamphlet, published in 1659, pleaded for a "settlement of Peace and Truth in the Nation", and amongst many proposals he argued again for "tender consciences" and for congregations to be free to choose their ministers so that the Voice of God might be allowed. He

3. For Robert Duncon see C. Holmes, ed., *The Suffolk Committee...op.cit.* p.25; Browne, *op.cit.* p.366, 368, 372, 608; A.Woolrych, *Commonwealth to Protectorate* (Oxford 1982) p.192-3; G.Whitehead, *The Christian Progress* (1725) p.135-8; Suffolk Record Office HD36:2672/102; P.R.O. Probate 4: 12398.

had come by this time to a rejection of churches *per se* as “falsly so called”. The political and social content of these pamphlets parallels that of the radical puritans who wished to “turn the world upside down”. He argued for the election of MPs, JPs, jurymen, constables and all civil officers by all free men, and that a model of government should be set out for the people to set their hands to: a “general and particular Agreement among the People”. The Restoration in church and state in 1660 crushed such Levelling hopes, and the last we hear of Samuel Duncon is a letter of March 1663, dated in Quaker style, which hints at his quietist resignation and willingness to “love his enemies and pray for them that persecute”.⁴

These brief biographies indicate the paths to dissent that some in Ipswich followed after the events of 1636 when we sense for the first time the build up of tension, the internalised anger amongst the godly against what they perceived to be the persecuting and popish church of Charles I and Archbishop Laud. Hopes amongst such puritans of building the new Jerusalem were dashed in 1660, and in 1662 retribution came for any men who held any public office with the requirement to foreswear the puritan Covenant of 1643 and accept a restored episcopacy. Fisher was not even given the chance and was discharged as “unfit to be continued” as a Portman in the town. The Quaker Duncons had already left their public offices and would have rejected the swearing of oaths in any case. Fisher and the Duncons were not isolated examples. There were many others in the hierarchy of the town’s government who were offered the choice, and eighteen of the thirty-six members of the Ipswich Assembly were eventually purged for refusing on conscientious grounds to foreswear. They included John Brandling, newly chosen Bailiff, who said that “he could not nor would not hold the place” and Richard Haile, who similarly refused “so long as I live”, then subscribed, but later recanted and was discharged. These men, and a majority of the rest, had come to the fore in the town’s affairs in the 1620s and 1630s during the rise of Arminianism and Laudianism. After the collapse of the Puritan cause and the Restoration, 1662 thus marked their severance from the restored church and their commitment, like John Bunyan’s Pilgrim, to other paths to righteousness.

FRANK GRACE

4. For Samuel Duncon see F. Grace, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2004) s.v. Samuel Duncon; C.Thompson & F. Grace, “Samuel Duncon of Ipswich’s Proposal for an Association of Counties in November, 1642” (*Suffolk Review*, New Series No.34, 2000) p. 31-4; A.J.Klaiber, *The Story of the Suffolk Baptists* (1931) p. 204-5; British Library, Thomason Tracts, E656 (18) and E989 (10); Suffolk Record Office HD36:2672/105.

**JOSEPH WILLIAMS OF KIDDERMINSTER
(1692–1755) AND HIS JOURNAL**

The eighteenth-century Evangelical Dissenter Joseph Williams, author of a remarkable journal that was edited and reissued many times in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, has almost disappeared from view. There is no entry for him in the old *Dictionary of National Biography* (1885–1901), nor in *The Blackwell Dictionary of Evangelical Biography* (1995), nor indeed in the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004). But he does not deserve this neglect, and here I will try to give him his proper place in eighteenth-century religious and literary history. I do not claim to have discovered Joseph Williams by myself. Geoffrey Nuttall in his *Calendar of Philip Doddridge's letters* drew attention to Williams's friendship with Doddridge, and to the fact that Williams was the abridger of the journal of the New England missionary David Brainerd, published by the Scottish SPCK with a dedication by Doddridge; Nuttall also pointed out Williams's links with many other key figures of the evangelical revival in his essay on "Methodism and the Older Dissent: Some Perspectives", published in this Society's *Journal*.¹ Frank Baker in his biography of the Methodist clergyman William Grimshaw of Haworth drew on Williams's account of Grimshaw's extraordinary religious experience, an account that survives in a number of different versions deriving from Williams and listed by Baker.² These have been my starting points. No one has hitherto made a detailed comparison of the manuscript with the printed versions of Williams's journal, or tried to assess the importance or account for the popularity of this work up to the middle of the nineteenth century.

Why is Williams's journal important? I would like to suggest two main reasons. First, it provides detailed evidence of the responses of a lay Dissenter in the first half of the eighteenth century to contemporary developments in religious thought and organisation, and particularly to the beginnings of the evangelical revival. Williams deplored the movement towards moral and rational religion among some Dissenting ministers, and sought out Church of England clergy of Methodist and evangelical leanings; what he was looking for was a continuation of the Puritan tradition, and he applauded it wherever he found it. He took an active, indeed an aggressive, part in electing the new minister for his church in Kidderminster, and in putting others on the road to conversion – members of his family, strangers he met on the road, even an Anglican clergyman – and at the

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1. G. F. Nuttall, *Calendar of the Correspondence of Philip Doddridge DD (1702–1751)* (London, 1979), letter 1333; "Methodism and the Older Dissent: Some Perspectives", *Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society*, 2 (1981), 259–74, reprinted in *Studies in English Dissent* (Weston Rhyn, Shropshire, 2002), 263–81. I am grateful to Dr Nuttall for directing me to Williams's manuscript journal in the Congregational Library, London.
 2. Frank Baker, *William Grimshaw 1708–1763* (London, 1963), pp. 71–2, 277–78.

same time he was very conscious of his own limitations as a layman and his subordinate relationship to ministers and clergy. Secondly, the journal as it was written, edited, and read – a process that lasted from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth – provides an excellent example of the peculiar nature of the literature of the revival, combining the favourite genres of meditation, narrative, hymns, letters, and poetry. I shall first provide some bibliographical details of Williams’s journal and the different ways in which it was edited and abridged; I shall then concentrate on Williams’s religious life, both private and public, and the importance that he attached to reading and writing as a means of encouraging and recording religious experience in himself and others.

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The journal is contained in a substantial bound book with about 300 closely written pages and a number of blank ones, signed and dated on the title page 1 January 1714/15, when Williams was aged twenty-two.³ The first eight pages list detailed instructions for self-examination, for example “Have I employed some time in stated meditation?” “Have I digested y^e sermon I heard last?” “Have I been carefull to take some time for reading[?]” (MS p. 8), which presumably are derived from a standard work. Pages 9 to 82 are in shorthand, and are dated from 1715 to 1736; at the end of the book there are also many unnumbered pages in shorthand, some with dates in the 1730s and 1740s. Luckily for posterity, on 2 July 1737 Williams decided to continue his journal in a beautifully clear longhand:⁴

I find my Self now at length inclined, (w^{ch} I never before could persuade my Self to) to write in Long-hand some of my Soliloquies, y^e Remarks I make from time to time on my Heart & Life, y^e Result of my Self-examinations; together wth whatever Incidents or Stories I shall think proper to take Notice of.

He gave three reasons: he found it very difficult to read his own shorthand, especially by candlelight; in a “Day of future Distress” he might want “to have Recourse to former Experiences for Comfort & Support”, and need someone to read his journal to him; and finally, although he wrote chiefly for himself, he recognised that his wife or children or others might want to read his journal after his death. So he told himself, “I think proper to write over again a Breviate of some particular Passages which are more largely written in shorthand in this & a

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3. I am grateful to Dr David Wykes on behalf of the Congregational Memorial Hall Trustees for giving me permission to quote from the manuscript (Congregational Library MS 1.f.6). All page numbers for quotations are given in the text.
 4. The account of this decision was not included in the printed editions.

former Book” (MS p. 83). (This shorthand “former Book” does not survive.) It is clear that Williams thought of his journal not as a disparate and impenetrable collection of private thoughts but as a carefully composed and ordered book to be read again and again by himself and others.

After Williams’s death in 1755 his journal was to be, even more than he might have expected, reread and treasured by his family. His first editor, his minister and friend Benjamin Fawcett, said he would have published the edition much sooner if he could have got his hands on Williams’s papers. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters, of Mr. Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster* was not published until 1779, almost twenty-four years after Williams’s death. In the preface Fawcett explained why:

His widow would never suffer them to go out of her hands, during the four years in which she survived him. And after her death, his three daughters, . . . having agreed to enjoy the *manuscript* by turns, were so eager to extend their separate privilege from year to year, as absolutely to prevent others from sharing with them in their satisfaction.

Fawcett went on to say that the diary and meditations (as he called the journal) were now published at the request of Williams’s only surviving daughter (Phebe Hanbury), his grandchildren, and many other relations.⁵

At the time of editing the journal Fawcett had much experience as an abridger of long works. Twenty years earlier he had brought out a drastically shortened version of Richard Baxter’s huge and influential *The Saints Everlasting Rest* (first published 1650), the first part of which Baxter had dedicated to his parishioners at Kidderminster, and he followed this with abridgements of other works by Baxter.⁶ In his preface to his edition of *The Saints Everlasting Rest* (first published 1759) Fawcett explained his principles of abridgement (his version was about a quarter of the length of the original), some of which are relevant to his treatment of Williams:

I have been very desirous to do justice to the author, and at the same time promote the pleasure and profit of the serious reader. And, I hope, those ends are, in some measure, answered; chiefly by dropping things of a digressive, controversial, or metaphysical nature; together with... various allusions to some peculiar circumstances of the last age; ... and sometimes by altering the

5. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters, of Mr. Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster*, ed. Benjamin Fawcett (Shrewsbury, 1779), pp. iii– iv.
6. Fawcett’s abridgements of Baxter include *The Dying Thoughts of the Reverend Mr. Richard Baxter* (Salop, 1761; first published 1683); *Converse with God in Solitude* (Salop, 1761), from part III of *The Divine Life* (first published 1664); *The Causes and Danger of Slighting Christ and his Gospel* (Salop, 1763); *The Life of Faith* (Salop, 1764; first published 1660); *Dialogues on Personal and Family-Religion* (1769), from *The Poor Man’s Family Book* (first published 1674).

form, but not the sense, of a period, for the sake of brevity; and when an obsolete phrase occurred, changing it for one more common and intelligible.⁷

In Fawcett's hands Baxter's complex and multifaceted work became much more practical (in the old Puritan sense), much more of a devotional handbook for the use of his own Kidderminster congregation. Williams's journal, though obviously a much shorter and more recent work, received similar treatment. Fawcett explained in the preface:

The title of *extracts* is given to the *following pages*, because it was necessary to omit many things, even in Mr. *Williams's* abridged copy, that either related to the private concerns of particular persons, families, and religious societies, or that were merely of a controversial nature.

He made no reference to his stylistic alterations, which were as pronounced here as they were with Baxter, nor to the fact that the titles given to each of the extracts were his. He pointed out that much of his edition consisted of letters in the possession of Williams's friends and correspondents (an aspect of the successive editions that was to become increasingly important), and it is evident that he also abridged these. He had a very clear idea of the nature and function of his edition. "What is here presented to the *reader*, contains a comprehensive review of a life devoted to God from early to advanced age".⁸ The greater part of the preface is concerned with showing, in a very Baxterian way, how different kinds of reader can profit from the book:

Here, it is humbly hoped, christians of very different attainments in the divine life, whether weak or strong in faith; whether engaged in painful conflicts with their spiritual enemies, or triumphing over them; may see reason to conclude, that *as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man*. . . .

These histories of pious reflection, these devout exercises of the heart, while they were in manuscript, were blessed as the means of beginning piety in some, and of reviving it in others, of Mr. *Williams's* descendants. May divine grace assist *readers* of every age and character, of every condition and relation, so to improve them, as to *be followers of him, who through faith and patience inherits the promises*.⁹

7. Richard Baxter, *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, abridged by Benjamin Fawcett (Romsey, 1816), p. xv. Fawcett's abridgement went through many editions up to the mid-nineteenth century. For a brief comparison of his abridgement with John Wesley's see Isabel Rivers, "Dissenting and Methodist Books of Practical Divinity", in I. Rivers, ed., *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (Leicester, 1982), pp. 141-2.

8. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. iv-v.

9. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. vi, viii.

Williams's manuscript journal contained much more than "histories of pious reflection" and "devout exercises of the heart", though these were certainly crucial elements. (Fawcett presumably used the second phrase to remind his readers of Isaac Watts's very popular edition of Elizabeth Rowe's posthumous work of that name.)¹⁰ The terms Williams used to describe his material (already quoted) were "Soliloquies, y^e Remarks I make from time to time on my Heart & Life" and "Incidents or Stories" (MS p. 83). Fawcett tended to concentrate on the former. He excised the following (the list is not complete): most of the narratives of Williams's providential escapes from accidents; detailed descriptions of his children's deaths; the bad deaths of several of his reprobate acquaintances; precise details of his profits and losses in trade; the adulatory accounts of the Methodists; the criticism of the decay of dissent; the insistence on doctrinal orthodoxy; the story of the complex and acrimonious negotiations over the search for a new minister for Kidderminster (satisfactorily resolved when Fawcett himself was elected); the bad temper Williams displayed to those who resisted his attempts to convert them; much of the enthusiastic language he used to convey the nature of his religious experience; and some of his poetry. Most of this excised material is fascinating. Fawcett's edition does, however, contain journal entries that do not survive in the manuscript. The longhand abridgement of the shorthand for the period 1725–37 is missing, but was presumably available to Fawcett.¹¹ What this means is that comparable material to that listed above is not available for these twelve years, and it is therefore not possible to check any alterations Fawcett might have made.

Fawcett's carefully shaped edition, focusing on Williams's meditations, hymns, poems, and letters, the last consisting mainly of religious advice, proved very popular: a second edition was issued in 1783, followed by many more. William Sharp of Romsey, Hampshire, published a collection of devotional works in 1816, handsomely printed in large octavo, that suggests the high status of Williams's journal among contemporary Dissenters. The collection consists of four seventeenth-century classics, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, and Fawcett's edition of *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, and four eighteenth-century ones, William Law's *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (the only work in the collection not by a Dissenter), Elizabeth Rowe's *Friendship in Death*, Watts's *The World to Come*, and Fawcett's

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10. Elizabeth Rowe, *Devout Exercises of the Heart in Meditation and Soliloquy*, ed. Isaac Watts (London, 1738), much reissued until the early nineteenth century.
 11. Williams wrote at the foot of p. 100 of the MS: "I thought to have abridged all y^e Remarks I had made before that of July 24. 1737. so as to have reduced them within y^e limits of y^e fore-going leaves: but missing thereof, some further remarks on y^e next 12 years I shall insert in a Sheet or two by themselves, if God spare me Life & ability." In a larger hand is written underneath: "See Page 299 & following". However, the pages after 297 are blank.

edition of Williams, described as the fourteenth edition.¹² Williams's letters to a Scottish minister, Thomas Randall, were first included in a new Edinburgh edition of Fawcett's edition in 1797, and this was reprinted several times. It was still being issued after the publication of the much enlarged edition by Benjamin Hanbury: a tiny pocket edition dated 1825 survives in Dr Williams's Library.¹³

Hanbury, Williams's second, and extremely helpful, editor, was the grandson of his last surviving child Phebe, who had authorised the original publication of the journal. Hanbury's has many advantages over Fawcett's edition, and is the one modern readers should turn to, but it is not quite so useful as he claims. Over a period of almost forty years he brought out three separate editions, the first two with the dull but accurate title *An Enlarged Series of Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters* (1815 and 1826), the last, published when he was seventy-four years old, with the much more eye-catching title *The Christian Merchant: A Practical Way to Make "The Best of Both Worlds"* (1853).¹⁴ What were Hanbury's improvements? His motives as an editor were clearly scholarly as well as religious. As he explained in the preface, he had taught himself to read Williams's shorthand, and could therefore compare Williams's own longhand abridgement with the shorthand original. This enabled him to correct some dates in Fawcett's edition. Where Fawcett, in accordance with standard eighteenth-century practice, suppressed proper names, Hanbury included them (there are some exceptions), and he also provided brief biographical accounts in footnotes. He introduced some material from the journal that was not in Fawcett, in the form of new entries and additions to existing ones, and many more letters which he obtained from descendants of Williams's friends and relations. He also incorporated Randall's letters from the Scottish edition. He very helpfully identified quotations from hymns. He also provided a table of contents in which he distinguished his new entries from Fawcett's, and an index.¹⁵

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12. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations, and Letters, of Mr. Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster, ... Compiled by the late Benjamin Fawcett*, 14th edn corrected (Romsey, Hants, 1816). The collection is in the British Library. Sharp also published c. 1820 a cheap duodecimo edition of another seventeenth-century Dissenting favourite, James Janeway's *A Token for Children*.
 13. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations, and Letters, of Mr. Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster*, ed. Benjamin Fawcett, *To which are now added, A Number of Original Letters to the late Rev. Mr. R[andall]* (Edinburgh, 1797). Reprints include Edinburgh, 1801, 1807; London, 1825.
 14. *An Enlarged Series of Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters of Mr. Joseph Williams of Kidderminster: with Notes Biographical and Explanatory*, ed. Benjamin Hanbury (London, 1815); 2nd edn (London, 1826); *The Christian Merchant: A Practical Way to Make "The Best of Both Worlds:" Exhibited in the Life and Writings of Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster*, ed. Benjamin Hanbury, 3rd edn [i.e. of *An Enlarged Series of Extracts*] (London, 1853).
 15. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. ix–xi. The MS of Williams's journal contains tipped in between pages 82 and 83 a letter of 25 July 1854 addressed to Hanbury forwarding him the journal, and on the reverse a copy of a letter of 26 July from Hanbury acknowledging its receipt and expressing gratitude for "the kindness that has made me the final depository of the treasure".

The new material provides a wider social context for Williams's inner religious life, and also gives a fuller picture of the man. Williams the poet and hymnwriter is given much greater prominence, and though there are poems and hymns in the journal which are not in Hanbury, the reverse is also true. Williams's admiration for the Methodists is made clear (though there is much material in the journal on this subject that is omitted): Hanbury included some of Williams's account of Grimshaw, and in the third edition he published for the first time a letter from Williams to the Welsh Methodist Howel Harris and drew attention to the fact that in 1815 he had sent Williams's account of Charles Wesley preaching in 1739 to the *Methodist Magazine*.¹⁶ However, despite these valuable additions to Fawcett, Hanbury seems to have approved the stylistic principles of Fawcett's abridgement: he did not reinstate enthusiastic passages in entries Fawcett had edited, and he similarly abridged and modified the new material he introduced. This decision necessarily sets limits to the value of his otherwise useful edition: it is not and was not intended to be an accurate transcript of Williams. At the front of the second edition Hanbury put a "Recommendation" in the form of an extract from a letter by Hannah More, herself a Church of England Evangelical, which gives a clear indication of how he wanted the book to be read:

I know not when I have received more spiritual edification from any book. I have thought it my duty to recommend it to such of my friends as I thought likely to feel its value. It is so free from party spirit, enthusiasm, and other common faults even of good men, that as it increased my pleasure, so it will, I trust, add to its general acceptance.¹⁷

The final edition of Williams's journal gives further evidence of the book's standing, but also illustrates another change in its character. In 1832–33 the interdenominational Religious Tract Society, founded in 1799 by the Congregational minister George Burder following the success of Hannah More's Cheap Repository Tracts, published a fifteen volume duodecimo collection entitled *Christian Biography*. The sixty-nine lives in the collection, drawn from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries, represent different denominations with a leaning towards Calvinists, and include several laymen and women, among them Margaret Baxter (wife of Richard), John Howard the prison reformer, and Joseph Williams. The individual lives are of a standard size, normally seventy-two pages and occasionally 144 pages long; they could

16. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. xix, xxi–xxii. Hanbury's covering letter together with two extracts from Williams's journal, the first concerning Charles Wesley, the second a poor Methodist woman of Shrewsbury, appeared in *The Methodist Magazine*, 38, new series 12 (1815), 455–59. Hanbury did not include this material in his edition of Williams.

17. *An Enlarged Series of Extracts*, ed. Hanbury, 2nd edn (1826). In the third edition this passage is incorporated in the preface: *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. xxi.

evidently be distributed separately. Williams's life, extracted with permission from Hanbury's second edition of 1826, is one of the long ones, but it is still drastically cut from Hanbury's version. There is much less information about Williams's trade or his interest in other churches, and the focus is now much more on the letters than on the journal. None of the poems appear. Hanbury had considerably increased the number of letters of advice Williams wrote to family and friends on subjects such as the choice of marriage partner and the loss of children, and these letters are retained in the Religious Tract Society abridgement. The effect is that the work becomes both more unified and more consistently domestic in its emphases, more of a family handbook than a journal. It is an attractive little book, but it inevitably lacks the range, the variety, and the excitement of Williams's original manuscript.¹⁸

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Hanbury called his third edition *The Christian Merchant* because it was in harmony with an allegory Williams developed in a letter he wrote late in life to Samuel Walker, the evangelical rector of Truro and correspondent of the Wesleys. Williams was encouraged to write to Walker by Risdon Darracott, minister at Wellington in Somerset. He explained to Walker:

I am an old man: in man's account, a Dissenter; in God's, I trust, a Christian. I am also a tradesman, of no small account in this town and neighbourhood; but I trust my more beloved, because most gainful trade or traffic, lies in a far country...

My traffic is to the country beyond Jordan, and my chief correspondence with the King of Zion, a good friend to merchantmen; he first condescended to traffic with me, furnished me with the stock, made me many valuable remittances, and hath firmly assured me of an infinitely great and good inheritance, richer than both Indies, to which I am to sail and take possession as soon as I shall be ready for it. ...¹⁹

Before turning to Williams's traffic with his heavenly country I want to give a brief sketch of his material life as a tradesman in Kidderminster and beyond. Williams followed his father's trade, which he does not specifically identify, but which was evidently that of a clothier, comprising both the manufacture and the sale of woollen cloth. It is not clear at what age he started, but in his summary of his early life he says that at the age of twelve after the death of one of his sisters

18. The British Library set has 16 volumes; *Life of Mr. Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster* is no. 57 in vol. 13 (1832). On collections of religious lives see Isabel Rivers, "John Wesley and Religious Biography", in *John Wesley: Tercentenary Essays*, ed. Jeremy Gregory (special number of the *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, forthcoming 2005).

19. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. xix, 385, dated 1754.

he became convinced of the vanity of the world, and that after working for some time at his father's trade his mind was corrupted by the filthy conversation of the shopmen. Later at the age of fifteen he wove in the clothier's broad loom for fourteen to sixteen hours a day together with a hard worker, and again lack of time and his co-worker's conversation made prayer and thinking about religion very difficult. After two years of this he was very glad that he was set to scribble (i.e. card) wool for a year, though it was dirty servile work, because it gave him time for religious duties.²⁰ He worked in a shop with three journeymen, but again he found their conversation very irksome, and persuaded his father to allow him to work in a chamber by himself. This made it possible for him to read devotional books while working, a crucial point to which I shall return.²¹

In 1719 when Williams was twenty-six years old his father died, and presumably left him the business. A very varied picture of his failures and successes as a manufacturer and tradesman is given at different stages of the journal. For example, in 1725 he lost almost all his capital after many years of prosperity.²² In December 1736, in a very interesting entry which is in Hanbury but not Fawcett, and which cannot be checked against the manuscript because it comes in the missing section, he wrote that a letter was thrust in at the window threatening his life "on account of the share I have had in endeavouring to regulate and reduce the price of spinning in this town and neighbourhood". He went on to argue that "unless we can sell as cheaply as our competitors, we must lose our share of the trade, which will take place if the price of spinning be not proportionable."²³ On other occasions his attitude to impoverished workers was more generous. In September 1737, he wrote that with orders failing, "& being loth, if avoidable, to turn off any of my Weavers, Work being very scarce in ye Town, I thought proper to set out. . . on a new Circuit in quest of Business"(MS p. 106). These circuits were of great importance not only for his trade but, as we shall see, for his awareness of the developing evangelical revival. In 1741 he noted that he had employed more of the poor than the demand for goods required.²⁴ In 1738 his affairs were looking up, particularly in comparison with those of his neighbours: a fellow townsman had absconded owing £900, and another who was bound for a large sum on this man's behalf was bankrupt as a result. Williams gives thanks that though twenty years ago he was not as prosperous as either, and he has since lost £300 through bad debts, "yet am now, through y^e good Hand of my God upon me worth, I suppose, £900, and have y^e

20. This detail about scribbling is only in the MS, p. 86.

21. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 3-5; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 2-4. Where passages appear in both Fawcett's and Hanbury's editions, both are cited. When a passage is quoted, the quotation is taken from Hanbury's edition.

22. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 14, 21, 26; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 35, 40, 44.

23. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 82-3.

24. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 137.

pleasing Prospect of further Prosperity & Increase”(MS pp. 214–15).²⁵ In March 1739 he noted a great flow of business in the last five months, with the greatest prospect of gain he had ever had; his manufacture was increased to forty looms, which were not enough to fill the orders (MS p. 155). However, in August the following year he found himself again in financial difficulties, and he noted that “Providing Work for 40 men, & disposing of y^e Goods they make, must of necessity very much employ both my Hands & Head”(MS pp. 156, 158). In his later years when he was in partnership with his nephew John Watson his business boomed: in April 1751 following the death of Frederick Prince of Wales he had orders for mourning worth more than £550 (MS p. 270), and in December 1753 he wrote to John’s father Benjamin, in an expression he was clearly fond of, since he also used it in the journal, “Your son and I are getting money like dust”.²⁶

In extracting this information about Williams’s occupation and his financial profits and losses I am giving a misleading impression of its importance in the journal. Williams always viewed his material failures and successes in a providential light, and they play only a very small part in his self-examination and the stories he tells about himself and others. His financial losses in the bad year of 1725 became spiritual gains: “I was thoroughly convinced that honey was in the rod, and that God was doing me good, and not evil, by my chastisement”; “God was pleased... to assure me that it was from love, from covenant love, he thus exercised me.”²⁷ Conversely, he attributed his success in the good year of 1753, when he got money like dust, to the fact that he gave so much of it away; as he told Benjamin Watson in the letter quoted above, since he had given £100 and his nephew £30 towards building a new meeting house, there had been a great increase in their profits, “at least two hundred and fifty pounds more than our usual increase, which the Lord has already given us as bounty-money for the hundred and thirty pounds we lent to him.”²⁸

The main focus of the journal and of the letters included by Fawcett and Hanbury is Williams’s “traffic...to the country beyond Jordan, and... correspondence with the King of Zion”, as he put it in the letter to Walker.²⁹ We can see him analysing his religious life in four different spheres which necessarily intersected: his private, inner life; his extended family; his Kidderminster church; and in relation to the state of religion nationally among both the dissenting and the established churches. Williams’s private religious life involved meditation and

25. Most of this specifically financial information is given only in the manuscript.

26. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 353; cf MS p. 286.

27. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 19, 21; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 38, 41.

28. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 353. Williams made a similar point in a letter to Philip Doddridge of December 1744: since declaring his intention “to devote all my future profits in trade to pious and charitable uses”, he has received a large number of orders; *The Correspondence and Diary of Philip Doddridge, D.D.*, ed. J.D. Humphreys, 5 vols. (London, 1829-31), vol. 4, p. 366.

29. See n. 19 above.

prayer (both silent and spoken, at home and out of doors), the careful reading of devotional literature, and the writing of hymns and poems and, of course, his journal. On several occasions he had rapturous solitary experiences of being chosen, inflamed, and illuminated by divine love, the first in the meadows in the summer of 1710 when he was seventeen years old, later followed by his written self-consecration to God.³⁰ He had similar experiences in April 1721, when in fear that his religious profession was hypocrisy he felt God warm his heart,³¹ in November 1725 (the year of his financial losses), when he recorded that “evening after evening, God is pleased to ravish my soul with the joyful prospect of future glory”,³² in June 1731, when he received “a renewed evidence of [God’s] special favour”,³³ and in February 1742, when, he wrote, “I felt my heart warmed with such ardent love, and earnest desires after a fuller enjoyment of him whom my soul loves – as, I think, I scarce ever before experienced.”³⁴ These dates assumed a particular importance for Williams when he looked back and reread his journal. So two years later, in March 1744, he referred to “that memorable evening, February 17, 1742”,³⁵ and in a letter written in 1747 to his brother-in-law Richard Pearsall he looked back over the last forty years of his religious history, emphasising his experiences of 1721 and 1725.³⁶ His rapturous experiences were not always solitary, however; several took place during church services. In August 1717 he experienced “a flame of divine love” while hearing the sermon (the minister was probably Francis Spilsbury),³⁷ in August 1744 streams of tears flowed from his eyes during Fawcett’s introductory discourse, and he was even more affected by Fawcett preaching in November 1745: “In the discourse, how did my heart throb! how did every bowel within me roll!” though he noted that others did not share his experience: “Sorry I was.... to see so many dry eyes, when

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30. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 6; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 5–6. Cf. Nuttall, “Methodism and the Older Dissent”, in *Studies in English Dissent*, pp. 266–67.
 31. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 16; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 34.
 32. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 21 ; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 41.
 33. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 43; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 63.
 34. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 130–31; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 146.
 35. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 165.
 36. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 207, 209, 211–2. The MS contains two unnumbered pages dated 15 September 1754 between pages 293–94 in which Williams describes how his retelling of his experiences of 1721 and 1725 had a profound influence on a young woman in the congregation of Mr Burgess at Whitworth.
 37. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 13; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 29.

my own had been so drenched".³⁸ In January 1755, in the last year of his life, he explicitly compared his experience at communion with those of 1744 and 1745. I quote here a passage from the manuscript account which Fawcett excised: "O how sweet, how refreshing to y^e Soul to drink, not Wine, but Blood from y^e Sacred Cup! O ye Blood! y^e Blood! my Soul within me cried Times w^tout Number"(MS p. 296).³⁹

A key function of both the journal and the letters was to help Williams reconcile himself to and indeed profit from the deaths of members of his family – his father, his children, his grandchildren, and his first wife. His portrait of his father following his death in 1719 concentrates on his importance as a model: Williams Sr. usually rose at four in the morning and spent two or three hours "in reading, meditation, and prayer", and he was "beloved by persons of all denominations".⁴⁰ Joseph Williams unsurprisingly found the deaths of his children much more difficult to accept. In August 1739, looking back over the twenty years of his marriage, he balanced the blessings and afflictions God had given him, the chief example of the latter being the deaths of five of his children, in particular his daughters Hannah and Molly in 1735 and 1737 respectively.⁴¹ In Molly's case there are significant differences between the manuscript and the printed version (the manuscript account of Hannah's death is missing). On his return from his business circuit in September 1737 Williams found that several members of his household were infected with small pox, and within a month Molly was dead. In the manuscript he details at length the effects of the disease, the pain of the victim, the helplessness and anguish of the parents, and his struggle to submit with patience to his affliction (MS pp. 110–113). In the printed version the whole account is drastically shortened, and the emphasis is on what he has gained from his chastisement.⁴² Fawcett perhaps wished to dispense with particular, personal suffering in order to emphasise the general theme of religious consolation, but the strength of the manuscript account is that Williams reaches the latter through the former. When two of his daughter Phebe's children died, in November 1749 and

38. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 147; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 169, 173–4. Fawcett does not identify himself as the minister.

39. The modified versions are in *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 286; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 387.

40. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 14; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 35.

41. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 109–10; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp 124–5.

42. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 75–6; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 93–4. Williams's account can usefully be compared with Doddridge's response to the death of his daughter Betsey in October 1736, *Correspondence and Diary of Philip Doddridge*, ed. Humphreys, vol. 5, pp. 361–6.

October 1750, he drew on his own experience in his letters of consolation to her,⁴³ but when his wife died in December 1750, during his absence on his south circuit, he found this death the hardest of all to bear. Again, Fawcett much abbreviated the manuscript account (MS pp. 267–8), but in Hanbury's edition this abridged version is followed by a letter from Williams to his Scottish correspondent Randall, in which he argues his way at length from grief to acquiescence.⁴⁴ The last and longest letter in Fawcett's and Hanbury's editions was addressed by Williams to his second wife in December 1755, when he was struggling to return home from his circuit in the knowledge that he was dying. He reviewed his religious life and his experiences of grace from the age of seventeen, confident of his salvation and of their reunion in eternity.⁴⁵ This apparently self-regarding letter was designed to enable his wife to understand loss as gain. It also enables the reader to see clearly once more the patterns that Williams saw in his own life and the meaning of the *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters* as shaped by Fawcett.

Williams's religious life also had a very important public dimension, in Kidderminster and beyond, and here the printed versions leave out much of the story that he told. An interesting fact that Fawcett suppressed, though Hanbury did not, is that Williams himself at one stage had set his heart on becoming a minister, as he recorded in November 1733; in a letter to Randall written twenty years later he described with some resentment how he had been discouraged.⁴⁶ Williams was a man of very strong views on the subjects of how ministers should behave and what they should believe and teach, and he was not afraid of expressing them.⁴⁷ The church had three ministers in his lifetime, Francis Spilsbury (who died in 1727), Matthew Bradshaw (who died in 1742), and Fawcett. On Bradshaw's death Williams reflected very critically on his ministry:

Notwithstanding the excellency of his public ministrations, I cannot but fear religion languishes among us, which I impute very much to the want of encouragement to private opportunities, as well as to the want of a more rousing evangelical ministry in general. Neither the love of God, nor the fear of God, nor faith in Christ, nor the nature or necessity of conversion, nor the

43. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 239–40; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 286, 299. The letter of 4 November 1749 is not in Fawcett's edition.

44. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 241–43; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 300–01, 302–04.

45. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 294–305; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 402–09.

46. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 69, 337.

47. Hanbury includes a letter of 1730 to an unidentified minister urging him to preach more plainly, and a long letter of 1754 to the Revd Richard Jenkins on the importance of the minister warming his hearers' hearts, supported by references to Baxter, Watts, and Doddridge, *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 61, 376–80.

peculiar privileges of believers, have been so much urged and pressed upon us, as moral duties; neither have these last been recommended so much from gospel motives, as from their own intrinsic beauty and excellency, which too few have eyes to discern, and fewer feel the constraining force of.

Williams prayed that in the search for Bradshaw's successor he would neither give up the cause of Christ nor "kindle a flame of division" among the congregation.⁴⁸ Hanbury published these comments, but he omitted the very detailed account of this search and the bitter disputes it entailed. For example, a group including Williams put written theological questions on the doctrines of the Trinity, Original Sin, and Justification by Faith to a potential candidate whose orthodoxy they doubted, Mr Statham, who refused to answer them; Williams and his friends were censured by other members of the congregation for what they had done: "They plead vehemently against our taking the Liberty to propose Questions to any Minister by way of Test or Trial" (MS pp.176-79, 181-2). The whole process, in the course of which Williams appealed to Watts and Doddridge for help and then travelled to Taunton via Northampton to negotiate with Fawcett, took over two years, until in March 1745 the divisions were healed and Fawcett finally accepted the congregation's invitation to be their minister (MS pp.205-12).⁴⁹ Williams thought Fawcett's ministry a triumphant success, as he told Howel Harris in a letter of January 1747, but it was an exception: "Alas! he is like a speckled bird among the neighbouring Dissenting ministers, as you and Mr. Rowland, and Mr. Davis, and others, are among the clergy of the Establishment; and indeed many self righteous ones among us look at him with an evil eye."⁵⁰

For Williams this local struggle for orthodox doctrine and evangelical ministry was part of a much wider one. On his circuits he deliberately sought out different preachers, in Dissenting congregations and parish churches, sometimes in the fields, and on the basis of this empirical evidence formed his conclusions about the state of religion nationally among the Dissenters and the Established Church. His southern circuit took him at different times to Bradford on Avon, Bristol, Abingdon, Beaconsfield, and London, his northern circuit to Staffordshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Westmorland, Yorkshire, and at the end of his life to Edinburgh and Glasgow, and he also on one occasion visited Trevecca in Breconshire (though this may have been purely for heavenly traffic). His findings were remarkably consistent. He was highly critical of what he saw as the decay of Dissent, and though his view of the Established Church in general was very pessimistic, it was the English and Welsh Methodist clergy who seemed to him to

48. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 154-5.

49. Williams says that his "inveterate adversary" Mr Butler, who could hardly bear the sight of him, came to his counting house to ask him to write to Doddridge, MS p. 207.

50. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 200-01, referring to Jeremiah 12:9. Harris, unlike Daniel Rowland and Howell Davies, was not in fact an ordained clergyman. Hanbury notes cautiously: "This sentence must be understood with some qualifications."

be providing a true evangelical ministry. In 1740 he published anonymously, with advice from Watts, *The Principal Causes of some late Divisions in Dissenting Congregations, traced to their Origin*, in which he started from two premises: "I. The People whom I am vindicating, with myself, do believe that it is the Duty of a Christian Minister to preach Christ.... II. That the most, if not only, profitable Preachers of the Gospel are those who can, and do preach experimentally."⁵¹ In 1742 he had an exchange of letters with his *bête noire*, the minister Samuel Bourn of Coseley, Staffordshire, on the subject of Christ's divinity;⁵² these remained unpublished, but their tenor can be gauged from some comments in the journal omitted by both Fawcett and Hanbury. "How few, comparatively, are there now among Dissenting Ministers, who do not corrupt ye Word of God?" he asked rhetorically in October 1745, identifying John Taylor of Norwich as worse than Bourn. "And if y^e Priesthood is generally corrupt, is it any Wonder y^t the People are so too?" (MS pp.221–22). He became more pessimistic about the state of Dissent as the years went by. In February 1748 on a national Fast Day he meditated at length on the degeneracy of the nation in general and the dissenters in particular:

Now for 20 or 30 years past ye Purity, ye Life & Power of Religion have been evidently & lamentably declining among Dissenters. Errors & Heresies have sprung up, & spread among us, & are at this Day very rampant. . . . There is a strenuous Opposition to y^e Doctrine of Original Sin. . . . And such is y^e Opposition to y^e Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Xt's Righteousness imputed to us y^t of y^e few who believe it fewer still have y^e Courage to assert & preach it. Arianism, Socinianism, Arminianism, & Pelagianism reign among Dissenters, in y^e far greater Part of y^e Land. These strike at y^e very Root of Xtianity. (MS pp.245–46)

What of the Methodists? In a letter to his sister Mrs Richards of March 1746 Williams spelled out what he saw as their function:

In this declining state of religion, it has been the joy of my heart to see the Lord choosing instruments out of the Church of England (a Church which has been more than eighty years sadly degenerated), and forming them for eminent usefulness; so that I think in my conscience the Lord hath brought home to himself, for seven years past, more souls by a few hands selected out of that Church, than by the body of Dissenters of all denominations... To me

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51. *The Principal Causes of some late Divisions in Dissenting Congregations, traced to their Origin*. In *a Letter from a Dissenter in the Country* (London, 1740), pp. 6, 7. Williams's views are consistent with those of Watts, John Jennings (Doddridge's tutor), and Doddridge. Williams is identified as the author in the preface to *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. iv.
 52. See *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), Appendix II, pp. 466–7. The letters are described by Hanbury, who says Fawcett refused to publish them.

it is evident, and I behold it with joy, that God hath given an uncommon measure of the Spirit to Mr. Whitefield (whom I must name first), Messrs. Wesley, and many others, their 'fellow helpers' in the Lord. I am not insensible to their differences in opinion concerning some points, which I do not esteem to be fundamental articles of the Christian faith.⁵³

From the manuscript journal it is clear that Williams sought out the Methodists. In October 1739, while on his southern circuit, he heard Charles Wesley preach in the field in Bristol and minister to a religious society, and he thought he had never seen such "a lively, fervent devotion" as among its members. "As for my own part, I do not remember my heart to have been so elevated in divine love and praise, as it was there and then, for many years past, if ever".⁵⁴ His interest in the Methodists had been whetted by reading George Whitefield's published journals,⁵⁵ and he and Whitefield began corresponding in 1741 or 42. In December 1743 Williams described Whitefield preaching in Kidderminster, out of doors and then in the meeting house, and he noted proudly, "it was remarkable y^t I read y^e same Hymn in y^e Conclusion y^t Dr. Doddridge had read when he preached about 2 months ago in his meeting-house at *Northampton*". He was strongly affected by Whitefield's preaching – "I felt an inward Shuddering for a good while & great Meltings" – and after long discussion with him on his journey to Worcester was convinced that Whitefield was "called out, & sent out, for extraordinary Service". "Sure he has the most disinterested Zeal for y^e Glory of y^e Bl- Jesus, & y^e best way of vindicating, asserting, & displaying it I have ever been Witness to"(MS pp.190–92).⁵⁶ The most striking of these encounters with Methodist clergy was with William Grimshaw in Haworth, Yorkshire, in February 1746. Williams struggled to reach him on a dangerous icy ride from Halifax, and was rewarded with a detailed account of Grimshaw's conversion and his experience in a trance of seeing Jesus thrusting his hands and feet through the

53. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 192-4.

54. *The Methodist Magazine*, 38, new series 12 (1815), 455–59, at 458, based on MS pp. 151-55, at 153. Hanbury omitted Williams's discussion with Charles Wesley about Count Zinzendorf. Another version of Williams's meeting with Wesley appeared as "Early Methodism" (three letters copied from originals of Williams to and concerning Wesley), *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, 51, 3rd series 7 (1828), 382–86. Williams's journal account was published by G. F. Nuttall as "Charles Wesley in 1739 by Joseph Williams of Kidderminster", *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, 42 (1980), 181–85. See also *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, ed. Kenneth G. C. Newport (Oxford, 2001), Introduction, pp. 30–31.

55. *Methodist Magazine*, 38, new series 12 (1815), 456.

56. In a letter to Howel Harris of 31 December 1743, Whitefield described his meeting with Williams and mentioned that they had been corresponding for almost two years; Luke Tyerman, *The Life of the Rev. George Whitefield*, 2 vols. (2nd edn, London, 1890), vol. 2, pp. 82–3. For hostile reaction to Doddridge's friendly reception of Whitefield see Nuttall, *Calendar of the Correspondence of Doddridge* (1979), letters 922–3, 926, 933–4.

ceiling so that Grimshaw could see the blood streaming from his wounds. “Instantly he was filled with a joyful Sense of his Interest in Xt”(MS pp. 228-31).⁵⁷ In August 1753 Williams was in Haworth again, where he heard Whitefield preach to thousands in the churchyard; he then sat for more than three hours in a pew near the chancel rails watching Whitefield assist Grimshaw in administering the Lord’s Supper (MS p. 282). Comparing Methodist and Dissenting preachers at Bolton, where he again heard Whitefield, he commented, “there seemed to be a great Work of Grace going on at Bolton among the Methodists, whilst among ye Dissenters, (for I went to hear their Ministers also) all seemed to be quite dead”(MS p. 284).⁵⁸

Why did Fawcett exclude all this material? Three main reasons suggest themselves: Williams’s picture of what was happening to Dissent; his expressed preference for Methodist preaching, often in the open air, to preaching in most Dissenting meeting houses; and his unrestrained adoption of a religion of feeling. But despite Williams’s portrait of himself in this context as an outsider in Dissent, he was, as were Fawcett and Risdon Darracott, another pupil of Doddridge whom Williams greatly admired,⁵⁹ firmly in the seventeenth-century Puritan and Baxterian tradition. Nowhere is this more evident than in his reading and his use of devotional literature.

In the last year of his life Williams told an Edinburgh correspondent and fellow merchant, Archibald Wallace, that no “employment [is] so delightful as meditating, reading, hearing, writing, communing with my own heart, and conversing with our Lord’s disciples, about the things relating to that world and state whither we are going”.⁶⁰ I have described his engagement in some of these activities, and the final point I want to stress is how important a part reading hymns, poems, sermons, and handbooks, and writing his own hymns and poems, played in his own religious life and his relationships with others. Williams gives no details about his education, but it is possible to piece together which authors

57. The journal account has not been published in full. A version appeared as “Experience of the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, of Haworth. In a Letter from Mr. Josiah [sic] Williams, to the Revd. Malachi Blake of Blandford”, *The Evangelical Magazine*, 2 (1794), 468–71. A very truncated version is in *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 187–92. In the journal account it is clear that during the period of his trance, for over an hour, Grimshaw continued exhorting the people in the clerk’s house, to which he had been taken after a fit of dizziness in church.

58. Other significant references to Methodism in the MS include Williams’s visit to Trevecca in June 1746 (p. 233), his meeting in London in May 1747 with the Revd Richard Thomas Bateman (p. 240), and Colonel Samuel Gumley’s account in April 1748 of his conversion by John Wesley (p. 250). Hanbury included a letter from Williams of March 1750 to the Dissenting minister Nicholas Pearson in which he esteems Whitefield “second to none I know of all the human race” yet blames him for enthusiasm and vain glory, *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 294–5.

59. See Williams’s letter of March 1752 to Mrs Darracott, *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 323.

60. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 388–9.

mattered most to him. When he worked in a room on his own for his father he learned by heart all the hymns by the eccentric clergyman John Mason, i.e. *Spiritual Songs* (first published in 1683), and at crucial moments in his life, for example on the death of Molly, lines from Mason helped him understand his afflictions.⁶¹ The hymns of Baxter and Watts came to mean even more; again and again he quoted Watts to express his feelings, often introducing the quotation with the locution "I can say, with Dr. Watts..."⁶² His experience of heart-warming in February 1742 was triggered by revolving some lines of Watts in his mind, and he then deliberately altered the words to fit himself.⁶³ Sometimes he applied lines from pairs of authors to himself, for example Baxter and Mason, or Baxter and "the pious and ingenious Mrs. Rowe".⁶⁴ Two Anglican poets of whom he was very fond served a similar function, George Herbert, whom he quoted alongside Watts in a letter to an unidentified correspondent,⁶⁵ and Edward Young, through whose words he expressed his grief at his wife's death in his letter to Randall.⁶⁶ When one of his grandchildren died he transcribed for his daughter Phebe one of the hymns Darracott had written for himself in the same situation.⁶⁷

The works that seem to have shaped Williams's mind the most were the standard prose devotional handbooks and treatises of seventeenth-century Puritans: the sermons of John Preston, Robert Bolton's *Some Generall Directions for a Comfortable Walking with God* (1625), Richard Sibbes's *The Soules Conflict* (1635), William Fenner's *A Treatise of the Affections* (1641), John Flavel's *A Saint Indeed* (1668), and especially Baxter's *The Saints Everlasting Rest* (1650). He drew attention in letters to Baxter's recommendation of authors such as Bolton and Sibbes.⁶⁸ Again and again these works played a key function in stimulating his religious experiences. Thus in 1721 reading *A Treatise of the Affections* first roused fears of his own hypocrisy and then led to the awakening of his affections;⁶⁹ in 1725, the year of his heavy financial losses, reading *A Saint Indeed* and *The Saints Rest* and practising the spiritual exercises recommended by Flavel

61. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 5, 76, 259; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 4, 95, 339.

62. Eg *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 26, 65, 290–91; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 43, 44, 87, 400.

63. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 130–31; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 146–7.

64. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 72; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 138, 139, 92.

65. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 129; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 144; see also 229, 263, 312.

66. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 302–3.

67. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 286.

68. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 313, 380.

69. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), p. 16; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 34.

and Baxter led to his state of joy.⁷⁰ It is not surprising that Williams recorded in detail Grimshaw's experience of uncommon heat flashing on his face when he opened John Owen's *The Doctrine of Justification by Faith* (1677) and his subsequent illumination (MS p. 229).⁷¹ Though he does not say as much, he must have been delighted that an Anglican clergyman had been awakened by reading an arch-Independent.

But Williams did not rely only on the writings of others as guides to his experience: he was himself an active poet and hymnwriter. He wrote for himself, for members of his family, for his church, and for a wider audience – four of his poems were published anonymously in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in the 1730s.⁷² Some of his poems draw directly on his reading. For example, after reading *The Saints Rest*, he wrote a long poem in tetrameter couplets entitled "The Heavenly Rest. A Meditation".⁷³ Much of his writing was done while he was travelling, and in the journal he often describes the circumstances in which he composed the poem, sometimes on horseback, before setting it down. At Abingdon, "having read in y^e Life of Dr Cotton Mather till my Eyes were tired, I amused my Self with versifying his Covenant"(MS pp.212–13); "It afforded me a good deal of Pleasure in several Periods of my Journy... to versifie some other of Dr Cotton Mather's Observations"(MS pp.213–19). In the evening at Rochdale and between Rochdale and Chester he wrote a long and ambitious "Hymn to the Incomprehensible" in blank verse, which unlike the rest of his poems uses the language of physicotheology rather than Scripture (MS pp. 119–22). After reading verses on mankind's fear of the afterlife engraved on a parlour window in an inn at Beaconsfield, he wrote a triumphant hymn on faith conquering fear (MS p. 264).⁷⁴ Two of his most delightful poems were exchanges with family members on his circuits. His brother-in law Richard Pearsall and he wrote to each other as Damon and Pythias (this exchange was published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*); on another occasion his wife sent a poem to him, much to his surprise, and he replied to her plain style in a much more consciously poetic one, in which she yields the first place in Pythias's heart to Christ (MS p. 242). Williams then copied his poem to his nephew's fiancée.⁷⁵

Despite Williams's pessimism about the general state of Dissent, it was a

70. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 19, 21; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 38–41.

71. Hanbury omits the details of the flashes of heat, so that the illumination is spiritual only, *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), p. 189.

72. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 6 (May, 1736), p. 282; vol. 6 (August, 1736), p. 483; vol. 8 (August, 1738), p. 431; vol. 9 (July, 1739), p. 379; *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 53–4, 57–61, 61–2, 92–4; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 75–6, 78–9, 81–2, 111–12.

73. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 63–7.

74. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 233–35; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 287–8.

75. *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 217–18.

fundamental assumption of his religious, literary, domestic, and public life that through exchanging books, letters, poems, and hymns, through reading and conversing with others, the doctrines and experiences he valued so much could be shared and transmitted. The evidence of the circulation of his own writing in his lifetime and long after suggests that this was true. Yet he was conscious of his failures, and recorded them scrupulously. These examples are especially interesting because it is always difficult to find contemporary responses to religious literature by audiences who were indifferent or hostile to it. A gentleman of figure and fortune he met in London, who seemed to him a self-justifying pharisee, was obviously annoyed by his enthusiasm for *The Saints Rest*: he told Williams indignantly “y^t if what Mr Baxter had written in that Book were true he should certainly be damned, for he was sure he co.^d never come up to y^e Strictness of Religion both in Heart & Life he had there made requisite, & therefore was resolved never to read that Book more”(MS p. 219). On one occasion Williams travelled for two days in a coach with two laughing young women from Ludlow, whose behaviour he found intolerable; after thundering at them about their immortal souls, he pulled Watts’s *Horae Lyricae* from his pocket and read out the following to them “in a solemn manner”:

Laugh, ye Prophane, and swell, and burst,
 With bold Impiety;
 Yet shall ye live for ever curs’d,
 And seek in vain to die.

One of the young women as a result got down sooner than she had intended. Williams observes with satisfaction: “I had made ye Coach too hot to hold her.” She said to him on leaving, “ ‘Well, old Gentleman, I wish you safe at Heaven: you are too good to live in this World.’ To wch I replied – ‘I heartily wish you & I may meet there.’ So we parted, mutually pleased with ye Separation” (MS pp. 293–4). The last example is a melancholy one. Williams had a brother John, the only member of his extended family who was not a willing member of the religious network I have been describing; he was a drunkard and a wastrel, and Williams recorded three attempts to reclaim him, using a variety of methods. On the first he endeavoured to comfort and counsel him, and sent him a poem composed on horseback on his northern circuit, a soliloquy for a sinner who turns to Christ.⁷⁶ On the second as John was now hardened in sin he sent him a savage verse satire on his drunkenness, condemning him to despair, but noted, “These Verses I hoped would have made some good Impressions on him, but had a quite contrary Effect, & moved him to Say, he knew not what I meant; y^t I might

76. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1799), pp. 82–5; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 99–100. Fawcett does not name John Williams.

meddle with my own Business: or Words of the like Import”(MS pp. 127–8).⁷⁷ On the last attempt in 1747, nearly ten years later, he brought in Baxter to help him; he promised to give John a guinea if he would spend his evenings with him while he read out *A Call to the Unconverted* (MS pp. 240–1). “I had great freedom, boldness, and confidence; he had sighs and groanings unutterable. We afterwards embraced and kissed each other with great affection.”⁷⁸ We hear no more of brother John in the journal or letters; it seems unlikely that Williams succeeded in converting him. These episodes are further evidence of the two sides of Williams’s nature – on the one hand open in his attitudes to other denominations and generous in his friendships with those who shared his views or could be brought to share them, on the other hand censorious and unforgiving towards those whose doctrines or behaviour he deplored.

I would like to conclude with some more general comments. What Fawcett and Hanbury did with Williams’s manuscript was standard practice among eighteenth- and nineteenth-century editors of religious books, and we should not blame them anachronistically for not applying modern standards. These editors had their own standards and objectives: to disseminate books which were above all useful, and with that end in view to delete material that was polemical, or old-fashioned, or contradictory, or distasteful, or simply longwinded. Comparisons could be made with Job Orton’s edition of Matthew Henry’s life of his father Philip Henry, or J. D. Humphreys’s edition of Philip Doddridge’s correspondence and diary, or the revised version of George Whitefield’s journals, in which Doddridge had a hand, or the hundreds of works which John Wesley abridged.⁷⁹

I have indicated the great popularity of the various editions of Joseph Williams’s journal and letters from 1779 to 1853. For a layman this was unusual. In the various interdenominational collections of religious biography that appeared in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries – the Religious Tract Society’s collection of *Christian Biography* already discussed is an example – few lay figures were among the most popular. As far as I can tell from my

77. Hanbury provides an abbreviated version of the poem and omits this comment, *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 103–4.

78. *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations and Letters*, ed. Fawcett (1779), pp. 177–79; *The Christian Merchant*, ed. Hanbury (1853), pp. 221–22. Fawcett and Hanbury omit the payment. In the MS p. 240 Williams refers to the new edition of *A Call to the Unconverted*. This is presumably Richard Baxter, *A Call to the Unconverted*. . . . *To which are added, Directions how to spend every Ordinary Day, and every Lord’s Day. Collected from the Works of Mr. Baxter and Dr. Doddridge* (London, 1746).

79. Matthew Henry, *An Account of the Life and Death of Mr. Philip Henry*, 4th edn, ed. Job Orton (Salop, 1765); *The Correspondence and Diary of Philip Doddridge, D. D.*, ed. J. D. Humphreys, 5 vols. (London, 1829–31); George Whitefield, *The Two First Parts of his Life, with his Journals, Revised, Corrected, and Abridged* (London, 1756). On Wesley’s abridgements see Rivers, “Dissenting and Methodist Books of Practical Divinity”, in Rivers, ed., *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, pp. 152–9.

researches, the only life of a layman that was more popular than that of Williams was Doddridge's life of Colonel Gardiner.⁸⁰ So why did Williams disappear from view? Why is he not in the *DNB*? Geoffrey Nuttall blamed Alexander Gordon for giving prominence to Presbyterians at the expense of Evangelical Dissenters,⁸¹ but we should also bear in mind that the old *DNB* was heavily biased towards ordained ministers. Williams's status as a lay Dissenter told against him. Perhaps if he had been a Methodist lay preacher, he would not have disappeared into obscurity.

ISABEL RIVERS

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80. Philip Doddridge, *Some Remarkable Passages in the Life of the Honourable Col. James Gardiner* (London, 1747). See Rivers, "John Wesley and Religious Biography", in *John Wesley: Tercentenary Essays*, ed. Gregory (forthcoming 2005).
81. Nuttall, "Methodism and the Older Dissent", in *Studies in English Dissent*, p. 277.

TADAO YANAIHARA AND MRS COOK. I: COLONIES, LETTERS AND CHRISTIANITY

Tadao Yanaihara (1893-1961) was one of the most distinguished Japanese Christian intellectuals of the twentieth century. The son of a provincial doctor, he was born near Imabari on the island of Shikoku. After studying for seven years at a local junior school, in 1905 he entered the highly regarded Kobe Middle School on the mainland. The school's mottoes, "Frugality and Fortitude", "Self-Respect and Self-Control", suggest the atmosphere in which Yanaihara lived his early teenage years. In 1910 he entered the most distinguished high school in Japan, the First Higher School in Tokyo. The school's headmaster, the renowned Christian liberal, Inazo Nitobe (1862-1933), came to exert a major influence of Yanaihara's intellectual development. Yanaihara attended Nitobe's lectures on Japanese-American relations and was moved by their idealistic emphasis on humanitarianism, international understanding and peace.

A yet more powerful influence was Kanzo Uchimura (1861-1930), a dominant thinker in the "no-church" branch of Japanese Christianity. In 1891 Uchimura had resigned from an important teaching position after rejecting the quasi-religious ceremonials surrounding the Imperial Rescript on Education. Yanaihara joined Uchimura's Bible classes and eventually became a lifelong "no-church" Christian.

In 1913 Yanaihara entered Tokyo Imperial University as an undergraduate. At almost the same time Nitobe joined the University's teaching staff, and his influence on Yanaihara continued. Nitobe's lectures on colonial policy attracted the young idealist, and ultimately shaped his research and career. Yanaihara's interest in colonial issues was further deepened by Japanese and Western criticisms of Japanese rule in Korea.

In 1917 Yanaihara graduated, and briefly considered working in Korea "for the Korean people," but after his marriage he joined the Sumitomo Besshi Copper Mining Company in Shikoku. During the next three years he worked in offices and mines but finally returned to Tokyo Imperial University as Assistant Professor of Colonial Policy. He succeeded his mentor Nitobe, who had recently been appointed an Assistant Secretary-General at the League of Nations. Yanaihara was now sent to Europe for two years to study colonial problems.

He arrived at Dover on 3 December 1920, and during his stay in London lodged with the Cook family in Woodford Green. In this household he heard recurrent questioning of British colonial policies which left a lasting impression. Before returning to Japan Yanaihara toured the British Isles, and visited Dublin in July 1921, only ten days after the Anglo-Irish truce, which ended two years of bitter fighting. Yanaihara noted the physical hardships of many Dubliners, but also the mood of elation which followed Irish military success.

Yanaihara's visit to Dublin and later Belfast, led him to a prolonged study of Ireland and finally the publication in 1936 of *Airurando Mondai no Enkaku* (A History of the Irish Problem). This was a serious scholarly work but it was also an indirect attack on Japan's oppressive policies in Korea. Yanaihara returned to

Japan via the United States and arrived in Tokyo on 9 February 1923. His wife Aiko, who had remained in Japan, died seventeen days later. On 30 August he was promoted to the rank of Professor of Colonial Policy.

In mid September 1923 Yanaihara wrote to Mrs Cook describing the Great Kanto Earthquake which had devastated Tokyo and neighbouring cities two weeks before. Overall Yanaihara's letter is a vivid and moving account of the disaster, but its estimate of fatalities in Tokyo – 80,000 – is significantly higher than the figure of 68,660 for dead and missing finally issued by the city authorities. There were, perhaps, calculated omissions from Yanaihara's description. Whether these reflected a fear of censorship or simply a wish to impress a foreign reader is difficult to determine. He praised the philanthropic relief policies of the Japanese Government, but failed to mention Cabinet Ministers' fears of mass panic. He also made no reference to the murder of Koreans and leftists by police and vigilantes following the earthquake. It is understandable that in writing to a British friend Yanaihara expressed gratitude for British humanitarian aid, but it is noteworthy that British help, officially stated as 5,778,587 *yen*, was dwarfed by aid from the United States. This amounted to some 30,924,718 *yen*. These statistics suggest the growing significance of American-Japanese relations, an important factor in the ending of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

In the years which followed Yanaihara's return to Tokyo he continued to travel widely and write extensively on colonial questions. In his writings he drew upon his knowledge of British experience to criticise Japan's assimilation policies in Korea and Taiwan. Yanaihara was particularly impressed by the political evolution of Britain's white dominions and favoured the granting of autonomy to Japan's colonial possessions. This feature of Yanaihara's thought is clearly illustrated in the letter which he wrote to Mrs Cook on 3 October 1928. Four years earlier Yanaihara had met the moderate Taiwanese leader T'sai Pei-huo (Sai-bai-ka in Japanese) through the League for the Establishment of a Taiwanese Parliament. In April 1927 Yanaihara entered Taiwan, not as an official visitor but "by the back door," with the help of a friend working in the Taiwan Government-General. In his letter Yanaihara wrote of this visit as "a tour of study" but he also used it to renew links with T'sai Pei-huo and give lectures on colonial issues. On these occasions he was closely watched by the Japanese colonial police. It was largely on the basis of this five week visit, and his friendship with T'sai that he wrote a sympathetic Introduction to T'sai's "An Appeal to the Japanese Nation, Keynote to the Solution of Colonial Problems." (*Nippon kokumin ni Atau...*) In this Introduction he made direct reference to his own Christian concern for colonial peoples and the influence upon him of the Cook family.

The 3 October letter is also significant in illustrating Yanaihara's approach to the history of Japanese colonisation. He described the settlement of Japan's fourth main island, Hokkaido as "colonisation" as if parallel to Japanese policies in Korea and Taiwan. In this letter and other writings Yanaihara suggested that in all these cases indigenous peoples had suffered from the activities of Japanese officials and businessmen.

The latter sections of the 3 October letter suggest the difficulties which Japanese Christian intellectuals faced in the late 1920s. In these years they were criticised by both right-wing nationalists and Marxists who were a rising force in Universities and labour circles. As this indicates Japan remained a somewhat pluralistic society. The YWCA Centre at Gotemba, where Yanaihara lectured in 1928, was the joint product of Japanese Christian endeavour, financial help from American Christians, and grants from the Japanese Ministry of the Interior.

Yanaihara may have been over optimistic regarding the prospects of Japanese Christianity, particularly in its most distinctive form, the "no-church" movement, but his letter reveals something not generally known in the West. In the late 1920s some Japanese Christians sought to contribute to international missionary activity and sent financial help to the British China Mission and Albert Schweitzer's Hospital at Lambarene in tropical Africa.

In the 1930s as Japanese foreign policies became more aggressive and nationalistic Yanaihara was increasingly disillusioned. Amid his Christian and academic activities he made liberal criticisms of Government but usually in oblique and indirect ways. It was only in October 1937, after the outbreak of the China War, that his condemnations of national policy became overt. In a speech to a group of Christians he dramatically declared "Please bury our country for a while so that her ideals may live." Such pronouncements resulted in official hostility and, finally, his resignation from Tokyo Imperial University. With the outbreak of war with the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands Yanaihara and all "no-church" Christians were placed under close police surveillance. Yanaihara's Christian work continued and after Japan's defeat he was reinstated as Professor at the newly named Tokyo University. Later he became President of the University and played a major role in the liberalisation of the Japanese University system. He died of cancer in 1961. His academic writings remain highly respected in Japan, Europe, and the United States.

GORDON DANIELS

TADAO YANAIHARA AND MRS COOK. II: THE LETTERS

Imperial University
Tokio.

15. 9. 23

Dear Mrs. Cook,

While I was thinking about that I must answer to your kindest letter which I received a month ago, there came the great earthquake and fire on Tokio and the neighbouring districts. It was really a terrible catastrophe. 70% of the whole area of Tokio, including the best streets and buildings were destroyed. Up to to-day about 80,000 deads were found and the whereabouts of 120,000 people are unknown. It is horrible indeed to see the big town reduced to ashes, bones heaped up in a big open place where 35,000 lives were lost and their dead bodies were burned. Still they are burning! (After two weeks since the unhappy day, the first of September). Of the University, all buildings which belonged to our Faculty and the big library were completely burned down, I am very sad. It is the greatest loss to the learning and science.

I do not yet visit Yokohama, great sea-port, 20 miles from Tokio. The damage of the houses and lives are said still larger than in Tokio. Many foreigners were dead, among them British and American consuls and their wives.

The Government and the whole nation are doing their best to save the poor people who lost their families and houses, and there is no one who is suffering from hunger or cold, though their lives are reduced to the simplest form and degree.

As for myself, the house was partly damaged, but saved from the fire, and I and the family are quite safe, and you are assured not to be anxious on my account.

I read in the paper that your King and British Nation have shown the sincerest sympathy for our calamity by words and gifts, and I am much glad of it.

The communication from Tokio has been deadly damaged, and it is very difficult now to send a letter abroad from here. As a friend of mine is going to Osaka tomorrow, I have hurried up to pen and ink to inform you of my safety.

With best compliments

Yours truly

Tadao Yanaihara

Imperial University,
Tokyo.

Oct 3. 1928

My dear Mrs. Cook,

A week has already passed away since I received your parcel. From the bottom of my heart I thank you for your kind letter and the book which you gave me. As for my long silence I have no word to apologize, and I bow down my head before you and I beg your pardon. It comes only from my laziness. I do not know now when I wrote you last time. Perhaps I have not written you since Christmas time. For your last kind letter I had to answer at once. That I did not do, and the time passed away so quick, and now I got the joyful shock by your new letter. I have never forgotten you, nor to write you. It has been always in my mind. Your last letter has lied on my desk for such a long time as 'unanswered'. My laziness to write letters, especially in foreign language which I write only in very awkward ways – this is my only apology!

Yes, dear Mrs Cook! I have *never* forgotten you. I can testify it by visible proofs. I will tell you a story:

My lecture in the University is specially on the subject of colonies. Not only I study with interest the political, social and economic conditions of various colonies, but also I have a keen sympathy for the natives of those lands. I made a trip of study last year in Formosa (one of the colonies of our Empire). There I got a native friend. He is a Christian. He studied in a college in Tokyo. His name calls Sai-bai-ka. He wrote a book with the title 'An Appeal to the Japanese Nation. Keynote to the Solution of Colonial Problems'. This book was published last April in Tokyo. He asked me to write an introduction to this book. Of course all is written in Japanese, and I am sorry that you can not read it. But I shall translate here what I wrote at the tope of my long article of introduction in this Mr Sai Bai Ka's book.

As an introduction to this book, I intend [unclear:? to appeal] *myself* to the reason and the heart of our nation about the condition and problems of our colonies.

When I stayed as a paying guest in a Christian home near London, I liked often to listen to an old lady of that family to talk about the problems of China, India or Ireland with her daughters in our after-dinner talks. On one evening, when they read in the morning paper about the famine in China, they were all anxious about the sad conditions and pains of famine-stricken people in this far country. That old lady of more than seventy years old got quite animated and spoke repeatedly that they *must* be saved. On

other occasions the problem of India – the question of ‘what good has England done for India after all?’, or the problems of Ireland – that the terrorism must be rejected and they must come to the peaceful solution at once, were discussed. Their earnest argument and deep sympathy had gave me strong impression and, made me often ashamed for my narrow mind and indifferent heart.

My argument is:- As I got the lesson from this old lady not be indifferent about the conditions of the people who lives in far, unknown lands, I appeal now to my fellow countrymen not to be indifferent to the appeal of Mr Sai-bai-ka, a native in Formosa, and to open our reason and heart to help the needs of poor natives in our colony.

I wrote this article with the date of the 14th March of this year. I did not mention of your name in this article. But knows that it is *you*. You inspired me to have always warm heart and keen interest towards the people of the far colonies. I saw too ‘what the Love of Christ is’ in your kind care for the poor and aliens. You showed me again your Christian Love by your new letter which roused my whole body up. You sought out one who sought not you. You wrote to one who wrote not you. This is Christian Love. I see it. I thank you very much indeed.

Now I shall write you what I have done and how I have lived since the beginning of this year. In February my new book with the title ‘The Problem of Over-Population’ was published. It is a scientific work, and contains 232 pages. It is not a big book, but it took me much time to prepare for it. (Continued)

Oct. 5.

Dear Mrs. Cook,

Now I continue my letter.

In March, as soon as I finished my lecture in the Tokyo Imperial University, I accepted the invitation from the Kyushu Imperial University and went to Fukuoka (where that University stands, a town in Kyushu – the western part of Japan – ; 30 hours on train from Tokyo). I read there my lecture on Colonies for 20 hours. I took bad cold there, and after the lecture I was kept there in bed for some days more.

In April new term in our University has begun. I contributed six successive articles on Formosa for the academic journal of our University. This work came to the end in the beginning of August. And then I started on the 5th Aug. for a trip in Karafuto (Saqhalin) and Hokkaido. Karafuto is our northern colony. Its capital calls Toyohara. It takes 60 hours on express train and steamer from Tokyo to Toyohara. Karafuto is quite a new land, and it was interesting to see how the work

of colonization and cultivation is getting on. After Karafuto, I made a trip in Hokkaido. This is also comparatively new land, and I could make a good study of colonization. Karafuto and Hokkaido were the lands of the Ainu race. They were one of the native population of Japan proper, too. As the Japanese (Yamato Race) came and proceeded, the Ainu retired and diminished. We have now about 15,000 population of the Ainu in Hokkaido, and about 2000 in Karafuto. They are still rather primitive, and they are a quite separate and special race. Some authority says that the Ainu belongs to the Mongolian Race, and the others maintain that they belong to the Caucasian Race. But the best authority says now that they belong neither to the Mongolian, nor to the Caucasian, but they are an independent race.

Anyhow my trip in Hokkaido came to an abrupt end on account of the death of my brother-in-law. I came home in post-haste arrived at Tokyo on the 3rd September. So I was absent from home just one month.

You see that I have had pretty busy time!

As for my Christian work, I may first say that everyone knows that I am a Christian, through my writings and sayings. Newspapers and magazines write sometimes gossips about the University professors. Even in those gossips I am introduced almost as a convicted Christian. This is not a small thing in a country like Japan. Some people laughs at me. But it is very good for me to be ridiculed on account of my faith in Christ.

I contribute almost every month to a certain Christian journal 'The Eternal Life', edited by my friend Mr Kurosaki.

In July of this year I was invited by the Students' Y.W.C.A. to give a lecture in their summer special meeting at Gotenba, near Mount Fuji. That I did with much interest.

I made too Christian lectures in several other occasions. Sometimes in colleges, sometimes in Churches. Just yesterday afternoon I spoke in a girls' college in Tokyo on the Christianity and the Social Problem, for it is now a serious question how and why the Christians stand against the Marxism in Japan.

I can tell you with pleasure that Japan is awakening day by day to her own real worth. For sixty years we have imported very much civilization from the foreign countries. We have adopted very much of the occidental ways of living and thinking. Yes, we have imitated perhaps too much! Now we are coming back to our own good side. We are recovering our national character. And this has done very good thing to our Christian life, for we are now seeking the Truth and believing Christ from our own heart, on our own standpoint, on our own account, not simply as the others tell us. There is springing up several good, vigorous, evangelical Christian journals. Someone published lately new translation of the New

Testament from the Greek original without any assistance from the foreigners. My friend is writing now a good commentary of the N.T. I know that there are many people who are learning the Greek and the Hebrew to be able to read the Bible in the originals. Our meeting which Mr Uchimura presides has four classes for that study. There are in those classes both young and old, students and non-students, men and women. The teacher is a member of our meeting. The teacher as well as the pupils are all *laymen*. They are studying very hard and making good progress.

Our meeting has started before two years to help the Christian work in foreign countries. We send money to China and Africa. Japan has received very much money, perhaps too much, from other countries. Now we are in the position to help others. The sum is still small, but the mind we have got. I am sorry to say that we do not send our *men* or *women* to preach the Gospel in the other countries, but we send now only money to help the China Mission (British) or Dr Schweitzer's Hospital in Africa. But I hope before long our young people begin to go abroad for Evangelism. When we see the facts of degeneration and corruption of the Christian Churches in U.S.A. or Europe, we think sometimes that we the Japanese must go to U.S.A. or Europe to preach the true Evangelium of Jesus Christ.

Of course we have many dark side in our national life. Still we feel there is rising up new spirit among us.

We are holding a Christian meeting once a month in our University building. I pray always that our University stands on Truth of God. I am only professor who present regularly, though there are several other good Christian Professors. Assistants, Graduates, and the students come to the meeting. We sing together, pray and speak. It is one of the most pleasant hour in my University life. This meeting was really started by myself.

As for my family, they are getting on pretty well. Isaac is now ten years old and he is now in the fourth year class in the primary school. Mitsuo, the second son, is eight years old. He is in the second year class of the same school. Katsu, the third and the last son, is two years. He chatters and imitates all things, very funny fellow.

My wife is not strong, but not ill. I myself is now quite well, only sometimes I get very much tired. It comes always from over-work.

I enclose here my picture which was taken at the end of February. It was then intended to send a copy to you, but it was not fulfilled owing to my laziness. I am thinking now to take another picture with my family. If it is taken, I promise you to send a copy.

I enclose two cards here. They are for Jean. Please give them to her with my best love. She has certainly grown up beautifully. Hugh studies now in Edinburgh, you wrote me in your letter of last November. Kenneth goes to school...O, I may see them now even for a glance!

I am mostly glad to know that you are quite well in your high age. I hope Miss Marion and Miss Olive are getting on well too. How is it with Miss Olive's asthma? Is it a little better now?

The Firs comes often into my recollection. Though you do not live there now, I remember quite well where The Oakfield stands. I can imagine how you are going to the Church by the way, with the school and the common on its left side.

Now I shall close this letter. It has become very long, and you must have got tired to read it over, haven't you? I hope to write you next time, not with such a long interval as this time.

May God bless you,

I remain

Yours sincerely

Tadao Yanaihara

My address is not changed, that is
2192 Avaijuku, Omori, Tokyo.

But you can send me letter as well as to the University.

TADAO YANAIHARA AND MRS COOK. III: THE COOKS

Cook is not an uncommon name but Congregationally it resonates. There have been Congregational Cooks for six generations, perhaps more. There have been Cooks in the ministry (Ernest Hampden Cook, 1860-1932, and his second cousin Henry Arnold Cook, 1873-1950); and Cooks have married ministers from Richard Fletcher (1795-1873) to Warren Thorpe (1921-1996). At a more distant remove Josiah Viney (1816-1896) and Thomas Binney (1798-1874) were family connexions. Cooks claimed descent from the Ketts of Kett's Rebellion and there was Huguenot ancestry through the Byles family: that link introduces another Dissenting clan, both Congregational and Unitarian, whose best-known Congregational members were the Byleses of the *Bradford Observer*, which in its hey-day ranked as a provincial power in the Liberal press alongside the *Leeds Mercury*, the *Sheffield Independent*, the *Northern Echo*, and the *Manchester Guardian* and *Examiner*. The family's radicalism in religion and politics were for all to see in their names – thus Hampden Cook's brothers included John Williams Cook and (Herbert) Moffat Cook, Edward Miall Cook and Alfred Rowland Cook, with (Walter) Arnold Cook to add educational breadth beyond the denominational fold. As a family memoir says of their father, John Cook (1822-1884) of Bethnal Green and Upper Clayton:

His zeal for religion and education and for political justice and freedom was also indicated by his naming his eldest son and eighth sons after great Foreign Missionaries, his second son after the apostle of Disestablishment, this third son after two beloved Congregational ministers, his sixth son after Dr. Arnold of Rugby School, and his seventh son after the hero of Chalgrove Field (1643).¹

There were farming, legal, and school-teaching Cooks. As they prospered, so the school of choice for male Cooks tended to be Mill Hill.² The staple of their prosperity, however, was soap. The memoir already quoted captures something of the family's atmosphere and aspirations: it was felt that had John been able to go to Cambridge he would have made a fine mathematician, he himself wished on leaving school (in partial disgrace: he had refused to apologise where he felt no regret)³ to go as a missionary to China, and he "was a friend of Mrs. Elizabeth Charles (1828-1896) authoress of the Schönberg Cotta Family. In one of her books she has a character – Sir John Cook, named after him". Since this John

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1. Ms. in possession of Mrs. Jean Gill, to whom I am particularly indebted for much information about the Cook and Mummery families. I am also greatly indebted to Lt. Cmdr. John Cook, Mr. Robin Morley Fletcher, Sir John Mummery, Dr. J.H. Thompson, Mrs. Rachel Thorpe.
 2. E. Hampden Cook, *The Register of Mill Hill School 1807-1826*, privately printed, London 1926, is a mine of Cook information.
 3. *Ibid.* p. 58.

Cook was the eldest son there could be neither Cambridge nor China, and there was to be no knighthood, but there was the family business.

John Cook, mathematician and missionary *manqué* but “the first to teach me that a man of business can be a true Christian”,⁴ was a third generation soapmaker. His grandfather, Edward Cook (1774-1831), was a Henley man who married a Southwark tallow chandler’s daughter and set up a soap and tallow works which in 1820 became the London Soap Works, Southwark. Edward’s sons, John I (1799-1862) and Edward II (1810-1886) continued the business, moved it across the Thames to Goodman’s Yard, Minories, and then divided it; the John Cook’s took over the tallow and the Edward Cooks concentrated on soap. All were Congregationalists, Edward I at Henley, John I at Park Chapel, Crouch End, where he was an early deacon, John II at Holloway and Upper Clapton, and Edward II at The Weigh House and latterly at Witham and Little Baddow, where he is buried.

Edward Cook (II) was a go-ahead and successful businessman. His East London Soap Works were at Bow. Charles Wilson, the historian of Unilever, rated his firm as among the most vigorous in the second rank of London soapmakers. By the 1870s his Primrose Soap was patronised by the Royal Family, the War Office, the Admiralty, and several local authorities.⁵ His prosperity allowed him to lease a country house, Crix, Hatfield Peverel, with long established Dissenting traditions of its own, and his will was proved at £122, 400.⁶

The commercial vigour was sustained by his sons, Edward Rider (1836-1898), Henry John (1840-1918), William (1843-1903), and James William (1847-1916). All were Congregationally active, the first two at Woodford Green, William as a deacon at Highbury Quadrant, and James William as a deacon at Brentwood.

All had been formed at Thomas Binney’s Weigh House. Binney, indeed, was a family friend, and Edward Rider Cook’s first wife, Edith Piper, was the niece of Mrs. Thomas Binney and Mrs. Josiah Viney. Her family were successful London builders; her father, Thomas Piper (1800-1870) was author of a *Digest of Building Acts* (1856) and treasurer of Mill Hill School, and her grandfather, also Thomas Piper (d. 1858), served on the Committee of the Congregational Library, on New College’s Building and Finance Committees, and as treasurer of the Coward Trust.⁷ These were both weighty and useful connections and Edward Rider Cook was a weighty and useful citizen, indefatigable in the politics of soap and the metropolis and briefly Liberal MP for West Ham (1885-1886).⁸

It was the Piper connexion which took the Cooks to Woodford Green in the

4. *Ibid.*

5. C. Wilson, *The History of Unilever*, Vol. I, London 1954, pp. 15, 18.

6. I am indebted to R. Morley Fletcher for this information. Crix, a good Georgian house, had been the home of the Shaen family, notable Essex and London Dissenters.

7. I am indebted to Dr. J. H. Thompson for information about the Piper family.

8. M. Stanton and S. Lees, *Who’s Who of British Members of Parliament*, Vol. II, 1886-1918, Hassocks 1978, p. 75.

early 1870s. The Edward Rider Cooks lived in what had been a Piper house and the Henry John Cooks lived next door to them. At first they were active in the grand new Woodford Congregational Church, already famously the preserve of the James Spicers of Harts. The paper Spicers and the soap Cooks were numerous, radical, opinionated, and generous. A single church could not contain them. In 1875 the Cooks led a succession of Baptists and Congregationalists who joined with a group of Free Methodists to form Woodford Union Church. "We want unity, not uniformity", Edward Rider Cook insisted when he introduced the new cause's new minister at a public meeting in September 1879.⁹ There spoke an incorrigible Congregationalist and thereafter Woodford had two powerful Congregational Churches, one of which was also a duly constituted United Methodist Free Church in which Baptist members had full equality.

The Baptist element was justified. Edward Rider Cook's younger brother, Henry John Cook, had married Lucilla Mummery (1850-1934) at Regent's Park Baptist Church in May 1872. The Mummerys were a comfortably circumstanced East Kent family, equally active in Dover's Baptist and Congregational churches. Lucilla's uncle, W.R. Mummery, thrice Mayor of Dover in the 1860s, was a tanner whose fine brick Jacobean-Carolean Maison Dieu House had been the Agent Victualler's residence and was to become the borough library.¹⁰ Lucilla's cousin, Alfred Frederick Mummery, "who in his enthusiasm for technical difficulty and elegant lines was arguably the first modern climber", perished in the Himalayas.¹¹ Lucilla's father, John Rigden Mummery (d. 1885), was a West End dentist who, having transferred his membership from Dover's Zion Congregational Church to Dover's Salem Baptist Church in 1856, transferred again to the Congregational Craven Chapel, London, in 1858, and thence to Regent's Park Baptist Church. Lucilla's brother, Howard Mummery, practised dentistry in Cavendish Square; his wife was a daughter of the pioneer medical missionary William Lockhart (1811-1896), Chairman of the London Missionary Society 1869-70, in China from 1838 to 1867 and very briefly in Japan in 1864.¹² Home and foreign missions, national and local politics, educational and commercial opportunity, were thus inseparable from being a Cook.

When Yadao Yanaihara first encountered the family, the glory days had passed. Lever Brothers had taken over the firm in 1911, the family connection was to

9. R.L. Galey, *The History of the Woodford Green United Free Church*, Woodford 1968, *passim*, esp. p. 55.

10. It is now civic offices. I must declare an interest: my grandparents first met in the 1890s, as teachers in the Sunday School of Russell Street Congregational Church: teachers' meetings were then held in Maison Dieu House, at that time still a Mummery residence. For the Mummerys see J. Bavington Jones, *Dover*, Dover 1907, pp. 50-51, 98; *Idem*, *Annals of Dover*, 2nd ed. Dover 1938, pp. 283, 297-8, 349-50.

11. J.B. Jones, *Dover*, p. 51; Alison Fell, "Heightening life", *Times Literary Supplement*, 9 October 1992, p. 32.

12. James Sibree, ed., *London Missionary Society: A Register of Missionaries, Deputations, Etc. From 1796 to 1923* 4th ed., London 1923, pp. 43-4.

cease in 1925 and the works would dwindle to nothing in the following decade.¹³ Henry John Cook had died in 1918 and his widow and unmarried daughters found it both convenient and companionable to take paying guests. The Firs, incorporating two doors from Thomas Binney's study, had been their home since 1886, a large house, set back in good grounds facing the High Road, convenient for Union Church and safely across the Green from Harts. It remained the Cooks home until 1924, when Lucilla Cook and her daughters moved to the smaller Oakfield, close by.

The household's liveliness and hospitality is well conveyed in Yanaihara's letters. Mrs. Cook died in 1934, her daughters Marian and Olive in 1956 and 1948 respectively. The Kenneth and Hugh who are mentioned were Cook grandsons, children of Bernard Cook (1879-1966), Old Millhillian, chemical manufacturer, and deacon and life deacon at Woodford Union Church; he was as instrumental in promoting the re-union in 1946 of the two Woodford Churches as his father and uncle had been in their separation seventy years earlier.¹⁴ The Jean who is also mentioned is Bernard's daughter. She remembers "Uncle Hara", and has a Japanese doll which he gave her and a card which he sent her on the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Sunday School Movement: "A Greeting from the Sunday Schools of Japan". And she recalls that in the 1950s Tadao Yanaihara's son, Katsu, who is also mentioned in his letter of 1928, visited her and the Bernard Cooks in Woodford Green.¹⁵

CLYDE BINFIELD

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13. Edward Leonard Cook (1874-1925), a son of E.R. Cook, was a director of Lever Brothers 1919-1925. The firm's decline can be followed in Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 77, 96, 116-7, 122. 302-3, 319.
 14. Galey, *op. cit.*, *passim*, esp. pp. 73-5.
 15. For Tadao Yanaihara see Susan Catherine Townsend, "Yanaihara Tadao's Critique of Japanese Colonial Policy 1923-1938: A Case Study", unpublished Sheffield Ph.D. dissertation, 1995; Susan C. Townsend, *Yanaihara Tadao and Japanese Colonial Policy, Redeeming Empire*, Richmond, 2000.

REVIEWS

Let It Go among Our People: An Illustrated History of the English Bible from John Wyclif to the King James Version. By David Price and Charles C. Ryrie. Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2004. ISBN 0 7188 20423; £30, pp. 160.

To mark the beginning of the third millennium, two competing lectern-sized editions of the Bible were published in the United States. They were cranked off old cast-iron hand presses and contained only the finest materials. An engraver was employed to model biblical figures on men and women whom he knew. The finished articles retail at between 10,000 and 11,000 dollars apiece. Clearly these bibles are intended for the rich, for collectors and private libraries, for cathedrals and churches in wealthy suburbs.

The irony in the contrast between the intention of the early translators and the perceived market of these two modern editions will not be lost on those who are familiar with the history of the English Bible. When the first English translations were produced five centuries ago, it was intended that they should be available to all. A vernacular version of the Scriptures would give the common people access to God's word. The Bible would no longer be the monopoly of the clergy.

This book tells the story of the way in which the Scriptures were made available to the English-speaking public. Until Wyclif made his translation in the fifteenth-century from the Vulgate, the Bible was the preserve of the priest. Though produced on vellum, Wyclif's Bible was specifically "for the people". Early in the following century Erasmus recorded his dissent "from those who are unwilling that the sacred Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue, should be read by the unlearned." He wanted the farmer to sing parts of them as he followed the plough and the weaver as he worked at the shuttle. It was Tyndale who took Erasmus's wishes seriously and produced an English version of most of the Bible. When Henry VIII was presented with Coverdale's Bible, he said, "if there be no heresies, then in God's name let it go abroad among our people." The most controversial aspect of the Geneva Bible is the notes appended to each chapter; they were to become notorious for their political implications. But the intention was to "provide spectacles for weak eyes"; to help the common people understand Scripture by explaining difficult words, and clarifying the sense. William Allen, founder of the Roman Catholic college at Douai, sought the Pope's permission for an English translation in order to help the clergy when they were preaching "to the unlearned". The Douai New Testament appeared in 1582. By 1611 there were many English translations available; there was no need to make a new one. So the translators of the AV declare their intention of "making a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one". They realized their goal.

It is inevitable that this book should cover familiar territory. The English Bible has received a great deal of scholarly attention, not least during the past decade, as the appended bibliography indicates. The unique contribution of *Let it Go among Our People* is the illustrations, charts and tables. Each chapter contains excellent illustrative material, much of it taken from rare imprints, with lengthy

captions. The authors tell the story in pictures as well as in prose because they want the reader to experience the history as well as read it. Their hope that someone “who only looks at the pictures and reads the captions to them will have mastered the essential aspect of the history”, is by no means unrealistic. The authors and the press are to be congratulated on a most informative and beautifully produced volume, whose publication appropriately marks the quatercentenary of the Hampton Court Conference.

GARETH LLOYD JONES

The Art of Suffering and the Impact of Seventeenth-century Anti-Providential Thought. By Ann Thompson. London: Ashgate, 2003. £47.50 hb, pp. 214.

This attractively produced volume forms part of a series on new critical thinking in religion, theology and Biblical studies. The emphasis is chiefly placed on contemporary research, and the themes are closely associated with these broad dimensions. It is a carefully structured volume which examines the concept of “suffering” in its practical and theoretical contexts as well as the Puritan impact on the art of suffering. In the period down to the 1640s people were taught by manuals which concentrated on suffering and how best to overcome it. The teaching enabled them to endure and cope with the depression which ensued in a world lacking today’s methods of combating physical and mental affliction.

The subject-matter is God-related and the volume investigates how the individual might contend with suffering while maintaining a defence of God against arguments which deny his perfection and divine attributes. The intellectual qualities revealed assist the reader to evaluate one of the major topics of discussion in the seventeenth-century when Puritanism was at its most potent as a movement providing stimulus on issues considered essential to the individual faced by the traumas of suffering. The relatively small number of available literary sources are analysed in considerable depth so as to expose how litterateurs interpreted the manner in which the sufferer faced the realities of his condition. The motive in writing this volume is to illustrate how suffering can be dealt with in relation to God.

The study is divided into nine chapters, with three appendices and an extensive bibliography. It commences by discussing the art of suffering in the context of the godly life, its content, the art of suffering in its changed form in the latter half of the seventeenth-century, and the doctrine of contentment. These issues are expanded in four further chapters which examine selected contemporary works illustrating the central issues of the volume. The appendices cover an assessment of Richard Baxter’s *The Life of faith: in three parts* (1670), the impact of sermon-writing on the godly art of suffering and “residual” versions which constitute what remains of interpretations of godly life and of suffering.

The seventeenth-century provided writings which focused on the art of suffering. It was an age when Puritan expositions of the frailty of human life

demanded that thoughts on suffering, defined as the punishments sent by God for sinning, be at the disposal of the literate and religiously inclined. The reflective strain in Puritan thought led its exponents to place more emphasis on moral weaknesses and the spiritual needs of the future and not on the pleasures of the present. In this context the author examines changes in the interpretation of suffering, which is an inheritance from the Middle Ages, as part of God's means of attaining salvation, and how it is enhanced and developed by "anti-providential thought". Further examination of literature highlights the means by which discussions of suffering are interpreted to preserve the image of God in his goodness.

The first chapter examines the state of the godly life art of suffering using contemporary texts. The second chapter explores more profoundly the contents of the godly life of suffering. That is followed by a discussion of the role of faith to the believer who endures suffering, as illustrated, for example, in Richard Rogers's *Seven Treatises* (1603), and William Perkins's *How to Live, and that well* (1601). This involves close textual study of suffering relative to personal experience. Thus, in the later seventeenth-century suffering was passively accepted and the "unbridgeable distance" between God and man, the creator and the sinner, and the stress on the universal rather than the particular took on a different perspective, while the earlier period dealt with the Puritan practical identify whereby connection with God also involved personal associations between God, suffering, and the individual. Thus, in the post-1640 period, suffering was passively accepted and the "unbridgeable distance" between God and man, the creator and the sinner, and the stress on the universal rather than the particular providence of God led invariably to the art of contentment. The second half of the century was also interpreted as a defence of God.

The volume offers a scholarly analysis and a skilful use of texts and commentary. It contains closely-argued sets of themes extending over the seventeenth-century. Unfortunately, too much of the doctoral thesis is retained in the style and presentation, and arguments are not always clearly expounded, particularly for readers unfamiliar with theological dimensions in the early modern era. For example, an opening section on religious thought within the historical context of the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries would have helped in what is throughout a tightly-structured study. The depth and breadth of research, however, fully deserves commendation for its exactitude and methodology. Source material is dexterously interwoven into the text thus enriching its scholarship. The volume opens new avenues of thought and expands critical debate focused on historical concepts of the art of suffering.

J. GWYNFOR JONES

The Appearance of Evil: Apparitions of Spirits in Wales. By Edmund Jones, edited with introduction by John Harvey. University of Wales Press. 2003. £15.99, pp. 164. ISBN 0708318541.

This book is really a reprint of a work partly entitled *A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales* which Edmund Jones (1702-93) published in 1780. Apparently, it was a sequel to a previous work on apparitions which Jones had published in 1767, but which now seems lost. Jones was an Independent minister whose ministry was based on the Pontypool area in Monmouthshire. He established a meeting-house in 1741 at Pontnewynydd, but he was also an itinerant preacher whose evangelistic work took him to most parts of Wales. His Independency was not of the dry, and academic variety (he was not one of the "Sentars sych") but rather of an evangelistic and enthusiastic sort. In his introduction, Professor Harvey says of him, "he embraced the new enthusiasm, thus bridging the Old Dissent and New Dissent".

Given that Jones's brand of Nonconformity was evangelical, Bible-centred and Calvinist, it is at first difficult to understand how he came to be interested in the occult and para-normal. Harvey's introduction and epilogue explain in a masterly way how apparitions of spirits became for Jones a major strand of his evangelicalism. Without Harvey's guidance Jones's text could easily be dismissed as having only curiosity value, but as readers progress through the enlightening and fascinating introduction, the theological and pastoral significance of the retelling of what otherwise one might discount as mere ghost stories will dawn upon them. In my opinion, it is Harvey's account of the aims and mission of Jones which make this reprint worthwhile.

What Jones feared would ensnare his contemporaries was the rationalism of the Enlightenment, the enemy of piety and spirituality and the propagator of materialism and profanity. For him the accounts he had received of apparitions from science and sincere persons served as ammunition to counter materialist unbelief found in the opinions of "Atheists, Deists, Sadducees, Arians and Socinians". (The same purpose apparently was served by astrology, and Jones was not inhibited by his Calvinism from casting his horoscope.) Many of these sceptics, according to Jones, belonged to the gentry, and he wondered why. "But why is it that so many of the gentry affect to deny these important matters of fact?" Is it not because they are further alienated from God and spiritual things than others in common. They were poor that received the Gospel in the days of Jesus Christ, not the Sadducees."

In themselves, few of the stories Jones recounts could be regarded as genuinely uplifting or enlightening in a spiritual way. They are often concerned with apparitions revealing where hidden money or gold might be found, and ordering that it be cast into rivers or lakes. As one would expect there are numerous accounts of corpse-candles, sky hounds of various types and fairies (*ellyllon*, *gwyllion*, etc.), and also supernatural sounds like *cyhyraeth*. Indeed it is probably only the account of the heavenly visitation vouchsafed to David Thomas with its accompanying divine singing which is truly joyful. Jones is aware of this, and he

is from time to time led to ponder the role of apparitions in the divine plan. One is not surprised that among their functions is to give warnings, particularly of impending death. They might also have the effect of making those who become aware of them mend their ways and turn from sins like theft, fornication and cockfighting. Jones is aware too that the exact status of visiting spirits within an orthodox Protestant theology demands an explanation.

John Harvey is Professor of Fine Art and Director of the Centre for Studies in the Visual Culture of Religion at University of Wales, Aberystwyth. Apparitions fall within his field of interest because, as he says in his epilogue, "Apparitions are visual phenomena, 'seen' either in the mind's eye of a witness or as part of the external world. They are, in an honorary sense, artefacts too – the product and representation (or projection) of the religious imagination... Accordingly, they are as much within the province of the historian of art and visual culture as within that of the theologian and psychic investigator".

The theological dimension of apparitions is discussed briefly in the introduction where it is interesting to see the difference in approach between Luther and Calvin. Luther seems to allow (as did the Roman Catholic tradition) that salvation may at least be facilitated by the visual, whereas for Calvin salvation is by faith, and faith comes by hearing. Facing the table of contents, Harvey has placed a quotation by Luther which represents in an earlier age the stance which Jones was determined to oppose. "When these things happen (apparitions of spirits), then the philosophers and physicians say, it is natural, ascribing it to the planets, and showing I know not what reasons for such misfortunes and plagues as ensue".

A hundred years ago, a great evangelical revival raised the spiritual consciousness of people in Wales to great heights. It is interesting to note, as Harvey does in his epilogue, that the type of apparition associated with the Evan Roberts Revival was quite unlike that encountered in the eighteenth-century, and to wonder why.

E. GWYNN MATTHEWS

Early Congregational Independency in the Highlands and Islands and the North-East of Scotland. By William D. McNaughton. Tiree: The Trustees of Ruaig Congregational Church; obtainable from The United Reformed Church Synod of Scotland. Pp. xxix, 659. £20.00 plus £5.00 postage.

Having already served us well with *The Scottish Congregational Ministry 1794-1993*, W. D. McNaughton places us further in his debt with this sturdy and inexpensive volume. He has an important story to tell of a generally neglected episode in Scottish history: that concerning the Congregational pastor-and-student evangelists whose itinerant ministry did so much to propagate the Gospel in the eighty years to 1870. I said that McNaughton has an important story to tell, and certainly he interprets what is going on in a lucid and balanced way. But what especially delights is that wherever possible he allows the actors to speak in their own words. His investigation of sources, many of them scarce and all of them

listed, is well nigh exhaustive, and his use of them is exemplary; the notes and indices are a boon, and the illustrations afford further illumination. But the story, told county by county, is the thing. What follows is an attempt to present something of the flavour of it.

The initial impetus towards the movement which became the Scottish Congregational Union (1812) came from the Evangelical Revival, one of the Scottish products of which was the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home. Whereas the primary concern of the early English Congregationalists and their Separatist harbingers was ecclesiological, in post-Revival Scotland the quest was for vital religion – a quest which implied a critique of Moderatism. However, a number of awakened Scots became distressed by what they perceived as disciplinary laxity in the denominations to which they belonged, and their desire for a regenerate church membership led them towards the Congregational polity.

All was not plain sailing, however. The internal divisiveness which had characterized the earlier Berean, Old Scots, and Glasite versions of Independency was not unknown among the new breed of Congregationalists. A significant split occurred in 1808, when James Haldane, a major financial supporter of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, embraced Baptist views and drew others after him. Thereafter a number of regional evangelistic agencies were established, and it became normal to release Congregational pastors, as well as students at the Glasgow Theological Academy conducted by Ralph Wardlaw, for summer itinerancy. The stated objectives of the Congregational Union were church aid and home mission.

Following the publication of C. G. Finney's *Lectures on Revivals* (1835) some took to the "new measures", to the dismay of such moderate Calvinists as Wardlaw, who smelled the burning rubber of Arminianism. The associated theological issue concerned the extent of the atonement. Nine theological students were expelled from the Glasgow Academy over this and, more generally, there was a loss of members to the Evangelical Union (1843), whose principal leader was James Morison. The teaching of John McLeod Campbell was not without influence in some districts. In 1847 John Morison of Millseat used the occasion of an infant's baptism to defend the paedobaptist position, some members of his church having recently withdrawn following a visit of Alexander Campbell of America.

The Disruption of 1843 and the "coming out" of "the Church of Scotland, Free" resulted in the existence of a sizeable Church committed to evangelical theology – the very thing that the Congregationalists had organized to provide. Their growth was henceforth inhibited, not least because their terms of (regenerate) membership were stricter than those prevailing in some Presbyterian circles. Emigration made further inroads into their membership, and depleted the rural populations in which they had been evangelistic pioneers. It is also the case that not all of those who flocked to hear the evangelists became church members. At Thurso in 1836, for example, whereas 300 attended the morning service and 350/400 the evening, there were but sixty church members. Whereas Greville Ewing, the architect of Scottish Congregationalism, advocated the role of itinerant

evangelist to the end, no revivals were heard of after 1874, the founding (c. 1873) of a college at Sannox for the training of Gaelic evangelists notwithstanding.

The dedication and self-sacrifice of the Congregationalists shines through. At Kintyre the landlord deprived them of their farms, and one man, "while removing his effects in a boat, was drowned in the sea, leaving a widow and several young children." At Knockando, the clergy influenced the "Lords of the soil" and "Several individuals were put out of their farms, and others have suffered a good deal from their relatives." At Oban a large gathering, previously ignorant of the fact that such a text existed, heard the Act of Toleration read aloud. On Islay members were reluctant to provide hospitality to itinerant evangelists lest they "incur the displeasure of some petty local authorities, lay or ecclesiastical, or both." In some places ministers of the Church of Scotland refused to baptize the infants of, or grant burial spaces to, those who attended evangelists' meetings. At Inverness, on account of their voluntarism, the Congregationalists were represented as being in league with the Papists. By the 1870s, however, there was a degree of co-operation in some places, as at Oban, where the Congregational minister, Charles Whyte, and three Presbyterian ministers held regular united meetings in both English and Gaelic.

On the strength of a *Sale of Ladies' Work* in Edinburgh which raised £164, six Gaelic speaking Congregational ministers were sent as itinerants to Perthshire, Sutherland and the Western Isles. At Elgin, both the Lord's Supper and Church Meeting were held weekly, disciplinary cases being dealt with at the latter. From the account of Donald Galbraith of Campbelltown it appears that revivals could be something of a nuisance at times, and their results transitory: "The Revival, which appeared in this district in a most exciting form, tended rather to interfere with our ordinary arrangements, especially our Sabbath evening sermons and lectures, which used to form a most interesting part of my winter work. ... [M]atters are now getting quiet enough, and, as might be expected, a somewhat painful relapse is quite apparent." When John Arthur had the temerity to tell the tongue-speaking Mary Campbell of the Gare Lock that she was deluded, he was met with "much rolling of the eyes."

A positive response to the evangelists' efforts was not a foregone conclusion. One who heard the impressive James Kennedy preach "thought that every person present would be converted, except a woman I noticed asleep." On the other hand, a conscience-smitten young man who had been making malt illegally turned himself in to the authorities. A Highlander who walked nine miles to the services felt that he had a right to meetings lasting more than ninety minutes, while an old man, deprived of "the terrors of the law", rebuked a student who had majored on the love of God.

We need not doubt that William McGavin spoke for many when he said, "It is a noble thing to preach the gospel in a cathedral; but I hold it more honourable to preach it in a hovel; because it indicates that humility, disinterestedness, and self-denial, which ought always to characterise the ministers of Christ." The record of the evangelists is impressive. James and Alexander Dewar's dedication in preaching in all but three of the Gaelic parishes from Fort William to

John o' Groats and round to Cape Wrath is representative of the commitment of many. Nor should we forget Tommy, James Kennedy's brown pony. He always carried his master directly to his preaching engagements, "But on his homeward journey he knew well that there was no haste, and regardless of whip or spur he took his own wilful way, and traversed the road as best suited his own convenience." What else should we expect of a Congregational quadruped?

ALAN P.F. SELL

Protestant Nonconformity in the Twentieth Century. Edited by Alan P. F. Sell and Anthony R. Cross. Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003. £24.99, pp. x, 398. ISBN 1 84227 221 7. Illustrated.

Although we are still too close to give it the thorough and judicious treatment it deserves, it can be said without fear of contradiction that the twentieth century was a fascinating - and critical - one for Protestant Nonconformists. Any attempt to bring to light our history in that century should be encouraged, partly because there is so much to say and partly because church history, like other theological disciplines, often appears to give precedence to more dominant - or domineering - traditions. This collection of twelve essays, which began life as a conference of the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries in July 2000, is to be welcomed for its redressing of this imbalance and for issuing a timely reminder that, for Nonconformists, the twentieth century was not simply one of cruel and relentless decline. Indeed, its pages are replete with the spiritual energy, religious and social activity and the theological conviction which characterised Nonconformist witness during that century.

The book's first four chapters concern Nonconformist contributions to study and thought and reveal the depths of scholarly acumen which Nonconformity has been numerically and intellectually strong enough to produce over the past hundred years. In the opening chapter, John Tudno Williams surveys the contributions made to biblical studies. The chapter demonstrates the vitality once extant among Nonconformist denominations, though it tends to concentrate on the early twentieth century, with scholars such as Morna Hooker mentioned only in passing and Charles Cranfield and Graham Stanton not at all. Rather than omissions, however, what is remarkable is that Professor Williams was able to include so much - a feat mirrored in the book as a whole. Alan P. F. Sell promises a fuller account of Nonconformist theology and theologians, restricting himself here to some "theological excitements" of the twentieth century (quite a wide-ranging survey that includes, but is not restricted to, the usual references to R. J. Campbell's "New Theology" and the debate over *The Myth of God Incarnate*), the specific issue of establishment and, most provocatively, the state of Nonconformist theology as we enter the twenty-first century. His conclusion makes sobering reading as we are left wondering who it is who will maintain the link between openness in investigation and a high regard for the historical tradition (Reformed and Dissenting), two formative characteristics in

Nonconformist theology. David Cornick, rather wisely, chose to compare and contrast three historians of the twentieth century instead of trying to comment on them all. The result is an exquisite and perspicacious analysis not only of the volumes considered but of the context in which they were produced. There is something especially insightful about the analysis here, leaving the reader wishing that Dr Cornick would publish more. D. Denis Morgan offers a more comprehensive account of the contribution made by Welsh Nonconformist historians. Beautifully written, this chapter is sure to make the main exponents and their work more fully known to a readership to whom the names may be familiar but whose work - written as much of it was in Welsh - remains a mystery.

There follow three chapters about Nonconformist practice - namely its worship, architectural context and evangelistic activity. Norman Wallwork offers a comprehensive overview of liturgical developments largely based on analyses of various service books published by the different denominations over the course of the century. The treatment is thorough and enlightening, though blighted slightly by the methodology. Given its importance in Nonconformist worship, one might have expected more on preaching (not to mention *preachers*) and hymnody. Clyde Binfield's lively essay on twentieth-century Nonconformist architecture is as fascinating as it is informative. Though supplemented with fourteen photographs (all taken by the author), his prose descriptions are highly evocative and serve the reader as well as do the pictures. A detailed description of Trinity United Reformed (formerly Presbyterian) Church, Norwich, focuses the thesis, that these buildings "capture the twentieth century". David Bebbington reviews the century and the evangelistic activities of the Nonconformists as a whole, detailing a common evangelicalism shared in the Free Church Councils (what R. Tudur Jones called "the evangelical accord"), through Keswick holiness teaching and Billy Graham crusades, a spirituality centred on discovering Jesus in the world ("The discovery [of Christ] was to be by the missionary, not the missioned"), Charismatic renewal, Toronto Blessing and Alpha courses, leading to a remarkable diversity by the end of the century. Professor Bebbington's conclusion includes the unexpected statistic that the "Free Churches" (including the newer independent, pentecostal and house churches) comprised the largest group of church-goers in England in 1998 - a fact belied by the aura of decline which gripped Nonconformity during the latter years of the century.

The next three chapters deal with some ethical aspects of Nonconformist witness. Keith Robbins outlines the tension felt in Nonconformity as it sought to take a legitimate role in government but felt unease at the validity of using force to solve disputes. Perhaps Nonconformists more than any had meditated upon the dilemma concerning "the relationship between [and reconciliation of] power and the pursuit of peace". But, as Professor Robbins notes in conclusion, they found no solutions and "these age-old problems are still with us". Alan Ruston confines his comments to the period of the Great War and the almost unequivocal support given it by the Nonconformists - and that contrary to the ideals which they had previously espoused. As a result, he claims that they became part of the Establishment and the weaknesses which emerged remain with us in the present.

It was indeed the “great” war for Nonconformists, as the author reveals the inherent hypocrisy in attempting to maintain the moral high ground while also championing a petty moralism which (for example) expected the army to stop rifle practice on the Sabbath. David, J. Jeremy comments on the Nonconformist contribution to the world of business including the influence of education, enterprising individuals, trust networks, reformed business systems and the undergirding of Nonconformist values. His account of the contribution of business to Nonconformity is largely restricted to a fascinating analysis of the candidates for Vice-Presidency of the Methodist Conference (because that information is available). It might have been illuminating to have had more on the development of business policies in the twentieth century and to have seen whether or not they were employed by Nonconformist denominations. Nevertheless, the conclusion that business had a greater impact on Nonconformity than vice versa demands further theological as well as historical consideration.

The final two chapters tend to plough their own furrow, one in a peripheral but interesting subject while the other regards what has become a virtual orthodoxy among “mainstream” Protestant Nonconformist. The contribution by Hugh R. Boudin is a valuable study of French-speaking Protestant Congregations in Britain, unearthing facts hitherto unknown to many historians of Reformed Christianity in these islands. Entwined as it is with the Huguenot and Free French diaspora – and the persecution which caused both – there can be little doubt that this group of Protestants deserves to be grouped in an anthology on English and Welsh Dissent, though this reviewer would have liked some comment on the relationship between the two. John A. Newton gives an account of ecumenical development during the century from its concentration on united action (1910 Edinburgh missionary conference), through efforts at organic union, to the emphasis on local partnership. It seems that organic union rather than local co-operation is closest to Dr Newton’s heart, and that despite the empirical evidence which suggests – notwithstanding Methodist re-union in 1932 and the formation of the United Reformed Church forty years later – that such a development remains a long way off.

Scholarly and erudite, illuminating, perceptive, and at times brilliant, this collection of essays is essential reading for students of twentieth-century religious history in England and Wales, and is accessible enough to those whose interest is more general. They draw two major points to attention. First, Nonconformity, especially during the first half of the twentieth century, retained a vitality and social significance which is often obscured by concern over later decline. Secondly, Nonconformity, even during the latter half of the twentieth century, was sufficiently vibrant to produce this set of scholars. While no-one could deny the decline both in membership and influence, the book hints at the possibility that, at times, we overplay this card.

This collection does a great service to historians of the present and of the future in recording so much of our history before it is lost to us. There is, of course, more to be said and it is all too easy to highlight sins of omission. What is truly

remarkable is that the book succeeds in saying as much as it does. We would do well to reconsider the tradition which it describes and analyses, as well as rediscover what it stood for, before we are finally overcome not so much by decline but by the mentality of decline which pervades and paralyses the church in the present. It is to be hoped that the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries will organise further conferences and produce similar studies for, if this collection is anything to go by, they can only enrich our knowledge of the past and assist our understanding of the present.

ROBERT POPE

Christian Youth Movements, Their History and Significance

to be held on Friday 17 – Sunday 19 February 2006

The Sesquicentenary of the founding of the World Alliance of YMCAs is celebrated in 2005. That is also the centenary of the death of George Williams, founder of London YMCA. The World Alliance claims to be the oldest N.G.O. to have its headquarters in Geneva. London YMCA claims to be the representative prototype YMCA. It is proposed to hold a Conference – in Birmingham in *Christian Youth Movements conference continued*

February 2006 – to explore the history and significance of the Christian Youth Movements. The University of Birmingham's extensive Special Collections include the Archive of YMCA England, which is exceeded in significance only by the Archive of the YMCA of the USA at the University of Minnesota, and the Archive of the World Alliance itself, in Geneva.

The subject is large and rewarding. It embraces class, networks, gender and sexuality; youth, and age; nationalism, and internationalism; formation, education and citizenship; ecumenism, spirituality, personality; muscular Christianity, and sports; internationalism, and war; Euro-Americanism, imperialism, and colonialism; development and the rural/urban divide. What is explored, how it is explored, and who is to explore it, depend significantly on the interest that is expressed. Initial expressions of interest are solicited. Please send them with appropriate synopses to the Royal Historical Society, University College London, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT, E-mail: royalhistosoc@ucl.ac.uk, or to Professor Clyde Binfield (address on back cover).