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DIARY OF A BIRMINGHAM METHODIST

MARCH 1791. After a few days illness, a cold succeeded by a fever carried to his long home the Revd. and venerable John Wesley; who, notwithstanding his peculiarities, was an honour and an ornament to the religion he professed, and to the nation he belonged to.

Being so remarkable a person, no doubt his character, writings and sentiments will attract the attention of various writers, so that it were unnecessary I should stop to say more.

This economically brief comment occurs in the manuscript diary of a young Birmingham business-man. Only recently transcribed for family interest, it illustrates the impact of Methodism on everyday life at the end of the eighteenth century.

Julius Hardy, the writer of the diary, was in business with a brother, in the button-making industry. The first entry—in December 1788—describes an altercation between these two which resulted in his leaving the house where he had lived with his brother Joseph and his wife, and setting up his own bachelor establishment; and for the two years until his marriage he made his diary his confidant, for lack of a close human companion.

Attendances at Methodist meetings were recorded frequently during this period, often with appreciation or criticism of the preachers and their subject-matter. In Birmingham at this time he was well placed for sermon-tasting. Methodism, after meeting with some rowdy opposition in the early days, was now well established; and John Wesley, visiting the town earlier that year, recorded

a glorious increase of the work of God. The Society is risen to above eight hundred; so that it is at present inferior to none in England, except those in London and Bristol.¹

Because of its geographical position, Birmingham was visited by many of the notable preachers of the day when going to or returning from Conference, and Wesley himself included it in his itinerary for many years.

¹ *Journal*, vii, p. 365.

As a child Julius Hardy was probably taken to hear Wesley preach in the gloomy converted playhouse which was the meeting-place of the society from 1763 (the year he was born) until 1782. In July of that year Wesley had opened a large new meeting-house at Cherry Street, when Hardy had been present and suffered "great agitation of mind" as ominous sounds were heard in the overcrowded place and

the whole congregation seemed to be struck with dismay, expecting it to fall, when after it was found only to be occasioned by some loose planks or benches breaking, being over-weighted by some back-hearers below.²

Claustrophobic remembrance of this made him refrain from attending Cherry Street on 21st March 1790—the occasion of Wesley's last visit. He records:

The aged and reverend gentleman at the usual hour of night took his public leave of an uncommonly numerous audience, as I was told, at Cherry Street; many predicting the possibility of their never being seen by each other again on this side of the grave, the final repository of young and old, rich and poor. For my own part, I staid away.

But he had already heard Wesley preach on the previous Friday evening, and at six o'clock on Saturday, when Alexander Mather and Dr. Hamilton had also been present; again at half-past ten on the Sunday morning, at Coleshill Street meeting-house, when

such multitudes crowded in as to fill that place in a degree beyond anything I ever remember to have seen upon any occasion whatsoever, or anywhere: or in other words, altho' I may have seen greater assemblies of people, yet I never saw any place so crammed with auditors.

Julius Hardy attended impartially Cherry Street, the largest of the Birmingham meeting-houses; Coleshill Street, also opened by Wesley in 1789, at what was then the eastern extremity of the town, later known as Belmont Row chapel; or the one nearest to his own home in Weaman's Row, which he refers to as Deritend (later Bradford Street). None of these chapels now exists, and the extensions and rebuilding of the city make it almost impossible to identify their sites; but the following entry, in January 1789, recalled to people living there a few years ago a childhood memory of the area:

18th, Lord's Day. In going this morning to meeting, I was stopped for some time before I could get over the water, it being quite impassible [sic] at the bottom of Digbeth and on the other side Deritend Bridge. This was owing to the heavy rain which fell last night. At length a friend going over lent me his horse. The congregation was uncommonly thin.

Nevertheless he went again in the afternoon, though again "there was not, I think, so many as usual".

The hours for meeting on Sunday were already beginning to be changed from those which at first were fixed to avoid interference

² For John Wesley's own comment on this incident, see *Journal*, vi, p. 360.

with church services; but the early morning preaching was still normal in Birmingham, and there were frequent evening meetings during the week. The diary contains many entries recording attendance at such meetings, giving the names of preachers, their texts, and comments appreciative or critical of their style and of the doctrinal teaching given. Conference in 1789 brought many eminent preachers to Birmingham in the course of their travelling. On the evenings of the 4th, 6th, and 7th August, and at 5 a.m. on the 8th (Saturday) there were preaching services; and then—

Aug. 9th. Lord's Day forenoon, a gentleman from the north, a physician of the name of . . . Hamilton,³ officiated at Coleshill Street meeting house, where attended a many strangers in expectation, I suppose, of a fresh preacher. This person preached, too, in the evening at Cherry Street, as also on the 10th & 11th . . . at the usual hours, at the same place, where attended a great number of people, especially on the latter day. I hope his occasional ministrations will prove a blessing. He had on his professional wig: but yet appeared very humble and earnestly desirous of good being done.

And the following week:

16th. Coleshill Street meeting house was much crowded whilst Dr. Coke at the usual hour read the service, and delivered a most animated discourse: after which, being solicited, I engaged to accompany him and assist in making a private collection for the support of some missionaries engaged for the conversion of the negroes in the British Islands in the West Indies. This we began to execute on the . . .

17th . . . meeting with tolerable good success; yet not having applied to all in our lists, we took another tour on the two following days . . .

18th & 19th . . . On the former, the Doctor preached at Cherry Street to a very numerous assembly. The sum paid and promised on these days of collecting I believe will be about forty-five pounds.

This Conference also brought to Birmingham, as one of the newly-appointed ministers, Joseph Benson. Julius Hardy at once fell under the spell of his preaching and personality, and very quickly struck up a friendship with him. He writes:

I found him to be even more moderate in some controverted points than I had previously imagined, and no bigot in any, so far as I could perceive; and withal of a most loving, friendly, joined to a catholic, spirit; no novice, nor yet high-minded,⁴ as is unhappily the case with some of the Methodist preachers. At our parting I invited him to dine with me, which he did on the Wednesday following.

On this social occasion Mr. Benson brought with him his wife, together with another preacher newly appointed to the Birmingham circuit, John Smith, who also met with his host's approval. The diary entry for 2nd September 1789 adds further encomiums on Mr. Benson's gifts and graces. In conversation, the latter mentioned

a request having been made at last by Mr. Henry Taylor, thro' him, to Mr. Wesley at last Conference, for Mr. W. to republish Mr. Baxter's

³ i.e. Dr. James Hamilton of Dunbar.

⁴ This term is used consistently in the diary in the sense of "arrogant".

reformed "Pastor" [i.e. *Reformed Pastor*], but he did not say he would. On which account Mr. Benson had some thoughts of undertaking that task. I lent him Mr. Palmer's Abridgement of that excellent treatise which I happened to have by me; and he borrowed of me, too, a little performance in manuscript: Mr. Ryland's⁵ "Complaint against the Discipline and Government of the Established Church".

On the two evenings following this dinner, large congregations assembled to hear Samuel Bradburn—first at Cherry Street and then at Coleshill Street. His preaching was not entirely acceptable to Hardy, however:

One thing he dropped, which I was much surprised at: not only ministers, says he, but people, too, have a right to express private judgment; yea, this right is both inalienable and indefeasible in religious matters; and that it was a crime in any to permit themselves [?] to be deprived] of what might justly be stiled the birthright of every reasonable creature.

Without criminating Mr. Bradburn's, and the conduct of all the other preachers who still adhere, they know not for why may be, to the Established Church, how can this and such-like speeches be reconciled with the idea of Methodistical Conformity? . . . Let me add, for all this Mr. Bradburn made an excellent discourse, which he spun out to the length of about an hour and a half, because of the rain being very heavy during service . . .

It was not only in his home-town that Julius Hardy enjoyed a good sermon. Travelling in connexion with his business took him periodically up to London; and on 1st March 1789 he records:

At half-past three I went with a serious person whom I met with at my inn, to hear Mr. Wesley who had been appointed to preach a Charity Sermon for the benefit of some poor boys and girls; and notwithstanding we were there about an hour and a half before service began, we had difficulty to get a tolerable sitting.

After this service Wesley was to set out on his next itinerary; and, meeting by chance a friend who was a local preacher, Hardy was glad of the opportunity, by this person's suggestion, to go into Mr. Wesley's house, but I did not see him; my friend went upstairs and bad [e] him farewell, but I did not go. Afterwards I see him set off in the Mail Coach for Bath.

The previous day, a Sunday, he had gone with three business friends to "a Presbyterian meeting near Paul's Church . . . The minister made a very useful, judicious discourse, and I came away much profited thereby."

Later that year, again in London on business, Hardy took the

⁵ The author here mentioned, the Rev. John Ryland, was the rector at this time of St. Mary's, Birmingham, in which parish Julius Hardy lived; he was not only sympathetic to the Methodists, but a personal friend of John Wesley. It is mentioned elsewhere in the diary that Wesley would normally attend Ryland's church when in Birmingham on a Sunday; and occasions are recorded when the rector and his curate and successor, the Rev. John Burn, attended services at which Wesley preached. Julius Hardy was personally acquainted with him—a circumstance which no doubt accounts for his possessing this manuscript work.

step of calling on John Wesley, who had just returned to town. This was on 24th October :

The old gentleman looked very hearty ; his sight, to be sure, evidently fails ; for on my saying I could wish to speak to *him* and on our leaving the front parlour, where was his own sister and some others going to tea, and in going to a back room, he could hardly see his way.

By my putting a few questions to him relating to the subject, I presently found he was irritated at Dr. Coke's making a collection for the cause he is engaged in, in the W. Indies. How far this conduct in Mr. Wesley is right I will not, because I cannot, by any means determine. 'Tis true, I was not convinced of the Doctor's committing any crime therein, by anything that was dropped at this time. Still more was Mr. W. embittered at the mention of Mr. Jno. Undrell's name, for whom he seems resolved to do nothing whatsoever in his public capacity.

This reference to John Undrell is explained later.

The following day, Sunday, in the morning Hardy attended West Street chapel. He describes the service in some detail :

... some revd. Divine read the prayers, and Mr. Wesley preached. [There was] a tolerably full congregation, the men on one side, the women opposite. Afterwards the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was administered by the two ministers before noted, and one other whom I did not know, in their surplices, the people kneeling and receiving. They sang two or more hymns out of Mr. Wesley's collection during the ceremony . . . Only in that matter of singing the hymns, otherwise I suppose the whole form of administration was gone through as is in use with the Establishment.

At half-past two, there being no Methodist service to which he could go at that time, he "called in at Mr. Bennett's Meeting house in Moorfields", where a Presbyterian minister preached, and he contributed sixpence to a collection "intended for the support of pastors in villages and smaller market towns, where the people are poor". And then :

At five o'clock service began at the New Meeting House in the City Road. Mr. Jno. Broadbent officiated, beginning with extemporate prayer, then an hymn, and the sermon, etc.—the same as, at most other Methodist meeting houses, is commonly the practice.

The publick service being ended, Mr. Wesley spoke for some time to the Society, and many others as well as myself who were not in connection. He reprimanded him for preaching so loud, saying that was by no means acceptable—to offer God murder for sacrifice. Then he scolded the leaders (so termed) for not attending their weekly appointed meeting, as I suppose, for mutual consultation. He ended his oration by saying he was about to publish more at large again his thoughts on the impropriety as well as the inexpediency of the Methodists forsaking the Established Church, and becoming a distinct body separate from, and unconnected with, it. Whether this can be proved or not, will be best known when the publication comes out.

It is surprising to learn from this entry that Julius Hardy was not yet "in connection", in spite of his obvious strong attachment to the Methodists. Nor does he appear to attend any class meeting as a

member, though in one place he gives a list of all the class leaders in the Birmingham circuit at that time. He was constantly searching his mind, to establish just where his beliefs lay, being wary of "bigots" and cautious in regard to new lines of thought. Of another preacher then stationed in Birmingham—George Snowden—he says:

To be sure, his doctrinal sentiments are rather different to mine, being much inclined to Arminianism, whereas I suppose the truth to lie rather between than with rigid Calvinists or Arminians, so called.

And on another occasion:

Mr. Benson, I thought, was too severe in his censures upon the people called Socinians; no man could be saved, he asserted, who did not believe in the Atonement.

He refers more than once to "our dear brothers, the Dissenters".

The vital question of whether or not the Methodists should separate from the Established Church was by now being widely canvassed. On 18th July 1790, after hearing John Pawson in the morning, Hardy attended Deritend in the afternoon, where a large congregation heard

Rev. Mr. Atmore . . . one of those ministers in connection with Mr. Wesley, who had been ordained by him previous to his being sent to a Scottish circuit . . .

When service was over, he with Mr. Thompson another minister, with Mr. Mason my neighbour, myself and others, sat a little while at Mr. Gardner's house upon invitation of the family. On our leaving there, and in the way up street, Mr. Atmore and I had much friendly conversation. Amongst the rest he expressed an earnest desire that all the Methodist congregations had service the same as at Deritend, during Church-hours so called; and utterly reprobated the present system of ordination in the Establishment, saying no considerable reformation could reasonably be expected whilst the power of sending out ministers remained in the hands of the bishops. He recommended me to read Lord King's treatise on Church government . . .

Four days later:

There slept at my house this evening a Mr. James Watson, one of Mr. Wesley's preachers, stationed this year along with Mr. Consterdine in Derby circuit. From our conversation together, I presently found him bigotted enough, and by no means so well informed on controversial subjects as some others I have met with. I understood he had been bred a Dissenter, but it appears he has no attachment that way now—nay, he is somewhat violent against them, and probably altogether the idea of separation from the Established Church on the part of the Methodists. In short, he grieved me much with his narrow-mindedness.

The visiting preachers, before or after that Conference of 1790, included William Thompson, Daniel Jackson, William Hunter, Thomas Tennant, Thomas Taylor, Adam Clarke, Andrew Inglis, Thomas Hanby, Andrew Blair, and Joseph Cole.

In January 1791 Julius Hardy married; diary entries became much less frequent, and were concerned mainly with business matters and public affairs; but in May 1793 Birmingham had a visit from Samuel Bradburn, and speculation began to be aroused:

It seems he has been from his circuit some time, on a journey through South and North Wales, Cheshire, Lancashire, and is now on his return to Bristol. Suspicion, I doubt not, has attended him; several with us ask, what has he been about? How can he presume to leave Bristol so long? Surely he must have some fresh scheme in contemplation, in order to which he has been sounding the disposition of the people and preachers too. These and other conjectures I find already occupy the minds of high-flyers, zealous churchmen.

Bradburn preached three times—morning, afternoon and evening—on 26th May, to large and attentive congregations. The following morning Julius Hardy and another friend accompanied him on horse-back as far as Bromsgrove, and learned more in conversation.

I understand it is the determination of the liberal part of the Methodist ministers to be shackled no longer than till their ensuing yearly Conference. After that, it is their intention to drop that slavish adherence to the established Church, and by celebrating the Lord's Supper in their own congregations and baptising the children of such people as desire it, to assume more the appearance of an independent body of themselves. This, it appears that Mr. Benson and that party are not disposed to acquiesce [in]; at least, he tells Mr. Bradburn it is not the proper time, and is desirous of putting it off another year. Which of the two will prevail, time must discover . . . After all, whatever is for the best I hope will take place, at the ensuing Conference.

It is clear to Hardy that, in Birmingham at any rate, many are in favour of separating—a step which would result in “an acquisition of numbers, both ministers and people, to the liberal side”, and many new members, even though “Mr. and Mrs. Jones, William Parkes and it may be other individuals” would leave the Methodists.

A. MARION BANKS.

(To be continued)

[Miss Marion Banks, a Methodist living at Torquay, is a member of our Plymouth and Exeter Branch. She is the daughter of the late Rev. Thomas Hardy Banks, great-grandson of Julius Hardy. A copy of Hardy's diary has been donated by Miss Banks to the Archives Library. A few copies are still available, at 50p. each (including postage), and anyone wishing to have one should write to Miss A. M. Banks at 112, Westhill Road, St. Marychurch, Torquay, TQ1 4NT.]

We gratefully acknowledge the following periodicals, which have come to hand since the publication of the list in our last issue. Some of these are received on a reciprocal basis with our own *Proceedings*, and we appreciate the continuing friendly contact with our contemporaries in this field of study and research.

The Baptist Quarterly, January 1974.

The Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society,
November 1973.

Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, October 1973.

The Local Historian, Vol. 10, No. 8.

Methodist History, October 1973.

Cirplan, Michaelmas 1973.

THE WESLEYAN THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION

Hoxton and Abney House, 1834-42

AFTER many years of indecision, the Wesleyan Conference of 1833 appointed a committee "to provide a scheme for the education of the Preachers on the List of Reserve". The committee had its first meeting in October, and continued meeting at intervals throughout the connexional year. At the Conference of 1834 they presented their report. It bore the rather cumbersome title *Proposals for the formation of a Literary and Theological Institution, with a design to promote the improvement of the Junior Preachers in the Methodist Connexion*. The Conference accepted the proposals with little alteration—a concurrence which the committee had anticipated, having in fact exceeded its terms of reference and taken upon itself the nomination of persons to fill the principal offices. (It was this part of the report that was the cause of the "Warrenite Controversy", resulting in the expulsion of Dr. Samuel Warren from the Connexion.) Conference accepted the nominations:

President of the Institution—Jabez Bunting, D.D.
House Governor—Joseph Entwisle.
Theological Tutor—John Hannah, D.D.

No nomination was made for the office of Classical Tutor, but the Institution Committee was given permission to fill the position as soon as it was necessary. Early in 1835 the Rev. Samuel Jones, M.A. of the Irish Conference was appointed.

The first duty of the Institution Committee after the Conference was to find suitable premises, and within a month a building was rented at Hoxton, which was not a great distance from City Road, London—an advantage which was to be of help later.

Hoxton Theological Institute, 1834-42

The Hoxton premises had been used (with some short discontinuations) for over two hundred years before Methodism took them. Joshua Oldfield, who came from Coventry, founded an academy in 1700, and was there for 29 years. In 1762 the place became a Congregational academy, and remained so until 1785. In 1791 the Hoxton Independent Academy was formed by the Societas Evangelica, who remained until 1826. (Robert Morrison of China was trained there, 1803-7.) The London Missionary Society took over in 1826, and was there until 1830.

This building was offered to the committee acting on behalf of the Conference for £85 per annum. The London Missionary Society was anxious for it to be used for the purpose that Methodism had in mind, and moreover it was in need of repair. These factors probably constitute the reasons for so low a rental.

The first balance sheet, which is for sixteen months (1st September 1834 to 31st December 1835) gives details:

	£	s.	d.
Repairs and alterations to premises	626	12	5
Furnishings	1,250	18	0
House and Furnishings for Theological Tutor	412	16	11
General Purposes, including £75 for the commencement of the Library	361	13	7
	<hr/>		
	£2,652	0	11

Donations received from all over the Connexion for the same period, including £41 18s. 4d. Bank interest, amounted to £5,610 19s. 0d., leaving a credit balance of £2,958 18s. 1d.

The premises were ready for occupation by the beginning of December. Fourteen students had been selected by the Candidates' Examination Committee for training in the Institution, and from the beginning of October these men had been living in the homes of London preachers and receiving lectures at City Road chapel. According to the register, six students arrived at Hoxton on 12th December, five on the 13th, and one on the 30th. Two more arrived on 26th January 1835. The report says:

As it was found that all the students could be present by January 26th, and everything prepared for the regular commencement of the business of the Institution, it was agreed that a meeting of special prayer on the occasion should be held on the premises, and that all the Preachers resident in London and its immediate vicinity, should be invited to attend with the Committee. On that day the meeting was accordingly held, and the inmates of the Institution, and its objects, were solemnly commended to the blessing of Almighty God. The services were delightfully auspicious, and all who were present felt more deeply convinced than ever that the work was of God, and that therefore it would prosper.

In September 1835 thirteen students were admitted, and thirteen were continued for a second year. In 1836 sixteen students were admitted, five were continued for a third year, and ten for a second year. In 1837 the number of students selected by the Examination Committee was 37, and there now arose the problem of finding room for them. It was decided that seventeen men of the first year should be "out-door" students, which meant that they would live as near to the Institution as possible, and attend lectures during the day. The Institution report for 1837 says:

According to the plan thus agreed upon, those brethren who could not be admitted to reside in the Institution were to be considered as Out-door Students; they were to reside with Preachers as near the Institution as possible; they were to be required to be at the Institution at half-past six in the morning during the four or five winter months, and for the rest of the year, at six, and to attend to the lectures, studies, &c. in the same manner as though resident in the house; after dinner they were to return to their respective lodgings, and to pursue their studies for the remainder of the day in their own rooms.

The same arrangements were made for 1838. In 1839 another problem presented itself, for not only was there more room required, but it was also realized that the work of the tutors would be much more remunerative at Hoxton if the more elementary teaching were given elsewhere. The report of 1839 states:

It appeared to the Committee an unreasonable sacrifice of the time and energy of the Theological and Classical Tutors, that they should be employed in imparting to young men so unfurnished the mere elements of knowledge; and yet so long as they remained destitute of these essential means of future improvement, they were unprepared to receive, or adequately to profit by, a system of instruction which was adapted to a more advanced class of students.

After due consideration by the committee, it was decided that what they termed a "Preparatory or Auxiliary Branch" should come into being. The Conference adopted the recommendation of the committee.

Abney House Theological Institution, 1839-43

At the time the considerations were going on with regard to the "Preparatory Branch", the report for 1839 says:

A spacious residence was offered to them, in every way eligible for our purpose. It is situate at Stoke Newington, a beautiful and salubrious vicinity, and is well known as "Abney House".

The house was the old home of Sir Thomas and Lady Abney, where Isaac Watts lived as a guest for 36 years. It was in the grounds of this residence that John and Charles Wesley met Watts. In John Wesley's diary for 1738, under the date Wednesday, 4th October, we read:

. . . 1.30 at Dr. Watts', conversed; 2.30 walked, singing, conversed . . .

One wonders what they sang. The house was the property of the London Cemetery Company, but they were not ready for a time to demolish the building and convert the grounds. It was offered in the first instance for two years at £125 per annum. The balance sheet for 1839 shows that the following items were required before it could be used:

	£	s.	d.
Smiths' work and Ironmongery	155	13	1
Upholstery, Linen, and other Furniture	217	2	4
	<hr/>		
	£372	15	5

John Farrar was appointed "Tutor and Governor" of Abney House. Dr. Hannah lectured four times a week, and Thomas Jackson, who was at the time Connexional Editor, also gave lectures. In September 1839 there were at Hoxton two third-year students, 26 second-year, and 21 newly-admitted. Hoxton was full to capacity with 40 students. Nine of the first-year men had to be "out-door" students, three living with Thomas Jackson, two with John Hannah, and four with the Missionary Secretaries. The remaining 29 out of the 50 men accepted for training in the Institution that year were

admitted to Abney House. As will be seen from the lists printed on the succeeding pages, this was the highest number in residence there during the four years of its use.

As already stated, Abney House was taken at first for two years. Negotiations for the purchase of Richmond began in 1841, but could not be completed and the premises made ready until two years later. In the meantime the London Cemetery Company greatly assisted the Institution by continuing the letting until July 1843.

The history of Didsbury College was related in *Didsbury Centenary, 1842-1942*, a volume edited by the late Revs. W. Bardsley Brash and Dr. C. J. Wright, and the history of Richmond likewise told by the Rev. Dr. Frank H. Cumbers in *Richmond College, 1843-1943*. Both of these books contain an appendix in which lists of students are given according to their year of entry. There has not been hitherto any publication of the names of students who went to Hoxton or Abney House. Those given in the Institution report, as the report itself says, are not complete. The lists given here are, as far as we know, complete and correct.

Students entering Hoxton and Abney House

There are a number of discrepancies between the student registers and the lists given in the Theological Institution reports. These latter do not record the name of any student who did not spend a complete year in the Institution. A number of students were called out both for the home circuits and for the overseas stations before they could finish their first year's training. In some cases a student commenced a second or a third year but did not complete the full time.

The Candidates' Examination Committee (consisting of all the preachers of the London District) met soon after the Conference of 1834 to examine candidates on the President's List of Reserve. It was found that only fourteen could be spared at the time, and these began their training, as stated above, by attending lectures given at City Road chapel, and moving to Hoxton on various dates in December 1834 and January 1835. Their names are given below, listed under "Hoxton 1834".

Hoxton 1834

Arthy, William R. B.
Chapman, Philip
Curtice, Robert
Haswell, Thomas
Hay, David
Heaton, Joseph
Hole, George
Hutchinson, Richard
Jenkins, Isaac
Jenkins, John
Male, Matthew T.
Morris, John
Owen, John
Stanton, Samuel

Hoxton 1835—Second year

Arthy, William R. B.
Chapman, Philip
Haswell, Thomas
Hay, David
Heaton, Joseph
Hole, George
Hutchinson, Richard
Jenkins, Isaac
Jenkins, John
Male, Matthew T.
Morris, John
Owen, John
Stanton, Samuel

Hoxton 1835—First year

Baddeley, William
 Baker, William
 Brown, Richard
 Griffith, Richard D.
 Hall, S. Romilly
 (*President*, 1868)

Hunt, John
 James, John H.
 ([D.D.] *Secretary*, 1870;
President, 1871)

Marsden, Joseph A.
 Nightingale, Thomas
 Richards, John
 Rowe, Thomas
 Sargeant, Richard
 Tuckfield, Francis

Hoxton 1836—Third year

Arthy, William R. B.
 Heaton, Joseph
 Hutchinson, Richard
 Jenkins, John
 Male, Matthew T.

Hoxton 1836—Second year

Baddeley, William
 Griffith, Richard D.
 Hall, S. Romilly
 Hunt, John
 James, John H.
 Nightingale, Thomas
 Richards, John
 Rowe, Thomas
 Sargeant, Richard
 Tuckfield, Francis

Hoxton 1836—First year

Andrews, William
 Barratt, George M.
 Best, James K.
 Creed, Charles
 Evans, David
 Evans, Robert
 Fox, William
 Ironside, Samuel
 Lanton, Henry
 Lucas, Samuel
 Palmer, Jabez
 Sheers, Thomas
 Thomas, Henry S.
 Thomas, James S.
 Withington, Thomas
 Yardley, Jabez

Hoxton 1837—Third year

Hunt, John
 Richards, John

Hoxton 1837—Second year

Andrews, William
 Barratt, George M.
 Creed, Charles
 Evans, David
 Ironside, Samuel
 Lanton, Henry
 Palmer, Jabez
 Sheers, Thomas
 Thomas, Henry S.
 Thomas, James S.
 Withington, Thomas
 Yardley, Jabez

Hoxton 1837—First year

Akrill, Joseph
 Andrews, Matthew
 Appleyard, John
 Arthur, William
 ([M.A.] *President*, 1866)
 Aspinall, George
 Atkins, John H.
 Bottrell, Henry
 Brailey, William
 Brumwell, Thomas
 Calvert, James
 Davies, Richard
 Dennis, William B.
 Dowty, George
 Garrett, John
 Hastling, Henry
 Jones, Edward
 Kirkland, Henry
 Norwood, William
 Radcliffe, William T.
 Railton, Lancelot
 Redfern, William
 Relph, John
 Sansome, Philip
 Shearman, William
 Smart, John
 Smith, John
 Smith, Thornley
 Stizaker, John
 Stokes, Edward
 Sutcliffe, Robert
 Thomas, J. Stewart
 Webb, William
 Williams, Thomas
 Wilson, William (5th)
 Wilson, William (6th)
 de Wolfe, Charles
 Wood, Thomas S.

Hoxton 1838—Third year

Thomas, James S.

Hoxton 1838—Second year

Akrill, Joseph
 Andrews, Matthew
 Appleyard, John
 Arthur, William
 Aspinall, George
 Atkins, John H.
 Bottrell, Henry
 Brumwell, Thomas
 Dennis, William B.
 Garrett, John
 Hastling, Henry
 Kirkland, Henry
 Radcliffe, William T.
 Relph, John
 Smart, John
 Smith, John
 Smith, Thornley
 Stizaker, John
 Stokes, Edward
 Thomas, J. Stewart
 Webb, William
 Williams, Thomas
 Wilson, William (5th)
 Wilson, William (6th)
 Wood, Thomas S.

Hoxton 1838—First year

Bambridge, William H.
 Banfield, James
 Blencowe, George
 Brown, Josias F.
 Chapman, Richard
 Crofts, Edward
 Davenport, William
 Dawson, John W.
 Dowty, John
 Flower, Thomas
 Gay, John
 Hartley, John
 Hirst, James
 Howe, Charles
 Ingram, William
 Jehu, David
 Jones, Robert
 Mayer, James
 Nightingale, Robert
 Officer, Joseph
 Ridler, Christopher
 Riley, Richard
 Roberts, Benjamin
 Russell, Edward
 Savery, George
 Skidmore, William J.
 Smith, James
 Stripp, John M.
 Tucker, Joseph K.
 Weddall, Richard
 Wesley, Samuel
 Wilkinson, Samuel
 Willan, William

Hoxton 1839—Third year

Relph, John
 Williams, Thomas

Hoxton 1839—Second year

Bambridge, William H.
 Blencowe, George
 Chapman, Richard
 Crofts, Edward
 Davenport, William
 Dawson, John W.
 Dowty, John
 Flower, Thomas
 Hartley, John
 Hirst, James
 Howe, Charles
 Ingram, William
 Jones, Robert
 Mayer, James
 Nightingale, Robert
 Officer, Joseph
 Ridler, Christopher
 Riley, Richard
 Roberts, Benjamin
 Russell, Edward
 Savery, George
 Skidmore, William J.
 Smith, James
 Tucker, Joseph K.
 Wilkinson, Samuel
 Willan, William

Hoxton 1839—First year

Aldom, William (T.J.)
 Atkinson, Samuel (J.H.)
 Bestall, William S.
 Bowman, John
 Brown, John (M.S.)
 Davison, William
 Devers, Robert A.
 Dunstan, Joseph A. (M.S.)
 Ellis, Robert S.
 Garrett, Joseph (T.J.)
 Hann, William H.
 Harvard, George C.
 Jones, John S. (T.J.)
 Lord, John H. (J.H.)
 Mason, William (M.S.)
 Redfern, Robert S.
 Robinson, Thomas
 Turner, George (M.S.)
 Waugh, James S.
 Wiseman, Luke H.
 ([M.A.] *Secretary*, 1871;
President, 1872)

Young, Edward K.

Hoxton 1840—Third year

Chapman, Richard
 Hartley, John
 Wilkinson, Samuel

Hoxton 1840—Second year

Aldom, William
 Atkinson, Samuel
 Brown, John
 Davison, William
 Devers, Robert A.
 Harvard, George C.
 Turner, George
 Wiseman, Luke H.
 Young, Edward K.

Hoxton 1840—First year

Brocklehurst, James D.
 Cather, Robert
 Eaton, John
 Hamm, Thomas
 Harvard, John (T.J.)
 Hayman, Henry
 Jones, Thomas
 Lightwood, Edward
 Parkes, James
 Phenix, Isaac (T.J.)
 Pope, W. Burt (J.H.)
 ([D.D.] *President*, 1877)
 Portrey, Joseph
 Povah, Charles
 Powlands, Thomas
 Shaw, Barnabas, jun.
 Sheldon, Thomas
 Talbot, Ebenezer
 Thompson, Edward
 Williams, William

Hoxton 1841—Third year

Atkinson, Samuel
 Davison, William
 Harvard, George C.
 Garrett, Joseph
 Hardey, Edward J. (*Transferred
 from Abney House*)
 Jones, John S.
 Lord, John H.

Hoxton 1841—Second year

*Brocklehurst, James D.
 Eaton, John
 *Harvard, John
 *Hayman, Henry
 Jones, Thomas
 *Lightwood, Edward
 Parkes, James
 Phenix, Isaac
 Pope, W. Burt
 Portrey, Joseph
 Povah, Charles
 Shaw, Barnabas, jun.
 *Sheldon, Thomas
 Talbot, Ebenezer
 Thompson, Edward
 Williams, William

Hoxton 1841—First year

*Hawkesley, Robert J. T.
 Horne, George
 Jones, John
 *Lewis, William L.
 Woolmer, Theophilus
 * *Transferred to Didsbury, 1842*

Hoxton—Summary

<i>Year</i>	<i>Admissions</i>	<i>Number of Students in training</i>
1834	14	14
1835	13	27
1836	16	31
1837	37	51 (including the "Out-door" students)
1838	33	59 " "
1839	21	49 " "
1840	19	31 " "
1841	5	28
	158	

The initials in parentheses after students' names in the above lists refer to the preachers with whom the "Out-door" men lodged during part of their time in training: T.J.—Thomas Jackson; J.H.—John Hannah; M.S.—one of the Missionary Secretaries.

Abney House 1839

Atherton, Robert H.
 Banks, Henry
 Batchelor, Frederick S.
 Broomfield, Robert W.
 Cole, William L.
 Edge, William
 Ford, William
 George, William K.
 Greatbatch, George
 Green, Thomas
 Hardey, Edward J.
 Hedge, James
 Hesk, Thompson
 Hudson, Thomas
 Johnson, Hugh
 Kirk, John
 Owen, John
 Page, Gregory A.
 Peck, William P.
 Perks, George T.
 ([M.A.] *President*, 1875)
 Ridsdale, John S.
 Rundle, Robert T.
 Sanders, John L.
 Shaw, Thomas
 Smith, George
 Watson, John
 Wheeler, James
 Williams, David
 Young, Henry

Abney House 1840—Second year

Atherton, Robert H.
 Banks, Henry
 Broomfield, Robert W.
 Edge, William
 Ford, William
 Greatbatch, George
 Green, Thomas
 Hardey, Edward J.
 Hedge, James
 Hudson, Thomas
 Johnson, Hugh
 Kirk, John
 Owen, John
 Page, Gregory A.
 Peck, William P.
 Perks, George T.
 Ridsdale, John S.
 Sanders, John L.
 Shaw, Thomas
 Smith, George

Abney House 1840—First year

Seager, William L.

Abney House 1841—Third year

Atherton, Robert H.
 Banks, Henry
 Broomfield, Robert W.
 Edge, William
 Ford, William
 Green, Thomas
 Hedge, James
 Peck, William P.
 Perks, George T.
 Ridsdale, John S.
 Sanders, John L.
 Shaw, Thomas

(1841—*No Second year*)

Abney House 1841—First year

Bumstead, James
 Deery, George
 Edwards, William
 Giles, Matthew
 Hardy, Richard
 Harris, John
 Hill, Thomas R.
 Labarte, William
 Pickworth, Felix
 Sanderson, Daniel
 Taylor, George C.
 Ward, Anthony

(1842—*No Third year*)

Abney House 1842—Second year

*Deery, George
 *Edwards, William
 *Giles, Matthew
 *Hardy, Richard
 *Hill, Thomas R.
 *Pickworth, Felix
 *Taylor, George C.
 *Ward, Anthony

Abney House 1842—First year

*Balls, Henry
 *Barley, David
 *Binks, William L.
 Booth, Henry J.
 *Burgess, Abel
 *Davis, George H.
 Godman, Matthew
 *Hodson, John
 *Moody, John F.
 *Parkinson, George
 Parsonson, George
 *Rees, Robert
 *Smith, George
 Wilson, John
 *Wright, Joseph

* *Transferred to Richmond, 1843*

Abney House—Summary

Year	Admissions	Number of Students in training
1839	29	29
1840	1	21
1841	12	24
1842	15	23

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Joseph Wright entered Abney House in 1842, and was transferred to Richmond in 1843. He was the first West African negro to be trained in the Institution. There is in the report for 1844 a letter written by Joseph Wright to Dr. Bunting, dated 19th February 1844, expressing his "gratefulness of being able to enter the Institution". Shortly afterwards he returned to Sierra Leone. He died in the work in 1855.

KENNETH B. GARLICK.

[We are grateful to our Registrar for illuminating this obscure record in the history of ministerial training. Hoxton and Abney House records (such as they are!) are among those deposited in the Archives upon the closure of Richmond College.—EDITOR.]

Religious Census of 1851: Methodist Attendances in Leeds

(See article on pp. 113-16.)

TOWNSHIPS	ATTENDANCES ¹						Attendances as Percentages of Population	Popula- tion, 1851
	Wesleyan Methodist	Methodist New Connexion	Primitive Methodist	Wesleyan Methodist Association	Wesleyan Reformers			
Leeds	6,095	668	790	1,199	750	9.5	101,343	
Armley	289	367	109	155	...	14.9	6,190	
Beeston	163	...	40	...	...	10.2	1,973
Bramley	430	...	234	...	...	7.4	8,949
Chapel Allerton ²	371	...	...	50	...	9.7	2,842
Potter Newton ²								
Farnley	223	...	74	...	...	17.8	1,722
Headingley-cum-Burley	524	...	...	125	180	13.6	6,105
Holbeck	904	...	...⁴	641	...	10.9	14,152
Hunslet	688	897	495	122	132	12.0	19,466	
Wortley	270	...	224	130	...	7.9	7,896	
Coldcotes ³ ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
Osmondthorpe ³ ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	234
TOTALS	9,957	1,932	1,966	2,422	1,062			
	17,339						10.0	172,270

¹ "Attendances" is taken to be the total of the highest individual attendances for each society. (See text of article.)

² Chapel Allerton and Potter Newton are taken to be one unit, with a population of 4,227.

³ Coldcotes and Osmondthorpe were not townships, and did not have any places of worship.

⁴ The Primitive Methodist chapel for Holbeck, being physically in Hunslet, is included under that township.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL RETURNS, 1851

A Study of Methodist Attendances in Leeds

ONLY once in English history has a genuine national attempt been made to calculate the strength of attendance at public worship, and this resulted in the compilation of the Ecclesiastical Returns, 1851, the actual census being taken on Sunday, 30th March. The Returns are available for inspection in the Public Record Office,¹ and, I believe, are of considerable value to the Methodist historian. To illustrate how the Returns may be used, I have taken Leeds as a case-study for analysis.

To see the Returns in context, it is necessary to understand the basis of local government administration in Leeds. In 1851 the borough of Leeds was co-extant with the ecclesiastical parish. This was subdivided into the in-township of Leeds and ten out-townships (Armley, Beeston, Bramley, Chapel Allerton, Farnley, Headingley-cum-Burley, Holbeck, Hunslet, Potter Newton, and Wortley), Coldcotes and Osmondthorpe being outside these administrative units. The Returns for the parish are contained in two volumes, one for the Leeds township and the other for Hunslet, which included not only the out-townships but also the parishes of Swillington and Whitkirk, to the east of Leeds.

There have been various formulæ forwarded for calculating the totals of church attendances, but all seem to be based on a "rule of thumb". To calculate the actual figures of Methodist attendances, I have used the highest individual attendance of each society on the census day, regardless of the number of services held. As the population figures of each township are available, the total may be given as a percentage of the population for each township, except that Chapel Allerton and Potter Newton are best considered as one entity.

What emerges is that within the parish the strength of attendances averaged 10 per cent, but the range was from 17.8 per cent (Farnley) down to 7.4 per cent (Bramley). There seems to be no correlation between the industrially-based townships and highest attendances. What complicates the figures is the fact that undoubtedly many people attended worship in a different township from that in which they dwelt. To illustrate, Silver Royd Hill Primitive Methodist chapel, Wortley, was close to the boundary with Armley, and its congregation must have been drawn from both townships. However, the strength of the various Methodist groups varied considerably, and it is this aspect which is more worthy of analysis.

Considering that the Methodist New Connexion had begun in Leeds in 1797, their growth in the succeeding half-century had been fairly slow, and it was not until as late as 1907, with the building of Trinity chapel in Tempest Road, Beeston, that there was to be a society in another township. Undoubtedly their strength was in

¹ The Ecclesiastical Returns for Leeds are HO/129/500-1.

Hunslet, where in 1851 they had much larger attendances than the Wesleyans, and they remained a separate circuit until 1907. In Leeds itself the original Ebenezer chapel was still in use, but the society was to expand when this historic building was replaced in 1858 by larger premises in Woodhouse Lane.

The Primitive Methodists were to be found in all but four of the townships, and were generally strongest in those which were working-class. Of the four townships which had no PM society, Holbeck was served by a chapel physically within the Hunslet township; and the predominantly agricultural and high-class residential townships of Chapel Allerton and Potter Newton were not to be served by a PM cause until the beginning of the present century, when Harehills Avenue was opened. However, many of the PM societies only really developed after this period, and so the figures probably do not reflect the ultimate strength of this connexion.

More important than the statistics is the insight provided into the dissensions which originated with the Brunswick Organ controversy of 1827 and were inflamed by the "Fly-Sheets" of the 1840s, much of the agitation being centred on Leeds. Wesleyan societies at Bramley, Hunslet (Centenary) and Woodhouse added footnotes to the effect that there was then "a decrease in consequence of the present state of the society" (Bramley). In Hunslet the strife was referred to in no uncertain terms:

The number is considerably below the average of the past years in consequence of an unholy agitation having for some time been carried on in the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion by some expelled members of our church.

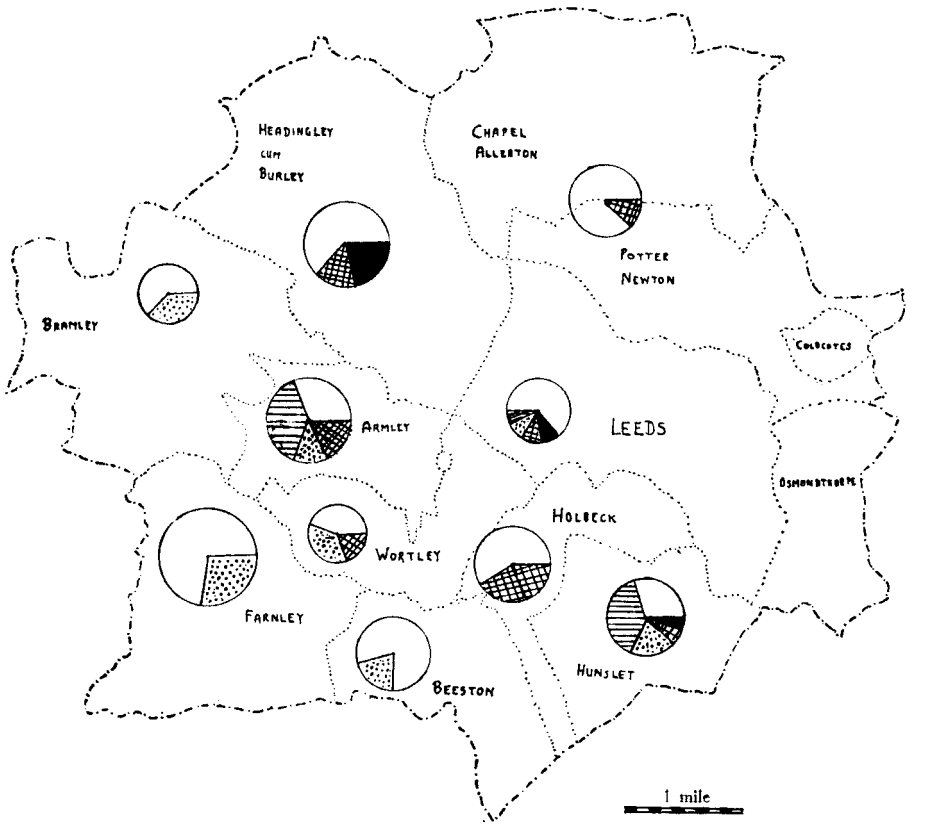
There are certain difficulties, however, in differentiating Wesleyan Methodist from Wesleyan Methodist Association societies. For example, the Leylands society was described as being Wesleyan Methodist, and yet the members attended a lovefeast in the afternoon at another chapel—and the only one to be held was at Lady Lane, which was Wesleyan Association. An investigation of the Brunswick circuit records in the Leeds City Archives helps to clarify this situation. The Leylands society had a most peculiar history, having originated as a split within Primitive Methodism and by this time become united with the Wesleyans.

One may wonder whether the Returns included *all* the Methodist societies. Evidence is scant on this point, but certainly in Bramley the Wesleyans referred to a dissent amongst the society, and yet in this township there were neither Associationists nor Reformers recorded, although later on there indeed existed a UMFC society in Bramley.

Considerably more information, not discussed here, is obtainable from the Returns²—such as age, dimensions and capacity of premises,

² An outline of other uses for the Returns is given in A. Rogers: *This was their World: Approaches to Local History* (1972), chapter VII, "The Bond of Religion", pp. 143-7.—EDITOR.

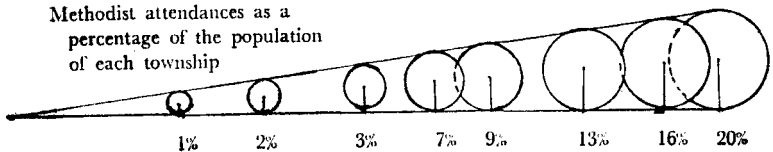
PROPORTIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF METHODIST ATTENDANCES WITHIN THE PARISH OF LEEDS, 1851



- Wesleyan Methodist
- Methodist New Connexion
- Primitive Methodist
- Wesleyan Methodist Association
- Wesleyan Reformers

- Parish boundary
- Township boundaries (generalized)

Methodist attendances as a percentage of the population of each township



and whether or not they were rented. There is also evidence for the strength of the Sunday-school movement at this time.

The question really to be asked is to what degree the figures accurately reflect the strength of church attendances in the middle of the nineteenth century. I think that my figures undoubtedly represent an underestimate, and the Returns themselves suggest this, for beside the total of actual attendances on the census day, a figure for average attendances was given also, nearly all societies being below average. Certainly a "showery morning, stormy even with thunder" (Brunswick) did not encourage large congregations on the day. The crux of the problem, however, is really to ascertain whether people attended twice (or more) on a Sunday, or only once. The only direct evidence comes from Marshall Street Independent chapel, Holbeck, where it was recorded :

Many of those who attended in the morning remain at home in the evening in order to allow those who were absent in the morning to attend in the evening.

To what extent this was the general pattern must surely remain an open question.

The only way in which it would have been possible accurately to assess the true strength of the attendances would have been to have recorded the names of individuals, and ideally their places of abode, who attended a particular place of worship. As this was not done, all that remains is a total for each service—a total which in all too many cases was either a rounded figure or even an estimate.

In conclusion, I would maintain that, whatever the shortcomings of the Returns, they still are invaluable. At the least they may be taken to be no more than a list of places of worship; but their importance lies in the fact that they provide a useful guide, if not a precise one, to the strength of church attendances in 1851.

D. COLIN DEWS.

[Mr. D. Colin Dews, B.Ed. is an assistant lecturer at the Park Lane College of Further Education, Leeds.]

The Methodist Philatelic Society is producing a commemorative envelope, bearing the portrait of Charles Wesley, for the opening day of the Representative Session of Conference in Bristol, 28th June 1974. Copies of this first-day cover, price 15p., may be obtained from Mr. Frank H. P. Lewis, 21, Metford Grove, Redland, Bristol, BS6 7LG.

A short history of Methodism in Addingham (Yorks) (pp. 14) has been written by Mr. William Lenmon on the occasion of the closing of the chapel. Copies may be obtained from the Rev. Peter R. Gray, Springfield Mause, Addingham, Ilkley, Yorks, LS29 0JA.

From Essington Wood (Staffs) comes a ninetieth birthday souvenir booklet (pp. 16): copies from the Rev. Brian J. Dennigan, 192, Walsall Road, Great Wyrley, Walsall, Staffs, WS6 6NQ.

NEWS FROM OUR BRANCHES

[All dates refer to 1973 unless otherwise stated.]

THE **Bristol** branch met on Saturday, 17th March, at the New Room, when Mr. A. B. Sackett gave an informal address on the background to his recent studies of John Jones and James Rouquet. This was followed up by a visit to Kingswood School on Saturday, 29th September, to view their interesting Wesleyana. The visit also included a tour of the school premises, tea, and a service in the chapel.

Occasional Publication : *Captain Thomas Webb : Bristol Methodism's Hero-Pioneer*, by the Rev. E. Ralph Bates.

Secretary : Mr. G. E. Roberts, 21, Ormerod Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol,
Membership : 79. [BS9 IBA.]

THE trustees of the St. Clement Street chapel, Truro, have generously made available to the **Cornish** branch a room for the use of its committee, and it is hoped that this may also be used for the accommodation and display of an expanding collection of Cornish Wesleyana. Mr. R. E. Tonkin, a member of the branch, has been appointed curator.

Branch activities included a summer pilgrimage to places in the St. Hilary area, now forming part of the Marazion circuit but having links with Wesley's preaching to the tin-miners in that locality; a lecture on "The Musical Tradition in Cornish Methodism" by Mr. W. H. H. Julian (organist and choirmaster at Newquay Wesley); and an additional lecture by Mr. Bert Cows of Helston entitled "In the steps of Walter Lawry and Benjamin Carvosso", based on the speaker's recent tours of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand.

Journal : Vol. IV. Nos. 3 and 4 received.

Secretaries : Rev. Baynard P. Evans, Orchard Meadow, Tremarne Close, Feock, Truro, Cornwall.

Mr. C. J. Tromans, M.A., 17, Knight's Meadow, Carnon Downs, Truro.
Membership : 350.

THE **East Anglia** branch held two very successful meetings in 1973. In May, members met at Woodbridge to commemorate the centenary of the birth, in that town, of Percy Ainsworth, the distinguished Wesleyan minister who died at the early age of 36. The lecture was given by Mr. W. W. Warren, and also taking part were Percy Ainsworth's son and daughter, Dr. Geoffrey Ainsworth and Mrs. Ruth Gilbert.

The autumn meeting was held at Norwich. An illustrated lecture entitled "Our visit to Wesley's Georgia" was given by the Rev. C. E. Brian Cowburn.

Bulletin : Nos. 29 and 30 received.

Secretary : Rev. William D. Horton, M.A., 28, The Croft, Sudbury,
Membership : 98. [Suffolk, CO10 6HW.]

THE spring meeting of the **Lancashire and Cheshire** branch took the form of a joint meeting with the Independent Methodist Historical Society at their chapel at Lamberhead Green, Wigan, during which visit members were able to look in at the nearby Independent Methodist Bookroom.

In June members toured several Inghamite chapels in the Colne area, the outing ending with tea at the tiny Methodist chapel at Southfield, opened in 1797.

On Thursday, 12th July, an evening visit was paid to Didsbury College of Education, Manchester, formerly the Wesleyan Theological Institution, and the former college chapel, now St. Paul's Methodist church.

The Annual Meeting took place at the Central Hall, Manchester, in October. It was followed by a lecture on "Methodist Spirituality" given by the Chairman of the Manchester and Stockport District, the Rev. Gordon S. Wakefield.

Journal : Vol. II. Nos. 8 and 9 received.

Secretary : Mr. E. A. Rose, 26, Roe Cross Green, Mottram, Hyde,

Membership : 126. [Cheshire, SK14 6LP.

In the spring the **Lincolnshire** branch met at Epworth, when the Connexional Archivist visited the society. In the autumn a meeting was held at Brigg, where a member of the branch, Mr. Nicholas J. L. Lyons, gave a talk entitled "Wesley's *Journal* : a controversial assessment".

Journal : Vol. II. Parts 5 and 6 received.

Secretary : Mr. William Leary, Brantwood, St. Edward's Drive,

Membership : 94, plus 11 libraries. [Sudbrooke, Lincoln, LN2 2QR.

THE summer meeting of the **London** branch took the form of a tour of historic places in the area of Kingsway, the Law Courts, and Lincoln's Inn. The guide was the branch secretary, who is himself on the staff of the Law Courts.

For the autumn meeting, the branch assembled at Hinde Street chapel, when Mr. A. Lloyd related the thrilling story of the early history of this West End Methodist centre and some of the picturesque personalities connected with it.

Secretary : Mr. J. A. Pendry Morris, 118, Elgar Avenue, Tolworth,

Membership : 78. [Surbiton, Surrey.

No information has been received from the **Manx** branch.

Secretary : Miss A. M. McHardy, Zeerust, Clayhead Road, Baldrine,

Isle of Man.

THE **North-East** branch began the year on Saturday, 7th April, by visiting the fine new chapel at Consett, where the branch secretary spoke on "Mid-Victorian Methodism in the North-East". A lively discussion followed, with Professor W. R. Ward making a valuable contribution.

The summer outing—to the Anglo-Saxon church at Escomb and the palace of the Bishop of Durham at Auckland Castle—took place on Saturday, 2nd June. At the palace the new bishop extended a welcome to the party, and mentioned his Methodist associations at Queen's College, Birmingham, of which he had been the principal before his appointment to the see of Durham.

In connexion with the Newcastle upon Tyne Conference, the branch was responsible for the mounting of exhibitions at the Newcastle Central Library and the Laing Art Gallery.

The Rev. Gordon S. Wakefield was the speaker at the meeting on Saturday, 20th October, which was held at West Avenue, Gosforth, where he had once been the minister. His paper on "Methodist Spirituality" was much appreciated.

Finally, on Thursday, 6th December, a group of members enjoyed an

evening "behind the scenes" at the Durham Record Office, seeing a glimpse of the fine collection of Methodist archives, and learning about the technicalities of archive-preservation and -repair.

The year was saddened by the quite sudden death at an early age of our branch registrar, Mr. R. Marston Palmer of Shield Row—a valued member and friend.

Bulletin : Nos. 19 and 20 received.

Secretary : Mr. Geoffrey E. Milburn, M.A., 8, Ashbrooke Mount,

Membership : 121. [Sunderland.]

Plymouth and Exeter branch-members visited the New Room, Bristol, in April, when Dr. Maldwyn Edwards conducted the party round the building and described its treasures.

In September, the Rev. John Lawson of Emory University, Atlanta, talked to members at The Mint, Exeter, on the forthcoming Oxford edition of Wesley's *Works*. He described the painstaking task of preparing the new edition of the *Notes upon the New Testament*.

Proceedings : Vol. II. No. 10 and Vol. III. No. 1 received.

Secretary : Mrs. C. Channon, 79, East Wonford Hill, Exeter.

Membership : 100.

THE **Scottish** branch goes from strength to strength. The first meeting took place at Glasgow in September, when Mr. A. F. Walls read a paper entitled "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers: some interrelationships of Scottish and English Methodism".

The second meeting was held in November in conjunction with the centenary of Crown Terrace church, Aberdeen. A panel of speakers discussed the history of Methodism in North-East Scotland, and there was an historical exhibition relating to Methodism in the area. The President of the Conference joined the meeting and took out branch membership (a "first" for Scotland?).

Journal : Nos. 1 and 2 received.

Secretary : Dr. D. A. Gowland, Department of Modern History,

Membership : 115. [The University, Dundee, DD1 4HN.]

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, Birmingham, was the venue for the spring meeting of the **West Midlands** branch, held in March. The Rev. J. Munsey Turner spoke on "Methodism, Revolution and Social Change".

A small number of members went to Oxford on Saturday, 19th May, and were conducted round Lincoln College by Canon V. H. H. Green.

The autumn meeting was held at Westhill College, Selly Oak, Birmingham, in October, when Dr. John D. Walsh of Jesus College, Oxford, lectured on "Methodism and the Mob".

Bulletin : Vol. II. Nos. 7 and 8 received.

Secretary : Mrs. E. D. Graham, B.A., B.D., 34, Spiceland Road,

Membership : 110. [Northfield, Birmingham, B31 1NJ.]

THE summer meeting of the **Yorkshire** branch was held at the Moravian settlement, Fulneck, Pudsey—still a very active centre of the United Brethren. That day members also visited Ebenezer, Dudley Hill, Bradford—an old chapel now taking on a new lease of life as the ecumenical centre for industrial mission in the city.

The autumn meeting was held at Mount Zion chapel, Ogden, Halifax, which, although ex-Methodist New Connexion, celebrated its bicentenary in 1973, being a Wesleyan foundation that was taken over. [See *Proceedings*, xxxvi, p. 13.—EDITOR.] Wesley preached his last sermon in Halifax at this bleak moorland spot in 1790, when it was known as Bradshaw.

Bulletin: Nos. 22 and 23 received.

Secretary: Rev. W. Stanley Rose, B.D., 45, Main Street, Menston, Ilkley, Yorks, LS29 6NB; (from May) Mr. D. Colin Dews, B.Ed., 4, Lynwood Grove, Leeds, LS12 4AV.

Membership: 122.

MORE LOCAL HISTORIES

We acknowledge, with many thanks, the following handbooks and brochures which have been sent to us recently (as also the two publications mentioned at the foot of page 116). Not all the items are priced, but we give the figures where these have been supplied.

Hayton Chapel (Retford)—150 Years (pp. 8): copies from Mr. Barry J. Biggs, 13, Cornwall Road, Retford, Notts.

Stroud Green, Newbury, centenary handbook (pp. 32): copies from Miss Christine M. Perry, Prior's Court, Chieveley, Newbury, Berks, RG16 8XW.

Hebron, Staple Hill, Bristol, centenary brochure (pp. 16): copies, price 30p., from Mr. John B. Edwards, 172, Kingfisher Road, Chipping Sodbury, Bristol, BS17 6JQ.

Penrith centenary brochure (pp. 12): copies from the Rev. R. Frank Robbins, 10, Wordsworth Street, Penrith, Cumberland, CA11 7QY.

Bramford, Ipswich, centenary handbook (pp. 12): copies from the Rev. David L. Bumphrey, 284, Norwich Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 4HB.

Ogden, Mount Zion (W. Yorks), 1773-1973 (pp. 24): copies from the Rev. Stanley Crowther, 37, Rothwell Road, Halifax, Yorks, HX1 2HA.

Reading (Wesley) centenary handbook (pp. 72): copies from Mr. E. Edwards, 90, Hamilton Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5RD.

Methodism in Burnham-on-Sea (pp. 44): copies, price 30p., from Mr. Arnold Houlder, 15, Westfield Close, Burnham-on-Sea, Som.

Chellaston, Derby (pp. 12): copies, price 20p., from Mr. F. Clayton, 6, Crich Avenue, Littleover, Derby, DE3 6ES.

Victorian Nonconformity, by John Briggs and Ian Sellers (Edward Arnold, pp. vii. 180, Boards, £3; Paper covers, £1 50p.) is a volume in the series "Documents of Modern History". The extracts are arranged in six main sections—Nonconformity and the Individual, The Church, Society, Culture, State, and The World. Methodist items are few—a letter from John Stephens to Jabez Bunting giving a picture of Wesleyan Methodism in 1821, a grossly partisan item on "Priestly Despotism in the Wesleyan Conference", some verses and a death-bed scene from the *Primitive Methodist Magazine*, and an item from the *MNC Magazine*. On page 45 the editors classify Congregationalism under "Connexionalism", but in Methodist understanding these two words are opposites. There are nine pages of Introduction, a short Bibliography, and a set of Biographical Notes; but there is no index. This is a rather slight book, and should be compared with a similar collection which was reviewed in our pages in 1972—*Proceedings*, xxxviii, p. 157. J.C.B.