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Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

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EARLY METHODISM AND THE HUGUENOTS

THE year 1985, the tercentenary of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, has been celebrated as Huguenot Heritage Year. There has been something both moving and exciting in the way in which one of the blackest dates in Huguenot history has provided the occasion for so many splendid reminders of the faith and courage of the French protestants, and of the astounding range of their achievements as refugees in the countries to which many thousands of them were forced to flee, not least England.¹ The very word "refugee" is an anglicised French word which came into common use as the result of the flight to our country in the reign of Louis XIV of between 40,000 and 50,000 Huguenots, their settlement being largely confined to the south of the country, in particular London, where up to 30,000 made their homes. Other considerable settlements occurred at places such as Bristol, Canterbury and Norwich, and there were also some substantial Huguenot communities in Ireland.

The social and economic importance of the Huguenots in England is well known. What is less clear is the scale and character of their impact upon the religious and ecclesiastical life of the country, though it is not difficult to surmise what some elements in it were. As living witnesses to the bigotry and intolerance of a repressive Catholic regime they helped to strengthen anti-Catholic feeling. As refugees who had chosen exile in order to preserve the integrity of their faith they set an example to English protestants of courage and commit-

¹ Two major publications on the Huguenots in 1985 were Dr. Robin Gwynn's refreshingly readable and scholarly *Huguenot Heritage* and *The Quiet Conquest*, a superb illustrated catalogue compiled by Tessa Murdoch to accompany the exhibition on the Huguenots which was on show at the Museum of London for several months. Among publications of more local interest may be mentioned Ronald Mayo: *The Huguenots in Bristol* (Bristol Branch of the Historical Association) (1985), and Trevor Bevis: *Strangers in the Fens* (1983), which describes Walloon and Huguenot communities and their churches in the eastern counties, including that at Sandtoft near Epworth (available from the author at 150 Burrowmoor Road, March, Cambs.)

ment in matters of religion. As puritans they embodied the protestant ethic in their personal lives and professional activities. As lovers of the Word they encouraged a high view of preaching and may well have exercised some influence on the evolution of auditory churches. As Presbyterians they demonstrated the strengths of a disciplined church system and the participation of the laity in the pastoral and administrative life of the church. And as those who through suffering had learned the virtues of compassion they exercised a lively social concern and set an impressive standard in Christian philanthropy. For those with eyes to see, there was much to be learned from the Huguenots, especially in those places where they were most numerous and above all in the capital itself.

A major question was whether they would exercise their religion within the mainstream of the protestant establishment.² London already had two older French churches one of which, on Threadneedle Street, had rejected conformity, while the other, at the Savoy, had been founded after the Restoration as a conforming congregation, accepting oversight by the Bishop of London, episcopal ordination for its ministers, and the use of the Book of Common Prayer in a French translation. Despite involving the sacrifice of certain Huguenot convictions, conformity had practical advantages, social as well as religious, and a number of Huguenot congregations in London and elsewhere opted for it, on the model of the Savoy church. It ought to be pointed out that these congregations, while technically Anglican, retained for many years a strongly French character, not only through worshipping in that language but also through clinging to a number of Reformed practices and disciplines not normal in the Church of England. Nevertheless, despite the attractions of conformity and the blandishments of the establishment, many Huguenots in England followed the lead of the Threadneedle Street church and maintained a nonconformist position, pursuing as far as was possible in their new situation their familiar Calvinistic modes of worship and church government. In London the churches in the eastern suburbs, especially Spitalfields, were virtually all nonconformist, while those in the western suburbs and Westminster were more or less equally divided between conformity and nonconformity. Those which chose nonconformity were anxious to distance themselves from English dissenters, who might have seemed to be their natural allies, largely to avoid any suspicion of disloyalty to a government which had been generous to them, and to rebut charges of republican sentiment. Thus even the nonconformist Huguenot chapels displayed the royal coat of arms as proudly as any parish church.

More important however than the ecclesiastical issue of conformity was the question whether the Huguenots could retain in England the vitality and integrity of the faith which they had chosen exile to pre-

² Gwynn, *op. cit.*, has much of interest on the Huguenot churches in England, especially in Chapter 6.

serve. Inevitably zeal declined with the passage of the years and as the memories of the "desert" period of persecution faded. Yet many Huguenots must have felt a strong desire to be true to their heritage, a longing for a renewal of the commitment and courage of the first exiles and for a revival of zeal to combat the rising tides of formality and scepticism which were a feature of the age. For some, membership of one of the Religious Societies then proliferating in London and elsewhere was a way of seeking this renewal. Another way, though only a small number chose to follow it, was to become associated with the French Prophets or Camisards, that exotic and intense group of Huguenots from the Cevennes who, having attempted to hold out against Louis XIV's forces, had finally sought refuge in England early in the eighteenth century.³ Other possibilities were to seek spiritual enrichment through mysticism or Moravianism.⁴ And some Huguenots, following one or more of these routes, were to be led towards Methodism.

The relationship between early Methodism and the Huguenots has never been fully explored, though certain aspects of it are familiar enough.⁵ It is common knowledge that Mary Vazeille whom John Wesley married in 1751 was the widow of Anthony Vazeille, a moderately prosperous Huguenot merchant of the City of London with a house on Threadneedle Street and another in Wandsworth where, incidentally, a Huguenot burial ground still survives. Mary herself is said to have been of Flemish descent.⁶ The notorious incompatibility between her and Wesley was not to be a feature of his other associations with men and women of Huguenot descent, some of whom were to be his staunchest supporters and closest friends. While in America, as well as having his first hymn book (*Psalms and Hymns*, 1737) published by a Huguenot printer, Lewis Timothy (Louis Thimothée) in Charleston,⁷ Wesley befriended and helped a young French refugee doctor, John Reinier, and did much to help him rehabilitate himself in his profession.⁸ One senses a close attachment between Wesley and Reinier but this friendship pales into insignificance

³ Hillel Swartz: *The French Prophets : The History of a Millenarian Group in Eighteenth Century England* (1980). See also Ronald Knox : *Enthusiasm* (1950), especially Chapter XV.

⁴ Pierre Poirer (1646-1719), a Huguenot preacher who worked mainly in Germany and Holland, was one of the foremost popularisers of mysticism. His writings were well known to Wesley.

⁵ Over sixty years ago T. E. Bridgen wrote in *Proceedings*, xiii, p.99, that "more might be written of our [i.e. Methodism's] debt to the French Protestants", but his suggestion does not appear to have been taken up. The Revd. G. H. Sully, a Methodist of Huguenot ancestry, submitted a dissertation (Leeds M.A., 1954) on the Huguenots in England but confined his study to their relations with the Church of England from the sixteenth century to the accession of William and Mary.

⁶ *Proceedings*, xvi, p.47.

⁷ *Proceedings*, xiii, pp. 97-99.

⁸ *Journal*, I, pp. 175-6, 180, 214, 217, 318, 371. Georgia was in part founded as a refuge for protestant exiles from the Continent, and there was a Huguenot community near Savannah visited by Wesley.

when compared with that between Wesley and the young Charles Delamotte, who had accompanied him to America.⁹ Indeed one might ask whether any other colleague of Wesley's was more close and loyal to him at any time during the whole of his life than was Delamotte during the Georgia episode. The Delamotte family (sugar importers with a business on the north bank of the Thames just below London Bridge and a house at Blendon near Bexley in Kent) were in due course to become one of the first families to offer hospitality and a place of retreat to the Wesleys, and to other revival preachers such as Whitefield; and Charles' brother William (though ending up in Moravianism) was one of those most instrumental in giving Methodism an early foothold in the University of Cambridge.¹⁰ Another Huguenot with interesting Methodist associations was James Rouquet (1730-76) of Bristol, a man of direct Huguenot descent who was recruited by Wesley to be a master at Kingswood School in the early 1750s, and a preacher to the Methodist societies.¹¹ He later became ordained and exercised an influential evangelical ministry in Bristol, preserving links with Wesley, though his tendency towards Calvinism and political radicalism in his later years created something of a gulf between the two. Then there was Mary Bosanquet (1739-1815), a member of one of the most illustrious and wealthy Huguenot families in London who were closely involved in city finance and the Bank of England, of which her brother Samuel was a director. Rebelling against the comfortable and worldly life style in which she was reared, and being much impressed, it is said, by memories of the simple, generous, abstemious lives of an earlier generation of Huguenot exiles (her grandparents in particular), she turned to Methodism and was ultimately obliged to leave home because of this allegiance. Mary's story is well enough known thereafter, and reveals how the talents of a remarkable women, somewhat stifled within her own family and church, could blossom within the fellowship and structures of early Methodism. We are led on naturally from Mary to mention her husband John Fletcher, a Swiss protestant but from the same religious stable as the French protestants; and with him another Swiss clergyman, Vincent Perronet. Both are sufficiently well known to require no further account here, and the influential roles they played in the development of eighteenth century Methodism are clearly recognised in the very phrases which are so generally attached to their names—"Wesley's designated successor" (Fletcher) and "the archbishop of Methodism" (Perronet). Nor ought we to forget here the work which Perronet's children did for Methodism.

⁹ On Delamotte see Wesley's *Journal*, esp. i and ii *passim*; Whitefield's *Journal* (Banner of Truth, 1960) pp. 155, 157, 202-3, 205-7, 291, 325; and John Naylor: *Charles Delamotte: John Wesley's Companion* (1938).

¹⁰ On William Delamotte see John Walsh: "The Cambridge Methodists" in Peter Brooks (ed.): *Christian Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Gordon Rupp* (1975), Chapter xi. For an insight into William see also Wesley's *Journal*, ii, pp. 109-111.

¹¹ A. Barrett Sackett: *James Rouquet and his Part in Early Methodism* (1972). See also *Proceedings*, xix, pp. 88-9.

One is bound to ask whether any general conclusions may be drawn from this catalogue of associations. It is not surprising that apart from Rouquet the contacts were largely London based. London had, as we have seen, an enormous community of French exiles and their descendants, many of them virtual Anglicans and some active in the Religious Societies, and it was natural that John Wesley should be acquainted with at least certain of them and understandable that some deeper associations would develop. There were strong grounds for a mutual attraction between Wesley and the earnest, respectable Huguenot families of London, based in part on a shared puritan upbringing and a community of interest in religious and social matters. Is it too fanciful also to think that there were qualities in Wesley's own character—his natural taste and courtesy, his fineness of manner, the tension in his make-up between reason and emotion, his love of frankness and directness in personal relations—for which one can well imagine counterparts in those of French (and Swiss) upbringing?¹² It is interesting also that it was to the young that Wesley especially appealed, maybe touching an idealism which their more worldly-wise parents had lost. Another point of interest is that all these contacts centre round the Church of England. Indeed in two cases (those of John Fletcher and James Rouquet) it was by becoming Methodist preachers that they were led to ordination in that Church; Vincent Perronet already was the incumbent of a parish (Shoreham) when Wesley met him.

All those Huguenots (and Swiss) with whom Wesley had the closest links and who threw in their lot with him may be assumed to have abandoned their native Calvinism, especially the decrees concerning predestination. John Fletcher indeed was to be one of Wesley's stoutest defenders against his Calvinist critics. An interesting question (no doubt difficult to answer) is whether there was a general move away from hardline Calvinism among Huguenots as the eighteenth century advanced. Contemporary developments among their nearest English counterparts, the Presbyterians, would suggest that this was the case. As the older positions dissolved, some Huguenots no doubt progressed towards Unitarianism, Deism and scepticism; some towards pietism and mysticism; and some towards evangelical Arminianism. Nevertheless some obviously remained loyal to Calvinism (such as the popular London preacher William Romaine) or were drawn back to it after excursions in other directions (such as James Rouquet of Bristol), both of course being ordained clergymen in the Church of England.

We have considered so far Wesley's closest contacts with men and women of French protestant descent, those whose allegiance and

¹² All this despite Wesley's professed contempt for French as a language! (see *Journal*, iv, pp. 188-9). On frankness in speech see for instance George Lawton: *Shropshire Saint* (1960) pp. 8-9 (on Fletcher) and Wesley's *Journal*, ii, p. 103 for an outspoken assessment of Wesley by Charles Delamotte.

support meant most to him. Outside this inner circle there was a wider range of associations, less significant in individual terms but nevertheless of general interest and importance to early Methodism. In the post-Aldersgate period Wesley's journal and diary show him and his group engaged in an endless round of preaching, prayer, pious conversation, hymn-singing and tea-drinking, as they visited societies and groups in all parts of the capital "from Wapping to Westminster", as Wesley graphically put it in his open letter to Perronet (1748) published as *A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists*.¹³ A good many of the older Religious Societies were in areas of heavy Huguenot concentration, such as the Savoy and Soho in the west of London, and Spitalfields, Whitechapel and Wapping in the east. Wesley obviously met many Huguenots during these visits, and we find their names in his diary as contacts and hosts—Dubart, Dobrée, Vertue, Motte, Cossart, Duthoit, Andray, Thacquier, Frecquer, Voniel, Vandome, Aspernel, Vandrelst, Standex, Mazine and Garnault. At the home of the last named, Daniel Garnault, Wesley actually stayed for several days in July 1740 in order to get sufficient peace to prepare part of his journal for publication. Some of these French folk were in due course to join Wesley's new Methodist Society at its base at the Moorfields Foundery, itself only some fifteen or twenty minutes' walk from Spitalfields where by far the greatest concentration of Huguenots was to be found. Wesley's own lists of the Society's members contain a noticeable scattering of French names, constituting perhaps a tenth of the total for the early 1740s.¹⁴ Some of the French were class leaders—Frances and Jane Belbin, Susan Debonair of Bethnal Green (who was later to be the second person interred in the burial ground behind Wesley's City Road chapel), Anne Groce, Thomas Royale, Elizabeth Vandome (whose death in 1769 Wesley reverently recorded in his journal) and Sarah Clavel, Wesley's housekeeper at the Foundery.¹⁵ Some intriguing references in Wesley's diary for the latter part of 1740 seem to indicate that a number of "spinners" were members of the Society and this may well be an allusion to textile workers of Spitalfields, many of whom were Huguenots.¹⁶ Later in the eighteenth century Melchior Seymour Teulon, a distinguished Huguenot hatter, some of whose descendants were to become well known architects, was an active Methodist serving as a house-steward at the Foundery and as class leader there and at the City Road Chapel.¹⁷

In Bristol also, in the early period of Methodism, we find Wesley benefitting from interest and support among some of the Huguenot

¹³ *Works* (1872 edn.), viii, pp. 248-268.

¹⁴ The original lists are in the Methodist Archives, Colman Collection vol. ii. Some selections can be found in G. J. Stevenson: *City Road Chapel and its Associations* (1872), pp. 29, 33-39. In August 1742, the total number in the London Methodist Society was 742, and there were about 70 French names in Wesley's lists.

¹⁵ On Sarah Clavel see *Proceedings*, xiv, p. 27.

¹⁶ *Journal*, ii, pp. 403-6.

¹⁷ On Teulon see Stevenson, *op. cit.* pp. 419ff.

community. As in London, though on a smaller scale, French names appear among the network of family connexions which Wesley was building up—Fancourt, Deschamps, Marine, Somerel, Deffel, Purnel, Panou and Labu.¹⁸ Much practical assistance came in particular from John Deschamps, a stuff maker. He and his wife were among the first members of the Society which met at the New Room, and Deschamps accompanied the Wesleys on some of their journeyings in the Bristol region. The effervescence of the revival is nicely conveyed in a small entry in Wesley's diary relating to a journey from Bristol to Wells in August 1739: "6(a.m.) Set out with Charles, Deschamps, and Giles—singing, conversed, lost the way!"¹⁹ They eventually reached Wells and got lost again in the afternoon, but continued singing and finally arrived back at Deschamps' house by 11 p.m. after an eventful day. References to singing are also found in entries relating to meetings with the Delamottes, and it would appear that the Huguenots and the Methodists enjoyed a common love of lively religious music.

Spontaneous song was only one outward expression of the bubbling excitement of the early stages of the Methodist revival, a response to an awakened awareness of the power of the Spirit breaking into the mundane, rational world. A more disturbing response was religious enthusiasm, from which the Huguenots were not exempted. It can be argued that it was the presence in England since 1706 of a small but influential group of French Prophets which had both challenged the comfortable faith of many Christians, Huguenots and others, and had encouraged their expectation of strange and inexplicable happenings under divine inspiration. The Prophets in fact constitute an interesting link between the Huguenots and Methodism. They were active in places such as London and Bristol, they permeated some of the Religious Societies, made links with the Moravians, and in due course also with emerging Methodism. Some writers, wishing to defend Wesley as far as they could whilst also criticising the excesses of his followers, have blamed the Prophets for actually introducing enthusiasm into early Methodism.²⁰ This is over-simplified, but there is no doubt that there were interesting connexions between the two movements. Contemporaries commented on their similarity, and Wesley was certainly intrigued by the Prophets, while also being anxious to distance his movement from them. The most recent historian of the Prophets draws these conclusions:

The interplay between the last prophets and the first London evangelicals argues for a recognisable kinship, if not sibling rivalry. . . . Both the French Prophets and the Methodists valued the tension between the closed and

¹⁸ See *Journal* ii, *passim*. On Deschamps see *Proceedings*, iv, pp. 92-7, xix, pp. 161, 164. Charles Wesley has a snide comment on the feigned "enthusiasm" of Deschamps' daughter Jenny (a girl of twelve) in August 1740 (see *Proceedings*, iv, p. 94).

¹⁹ *Journal*, ii, pp. 265-6.

²⁰ See for instance G. H. Curteis: *Dissent in its Relation to the Church of England* (1872), pp. 367-375 (1911 edition quoted here).

the open, the rational and irrational, in order to transcend the limits of a purely intellectual or merely habitual religion. Both partook of the eighteenth century undercurrent of resurgent emotionalism, not so much as a retreat from reason as another and more crucial step towards unbounded faith.²¹

It is not hard to imagine that some French protestants, either through association with the Prophets or through having been influenced by their example, would become as a result susceptible to the urgent warnings and appeals of early Methodist preaching, and more open to the attractions of membership of Wesley's movement. That movement however was, under Wesley's leadership, developing in ways which the Prophetic movement could never have done, building up structures to channel and employ the spiritual momentum generated by the enthusiasm of the revival, and establishing centres for the worship and community life of the Methodist societies. The first such centre was the Foundery; but within four years Wesley had also acquired for his purposes in London two redundant Huguenot chapels, a highly interesting development which deserves consideration.²²

To Wesley the Foundery, with its all too obvious secular associations, was unsuited for liturgical worship and the celebration of the Sacrament, though he was fully prepared to use it for preaching services on the simple Methodist pattern, as well as for a wide range of other activities related to the communal life and social concerns of Methodism.²³ The tensions and difficulties resulting from these scruples need not be recounted here in detail, but they led to a growing realisation by Wesley that he needed a suitable building in which he could read the Church Prayers and administer the Sacrament to his Methodist members. The value of such a building was made clear when, in the late summer of 1741, Wesley accepted the offer of Dr. Deleznor, the pastor of a Huguenot congregation in Great Hermitage Street, Wapping, to make his chapel available to the Methodist Society.²⁴ Wesley seized the opportunity to hold a series of services spread over several Sundays, at which prayers were read from the Book of Common Prayer and the Sacrament was administered (according to Church rites of course) to the entire Methodist Society by Wesley himself, some two hundred communicating at a time. Wesley tells us that he talked "severally" to one such group during the week before the service, and presumably did the same for them all.²⁵ Apart from the spiritual instruction there was no doubt a lot of explaining done by Wesley on these occasions. The Anglican Methodists would need convincing of the propriety of celebrating the

²¹ Swartz op. cit. pp. 287-288.

²² Towards the end of his life Wesley made some very interesting comments on these developments in a letter to the *Dublin Chronicle* in 1789 (see *Letters*, viii, pp. 139-143).

²³ J. C. Bowmer: *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, (1951) esp. Chapter 6 on Wesley's attitudes to celebrating the Sacrament in Methodist buildings.

²⁴ *Journal*, ii, p. 484.

²⁵ *Journal*, ii, p. 503.

Sacrament in an unconsecrated building, and the non-Anglicans (including nonconforming Huguenots) of the necessity for them to worship according to the liturgy of the established Church. The more radical might have asked why the old Foundery, becoming hallowed by many precious associations, could not have served just as well.

Wesley no doubt had cogent arguments to put forward to them all. Evangelical necessity and his desire to minister to his own people were the strongest, but he could obviously justify his decision to use the Wapping chapel on other practical grounds. For the Methodists in the capital to be seen worshipping from the Prayer Book, and receiving Church communion, was a valuable declaration of their association with the establishment. To maintain decorum and acceptability that worship should take place in a regular place of worship. True, the Wapping chapel was not consecrated, but the Huguenots in general had many links with the Church, and even the nonconformists among them enjoyed a special place within national religious life, halfway between the Church of England and the dissenters.²⁶ A Huguenot chapel therefore was, if a compromise, strategically very useful. It could also be an excellent bridgehead from which the Church of England (represented by Wesley in this case) could attempt to make inroads into the strongholds of nonconformity in London and endeavour to win back to the fold of Anglicanism those who were currently rejecting its ministrations, and who were perhaps also deterred by the unattractive face of religious officialdom.

Within three years of the remarkable Wapping experiment Wesley was able to give permanence to what it represented by acquiring first in 1743 the tenancy of the Huguenot chapel (La Tremblade) on West Street, Seven Dials, and a year or so later that of another Huguenot chapel (L'Église de l'Hôpital) on the corner of Grey Eagle Street and Black Eagle Street, Spitalfields.²⁷ These two buildings were to serve Methodism in the west and east ends of London until 1798 and 1819 respectively, and they played a central role in the development both of Wesley's strategy in the capital and of the more general processes

²⁶ On the question of consecration Wesley's view (at least as stated in 1764) was that the performance of public (i.e. Anglican) worship was sufficient in itself to consecrate a building (*Journal*, v, p.92).

²⁷ On West Street see *Journal*, iii, pp. 78 *et seq.* and general accounts such as J. S. Simon: *John Wesley and the Methodist Societies* (1923), Chapter 9. The first *Journal* reference to the Spitalfields church is in March 1750 (iii, p. 455) and Curnock (iii, p. 496 n.) assumes this to have been the year in which Wesley acquired it. This is mistaken. The building is shown as a Methodist chapel on the superb map drawn by Rocque (himself a Huguenot refugee) in the mid-1740s, which is available in book format with full index to places and streets as *The A-Z of Georgian London* (1981) published by Harry Margary, and other references give the date of Wesley's acquisition as 1744, e.g. E. C. Rayner: *The Story of the Christian Community* (1909), p. 20. Dr. J. C. Bowmer has a short article on the two chapels (*Proceedings*, xxvii, pp. 25-6) and makes some valuable comments but appears to assume both had belonged to conformist Huguenot congregations, which is not the case. An interesting article describing the West Street chapel, with illustrations, can be found in *Proceedings*, xvi, pp. 137-141.

by which Methodism was slowly (and against Wesley's intentions) to develop into a distinct denomination with its own chapels in which the liturgy might be read and the sacrament celebrated. South of the Thames, Wesley acquired also a former dissenting meeting house in Snowsfields in 1743, but the Huguenot chapels had a special importance for him. Before the Huguenots used it West Street had been an episcopal free chapel, and having been consecrated it provided Wesley with a thoroughly respectable base from which to operate in the west end of London, where Anglican loyalties were strongest. It is noteworthy that West Street was to Wesley always "the Chapel"—a term which he very rarely applied to any other of his preaching houses at that time.²⁸ The Spitalfields chapel (which the Methodists left in 1819 for yet another Huguenot building nearby, on the corner of Brick Lane—a building which still stands²⁹) gave Wesley that bridgehead into the east end which he must dearly have wanted. In 1684 Spitalfields, soon to become the home of thousands of Huguenot immigrants, had been described as "a most factious hamlet" with many dissenting conventicles.³⁰ It is pleasant if ironic to recall that Wesley's maternal grandfather, Samuel Annesley, was ministering at that very date to one of those conventicles, Little St. Helen's, off Bishopgate Street, to the south east of Moorfields. And it was in this area that John Wesley's mother grew up.³¹ Dr. Annesley represented the best kind of seventeenth century puritanism. His grandson inherited many of those qualities through his mother, and was now employing them in the same area on behalf of the establishment. But it was a revived, popular, evangelical establishment which Wesley represented, and his work in Spitalfields must have appeared in a very different light from the Anglicanism represented by Hawksmoor's towering new church in Spitalfields (Christ Church) built in the 1720s. Wesley had a special affection for the Spitalfields area and its people, and clung on to his chapel there when there was pressure from his lay officials in 1768 to close it.³² Those whom the chapel served must have included many nonconformist Huguenots, as well as English dissenters and those of no religion at all. It is significant that Wesley introduced liturgical worship cautiously at Spitalfields, so as to accustom the worshippers to it by degrees.³³ He was obviously anxious to

²⁸ See Curnock's comment, *Journal*, viii, p. 381 n. Wesley occasionally called the Snowsfields building a chapel, but when his use for it ceased it reverted to being "a useless, dissenting meeting house" (*Journal*, v, p. 444).

²⁹ On Brick Lane (which has in its history been worshipped in by Huguenots, Methodists, Jews and Moslems), see *Proceedings*, xxxi, photographs between pp. 196 and 197.

³⁰ B. Weinreb and C. Hibbert: *The London Encyclopedia* (1983) article on Spitalfields.

³¹ At the age of twelve, with a maturity beyond her years, Susanna opted to abandon dissent. She represents those thoughtful, moderate presbyterians who were persuaded to accept the Book of Common Prayer and the established Church. (See John Newton: *Susanna Wesley and the Puritan Tradition in Methodism* (1968), esp. Chapters 1 and 2.) Did Wesley see his mother as an example of what he hoped would be the fruit of his own work among the dissenters and nonconformist Huguenots of Spitalfields?

³² *Letters*, v, p. 100.

³³ *Ibid.*, viii, p. 141.

draw them back via Methodism into the mainstream of English religion. It was here that Wesley first introduced his Covenant Service in 1755.³⁴ One wonders whether one motive in introducing it here was deliberately to appeal to those covenanting principles which were part of the puritan heritage common to both the French Huguenots and the English dissenters of Spitalfields.

Much more could be written if space allowed of Wesley's associations with the Huguenots, and indeed of wider Methodist-Huguenot links in which Wesley played no direct role. It is hoped nevertheless that enough has been written to indicate something of the scope and interest of John Wesley's French connection, and perhaps to suggest to others possible lines of research for the future. There are a number of problems and questions which arise. In some cases the evidence may not exist for answers to be found, but some suggestions (tentative in the main) have been made here and there in this article as to what conclusions might be drawn from the evidence presented here. It is clear enough that in a number of practical ways Wesley was indebted to the Huguenots—he drew on their loyalty, he enlisted no small number of them into his movement, he used their chapels, and he may well have been inspired by what he knew of their courage under persecution. Can we go further than that?

Let me here fly a kite! It is possible that the most fundamental debt which Wesley owed to the Huguenots in England is that he glimpsed in them a model as to the kind of community into which Methodism might evolve, and the position it might occupy in the English religious spectrum? That is to say, a committed protestant body, holding preaching and the sacraments in high regard, rejoicing in hymnody, loyal to the state, desiring good relations with the established church even if not entirely within it (and, even when professing conformity, sitting loose to some of its regulations), reformed in structure with a dedicated ministry and a high degree of lay participation, thoroughly puritan in personal and social discipline, and with a lively concern for good works and philanthropy. If this were indeed the case Methodists would have good reason for recalling the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and its aftermath not simply as momentous for the Huguenots, but as events which had a direct bearing on the history of Methodism itself.

G. E. MILBURN

³⁴ *Journal*, iv, p.126.

A 'NEW ROOM' RELIC IN ANGLESEY?

WHEN Sir George Oatley undertook the restoration of the New Room in Bristol in 1929 he added another deck or level to the pulpit in order to restore it as nearly as possible to its appearance in 1748. For in the meantime the original double-decker structure, consisting of an upper pulpit for preaching and a lower one for reading the lessons, had been converted into a single preaching place with access from the floor and not, as in John Wesley's day, by stairs from above. Thus, only a part of the original pulpit remained when Sir George began his commission. That part, faced with a large rectangular panel, now forms the lower portion of the present pulpit, though the generally held view has been that originally it formed the upper pulpit from which the Wesley brothers and many of their contemporaries and successors preached.

But what happened to the lower portion of the 1748 structure when this transformation took place? Was it cast aside as being no longer of any use, or was it given or sold to another church elsewhere? No satisfactory answers appear to have been given to these questions; indeed, it is doubtful whether they have ever been raised. But if an interested Methodist were to raise them today he would doubtless be surprised to learn that the answer may well lie in Anglesey and, even more surprising, that the 'missing link' may still exist—in a Welsh Congregational chapel!

In 1867 the Rev Lot Hughes, a Welsh Wesleyan minister who was keenly interested in Methodist local history, stated quite explicitly that a pulpit which had once been used in the New Room, Bristol had been brought to Holyhead by a certain Captain Evan Lloyd.¹ So far from being challenged, his statement was repeated, with some modification, in 1915 by the Rev Dr Thomas Williams, minister of Armenia Welsh Calvinistic Methodist church, Holyhead. Evan Lloyd, he alleged, had been given the pulpit by the officers of the church which met in the New Room, had shipped it to Holyhead in 1829 in his sloop the *Henrietta*, and had presented it to the members who met in the small schoolroom at Penrhosfeilw in the town, where it remained until 1895.² In 1930, Hugh Owen, a Calvinistic Methodist layman, repeated the gist of Williams's account and added one important particular, as we shall see.³

Evan Lloyd (1790-1874) was a native of Llanaber in the old county of Merioneth but he was brought up by an uncle at Holyhead. At the

¹ *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, 1867, pp. 287-295.

² Thomas Williams, *Hanes Armenia M.C., Caergybi*, p. 28.

³ Hugh Owen, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Galfinaidd Môn*, p. 203. On the other hand Owen was very wide of the mark when he stated that the pulpit was portable and had often been used by John Wesley when he preached in the open air.

age of fourteen he went to sea and made good ; at various times he was captain of several sailing ships, two of which, including the *Henrietta*, were destined to be wrecked. He was moreover a deeply committed Christian. For some years he served as a missionary to the seamen at Holyhead and as such paid occasional visits to Bangor, Port Dinorwic and Caernarfon to collect on behalf of the British and Foreign Sailors' Society ; from 1857 to 1865 he was placed in charge of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist church at Dublin, with the added responsibility of attending to the welfare of the sailors at Kingstown and at Dublin itself ; while a little earlier (1854) he was one of three members from Hyfrydle Welsh C.M. church, Holyhead who established a Ragged School and a Sunday School at Ponc-yr-Efail in the town and who organised prayer meetings and occasionally preached there on Sundays. So successful was this missionary effort (aided no doubt by the remarkable revival of religion which engulfed Wales in 1859) that a chapel was built in 1860—Armenia—and among the 200 or so members who transferred their membership thither from the mother-church was Evan Lloyd himself.

His voyages (often with slate from the quarries of the Bethesda district) frequently took him to Bristol, and it is not surprising to learn that while his ship was being loaded and unloaded he took advantage of the opportunity to attend public worship in the New Room. For at that time the New Room no longer belonged to Wesley's English-speaking Methodists but to the small band of Welsh Calvinistic Methodists who, after worshipping since 1798 at Baker's Hall in Merchant Street, had bought the chapel in 1808 for £900.⁴ Nor is it difficult to believe that in 1829, having noticed a spare pulpit lying about, he either bought it (as Lot Hughes alleged) or was given it (as Dr. Thomas Williams stated) in order that it could be used in the small schoolroom erected a few years earlier at Penrhosfeilw, again by the mother church at Hyfrydle.

Unfortunately, efforts to trace details of the *Henrietta's* cargo on that voyage from Bristol to Holyhead in 1829 have proved fruitless for the sloop's log-books have not survived. But it is at least plausible that a God-fearing Calvinistic Methodist sea-captain transported a pulpit, obtained from fellow Calvinistic Methodists, from Bristol to Holyhead by sea—easily the cheapest and the most convenient means of transport in those days from one end of Wales to the other. Moreover, when Lot Hughes first made that statement in 1867 Evan Lloyd was alive and could easily have refuted it, if refutation was necessary. And when Thomas Williams repeated and amplified it in 1915 he must have seen the pulpit itself, for by then it had found a new home at Ponc-yr-Efail, the schoolroom attached to his own chapel, Armenia. Nor is that all, for as the son-in-law of the Rev. Edward Jones, who succeeded Evan Lloyd at Dublin and knew him well, he must surely have heard much about him.

⁴ Gomer M. Roberts (editor) : *Hanes Methodistiaeth Galfinaidd Cymru*, ii, p. 351.

Granted however that the missing portion of Wesley's 1748 pulpit had reached Anglesey by 1829, what of its later history? Until very recently only one indisputable fact relating to it had emerged. According to Hugh Owen, in 1895 or 1896 the Rev. William Evans, better known by his bardic name of *Monwysan*, the Welsh Wesleyan Methodist minister at Holyhead, delivered a lecture on "John Wesley" at Hyfrydle in aid of the building-fund at Penrhosfeilw, and used the pulpit to illustrate it.⁵ For in 1895, when a new chapel was built at Penrhosfeilw and furnished with new pews and a new pulpit, the pulpit which had been there since 1829 was returned to the mother-church; indeed, it may well have prompted William Evans, then newly arrived on the circuit, to deliver the lecture in the first instance. Whether he bought it or was given it, or whether he merely used it as an interesting 'prop' for his lecture we may never know, for efforts to trace his descendants have been in vain. What is certain however is this: after 1895 the pulpit lapsed into obscurity once again—until recently.

On 25th October 1983 a short talk about it was given in a popular programme broadcast on Sunday evenings by the B.B.C. to its Welsh listeners, and anyone who could throw light upon the interesting relic was invited to respond. Among those who heard the talk were Mr. Howell Parry, a retired engineer and an elder at Armenia, and a mutual friend, Mr. William Owen who, incidentally, had first suggested this investigation. Mr. Parry recalls his father's telling him that about 80 years ago an old pulpit had arrived from Hyfrydle at Ponc-yr-Efail, the schoolroom which he and his son attended—and Evan Lloyd, it will be recalled, was one of the founder-members of that mission, though by then he had been dead for well-nigh a quarter of a century. The schoolroom was demolished as recently as the early 1960s and the pulpit moved to Armenia, the chapel across the way. Its stay there was brief, for before the end of the decade it found yet another new home, at the New Tabernacle, the Welsh Congregational chapel nearby.

In short, the existing evidence suggests that in 1829 a pulpit, a portion of a pulpit, from the New Room, Bristol (where it had probably been used by some of the most eminent religious leaders of eighteenth century Britain) was taken to Penrhosfeilw on the outskirts of Holyhead. When a new and much enlarged chapel was built there in 1895, complete with new furnishings, it was moved to the mother-church at Hyfrydle and soon afterwards was used by the Rev. William Evans when he delivered his lecture on "John Wesley". Around the turn of the century it was moved again, to the schoolroom at Ponc-yr-Efail and, when this building was demolished in the early 1960s, it was taken to a store-room at Armenia. Finally, about 1968 it found yet another home in the schoolroom of the Welsh Congregationalist at New Tabernacle. And there it remains to this day.

⁵ *op. cit.* Owen also adds that the pulpit passed into William Evans's hands.

But if one is inclined to believe on the strength of the available evidence, and with some justification perhaps, that a pulpit, and even a pulpit from the New Room, found its way from Bristol to Holyhead just over a century and a half ago and that it still exists, it does not necessarily follow that it once formed part of the original double-decker pulpit of the enlarged New Room of 1748. Only a close examination of its design, its measurements and its construction—and then a comparison of it with the remaining portion of the original structure which has remained in the New Room will prove whether the one matches the other. Both were apparently constructed of pinewood, and both reveal some plain panelling—that much at least is apparent even to the eye of the amateur. But only the professional expertise of a Methodist Arthur Negus can really satisfy our curiosity and clear up the matter once and for all. Until he appears it must suffice to say that a pulpit, or more accurately a portion of a pulpit, which once graced the oldest Methodist chapel in the world, may now be a relic in a Welsh Congregational chapel at Holyhead on the isle of Anglesey. Farther than that it would be unwise to go.

JOHN T. OWEN

Post-script : Since writing the above article I have been able to take the investigation a stage further, as a result of which I am now of the opinion that although the substance of the story remains intact (namely that a pulpit was shipped from the New Room to Holyhead in 1829) it is extremely unlikely that it once formed a part of the 1748 double-decker.

Two independent and well-qualified witnesses state quite categorically that that pulpit was divided into two in the nineteenth century by separating the upper deck from the lower. One of them was Sir George Oatley, the architect responsible for restoring the New Room in 1929-30. In some "Notes and Queries" which he jotted down on 16th October 1929 he was convinced that the pulpit in use there in that year had once been the upper deck of the original pulpit of 1748.⁶ He added that he had been told that a carpenter had told his informant that the other, lower deck had been in his possession for a long time but that he had at last broken it up.

Oatley was evidently put in touch with the second witness, William Morgan Lewis, a native of Bristol but who then lived in Cardiff, an architect who had been employed many years earlier by Henry Crisp of Quay Street, Bristol until about 1885 and a former member of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist church which had worshipped in the New Room since 1808. He may have been one of the two sons of the

⁶ I am grateful to the Rev. A. Raymond George, Warden of the New Room, for drawing my attention to these "Notes and Queries" (now in the New Room) and for transcribing some of them for me.

Morgan Lewis, a deacon, who lived in the 'chapel house' (presumably John Wesley's living quarters in the Room) and who died in 1867;⁷ alternatively his father may have been another Morgan Lewis, a native of Bristol and a deacon of the church until his death in January 1870.⁸ W. Morgan Lewis had firsthand knowledge of the interior of the New Room extending over many years; indeed, when asked by Oatley on 27th March 1930 whether the sketches of the pulpit he had drawn for him had been made from memory he replied that they had been made "from my personal knowledge extending as far back as 1870 and earlier".⁹

These sketches showed "the pulpits and front" (i.e. the upper and lower pulpits and the large six-panelled screen between them) as they had been in 1870 "before any alteration was thought of"; the lower deck had an octagonal face "and was as originally built", and the upper deck a square one. He could not say whether the latter had been destroyed or not, but when he had visited the chapel "some years ago" he had seen it—"or a similar one". It had been fixed to the ground floor and he had been given to understand that it was the old upper one. He added that "the first alterations" (which suggests there were more than one) had been made just after he had left Mr. Crisp's office, "which was about 1885"; moreover the carpenter and joiner who carried out what he called the "vandalism" (presumably the division of the pulpit but not necessarily its later destruction, of which he had no knowledge) had emigrated to Australia.

No written evidence has so far come to light to corroborate or to refute Lewis's account, but his description of the pulpit tallies remarkably well with an engraving entitled "The First Methodist Chapel Ever Built" a photo-copy of which the Rev. W.J. Little was good enough to send me.¹⁰ Moreover, the Rev. H.J. Foster, at some unknown date but possibly in the early 1880s, drew plans of the New Room which show the square upper deck pulpit (with stairs leading to it from the galleries on both sides) but not the lower octagonal one.¹¹ The latter had evidently disappeared by then. Nor does it appear on another engraving, the date of which is unfortunately not known.¹²

Two other points are worth noting. Firstly, all three writers who referred to the pulpit at Holyhead—Lot Hughes, Thomas Williams and Hugh Owen—refer explicitly to a pulpit not to a part of a pulpit. And secondly, whereas the missing portion of the 1748 pulpit was the lower octagonal deck, the pulpit at Holyhead is square in shape; on

⁷ *Y Cylchgrawn*, 1867, p. 257.

⁸ *ibid*, 1870, p. 142.

⁹ "Notes and Queries".

¹⁰ The date of publication of the book in which the engraving appears is not given, nor apparently the name of the engraver.

¹¹ *Journal*, ii, p. 253.

¹² *ibid*, ii, p. 196. This engraving shows the screen in front of the square upper deck pulpit only.

its front are three segmental-headed rectangular panels, and there is a similar panel on each of its sides. It is therefore quite clear that this pulpit cannot be the lower deck of the 1748 pulpit ; nor does it match the original upper deck which has survived in the New Room.

In short, if W. Morgan Lewis's testimony is accepted—and as a member of the congregation at the New Room for many years, and a professional architect to boot, it must surely carry some weight—then the original 1748 pulpit was still intact as late as 1870, and even later if what he termed "the first alteration" was not made until he had just left his employer's service about 1885 ; he had seen it both before and after its division. If this was so, then obviously the pulpit which Captain Evan Lloyd took from the New Room to Holyhead could not be a part of the original pulpit of 1748. If furthermore we accept the testimony of the three Welsh writers (and nothing so far has been adduced to refute it) it may well be that it was the original pulpit of the first New Room of 1739, in which case its Methodist interest is even greater. In any case it is good to know that should the authorities at the New Room so desire, it should not prove difficult to re-acquire it.

I am grateful to the following for their ready assistance while pursuing this investigation : The Rev. A. Raymond George, Warden of the New Room, and his predecessor the Rev. W.J. Little ; the Rev. Dennis Griffiths and Messrs. William Owen, Howell Parry and Thomas Roberts, all of Holyhead ; and especially Mr. A.H. Williams of Cardiff for his keen interest and constructive suggestions throughout.

JOHN T. OWEN

[Dr. John T. Owen is a former Principal of Leigh College, Lancashire]

*It is now eighteen years since Max Woodward's attractive and well-written story of Wesley's Chapel appeared under the title **One at London**. This was reviewed in Proceedings xxxv. p. 195. During those eighteen years, much has happened to the Chapel and interest in this historic mother church of Methodism has been rekindled. So it is good to find that the Friends of Wesley's Chapel have thought it fitting to produce a second edition of this book. The present minister, Dr. R. C. Gibbins has written a new appendix bringing the story up-to-date, covering the restoration and re-opening of the building. New photographs appear to take into account the renovations, an extra collect for Wesley Day appears and, what is most welcome, an index is provided. The book sells at £4.95 in hard back and £2.95 soft back—bargain prices, surely !*

J.C.B.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES OF LOCAL METHODISM

IN 1963 E. Alan Rose, reporting the compilation of a 150-item list of Methodist local histories of the Manchester area, wrote, "I am sure that similar lists could be prepared for other areas without undue difficulty ; this could well be undertaken in the areas covered by our local branches. In this way a list covering the whole country could gradually be built up."¹ Since then, apart from Alan Rose's own Mark II list of 1970, still on Greater Manchester, very little has materialised until the recent publication of Roger Thorne's *Methodism in the south west : an historical bibliography*,² but this is not to say that nothing is happening elsewhere in the country. John Vickers has issued the first two parts of his projected London Methodist bibliography³, Alan Rose is extending his work and hopes to compile a bibliography of Lancashire and Cheshire Methodism ; David Barton has compiled a Derbyshire listing which has just appeared in the East Midlands WHS Branch Journal, December 1985 ; the Rev. Thomas Shaw has

. . . no immediate plans for publishing a bibliography of Cornish Methodism though I have lists of holdings on the subject in various Cornish libraries from which a bibliography could (given the time) easily be compiled.

while I myself have some 480 entries on cards for a Lincolnshire Methodist bibliography with no immediate publishing plans in view. Such is the work in progress which I know of in this field : there may be other projects of course.

It is interesting to look at the scope of these various schemes. Alan Rose confines himself to local published histories and includes no articles or biographies, nor does he include ephemera (e.g. chapel opening leaflets) unless there is at least one page of history included. David Barton lists books and theses but has not looked for magazine articles and does not include general town histories unless they contain an overwhelming amount on Methodism. John Vickers excludes ephemera but includes periodical and newspaper articles and relevant chapters in books that are wider in scope, and plans a biographical section ; his London bibliography, incidentally, is to be arranged by the latest Dewey Classification schedules whereas most envisage an alphabetical arrangement by place, although Roger Thorne elected to arrange his by towns and parishes. The Lincolnshire material includes not only books and pamphlets (with what would seem to be a generally followed exclusion of ephemera based roughly on Alan

¹ *Proceedings*, xxxiv, p. 98.

² Obtainable from Roger Thorne, 11 Station Road, Topsham, Exeter ; price £1.50 plus postage.

³ I am indebted to John Vickers and to David Barton, Alan Rose, Rev. Thomas Shaw and Roger Thorne for answering my enquiries about their work in local Methodist bibliography and from whose letters I quote or paraphrase information on their work.

Rose's criteria) and also articles from the *Proceedings* and the Lincolnshire Methodist History Society Journal, together with a few from other sources that have been found although no systematic search of those has been made. Also included are general town histories with a note on their Methodist coverage, and biographies of Lincolnshire Methodists (although John and Charles Wesley have, perhaps not surprisingly, been excluded).

Roger Thorne in his bibliography has put all West Country historians—and particularly Methodist historians—in his debt, and has set compilers of checklists and bibliographies in other regions a worthy model to emulate. He takes as his area the Plymouth and Exeter District (of which he is District Archivist)—that is, Devon, East Cornwall, West Somerset and West Dorset—and for his chosen area gives an exhaustive listing of books, pamphlets and magazine articles, but includes some more general works too, such as Tindall's *Wesleyan Methodist Atlas*, and full bibliographical descriptions of the various editions of J. G. Hayman's *Methodism in North Devon*. The periodical articles are culled from the *Proceedings* of the Wesley Historical Society and of the Plymouth and Exeter District Methodist History Society, the *Transactions* of the Devonshire Association, *Cirplan*, the *Journal* of the Cornish Methodist Historical Association as well as the *Methodist Recorder*, the *Bible Christian Magazine*, the *United Methodist Magazine* and many others both local and connexional. The bibliography is based on the compiler's extensive collection, and locations are given for any items not held by him; occasional items are included which have been identified only from standard Methodist bibliographies.

Production of the bibliography is by reduction to A5 of the compiler's A4 typescript and although (as he himself admits) the typing is uneven and the resultant pages therefore patchy in places, to have had it re-typed professionally ". . . probably wouldn't sell an extra copy. Less, as the cost would have to go up."⁴ As it is the result—reproduced in a local college as a community project (a possibility worth exploring for other local Methodist publications perhaps)—is very acceptable and the 47 pages of bibliography, supported by 8 pages of indexes (author and place) and 2 pages each of introduction and abbreviations, is a bargain at £1.50. One looks forward to his next bibliographical works—a Methodist supplement and a nonconformist bibliography of the south west, imprints 1800 and later—while resolving to emulate him for Lincolnshire and hoping that others elsewhere will take up the challenge to make a reality of Alan Rose's 20-year old dream of a national bibliography of local Methodist history.

J. S. ENGLISH.

[Mr. J. S. English is a librarian and Editor of the Lincolnshire Methodist History Society]

⁴ Letter from Roger Thorne dated 6th May 1983.

BOOK NOTICES

Diary of an Oxford Methodist Benjamin Ingham, 1733-1734 edited by Professor Richard P. Heitzenrater (Duke University Press, 1985 : pp 304, \$37.50)

These Oxford University students were, in the main, preparing for Holy Orders and, naturally, they gave a good deal of their time to the study of appropriate literary works. They also met together in small groups to assist each other in the pursuit of holiness. Since men like John Wesley and Benjamin Ingham wrote diaries to record almost every single moment they lived, they found it convenient to use symbols : both for detail and, possibly, for a certain amount of privacy. Professor Heitzenrater, however, has given us the key to these symbols, thereby opening the door wider onto life at Oxford and onto a better understanding of that decade which was possibly as heart-warming at its beginning as it was towards its end.

In their lives of study, devotion and charity, the Oxford Methodists reprimanded each other for past sins and we are told that Ingham and his friends "developed a series of hand signals to warn each other in public when they saw or heard one of their company saying or doing something that 'did not tend to God's Glory'." Meditation, however, was at the heart of their search for holiness, self-knowledge being an important goal and self-examination a primary means to that end. Wesley encouraged his friends, in such daily exercises of self-examination, to "ferret out specific sins" and the study of Scripture provided, with attendance at the Eucharist, the almost exclusive focus for such meditation. With such devotion went works of good will and, as so often has been said, "the outward manifestations of their religious perspective appeared fanatical to many in that age of spiritual lethargy."

Their theology of holy living, especially that of interior holiness, was their basic motivation : to be, that is, restored in the image of God. "The goal (was) not to be able to act perfectly ; the goal (was) to BE perfect, to achieve an inward perfection of intentions and attitudes, of will as well as of understanding." It required that a man must do his best, acknowledging that "every effort springs from God's grace." Indeed Heitzenrater quotes Jean Orcibal's "The Theological Originality of John Wesley," by noting that Wesley claimed to have remained (even after 1770) "as tenacious a champion of inner holiness as any mystic and of outward holiness as any Pharisee."

The author's footnotes are most illuminating throughout, not least the one which says that no full-length biography of Ingham has ever been published. (One awaits a publisher for one's M. Phil. thesis, shelved at Leeds University). More importantly, the text of Ingham's Diary helps us to understand John Wesley and the Oxford Methodists before 1738. It helps us to see a longer heart-warming process than some accounts of Wesley's instant conversion might suggest and it may even help us to make more of the celebrations of 1988, especially if we remember, as Ingham's Diary clearly shows, that John Wesley was concerned about holiness long before 1738. Whimsical references to Wesley's Journal in introductory remarks at Methodist Synods, which, so often, only point out that he visited this town and that (but, never, Nuneaton), may, even now, more usefully give way to the suggestion that a *vision* of holiness is as much a necessary forerunner of conversion as its *reality* is an outcome.

DAVID F. CLARKE.

A Man for All Churches: Marcus Ward, by John A. Newton. (Epworth Press: 1984 pp. ii + 88) £3.95

One of the joys of this book is that the biographer, John Newton, has walked the same scholarly, ecumenical and Methodist paths as the subject of the book himself.

The clue to Marcus Ward clearly lay in his warm and many-sided humanity and his dogged application to study. Here was a schoolboy who got the wrong side of a short-sighted and mediocre headmaster at Kingswood and yet went on to gain a first in Latin and Philosophy at the University of Southampton and a Double First at Cambridge, where he came under the spell of Newton Flew at Wesley House.

Marcus Ward's long career in theological education began as assistant tutor at Richmond College, in the days of Ryder Smith, Eric Waterhouse, Bertram Clogg and Leslie Church. There followed twenty-three years in India, first in Madras and then, for nineteen years, a distinguished lectureship in systematic theology at the United Theological College in Bangalore.

Before setting sail for India, Ward had gained his life-long passion for rugby, had drunk deeply at the well of the Methodist School of Fellowship at Swanwick, had been ordained at the Uniting British Conference of 1932 and had abandoned his family's Liberalism for the Labour Party.

His Cambridge prizes included a significant study of the Byzantine Church and his major furlough included a long summer term as a don at Jesus College, Cambridge and long hours of friendship with the legendary duo of Bernard Manning and Freddie Brittain.

His near miss of the nomination to be Bishop in Mysore in 1950 was as nothing compared with the generation of Indian leaders whom he gave to the Church of South India and the creative skill which he gave to the formation of the Church of South India itself and that massive contribution which he made to the Christian Students' Library series.

Ward's return to Britain in 1955 began eighteen years of outstanding service to his beloved Richmond College along with Harold Roberts, Clive Thexton and Norman Goldhawk. From his Richmond base he was able to serve as a member of the Anglican-Methodist Conversations on which he felt there was good reason for not supporting the CSI scheme as the way forward for Britain.

The climax of his career in theological education came with six years on the staff of the Jesuit seminary at Heythrop College, where for two days each week, with both staff and students, in the lecture-room, the common-room and the chapel he became *anima naturaliter Jesuitica*.

Like John Wesley he ceased at once to work and live when he died quietly and suddenly on the first morning of June 1978 while completing a batch of examination papers.

Marcus Ward's family and friends will continue to reap much joy from this book and the vigour, wit and contribution of its subject will do nothing but improve the minds and knowledge of those into whose hands it may come.

NORMAN WALLWORK.

The Primitive Methodist Connexion: Its Background and its Early History by Julia Stewart Werner. (University of Wisconsin Press, pp. xv, 251, 1984, \$35).

It is eighty years since H. B. Kendall produced his outstandingly useful two-volume history of Primitive Methodism and though we have since then had a good many studies of various aspects of that history, no scholar has rewritten it in fullness and in depth. There must be various reasons for this including the sheer comprehensiveness of Kendall's account, the temporary decline in interest in Primitive Methodist history after Methodist union, and a reluctance to tackle the re-interpretation of such a large field of study until detailed local researches into Primitive Methodism had been adequately synthesised.

Now an American scholar has stepped into the breach but has in fact only filled one part of it, having limited her enquiry to the first decade of the Primitive Methodist connexion's life and work. Within this timespan there is much that is highly admirable in Miss Werner's account, in its broad grasp, its insights and its vivid detail. Her first two chapters set the scene by analysing the growing paralysis of Wesleyanism in the difficult decades after Wesley's death and the sharp tensions and frustrations as official Wesleyanism disowned the revivalism which it had in part generated. The three following chapters describe the birth of Primitive Methodism and its expansion into the East Midlands, the East Riding, the Black Country, Cheshire and the Lancashire-West Riding textile belt. A final chapter analyses the distinguishing characteristics of Primitive Methodism in its earliest phase.

The 36 pages of notes and the 14 pages of bibliography reveal the extent and thoroughness of Miss Werner's delving. (Her research was done in the 1970s when the Methodist Church Archives were at City Road under Dr John Bowmer's care, and it is good to find a warm acknowledgement of his helpfulness in the book's preface.) Despite the comprehensive nature of the bibliography there are some surprising omissions—John Petty's life of Thomas Batty, W.E. Farndale's *Secret of Mow Cop*, Michael Sheard's study of early Manchester Primitive Methodism, and John Kent's chapter on Dow in *Holding the Fort*, among them. As for the primary sources, the author has largely confined herself to those which were available in the Methodist Archives and she does not appear to have made any use of the material in County Record Offices.

The publisher's blurb claims that Miss Werner's is the first study of early Primitive Methodism written from the perspectives of social history. This is unfair to Kendall who was very aware of environmental factors; and in fact Miss Werner's book does not deal with the social and economic background in any unusual depth. The author shows an intelligent awareness of the importance of that background, and there are allusions to social and political issues in the areas into which Primitive Methodism spread, but these are not sustained or developed to any great extent.

The main thesis of the book is the rigidity of official Wesleyanism compared with the spontaneity of the Primitives. One would not quarrel with this but it is pursued somewhat repetitiously, and perhaps too strictly at times. The author turns to it again in her conclusion. This is entitled 'An Opportunity Missed, and an Opening Exploited' (i.e. the Wesleyans missed their opportunity to evangelise the new working classes in the age of revolution, while the Primitive Methodists spotted an opening and exploited it). In fact this phrase is a not unfitting comment on the book itself.

Miss Werner has exploited the opening for a modern study of Primitive Methodism and there is much to be learned (and enjoyed) in what she writes. But the value of the work is severely limited by her decision to stop suddenly around 1820. This might be acceptable in an academic dissertation (in which form this book presumably had its origin) but here it is seriously detrimental, especially as there is no attempt to look forward in any way from that terminal point or to indicate (if only in outline) the future development and significance of the movement whose birth and infancy have been so well described. This is indeed an opportunity missed! And the lack is the more severely felt since nineteenth century Primitive Methodism receives scant treatment in the second and third volumes of the new history of Methodism. Despite the quality of Miss Werner's study, those who have the equivalent of 35 dollars to spend might still be wiser to opt for a second-hand copy of Kendall and they will receive as a bonus many illustrations in which this new book is completely lacking apart from an outline map.

In conclusion may I indulge one private nigger? Miss Werner cites as an example of the hardships of the early preachers the oft-quoted statement by William Lister that he walked 2,400 miles as superintendent of Ripon Circuit between 1835 and 1838 (see Kendall ii p. 81). In fact anyone who does not own a car, who walks a reasonable distance to work each day and to church on Sunday, can quite easily clock up this kind of mileage over three years without thinking about it. There are plenty of other instances of the sacrificial efforts of the early Primitive Methodist preachers; this particular one should be laid to rest!

GEOFFREY E. MILBURN .

Jean Guillaume de la Fléchère. John William Fletcher 1729-1785. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Methodismus. by Patrick Philipp Streiff (Basler und Berner Studien zur historischen und systematischen Theologie no. 51. Verlag Peter Lang: Frankfurt, 1984. pp. 540. ISBN 3-8204-8120-6.)

This book, written in German, but containing plenty of Fletcher's French and English, is every bit as solid a contribution to Methodist history as it looks. It is the work of a delightful young Swiss Methodist minister, trained at the central European Methodist seminary at Reutlingen, and offered as his doctoral dissertation under Andreas Lindt at Bern. Dr Streiff's present commission is to unite a German and a French-speaking congregation in Lausanne, and he presents Fletcher in this spirit as a middleman also, a middleman between Swiss Rational Orthodoxy and the English religious scene, and a middleman between the English religious parties, defending Wesley furiously in the Antinomian controversy, even though this involved attacking the Shropshire gentry to whom he owed his career, yet resisting Wesley's efforts to turn him into an itinerant. Here the resemblance between hero and author ends; for Fletcher was an autodidact and Dr Streiff is a very professional performer.

That Fletcher was an autodidact is the first interesting thing about him. He came from the Waadtland, then subject to the canton of Bern, which was at that time the principal and resolute upholder of the symbol of high Reformed Orthodoxy, the Formula Consensus. The position of this symbol was, in Fletcher's youth, being steadily eroded in Geneva, Basel and

Neuchâtel, but in Bern of the four clergy who made a stand against it, three left the country, and the fourth became unemployable in the church. He was Fletcher's uncle, and Fletcher himself, though desiring a clerical career, took one year's non-theological education at Geneva, before the family tried to provide for him with the other string to their bow, military service abroad. Ill-health and the return of peace damaged Fletcher's chances here too, so he had resort to a line which Archbishop Moore thought was too common, coming to England to make use of his languages as tutor to a gentry family, and being eventually rewarded with a parish. Becoming an Anglican, and finally rejecting the Calvinist doctrine of predestination (though he stood generally in the Reformed tradition) was in a sense a long liberation from Reformed Orthodoxy, and Fletcher was quite as conservative as the Rational Orthodox who secured their liberation by other means in Switzerland.

Dr Streiff's careful account of Fletcher's theological 'location' is well worth reading, especially as Fletcher, like Wesley, had the misfortune to be edited by Joseph Benson, and unlike him, has not been rescued by later editors. But Fletcher is also a biographical problem to which the book makes an excellent introduction. Amongst Methodist contemporaries, Fletcher had an unrivalled reputation for sanctity—Wesley's funeral sermon for him was on the text 'Mark the perfect man' (Ps. 37 : 37), and he seems never to have behaved as badly as Wesley did in the unhappy period after he returned from Georgia. Yet Fletcher needed a powerful conversion experience to make pastoral work possible for him, and even then remained so unsure in his touch that he did not propose marriage to Mary Bosanquet till he was a dying man. Charles Wesley was perfectly certain that he would have done so twenty years before had he not doubted whether he preferred her money to her person. How sanctification could create human problems instead of solving them is not Dr Streiff's theme, but he supplies a great deal of material for readers to work out their own solutions.

This is a notable book, by no means the first notable contribution made by the small Methodism of Switzerland to Methodist history generally. It would be a pity if the large Methodisms of Britain and the United States having left this field of study open for so long, were not now to arrange for an English version to gain a wider circulation.

W. R. WARD.

Religion and the Working-Class in Nineteenth-Century Britain, by Hugh McLeod. (Studies in Economic and Social History, Macmillan : London 1984, pp. 76, £2.95).

Hugh McLeod's latest brief introduction to the theme of popular religious belief and practice bears the marks of the series by which it is commissioned. For almost twenty years the Economic History Society has been publishing valuable brief introductions to debates in its field designed not so much to wind up the argument as to introduce the non-specialist to what is at issue. His theme is therefore narrower than it was in his excellent *Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789-1970* (1980),¹ and his treatment shows how historians can be every bit as contentious as those about whom they write. The difficulty is that although perceptions are in their way "hard" facts, much of what they report is very "soft" indeed. And there are difficulties in the perceptions

both of those about whom Dr. McLeod writes and of our own contemporaries. One perception strongly held in the middle of the nineteenth century, yet hardly held at all a century before or a century later, was that there should not only be a parson in every parish, but that everyone free and able to darken the doors of a church should do so weekly; thus the compilers of the religious census of 1851 understood their evidence differently from their forebears and successors. Equally, as the writer does not explain, "working-classness" is not jargon for an income group, but a way which some people (almost none in the eighteenth century, and very far from all now) perceive their relations with others, a tricky issue in connexion with religious attitudes also much occupied with relations with others. (If anything ever descended "vertically from above" it was not the phenomena historians have to interpret.) Perceptions of our own contemporaries make the matter worse. Is there one plot or several? One story of intermittent secularisation, or many, with religion, even Christian religion, assuming many different social roles? So distinguished an historian as Owen Chadwick held each of these views in successive books. Hugh McLeod, in his businesslike way, takes the reader through this minefield as effectively as the format of the series permits, and caps his essay with a bibliography which contains most of what is useful. Evangelists and social-Christians should not utter publicly on this theme again until they have read him, and a portion of his bibliography; apologists for ecumenism and (worst of all) "mainstream religion" will not find either here, and had better think where they went in the nineteenth century. Another notable absentee is the Victorian "crisis of faith", but new work on that is being prepared elsewhere.

For a fresh look at a theme too many of us assume we know all about, Dr. McLeod's treatment is highly commended, and the reader's path will be eased if he bears a simple model in mind. Early in the nineteenth century the social pyramid, though very steep in terms of income, was very flat in terms of numbers above the base. It followed from this, in the nature of the case, that working-men penetrated the churches much more substantially than the churches penetrated the working-class. Some argument at least might be saved if this, one of the less "soft" perceptions, is kept in mind.

W. R. WARD

¹Reviewed in *Proceedings*, xliii, p. 135 (Editor).

Wesleyans and Bible Christians in South Somerset. Accounts and Minutes, 1808-1907. Edited by M. D. Costen. (Somerset Record Society, 1984, pp. xxvi, 387. £15.)

This volume—so far as I know, the first of its kind to deal with Methodist circuit records—is a commendable venture and a welcome recognition that local ecclesiastical records do not begin and end with parish registers. It contains transcripts of the circuit accounts, Quarterly Meeting and Local Preachers' Meeting minutes and other related records from the South Pether-ton Wesleyan Circuit and the Crewkerne Bible Christian Mission.

The Introduction outlines the main features of local Methodism during its formative years. In some respects (e.g. the stress on 'ministerial initiative' in evangelical outreach (p. xv) and the existence of ministerial Trustees (p. xxv))

the picture that emerges differs from what is found elsewhere (e.g. in the adjoining counties of Dorset and Hampshire). Some indication of the evidence for these regional variations and a discussion of their significance would have been welcome. They do not emerge from the records printed here.

Axminster is, no doubt inadvertently, located in Dorset (p. x), and there are other traces of editorial carelessness, such as the three entries added to the Glossary out of alphabetical order. But the weakest link in the chain is the index, which not only fails to take into account the repagination of the Introduction (occasioned by the insertion of an otherwise useless map on pp. viii-ix), but is an inept and inadequate affair, quite unworthy of any serious contribution to scholarship.

JOHN A. VICKERS.

LOCAL HISTORIES

A History of Methodism in Bosley, written for the Centenary celebrations of 1985 (23pp, 10 illus) by Andrew Worth. Copies, price £1.50 post free from the author at Rough Hey, Gawsorth, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 0JQ.

Poynton Green Chapel Centenary 1885-1985: A Shropshire Village's Methodism (16pp) by J.H. Lenton. Copies, price £1.25 post free, from the author at 40 Pemberton Road, Admaston, Telford, Salop, TF5 0BL.

Water Lane Chapel and the Methodists of Wilmslow (91 pp) by John Banks *et al.* 1985. Copies, price £3.00 each, from the author at Parkgate House, Fulshaw Park South, Wilmslow, Cheshire.

John Wesley Passed By: 200 Years of Methodism in Wellington (Somerset) (28 pp) by Herbert W White. Copies, price £1.20 post free, from Rev Leslie E P Richards, 71 Waterloo Road, Wellington, Somerset.

North Chingford Methodist Church, 80 Years of Service 1905-1985 (12 pp) by John H. Boyes. Copies, price £1.15 each, post free, from the author at 129 Endlebury Road, Chingford, London E4 6PX.

To Serve the Coming Days: The story of Cheriton Fitzpaine Methodist Chapel 1860-1985 by Jean Carr and Jennifer Cave. Copies, price £1 plus postage, from Mrs J Carr, West Riding, Cheriton Fitzpaine, Devon.

NOTES AND QUERIES

1388. A MISSING PLAN

J. W. Laycock, in his *Methodist Heroes of the Great Haworth Round* (1909), makes reference on pages 348-9 to a manuscript preaching plan for 1788-9. Such a plan would give vital information about the early years of the Keighley circuit, but it does not seem to be among the surviving circuit records. Any information of its whereabouts would be greatly appreciated by the Rev. I. D. Johnson, 24 Corbett Street, Droitwich, Worcs., WR9 7BQ.

1389. THE WHS LIBRARY

Reading Notes and Queries No. 1371 (*Proceedings*, xliii, p. 183) on the Primitive Methodist "Other Side", I looked to see what we might have in the WHS Library on the subject. Two cuttings only, whereas there is much more from the Wesleyan side, both pro- and anti-Union. This is, no doubt, in proportion to the amount of words exchanged, but made me think that a great deal of material may be lost, as members are not always aware of the value of such "non-book" items. Now that the library is fairly well organised, we are able to file cuttings, pamphlets, handbills, programmes and other ephemera safely, in an orderly manner, and in a place of accessibility.

If it is thought advisable to send originals of such material to Manchester, it is often possible to copy them for use in the WHS Library. A parallel case is that of photographs, where, if an interesting one is deposited at Manchester or in a branch archive, we would welcome a print for the WHS Library. (Particularly valuable would be photographs of disused Methodist churches, clearly labelled!) The governors of Southlands grant us a small amount per annum for the library, so in addition to the purchase of books we can refund expenses of this kind. We may not be able to afford many valuable accessions in the monetary sense, but with a very small outlay and the help of members, we can enrich our "bank of knowledge" as early members did in their interesting manuscript journals, and increase our library's value for research.

JOYCE BANKS.

1390. CITY ROAD ARRANGEMENTS

Research continues to reveal examples of lost City Road arrangements and a number of these are known to have once existed in Calderdale, West Yorkshire. Salem, Hebden Bridge, was opened in 1824 and the centenary brochure (1924) describes the interior: "Both the high and low pulpits were situated at the south end, behind which was the Communion rail, also a large semi-circle recess or alcove. On the walls were the Commandments in gold letters on a blue ground, and above the recess or alcove were the choir pews and organ chamber, a separate entrance being provided by an outside staircase." This chapel was replaced in 1885.

C. F. Stell: *Calderdale Chapels* (1985) provides evidence that Bolton Brow, Sowerby Bridge, the model deed chapel built in 1832 and extended around 1868, was another example. He also shows that it is likely that the octagon at Heptonstall, built in 1764 and extended in 1802, may have been a further case.

Charles H. Gee: *Methodism in Heptonstall* (1939) states that the chapel of 1764 had a pulpit which stood against the back wall, and so it must be

presumed that its City Road arrangement dates from the rebuilding.

D. C. DEWS.

1391. ELIJAH HOOLE, ARCHITECT

Roland Wetter, of Mont d'Or 11, CH-1007 Lausanne, Switzerland, writes:

I am seeking to obtain information on the architect Elijah Hoole (died in 1912) who constructed a great number of Wesleyan Methodist Churches from 1864 onwards. I am also interested in any information on the buildings which he erected in the opening years of his activity as architect, and which are the following :

- Southwark, London, Queen's Road, Camberwell (1864)
- Church and school, Creed Place, Greenwich (1865)
- Chapel and school, Prince of Wales Road, Haverstock Hill, London (1867)
- Southend-on-Sea, Essex, Park Road (1872).

I should be very happy if it would be possible for any of your members to help me in this research enquiry.

THE ANNUAL LECTURE

in connexion with the Stoke-on-Trent Conference, 1986
will be delivered in

Goldenhill Methodist Church, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent

On Monday, 23rd June, at 7.30pm.

By

The Rev. Dr. Norman W. Taggart, BA, BD.

SUBJECT: "Methodist Foreign Missions, the first Half Century".

The chair will be taken by the Rev. Albert W. Mosley MA.

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held on the same premises
at 6pm, preceded by **Tea at 5pm.**
