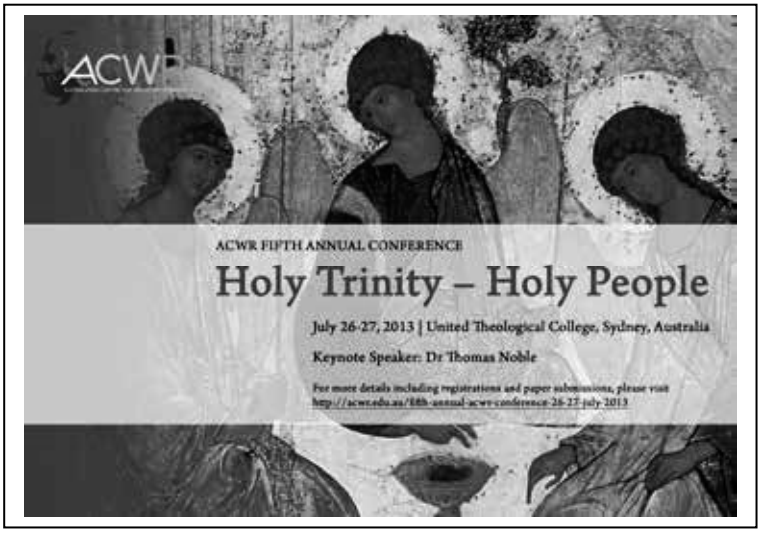
ALDERSGATE PAPERS

THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL OF THE ACWR
VOLUME 10 SEPTEMBER 2012
ISSN 2201-0063

Fifth Annual ACWR Conference
26-27 July, 2013
United Theological College, North Parramatta, NSW



The Fifth Annual Conference will be held in Sydney, Australia from July 26th-27th, 2013. The keynote speaker will be Dr Thomas Noble, Senior Research Fellow at Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, UK and Professor of Theology, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, USA. For more details including registrations and paper submissions, please visit our website at acwr.edu.au

Brisbane:
Australasian Centre for Wesleyan Research
2012

ISSN 2201-0063

Printed by
Springwood Printing Company
NSW, Australia

The Australasian Centre for Wesleyan Research

The ACWR promotes and supports research on the life, work and times of John and Charles Wesley, their historical and theological antecedents, their successors in the Wesleyan tradition, and contemporary scholarship in the Wesleyan tradition. This includes areas such as theology, biblical studies, history, education, ethics, literature, mission, cultural studies, philosophy, pastoral studies, worship, preaching, practical theology, and social theology.

Currently the ACWR is headquartered at the Nazarene Theological College in Brisbane, Australia and is a working partnership formed by a number of Wesleyan theological institutions, and one denominational partner.

- Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (Church of the Nazarene), Manila
- Booth College (Salvation Army Eastern Territory), Sydney
- Booth College of Mission, (Salvation Army New Zealand Territory), Wellington
- Catherine Booth College (Salvation Army Southern Territory), Melbourne
- Kingsley Australia (Wesleyan Methodist), Melbourne
- Nazarene Theological College (Church of the Nazarene), Brisbane
- The Wesleyan Methodist Church of New Zealand

We also have formal partnerships with the following libraries:

- Camden Theological Library, Sydney (NSW Synod of the Uniting Church)
- The Sugden Heritage Collections at Queen's College (a college of the Victorian and Tasmanian Synod of the Uniting Church within the University of Melbourne).

Each of the Partner Colleges and Libraries provides quality resources for students and researchers in this field. We are actively seeking to enlarge our range of partners throughout Australia and New Zealand, as well as further afield.

Aldersgate Papers has been published since September 2000 and this tenth volume of the journal appears in 2013 with a September 2012 cover date.

Abstracts from the journal are listed in *Religious and Theological Abstracts* http://rtabstracts.org/

Subscriptions

Subscriptions (AUD $60 for 2 volumes + $6 postage) may be obtained from the website of *The Australasian Centre for Wesleyan Research* http://www.acwr.org Enquiries should be addressed to Glen O'Brien, Editor, *Aldersgate Papers* PO Box 4063 Bexley North NSW 2207 or glenaobrien@gmail.com Back copies of some issues of the journal are available for $15 each.

Guidelines for Submissions

Aldersgate Papers is an international journal publishing articles and reviews in theology and all related disciplines. The journal follows the *Chicago Manual of Style,* 16th ed. for all matters of style with the exception of spelling which follows the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Authors may also refer to Kate L. Turabian's short guide to the Chicago style, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations,* 16th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

1. Submissions should be sent as attachments in electronic format to the Editor, glenaobrien@gmail.com ph: 0451010799 or +61 (0)3 9717 1065

2. Books for review and correspondence about reviews should also be sent to the editor.

3. The email in which the submission is sent functions as a cover sheet, with the title of the paper, name and title of the author, institutional affiliation and teaching or research post (if relevant), postal address, phone, fax, and email. Except for the cover sheet, all identification should be removed.

4. Papers should include a brief abstract, be word-processed, double-spaced, and numbered, with ample margins. Footnotes (not endnotes) should also be double-spaced and numbered consecutively.

5. The length of published articles is restricted to a maximum of about 8,000 words including footnotes.

9. Except for brief quotations of no more than a line, the body of all papers should be in English.

10. Illustrations, tables, maps and figures should appear on separate pages following

the footnotes. They must be numbered consecutively and include captions which identify the source of any image or data. Authors are responsible for obtaining and paying for the use of all copyrighted materials and any reproduction charges.

11. Authors are urged to double check all references ensuring that they are complete and include accurate page numbers. References to manuscript, archival and printed government sources should follow recognised conventions and avoid ambiguous contractions.

12. Footnotes should be numbered consecutively. Some examples follow:

Journal Article:

7. J. Stenhouse, 'Christianity, Gender, and the Working Class in Southern Dunedin, 1880-1940,' *Journal of Religious History* 30:1 (Feb. 2006): 18-44.

Modern Book:
(Include publisher)

8. M. A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), 96-97.

Subsequent references to the same work should be reduced to:

9. Noll, 112.

Early Book:
(Publisher may be omitted)

10. William Baldwin, *A Treatise of morall philosophy Contaynynge the sayings of the wyse* (London, 1579).

Government Publication:

11. U. K. *Parliamentary Debates,* Lords, 5th ser., vol.13 (1893), cols.1273-74. *and subsequently* :

12. *Parl. Deb.,* Lords, 5th ser., 13 (1893): 1273.

Archival Source:

13. Report of the Committee into Convict Discipline, 24 March 1842, CSO 22/50, Archives Office of Tasmania, Hobart.

Manuscript:

14. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 581, fols. 23-24v. and subsequently

15. Bodley 581, fol. 23.

Judeo-Christian Scriptures:

16. Heb. 13:8, 12-13.

For standard scriptural abbreviations see *Chicago Manual of Style,* 14.34-35.

Classical and Medieval References:

17. Abelard *Epistle* 17 to *Heloise* (Migne PL 180.375c-378a).

18. Cicero *De officiis* 1.133, 140.

Abbreviations should follow the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

13. Subsequent citations to a work previously cited should provide only the author's last name and the page number(s) and, in the case of citations to more than one work by the same author, a short title of the work. Do not use *Ibid* or other Latin contractions.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Peter Benzie is Senior Minister of the Redoubt North Wesleyan Church and National Secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of New Zealand.

Gregory R. Coates is an ordained elder in the Free Methodist Church and a Master of Theology student at Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina.

Samantha Frappell is an historian and author based in Sydney.

Jennifer Hein is a PhD student in the Adelaide College of Divinity, Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia.

David Hilliard is Adjunct Associate Professor in History at Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia.

Donald J. Hopgood was formerly Minister for Education in the South Australian Labor government.

Amber Livermore is the National Youth Consultant of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of New Zealand, Auckland, New Zealand.

David Noakes is Principal of Booth College of Mission, Wellington New Zealand in the Salvation Army's New Zealand, Fiji, and Tonga Territory.

Glen O'Brien is Head of Humanities at Booth College and a Senior Lecturer in Church History and Theology in the Sydney College of Divinity.

Campbell Roberts is the Director of Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit in the Salvation Army's New Zealand, Fiji, and Tonga Territory.

Norman Young is a Fellow of Queen's College and the Melbourne College of Divinity and Lecturer in Systematic Theology at Yarra Theological Union, Melbourne.

EDITORIAL

I am very pleased to offer in this issue of the journal two special sections that highlight areas of research interest in the ACWR. Over the last three years Professor Hilary Carey and I, with the assistance of Dr. Troy Duncan, have been involved in a project to publish a new scholarly history of Australian Methodism. Such a history is long overdue. While there have been good state-based studies, there has not been an attempt at a national history of Methodism since the first decade of the twentieth century. The model we adopted was to run a series of scholarly conferences (Wesley College, University of Sydney, 2010; Queen's College University of Melbourne, 2011; Adelaide College of Divinity, 2012) and to invite scholars to present papers, many of which would form drafts of chapters in the final work.

One very pleasing side product of such an exercise is the stimulation of research related to the book project without being part of the final volume. Hearing of our project the Historical Society of the Uniting Church in South Australia dedicated its November 2011 meeting in Adelaide to the project and two of the articles published here were presented on that day – David Hilliard's updated survey of South Australian Methodism via a revisiting of Arnold Hunt's landmark study *This Side of Heaven*, and former Minister for Education, Donald Hopgood's study of Methodists in South Australian politics. Samantha Frappell's insightful article on Methodists and six o'clock closing and Norman Young's review of Methodist ministerial training both began as papers at the Queen's College workshop in December 2011. An earlier version of my own paper on Methodism and the Great War was delivered at the Religious History Association meeting in Fremantle, Western Australia in July 2009 and sparked discussion with Hilary Carey about the need for a new scholarly history of Australian Methodism.

The ACWR has become closely related to this project being among the financial contributors. Other churches and agencies to have contributed include the Arnold Hunt Trust, Kingsley Australia, the Uniting Church Victoria and Tasmania Synod, and the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia. We are very pleased to be one of the places for the publication of work generated by this important research project.

The second collection of articles in this issue is the fruit of our Fourth Annual Conference held at East City Wesleyan Church, Auckland, New Zealand in August 2012 around the theme

Wesleyans and the Mission of God. Several of these writers are early in their publishing careers and it is exciting to be able to provide a forum for their work. None of the Conference papers were peer reviewed, though each one went through a careful process of editorial review and comment including input from our international editorial board. The first three articles of this issue, including Greg Coates' insightful survey of Wesley's political theology, were peer reviewed by external readers. I am grateful to those scholars who provided their advice and expertise to improve these articles, a process that is vital to the continued improvement of the journal.

Our 10th issue of the journal seemed an appropriate time to include an index of articles published. You will find Article, Author, and Subject Indexes on pages 173-187. Of the 71 articles and book reviews published in the journal, only four have been in the area of Christian Practice and eight in Biblical Studies. The lion's share of the article have been in Theology (26), followed closely by Wesley Studies/Wesleyan Theology (18) and History (16). It would be good to be able to strengthen the areas where we have published the least while maintaining our strengths.

I hope you enjoy this current edition of the journal. Our next conference will be held at United Theological College, Sydney 26-27 July, 2013. The theme will be *Holy Trinity – Holy People* and our keynote speaker will be Dr. Thomas Noble of Nazarene Theological College, Manchester and Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City. High quality paper proposals have already begun to roll in and it is hoped that several of these papers will make an appearance here in the pages of *Aldersgate Papers*.

Glen O'Brien
Editor

WILL THE REAL JOHN WESLEY PLEASE STAND UP?: A SURVEY OF VARYING INTERPRETATIONS OF JOHN WESLEY'S POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Gregory R. Coates

This article has been peer reviewed

This article provides a survey of the differing interpretations of Wesley's political theology offered by scholars in recent years, paying particularly close attention to the work of Leon Hynson, Theodore Jennings, and Theodore Weber. It suggests three crucial distinctions that must be kept clear for any proper interpretation of Wesley's political theology and argues that Wesley's thought informs important contemporary debates over Christian civic engagement.

The life and work of John Wesley, father of the eighteenth century Methodist movement in England, left an indelible mark on the history of Christianity, especially in Europe and North America. The impact of the Methodist movement reshaped not only the spiritual, but also the political landscape of England and the United States. Indeed, some have even argued that were it not for the impact of Wesley and the Methodists, England would have been plunged into a bloody revolution similar to that experienced in eighteenth century France.[1] Yet, despite its historical significance, the political theology of John Wesley is notoriously difficult to pinpoint. While some scholars have depicted Wesley as a deeply conservative High Church Tory thoroughly committed to king and country, others argue that he was a proto-Marxist liberation theologian.[2] While most scholars espouse an interpretation between these two extremes, this is a debate that will likely continue for decades to come. What are we to

---

[1] This theory was first proposed by the French historian Élie Halévy in 1906. For an English translation, see Élie Halévy, *The Birth of Methodism in England*. ed and trans. by Bernard Semmel (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1971).

[2] For a conservative interpretation of Wesley's political theology, see Theodore R. Weber, *Politics in the Order of Salvation: Transforming Wesleyan Political Ethics* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2001) and for a liberationist reading of Wesley, see Theodore W. Jennings, *Good News to the Poor: John Wesley's Evangelical Economics* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990). Both of these will be examined in greater detail later in this paper.

make of the radically different interpretations of John Wesley's political theology?

Interpretations of Wesley's Political Theology

Throughout most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, scholars depicted John Wesley as a High Church Tory typified by the following four characteristics: 1) commitment to the doctrine of divine right, 2) the conviction that God (rather than the people) chooses kings, 3) the practice of passive obedience to authority, and 4) a profound fear of democratic liberalism as the seedbed for anarchy.[3] Ample evidence in Wesley's letters, sermons, and writings can be cited in support of this view including, most obviously, Wesley's famous statement in 1775, 'I am a High Churchman, the son of a High Churchman, bred up from my childhood in the highest notions of passive obedience and non-resistance.'[4] As Jason Vickers notes about Wesleyan scholarship in the first half of the twentieth century, 'In what was among the most influential early twentieth-century monographs of Wesley's political philosophy, Maldwyn Edwards' *John Wesley and the Eighteenth Century* begins with the simple and straightforward declaration, "John Wesley was a Tory."'[5] Due to the preponderance of evidence in Wesley's writings for this theory, this facile depiction of Wesley as a Tory, articulated by scholars such as Frederick Norwood, Richard Cameron, and William Warren Sweet, remained largely unchallenged until the early 1970s.

In the last forty years, however, scholars have argued for a more nuanced view of Wesley's politics, in some cases citing him as a proto-liberal democrat committed to natural rights. Leon Hynson was among the first to reinterpret Wesley's political convictions in this vein. Hynson argues that Wesley underwent a radical transformation in his political position throughout his life, particularly during a transitionary period between the years 1734 and 1764.[6] In his younger years, Wesley reflected the conservative Tory views of his father, but the late Wesley had greater appreciation for individual human liberty as a God-given right and grew in

[3] Jason Vickers, *Wesley: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Continuum Books, 2009), 61-62.
[4] John Wesley, 'Letter to William Legge' (14 June 1775), in *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley*, ed. John Telford (London: Epworth Press, 1931), 6:156.
[5] Jason Vickers, *Wesley: A Guide for the Perplexed*, 62.
[6] Leon O. Hynson, 'Human Liberty as a Divine Right: A Study in the Political Maturation of John Wesley,' *Journal of Church and State* 25 (1983): 57-85.

sympathy with democratic movements.[7] As a foundation for his argument, Hynson points to Wesley's increasing willingness to critique his government on issues such as slavery and the plight of the nation's poor, and to advocate for natural rights and human liberty.

Hynson's argument challenged the accepted view by stressing five specific and interrelated points: 1) Wesley wrote as a champion of human liberty; 2) he supported the human regulation of kingly authority inasmuch as he favored a limited constitutional monarchy (as in place in England) over and against an absolute monarchy, 3) he opposed the pre-Glorious Revolution notion of the divine right of kings, 4) he supported the monarchy only insofar as it protected and defended basic human rights, and 5) Wesley's view of the liberty of conscience undercut his early appeals to passive obedience.[8]

Central to Hynson's argument is the conviction that Wesley underwent a significant period of change during the middle years of his life, a thesis later to be built upon by Theodore Weber. In summary, over and against the view that Wesley was purely Tory, Hynson concludes, 'Wesley's central commitment was not to his country, his king, or negatively, his distaste for republican governments, but his dedication to the full liberties of his land, liberties both in church and state, both personal and social.'[9] Here Hynson opens the door for future interpretations of Wesley as a proto-liberal democrat committed to human rights, a thesis quite palatable to American Methodist scholars seeking to recruit the founder of their church as a supporter of modern political values.

In his book *Good News to the Poor: John Wesley's Evangelical Economics* (published in 1990), Theodore W. Jennings interprets John Wesley as a forerunner to modern liberation theology. Agreeing that Wesley placed strong emphasis on human liberty and natural rights,[10] Jennings builds on Hynson's thesis and radically expands it to depict Wesley as a proto-Marxist. Jennings draws attention to the many sermons and letters Wesley wrote condemning the ownership of private property and instead extolling

[7] See Leon O. Hynson, 'John Wesley's Concept of Liberty of Conscience,' *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 7 (1972): 36-46; Leon O. Hynson, 'John Wesley and Political Reality,' *Methodist History* 12.1 (1973): 37-42.
[8] Hynson, 'John Wesley and Political Reality,' 38.
[9] Hynson, 'John Wesley and Political Reality,' 41.
[10] Jennings writes, 'For Wesley the question of human rights is the decisive norm for the development of a political ethic.' *Good News for the Poor*, 200.

the early church of Acts 2-4 – including their practice of holding all possessions in common – as exemplary for modern Methodists.

Jennings argues that God's preferential option for the poor takes center stage in Wesley's theology and becomes the litmus test for earnest Christian belief: 'Thus the question of solidarity with the poor was ultimately a question of the authenticity of the Christian's confession of faith.'[11] As for Wesley's defense of the monarchy, Jennings explains that Wesley compromised with the political establishment in order to protect the young and vulnerable Methodist movement from being associated with other anarchist movements. But Jennings contends that Wesley's monarchism never took a central place in his sermons.[12]

It is essential to note that Jennings differs from Hynson in his point of departure. Whereas Hynson is primarily concerned with Wesley's political convictions, Jennings is more interested in what he calls Wesley's 'evangelical economics.' One might say that Hynson reads Wesley's economics in light of his politics, but Jennings reads Wesley's politics in light of his economics. And this is a deliberate interpretive choice on the part of Jennings who argues, 'One of the conditions for a rereading of Wesley in this connection is the move from an emphasis on *political* issues to an emphasis on *economic* issues as significant for the general themes of social ethics.'[13] Jennings explicitly states that this orientation situates his own scholarship within the tradition of liberation theology.

From this starting point, then, Jennings argues that Wesley took a critical stance toward the given economic structures of his day and used both his pen and his pulpit to 'demystify' wealth and power. Wesley became intensely critical of the economics of private property as popularized by the thought of John Locke,[14] and instead

---

[11] Jennings, *Good News for the Poor*, 130.
[12] Jennings, *Good News for the Poor*, 206-209.
[13] Jennings, *Good News for the Poor*, 19. Emphasis added.
[14] Thomas Madron notes the points of difference between Wesley and Locke: 'Unlike John Locke, whose ideas dominated much of the eighteenth-century political and economic thought, Wesley refused to elaborate a theory for the absolute protection of property rights… For Locke, property became an inalienable right which must be defended. For Wesley, on the other hand, property was never an inalienable right; any person holds property only as a steward of God.' Thomas W. Madron, 'John Wesley on Economics,' in *Sanctification and Liberation: Liberation Theologies in Light of the Wesleyan Tradition* ed. Theodore Runyon (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1981), 107. For a primary source, see Wesley's sermon 'The Use of Money' in

turned to the early church as an alternative economic model favoring common property. This theological persuasion led Wesley actively to engage in political and structural advocacy in the hope of developing 'a positive ethic that will alter the given socioeconomic reality' of his day 'that breaks the spell of "private property" and leads to a redistribution of wealth whose criterion is the welfare of the poor.'[15]

Jennings and Hynson both view Wesley as limited by the context of his own day. They readily recognize the ways in which Wesley's politics do not align with modern liberal values. But they highlight elements of his thought that resonate with later developments. As Hynson concludes, 'From the vantage point of our historical position, some of Wesley's assumptions and beliefs are seen to be faulty, but his commitment to human liberty is a luminous and penetrating valuation of man.'[16] Jennings would agree, yet push farther, arguing that a modern reading of Wesley will properly situate him as the progenitor of liberation theology.[17]

Reacting to Jennings' interpretation of Wesley, Theodore R. Weber offered a rejoinder in 2001 in his study *Politics in the Order of Salvation: Transforming Wesleyan Political Ethics*, the most exhaustive and thoroughly researched treatment of Wesley's political theology to date. Weber describes Wesley as an 'organic constitutionalist' for whom loyalty to God, church, and country

---

The Works of John Wesley. 14 Volumes (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 6: 124-136. This source is hereafter referred to as *Works*.

[15] Jennings, *Good News to the Poor*, 25.

[16] Hynson, 'John Wesley and Political Reality,' 42.

[17] As Jennings is well aware, a proper emphasis upon Wesley's interpretation of Scripture is central to any argument favoring the liberationist elements in Wesley's economics. For Wesley, the holding of common property was not first a concept rooted in political theory (as it would be for Marx years later), but rather a concept taught in Scripture and exemplified among the early disciples. Wesley's challenge to private property among Christians was rooted in two fundamental theological convictions: First, all property ultimately belongs to God. Therefore, Christians are stewards, not owners, of what they possess. Second, Wesley believed that outward actions always flow from what he called the 'tempers.' When Christ transforms the tempers of an individual through the process of sanctification, the natural outworking of perfect love within her heart will necessitate the generous sharing of her property for the benefit of others. Thus, Wesley did not advocate a system of forced redistribution through taxes, but did insist that the holding of common property ought to be the normative practice among all true believers who steward God's resources properly and whose tempers are transformed by the Holy Spirit. See especially Wesley's sermons, 'The Use of Money' and 'The Good Steward,' in *The Works of John Wesley* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1958), 6:124-149.

remain inextricably interwoven. In support, Weber quotes Wesley, who wrote in 1747,

> Above all, mark that man who talks of loving the Church, and does not love the King. If he does not love the King, he cannot love God. And if he does not love God, he cannot love the Church. He loves the Church and King just alike. For indeed he loves neither one nor the other.[18]

Weber does not fully retreat to the hard line on Wesley's Tory values common among scholars in the first half of the twentieth century, but he does criticize modern scholars for contorting Wesley to fit their own agendas: 'No aggressive investigation, no artful revisionism can overcome the fact that Wesley denied a political role to the people, and that he never wavered from this conviction.'[19] Wesley was, according to Weber, unabashedly anti-democratic and anti-republican due to his unyielding loyalty to monarchism, albeit a limited, constitutional monarchism. In short, Weber accuses scholars of trying to fit Wesley into their own political agenda rather than taking his writings at face value.

In his argument portraying Wesley as an organic constitutionalist, Weber seeks to show that Wesley stands in 'a conservative tradition, but it is not the conservatism of autocracy and absolutism. Rather, it is a tradition that respects established institutions that protect the values of people, while at the same time leaving the way open for change and improvement.'[20] Weber does this by closely examining three crucial moments in the life of John Wesley's political formation: 1) the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, 2) the social upheaval and constitutional crisis caused by John Wilkes and his followers in the 1760s, and 3) the division of the English empire during the American colonial rebellion. In each of these three events, Weber argues, John Wesley defended the established order and sought to distance himself from any perceived or genuine threat to the British king and system of government. Throughout all three of these crisis moments in English history, Wesley 'trumpeted the virtues of the existing system and projected disaster if it were destroyed and replaced; and he attacked the radical (liberal)

[18] John Wesley, 'A Word to a Freeholder' (1747), in *The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley* ed. W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1976), 11:197-98, quoted in Weber, *Politics in the Order of Salvation*, 30-31.
[19] Weber, *Politics in the Order of Salvation*, 32.
[20] Weber, *Politics in the Order of Salvation*, 31.

ideology with its arguments for natural rights, popular sovereignty, and social contract.'[21]

While Weber faults scholars like Hynson and Jennings for distorting Wesley's actual political position, he does share their desire to redeem Wesley's thought for our contemporary context by articulating a genuinely Wesleyan political theology. In the final chapter of his book, Weber critiques Wesley for failing to connect his political theology to the transformationist elements of his soteriology. Wesley championed the idea of a three-fold image of God in every human being: the natural image, the moral image, and the political image.[22] Yet of the three aspects in this typology, the least developed in Wesley's theology is the political image. Weber suggests that if Wesley were to extrapolate practical theology from his concept of the political image to the same extent that he did of the moral image it would have led him to a deeper appreciation of human liberty and natural rights. In short, Weber argues that the political image of God can serve as a theological foundation for democratic, popular governance over and against the hierarchical top-down model of authority that Wesley inherited and defended. Thus, later Methodists can find lying dormant within Wesley's own soteriology a strong case for the right of all people to govern themselves. This does not necessarily imply an endorsement of a particular form of government, according to Weber, but it does call into question Wesley's own strongly monarchical political persuasion.[23]

From this overview of three scholars – Hynson, Jennings, and Weber – we can surmise that John Wesley was a complex character whose political, social and economic theology is not easily distilled. Now we must turn our attention to what accounts for this wide variety in interpretations.

---

[21] Weber, *Politics in the Order of Salvation*, 110.

[22] According to Wesley's anthropology, each of these three 'images' remained intact subsequent to the fall of mankind. By 'natural image,' Wesley referred to the understanding, free will, and liberty imprinted on every human by the grace of God. By 'moral image,' Wesley meant knowledge of God's moral laws, to which God required perfect obedience. The 'political image' refers to the Adamic relationship with the rest of creation as its steward and caretaker. Barry E. Bryant, 'Original Sin' in *The Oxford Handbook of Methodist Studies*, eds. William J. Abraham and James E. Kirby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 522-539. See also Wesley's sermon 'Original Sin' in *Works* 6:54-65.

[23] For the full development of this argument, see especially chapter 12, 'Recovering the Political Image of God' in Weber, *Politics in the Order of Salvation*, 391-420.

Accounting for the Variations

Why have attempts to interpret the political and social theology of John Wesley generated such starkly divergent interpretations? As we have seen from our survey of the three scholars above, readings of Wesley range from depictions of him as a high church, pro-monarchy Tory to an advocate for democratic and republican values to a proto-Marxist liberation theologian. In this second section of the paper, I will suggest three important distinctions that must be made in order to properly understand Wesley's political theology: 1) the distinction between Wesley's politics and his economics, 2) the distinction between Wesley's message to the Methodists and his message to society at large, and 3) the distinction between the young and the mature Wesley.

First, a strong differentiation needs to be maintained between Wesley's economic views and his political views. Obviously, politics and economics are closely related to one another, but in Wesley's thought this distinction must be made for the sake of clarity. In short, Wesley's economics, rooted in his reading of the New Testament, challenged the emerging capitalist spirit that was increasingly prevalent in his eighteenth-century context. Indeed, at times, Wesley even called the very foundations of capitalism into question. In this sense, then, Wesley harkened back to what Madron calls a form of 'primitive communism.'[24] Taken in the context of his own day, Wesley's economics could, in one sense, be described as conservative or traditionalist since it questioned the basic tenets of the newly emerging capitalist system and championed a return to biblical models of economic life. However, given the hegemony of *laissez faire* free market-based economies in our own day, Wesley's economic theory could now rightly be called prophetically progressive inasmuch as he remained remarkably wary of the dangers inherent in any economic system which prizes individualism and the accumulation of private property above all else.

Wesley's politics, on the other hand, remained committed to conservative Tory values throughout his life. Rooted in the deep conviction that all authority derives from God, Wesley remained suspicious about democratic forms of government and the right of people to choose their own leaders. Since Wesley's politics and economics are so different, therefore, it is crucial for all interpreters

[24] Madron, 'John Wesley on Economics,' 108. See also footnote #17.

to maintain a clear distinction between the two. Whereas Wesley's politics may leave unsatisfied modern readers committed to liberal democracy and the right of the people for self-governance, his economic theories certainly offer profound and important insights for contemporary politics. To emphasize the importance of this distinction we will briefly take a look at each, beginning with a sketch of Wesley's economic ethics.

Repeatedly throughout his life, Wesley demonstrated his willingness to question radically the economic structures of his day. Randy Maddox offers a helpful summary of Wesley's economic ethics in four concise points:

> (1) Ultimately everything belongs to God; (2) resources are placed in our care to use as God sees fit; (3) God desires that we use these resources to meet our necessities (i.e. providing food and shelter for ourselves and dependents), and then to help others in need; thus (4) spending resources on luxuries for ourselves while others remain in need is robbing God![25]

In the context of eighteenth century England, where the economic thought of Adam Smith and John Locke increasingly impacted both government policies and popular opinion, Wesley promoted a counter-cultural alternative that took the early church as its prototype, and he attempted to recapture the Christian tradition of communality that had largely been lost by the time of the Enlightenment.

The theological foundation of all Wesleyan economics is the concept of stewardship. Since God is the Creator and Sustainer of all that exists, human beings never actually *own* anything. Rather, humans are entrusted with the property of God to be used for his purposes. Furthermore since the basic law of Christian ethics is to love God and love our neighbors, Wesley believed all excess money must be utilized to promote the common good. Marquardt summarizes the centrality of both the concept of stewardship and the love commandment in Wesley's economic teachings:

> According to Wesley, the purpose of earning and thrift is to make life's necessities available to all and to ameliorate or eliminate the distress of others. Doing so fulfills the commandment to love one's neighbor, and above all demonstrates obedience to the will of God, the owner. All

[25] Randy Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 244.

> persons must account before their Creator and Judge for what they have done with their money and all other goods entrusted to them and must receive God's reward or punishment.[26]

Given his critique of private property rooted in a theological commitment to the love commandment and the principle of stewardship, Wesley offered harsh words of warning against the accumulation of wealth or expenditure of resources on needless luxuries. This theme appeared more frequently in Wesley's later ministry as he witnessed many Methodists increasing in riches and yet failing to properly steward their money for the use of the common good. Two years before his death, Wesley declared,

> The Methodists grow more and more self-indulgent, because they grow rich. Although many of them are still deplorably poor…yet many others, in the space of twenty, thirty, or forty years, are twenty, thirty, or yea a hundred times richer than they were when they first entered the society. And it is an observation which admits of few exceptions, that nine in ten of these decreased in grace in the same proportion as they increased in wealth. Indeed, according to the natural tendency of riches, we cannot expect it to be otherwise.[27]

Indeed, Wesley perceived the gradual accumulation of wealth to be one of the greatest threats to the future of the Methodist movement since it entailed a rejection of both the love commandment and the acknowledgment of God's ownership over all of creation.

Thus, in his economics, Wesley defended the historic Christian values of charity and hospitality, in an age of increasing individualism. He resisted the impulse common among many of his day (and ours) to separate economic theory from the ethics of the Christian life. Vying against the emerging ethos of capitalism, Wesley proved himself willing time and again to shun the economic climate of eighteenth-century England and insist that a profound concern for the common good must take precedence in any proper Christian ethic. This leads Maddox to proclaim, 'While Adam Smith held that surplus accumulation was the foundation of economic well-being, Wesley viewed it as a mortal sin!'[28]

---

[26] Manfred Marquardt, *John Wesley's Social Ethics: Praxis and Principles* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992), 37.
[27] John Wesley, *Works*, 7:289.
[28] Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 244-245.

While his stance against the presuppositions and abuses of capitalism set him apart from most of his contemporaries, Wesley's political views, in contrast, were much more mainstream. Eighteenth-century England was deeply divided between the Tories and Whigs.[29] Given this reality, Wesley sided with the Tories, vigorously challenging Whiggish politics and principles. Wesley feared the influence of the Whigs because he believed that their political philosophy denied the biblical teaching that authority comes from God, and he feared that this could ultimately lead to anarchy. As we have already noted, Wesley stood for stability, continuity, and order during the political upheavals of his day, almost without exception choosing to side with the British monarch. So deeply ingrained was Wesley's loyalty to his king and country, that in 1756 he even offered to recruit soldiers for service in the king's army. Wesley wrote in a letter dated 1 March, 1756, that he was willing 'to raise for His Majesty's service at least two hundred volunteers, to be supported by contributions among themselves; and to be ready in case of an invasion for a year (if needed so long) at His Majesty's pleasure.'[30] Other evidence for Wesley's conservative political stance has already been cited in the overview of Weber's book so it is not necessary to repeat that here.

Thus, there was a notable difference between Wesley's economics and his politics. In the former, Wesley is the prophet, standing at the margins of society and challenging its basic presuppositions and structure. In the latter, Wesley serves as a chaplain to the Tory Party, defending the political structures as they currently stand against what he perceived to be radical elements that could potentially cause upheaval and disorder. It is little wonder that interpreters of Wesley today wrestle with these two very different portraits of his character.

---

[29] Weber explains the divided political climate within which Wesley was born and raised: 'English political sentiment polarized around two alternative modes of representation as the form that English society should take for action in history. Tories supported the notion of the monarch ruling by divine indefeasible hereditary right – above the law because he or she was the source of the law, answerable to no one but God, due to passive obedience and nonresistance from all subjects… [Whereas] Whigs supported the concept of a government of king and Parliament together, with predominance of power on the parliamentary side.' Weber, *Politics in the Order of Salvation*, 162.

[30] Quoted in Glenn Burton Hosman, 'The Problem of Church and State in the Thought of John Wesley as Reflecting His Understanding of Providence and His View of History,' PhD dissertation, Drew University, 1970, 237.

In this sense, Theodore Jennings and Theodore Weber are talking past one another. Jennings emphasizes Wesley's economics since his agenda is to portray Wesley as a forefather to modern liberation theologians. Weber, on the other hand, focuses on Wesley's politics, leading him to a vision of Wesley as a man who never recognized the political implications of his own theology. Or, more precisely, Jennings finds resonances between Wesley's defense of traditional, biblical economics and modern theologies of liberation. Weber, on the other hand, argues that no resonance can be found between Wesley's political commitment to a constitutional monarch and the values of liberal democracy embraced by modern Europe and North America.

A second important distinction to make in the study of Wesley's political theology concerns the audience to whom Wesley addressed his social ethic. Jennings argues that Wesley concerned himself with advocating for the poor by pressing for changes in government policies.[31] But were Wesley's social ethics directed at politicians *or* at the classes, bands, and societies of Methodists? Related to this, did Wesley understand the systematic and structural nature of poverty or did he view the transformation of individuals as the primary locus for addressing issues of economic injustice?

To be sure, the majority of Wesley's political theology found in his sermons and other writing is not directed toward the government, but at the Methodist laity. For example, Wesley's well-known instruction to gain all you can, save all you can, and give all you can in his sermon 'The Use of Money' was directed neither at the whole of society nor at government leaders, but only at committed Methodists.[32] Thus, the aforementioned convictions Wesley held about common property do not imply that Wesley was a communist

[31] Jennings disagrees with the prevailing view that Wesley saw no role for government in the alleviation of poverty. He writes, 'It simply is not the case that Wesley has nothing to say about the relation of poverty to government policy. Indeed it is precisely by way of his very solidarity with the poor and consequent awareness of their plight that the way is opened for Wesley to propose for government economic policy the same criterion he had found himself applying to the work of the Methodist movement.' In support, Jennings cites Wesley's *Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions.* Jennings, *Good News for the Poor*, 66-69. This is perhaps pushing Wesley too far into the area of direct political involvement. Fundamentally, Wesley was concerned with the renewal of the *church* (that is, his beloved Church of England). A renewed church would then become effective in renewing the nation-state. Thus, Wesley's advocacy for change in governmental policy was generally indirect rather than direct.

[32] Wesley, *Works,* 6: 124-136.

or socialist on the political level. Rather, he perceived the holding of common property to be a normative ethic *within the church*. This explains why Wesley attempted to implement his economic ideals only within the parameters of the select societies.[33]

Furthermore, Wesley believed that the ultimate solution to societal ills was found within the transformation of *individual human hearts* by the grace of God working to undo the marks of original sin. For example, when Wesley spoke of the evils of war, he never offered a statement about war's systemic causes, but rather blamed war's existence upon the fallen nature of individual human beings.[34] In the same way, Wesley's many appeals advocating generosity to the poor remained largely on the level of personal charity; with a few notable exceptions to be examined later, any calls for the creation of progressive taxation or governmental welfare systems remain absent from Wesley's sermons and writing.[35] Maddox notes that even during the most politically active years of Wesley's life, 'political advocacy was hardly [Wesley's] dominant concern. Wesley published many more sermons in his last years encouraging his Methodist followers to share their resources voluntarily with others in need than he did tracts calling for the political reform of social and economic structures.'[36]

Nevertheless, an argument can be made that any expectation of Wesley to be aware of the systemic, political causes of poverty would be unfairly anachronistic. Wesley was a product of his own time – a time deeply committed to Enlightenment individualism and, in comparison to today, largely unaware of the systemic causes of poverty. Given this context, it is truly remarkable that Wesley, especially in the later years of his life, did in fact recognize some of

---

[33] Randy Maddox, 'Visit the Poor: Wesley's Precedent for Wholistic Mission,' *Transformation: An International Dialogue on Mission and Ethics* 18.1 (2001): 41.
[34] Theodore Weber, *Politics in the Order of Salvation*, 362.
[35] See, for example, Wesley's sermon 'The Use of Money,' *Works*, 6: 124-36. One notable exception to this is Wesley's 'Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions' in which Wesley *does* call upon the government to make specific changes in policy in order to address the plight of the extremely poor. Specifically, Wesley calls for the prohibition of the distillation of hard liquors, a heavy tax on luxury goods, a reduction in the size of farms, limitations on excessive luxury, and an effort to pay off the national debt. See Wesley, *Works*, 11:58-59. Wesley's opposition to the slave trade is a second notable exception. These exceptions are so important that they will be discussed in greater detail later in this paper.
[36] Randy Maddox, 'Nurturing the New Creation: Reflections on a Wesleyan Trajectory,' in *Wesleyan Perspectives on the New Creation*, ed. M. Douglas Meeks, (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 2004): 34.

the structural causes of poverty.[37] The German Wesley scholar Manfred Marquardt, for example, argues that even though Wesley had a limited awareness of the structural causes of society's ills (due to his historical location), his soteriology does provide a foundation and trajectory for a social ethic that addresses social ills on the systematic level. Indeed, Marquardt goes beyond this and, citing Wesley's 'Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions,' concludes,

> For Wesley, the king's task was therefore to use his power of taxation to more equitably distribute goods and to eliminate grave distresses, to provide food and employment for people…He regarded a number of governmental interventions as essential to achieving lower [food] prices, and he perceived the national government and Parliament as the appropriate agencies [to accomplish this].[38]

As already mentioned, the two most obvious examples of Wesley's willingness to engage in political advocacy on the systemic level can be found in his opposition to the slave trade and in his 'Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions' (written in 1773). Because these two aspects of Wesley's thought are so crucial for understanding his political theology, it is appropriate to examine them in more detail.

Wesley's willingness to oppose the status quo of society on a structural level is most clearly expressed in his vocal opposition to slavery and, particularly, the *trade* of slaves that many merchants in his nation profited from. Wesley described slavery as 'that execrable sum of all villainies,' in a letter to William Wilberforce written near the end of his life.[39] But the Anglican state church to which Wesley belonged generally tolerated the slave trade without objection. The few clergy in the first half of the eighteenth century who did vocally oppose the practice were largely ignored. Although there are indications that he disapproved of slavery and the treatment of blacks in his early years,[40] Wesley finally publicly announced his

---

[37] For an examination of the changes in Wesley's eschatology in the final two decades of his life and the socioeconomic implications of this shift, see Randy Maddox, 'Nurturing the New Creation,' 21-52.

[38] Marquardt, *John Wesley's Social Ethics*, 46-47.

[39] Wesley, 'Letter to William Wilberforce,' 24 February 1791. Wesley Center Online, accessed December, 11 2012, http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1791.

[40] Despite the objections of whites, Wesley baptized and administered the Lord's Supper to blacks and whites alike during his visit to the colonies in the 1730s. See Marquardt, *John Wesley's Social Ethics:*, 71.

opposition in 1774 with his tract, *Thoughts upon Slavery*. In his argument that British ships cease participating in the slave trade, Wesley appeals to both biblical theology and natural law. Adopting the common political rhetoric of the Enlightenment, Wesley interprets the issue of slavery to be fundamentally about human rights: 'Better no trade, than trade procured by villainy. It is far better to have no wealth than to gain wealth at the expense of virtue. Better is honest poverty, than all the riches bought by the tears, and sweat, and blood, of our fellow-creatures.'[41]

Thus, despite the laws and common practices of his nation which condoned the slave trade, Wesley critiqued British law and questioned the governing authorities who created them. To those who countered Wesley by arguing that slavery was perfectly legal, Wesley replied,

> But can law, human law, change the nature of things? Can it turn darkness into light, or evil into good? By no means! Notwithstanding ten thousand laws, right is right, and wrong is wrong still. There must still remain an essential difference between justice and injustice, cruelty and mercy.[42]

Wesley proves through his opposition to the slave trade that he stands in that precarious space between Romans 13 and Revelation 13 – between submission to God-ordained authority and the recognition that the governmental principalities and powers can themselves become demonic. Theodore Jennings comments, 'Here Wesley, who on so many occasions must appeal to the appropriateness of obeying the law, breaks out into a clear statement of the relativity of all laws, the necessity of obeying the dictates of mercy and justice before any law.'[43] For Wesley, therefore, submission and passive obedience to authority were not absolutes. And in his vocal opposition to slavery, we find a prime example of Wesley's willingness to engage in advocacy not only on the level of the individual, but also in seeking political and structural change.

Slavery was not, however, the only issue that compelled Wesley to critique the laws of his nation. As mentioned earlier, he also proved willing to oppose economic policies that exacerbated the plight of the poor. In 1773, Wesley wrote his 'Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions,' in which he chastised an economic

[41] Wesley, *Works*, 11:74.
[42] Wesley, *Works*, 11:70.
[43] Jennings, *Good News to the Poor*, 84.

structure that allowed some to live in luxury while others starved. Wesley argued that the source of this extreme poverty in England can be traced back to the distilling of spirituous liquors requiring inordinate amounts of wheat and grain, the 'monopolizing of farms,' the 'enormous taxes, which are laid on almost everything that can be named,' and the obsession of the rich with needless luxuries.[44]

The suggestions that Wesley offers for solving the problem of poverty are revealing. He calls upon the government to reduce the price of basic foods, limit the distillation of liquor, lay a heavy tax on the wealthy and on the luxury goods they purchase, decrease the size of farms (through breaking up monopolies), and 'repress…luxury; whether by laws, by example, or by both.'[45] Thus, Wesley's concern for alleviating extreme poverty and hunger compelled him to engage in open, public criticism of government policy. With these notable exceptions in mind, then, we may conclude that for Wesley the solution to economic injustice may in certain instances involve *both* addressing the needs of the individual *and* the reshaping of laws and public policy.[46]

Yet despite these two examples of Wesley's willingness to engage in the political sphere, it must be acknowledged that for most of his life, Wesley remained reticent about pursuing socioeconomic reform by appealing to the government. Randy Maddox outlines three possible explanations for this reticence that have been offered by various scholars: 1) The conservative political values that Wesley inherited from his parents led him to distrust political revolutionaries seeking radical change to the socio-economic order, 2) Wesley held a deep-seated pessimism about the prospect of social change due to his 'bourgeois status,' and 3) Wesley rarely addressed the political arena, especially prior to the 1770s, because of how

---

[44] Wesley, *Works*, 11:53-59.
[45] Wesley, *Works*, 11:58.
[46] Though this paper is focused on the latter, ample evidence in John Wesley's writings can be cited for the former. Wesley did believe that spiritual revival in each individual human heart would ultimately transform society and produce greater economic equality. In this sense, Wesley engages in what Graham Ward calls 'macropolitics' *and* 'micropolitics.' See Graham Ward, *The Politics of Discipleship: Becoming Postmaterial Citizens* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 28-32. In today's context when many Christians argue for either one or the other, it is refreshing to find in Wesley an example of concern for *both* personal piety and social justice.

small and politically insignificant his movement was within the culture at large.[47]

A third and final distinction that must be maintained in the study of John Wesley's political theology is the difference between Wesley's thought in his early years from that of his later years. Hynson's work has proven helpful for subsequent scholars who notice the shifting nature of Wesley's political theology. Although Jason Vickers critiques Hynson for offering a two-stage theory that is overly simplistic and for failing to properly account for the shifting political landscape of eighteenth-century England,[48] the historian must acknowledge that the most politically active years of John Wesley's life were the final two decades of his life. Throughout the 1770s and onward Wesley proved increasingly willing to challenge the status quo. It is fair to note, then, that Wesley's life does provide a *trajectory* that points toward political engagement – lobbying in the political sphere on behalf of the poor, critiquing structural issues which exacerbate class distinctions, and advocating for greater human liberty.[49] Asking where John Wesley would locate himself in today's political landscape is certainly a legitimate question for modern theologians.

Conclusion

Interpreting the political and social ethics of John Wesley continues to be a crucial task for theologians seeking to bring the founder of Methodism into conversation with the church today. In this article, I have offered an overview of the differing interpretations of Wesley's political and economic commitments and suggested three distinctions that will be helpful to keep in mind for any interpreter of Wesley's social ethics. It is my hope that this article has provided a concise introduction to the study of Wesleyan political theology and that it will spur on future research in this area. Although a consensus on what a properly Wesleyan political theology looks like

[47] Randy Maddox, 'Nurturing the New Creation,' 34. Maddox goes on to consider the role Wesley's millennial eschatology played in his convictions about God's work to bring in a new creation.

[48] Jason Vickers, *Wesley: A Guide for the Perplexed*, 68-71. Vickers maintains that Wesley's political loyalties shifted very little over his lifetime, but that the Tory party itself was what changed and that Wesley was carried along with it.

[49] I am not here arguing for specific, identifiable pivots in Wesley's political thinking or even for distinct 'stages' during his lifetime, as Weber does, since to do so would go beyond the scope of this paper.

is not likely to be reached soon, Wesley's theology continues to provide fertile soil in the important debates over Christian civic engagement.

METHODISTS AND THE CAMPAIGNS FOR SIX O'CLOCK HOTEL CLOSING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Samantha Frappell

This article has been peer reviewed

The question of alcohol was a particularly important one for Methodists in the first half of the twentieth century. In New South Wales (NSW), Methodists took an active lead in promoting the cause of temperance in the referendum campaigns over hotel closing hours in 1916, 1947 and 1954, and in the prohibition referendum of 1928. The extent of Methodist activity in these campaigns belied their actual presence in NSW. Only 10% of the state's population identified as Methodist in 1901, a figure that fell to just 8% by 1954.[1] Yet in spite of their small numbers, Methodists' concerns about alcohol were adopted by much of the wider community. In part, this adoption occurred because ideals associated with temperance - self-denial, discipline and austerity - were values that made sense during a time of war and depression. As the post-war era gathered momentum, such values gave way to the ideals of personal freedom and leisure.

A study of Methodist involvement in attempts to restrict alcohol in the community provides revealing insights into how Methodists understood the problem of alcohol in the early twentieth century, both at a local and international level. Not only is it broadly indicative of the Methodist impetus to lead individuals and society towards a 'better' future, it also shows the internal conflict this would ultimately cause between older and younger Methodists by the twentieth century, as the former tried to hold fast to their long-standing ideals and the latter attempted to be relevant to the modern post-war community.

That Methodists in particular should want to restrict alcohol in the first half of the twentieth century was an outcome of a much longer history, reflecting a period of destabilising rapid social change in Western societies and the development of Methodist doctrine in response. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, concerns over the consumption of spirits had grown across the

---

[1] Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Census of the Commonwealth of Australia*, 1901 and 1954.

English-speaking world. Such concern was particularly acute in immigrant and settler societies such as Australia and the United States, where traditional forms of social control, such as church and extended family, were less present. Consumption of spirits in the Australian colonies was four times that of Britain;[2] alcohol intake was also high in the United States, where 7.1 gallons (27 litres) of pure alcohol was consumed per person annually (1830).[3]

Prior to the 1830s, the Methodist approach to alcohol had been one of moderation, rather than abstention. Although Wesley had raised the question of alcohol consumption and Christian behaviour in the mid-eighteenth century, his concerns had focussed on the imbibing of spirits and the importance of moderation. Wesley advised Methodists not to take spirits at all, unless there was a medical reason for doing so, and that they take care not to allow themselves to become drunk. He himself did not oppose the drinking of alcohol *per se*, and was known to drink wine on occasion. He also recommended wine for sacramental use.[4]

The early nineteenth century saw a shift from earlier Methodist attitudes which advocated refraining from spirits and indulging only in moderate drinking, to a new understanding that alcohol in any form was a social evil that needed to be avoided absolutely. This was prompted by the upheavals of the industrial revolution throughout the West, which had brought thousands of workers from the countryside into the factories of cities. Public drunkenness, a visible aspect of industrial life, was blamed as the cause of other visible vices in the industrial cities - poverty, violence, mental illness and neglect. The solution to these problems was believed to be individual will power, based on the belief that drunkenness was a sin and on the nineteenth century liberalist idea that individuals had the power to improve themselves. A raft of international temperance organisations were brought to Australia by American and British temperance campaigners, such as the Order of Rechabites (1847), the Sons of Temperance (1864) and the Order of Good Templars (1872).[5] Local groups included the Tasmanian Temperance Society (1833), the NSW Temperance Society (1834), the Melbourne Total

[2] J. S. Blocker, D. M. Fahey and I. R. Tyrrell (eds) *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History: A Global Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 2003), 75.
[3] Jennifer L. Woodruff Tait, *The Poisoned Chalice: Eucharistic Grape Juice and Commonsense Realism in Victorian Methodism* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011), 9.
[4] Jennifer L. Woodruff Tait, *The Poisoned Chalice*, 11.
[5] Australian foundation dates given.

Abstinence Society (1842) and the Moreton Bay Temperance Society (1849). Temperance organisations asked members to sign a personal pledge that they would abstain from alcohol. Some, such as the Order of Rechabites were in the style of Friendly Societies, offering insurance and saving schemes to members who had taken the pledge; others, such as the Order of Good Templars, were fraternal organisations with regalia and rituals that included the pledge. Prominent Methodists, such as John Fegan, Isabella Dalgarno, George Clark, Thomas Crouch and James Russell were well represented in the upper echelons of these organisations.[6]

Methodists were attracted to temperance organisations out of their reverence for the Methodist doctrines of sanctification and Christian perfection. Sanctification was understood as actively entering entering into an experience of 'personal holiness' as an outcome of Christian faith. Abstinence and mastery of the self was an attempt to approach a state of holiness with regards to alcohol. Christian perfection was an active seeking to change one's life for the better, (albeit with a realisation that the absolutely 'perfect' state would never be achieved). Working for temperance was a way Methodists could try to rid the world of an evil that stood in the way of their own (and others') sanctification.[7]

Appealing to the morals of the individual as a solution to drunkenness was coming under question by the end of the nineteenth century. New understandings as to the causes of public drunkenness were emerging. One of these was provided by socialism. Friedrich Engels' *Conditions of the Working Class in England* (1845) had argued that it was the introduction of machinery and the crowding of workers into filthy, impoverished cities that had led to widespread drunkenness, rather than a failure of people's individual morals and willpower.[8] Christian socialism, a movement that emerged briefly in the 1840s in Britain and resurfaced again in the 1880s, took a similar line.[9]

---

[6] See for example entries for Isabella Dalgarno, George Clark, Thomas Crouch and James Russell in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.
[7] Ian Tyrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 52.
[8] Friedrich Engels, *Conditions of the Working Class in England*, (1845). This text was translated into English and published in New York (1887) and London (1891).
[9] Edward Norman, *The Victorian Christian Socialists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 146; Phillip Backstrom, *Christian Socialism and Cooperation in Victorian England* (London: Croom Helm, 1974), 212; Jean H. Baker, *Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005), 137-182.

Meanwhile, the medical profession was also offering alternative insights. The NSW Inquiry into Intemperance (1854) found that while drunkenness began as a sin, it inevitably became a disease against which the individual had no defence. [10]

A further issue surrounding the question of drunkenness was raised by the nineteenth century women's movement. Women bore the brunt of alcoholism, with habitually inebriated husbands and fathers spending their wages on drink and subjecting women and children to outbursts of drunken violence. Alcoholism and drunkenness therefore, was an outcome of social change over which the individual had no control; a disease against which the individual was helpless; and left women and children at the mercy of those enthralled in its grip. In conjunction with their campaign for suffrage, nineteenth century women's organisations fought for legislation to protect women from abuse and exploitation by men. From their perspective, laws to restrict the availability of alcohol would protect women and children from poverty and abuse.

The late nineteenth century saw an outpouring of legislation for social and moral improvement throughout the English-speaking world. Public education, health regulations, labour reform and women's suffrage were testament to the period's belief in progress and its desire to make a better, kinder society and to protect individuals from the worst excesses of industrial society.[11] With the perception that individuals were unable to gain control over alcohol, it seemed logical to introduce legislation to minimise the availability of alcohol.

By the end of the century, newer temperance societies were focussing their efforts on political reform to protect individuals. In Australia, the NSW Temperance Alliance (1878), the Victorian Temperance Alliance (1882) and the South Australian Temperance Alliance (1883) were formed in rapid succession. International connections played a role too, with American Christian feminists travelling to Australia to encourage the establishment of an

---

[10] Suzanne Davies, 'The Search for a Certain Cure: Doctors, Drunkards and Victoria's Committee of Inquiry 1901,' *Provenance: The Journal of the Public Record Office*, 10 (2011) accessed 4/04/12, http://prov.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/The-search-for-a-certain-cure.pdf; Stephen Garton, 'Once a Drunkard, Always a Drunkard: Social Reform and the Problem of Habitual Drunkenness in Australia, 1880-1914,' *Labour History* 53 (1987): 53ff.

[11] Audrey Oldfield, *Woman Suffrage in Australia: A Gift or a Struggle* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1992); Katherine Henry, *Liberalism and the Culture of Security: Nineteenth Century Rhetoric of Reform* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011).

Australian branch of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (1882).[12] These organisations were just some of the temperance groups that formed and began to promote social reforms to restrict individuals' access to alcohol.[13] Reformist legislation therefore, aimed not to punish individuals for drunkenness, but to protect 'the weak' from the lure of alcohol. In response to increased agitation to restrict access to liquor, the liquor trade mobilised, forming the United Licensed Victuallers Association (ULVA) in 1873.

Again, Methodist individuals were prominent in these new temperance organisations, among the founders and leaders of the Australian branch of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the Adelaide branch of the WCTU and the NSW, Queensland and Tasmanian Temperance Alliances.[14] At the same time, Methodists also remained active and held leadership roles in the older 'personal pledge'-style of temperance organisations, such as the Order of Rechabites and the Order of Good Templars.[15]

While the involvement of Methodists in the newer temperance groups reflected the influence of the wider social reform movement of the late nineteenth century, the continued Methodist representation in the earlier type of temperance organisations and the persistent belief in the ability of the individual to overcome the lure of alcohol through willpower and a yearning for Christian perfection represented another late nineteenth century phenomenon: revivalism. The revivalist movement of the late nineteenth century placed particular emphasis on a link between salvation and temperance, with temperance evangelists such as English-born Methodist Matthew Burnett and American Methodist evangelists Richard Booth and William Noble calling for individuals

[12] Ian Tyrell, *Woman's World / Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective 1800-1930* (University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

[13] Judith Raftery, "God's Gift or Demon Drink? Churches and Alcohol in South Australia between the Two World Wars", *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia* 15 (1988): 16; Keith Dunstan, *Wowsers: Being an Account of the Prudery exhibited by certain outstanding men and women in such matters as Drinking, Smoking, Prostitution, Censorship, and Gambling* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1968), 98.

[14] See for example entries for John Holding, Elizabeth Nicholls, Eupehmia Bowes, Sara Nolan, William Rutledge and Edwin Derrington in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

[15] See for example entries for John Fegan, Thomas Jessep, William Jungwirth and Josiah Thomas in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*

to turn away from sin and drink and convert to Christianity.[16] The relationship between revivalism, temperance and Methodism is an interesting one. The successful work of American Methodist missionaries throughout the Asia-Pacific and the growing revivalist movement in America itself inspired the leaders of the American WCTU, itself led mainly by Methodists, to spread the work of the WCTU around the world.[17]

By the turn of the century, some small gains had been achieved by temperance agitators. In Australia, all of the colonies had introduced Sunday closing of hotels and all, except Western Australia, had adopted the introduction of local option - that is, legislation that allowed local residents to vote for or against the granting of extra hotel licenses in their town or suburb.

The First World War would bring the drink question into sharp focus. Initially, there were concerns in Britain about the increased consumption of alcohol by munitions workers, especially by women workers, whose rates of pay as munitions workers far exceeded what they had been able to earn as pre-war domestic servants or office workers.[18] In October 1915, British Chancellor of the Exchequer, David Lloyd George, began implementing various regulations, including reduced opening hours of hotels, in an attempt to curtail drinking. For Lloyd George, drink was a greater foe than Germany and Austria combined. Many agreed, with prohibition enacted in Canada (1915) and six o'clock closing introduced in March 1916 in South Australia.

Guilt and an effort to show solidarity with those at the front was another war-related factor in the push to restrict alcohol. Faced with the terrible death toll and the broken bodies and minds of those returned early from war, alcohol became a symbol of unnecessary frivolity and uncaring pleasure. Austerity and self-denial were called for as the only appropriate response to the deprivations and miseries suffered by those at the front. Prompted by Lloyd George to set an example for the nation, King George V announced in April 1915 that he would neither drink nor serve alcohol until the war was ended.

The British example, concern to show their compassion for the men at the front, decades of temperance education and agitation for

---

[16] Robert Evans, *Evangelism and Revivals in Australia 1880-1914,* vol 1 (Hazelbrook: Research in Evangelical Revivals, 2005); J. S. Blocker, D. M. Fahey and I. R. Tyrrell, *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History,* 76.

[17] Ian Tyrell, *Reforming the World*, 75.

[18] Angela Woollacott, *On Her Their Lives Depend: Munitions Workers in the Great War* (London: University of California Press, 1994), 124-6.

reform by the churches and by temperance organisations, brought increasing pressure for NSW to follow suit and introduce a referendum on hotel closing hours. The final catalyst however, was the Liverpool/Casula Riot. On 14 February 1916, five thousand troops from the Liverpool and Casula army training camps began rioting through the streets of Liverpool. They overran local pubs, looted shops, vandalised buildings and commandeered the Liverpool train station. The mob, which had grown to some 15,000, started boarding trains to Sydney, where they continued their rampage of damage and looting. The riot was finally brought to an ignominious end when police opened fire on the drunken soldiers at Central Station, killing one soldier and wounding six others.

From the trainee soldiers' perspective, the riot had resulted from a decision taken at the end of 1915 to place more restrictions on leave and to institute longer training hours.[19] Indeed, a Royal Commission into conditions at the Liverpool camp, published just months before the riot, had found that the strict discipline, hardship and grueling training demands placed on new recruits were serious problems that needed to be addressed.[20] The report's recommendations were not implemented and instead, the training regimen was extended.

The Royal Commission had also mentioned excessive alcohol consumption as a problem, recommending severe restrictions be placed on the availability of alcohol. Indeed, only a month before, *The Methodist* had reported that four thousand troops stationed at the Liverpool camp had signed a petition for six o'clock closing of local liquor bars in an attempt to curb the availability of alcohol. Doctors readily agreed with the Report's proposal, but military leaders were less enthusiastic, contending that restrictions on alcohol would be detrimental to their recruitment efforts.[21]

From the perspective of the Methodist Church, alcohol, rather than harsh training schedules, was 'the chief cause' of the 1916 riot.[22] *The Methodist* bolstered their opinion arguing that both the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph* had also cited drink as the

[19] Kevin Baker, *Mutiny, Terrorism, Riots and Murder: A History of Sedition in Australia and New Zealand* (Dural: Rosenberg Publishing, 2006), 72.
[20] *Report of proceedings and minutes of evidence of Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Administration of the Liverpool Camp* (1915).
[21] Tony Cuneen, 'The Law at War (1916): A Social History of the New South Wales Legal Profession in 1916,' unpublished paper (accessed 02/04/12), http://www.forbessociety.org.au/.
[22] *The Methodist*, 19 February, 1916, 8.

cause of the riot. For their part, the *Herald* had actually reported that the riot was a response to the new training regimen, but was nonetheless largely unsympathetic to the soldiers' cause, contending that the rioters were unpatriotic, lazy and with many aged between 17 and 19 years of age, probably too young.[23] *The Methodist*'s purpose however, was to prove to its readership that the call to restrict the sale of alcohol was not just a Methodist cause, but was also a cause for the knowledgeable, the respectable and the workers.

Two months after the Liverpool/Casula riot, the NSW state government decided to implement a referendum for the earlier closing of hotels, as a wartime measure. Voters were to be given a choice of six closing time options: either six, seven, eight, nine, ten or eleven o'clock closing.[24] *The Methodist* was unimpressed, declaring that the decision to call a referendum, rather than simply implementing an earlier closing law was a shirking of political duty, a barely disguised attempt to escape the retribution of the liquor industry come election time. In fact, the NSW parliament had attempted to introduce ten o'clock closing for hotels, with the proposed Bill later amended to nine o'clock closing, however this Bill was defeated in December 1915.[25]

Notwithstanding their disdain for a referendum, Methodist leaders, in line with other temperance campaigners, actively encouraged their congregations to vote for the six o'clock option. The choice of the six o'clock preference was an obvious one for the temperance cause. Not only did it make the temperance vote more effective by concentrating on one option, it also reflected their concern to minimise the negative effects of excessive drinking. Furthermore, the earlier closing hour would bring hotels into line with the recently passed legislation to restrict the trading hours of other businesses in the interests of workers and family life.[26] How-to-vote posters were prominently displayed in Methodist churches and church halls, while articles in *The Methodist* included how-to-vote instructions, the benefits seen from the introduction of six o'clock closing in South Australia and appeals to vote for six o'clock closing in order to show support for the war effort.[27]

---

[23] *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 February, 1916, 9.
[24] *Liquor Referendum Act* (NSW), Act No. 10, 1916.
[25] *Liquor Amendment Bill*, 1915.
[26] *Factories and Shops Act* (NSW), Act No. 39, 1912.
[27] *The Methodist*, 10 May 1916, 11; 10 June 1916, 6; 22 April, 1916, 9; 8 April 1916, 1; 25 March 1916, 1, 9, 10

The referendum result was a positive one for temperance campaigners, with 62% of voters choosing six o'clock closing and only 1% opting for eleven o'clock. *The Methodist* was pleased to note that the outcome of the referendum had shown churches and the general public to be working together 'in hearty and active cooperation'.[28] Although six o'clock closing was originally seen as a war-time measure, it was effectively declared the permanent closing time by the Liquor Amendment Acts of 1919 and 1923. Six o'clock closing in NSW would continue until 1954.

Australian Methodists were greatly encouraged by the introduction of the Volstead Act (1919) in the United States to prohibit the sale and manufacture of alcohol. Successful campaigning by groups such as the Anti-Saloon League and the Methodist Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals had fought for the curtailing of the German-based brewing industry in the interests of the nation's morals and health. Australian Methodists seemed relatively unconcerned by the criminal activity that ensued in the United States following passage of the Volstead Act. They were also unperturbed by the rise of a black market in Australia, following the introduction and continuation of six o'clock closing. Those willing to flout the law and serve alcohol after six made a fortune running sly grog shops that catered for all walks of life, from businessmen and politicians to the criminal underclass. In response, legislation was passed by the NSW government in 1927 to allow the sale of alcohol in clubs and restaurants with meals after six o'clock, in the hope that this would curb the profits of the sly grog shops. [29]

Many Methodists refused to see the connection between trade restriction and crime, arguing that prohibition was a sound economic strategy for Australia. Speaking at the Methodist School Hall in Queanbeyan, H. C. Stitt, leader of the NSW Temperance Alliance, contended that prohibition in the United States had turned saloons, breweries and hospitals for inebriates into thriving places of manufacturing and education. Prohibition, he declared, increased productivity and was the answer to unemployment. [30]

A referendum on the prohibition issue in 1928 would ultimately fail, with 71% of the population voting against prohibition. In part,

---

[28] *The Methodist*, 17 June, 1916, 7

[29] *Liquor Amendment Act* (NSW), Act No. 36, 1927

[30] *Queanbeyan-Canberra Advocate*, 22 April, 1926; see also *The Methodist Church of Australasia, New South Wales Annual Conference Minutes,* 1920; *Examiner*, 14 April 1919, 3; *The Argus* 13 October 1919, 7

this failure was due to divisions amongst prohibition campaigners over the clause that the liquor trade be compensated should prohibition be enacted. It also reflected a concern voiced by the press and among NSW voters that the expansion of organised crime, associated with prohibition in the United States, was not desirable. How was NSW to police its state borders? Furthermore, how could men in rural areas, many of whom ostensibly, had served in the Great War, be expected to support prohibition?[31] Unlike in the 1916 referendum, the press was firmly behind the liquor trade on the question of prohibition. Nevertheless, in the wake of the referendum's failure, and in spite of the serious issues raised by anti-prohibitionists, the Methodist Conference of NSW would continue to call for prohibition during the inter-war years as a solution to the drink problem.[32] This enabled the ULVA and others who opposed the Church's attitudes to alcohol to draw an association between the churches, prohibition and unreasonableness.

By the end of the Second World War there were renewed calls for the reform of the state's drinking laws. In 1946 the Liquor Amendment Act made provision for increasing the number of licensed clubs that could serve alcohol with meals to 414, abolished local option and called for a referendum on the state's early closing laws. The new referendum, to be held in 1947, asked citizens whether hotels should close at 6, 9 or 10 pm.[33]

For its part, the liquor trade campaigned on the issues of fairness and reason. They contended that it was unfair for hotels to have restrictions on the serving of alcohol when clubs did not.[34] Following the 1947 Full Court's decision that clubs could serve alcohol to their patrons at all times of the day, the liquor trade was quick to point out the class divide between access to alcohol, such that while patrons of wealthy clubs could drink at any time, working-class pub-goers had to abide by six o'clock closing. They pointed out that the six o'clock closing rule for hotels had resulted in the decidedly uncivilised 'six o'clock swill,' whereby hotel patrons

---

[31] The Liquor Trades Defence Union of NSW, *The Liquor Issue: a series of articles reprinted from The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney: H. C. Martyn & Son, 1928).
[32] *The Methodist Church of Australasia, New South Wales Annual Conference Minutes*, 1920-1946; J. D. Bollen, 'Clark, George Daniel (1848–1933),' *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.
[33] S. Redshaw, *Changes in the Liquor Law, NSW*, Law Book Company of Australasia, Sydney, 1946; C. O. Smithers, J. L. Smithers and K. Smithers, *Liquor (Amendment) Act 1946 and Regulations Thereunder*, ULVA, Sydney, 1947.
[34] *ULVA Review*, 20 January, 1947, 1.

bought as much alcohol as possible in the last hour before six o'clock.[35] The liquor trade also argued that the churches and other 'opponents of the trade' were being unreasonable and would again attempt to impose prohibition on the state if given any encouragement by a six o'clock success at the polls.[36]

The Methodist approach to the 1947 campaign was similar to their campaigns of 1916 and 1928. They argued that alcohol consumption was associated with poverty, moral decay and individuals turning to crime, inimical to the building of a morally progressive society. There was also an appeal to the need to protect women and children who were at the mercy of drunken husbands and fathers.[37] This time, unlike in 1916, the press was generally supportive of the liquor trade's position. *The Sydney Morning Herald* was scathingly dismissive of the Church's continued preference for six o'clock closing, maintaining that it was woefully short-sighted: 'If the Churches, for what seem to them good reasons, are supporting six o'clock closing, so are the sly-grog dealers and others with a vested interest in the present hours.'[38]

The *Herald* went on to raise the issue of the undignified swill, resulting, as they saw it, from the small window of opportunity for working men to have a beer after work. They contended that the only reason to continue six o'clock closing was because there was a need for more 'civilised bar service' and better hotel facilities, supposing that a vote for six o'clock would send a message to the liquor industry to improve their services. The *Herald* concluded its report with the observation that longer hotel hours overseas had resulted in more 'civilised drinking.'

The calls for wartime austerity and the concerns of health professionals - factors in the pro-temperance arguments for the 1916 referendum - were absent from the 1947 campaign. Furthermore, alcohol consumption had risen markedly in the two years immediately after the war, from 37,000,000 gallons in 1945 to almost 60,000,000 gallons by 1947,[39] even though there were beer

[35] Social Amenities League (advertisement), *The Catholic Weekly*, 18 July 1946, 14; Asher Joel Advertising, *A Survey of, and Report upon, the Hotel Industry of New South Wales* (Asher Joel Advertising, Sydney, 1957), 170.
[36] *ULVA Review*, 20 January, 1947, 1; Liquor Trades Council of NSW (advertisement), *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 February 1946, 7
[37] See for example *The Methodist*, 15 February 1947, 2; *The Methodist Church of Australasia, New South Wales Annual Conference Minutes*, 1946, 207.
[38] *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 February 1947, 2
[39] *New South Wales Statistical Register*, 1951-1952, 522

shortages in the years immediately following the war. Yet in spite of this, and of the liquor trade's appeal to fairness, the support of the press for the later closing hour, the failure of the prohibition referendum in 1928 and the awareness of the link between criminal activity and restricted opening hours, the six o'clock option was successful at the liquor referendum of 1947. Over 62% of voters favoured six - the same return for six o clock as in 1916. How was it then that the six o'clock option won?

Although the arguments presented in favour of six o'clock closing by the Methodist Church and others had been part of the late nineteenth century social reformist agenda, they nonetheless had resonance in the early post-war period. The call for a morally reformed society must have seemed particularly pertinent in the post-war age. The horrors unleashed during the Second World War - the terrible loss of life, the devastation in Europe, the threat posed to Australia by Japan, the birth of the atomic age, the emerging news about the Holocaust and the atrocities committed at Japanese prisoner of war camps - all took a psychological toll on Australian society, affecting civilians as well as those in the armed services.[40] The 'Populate or Perish' slogan and the resultant immigration program launched in 1945 was as much an expression of fear for the future as it was a mechanism for economic growth. Although trials of the war and concerns for the post-war world were not directly raised by the churches or the liquor trade in connection with the 1947 referendum, they cannot have failed to influence the vote to some extent, with post-war uncertainty prompting caution and conservatism. The plight of women and children struck a chord too, as wives struggled to cope with traumatised husbands returned from war service. Alcoholism and resultant violence were difficult issues for many families of returned service personnel.[41] Furthermore, wartime restrictions had banned women from drinking at bars, confining them to the 'Ladies' Lounge.' Following the war, restrictions on women's access to bars was lifted, but a culture of single-sex drinking had been created. As wives and mothers, most women did not have the personal freedom to frequent the Ladies' Lounge between five and six, and not all pubs had a lounge anyway.

[40] Joy Damousi, *Living with the Aftermath: Trauma, Nostalgia, and Grief in Post-war Australia* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 36-63.
[41] Joy Damousi, *Living with the Aftermath*, 134-138; Stephen Garton, *The Cost of War: Australians Return* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1996).

This helped to relegate drinking hours at hotels as a male issue, diametrically opposed to women's interests. [42]

At the same time, the arguments of the liquor trade were not compelling. With Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) clubs catering to returned servicemen of both wars, the only winners of later hotel closing times were working-class men who had not been in the armed services. The swill was certainly a blight on Australian society, but it could also be explained as a stereotypical example of uncouth working-class behaviour, rather than a direct consequence of shorter drinking hours. It was also a phenomenon that dated from the 1940s, as a consequence of wartime deprivations, where supplies frequently ran low due to the Control of Liquor Order (1942) which cut alcohol production, leading to scenes of crowding, jostling and rushed drinking at hotels among soldiers on leave.[43] The 'swill' had not been in evidence prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, and many probably believed it would abate in time.[44] As for the liquor trade's fear that continued earlier closing times would mean a return to the prohibition question, the sound defeat of the prohibition referendum in 1928 made this argument seem rather specious.

The success of the six o'clock closing result in 1947 was not so much due to a well organised campaign by Methodists and other Christian leaders, but was more likely a reflection of the failure of the liquor trade's campaign combined with a set of circumstances that enabled six o'clock advocates to succeed in spite of themselves. There were some in the Methodist Church who were acutely aware of this, and had realised that the absolutist and restrictive reforms of the past were becoming increasingly less viable. Furthermore, given the growth of crime provoked by limited trading hours, some Methodists began to wonder out loud if there might not be another way. Within the Australasian Methodist Conference's Public Questions Committee (renamed the Social and Ethical Questions Committee in 1948),[45] Methodists were positing the idea of

---

[42] Tanja Luckins, 'Pigs, Hogs and Aussie Blokes: The Emergence of the Term 'Six O'clock Swill'," *History Australia* 4 (1), (2007): 8.6-8.7; Diane Kirkby, *Barmaids: A History of Women's Work in Pubs* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 179-184; Diane Kirkby, '"Beer Glorious Beer": Gender Politics and Australian Popular Culture,' *Journal of Cultural History* 37 (2003): 244-256.

[43] Luckins, 'Pigs, Hogs and Aussie Blokes,' 8.6.

[44] Luckins, 'Pigs, Hogs and Aussie Blokes,' 8.6-8.7; Diane Kirkby, *Barmaids*, 167.

[45] The name change of this group is indicative of the shift in thinking away from specific social reforms towards broader social solutions.

nationalisation of the liquor trade as a possible solution, thereby cutting out the liquor trade's efforts to expand its profits at the expense of increased drinking in the community. Many Methodists were influenced by the broad aims of Labor's plans for post-war reconstruction - to build a society based on democratic socialism. Such a society was built on advocated state ownership and intervention in order to avoid the worst excesses of capitalism, thus securing a future free from economic depression and war.[46] At the federal Methodist conference of 1945, a Public Questions Committee (PQC) report made the following observation: 'Discussion revealed that the matter of the public ownership of the liquor traffic was a line question in some States, and that on the whole the older temperance leaders were opposed to it, and that support for it came mainly from those who were younger.'[47] For younger Methodists, the problem was the liquor trade itself and its profit motive. Individuals needed protection from exploitative capitalism, rather than mere alcohol.[48] This line of argument would become prominent in the 1954 referendum.

It was not only Methodists who were concerned about the liquor trade's profiteering. The 1954 referendum was prompted by a Royal Commission into Liquor Laws in NSW (1951-1954), headed by Justice A. V. Maxwell. The Commission was charged with investigating the liquor trade's financial interests in the ownership and control of hotels. It also sought to discover whether current licensing laws were effective; whether further club licences were desirable and if so, whether local option should be reintroduced; and whether meals and accommodation provided by hotels was adequate.

The Commission interviewed over four hundred witnesses, including liquor trade representatives, temperance advocates, publicans, police officers and members of various government bodies. The main representative for the temperance position at the Royal Commission was Oscar Piggott, Methodist, and General-Secretary of the NSW Temperance Alliance. The liquor trade had hired six King's Councils to represent their interests to the Commission. Piggott declined any legal support, a decision Maxwell

---

[46] Samantha Frappell, 'Building Jerusalem: Post-war Reconstruction and the Churches in NSW,' PhD dissertation, University of Sydney, 1996.
[47] Public Questions Committee, *Minutes of the 14th General Conference of the Methodist Church of Australasia*, 1945, 260
[48] Social and Ethical Questions Committee, *Minutes of the 15th General Conference of the Methodist Church of Australasia*, 1948, 86

strongly counselled against.[49] Piggott called a number of witnesses to speak for the return of local option and the retention of six o'clock closing. Many of these witnesses had been involved with the temperance cause for over forty years and had participated in the six o'clock closing campaign of 1916. Their arguments hinged on the social reformist agenda of the late nineteenth century - that individuals needed protection from alcohol, the source of poverty, crime and family breakdown.[50] Piggott told the Commission that he would gladly shut down all hotels and liquor outlets if he could, such was his concern at the social devastation caused by alcohol.[51]

A lack of legal support, combined with the emergence of divergent views regarding the temperance question within the Methodist Church, and within the Christian community at large, made Piggott's position relatively easy to counter. A report was tabled at the Commission that had been written by a committee within the Sydney diocese of the Anglican Church, known as the Social Questions Committee (SQC). The report called for low-alcohol beer, nationalisation of the liquor trade and more comfortable hotel facilities, in view of the SQC's belief that alcohol was a necessity in the community.[52] This report echoed the views of the Methodist SEQC and similar groups within the Presbyterian Church.[53] Piggott claimed the SQC's report was not representative of the churches, and that his own views were mainstream.[54]

Maxwell handed down his report in March 1954. The report was scathing where publicans were concerned. Maxwell cited evidence of poor conditions for patrons in hotels and the selfish motives of publicans for retaining early closing times rather than pay bar staff for the extra hours, at the expense of patrons. Police corruption was blamed for the continued operation of the sly grog trade. While Maxwell did not go so far as specifically to recommend an extension of hotel hours, he opined that later hotel closing would help combat the sly grog trade.[55] 'I am satisfied…that there are evils associated

---

[49] *Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Laws in New South Wales*, 1954, vol 2, 1523.
[50] *Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Laws*, 1523-56; Here 'crime' does not refer to bootlegging(!)
[51] *Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Laws*, vol 3, 1980.
[52] *Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Laws,* vol 3, 1977
[53] SEQC, *Minutes of the 15th General Conference of the Methodist Church of Australasia*, 1948, 86; *The New South Wales Presbyterian*, 12 February 1947, 4.
[54] *Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Laws*, vol 3, 1977
[55]*Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Laws*, vol 1.

with six o'clock closing which ought not to be tolerated in a civilised community.'[56]

Unsurprisingly, the Methodist Church was deeply disappointed with Maxwell's Report. Supporters of Oscar Piggott's position were unhappy with the Report's condemnation of six o'clock closing.[57] Members of the SEQC were also dissatisfied, decrying the Report's failure to tackle the 'increasing power of the liquor interests.'[58] They did not see advocacy of six o'clock as an attack on publicans profiteering and the sly grog trade, but as an opportunity for the liquor trade to extend its profits. Methodists' worst fears were confirmed. As a result of the Maxwell Report's findings, the NSW state government called for yet another referendum on hotel closing hours.

This time, the ten o'clock option won by a margin of 0.5%, just 9,792 votes. Despite the close result, the vote did indicate a significant shift in community attitudes, with a swing of 12% in favour of the later hour. The *Sydney Morning Herald* had predicted a majority for ten o'clock as the likely outcome, based on a number of factors, including the influence of the migrant vote (given that most migrants had come from countries where longer hotel hours was the norm), the appeal of new beer gardens and improved facilities for women, and the influence of the Maxwell Report.[59]

Methodists believed that the loss of the 1954 referendum was due to extensive spending on advertising by the liquor trade.[60] Indeed, the liquor trade had come up with some creative ways to get their message across, including making a film about the evils of the swill and employing a sky-writer to write 'VOTE 10' in the sky on the day of the election.[61] Methodists and other advocates of the six o'clock position relied on more traditional methods - leaflets, 'how-to-vote' cards, radio commentary on church radio stations, sermons, public meetings and newspaper articles and advertisements and articles in church newspapers. In this they were generally 'preaching to the converted.' One attempt to reach beyond this sphere was the

---

[56] *Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Laws*, vol 1, 87.
[57] *The Methodist*, 6 March 1954, 7.
[58] SEQC, *Minutes of the 17th General Conference of the Methodist Church of Australasia*, 1954, 140; 'The Liquor Commission Report' (special supplement), *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 February 1954, 16.
[59] *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 November 1954, 2.
[60] *The Methodist*, 6 March 1954, 6; Gar Dillon, *A Delusion of Australian Culture: A Brief History of the Clash with Alcohol in New South Wales 1788-1983*, (Sydney: NSW Temperance Alliance, 1984), 148.
[61] Keith Dunstan, *Boozers and Wowsers*, 124.

Methodist radio drama *The Devil's Advocate* which aired on the Macquarie Radio Network in June 1954. The program was part of a Methodist evangelistic venture called *Mission to the Nation*, led by Alan Walker. Walker, a member of the SEQC, had commissioned a series of radio programs, including *The Devil's Advocate*, in an attempt to get a Christian view of contemporary issues of social justice into the public arena. *The Devil's Advocate* was heavily critical of the liquor trade's profiteering, so much so that the Macquarie Radio Network considered censoring the program after liquor trade representatives protested. With the exception of *The Devil's Advocate* however, the amount spent by the churches on the six o'clock cause was limited. Unlike the liquor trade, the churches had many other concerns on which to devote their funds.

That said, the accuracy of the Methodist claim that an extensive advertising campaign run by the liquor trades was successful in shifting the vote is difficult to ascertain. According to Australian Gallup Polls conducted in 1954, the preference for ten o'clock closing climbed from 36% in July (slightly less than the 1947 referendum result) to 50% by November.[62] Certainly, this represents a relatively quick turnaround in the vote, but it is difficult to conclude that this shift in public opinion was solely due to the amount of money spent on advertising. Cost alone is no indicator of a successful advertising campaign. Rather, the issues targeted by the liquor trade in the lead up to the referendum may have had more resonance by the mid-1950s than they had in 1947.

Just as in 1947, the issue of the swill was prominent in the liquor trade's campaign in 1954.[63] The swill had persisted beyond the war and its immediate aftermath. The ULVA argued that the failure of the swill to abate in the post-war era was due to early closing.[64] The issue of the swill was a real sticking point for temperance advocates. In 1952, Francis Wilson, former research secretary of the Temperance Alliance, had told the Maxwell Commission that the 'alleged overcrowding' was not as bad as some made out. In fact, in his opinion, the swill was nothing more than ULVA propaganda. Maxwell was unimpressed, declaring that he had seen the swill with his own eyes and he could think of nothing more disgusting.[65]

---

[62] *Australian Gallup Polls*, July-November 1954.
[63] ULVA Review, 23 September 1954, 35.
[64] ULVA Review, 23 September 1954, 35; *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 November 1954, 2.
[65] *Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Laws in New South Wales*, 1954, vol 2, 1531-4.

Simply ignoring the swill however, did not make it go away. Two years later, the Social Service Department of the NSW Methodist Conference decided to set up a committee to investigate the reasons for the swill. Reverend Ray Watson, a member of the Department, proposed that the Methodist Church should interview doctors, psychologists and lawyers to investigate the six o'clock swill. He opined that the Church had failed to analyse these issues in the past. He hoped the outcome of the Department's research would make a positive contribution to the liquor question.[66] The reality of the swill and its persistence into the 1950s was wholly accepted by the Maxwell Report, by the press and finally, by some sections of the Methodist Church. That the swill was undesirable and a cause for reform tapped into other concerns, such as the presence of women in hotels and the increasing importance of leisure in post-war culture.

Maxwell proposed the presence of women as the solution to the swill and to uncivilised drinking in general. He had made a point of noting the 'unedifying spectacle' of women waiting outside the hotel while their husbands drank in the bar. Maxwell envisaged a culture where people of both sexes could enjoy a civilised drink before attending an evening show.[67] The liquor industry was not slow to understand the importance of this issue. Sixteen new hotels were constructed in NSW in 1954. The new hotels had been specifically designed with female drinkers in mind, with smaller bar areas and an increase in the size of lounges and beer gardens. Architects C. C. Ruwald claimed that these changes had been made to accommodate women, since 'more women are drinking in hotels than ever before.'[68] While difficulties with traumatised war-veteran husbands continued beyond the 1940s, later hotel closing times offered women the opportunity to accompany their husbands and to make use of more comfortable hotel facilities in the evenings.

Tied closely to the question of civilised drinking was the question of leisure. Leisure time and how to spend it was not directly addressed by either side of the referendum question. It was, nonetheless, an emerging issue in 1950s Australia. The introduction of the Annual Holidays Act (1944) and the 44 hour week (1945) by

---

[66] Social Service Department, *Minutes of the 17th General Conference of the Methodist Church of Australasia*, 1954, 141

[67] Diane Kirkby, 'Maxwell's Silver Hammer: Licensing Laws, Liquor Trading and the Maxwell Royal Commission in NSW 1951-1954,' *ANZLH-ejournal*, 2005; Diane Kirkby, *Barmaids*, 179-184.

[68] *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 May 1954, 13.

the McKell government gave citizens a new consciousness of leisure.[69] In this situation, the hotel was becoming less the domain of men after work, and increasingly the place where mixed leisurely socialising could occur in beer gardens and lounges.

The churches did not miss this link between the concept of post-war leisure and the demise of six o'clock. Indeed, the NSW Temperance Alliance was convinced that 'increased salaries and reduced hours of work' were responsible for the success of the ten o'clock vote.[70] For its part, the Methodist Church was quick to accuse NSW voters of moral apathy for the success of ten o'clock.[71] The film *10pm! The Breaking of the (Night) Drought: NSW* produced by Cinesound in 1955 is also revealing of the importance of leisure.[72] The film celebrates the success of the ten o'clock campaign. There are scenes of men and women dancing, drinking in beer gardens and enjoying a 'civilised drink.' There is also the observation that 1 February 1955 (the day the new laws took effect) was 'BE Day' (meaning, 'Beer in the Evening'). This association with the end of the Second World War (VE and VJ days) was not just pointing to the end of a political war with 'temperance wowsers,' but also to the end of a wartime mentality of restriction and frugality, towards a future of peace, prosperity and leisure.

Methodists' calls for temperance grew less in the wake of the 1954 referendum. Methodists were unable to find sustained support for temperance in a society drifting away from the older restrictive lifestyle imposed by social change, war and depression. Some were confused and angered by the change, but others, such as the SEQC, had seen the connection between individual drinking, freedom and leisure in post-war society. However, SEQC attempts to defend the right to drink and to limit the trade at the same time seemed contradictory in a society where longer drinking hours were seen as a catalyst for a new sociable leisure option, to be enjoyed by women as well as men. Ironically, it was a Christian organisation with a twelve step program that encouraged individuals to deal with their own problems with alcohol that would prove popular in the post-war

[69] Richard White, *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia* (North Melbourne: Pluto Press Australia, 2005), 121-127.
[70] NSW Temperance Alliance, *No Compromise, No Quarter: Manifesto* (Sydney: NSW Temperance Alliance, 1955), n.p.
[71] *The Methodist*, 20 November 1954, 3.
[72] *10pm! The Breaking of the (Night) Drought: NSW* (1955), Cinesound production.

period.[73] As early as 1948, it had been embraced by Methodists as a way forward to continue combating the social evil of alcohol.[74]

[73] Alcoholics Anonymous arrived in Australia in 1945. The first Central Service Office was set up in Sydney in 1952.
[74] Don Wright and Eric Clancy, *The Methodists: A History of Methodism in New South Wales* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin: 1993), 182.

'THE EMPIRE'S TITANIC STRUGGLE': VICTORIAN METHODISM AND THE GREAT WAR

Glen O'Brien

This article has been peer reviewed

This paper examines the response of the Victoria and Tasmania Conference of the Methodist Church to the First World War, with particular reference to the Rev. A. T. Holden, Methodist Chaplain-General to the Commonwealth Military Forces, and President of the Conference in 1915. It argues that the Church's initial response to the War was restrained and cautious, resisting the demonisation of the enemy, and expressing disapproval of armed conflict between professedly Christian nations as incompatible with the teaching of the New Testament. As the conflict escalated, however, the Church's discourse shifted toward one more supportive of the British imperial agenda and its 'struggle against barbarism.' A. T. Holden was a shaping influence on broader Methodist sentiment in this direction. Methodists made their contribution to the formation of the ANZAC myth with their published reports of the heroism of the Australian soldier and spent much effort ministering to the spiritual and physical needs of military camps. Australian Methodists shared the imperial sentiment common among Australians in the Edwardian period and became willing to make any sacrifices necessary to assist the Empire in its 'titanic struggle' against what it considered the forces of barbarism. Among these sacrifices were the more peaceful religious ideals exhibited during the earlier stages of the conflict.

I. Introduction

Methodism in Edwardian Australia, along with other Christian Churches, was deeply committed to the cause of empire and thus was implicated in the imperial agenda behind the Great War. The close association between religion and empire is part of Linda Colley's thesis that Protestantism played an important role in shaping British national identity.[1] By implication it served as a tool

[1] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994); For a recent collection of articles on the relationship between religion and empire see H. M. Carey, ed., *Empires of Religion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave

for imperial expansion and consolidation. Australian Methodism, still in 1914 part of what Charles Dilke had called 'Greater Britain,' has been seen in this light. [2] Wright and Clancy in their history of Methodism in NSW, for example, refer to Methodists as 'imperialists to the core, and unlikely to do other than support Britain in its hour of need. Loyalty came naturally to them, at least partly because of the perceived link between Empire and Gospel.'[3] Michael McKernan has argued that, along with other Protestant Churches, Methodists functioned as propagandists for the British imperial crusade, closely identifying the cause of Christianity with the aims of the Empire, and offering only 'a glib, superficial response to a catastrophe of overwhelming proportions.'[4] This paper will address such claims and, without rejecting them outright, argue that a more nuanced view of Methodist response to the Great War is needed.

Focusing primarily on the response of the Victoria and Tasmania Conference to the War, I will show that Methodists considered war among ostensibly Christian nations as particularly abhorrent, and resisted the demonisation of 'the enemy' offering somewhat reluctant support for the War especially in its early stages. Only as the conflict escalated, and it became clear that the War would last much longer than at first anticipated, did the Church's early statements regarding the incompatibility of Christian faith with aggressive militarism harden into a grim determination to win the War at all costs. An earlier 'deep-seated horror' of war was replaced by what Sister Faith of the Collingwood Mission called 'a more deeply-seated Empire love.'[5]

Since the 1980s several historians have presented a picture of Australia's involvement in the Great War as very much in Australia's best interest, counteracting an earlier more radical view that

---

Macmillan, 2008); see also H. M. Carey, *God's Empire: Religion and Colonialism in the British World c. 1801-1908* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[2] C. W. Dilke, *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries during 1866 and 1867* (London, 1868); D. Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[3] D. Wright and E. G. Clancy, *The Methodists: A History of Methodism in New South Wales* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1993), 130-31. See also A. D. Hunt, *Methodist Militant: Attitudes to the Great War 1914-1918* (Adelaide: South Australian Methodist Historical Society, 1975).

[4] M. McKernan, *Australian Churches at War: Attitudes and Activities of the Major Churches, 1914-1918* (Sydney and Canberra: Catholic Theological Faculty and Australian War Memorial, 1980), 172. See also the review of this work by Neville Meaney in *Journal of Religious History* 11:2 (Dec 1980): 356-59.

[5] *Spectator* (14 August 1914): 1315.

Australians were pawns in an essentially European conflict in which Australians should have had no part.[6] Bongiorno and Mansfield have argued that these historians have focused too much on the diplomatic and political features of Australia's involvement and that there was in fact much greater complexity and ambiguity in Australians' attitudes toward the War.[7] Specifically religious studies such as that presented here help to inform this conversation. Alongside of political, economic, and diplomatic reasons for engagement in such conflicts there are religious views to be considered. Did Australian Methodists of the period allow their religious convictions to control their approach to the War or were such convictions sublimated to the more prosaic practicalities of the situation? Were the churches simply tools of empire or did they have a voice of their own? As Andrew Eason has recently shown in the case of the Salvation Army's earliest work in Cape Town, one should not jump to rapid conclusions about the roles that religion played in colonial, or for that matter post-colonial, settings. Even a military uniform reminiscent of colonial rule could clothe a radical revivalism out of step with colonial authorities.[8] Edwardian Methodists shared in the wider 'Nonconformist conscience'[9] that was profoundly aware of the responsibility of ethical thought and action and the range of possible responses that a thoughtful Christian might make to such a crisis as war in Europe.

This research is based mainly on consulting the weekly Methodist newspaper *The Spectator* and the Annual Conference Minutes from 1914-1918, as well as archival materials relating to the Rev. Albert Thomas Holden.[10] Holden, a veteran of the South African War, and a man proud of his military connections,

---

[6] Frank Bongiorno and Grant Mansfield, 'Whose War Was It Anyway?: Some Australian Historians and the Great War,' *History Compass* 6:1 (January 2008): 62-90.

[7] Frank Bongiorno and Grant Mansfield, Teaching and Learning Guide for 'Whose War Was It Anyway?' http://www.blackwell-compass.com/subject/history/article_view?parent=section&last_results=section%3Dhico-australasia-and-pacific&sortby=date&section=hico-australasia-and-pacific&browse_id=hico_tr_bpl578&article_id=hico_tr_bpl578 accessed 17.01.10

[8] Andrew Eason, "Desperate Fighting at the Cape': The Salvation Army's Arrival and Earliest Work in Late-Victorian Cape Town,' *Journal of Religious History* 33:3 (September 2009): 265-284.

[9] D. W. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics, 1870-1914* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982).

[10] I am very grateful to Professor Ian Breward and his diligent staff at the Uniting Church Victorian and Tasmanian Synod Archives in Elsternwick, Victoria for the wonderful assistance they have given during the research for this paper.

articulated a strong stance in support of the Empire's 'righteous cause.' As President of the Conference during the first full year of the War and Methodist Chaplain-General to the Commonwealth Military Forces, he was able to influence Methodists toward a more full blooded support for 'the Empire's titanic struggle.'[11]

II. Edwardian Methodist Attitudes to War

In the years leading up to the First World War, the Methodist Church of Australasia was by no means universally supportive of imperial military conflicts. The NSW Methodist newspaper *Glad Tidings* led opposition to the Australian government's attempts, in 1911, to enforce compulsory military training on young men. The 'lust for war' was something 'heathenish' and conscription would only force young men into the danger of moral corruption brought on by camp life.[12]

When the War finally did come, Methodism took a perhaps inevitable stance in support of the imperial programme, though this support was neither immediate nor unqualified, as we shall see. The 1914 NSW Conference called upon Methodists to defend the Empire, and at the same time pray for the soon coming of the Prince of Peace.[13] The Victoria and Tasmania Conference took an identical stance and the Rev. John Thomas, President of the Conference, called the Church to prayer in a series of special meetings set up for the purpose.[14] Such calls for concerts of prayer were, of course, duplicating at the Conference level the call sent out by the President-General, the Rev. George Brown, for weekly Sunday evening services of intercession in each church, and a daily noontide prayer vigil.[15]

---

[11] The phrase, 'titanic struggle' appears numerous times in the pages of *The Spectator*, as well as in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference Minutes during the war years. See The Pastoral Addresses for 1915, A. T. Holden, president, Alfred Madsen, secretary Minutes (1915): 36; Samuel Scholes, President, Henry Worrall, Secretary, Minutes (1917): 36, and Henry Worrall, President, A. E. Albiston, Secretary, Minutes (1918): 38. The phrase appears in *The Spectator* frequently, including 10 March 1916: 309; 24 March 1916: 367; 5 May 1916: 575.

[12] D. Wright and E. G. Clancy, *The Methodists: A History of Methodism in New South Wales* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1993),129-30.

[13] Wright and Clancy, 130-31.

[14] *Spectator* (21 August 1914): 1343.

[15] A. D. Hunt, *This Side of Heaven: A History of Methodism in South Australia* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1985), 275. Chapter 10, 'Methodism Militant' deals extensively with South Australian Methodist response to the Great War.

Victorian and Tasmanian Methodists certainly played their part in the sacrifices made during wartime. By 1916, over 25% of Methodist Home Missioners in Victoria and Tasmania had enlisted and this was being felt as a shortage of workers on the home front.[16] By March 1916, nine ministers had enlisted and ten divinity students from Queens College.[17] In the archives of the Queen's College Memorial Chapel 1,430 names and service records of those who fell are recorded. These include nine ministers and probationers, who enlisted as privates, and did not survive the War. Thirty-one of the ministers present at the Victoria and Tasmania Conference in 1935 had served in various branches of the AIF during the War.[18] Thirty of the 213 names on the Queen's College Roll of Honour, lost their lives and 160 of the 1,016 names on the Wesley College Honour Roll. The honour roll of the Methodist Ladies College, remembers the nursing service of eighteen 'old girls.' Wesley Church in Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, has three memorial windows; one to Victorian chaplains, one to the sons of Methodist ministers who died during the war and one to the Methodist soldiers of Victoria. Numerous Uniting churches throughout the State of Victoria contain memorials to fallen Methodists.

Even while expressing abhorrence of war *The Spectator* acquiesced somewhat weakly, '…we may assume that the British Cabinet would not have decided upon its course of action without some strong reason.'[19]

> Britain's participation in the great war [*sic*] is a call to loyalty and prayer on the part of all her people. It seems that we may now be committed to a part in the struggle, which will cost huge sacrifices. May God, who has been our shield and defence in past days, still guard our shores, direct our destinies, and cause the awful ordeal through which we are called to pass to work out in some way the advancement of His Kingdom and the lasting interests of mankind. God save the King.[20]

'War Maps of Europe' were soon being sold through the Methodist Book Depot, providing 'every home exact geographical information relative to those places about which the tides of the

[16] 'President's retiring address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 298.
[17] 'President's retiring address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 301.
[18] E. Nye, 'The Church in Time of War,' in C. Irving Benson, *A Century of Victorian Methodism* (Melbourne: Spectator Publishing Company, 1935), 361.
[19] 'Current Topics,' *Spectator* (14 August 1914): 1295.
[20] 'Britain and the War,' *Spectator* (2 August 1914): 1268.

present woful [*sic*] war ebb and flow, price one shilling, post free.'[21] One paperboy selling *The Herald* could only see the upside of the War in increased sales, happily declaring, 'I'll make me forchern [*sic*] if the war goes on!'[22]

Imperial rhetoric can be read with a jaundiced eye by the modern reader but it should not disguise the fact that, at least in its early stages, Methodists only offered qualified and cautious support for the War. There was a strong expression of Christian opposition to war in principle. *The Spectator* for 7 August 1914 expressed its concern in the following way.

> The terrible and unprecedented situation in Europe naturally fills the minds of men with alarm. As Christians, we are bound to deprecate the appeal to wholesale bloodshed as a means of settling disputes among civilised nations professing, as they do, a common Christian faith...we know that when the war-drum throbs, the passions of men boil over, and reason and Christian principle, for the time being, are set aside. But as a famous statesman once rightly said [at] the declaration of war: 'They ring their bells now; they will wring their hands soon.'[23]

A week later the sentiment remained the same. 'There is little glory in war. At best it is a thing of horror, and its awful effects will soon be revealed.'[24] A woman's perspective may be gained from 'Sister Faith' of the Collingwood Methodist Mission reporting on 'The Great Shadow of the War.'

> Everyone realises how they have lived practically believing such carnage to be impossible in this age, and that the hydra-headed war dragons could never be loosed by professedly Christian nations...there is no boasting, no triumphant expression when any news of so-called victory is proclaimed, only a deep-seated horror, and a more deeply-seated Empire love.[25]

Certainly Britain and its allies were not to be seen as entirely innocent in the affair. The War could be seen as an expression of

---

[21] *Spectator* (14 August 1914): 1314.
[22] *Spectator* (14 August 1914), 1315.
[23] 'Current Topics: Though War Should Rise Against Me,' *Spectator* (7 August 1914): 1272. The reference is to Sir Robert Walpole, often thought of as the first British 'Prime Minister' though that office technically did not exist during his work as British statesman under George I and George II. He uttered these words when war was declared on Spain in 1739.
[24] 'Current Topics,' *Spectator* (14 August 1914): 1295.
[25] *Spectator* (14 August 1914): 1315.

God's chastisement upon them just as much as upon their enemies. Britain could be seen as responsible for the opium traffic in China. Russia had 'sinned grievously against the Jewish people.' Belgium had 'a shameful record in connection with the Congo atrocities…who knows but that these are some of the bills that are now being presented for payment.'[26]

In South Australia, Albert Morris argued in an address at Quorn in November 1915 for the 'Neutrality of God.' Without rejecting the legitimacy of the War itself he could not accept that God took sides in it. He asked his hearers to look into their hearts and ask themselves whether they really expected God to intervene in their cause. Were they not, rather, 'relying…on the army and navy for victory'?[27]

In late August 1914, a columnist in *The Spectator* expressed shame regarding the Empire's militaristic agenda.

> No one can be proud of this war. It expresses the rule of brute force, and each side has entered upon it confident, because of its alliances, of its power to crush the other. It represents the appeal, not to reason, but to might. It is something to make one hang the head in unspeakable shame.[28]

Upon noting the irony of the members of the two Methodist conferences of Germany praying for victory for their Fatherland, while Methodists on the British side prayed in turn for its annihilation, the article concludes, 'War is a hateful thing. It is only with extremist difficulty that it can ever be justified from the New Testament…'[29]

Even as late in the conflict as 1918, Henry Worrall, President of the Conference expressed the view in his Pastoral Address that 'Civilisation without Christianity at the back of it is a failure, and today we are faced with the sad spectacle of Christian nations bleeding to death.'[30]

---

[26] 'R. K.', 'Judgement and Chastening,' *Spectator* (21 August 1914): 1345.
[27] *Australian Christian Commonwealth* (12 November 1915), cited in Hunt, *This Side of Heaven*, 279-80.
[28] 'Current Topics,' *Spectator* (28 August 1914): 1367.
[29] 'Current Topics,' *Spectator* (28 August 1914: 1367.
[30] H. Worrall, President, A. E. Albiston, Secretary, 'Pastoral Address,' *The Methodist Church of Australasia Victorian and Tasmanian Conference Minutes of the 17th Annual Conference. Begun in Wesley Church Melbourne, Monday 28th of February, 1918* (Melbourne: Methodist Conference Offices, Lonsdale Street, 1918), 36.

While many in the wider community took the view that the Germans were by nature more barbarous and vicious than the British peoples, *The Spectator*, in September 1914, would have none of such racial stereotyping and even turned the spotlight on the potential for evil acts on the part of the Australian soldier.[31] Rumours about the alleged cruelty of Germans in particular were dismissed as 'common in all wars.'

> They were repeatedly and loudly made concerning our own troops in South Africa, and we hear only one side in all such matters…We may expect that in some instances, where millions of men are engaged, there will be unnatural ferocity. We may hope, even concerning an enemy nation, that such incidents, shocking as they are, do not represent the average soldier, but are abnormalities. But the war itself is unnatural. It is grotesque. No greater satire is imaginable after all our talk of civilisation and culture.[32]

Germans in Australia were even defended, in August 1914, as worthies to be honoured as members of a great nation. *The Spectator* cited with approval the story in one of the daily newspapers of The Science Congress having described Professor Johannes Walther, German geologist, as 'a worthy son of the great nation which has done so much to add to the sum of human knowledge…This kind of conduct toward a stranger within our gates is very different from that hooliganism, which has expressed itself in various quarters. It is certainly nearer the ideal of the New Testament - an ideal all too readily laid aside by some professing Christians when the lust of war is on them.'[33] Sympathy toward individual Germans was one thing. Political expediency was another, as is clear in the insistence of South Australian Methodists in 1914 that German colonial possessions in the Pacific should be seized and secured for Australia immediately, before they could become the site of further French colonial presence.[34]

For all this, there was something inevitable about eventual wholehearted support, on the part of Methodists, for the Empire's military goals during the Great War. There was no pacifist stance taken in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference and conscientious

---

[31] Though it is difficult to say whether the term 'our own troops' in the quote that follows is a reference to the Australian soldier or to the British soldier, inclusive of Australians.

[32] 'Current Topics,' *Spectator* (4 September 1914): 1403.

[33] 'Current Topics,' *Spectator* (21 August 1914): 1331.

[34] 'Current Topics: Dividing the Spoil,' *Spectator* (21 August 1914): 1331.

objectors do not appear in the records I have consulted. There was nothing to match the remarkable stand taken by B. Linden Webb in the rural NSW town of Hay, who preached three pacifist sermons from January to March 1915, and published these as a pamphlet - *The Religious Significance of the War*.[35] In it he took exception, not just to the present war but to all wars on the basis that such were contrary to the Sermon on the Mount. The pamphlet caused quite a stir and received negative responses in both *The Methodist* and *Glad Tidings*. Webb must have been greatly encouraged by the support he received from his local church officers even though not all agreed with his stance. Nevertheless, he was made to feel that he should resign from the ministry, but was persuaded to be listed as 'without pastoral charge,' and later returned to active service in the Church.[36] Webb is probably the outstanding Methodist representative of what Robert Linder refers to as 'the little cluster of Word War I doves' – the 'peaceful evangelicals' opposed to the Great War on pacifist grounds.[37] Linder sees Australian Methodists as 'in many ways the most questioning of the war while at the same time the most giving of their sons to the god of battle.'[38]

During a visit to Britain in 1918, A. T. Holden reported without censure that the Primitive Methodist Conference of that year sent greetings to its imprisoned conscientious objectors, as well as to its serving troops, evidence perhaps of the more radical politics that could be found among Primitives. One delegate to the Conference refused to accept the presentation of an address to the King, protesting that he only acknowledged one king, Jesus Christ. Four or five others joined in voting against the motion.[39] But the voices of pacifism and conscientious objection remained in the minority, and the Australian situation seems to have mirrored the British experience where, according to Michael Hughes, initial hesitation about the War on the part of Methodists was soon displaced by

---

[35] B. L. Webb, *The Religious Significance of the War* (Sydney: Christian World, 1915).
[36] R. D. Linder, 'The Peaceful Evangelicals: Refusing to Take up the Sword, 1914-1918,' *Lucas* 33-34 (June and December 2003): 5-65, esp. 23-34 covering Methodism. See also R. D. Linder, *The Long Tragedy: Australian Evangelical Christians and the Great War* (Adelaide: Open Book, 2000). For a broader treatment of general attitude toward the Great War on the part of the Churches see Michael McKernan, *Australian Churches at War: Attitudes and Activities of the Major Churches 1914-18* (Sydney and Canberra: Catholic Theological Faculty and Australian War Memorial, 1980).
[37] Linder, 'The Peaceful Evangelicals,' 5-6.
[38] Linder, 'The Peaceful Evangelicals,' 23.
[39] *Spectator* (14 August 1918): 798-99.

enthusiastic support.[40] Voices calling for peace were soon to be lost in the much louder sonic boom of Empire loyalty.

III. The Influence of A. T. Holden on Methodist Sentiment

A.T. Holden, President of the Victoria and Tasmania Conference in the first full year of the War, did much to encourage a more stridently imperial sentiment among Methodists. Affectionately known as 'Major' and later 'Colonel,' Holden was a veteran of the South African War, having accompanied the Fourth Contingent of Imperial Bushmen to that conflict in May of 1900 and receiving the Queen's and King's medals for his service there.[41] He was an imperial figure if ever there was one.[42] Given his military chaplaincy background and his appointment as Methodist Chaplain-General to the Commonwealth Military Forces with responsibility for nominating Methodist chaplains to serve with the AIF, it is not surprising that Holden should take a very strong stand in support of the Empire's cause during the Great War.

---

[40] David Bebbington, review of Michael Hughes, *Conscience and Conflict: Methodism, Peace and War in the Twentieth Century* (Peterborough: Epworth, 2008) in *English Historical Review* 508 (June 2009): 750-752.

[41] Rentoul and Cain, in Benson, 184. He succeeded Edward Bickford as Superintendent of Home Missions in 1904 after having served as his assistant, and went on to travel great distances through the Mallee by horse and buggy. J. C. Lawton, 'The Romance and Realism of Circuit Life,' in Benson, 162-63. Following the War, during Holden's leadership of Home Missions he established both the Home Missioners Training College (1925) and the Federal Methodist Inland Mission (1926), two important agencies for the spread of the Gospel.

[42] Basic biographical data on Holden is found in I. F. McLaren, 'Holden, Albert Thomas (1866 - 1935),' A*ustralian Dictionary of Biography* vol. 9 (Melbourne University Press, 1983), 327-328. Rentoul and Cain in their contribution to Irving Benson's centennial history of Victorian Methodism listed Holden along with John Watsford and Edward S. Bickford as holding 'an abiding place amongst the great determining forces that moulded the life of [the Methodist] Church in Victoria...' and 'one of the greatest personalities that God has given to Methodism, and indeed to Australia.' T. C. Rentoul and J. H. Cain, 'The Home Mission Enterprise,' in Benson, 181, 183. In addition to serving as President of the Victoria and Tasmania Conference in 1915, he was in 1932 elected President General of the Methodist Conference. When the various branches of British Methodism united in that same year, Holden was present in London to represent the Australasian Church, and received the Freedom of the City of London. The University of Toronto conferred an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree upon him in 1934. He was stricken with cancer and died in Melbourne in 1935, the funeral being held at Wesley Church in Lonsdale Street.

In his Pastoral Address to the 1915 Conference Holden gave a number of justifications for involvement in the War. The 'far-flung portions of the Empire [had] rallied to the old flag, because of the issue of public righteousness involved in this titanic struggle.'[43] The 'public righteousness' referred to here was the need to defend the neutrality of Belgium as previously agreed to by both Germany and Britain. The dominions must now in solidarity with 'the motherland…pay the price of keeping our pledged word.'[44] This 'pledged word' had been formally given in Article 7 of the 1839 *Treaty of London* guaranteeing Belgian neutrality. The German plan was to invade Belgium so as to reach Paris in the early weeks of the conflict. Germany's request to the British government in August 1914 to disregard the 'scrap of paper' committing Britain to the defence of Belgium was refused and when the Germans entered Belgium regardless, Britain felt obligated to enter the War.[45]

In his President's Retiring Address in 1916, Holden expressed his view that 'it was morally impossible for a nation with our obligations to remain neutral, while Belgium was being ravaged and France and Russia imperilled, and the gains of Christianity and civilisation jeopardised by a despotic ambition.'[46] Holden saw the War as an expression of 'two ideals in conflict, the British ideal of freedom, and the Teutonic idea of the State as the summit of everything, coercion applied all round, and everybody forced to a given purpose.'[47] Peace could not be accepted without total victory over what Sir Oliver Lodge called 'the deification of force and materialism represented by German ambitions of conquest.'[48] The 1916 Conference expressed its conviction that 'Great Britain and her allies are fighting for a cause that is pre-eminently a righteous one, as it is being waged against forces which are inimical to the liberties and welfare of the world at large.'[49]

Holden spoke of W. H. Fitchett, whose *Deeds that Won the Empire* contained stirring 'Boy's Own' adventure stores of imperial derring-do, as having 'strengthened imperial sentiment and fervour

---

[43] 'Annual Pastoral Address,' Minutes (1915): 36.
[44] 'Annual Pastoral Address,' Minutes (1915): 36.
[45]'Primary Documents – Treaty of London 1839,' *First World War.com: A Multimedia History of World War One*
http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/london1839.htm accessed 3 July 2010.
[46] 'President's retiring address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 300.
[47] 'President's retiring address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 300.
[48] 'President's retiring address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 300.
[49] Minutes (1916): 80.

in all parts of the empire.'[50] Addressing the congregation at a memorial service at Wesley Church, Melbourne, on Wednesday 8 March 1916, Holden spoke of how 'our boys, with the instinct of the true Britisher, can lay down their lives.' By this stage 271 Victorian Methodists had already done so.[51] Of course this kind of discourse was not unique to Holden. Prime Minister Billy Hughes gave an address on 'The Call of Empire' at a Pleasant Sunday Afternoon gathering at Wesley Church on the 4th of February 1917.[52] Lengthy letters appeared in *The Spectator*, from chaplains on the field to Holden as Chaplain-General. One such, in October 1915, from Colonel James Alexandria expressed the view that 'When our men get out here and see and understand the Empire's situation, they become the last word as British Imperialists.'[53] In his 1918 Pastoral Address, Henry Worrall, President of the Conference, referred to his constituents as 'Methodist citizens of this outer ward of the Empire.'[54]

In 1916, aware of the massive scale of casualties already suffered, Holden called for more troops and argued for conscription to fill up the numbers. In his President's retiring address that year he estimated that there were still 600,000 men in Australia of military age. 'Personally, I have been opposed to conscription, but if young married men, fit and free but unwilling hang back, nothing can prevent or withstand the demand for some form of legal obligation…The one thing we have to do is to win the War, to do it decisively and finally, and to do it as soon as possible.'[55] He expressed the same view a month later in his Anzac Day sermon at Wesley Church in Melbourne. 'How long will crowds of men of military age, apparently fit and free, continue to throng the stadium, race course and sports grounds, for purely selfish pleasure, and do so with no sense of shame? If these latter are not moved by an appeal from higher motives, ought they not to be rounded up with the stockwhip of conscription?'[56] Holden's views turned out not to

[50] 'President's retiring address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 297.
[51] *Spectator* (7 April 1916): 442.
[52] 'Brief Notes,' *Spectator* (4 February 1947): 152.
[53] Letter to the Chaplain-General from Colonel Chaplain James Alexandria, 8 July 1915 in 'Echoes of the War,' *Spectator* (1 October 1915): 1390.
[54] H. Worrall, 'Pastoral Address,' Minutes (1918): 38.
[55] 'President's retiring address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 300.
[56] Anzac Day sermon delivered at Wesley Church 30 April, 1916, *Spectator* (5 May 1916): 575.

be reflected in the national sentiment as both referenda on conscription in 1916 and 1917 resulted in a 'no' vote.[57]

Certainly Holden was no warmonger and the horror and tragedy of war was something he knew first hand. But his views were much more reflective of militant imperialism than had been the earlier more cautious statements about the appropriateness of the War in Europe. Given his reputation in Methodism, his platform as Conference President in 1915, and his appointment as Methodist Chaplain-General during wartime it is likely that Holden's view were a shaping influence on broader Methodist sentiment. While Methodists brought a certain reluctance to the support of the War in its early stages on the basis of higher Christian ideals than 'Empire love,' eventually justification for support of the War fell more into line with the practical exigencies and obligations inherent in the imperial political agenda so that when it finally came, the end of the war was seen by Conference President A. E. Albiston, in triumphalist terms, as 'the overthrow of one vast system of iniquity.'[58]

IV. Methodist Views of the Australian Soldier

Methodist support for the war effort was intricately connected to the admiration felt for the men who were dying in the trenches and whose efforts were seen in a decidedly heroic manner that resonated with important theological themes such as sacrifice and the laying down of one's life for others. Admiration for the Australian soldier is, of course, a well established part of the Australian national mythos. The digger is usually seen as the epitome of manhood – rugged, brave, and contemptuous of invested authority but willing to die for his mates. C. W. Bean's contributions to the *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-18* provide the classic description of the typical Australian digger.[59] Though Australians had fought in other British military conflicts, including the Crimean War (1854-1856), the Sudan conflict of 1885, and the South African (or Boer)

[57] According to Arnold D. Hunt, Methodist opposition to conscription was particularly strong in South Australia. Hunt, *This Side of Heaven*, 291; See also A. D. Hunt and R. P. Thomas, *For God, King and Country: A Study of the Attitudes of the Methodist and Catholic Press in South Australia to the Great War 1914-1918* (Salisbury, SA: Salisbury College of Advanced Education, 1979).

[58] A. E. Albiston, President, R. Ditterich, Secretary, 'Pastoral Address,' *The Methodist Church of Australasia Victorian and Tasmanian Conference Minutes of the 18th Annual Conference. Begun in Wesley Church Melbourne, Monday 19th March, 1919* (Melbourne: Methodist Conference Offices, Lonsdale Street, 1919).

[59] The first six volumes.

War of 1895-1902, the mythic ideal of the Australian soldier was not fully drawn until the Gallipoli landing of 1915, often said to be the first engagement fought after Australia became a nation (overlooking the fact that the Boer War did not conclude until 1902). Australians fought in several theatres of war; in France (notably at the Battle of the Somme), in Palestine, where the Light Horsemen liberated Jerusalem from the Turks in 1917, in the Pacific, where Australians captured the German island of Nauru and its communication centre, and at sea near the Cocos Islands, where the *Sydney* sunk the German cruiser the *Emden* in a brief sea battle. But it is Gallipoli which forms the centrepiece of Australia's memory of its contribution, though some, including most recently Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds have challenged the commonly held idea that the nation of Australia was born at Gallipoli, rather than at Federation in 1901.[60] In a similar vein, E.M. Andrews has argued that the idea of the superiority of the Australian soldier over others in the British Imperial Forces was useful for building morale but ultimately an 'illusion.'[61]

Methodist spokesmen certainly made their contribution to the formation of the Anzac myth. Holden spoke of the Gallipoli dead in his Anzac Day sermon delivered at Wesley Church April 30, 1916. 'We now have traditions. With the rich red blood of our noblest sons, we have purchased our place in the councils of the greater British Empire now being begotten in the agonies of war.'[62] The 1916 Conference expressed its admiration for 'the glorious gallantry displayed by our Australian troops at Gallipoli…'[63] In speaking of the Anzac spirit, in 1935, C. Irving Benson, Minister of Wesley Church, Melbourne, at least brought into focus the reality of defeat. 'The story of Anzac is the epic of men who dared an 'impossible' task, and nearly did it. They dared a deed which those who knew said could not be done. They failed, after performing prodigies of valour, and sailed away at last, unsuccessful.'[64]

The pages of *The Spectator* were filled during the War years with stories of gallantry on the part of young diggers. Colonel

[60] M. Lake and H. Reynolds, eds. *What's Wrong with ANZAC?: The Militarisation of Australian History* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2010.)
[61] E. M. Andrews, *The ANZAC Illusion* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
[62] Anzac Day sermon delivered at Wesley Church 30 April, 1916, *The Spectator* (5 May 1916): 575.
[63] Minutes (1916): 81.
[64] Benson, *A Century of Victorian Methodism*, 40.

Chaplain James Alexandria reported in July 1915 that those in attendance at the burial services over which he presided were being shot by snipers, not even the rites of burial being respected by the enemy. He reported finding the body of a 'young lad' lying 'forward and isolated…with his face towards the enemy, his hand still holding the rifle, and he had not a single cartridge left.'[65]

While in England in 1917, A. T. Holden came in contact with an Association that had determined that no Australian soldier would be buried without some Australian being present 'as a mark of honour and respect.'[66] A grave with the inscription 'To an unknown Anzac' was discovered. The Association said, 'We cannot have an unknown Anzac.' 'The grave was opened, the soldier was identified, and his name and number placed upon the headstone.'[67]

In September 1917, Chaplain Rev. A. H. Mitchell ventured upon a theological reflection on the nature of 'battered manhood.'

> If I could violate confidences, I could tell tales of such beauty and horror, and withal so glorious in sustained heroism, as would break a heart of adamant. It is not wise to speak of these things now, but when a lad comes home palsied and shattered, with limbs and speech disjointed, think on these things and tell the fireside theologians and critics that these battered fragments of Australian manhood have been filling up the fullness of the suffering in Christ in their application to the redemption of civilisation.[68]

So great was admiration for the sacrifice of fallen soldiers, some Methodists argued that even those who had lived openly sinful lives might find salvation in their sacrifice for their neighbours. J. B. Carruthers, editor of *The Methodist*, in which such an idea appeared, made no comment, but *Glad Tidings* sought to find a solution to the problem in the idea philosophers have referred to as 'middle knowledge.' Thinking it rash to set aside the doctrine of justification by faith altogether it suggested that God may indeed show mercy to those who *would have* repented if war had not intervened in their lives. The openly godless, could not expect such leniency.[69] Holden's views were more orthodox, writing in March 1916, 'We do not

---

[65] Letter to the Chaplain-General from Colonel Chaplain James Alexandria, 8 July 1915 in 'Echoes of the War,' *Spectator* (1 October 1915): 1390.
[66] 'In Memoriam Service: Our Fallen Soldiers,' *Spectator* (28 March 1917): 343.
[67] 'In Memoriam Service: Our Fallen Soldiers,' *Spectator* (28 March 1917): 343.
[68] Chaplain Rev. A. H. Mitchell in a letter to A. T. Holden, 7 Sept 1917, reported in *The Spectator* (5 Dec 1917): 1256.
[69] Wright and Clancy, 133-34.

believe that the death of a soldier can be his own atonement. We are all saved – soldiers and common folk alike – by the mercy of God and not by deeds of righteousness.'[70]

Both at the front and in the camps, Methodists soldiers needed to receive the ministrations of the clergy. Holden celebrated in September 1915, 'the keen interest…taken in this call of Empire,' evidenced by the twenty-five Methodist ministers who had volunteered to serve as chaplains, and the many from among the clergy, who volunteered as ordinary soldiers. Of these, two were chosen as the official Methodist chaplains, the Rev James Green, senior Methodist chaplain for NSW and a veteran of the South African War and the Rev A. C. Plane, from Maryborough, Queensland, with nineteen years military chaplaincy experience.[71]

There was much work to be done in military camps at home and abroad and Methodists set about this work with great gusto. By December of 1914, there were 12,000 men camped at Broadmeadows, north of Melbourne, at least 800 of whom were Methodists.[72] Work in military camps was aided by the construction of 'Institutes and marquees' at Broadmeadows, Seymour, Ascot Vale, Royal Park and Maribyrnong, all outlying areas in Melbourne's north. Over £2000 had been spent by March 1916. Apart from chaplaincy allowances and ongoing weekly maintenance costs, Holden intended 'to undertake all that is necessary and trust to the Methodist people to defray the cost.'[73] He had complained in August 1914 about the regulation that no chaplain should receive any higher than a captain's pay. If this were a reflection of the minister's willingness to live frugally, fair enough, but if it was a reflection of the unimportance of their work or of the quality of their service, it would be both unfair and inaccurate.[74]

---

[70] A. T. Holden, 'President's Retiring Address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 301.
[71] A. T. Holden, 'Methodist Chaplains,' *Spectator* (11 September 1915): 1447. Holden traced Methodist chaplaincy back to Wellington's troops, who before 1810 fought on the Peninsular without the benefit of the presence of a single clergyman. The Methodist movement saw the arrival of preachers on the field of battle, who organised prayer meetings that Wellington saw as irregular. Instead he called for chaplains to be formally appointed. 'President's retiring address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 300.
[72] *Spectator* (18 December 1914): 1964. A. T. Holden, 'Methodist Chaplains,' *Spectator* (11 September 1915): 1447.
[73] 'President's retiring address,' *Spectator* (10 March 1916): 298.
[74] *Spectator* (18 December 1914): 1964.

Retiring collections for Methodist military work were taken up on Empire Sunday, £1000 being reported to the 1916 conference.[75] As would be expected in a conversionist movement such as Methodism, evangelistic work was actively carried out in the camps, and not without some effect. 'Manly decisions for Christ' in the Seymour military camp were reporting in 1916 as having been 'fairly numerous.'[76] In addition to seeking converts, the moral purity of the soldiers needed to be safeguarded. The 1916 Conference resolved to urge militarily authorities to arrange for lectures at the camps on venereal disease, to be given by medical officers.[77] The 1915 Conference rebuked the State Premier for refusal to lessen hotel trading hours, concerned about the moral danger faced by the soldiers from the 'liquor traffic' and provided Senator Pierce, Minister for Defence, on closing the wet canteen at Broadmeadows and banning such canteens on troopships.[78] As un-Australian as it may seem, opposition to 'shouting' was strong among Methodists, and the government was asked to introduce legislation banning it.[79] Reporting on having lunched with 2,500 Australian soldiers on Christmas Day 1916, Holden commented, no doubt with pleasure albeit naively, 'I never saw one of them in the slightest degree the worse for liquor.'[80]

Of course Methodists were not alone in taking their part in offering religion to the Australian soldier. In addition to Holden, three other Chaplains-General were appointed to oversee chaplaincy throughout the Commonwealth Military Forces - Archbishop Thomas Joseph Carr (Roman Catholic), the Very Reverend Dr Lindsay Rentoul (Presbyterian), and Archbishop Charles Owen Leaver Riley (Anglican).[81] These four left Australia on 11 July 1916 by troopship to visit Australian military facilities, 'camps, depots and hospitals' in England, France and Egypt, to report to the Defence Department on their return early in 1917.[82]

---

[75] Minutes (1916): 183. For Empire Day, see Gavin Souter, *Lion and Kangaroo: Australia: 1901-1919, The Rise of a Nation* (Sydney: Collins Fontana, 1976): 109-117.
[76] Naval and Military Affairs Committee (Minutes, 1916): 176.
[77] *The Methodist Church of Australasia Victorian and Tasmanian Conference Minutes of the 15th Annual Conference. Begun in Wesley Church Melbourne, Monday 28th of February, 1916* (Melbourne: Methodist Conference Offices, 1916), 79.
[78] Minutes (1915): 83.
[79] Minutes (1916): 80.
[80] *Spectator* (14 March 1917): 286.
[81] *Spectator* (21 July 1916): 926.
[82] *Spectator* (21 July 1916): 926; (28 March 1917): 342.

In a French town, in March 1917, Holden saw the rubble of a bombed out churchyard. In it was a shrine containing a larger-than-life figure of Christ, untouched by the bombardment. On its left shoulder a bird had built its nest, drawing Holden's attention to the hope that many an Australian soldier would find such shelter here in France who, like that bird, had been driven from their homes, but who could find rest in Christ.[83] When visiting hospitals in England, he 'had no time to go through all the wards looking for Australians' so would simply stand in the doorway of a ward and call out, 'Are there any Australian soldiers in this ward?' 'It was quite pathetic to see some poor fellow struggling to lift his hand, in order to let it be known that an Australian was lying there.'[84] One soldier expressed his view from a hospital bed in London that 'the only VC I want to see is the Victorian coast.'[85] According to Senior Chaplain, James Green, writing in April 1917, Holden's visit 'has meant a great deal amid the cold winds of Salisbury Plains, the sloppy chalk mud of the Somme, and the dug-outs and billets where our men have been homesick.'[86]

In addition to his experiences near the front line and in the military hospitals, Holden learned much about the 'mother church' of British Wesleyanism, whose sons had volunteered just as enthusiastically as had their counterparts in the Dominions. By March 1917, over 200,000 British Wesleyans had enlisted and 200 had volunteered as chaplains.[87] Every British Methodist theological institution was closed to enable the student body to proceed to the Front. By 20 July 1917, 15,560 sons of Wesleyan Methodist homes in Britain had died, of whom 830 had been officers.[88]

Upon his return to Australia early in 1917, the Methodist Church decided that Holden should return to London and take charge of chaplaincy work there, £1000 to 'be placed at [his] disposal…to use for the spiritual and social benefits of our Methodist soldiers in England and at the front, to assist the chaplains in any way the Chaplain-General may deem necessary, and to cover all official incidental expenses.'[89] This amount was to be raised by the various

[83] *Spectator* (14 March 1917): 287.
[84] 'Central Mission Gazette,' *Spectator* (7 March 1917): 273.
[85] 'Central Mission Gazette,' *Spectator* (7 March 1917): 273.
[86] 'War News and Notes,' *Spectator* (18 April 1917): 423.
[87] *Spectator* (14 March 1917): 286.
[88] A. T. Holden, 'Our Chaplains at the Front,' *Spectator* (12 Sept 1917), 958.
[89] Nye, 359. This decision appears in the 1918 Annual Conference Minutes as part of the report of the Naval and Military Affairs Committee, Minutes (1918): 206.

State conferences with Victoria being asked to raise £320. Methodist Ladies College, Hawthorn alone raised £600 from a garden fete held on its grounds. Holden returned to England and took up this work with great vigour, his major project being to raise money for the construction of a Mission Headquarters on Horseferry Road, to serve Methodist soldiers, in partnership with the YMCA. It was in operation by Christmas 1918; but by then the War was over.[90]

The admiration for and ministrations toward the Australian soldier typified by Holden, but widely held by Australian Methodists of the period, almost necessitated the adoption of a more militant and imperialistic outlook. The idea that such brave and noble examples of Australian manhood were dying for an empty or questionable cause would have been unthinkable. In such a context pacifist voices, even if their stance is drawn from a profoundly religious conviction, are all too readily seen as unpatriotic, perhaps even seditious. That a community as conversionist as Methodism could suggest that the fallen soldier might receive salvation regardless of his lack of personal religious experience or belief, is indicative of how readily a faith community can allow prevailing cultural values to trump the inner logic of its own creed. It is a good example of how complex were religious responses to the Great War. Methodism, like all of the Christian churches in Australia, emerged from a colonial situation in which support for Britain's military agenda seemed natural, even in the post-colonial setting. The response of religious people should not, however, be lost in the assumption that the churches were simply tools of Empire, or that the clergy were its unthinking agents. Michael Gladwin has warned against the tendency of historians selectively to use evidence and failing to consider context, in presenting the unflattering views of the colonial clergymen that have resulted in the prevailing 'flogging parson' tradition.[91] The warning is pertinent also in studies of post-colonial clergy.

V. Conclusion

In the early stages of the Great War, the Victoria and Tasmania Conference expressed horror and revulsion at the prospect of

[90] *Spectator* (6 Nov 1918): 1091.
[91] M. Gladwin, 'Flogging Parsons?: Australian Anglican Clergymen, the Magistracy and Convicts, 1788-1850,' *Journal of Religious History* 36:3 (Sept 2012): 386-403.

Christian nations at war with each other in Europe. It was seen as a thing of horror and shame, unjustifiable on the basis of the teachings of the New Testament. Methodist Church leaders generally upheld the Christian preference for peace over war, so that the onset of hostilities in Europe led to some ambivalence in the Church's early pronouncements. Britain and its allies were seen as bearing some of the blame for the present crisis as a result of former unjust actions for which God was now seen to be calling them to account. Bigotry towards Germans on account of their nationality was a thing not to be countenanced and Germany was still seen as a great, educated, cultured and Christian nation. Men on both sides of a conflict, and not only the enemy soldiers, were seen as capable of behaving badly during the madness of war. Though there is evidence of some support for pacifism and conscientious objection, neither of these views ever exceeded the status of a minority viewpoint. The War was seen by Methodists as a just one, fought in a righteous cause. Britain had pledged itself to defend the neutrality of Belgium and it must now make good on its word. It was a matter of honour. Two types of civilization were in conflict and the German military aggression that represented the power of the State must be met with the strongest possible defensive response on the part of Britain and its allies, in the cause of freedom.

The Australian soldier was seen as fighting bravely and well and Methodists played their part in the formation of the Anzac myth. Theological reflection on fallen soldiers even included the conjecture that death in the trenches was a kind of martyrdom guaranteeing salvation, though this never replaced the more orthodox demand for a personal conversion. Opportunities were given to present the claims of Christ to the unconverted soldier, so that his salvation in the next life could be assured. In addition to the offering of regular religious services and personal contact with chaplains, support for the troops was also expressed in attempts to safeguard his moral purity. This included campaigning to ban 'wet canteens' and efforts to stop the spread of venereal disease.

As the conflict escalated, and it became clear that the War would last much longer than at first anticipated, the Church's early statements regarding the incompatibility of Christian faith with aggressive militarism hardened into a grim determination to win the War at all costs. The influence on this trajectory in sentiment of A. T. Holden, already a much loved and respected Methodist, was

significant given his roles as decorated veteran, Conference President, and Chaplain-General. Australian Methodists shared the 'Empire love' typical of Australians in the Edwardian period and became willing to make any sacrifices necessary to assist the Empire in its 'titanic struggle' against what it considered the forces of barbarism. Among these sacrifices, it appears, were the more peaceful religious ideals exhibited during the earlier stages of the conflict.

LOOKING AGAIN AT THE HISTORY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN METHODISM: TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER ARNOLD HUNT'S THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN

David Hilliard

This article was developed from a paper delivered at the Workshop on the History of Methodism in South Australia*, held by the* Historical Society of the Uniting Church in South Australia *in Adelaide, 19 November 2011. It seeks to supplement and update Arnold Hunt's landmark study of Australian Methodism, and to indicate areas of needed exploration and new questions that have been raised by a recent wave of fresh scholarship on global Methodism. It provides a brief historiography of South Australian Methodism and covers such themes as women and ministerial families, the social composition and lived experience of Methodists, worship, architecture and the religious and global context of South Australian Methodism.*

I. Introduction

Arnold Hunt's history of Methodism in South Australia, *This Side of Heaven*, published to coincide with the state's sesquicentenary in 1986, is the fullest and most scholarly study of Methodism anywhere in Australia.[1] The research and writing occupied Arnold for over six years while he was teaching at the Salisbury campus of the South Australian College of Advanced Education. In 1980 he spent some months in England on study leave doing research in the British Methodist archives at the John Rylands Library in Manchester and on Methodist sources in Cornwall, Cambridge, London and other places. From 1981, as he wrote his draft chapters he sent each of them to John Barrett (a former student of his who was then teaching history at La Trobe University) and myself for comment. I would visit Arnold at his home at Brighton on one of the days he was not teaching at Salisbury; we would have a cup of tea and a chat and he would hand over another twenty or thirty closely typed pages, on which I would later scribble comments, suggestions and queries.

---

[1]Arnold D. Hunt, *This Side of Heaven: A History of Methodism in South Australia* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1985).

Arnold worked to a strict timetable and the chapters came around every two or three months. Then in 1985, with a supporting grant from the state's Jubilee 150 Board, the book was published by Lutheran Publishing House. Both John Barrett and I had written letters of support to the publisher, assuring them that this was a respectable work, consistent with their objectives and deserving their imprint. Later I was asked to review the book for the *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*.[2] This may seem rather incestuous, but by that time I had published a few articles on South Australian religion and a history of the Anglican Church in South Australia – a much shorter work than *This Side of Heaven* – and it was hard to think of an alternative reviewer.[3]

This Side of Heaven is a solid and reliable institutional history but it goes much further. On re-reading the work, I am struck by its scope and its depth and by the balance of its judgements. After thirty years, however, the field of religious history has developed: new areas have been explored and new questions have been raised and there is a wave of new scholarship on Methodism, both in Britain and as an international religious movement. So as I stand on the edge of my next major project, a chapter on Methodism in South Australia between 1855 and 1901 for the forthcoming history of Methodism in Australia, this is an opportune time to look again at the subject. There is of course more to say. My list is only a starting point.

II. South Australian Methodist Historiography

First, let us look at the historiography of religion in South Australia, in relation to Methodism, since 1986. A cluster of important doctoral theses have been completed at Flinders University: Judith Raftery, 'Till Every Foe is Vanquished,' on churches and social issues in South Australia between the world wars (1988), John Walker on the Baptists in South Australia from 1900 to 1939 (2006), and Paul Barreira's sensitive exploration of Protestant religious ideas and practice: 'Protestant Piety and Religious Culture in South Australia, c.1914-c.1981' (2003). Also at Flinders, Julie-Ann Ellis wrote a prize-winning History Honours thesis on Methodism and working-class

[2]*Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia* 14 (1987): 149–52.
[3]David Hilliard, *Godliness and Good Order: A History of the Anglican Church in South Australia* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1986).

organisation in South Australia in the nineteenth century.[4] The Historical Society of the Uniting Church in South Australia has published a number of works, drawn from the Society's lectures, which open up many areas of the state's Methodist history, mostly of the twentieth century. These include Beth Hancock on Methodist deaconesses, Brian Kelley on Sunday schools, Lewis Kelsall on the minister and musician Brian Wibberley, Malcolm McArthur on Methodist Christian education and George Potter on the Order of Knights.[5] There have been several studies of the Primitive Methodists: a BA Honours thesis by Kevin Secomb and his lecture on the minister John Day Thompson, and a book on the Primitive Methodists on the northern plains by Ted Curnow.[6]

The Methodist contribution to education and social welfare has been investigated in relation to several important institutions. Firstly, there is Ron Gibbs's history of Prince Alfred College (PAC), first published in 1984 and with a new and enlarged edition in 2008.[7] Since its opening in 1869 PAC has been one of the premier schools in South Australia, the main rival of St Peter's College, and with close links to Adelaide's commercial and business community. Gibbs's history describes the network of ministers and prosperous businessmen who founded this Wesleyan college and the influence of its most famous headmasters, devout Methodists Frederic Chapple and J. F. Ward. However, Prince Alfred was never owned or controlled by the denomination and its links with the church have loosened over the years. On the enormous Methodist contribution to

---

[4]Julie-Ann Ellis, 'Methodism and Working-Class Organisation in South Australia in the Nineteenth Century,' BA Honours thesis, Flinders University, 1990. Her lecture to the Uniting Church Historical Society based on this thesis was published as *South Australian Methodists and Working-Class Organisation* (Adelaide, 1992).
[5]Bethany Hancock, *A History of the Methodist Deaconess Order in South Australia* (Adelaide, 1995); Brian Kelley, *Nurseries for Christians? Methodist Sunday Schools in South Australia* (Adelaide, 1989); Lewis Kelsall, *The Romance of Faith: Brian Wibberley, Methodist Minister, 1866–1944* (Adelaide, 1998); Malcolm McArthur, *Where's the Platform? Slices from the Story of South Australian Methodist Christian Education, 1904–1984* (Adelaide, 2004); George W. Potter, *The Methodist Order of Knights and the Methodist Girls' Comradeship: Formation of the Orders: Growth, Decline and Legacy in South Australia* (Adelaide, 1997).
[6]Kevin Secomb, 'Sowing Seeds of Radicalism?: Primitive Methodism in South Australia, 1840–1900, with Special Reference to the Wellington Square Church,' BA Honours thesis, Flinders University, 2001 and *'The Excitable Little Pastor': The Ministry of Rev. J. Day Thompson in the North Adelaide Primitive Methodist Church (1892–1898)* (Adelaide, 2002); Edwin A. Curnow, *Pioneering Para Plains: Early Stories & Primitive Methodism at Burton & Bolivar* (Meadows, SA, 2007).
[7]R.M. Gibbs, *A History of Prince Alfred College* (Adelaide, 2nd ed., 2008).

social welfare we now have Ivor Bailey's *Mission Story* on the Adelaide Central Mission, Brian Dickey and Elaine Martin's *Building Community* on the Port Adelaide Central Mission, and Pauline Payne's *Helping Hand Aged Care, 1953-2003*.[8] These works illuminate that uniquely Methodist journey from early evangelical hopes to social welfare and meeting new needs as a practical expression of Christianity. Jim Everett has written a history of the Epworth Building, next to Pirie Street Church, which for almost eighty years had a central place in Methodist life.[9] There have been some notable local studies such as Rosemary Mitchell's *A Sacred Trust* on the Uniting churches in the Mitcham Hills (Belair and Blackwood), Rob Linn's centenary history of Malvern Uniting Church, and Anita Woods' centenary history of Prospect North Church.[10] What are some of the areas that need further investigation?

III. Women in South Australian Methodism

Arnold Hunt and I were products of churches that were led and ruled entirely by men. In church newspapers and reports of church synods and conferences it was men who gave the major addresses and sermons, who controlled the finances, and made the major decisions. Women who had played significant roles in church organisations and in local congregations often received only brief obituaries so it takes a lot more digging to find out more about them. The sources are indeed there, provided one asks the right questions and searches. *This Side of Heaven* reflects this male-centred world-view, as does my own book *Godliness and Good Order*. In retrospect, I am ashamed to have missed so much. Therefore we need to look again at Methodism in the light of David Hempton's observation that it was predominantly a women's movement.[11] Could we write a women's history of Methodism in South Australia and

[8]Ivor Bailey, *Mission Story: The Story of the Adelaide Central Mission* (Adelaide, 1988); Brian Dickey and Elaine Martin, *Building Community: A History of the Port Adelaide Central Mission* (Adelaide, 1999); Pauline Payne, *Helping Hand Aged Care, 1953–2003: A History* (Adelaide, 2003).
[9]James D. Everett, *The History of the Epworth Building* (Adelaide, 2006).
[10] Rosemary Mitchell, *A Sacred Trust: The Uniting Churches in the Mitcham Hills* (Adelaide, 2006); Rob Linn, *Malvern Uniting Church: A Centenary History* (Adelaide, 1991); Anita Woods, *The Prospect North Story: A History of St John's Uniting Church* (Adelaide, 1988).
[11]David Hempton, *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 137–50.

what would it look like? Such a work would describe the various expressions of household piety and the central role of women in leading family worship and teaching religion to the young, women as evangelists, missionaries and deaconesses, as teachers in Sunday schools and church secondary schools, as social workers, musicians, fund-raisers, caterers, as leaders in community organisations, and comprising at least sixty per cent of enrolled church members. Women shaped Methodism in many ways and we need to know more than we do.

IV. The Lived Experience of South Australian Methodists

Methodism, observes David Hempton, 'at its heart and center had always been a profoundly counter-cultural movement' for it challenged the accepted norms in religion and society.[12] Arnold Hunt captured this sense of difference in his chapter 6 on 'The Methodist Way of Life.' This provides a vivid account of late nineteenth-century Methodism as it was lived by its church members, with numerous local examples. He describes the class meeting and the changing requirements for church membership, Sunday worship, preaching and the sacraments, church societies and organisations, the Methodist year with its celebrations such as Sunday school and church anniversaries, harvest festivals and meetings for foreign missions, its 'camp meetings' and 'love feasts,' and the practical implications of the Methodist injunction to 'shun the world.' It would be hard to better his summary of the culture of colonial Methodism: its distinctive world-view, practices and customs. However, there is more to be said. For example, there is scope for a more sustained exploration of Methodist piety and devotion, along the lines that Katharine Massam pioneered in her study of Australian Roman Catholic lay piety *Sacred Threads*.[13] Apart from her work, this area has not been explored to any extent in Australia. We might start looking at the material culture of Methodism – religious pictures, framed texts, devotional booklets, the illustrated Family Bible, Young Worshippers League stamps, the insignia of the Order of Knights and the Girls Comradeship, and the popularity of particular religious images such as Holman Hunt's 'The Light of the World.' Of course there was nothing that was

[12]Hempton, *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit*, 201.
[13]Katharine Massam, *Sacred Threads: Catholic Spirituality in Australia 1922-1962* (Sydney: University of New Wales Press, 1996).

particularly Methodist about many of these artefacts: they were common to all the main Protestant churches. Then there are the subtly different streams within Methodist hymnody. The Wesleyans, the Primitive Methodists, the Bible Christians and the Methodist New Connexion each had their own hymnal with a distinctive mix and their denominational favourites such as the Primitive Methodists' hymn 'Hark! The gospel news is sounding.'

The sense of being a distinct people flowed into other areas of life. Churches provided connections. Methodists might support Methodist-owned shops and other business firms. A reference from a minister or Sunday school superintendent, as evidence of respectability, might enable young men or women to obtain their first jobs. Many young people spent their Saturday afternoons playing in church-based sporting clubs (especially basketball and tennis) and they often had their first romance with another member of a church youth group.

Some friendship networks that began in a church continued for many decades. Mona Hunt, Arnold's widow, tells me that she is a member of an informal group who call themselves the 'Wesley Girls.' In the mid-1940s, as women in their early twenties, they were members of the choir at Wesley Church, Norwood, where Mona's father, Edgar Pryor, was minister. They have remained in touch. Although their numbers have diminished over the years, ten of them still live in Adelaide and meet three times a year for lunch.

V. Geographical Distribution and Social Composition

Where did South Australian Methodists live and in what occupations did they cluster? There were thousands of Methodist farmers but what do we know about Methodist business leaders, public servants and trade unionists, especially in the twentieth century? Hunt's book has a valuable summary of the main social groupings within Methodism about 1870, but how did this change over the next century? From census data, how did self-described Methodists compare with other religious bodies in terms of income and education? Any serious investigation requires a huge amount of time-consuming research, drawing upon church membership rolls (where they exist), lists of local preachers, marriage registers and so on. Using such sources, a good deal of work has been done on the social composition of religious denominations in Britain, but there is

not much on Australian Methodism, apart from Renate Howe's work on Melbourne.[14]

Some thirty years ago, in my first article on South Australian religious history, to provide a basic social profile of the main religious denominations, I analysed the 1901 census returns for the Adelaide metropolitan area.[15] In this I found that the distribution of self-described Methodists was almost exactly the reverse of Roman Catholics. Simply, Roman Catholics tended to be clustered in the inner city and the working-class suburbs of Thebarton, Hindmarsh and Port Adelaide, whereas Methodists were relatively thin on the ground in these areas – only one in eight of the inhabitants of the city square mile. By contrast, they were well represented in the growing middle-class suburbs that ringed the city: twenty per cent of those living in the St Peters council area, twenty-five per cent of Unley (which embraced Parkside and Malvern), twenty-seven per cent of Woodville and thirty per cent of Prospect. In Adelaide these respectable suburbs were for many years the Methodist heartlands where most of the biggest congregations were located. This was not unique to Methodists; it was much the same for the other Protestant churches.

South Australian Methodists were more likely to be rural and small-town dwellers than the population as a whole. At the beginning of the twentieth century two-thirds of them lived outside the capital, compared with fifty-five per cent of all South Australians. The counties with the highest concentrations of Methodists were then Daly (Upper Yorke Peninsula), Fergusson (central and southern Yorke Peninsula) and Stanley (around Clare). The dominance of Methodism in the agricultural areas continued until the 1960s. This is illustrated by the church membership returns for 1960, for example. In the Murray Mallee the Pinnaroo circuit had 249 members on the roll, Lameroo 192. The circuits of the Middle District (embracing Gawler and Balaklava) had a total membership of 2,446, the Mid-North District (embracing Riverton, Clare and Jamestown) 1,563; Yorke Peninsula 2,060 (Minlaton circuit 300), and Eyre Peninsula 1,517. On the other hand, Methodism was not particularly strong in relation to the population in the Riverland and in the South-East where Presbyterians were numerous. So in the

[14]Renate Howe, 'Social Composition of the Wesleyan Church in Victoria during the Nineteenth Century,' *Journal of Religious History* 4:3 (1967): 206-17.
[15]D.L. Hilliard, 'The City of Churches: Some Aspects of Religion in Adelaide about 1900,' *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia* 8 (1980): 3–30.

majority of South Australian towns it was the Methodist church, with its bulging Sunday school and cluster of clubs and societies, which had the closest ties to the wider community. Anglicans, Lutherans, Roman Catholics and the Churches of Christ were, in most towns, much smaller in size and kept to themselves.

VI. The Methodist Ministry as a Social Group and the Lives of Ministers and their Families

When did the ministry in South Australia become predominantly Australian-born? Certainly this occurred earlier than in the Anglican Church, which had a majority of English-born clergy until about 1920, while the Roman Catholic Church in South Australia had no local seminary until 1942 and was recruiting priests from Ireland until the 1950s. At the Uniting Church History Centre a volunteer has been compiling a data base of all Methodist clergy who have worked in South Australia, which will be a starting point. From Hunt's work we know that of the 101 Methodist ministers who died in South Australia between 1849 and 1930 one third came from Cornwall and Devon.[16] Compared with the Anglicans and the Congregationalists, very few Methodist ministers were university graduates: only two out of 106 in 1902 and eleven out of 173 in 1939. We may be able to find out more about the social background of Methodist ministers, their education and theological training, losses through premature retirement and early death, moves to other denominations, marital status and involvement in the wider public sphere. What proportion of them were Freemasons?

Mona Hunt, with whom I discussed this paper, thought I should mention the negative effects on ministers and their families of the itinerancy system: the moving to new places every three years or so and the strain of adjusting to a new community and often a substandard house. She herself attended three different schools in her first seven years of schooling, before she was sent as a boarder to Methodist Ladies College, and as a result, she told me, she long felt that she never belonged anywhere in particular. In this, ministers were of course not very different from bank managers and government officials who were moved around regularly. The difference was that the minister's wife was expected to be an unpaid partner in the work of her husband, a public figure in the congregation, usually as president of the ladies' guild and the

[16]Hunt, *This Side of Heaven*, 126.

Women's Auxiliary to Overseas Missions. Some found the role very hard and their story has not been told.

VII. Methodist Worship in South Australia

Methodist worship and preaching and hymn singing over time deserve fuller study. It would be good to have more first-hand accounts of what went on inside churches every Sunday say fifty years apart, for there have been several major shifts in Methodist worship since the first class meetings in South Australia in 1837.

Earlier this year in the newsletter of the Uniting Church Historical Society I wrote a short article on the descriptions of Sunday church services in Adelaide that were published each week during the year 1894-95 in the satirical weekly journal *Quiz and the Lantern*.[17] The author of the series, and the editor of *Quiz*, was Harry Evans, agnostic son of a Baptist minister, so he was both familiar with the evangelical Protestant world and critical of intellectual shoddiness and empty rhetoric. His stance was critical, not malicious, and he had a sense of humour. He commented tartly on parsonic voices with odd pronunciations, lifeless delivery, intellectual flabbiness and dreary singing. One of his targets was the Rev. James Haslam at Kent Town Wesleyan Church who droned through a banal 22-minute sermon on the Lord's Supper:

> Generalities, generalities, generalities! And they were not redeemed by any descriptive passages which would tickle the aural sense. Trite sayings, mere commonplaces constituted the sermon. There was not a single flash of humor, not an infinitesimal trace of poetic feeling, not the ghost even of original thought.[18]

But he was impressed by the size of the evening congregation at Pirie Street Church, which had the largest attendance in Adelaide. Some 1,500 were present, with men outnumbered by women and children by three to one.[19]

What were some typical sermon topics? While delving at the Uniting Church History Centre I found on a shelf three exercise books recording the services taken and the topics of the sermons preached by Methodist minister Leslie Hunt who was ordained in

[17]David Hilliard, 'Round the Churches with *Quiz*,' Historical Society of the Uniting Church in South Australia, *Newsletter* 102 (May 2011): 8–12.
[18]*Quiz and the Lantern* (15 November 1895): 8.
[19]*Quiz and the Lantern* (27 September 1894): 8.

1924 and served in rural circuits until the 1950s. We have no way of knowing whether he was a representative figure but I suspect his sermons were not untypical. In the Meadows circuit in a few months of 1952, for example, he preached on The Triumphant Christ, The Indispensable Christ, The Glorious Church, The Gaoler's Salvation, Abiding in Christ, Christianity and Women, One-and-Only Saviour, The God Who Saves, and Christian Holiness. These were devotional and other-worldly in emphasis with no trace of the social gospel. The piety they nurtured may explain the vehement response of many rural Methodists to the resolutions of the South Australia Conference on social and political issues from the later 1960s.

VIII. Architecture and Church Decoration in South Australian Methodism

It is true that Methodists in South Australia did not have as many churches of architectural importance and elaborate interior furnishings as did the Anglicans, Congregationalists or Roman Catholics. Nevertheless, as we know from the work of the historian Clyde Binfield and others in England, what is loosely called 'Nonconformist architecture' is a rich field of study. A Protestant church, Binfield observes, is a place for Word proclaimed and Word received, for sitting and listening, but within that parameter it has offered huge scope for architectural imagination and the adaptation of diverse European styles to local practical needs and tastes.

Wesley Uniting Church, Kent Town, opened in 1865 as Jubilee Memorial Church, was an early work in the gothic style of Edward John Woods, the most prolific church architect in South Australia in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. It was a statement that Methodism was taking its place among the older denominations: this was a *church*, not a meeting house or chapel. Four years ago I took Clyde Binfield to see it when he was visiting Australia and New Zealand on a lecture tour for the Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society. I'm pleased to report that he was impressed: 'This is a seriously good church.' We might look more closely at Malvern Uniting Church (1892) and its near-twin, Spicer Memorial Church at St Peters (1899). Both were designed by F.W. Dancker. He saw the style of a building as being achieved through its leading features of gables, towers, roof treatment and bay windows; for walls he liked combinations of brick and stone. His churches fit well with the federation villas of these prosperous suburbs. In the post-war years we see a wave of churches which used new materials and reflected

the ideals of the modern liturgical movement. Some notable buildings of this era are by the Czech-born and German-trained architect (Sir) Eric von Schramek who, in the 1950s and 60s, designed twelve churches for the Methodist Church in South Australia, notably Maughan Church with its striking interior.[20]

IX. Methodism in the South Australian Religious Context

In self-described adherents, Methodists were the second largest religious body in South Australia, claiming some twenty-five per cent of the population from the 1870s to the 1950s. But they comprised the largest body of churchgoers and accounted for over half the total enrolment of Sunday school scholars. Methodism in South Australia maintained an expansionist outlook and it had the centralised structure that enabled it to plan and provide resources for new work. The result was a Methodist church in every township and almost every locality. In 1920 for example, there were 493 churches and 33,200 Sunday school scholars, compared with the next largest denomination, the Anglican Church, with 216 churches and 12,400 Sunday school enrolments. Apart from the Roman Catholics, the Methodists were the only denomination to publish a weekly church newspaper, which indicates a sizeable body of people who were committed to the church and interested enough in its affairs to pay for a weekly, packed with comment and news. The *Australian Christian Commonwealth* which ran from 1901 to 1940 was a tabloid of sixteen to twenty pages. In 1910, for instance, its contents in each issue embraced political and social comment, pages for women, children and young men, church news and reports of major events such as the opening of new churches and jubilees, devotional articles, obituaries and letters. These were interspersed with advertisements from business firms (many of them with Methodist connections) and patent medicines such as Mother Siegel's Syrup for stomach and liver troubles, Hearne's bronchitis cure, tonics and ointments.

At the local level the main rival of Methodism was the Anglican Church which had a larger body of nominal adherents and close links with the social and professional elite of the state. Especially in rural areas, however, the Anglicans usually felt defensive, outnumbered by the more energetic Methodists. Moreover, there

[20]Helen Gordon (comp.), *Reminiscences: Eric von Schramek and his Churches* (Adelaide: Lutheran Archives, 2007), 87–94.

were theological tensions. Since the foundation of the colony Anglicans had tended to have an edgy relationship with non-episcopal Protestants.[21] This was reinforced by the growing influence of Anglo-Catholicism in South Australia from the later nineteenth century. Anglicans were taught by their clergy that the Church of England was essentially Catholic, not Protestant; Methodists had wilfully broken away from the Church. In 1899 the editor of the Anglican diocesan paper approved of the proposed Methodist union because 'when the sects are united they will be in a much better position for submitting to the discipline of the Church.'[22] Until the 1970s Anglican clergy of Anglo-Catholic views could never bring themselves to describe the Methodists as a Church; it was merely a 'religious body.' Understandably Methodists resented what they regarded as Anglican exclusiveness and dodgy theology, and they were quick to have a crack at any sign of the Anglican assumption of superiority, behaving as if it was the established church. But despite the frequent warnings by Anglican clergy of the dangers of 'undenominationalism' the lines were often crossed. Anglicans with loose attachment to their church often sent their children to a Methodist Sunday school if it was closer to home and offered more activities. Until the 1920s Anglicans of Protestant outlook might attend Sunday evening services at Methodist city churches such as Pirie Street to hear great preachers such as Henry Howard. In addition, there is evidence that children of wealthy Methodists (and also Baptists and Congregationalists) from the early twentieth century often moved into the Anglican Church either through marriage or by attraction to worship that was aesthetically more satisfying or because it allowed them to enjoy worldly pleasures such as drinking alcohol, dancing and horse-racing. One prominent example is the Bonython family.

Methodists regarded the other major Protestant denominations – Presbyterian, Baptist and Congregational – as 'sister' churches. They cooperated in the Council of Churches in South Australia and the United Churches Social Reform Board, and in evangelistic societies such as Christian Endeavour. At the local level ministers often exchanged pulpits on special occasions such as church or Sunday school anniversaries. For some years there was an informal comity

[21]David Hilliard, 'Anglican Relations with the Protestant Churches in South Australia, 1836–1996,' in George W. Potter et al (eds), *Heritage of Faith: Essays in Honour of Arnold D. Hunt* (Adelaide, 1996), 195–207.
[22]*Church News* (10 March 1899): 3.

agreement with the Congregationalists. In the late nineteenth century the Methodists withdrew from Victor Harbor and Port Elliot where the Congregationalists were well established. In the Riverland in the 1920s the Congregationalists were allotted responsibility for Barmera and Loxton while Berri remained Methodist. (These arrangements lasted until the 1950s.) In the Upper South East the Congregationalists were left alone in the settlements between Coomandook and Keith.

Between Methodists and Roman Catholics a great gulf was fixed. Mostly they ignored each other. Although Methodists took a dim view of Catholic attitudes to liquor and gambling, there was little of the persistent sectarian rhetoric that was familiar in the eastern states, apart from occasional waves of bad feeling, such as around 1900 and in the years between the 1916 Easter Rising and the emergence of the Irish Free State in the early 1920s. Then there would be articles in the Methodist press on such hot topics as Roman Catholics and crime, the 'worship' of Mary, Roman Catholics and religious liberty, and the threat of 'Popish tyranny.' But across the divide there were occasional flashes of mutual respect for individuals on each side. The Catholic weekly the *Southern Cross* published generous obituaries of Methodist politicians such as Sir Frederick Holder and the Methodist paper paid tribute to the Catholic Archbishop Reynolds on his death in 1893. And although there was huge opposition to mixed marriages they occurred in quite large numbers. During the first half of the twentieth century some thirty per cent of Catholic marriages in South Australia involved a non-Catholic partner; many of these would have been Methodists. Sometimes mixed marriages led to permanent estrangements within families but they also created links across denominational lines. Occasionally, though not often, there were secessions. At least one Roman Catholic priest (Father Geoffrey Taylor, in Melbourne) began his church life in Adelaide in the mid-1940s as a candidate for the Methodist ministry and a student at Wesley College.

X. South Australian Methodism in its International Context

We should remember that Methodism in South Australia was part of an international movement which shared common characteristics: it combined discipline and rules with evangelistic zeal and scope for

individual initiative, an authoritarian ecclesiology with a message that was egalitarian. It therefore had the capacity to expand into social spaces that were unoccupied by other bodies. In England it grew fastest where the Church of England was weak and outside Britain it did well in places where Anglicans and other English-speakers had migrated. This was true in South Australia. Without state aid, as provided in other colonies, the Anglican Church found it hard to provide sufficient clergy and churches to meet the religious needs of the expanding rural frontier of the mid-nineteenth century. The flexibility of Methodism and its use of lay ministry, combined with immigration from Cornwall and Devon, led to a swelling of Methodist numbers in South Australia, from one in eight of the population in 1855 to one in four in the 1870s. This was the highest proportion of Methodists in Australia and among the highest in the English-speaking world, comparable to Atlantic Canada, Ontario, Kentucky and Tennessee. In the international history of Methodism, therefore, South Australia occupies a significant place.

METHODISTS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC LIFE

Donald J. Hopgood

This article is developed from a paper given at the Workshop on the History of Methodism in South Australia*, held by the* Historical Society of the Uniting Church in South Australia *in Adelaide, 19 November 2011. It surveys the involvement of Methodists in South Australian public life from the nineteenth century until the 1960s. It focuses particularly on the public debate over the alcohol trade and shows strong Methodist involvement in local option polls, the Temperance movement, and the adoption of six o'clock closing. By the late 1930s prohibition was a lost cause but restrictions on trading hours were well-supported by Methodists. On the left, the Methodist social conscience looked to a reconstruction of society and, on the right, sought to protect the weak from the worst aspects of that society. South Australian Methodism was broad enough to encompass both approaches.*

I once heard a Congregationalist minister, out of awe, not spite I hasten to say, refer in a South Australian context to 'those ubiquitous Methodists.' Cornish miners at Burra and Moonta later spreading through the Northern Adelaide Plains and the Mid-North, plus competition between the nineteenth century Methodist denominations, meant a Methodist place of worship, so it seemed, in every little hamlet. These impressionistic demographic observations need to be buttressed by Census data. I have chosen 1911. By then, Methodism, in its various forms had been in South Australia for seventy five years, had been united, institutionally at least for ten but was sixty six years away from that wider union that occurred in 1977.[1] So 1911 is a convenient mid point.

The following table is informative:

---

[1] At the 1911 Census, despite union being ten years old, small minorities of respondents still used such designations as 'Primitive Methodist,' 'Bible Christian,' 'Free Church Methodist,' and the like. Interestingly the one 'Welsh Methodist' respondent is listed under the 'Presbyterian' heading. *Census Of The Commonwealth Of Australia, 1911* – Religions, 758.

Denomination	Numbers in Australia	Numbers in South Australia
Church of England	1,710,443	113,781
Presbyterian	558,386	25,568
Methodist	547,641	100,402

Methodism stands out. Commonwealth-wide the ratio of Methodists to Church of England was 8:25 while the equivalent figure for South Australia was 22:25.[2] It has further been argued that, given a higher than average degree of nominalism among Church of England respondents, and the very large Methodist Sunday Schools, Methodism could, at the time, fairly lay claim to being the largest denomination in the State. There was also considerable growth. Arnold Hunt noted that at the 1891 Colonial Census, the Methodist population of South Australia was 76,575.[3]

In public affairs, Methodists were punching above their weight. A consideration of the achievements of Samuel Way, John Verran, Shirley Jeffries, Norman Makin, along with many others, may help to confirm or deny that perception but, again, some numerical data is indicated.

The *Survey Of The Biographical Register Of The South Australian Parliament 1857-1967* by John Playford, Howard Coxon and Robert Reid includes references to religious affiliation.[4] It has been suggested that this source is unreliable and given the magnitude of the task almost certainly this is so, but it is unlikely that there is a systematic bias for or against any particular denomination, so while the individual designations may, in some cases be misleading, the overall position merits examination. A further difficulty is that, of the 512 Members of Parliament listed, 158 are given no affiliation. From what is known of the religious temper of the times, it beggars belief that all 158 would have been agnostic.[5] Clearly Playford *et al* were unable to locate the necessary information. Again there is no reason to conclude that this would bias the numbers against any particular Church. Using then the

[2] I have decided to stick to the 'Church of England' nomenclature; 'Anglican' came later.

[3] Arnold D. Hunt *This Side Of Heaven* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1985), 105.

[4] John Playford, Howard Coxon and Robert Reid, eds. *Survey Of The Biographical Register Of The South Australian Parliament 1857-1967* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1985).

[5] In fact only one such is listed, Ron Loveday, a long-time member for Whyalla.

information for the 447 whose religious affiliation is identified, we obtain the following:

Denomination or religion	Number identified	% of total
Church of England	158	35.4
Methodist	86	19.2
Congregationalist	50	11.2
Roman Catholic	44	9.8
Presbyterian	36	8.1
Baptist	22	4.9
Churches of Christ	21	4.7
Lutheran	9	2.0
Jewish	7	1.6
Other	14	3.1[6]

What immediately strikes one is that, from a Methodist population that, roughly half way through the survey period, amounted to 88% of the Church of England equivalent, 86 Members of Parliament were produced, this being only 54% of the Church of England equivalent. So this admittedly crude numerical analysis does not back up the presumption that there was a high number of Methodists in South Australian public life during this period.

But if quantity fails, does quality at least in part succeed? Another assumption, taken, in part from British experience, suggests a lively Methodist involvement in the early Labor Party and the nascent trade union movement. Local trade union leaders were invited to speak at two successive Primitive Methodist Conferences in the 1890s.[7] Rev. Hugh Gilmore of the Wellington Square Primitive Methodist Church supported the striking waterside workers in the same period, espoused the Single Tax doctrines of Henry George and was influenced by the liberal theology of the German seminaries. His son, Hugh Jr. was a pre-World War One State President of the Labor Party. Cornish miner and Methodist Richard Hooper was the first Labor member of the House of Assembly, elected in 1891 for the seat of Wallaroo. Tom Price, the first Labor Premier in South Australia was a Methodist from Wales. His successor, on the Labor side, John Verran is oft-quoted as maintaining that he was 'an MP because he was a PM – Primitive Methodist.' When he spoke in his electorate,

[6] For the record, they 'Other' comprised Unitarian 9, Salvation Army 2, Quaker 1, Rationalist 1, Agnostic 1

[7] Hunt p. 205.

those in attendance were never sure whether to expect a sermon, a political speech or a temperance message.

Verran's successor, Crawford Vaughan has, at various times, been claimed for the Unitarians, the Methodists and the Church of England. Like Price and Verran before him, and Bob Richards later, he was a 'dry' on the liquor issue (more of that later). The Conscription split in the Labor Party weakened the Methodist and, more broadly, the Nonconformist influence on that side of politics but Methodist Bob Richards was Premier in 1933 and led the Party until 1949.[8]

The above is limited to Methodist influence on the Labor side in the State Parliament. Federally, one could hardly omit reference to Broken Hill-born Norman Makin, Member of the House of Representatives from 1919, Speaker of the House from 1929 to 1931, a Minister in the Wartime Labor cabinets, Australia's first ambassador to Washington and to the United Nations and the inaugural President of the UN Security Council. A pattern maker by trade, he was a Methodist lay preacher and Sunday School teacher. When Rev Alan Walker brought the 1953 'Mission to the Nation' to Adelaide, Makin was his support speaker at the Botanic Park Labor Ring.[9]

On the conservative side, and given the strength of Methodism in rural areas, one presumes that the Liberals would have claimed a majority of Methodist votes outside the Copper Triangle. Methodist influence probably reached an apex under the long Premiership of the Baptist Sir Thomas Playford. One thinks of Sir Shirley Jeffries his Minister of Education, Colin Rowe, his Attorney General, and Speaker Sir Robert Nicholls. In earlier times, there had been Sir John Bice, Sir John Colton and Sir Frederick Holder.

In this survey, I do not limit myself to those Methodists who were elected to the Parliament or called to the Bench such as Sir Samuel Way who was in both categories. I include those, clerical or lay who, from their Methodist standpoint, became involved in the social and political issues of their day, particularly those to do with liquor, gambling, vice and Sunday observance. To cover the whole field would be a monumental task, so here I will concentrate on the liquor issue.

---

[8] There was no Roman Catholic leader until M.J. O'Halloran from 1949 and three since, Frank Walsh, Des Corcoran and Mike Rann.

[9] I was in attendance, along with other senior Sunday School students from the Prospect North Methodist Church.

A good deal of Methodist energy was expended on what were called 'Local Option Polls.' Local Option was an interesting subspecies of what was called 'the initiative and referendum' something that was espoused, with declining enthusiasm, it must be admitted, by the early Labor Party, and which continues to haunt the constitutional arrangements of some of the American states. The father of local option in South Australia was the Bible Christian David Nock, philanthropist and Member for Light from 1875-78. During his brief parliamentary career, he steered though the legislature what came to be known as the 'Nock Act.' It provided that, on petition of a 'sufficient' number of electors – 500 or one tenth of the local option district – a proposal to alter the number of liquor licenses in the area could be submitted to a vote of the electors, the district coinciding with the local State electorate or a designated portion thereof. The voter could choose between the options of reducing the number of licenses in the area by one third or one sixth, no change, or giving the Licensing Court the discretion to grant additional licences.[10]

Temperance enthusiasm was building in the last two decades of the nineteenth century as witness the formation of the Women's Christian Temperance Union under the leadership of Methodists Selina Thorne and Mary O'Brien. The WCTU campaigned vigorously for women's franchise on the assumption, it is argued, that women would vote for temperance advocates, who, on election, would restrict trading hours thereby increasing the likelihood that husbands would come home sober with pay packet reasonably intact. In the short-term, the introduction of adult franchise, a deal between Charles Cameron Kingston and the Labor Party, whose support Kingston needed to form a government, probably did help the cause, at least marginally.

In February 1906, for example, polls were held in Adelaide, North Adelaide, West Torrens, East Torrens and Wallaroo. All except Adelaide reduced the number of licences and Cornish Methodist Wallaroo achieved a combined reductionist vote of 72.5%. In the following year, East Torrens voted for a further reduction though the 'dry' vote had dropped. Amendments to the Act in the same year combined the first two options into a single vote for reduction and provided that the polls be held on the same day as a

[10] If there was no absolute majority for the first option, its votes were added to those of option number two and so on. The system was based on the reasonable assumption that the 'reductionists' had a 'second preference' for no change.

General Election.[11] This latter provision led to larger turn-outs which weakened the 'dry' vote.

Nonetheless, the big victory was the adoption of six o'clock closing in 1915. The Bill followed upon a petition for early closing bearing 37,000 signatures and presented to the House of Assembly. By the time the referendum required under the legislation took place, Great Britain had passed its 'Defence of The Realm' Act which had mandated six o'clock closing. Electors in South Australia could plump for any hour from six to eleven o'clock, the latter being the status quo. In all, 56.9% favoured six and 34.8% favoured the later time. Temperance enthusiasm, it seemed, was at the flood. One commentator concluded, 'The temper of a majority of the people is distinctly in favour of restriction, and temperance advocates state that, with the women's votes, they expect to be able, at no distant date, to carry total prohibition for the whole Continent.'[12]

From 1919, the temperance lobby, now taking its inspiration not from DORA (The Defense of the Realm Act) but from the Volstead Act in the USA, began to agitate for prohibition. In the following year, petitions totalling 54,000 signatures and praying for a referendum on the issue, were presented to the Parliament but a motion for such a poll, introduced into the Assembly was not put to the vote, becoming one of the 'slaughtered innocents' at the end of the session.

The Presbyterian Premier Peake's refusal to facilitate a vote provoked an 'indignation meeting' at Willard Hall where the Rev. H. Escourt Hughes, in high dudgeon, really let himself go: 'These miserable men – timid surely and toadying and time serving to one particular party!...The members of Parliament should be grabbed by the hair of their heads and shaken. If someone can suggest how to bring them to their senses, I will be in the 'scrap.'[13]

He was outdone by a Mr. Jolly who suggested horsewhipping those who had thwarted their object. Cooler heads called for candidates in those electorates not served by members of a temperance persuasion. In fact, only two ever stood as straight out prohibitionists at least over the next decade. One R.W. Bowey,

---

[11] This and much that follows is from my Ph.D. thesis, Don J. Hopgood, 'Psephological Examination of The South Australian Labor Party from World War One to the Depression,' Flinders University of South Australia, 1973, 342 – 364.
[12] *Round Table* Vol. VII p.173.
[13] *Observer* (27 November 1920): 20. A Baptist, Hughes wrote *Our First Hundred Years: The Baptist Church of South Australia* (Adelaide: South Australian Baptist Union, 1937).

gained 841 votes in the Mid-North electorate of Wooroora. He was member of the Liberal Party and an organiser for the Temperance Alliance. Not having made it to the House of Assembly, he is not covered in the Playford survey but was a Methodist.[14]

A few months before the 1924 State Election, Rev. C. E. Schafer of the Glenelg Methodist Church announced the formation of an 'Early Closing League' to campaign for the closing of liquor bars on Saturday afternoons.[15] The Methodist paper *Australian Christian Commonwealth* appealed to women voters to join a branch of the League, wear a pink ribbon, and pray: 'Take my vote and let it be / Consecrated Lord to Thee.'[16] The League joined forces with the Temperance Alliance and waited on Anglican Premier Barwell, who had replaced Peake, asking that a referendum be granted on prohibition and that the Licensing Act be amended to close liquor bars and wine shops at noon on Saturdays. Barwell refused the first on the grounds that it was 'unconstitutional' and said that the second would have to be a private member's bill on which he would not bind his party.[17] He added that he was a temperance advocate but had been drinking whisky for twenty years without suffering any ill effects.[18] This parting shot seems to have disturbed the delegation as much as the Premier's refusal to grant their requests. Schafer announced that he would campaign actively in Barwell's electorate to have him unseated.

Others rallied to the cause. The Methodist Conference, meeting only a month before the election, endorsed the programme of the Early Closing League. Rev. Frank Lade was in a fiery mood: 'They believed that Methodism was the spearhead of the movement in South Australia. They must drive that spear home and thrust it in the most vulnerable part of the monster that was defiantly straddling the continent. If the vulnerable part was the electorate of Stanley, that was where they must thrust the spear.'[19] Labor ran no candidates thereby freeing the League from accusations of bias in its

---

[14] I went to Sunday School with his grandchildren.

[15] Charles E Schafer b. Melbourne 1868, d. Adelaide 1941, ordained 1891, spent long years of circuit work in Port Pirie, Broken Hill, Hindmarsh, Glenelg, Prospect, *et al.* Very active in the 1915 Early Closing Referendum, he successfully moved at the 1917 Methodist Conference that what became known as the Memorial Hospital be set up.

[16] *Australian Christian Commonwealth* (25 January 1924): 7.

[17] This was a somewhat specious response. Certainly a referendum *per se* is only consultative but one could pass a bill that provided for the desired outcome subject to a referendum.

[18] *Australian Christian Commonwealth* (1 February 1924): 3.

[19] *Advertiser* (7 March 1924): 13. Stanley was Barwell's electorate.

direction.[20] Those on the ballot were the sitting Liberals, Barwell and Nicholls, the Country Party challengers Augey and Badman and an independent, Duncan Menzies. The League unofficially backed Nicholls and Badman, noting that they were Methodist lay preachers and were the only Stanley candidates to favour early closing.

That a measurable though small proportion of Stanley voters followed the 'Early Closing' ticket cannot be denied. Nicholls and Badman were 546 and 586 votes respectively above the totals of their running mates. *The Observer* reckoned the pure 'Early Closing' vote in Stanley was around 570. This was well in excess of the temperance effort in other electorates but not enough to unseat Barwell who retained second place in the two member electorate with a lead of 912 over Badman.

The temperance campaign did not expend its substance purely on Stanley. The issue took up as much space in the correspondence columns of the press as all the other matters to do with the election combined. Schafer, Lade, and the Congregationalist Smeaton, the sole survivor of the Labor Conscriptionists, now running as a Liberal, hurled thunderbolts at H. Penfold Hyland, 'Barossa Grape-grower' and others who were quite ready to return the compliment. The Alliance circularised all candidates re their attitude toward a referendum and published the results on the Friday before the poll alongside the signatures of representatives of the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregational, Church of Christ and Adventist denominations plus the WCTU, the Salvation Army and the Rechabites. The list strongly favoured the Liberals. There were no endorsements in Adelaide and, not surprisingly, Barossa.

The 1924 election was the high water mark of temperance and prohibitionist campaigning through the twenties and, probably thereafter. There was a series of local option polls on the day of the 1927 election and not one district, including Wallaroo, returned a reductionist majority. The Methodists seem to have sniffed the air. A motion before its Conference to allow prohibitionist speakers to speak from the pulpit was defeated. It is an interesting commentary on the loss of confidence of the temperance movement that the most it was prepared to ask for in 1930 was Saturday afternoon closing. By then, however, the cause had a new champion in the Parliament.

Shirley Williams Jeffries, a son of the Methodist manse, was elected as a Liberal candidate for North Adelaide in 1927. Jeffries'

[20] South Australia had multi-member electorates at the time. Stanley had two members.

father brought his family to Australia in 1890 settling there after eight years in Queensland. He was President of the South Australian Methodist Conference in 1904. His son was admitted to the Bar in 1910 and moved through the ranks to become senior partner in a law firm. In 1929, he introduced a Private Member's Bill for a referendum on Saturday afternoon closing. It failed on the second reading 14 votes to 27. Defeated in 1930, he was re-elected in 1933. He became Minister of Education and advocated religious instruction in State Schools, a measure that was enacted in 1940.

Interestingly Jeffries' main opponent on the liquor issue in the Parliament was Labor's Stan Whitford, also listed as Methodist. A perusal of his typescript autobiography does not betray a close involvement in the affairs of his Church. Interest in the issue waned in the early thirties as the dire economic conditions of the time claimed the attention of all, but a revival occurred late in the decade surrounding the figure of E. H. Woollacott. The Rev. Harry Woollacott, on being appointed full-time Superintendent of the Methodist Church's Social Service Department was for over twenty years, his denomination's public voice on matters to do with liquor and gambling. A confidant of Sir Thomas Playford who had replaced R. L. Butler as Premier, Woollacott later claimed to have involved himself in Liberal Country League pre-selections in an attempt to get temperance friendly candidates.[21] I recall a letter to the editor in which the writer used the term 'Woollacottism' as a label for what he regarded as the extreme Methodist position on liquor and gambling, its 'unswerving hostility' to the liquor industry as reaffirmed time and again at its Conferences.

But the Jeffries-Woolacott partnership really only maintained the status quo. If there was no liberalisation, neither was there any movement toward prohibition. Whitford led two attempts at a broadening of opening hours, in 1935 and again in 1938. Both failed, the second by one vote.[22] The climax of the agitation against Whitford's 'Booze Bill' was a Youth Protest Rally on 28 September, 1938 when an estimated 3,000 young people marched down King William Street to the Adelaide Town Hall where the crowd

[21] The Liberal and Country League was formed in 1931 following an amalgamation of the Liberal and Country Parties.

[22] Judith Raftery, 'God's Gift Or Demon Drink? Churches and Alcohol in South Australia between the Two World Wars,' 28. http://www.sahistorians.org.au/175/documents/gods-gift-or-demon-drink-churches-and-alcohol-in-s.shtml accessed 13 February 2012. This article also appeared in the *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia 15* (1987): 16-41.

overflowed into the adjacent Pirie Street Methodist and Stow Congregational Churches. The crowd, now estimated at 6,000, passed a resolution opposing alteration to the legislation except by referendum.[23] But talk of prohibition was in the past. It was a stalemate.

The dam finally broke in the 1960s with the Royal Commission into the liquor industry. Again Methodism took a hand with the fight against relaxation being led by Rev. Arch Simpson, secretary of the Alliance, but the forces on the other side were too well organised. A prominent Catholic lawyer, Leonard James King who took the brief for the liquor industry, was shortly thereafter elected to the Parliament, became Attorney General and, five years later, trod the path taken by the Methodist Sir Samuel Way all those years ago, to the presidency of the Supreme Court.

Methodism's 'unswerving hostility' arose from its keen social conscience and its bitter appreciation of the impact of liquor on individuals, families and both public and private assets. Concerned for the regeneration of society, it believed that this could only be achieved through the redemption of the individual. Ivor Bailey in his *Mission Story*, an account of the life of what was then called the Adelaide Central Methodist Mission, quotes the pioneering English missioner Hugh Price Hughes on the Methodist approach to social evils: 'We have practically neglected the fact that Christ came to save the nation as well as the individual, and that it is an essential feature of His Mission to reconstruct human society on the basis of justice and love.'[24]

Reconstruction however meant, for the most part, not so much Single Tax, nor Socialism, nor Fabianism but rather more services to the unfortunate and legislation to counter such particular vices as were seen to have brought them to such a pass. Rev. Samuel Forsyth's Depression-era Kuitpo settlement was strategically placed in the South Mount Lofty Ranges miles away from the seducing influences of saloon and racetrack. The dilemma of the social progressives in Methodism was that their army, the people in the pews, were humane but fairly conservative in outlook. Even the strong rural 'no' vote in each of the World War One Conscription

[23] Raftery, 'God's Gift Or Demon Drink?,' 24.
[24] Ivor Bailey, *Mission Story* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1987), 6.

Referenda, campaigns in which the Church had vigorously advocated 'yes,' could be seen as an endorsement of the status quo.[25]

The whole thing cries out for a deeper analysis than I have been able to pursue. Were Methodists in public life because they were Methodist or were deeper factors involved? An examination of 'maiden' and other speeches in Hansard may tell us much of the motivation of those who served in the Parliament but then it may not. In voting against the first Casino Bill to come before the House, I proclaimed my Methodism but one suspects some did not wear their hearts on their sleeves.[26] That, however, does not rule out the influence of the 'Gentle Jesus' prayer from age four, all those Sunday School lessons and long term exposure to the strident advocacy of the pulpit.

I am also acutely aware of the paucity of the references to women in the above. A more comprehensive treatment would, of necessity, include information on the work of Kate Cocks and the more prominent of those who served in the Deaconess Order.

Methodism did, at the very least, pull its weight.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise him who saves the drunkard's woe

It was a social conscience that, on the left, looked to a reconstruction of society and, on the right, sought to protect the weak from the worst aspects of that society and, where possible redeem them from the 'slough of despond.' Methodism was broad enough to encompass both approaches and motivated enough to want to do something about it.

[25] In 1916, the 'no' vote in the staunchly Methodist, but also staunchly Labor, Copper Triangle reached 72% in Kadina, 75% in Wallaroo and 78% in Moonta. Hunt, *This Side of Heaven*, 291.

[26] Indeed, on another occasion, a member on the other side of the chamber, and a fellow Methodist to boot, was heard to refer to me, more in frustration than in anger I presume, as a 'Bible bashing …', and, well, the rest was alliterative.

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION IN THE VICTORIA AND TASMANIA CONFERENCE, 1874-1977

Norman Young

This article originated as a paper presented at the Workshop on the History of Australian Methodism held at Queen's College, University of Melbourne, 9-10 December 2011. It surveys theological education in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference of the Methodist Church of Australasia (and its precedent body the Wesleyan Methodist Church). It focuses on the training offered at Queen's College, the Theological Hall and the United Faculty of Theology. Important themes covered include the curriculum, funding issues and ecumenical co-operation. The location of the Theological Hall, the impact of two world wars, the trend in 1902 toward higher degrees being taken overseas, the challenges of the 1960s, and the addition of women candidates are all considered. After taking into consideration the restructuring of theological education that took place in the 1970s it concludes that those with the original vision for ministerial education in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference would be likely to agree that candidates a century later were being adequately equipped to fulfil a ministry equal to the times.

I. The Collegiate Experience

The Methodist Church in Australasia (Australia and New Zealand) began as various Conferences of the parent Churches in England, namely the Wesleyan Methodist, Primitive Methodist, Bible Christian, Methodist New Connexion (which had united with Wesleyans in 1888) and United Methodist Free Church, and they united in 1902 as the Methodist Church of Australasia. To begin with, therefore, all ministers of the Methodist denominations came from England and received their ministerial education there. When Australian-born ministers began to be ordained, their education was primarily as probationary ministers working in circuits under the direction of a superintendent minister, sometimes supplemented with instruction in secular subjects at a secondary school.

In 1861 the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in Australia determined to provide theological education at tertiary level for its ministerial candidates, maintaining that since these had 'expressed a desire to spend some time at a theological college…let us follow in

the footsteps of the parent church in England.'[1] That parent church had a number of seminary-style theological colleges, but partly because an appeal for funds to establish such an Australia-wide institution failed, this proposal was abandoned.

Instead a different pattern developed in Victoria, and later in Queensland and Western Australia. In the State of Victoria, the Wesleyan Methodist Church accepted a grant of land from the University of Melbourne and agreed to build a residential College on the condition that this could also be the centre for educating candidates for the ministry. As with the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, this would be affiliated with the University. It would have its own Master and tutors, and students would be enrolled in the various faculties at the University. Since the University of Melbourne, unlike those of Oxford and Cambridge, excluded, by founding charter, a Faculty of Divinity, these courses would be taught within the College. Ministerial candidates were then enrolled, along with students of other faculties, as members of the College, taking studies at the University towards the Arts degree and professors were appointed by the Conference to the College to teach the additional theological subjects the ministerial candidates needed for ordination.

So Queen's College was founded in 1888 with the dual purpose of being an affiliated residential College of the University, at the same time having within it, as an integral part, a community of theological students and teachers. Over the decades this proved an excellent way of preparing people for the ordained ministry, providing them with an education in the humanities and in theology while living in a community that is a microcosm of society as a whole – men (and nine decades later, women) involved in various professions and diverse activities within which the community of faith lives and witnesses.

The first Master of Queen's College, Dr. Edward H. Sugden, was ideally placed to hold together the two streams in the College. Wesleyan scholar as he was (editor of a standard edition of Wesley's sermons, evangelical preacher, Hebrew and Old Testament scholar) he was also a fine musician, producer of plays, Shakespeare scholar and, for good measure, added a BSc to his higher degrees in Arts and Theology.[2] Writing in 1901 for the British Methodist Church from

[1] Quoted in the *Wesleyan Chronicle,* 1861.

[2] See Renate Howe, ed. *The Master: The Life and Work of Edward H. Sugden* (Melbourne: Uniting Academic Press, 2009) for a collection of biographical essays.

which he came, he reported on the advantages of the kind of theological education that had been pioneered in Melbourne. First were the academic benefits of lectures from professors 'equal to any similar body in the world.' But this, he said, was of small gain compared to the second benefit, namely the daily interaction with other students:

> There can be no surer way toward clearing the mind of cant, towards the sympathetic understanding of the difficulties and temptations of their fellows, towards the ability to view all sorts of questions in a catholic and not sectarian spirit…This system produces a stronger, more human minister, broader in sympathy and charity, and not, so far as I can judge, less spiritual [than that from]…the purely theological institutions that are in England.[3]

The Presbyterian Church in Victoria adopted the same pattern in its Ormond College, and later the Methodist Church in Queensland and Western Australia established similar 'dual-purpose' Colleges. While not expressing the benefits in quite the same phraseology as Sugden did, of those who prepared for ministry within this system (with College years followed by at least one as probationers in a circuit prior to ordination), the large majority would wholeheartedly endorse its advantages.

There were, of course, disadvantages. Since the College was founded as a residence for single men, married candidates for the ministry were excluded from this way of preparing for ordination, instead spending six years as Probationers in Circuits, subject to annual written and oral examination. Soon after its founding the University required all College residents to be matriculated, thus excluding those with lesser educational qualifications. Nor could women candidates be resident in Queen's, which did not become co-educational until 1973, although that did not become an issue until General Conference in 1966 resolved that women could be accepted as candidates. As years passed, the age of those offering as candidates steadily increased, making life in a largely undergraduate community less congenial, and leading to problems of providing housing and appropriate theological education for married candidates. There were also the recurring problems of funding the enterprise and striking the right balance between academic studies and practical training, but these will be dealt with in more detail in

[3] E. H. Sugden, 'Our Methodist University College in Australia.' *Methodist Magazine* Dec., 1901.

the account that follows of ministerial education in the Victoria-Tasmania Conference, from 1874 to 1976. This account will rely almost exclusively on reports and references in the Minutes of Annual Conference.

II. Recurring Themes

A reading of the Minutes of Annual Conference from the establishing of the Victoria and Tasmania Conference of the Methodist Church from its beginning in 1874 to Church union in 1977 reveals a number of recurring themes. Three major ones will be dealt with here, viz. the curriculum, funding and ecumenical co-operation.

1. The Curriculum

(a) Academic and practical. From the beginning there were those critical of locating the Theological Hall within the University College, claiming that this over-emphasised the academic dimension. One of the most persistent and influential of these was Dr. William H. Fitchett, Principal of Methodist Ladies' College and President of Conference who, as late as 1892, was still maintaining the view that the work of ministry was to save souls, not to satisfy minds. Certainly Sugden's proposed three-year course was academically demanding: *First year*: Systematic Theology I, Biblical Exegesis, Church History (ancient and modern), and Deductive Logic. *Second year:* Systematic Theology II, Greek New Testament, Church History and Inductive Logic. *Third year:* Apologetics, Greek New Testament II, Hebrew, Ethics, Homiletics and Pastoral Theology. In order to redress any perceived imbalance, from time to time the Conference indicated that the curriculum should include methods of pastoral work, management of a circuit, Methodist Laws, church architecture, church music, sociology, the 'new psychology,' Sunday School organization, Christian education, and elocution - all this within what was, until the mid-1950s, three years at most in College. In some years one or more of these were included in the curriculum, but at no time all of them. In the 1950s, for example, those undertaking an Arts course at the University of Melbourne also studied within the Theological Hall (Systematic Theology and Pastoral Theology) were instructed on the Book of Laws, went to elocution lessons, and were involved in weekly Worship and

Preaching class. The few students who received a fourth year in College after graduating in Arts usually undertook the first year of the Melbourne College of Divinity Bachelor of Divinity course.

In addition, students regularly undertook ten day evangelistic missions (in my time as a student, to Bendigo and Geelong) and spent long vacations in Circuit appointments (mine were to Newtown Circuit in Hobart, Noradjuha in the Wimmera, and Belmont, Geelong). Candidates also regularly conducted services of worship in local churches. Records show that in 1956, for example, candidates conducted 668 services.

1968 saw an addition to the curriculum which changed significantly the academic/practical balance, *viz.* the introduction of Field Education as a necessary component, to be undertaken each year. Every candidate was assigned to an area of ministerial work, usually in a Circuit but sometimes in Chaplaincy, and this was supervised and evaluated by appropriately trained supervisors, in conjunction with the Faculty member appointed as Field Education Director. How this work was undertaken varied; in 1974 for example ten days were spent in appointment during the first term vacation. But in following years the component increased, until by the time of Church Union this was to take a quarter of the students' time, and was not limited to vacations.

(b) Length of course. Sugden's ideal of a three year course, four if including a University degree, was not realized for all students until the mid nineteen-fifties. The balance of five, later six years between candidature and ordination included studying, while in a circuit appointment, for annual probationers' examinations, in earlier years set and examined at Annual Conference, later prescribed and examined by General Conference committee.

(c) Educational level of candidates. Minutes of Conference record recurring concern that candidates were not able to take full advantage of the courses offered because they lacked the appropriate educational background. Only matriculated candidates were able to enter College and thus benefit from the education offered there. The rest spent five or six years in circuits, preparing for probationers' examinations as best they could. Matriculation was not required of candidates until 1933, and even then exceptions were allowed. In the 1960s matriculation itself was not sufficient to ensure entry to the University of Melbourne, and thus to Queen's College, because of the introduction of a University Faculty quota. As a result, some

Victorian matriculated candidates went to Kingswood College in Perth for their undergraduate education, returning to Melbourne to begin B.D. studies.

All those offering as candidates for ministry, whether matriculated and able to enter Queen's or not, had first to be fully accredited Local Preachers. If then recommended by the local Circuit they were subsequently examined, both at Synod and Conference level, in theology, biblical studies and church history, and their capacity to lead worship and to preach was also assessed. With these results to hand, the Conference examining committee made its recommendation to a Ministerial session of Annual Conference, and acceptance was decided by vote of all ministers present.

2. Funding

From the beginning there was a chronic shortage of funds to meet the needs of educating candidates within Queen's College. Conference reports repeatedly noted that Circuits and Districts were not meeting requests made to them. Candidates undertaking University courses were required to pay their own fees (some could not) and all were asked to contribute as much to the cost of their College residence as they were able. If they resigned within ten years they were required to repay what had been expended on their behalf. This lack of funding led, from time to time, to restricting the number of candidates accepted by Conference. A resolution of 1890 is typical of several such in the early years: 'In view of the large number of young men now on probation or on the President's list of reserve and present difficulties in funding…Conference urges utmost caution in bringing out any more candidates during the ensuing year.'[4] Similarly in 1906, 'The number of students sent for training shall not be greater than the income of the [Theological] Institute for that year.'[5]

The funding situation improved significantly from 1914 when Conference agreed to impose a levy on all circuits to fund theological education. Initially set at 1% of circuit income, the amount was to vary as need arose. The inhibiting effect on ministerial numbers of earlier restrictions is seen by 1915, when Conference recommended a

[4] Minutes of Conference, 1890.
[5] Minutes of Conference, 1906.

kind of recruiting drive, including the resolve to address young men and 'direct their attention and that of their parents to the propriety of their considering whether God does not call them to the ministry of the Church.'[6]

As time went on and funding became more secure due to the compulsory levy on circuit finances, candidates' fees, both for University courses and College residence, were paid in full by the Church, and those resigning within ten years were no longer asked to repay. From the mid 1960s when candidates were permitted to marry in the later part of their course, an allowance to enable living off campus was provided. The same applied to married candidates who were permitted to study in the Theological Hall rather than spending all six years on Probation. Were these more generous provisions beneficial for those in training? In the view of some in the Conference, not necessarily, as we shall see later.

3. Ecumenical co-operation

As early as 1876 the Wesleyan Conference extolled the virtues, if not the necessity, of union with the other Methodist Churches, which was finally effected in 1901. Preparation for this union included the appointment, in 1899, of a joint committee for the examination of candidates. In 1902, at the first Annual Victoria and Tasmania Conference of the Methodist Church of Australasia, it was noted that there were two ordinands, nine students in the Theological Institution and ten on Probation. The union saw no change to the way Wesleyan candidates had previously been prepared for ministry, although further co-operation with the Congregational College was recommended. In the years 1904, 1905 and 1906 the Victorian Council of Churches recommended that its member Churches should set up a United Board of Examiners in theology. Conference endorsed the proposal, but it did not come to fruition.

In 1912, following another failed attempt to have the Charter of the University of Melbourne amended to include a Faculty of Divinity, the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD) was established by Act of Parliament. The College Board comprised representatives from the Church of England, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches, with the Churches of Christ a co-opted

[6] Minutes of Conference, 1915.

member. The College had no Faculty and did not itself undertake teaching. Its primary function was as an examining body, offering a post-graduate Bachelor of Divinity degree to those who met the requirements of the prescribed and examined curriculum, and a Licentiate in Theology to those without a primary degree. At the time this did not bring about significant change to courses taught to candidates at Queen's, but as time went on these became more closely aligned to MCD examination requirements. Since this gradual re-alignment was also occurring in the theological colleges of other churches, this paved the way in later years for more closely integrated teaching. Conference minutes of the 1920s and 30s record some combined Methodist-Congregational and Methodist-Baptist teaching, but this was sporadic.

In the 1950s, after the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches began formal negotiations toward union, more combined classes were held, and by the mid-60s all the classes for Queen's and Ormond College theological students were combined. Congregationalists and Trinity College theological faculties followed suit, and a Joint Senatus was formed in 1967. Soon after, following the decision post-Vatican II that Catholic ordinands could take post-graduate studies in an ecumenical context, the Jesuits moved their theological college from Sydney to property adjacent to the University of Melbourne, and joined what then became the United Faculty of Theology in 1970. Just prior to this the Melbourne College of Divinity made three decisions that have led to Melbourne's becoming a pre-eminent centre for theological studies in Australia, perhaps in the Southern Hemisphere. First, the application from the Catholic Church to become a full member of the College was met with enthusiastic support, thus widening its ecumenical scope. Second, the College determined to offer a primary degree (Bachelor of Theology) which enabled many more candidates to prepare for MCD degrees. Third, the College moved to recognize the theological colleges of its constituent churches as Teaching Institutions of the MCD, thus aligning the teaching in these colleges more closely and allowing students enrolled in one Institution to take courses for degree credit in another.

III. Some Definitive Events

1. The Location of the Theological Hall.

Two decades after Queen's College was founded with its dual purpose there were still some in the Conference uneasy about having ministerial candidates as members of the University College, and in 1915 the advisability of separating the Theological Hall from the College was again formally canvassed. Debate was precipitated by the recognition that the dual role of Master of Queen's and Theological tutor, which Dr. Sugden had been fulfilling from the beginning, had, with the increased numbers of students, become too onerous. A committee was set up to advise the Conference on whether the Hall should continue at Queen's, with the appointment of an additional tutor, or whether a theological institution should be set up in another location and with its own staff. The report of the committee received at the following Conference recommended the former course, and Conference agreed. The appointment of a theological tutor to oversee work in the Hall was postponed because of the 1914-18 war, and it was not until 1921 that the Revd. A. E. Albiston was appointed Professor of Theology and Principal of the Theological Hall. From that time the roles of Principal of the Hall and Master of the College remained separate. Theological students were to remain responsible to the Master in matters regarding 'the internal discipline of the College,' while the Theological Professor would direct their studies within the Hall.

2. The Impact of the World Wars.

Work in the Theological Hall, as might be expected, was not exempt from the upheaval in the nation at large caused by World War I. A resolution of the Annual Conference of 1916 reflected the view generally held in the Church, that 'Great Britain and her allies are fighting for a cause that is pre-eminently a righteous one, as it is being waged against forces which are inimical to the liberties and welfare of the world at large.'[7] Theological students were granted permission to suspend their studies in order to enlist (five did so in 1916). The minutes of 1917 record that six candidates were serving in the AIF, two of whom were later killed, and no candidates were received for training. In his report to Conference, the Master of the

[7] Minutes of Annual Conference, 1916.

College stated that the work of the Theological Hall had been practically suspended, with only two candidates resident in College. The 1919 minutes record that fifty past and present theological students had been on active service, ten of whom had given their lives. Activities in College and Hall were getting back to normal by 1920 and in 1921 nine candidates were received, bringing the total number in training to seventeen.

It does not appear, from Conference minutes of the period, that World War II had the same drastic effects on ministerial training as World War I, although some candidates did enlist, the 1941 Conference recording in language typical of the period that two of these had 'heard the bugles of England calling and could not stay in College beyond the first term.'[8] The war did result in a shortage of ministers in circuits, and some candidates had their studies in College curtailed in order to meet the shortfall. In 1942 there were sixteen candidates resident in Queen's, but only one of these in the fourth year that Conference had mandated a few years earlier. The Professor of Theology at the time (Revd. Dr. Calvert Barber) repeatedly pleaded with Conference to safeguard this fourth year when, following University study for the BA degree, candidates could give full attention to their theological studies. One incidental effect of the war was that soon after it ended two married candidates were permitted to reside at Queen's and study in the Theological Hall. They were ex-servicemen living in College during the week and at home on the weekends.

2. Postgraduate Study Overseas.

Since no tertiary institution in Australia offered post-graduate courses in theological studies, those very few Victorian ministers who went overseas to study did so at British universities. This changed in the 1940s. In 1941 Dr. Lynn Harold Hough, Dean of the Divinity School at Drew University in New Jersey, USA, came to Australia to deliver the Cato Lecture, a lecture given at the triennial meeting of General Conference.[9] Impressed by the undergraduate courses given at Queen's, but noting the dearth of opportunities for post-graduate study, he offered to make available a tuition

[8] Minutes of Conference, 1941.

[9] The title of his lecture, and its later expanded published version was *Adventures in Understanding* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1941). As was customary at the time for Cato Lecturers, Hough also gave addresses in other centres in Australia.

scholarship at Drew 'to one of our graduate students' as Conference minutes noted, and the offer was received with gratitude. The first graduate selected, John Westerman, was ready to sail to the US to take up the scholarship when Pearl Harbor intervened, and so the arrangement could not proceed. Colin Williams was the first to benefit from the scheme, travelling to Drew in 1948 and returning to Australia four years later. I was the next to benefit, beginning in 1954 with study for BD and then for a PhD, returning in 1959. A number of Methodist candidates or ordained ministers from Victoria and other states followed, many themselves returning to take up positions in theological education, and this paved the way for many more to study in other Universities in the USA, while others continued to go to Britain, to Cambridge in particular.

3. The Challenges of the 1960s.

At the beginning of the decade the future seemed bright. Candidate numbers were at an all-time high. There were more than a hundred preparing for ordination, of whom forty-seven were probationers in circuit appointments, sixty-four were students in the Hall, and eight were undertaking further study overseas. With the Conference levy set at 9% the perennial problem of under-funding seemed a thing of the past. With negotiations for Church union proceeding, the Conference opened the way to closer integration of courses taught with Ormond College by extending years in the Hall from four to five, and later to six, and by 1964 all courses were taught in combined classes. The six year course enabled all students to complete three years of theological study after their three years at University. Because of the extended length of the Hall course, students in their later years were permitted to marry, and residences for married students were provided off-campus.

Just when the hopes for theological education expressed in former years – a fully funded University course followed by three years theological study in an ecumenical context – it seemed were being fulfilled, problems were becoming apparent. Those candidates who had to travel interstate for their University study (due to quota restrictions at the University of Melbourne) were not finding it easy, on their return to Melbourne, to integrate well into the existing Hall community. Because of the Arts quota and the higher age of those offering as candidates and others permitted to marry, fewer students were living in Queen's.

Most critical was the upheaval in society as a whole, when many traditional attitudes and beliefs were being radically challenged. The church began to reflect these changes, especially the challenges to customary ways of doing and seeing things, the shift in attitude toward authority, and the polarization of the people and loss of confidence in elected representatives caused by continuing participation in the war in Vietnam.[10] Within the church the change could be seen particularly in a questioning of the traditional role and place of the ordained ministry. The 1966 Conference Minutes record that 'Contemporary theological issues such as the nature and relevance of the ordained ministry, the place of local congregations in relation to the Church's mission and the challenge to traditional beliefs have naturally had their impact.'[11] With the call to the church to be in the world, 'where the action is,' the traditional ministerial role of leading the gathered congregation in worship and ministering to their needs was downgraded. Consequently many ministers tried to reinterpret their role by being effective in areas other than preaching and pastoring – as educators, counsellors, managers, enablers or social activists. Many resigned to fulfil precisely one or other of these roles within the community at large, believing that there they could give full attention to these roles, unfettered by what they saw as ecclesiastical restraints.

Worse was to come, namely a radical challenge not just to ministry but to the place of the church itself, and indeed to the validity of faith. Under the heading of 'secularization' the argument was advanced that God's gift of freedom to humankind included human independence that came when the Creator cut loose the parental ties, allowing humankind to operate within a secular society without religious restraints. Thus would humans develop to the full their potential given by the Creator. That argument, coupled with the prevailing challenge to authority in the community at large, was enough to unsettle a great many candidates and younger ministers, leading to wholesale resignations. In the three years at the end of the decade about half the candidates and probationers in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference resigned, coinciding with a marked decline in church membership among the under-forties. So this

[10] This paragraph and the following are a revised version of observations I made in a 1999 lecture *Queen's College and its Theologs* Friends of the Library, Occasional Paper No. 8, March 1999.
[11] Minutes of Conference, 1966.

irony – just as theological education at Queen's came closest to realizing its ideal, even such excellent preparation was not proof against this most serious and complex of challenges.

As well, the benefits of fully funding candidates for their six years of training were seriously questioned, and the negative effects of dependence were being registered. Minutes of the 1967 Conference recorded the question, 'What can it do to a student to have the Church fund, house and teach throughout training?' The answer - encourage irresponsibility, obscure the relevance of the idea of sacrifice, cause insensitivity to the needs of others, and foster a culture of dependence and the view that the church 'owes candidates a living.' It was further noted that 'examples of all of these can be cited from within the Victorian/Tasmanian Theological Hall,' and consequently 'it would seem advantageous if candidates gained as much of their education as possible at their own expense, and if the period of total support were kept to a minimum.'[12]

4. Women Candidates.

Another feature of the 1960s was far more positive. In 1966, following a report from a committee set up three years earlier, the General Conference determined that women should be accepted as candidates for the ordained ministry, and that the process of candidature and training should be just the same as for men.[13] Soon afterwards the Victoria and Tasmania Conference received its first women candidates, and they began training within the Hall. Some had already been attending classes, along with their contemporary Presbyterians, as Deaconess candidates. Residence at Queen's was not at this time possible as the College did not admit women students until 1973, but at least one candidate was resident in the adjacent St. Hilda's College.

IV. Final Restructuring

In response to the critical years at the end of the sixties, but also building on positive developments of earlier years (e.g. ecumenical co-operation, MCD first degree course (B.Theol), supervised field

[12] Minutes of Conference, 1967.

[13] In 1936 the General Conference had declined to move in this direction, instead noting that while there were no theological objections to having women ministers, there were 'practical reasons.' What these were was never spelled out, and the issue was not formally addressed again until the 1960s.

education, full three year theological studies course) a significant restructuring occurred, and in 1973 a pattern of training was agreed which continued, with only minor modification, until union. Major features of this pattern were:

- All accepted candidates were required to undertake a course of at least three years, comprising biblical studies, theology, church history and field education.
- Those who already had a University degree would undertake the course preparing them for the MCD degree of Bachelor of Divinity.
- Those without a degree, but having matriculated, would have a four year course leading to the degree of Bachelor of Theology.
- Those who had not matriculated would undertake a four year 'Hall course,' with content substantially the same as for the BTheol.
- Accepted candidates would pay no fees for the courses taught within the Theological Hall, now a constituent member of the United Faculty of Theology.
- No finance would be available for pre-candidates or candidates who chose to undertake a University degree course. Government decision to provide 'free' University education made this latter provision less onerous than would have been the case in previous years.

In 1974, of the thirty-one candidates studying within the Hall, only one was resident in Queen's because most candidates were 'mature age', many married, and very few undertaking University studies, making residence in Queen's either impossible or not appropriate. So by the time of union, ministerial education in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference was in 'Collegiate context' only to the extent that classes were taught within Queen's and Methodist Professors lived on campus and were Senior Members of the College.

V. Conclusion

In 1975, at what was expected to be the final meeting of Annual Conference before union, the Principal of the Theological Hall, Dr. L.D. Fullerton, included in his report a section entitled *Looking*

Ahead.[14] It is worth quoting some relevant sections:

- 'It is unwise to assume the role of the prophet. However, there are some indications of developments that will probably influence the future shape of theological education in Melbourne.'
- 'The Theological Hall will become much more concerned with the theological education of the whole people of God. The days are past when theological colleges accepted only candidates studying for ordination. Implied in this is a recognition that ministry will become much more diversified.' Since 1970 there had been people taking courses in the United Faculty of Theology who were not candidates. Now, in 2012, those preparing for ordination are in the minority.

- 'The Theological Hall must become more directly involved in continuing education for ministry. This will obviously include a particular responsibility for post-ordination study.' Continuing education is now an integral function of the Theological College, co-ordinated by a full-time staff member.

- 'Our relation to the Third World will become more important. The Revd. I. S. Tuwere, Principal of the Methodist Theological College, Davuilevi, Fiji, has been enrolled to do postgraduate work in the United Faculty. There will be similar opportunities open to us.' Sevate Tuwere completed a successful course and received an MCD doctorate. Some years later he was appointed to teach in the Methodist College in Auckland. In succeeding years a number of candidates from the Third World have studied in the Hall, some returning to their countries of origin, some having already migrated to Australia and have become Methodist, now Uniting Church ministers.

In March 1888 an article in *The Spectator* reflected the hopes of those advocating a Theological Hall within Queen's College: 'In the

[14] In fact union was delayed until 1977 due to a Presbyterian request for minor modifications to be made to the Basis of Union.

future our ministers will be a better prepared and furnished ministry, a ministry equal to the times, i.e. equal to any demand which, in these days of education and science, shall be made upon it by an educated and exacting public.'[15]

Had they lived to the time of union, would they have seen their hopes fulfilled? Certainly they would have been disappointed to find no theological student resident in Queen's. Nevertheless they would have been encouraged to find that candidates for ordination, women among them were studying, not only in a thoroughly ecumenical faculty, but in a diverse community in which lay people, to whom candidates in the course of things would be ministering, were increasingly present. And although being older and usually married made it impossible for candidates to live in Queen's, some of the value of engagement with students of other faculties that residence had provided in previous years was already built in to these older students, most of whom had served many years in the workplace. So, would those with the original vision for ministerial education in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference have agreed that candidates a century later were being adequately equipped to fulfil a ministry 'equal to the times'? All things considered, I believe they would.

[15] *The Spectator*, March 1888.

THE INFLUENCE OF WESLEYAN SOURCES AND THEOLOGY ON THE SALVATION ARMY'S MINISTRY IN SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC POLICY IN NEW ZEALAND

David Noakes and Campbell Roberts

This article discusses the ongoing influence of William Booth's Wesleyan theological heritage upon the Salvation Army in New Zealand. It argues that the impact of Wesleyan thought has enabled the Salvation Army to hold its evangelistic and social imperatives in dynamic tension and considers how the recent recovery of Wesleyan theological roots has impacted the Salvation's Army's involvement in the social and public spheres of New Zealand life.

2012 marks the 100th anniversary of William Booth's death. His influence upon the Salvation Army's work and theology remains strong. Over recent years a number of historians and researchers have published accounts of William (and Catherine) Booth's work which have drawn attention to Booth's earlier revivalistic emphasis during the days of the Christian Mission and early Salvation Army contrasted with a significant emphasis on social action in the latter period of Booth's life.[1] These works have been in marked contrast to earlier works like St John Irvine in 1934 who offered little interpretative comment on any kind of change in Booth's outlook except to note that at age 60 'Booth was now a popular Public Person' and at age 80 'he was old and ill and his heart was haunted by a fear that he had allowed philanthropy to take the place of religion in his Army.'[2]

---

[1] These have included Roger Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth, Founder of The Salvation Army* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005); Norman Murdoch, *Origins of The Salvation Army* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1994); Roy Hattersley, *Blood and Fire: William and Catherine Booth and their Salvation Army* (London: Abacus, 2000); David Bennett, *The General: William Booth* 2 vols. (Longwood, Florida: Yulon Press, 2003); and Pamela L. Walker, *Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

[2] St John Ervine, *God's Soldier: General William Booth* (London: Heineman Ltd, 1934), 741, 798.

In the 1880s something of a dramatic change appeared to take place in Booth as he embarked on a major campaign for social reform. The focus of this move was centred on a farm-based immigration scheme known as the *In Darkest England* scheme designed to lift the poorest of Britain's population out of abject poverty and deprivation. The scheme itself had limited success but it was the impetus to the creation of a large social welfare organisation within the Salvation Army. This was also the period when Booth embarked on some very significant programmes in social justice and reform including the Maiden Tribute campaign, aimed at raising the age of consent to sixteen years and putting an end to child trafficking and prostitution.

Various explanations have been offered for Booth's change in direction although he always remained at heart a committed evangelical revivalist. Norman Murdoch claims that the movement was faltering and needed a fresh impetus. 'Booth had always been sure that a Christian world would be achieved by revival means he had learned in the 1840s. But the world of the 1880s had frustrated that hope…in his own Salvation Army, which was experiencing stagnation. By 1889 Booth was turning in new directions.'[3] Roger Green argues for a maturing change in Booth.

> Booth concluded that he had two gospels to preach - a gospel of redemption from personal sin and a gospel of redemption from social evil. He broadened his theological language to take into account his changed theology. He added new meaning and a new dimension to the redemptive theological language that he had been expressing for years. Salvation now had social obligations as well as spiritual ones.[4]

Others point to the influence of individuals upon his thinking. Steele refers to Booth as a 'dominant but plastic personality that yielded to the pressure of personalities who worked under his command.'[5] Murdoch points to Commissioner Frank Smith who later became a socialist politician as a key player in influencing 'Booth's change of mind.'[6] Bennett argues that Smith's influence was not as critical to Booth's change of thinking in the late 1880s as was Catherine Booth's encouragement and interest in the Darkest

[3] Murdoch, *Origins of the Salvation Army,* 145.
[4] Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth*,176.
[5] Harold C Steele, *I Was a Stranger: The Fact of William Booth of The Salvation Army* (New York: Exposition Press, 1954), 50-51.
[6] Murdoch, *The Origins of The Salvation Army*, 163.

England scheme prior to her death in 1890.[7] Wider social events and trends occurring in England at the time are considered by some to be important including economic depression, the collapse of British agriculture and the failure of social aid agencies under the Charity Aid Organisation as well as the wider church.[8]

This article argues that by the end of the 1880s and early 1890s Booth had achieved the financial and personnel resources along with the public support to embark on what had always been part of him as a committed Wesleyan. He had in his son Bramwell a consummate administrator as Chief of Staff and in extensive Orders and Regulations the governance structure required to undertake a major new undertaking. A large officer force of trained and committed Salvationists offered the manpower (and woman power) to act. There had been other significant evidences of social work in the earlier Army and Christian Mission but these had lacked the resources and expertise to be ongoing. These resources were now available as well as a level of public acceptance which had previously been lacking. What emerged in the 1880s and 1890s was an expression of who Booth had been from his early adulthood now made possible through a significant change in circumstances.

William Booth was converted at Broad Street Methodist Chapel in Nottingham at the age of fifteen. As an employee of a pawnbroker he was intimately aware on a daily basis of the realities of poverty around him. At one point he was unemployed for a year. Later, he threw his lot in with the Methodist New Connexion as an evangelist and circuit pastor. He was to withdraw from the Methodist New Connexion out of frustration over its lengthy committee processes and systems of governance but he was never to leave Wesleyan doctrine and outlook. The Methodist New Connexion's doctrines became in large measure the doctrines of the Salvation Army. Two quotes will need to suffice to illustrate Booth's commitment to Methodist belief and practice: 'I worshipped everything that bore the name Methodist. To me there was one God and John Wesley was his prophet.'[9] In 1885 Booth was interviewed by *The Methodist Times* and asked if he had any special advice for Methodists. The reply was swift and unequivocal: 'Follow Wesley, glorious John Wesley.'[10]

---

[7] Bennett, *The General, vol. 2,* 293-294.
[8] Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth,* 168-69, 171-72.
[9] Harold Begbie, *The Life of General William Booth, Vol II* (London: MacMillan & Co Ltd, 1926), 367-368.
[10] Hugh Price Hughes, 'An Interview with William Booth on The Salvation Army', *The Methodist Times, (*February 1885): 81-82.

Green observes that 'To miss this Methodist nurturing in the broader framework of the evangelicalism of nineteenth century England…is to misinterpret William Booth from the beginning and to see him as a-theological.'[11] Harry Jeffs writes, 'Undoubtedly the Army owes its existence to the fact that General Booth was a Methodist. It was in Methodism that he served his apprenticeship as an organiser…It is the Methodist theology of personal experience of salvation, the theology of the love of God, the theology of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the only thorough and permanent reforming agency that has been the mainspring of Salvation Army organisation.'[12]

If Wesleyan Methodism was such a formative and influential element in Booth's life, then it is important to identify social imperatives and impulses within John Wesley himself. This is an important exercise because it is not always readily recognised by Methodist commentators who are also embarked on the task of rediscovering identity in the current context. Randy Maddox comments on this. 'Wesley's descendents rather quickly dismissed him as a model for theological activity, and this dismissal widely led to the loss of the distinctive tension of his concern for responsible grace.'[13]

Wesley's social impetus was always integral to his wider commitment to holiness and was a direct expression of it. Howard Snyder observes that:

> For Wesley, holiness and good works were one piece. He saw 'faith, holiness and good works as the root, the tree and the fruit, which God had joined and man ought not to put asunder.' He especially stressed prayer, the Eucharist, Bible study, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, helping the stranger, and visiting or relieving the sick and imprisoned. He would have disputed any claim to holiness not matched by good works.[14]

James Logan observes how the Wesleyan-holiness movement

---

[11] Roger Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 36.
[12] Harry Jeffs, 'The Man and His Work,' in R. G. Moyles: *I Knew William Booth: An Album of Remembrance* (Alexandria, Virginia: Crest Books, 2007): 36-37.
[13] Randy Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994), 256.
[14] Howard Snyder, *The Radical Wesley and Patterns for Church Renewal* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1980), 120.

'saw the doctrine of entire sanctification inescapably bound with abolition, the plight of the poor and the enfranchisement of women.'[15] Don Thorsen observes that Wesley was 'concerned as much for the spiritual and moral well being of society as for the spiritual and moral well being of individuals.'[16] And Theodore Jennings notes, 'Wesley directed himself to the poor of England and away from the prosperous and the prestigious. We may imagine that this was simply a form of especially idealistic piety or even a misguided and ultimately failed strategy. It was the rigorous application to the field of proclamation and community formation of the being of God.'[17]

Wesley's social action can be grouped into three kinds of responses. Firstly, there was a pastoral response to the plight of individuals. His journal is laced with accounts of visits to individuals in prisons and also ministry to those condemned to meet the hangman's noose. He records 'on Friday and Saturday I visited as many more as I could. I found some in their cells under ground; others in their garrets, half starved both with cold and with hunger, added to their weakness and pain.'[18]

The second level of response was in the form of localised action to presenting needs.

> But I was still in pain for many of the poor that were sick; there was so great expense and so little profit…At length I thought of a desperate expedient. 'I will prepare and give them physical myself'…I took into my assistance an apothecary and an experienced surgeon; resolving at the time not to go out of my depth but to leave all difficult and complicated cases to the physicians as the patients should choose.[19]

Other localised schemes included the provision for widows, education of children in Sunday schools, financial lending services and strangely enough, the use of electric shock treatment for the

---

[15] James Logan, 'Offering Christ: Wesleyan Evangelism Today' in Randy Maddox, *Rethinking Wesleys Theology for Contemporary Methodism* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1998), 125-126.
[16] Don Thorsen, *The Wesleyan Quadrilateral* (Leamington: Emeth Press, 2005), 152-153.
[17] Theodore Jennings, 'Transcendence, Justice and Mercy,' in Maddox, *Rethinking Wesley's Theology,* 82.
[18] *The Journal of John Wesley*, Ed. Percy Livingstone Parker (Chicago: Moody Press), 192.
[19] Mildred Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1972), 61-63.

treatment of a range of ailments which Wesley claimed brought relief to many hundreds of patients.[20]

Wesley's third response was at a wider social level incorporating major social issues of the time, specifically slavery and liberal alcohol laws. J. Wesley Breadey claimed that he showed 'an alert, intimate and life long interest in the 'bread and butter' problems of life…he was more familiar with the life of the poor than any man of his age; he knew that many of them dwelt in cellars and attics, amongst verminous surroundings, lacking warmth, raiment and decent victuals.'[21]

Wesley's opposition to slavery and its accompanying horrific trade was long standing and constant. In his *Serious Address to the People of England* (1777) he thundered: 'I would to God that it never be found any more! That we may never more steal and sell our brothers like beasts, never murder them by the thousands and tens of thousands!…Never was anything such a reproach to England since it was a nation as having any hand in this execrable traffic.'[22] Breadey also points out that Wesley's last written letter was six days before his death and was addressed to William Wilberforce. 'O be not weary in well doing. Go on, in the name of God and in the power of his might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it.'[23]

Wesley's opposition to the liquor industry which thrived under liberal legislation is perhaps not so well known. In 1794 he wrote to the Prime Minister, 'Suppose your influence could prevent distilling by making it a felony, you would do more service to your country than any Prime Minister has done these 100 years.'[24] Also not so well known was his concern and practical action to assist French prisoners of war who were being kept under inhumane conditions in Bristol in addition to his campaigns to improve prison conditions at large.

In all this it should be noted that Wesley remained an ardent political conservative but he did not hesitate to embark as a radical reformer when social or legislative sanctions worsened the plight of people.

---

[20] *The Journal of John Wesley*, 218.
[21] J. Wesley Bready, *England Before and After Wesley* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1938), 238.
[22] Bready, 227.
[23] Bready, 228.
[24] Bready, 244.

This has been only a very brief outline of one aspect of the theology and ministry of the man who undoubtedly had the greatest influence upon William Booth as founder of the Salvation Army who in turn has continued to be the major determinant in the Army's ongoing social service ministry and commitment to responding to social justice issues within the public sphere.

During recent years a new urgency has emerged within the Salvation Army in New Zealand to have a closer alignment between its evangelistic and social agenda. It has been thought important that not only should there be a synergy between aspects of theology, evangelism, social service and social reform but that the organisation itself should be able to articulate and explain how and why that linking in ministry and service occurs. In the process of moving to this position, more attention has been paid to the Salvation Army's historical mandate and theology. This has laid bare our Wesleyan roots and given us a greater appreciation of their impact and value. Our journey toward a more integrated mission is a relatively recent one, with most of the real drive coming within the last ten years. To this extent, it is unclear whether what we are observing is a permanent change in how the Salvation Army in New Zealand undertakes its ministry, or whether more pressing environmental or international factors may arrest this approach.

From an early period, the Salvation Army in New Zealand separated its evangelistic and social wings administratively, financially and missionally. This gradually became entrenched, to the point that these ministries became two entities. It was common to talk about Salvation Army officers being 'field officers' (i.e clergy) or 'social officers' (involved in social service work) as if there was a 'great divide' between the two.

From the 1950s and 1960s, the Salvation Army in New Zealand moved to more strongly professionalise and separate its social services. This came about from numerous drivers. The external environment increasingly demanded such professionalism; better educated and more highly skilled social service officers and practitioners were staffing our services; and there was an increasing demand of professionalism related to government funding contracts. The Salvation Army's theological imprimatur on its social service operation could best be described as a loose belief that loving God meant loving others - hence, 'social services' were justified as Christian acts. This was a well intentioned but somewhat theologically soft approach. During this period, there seems to have been little serious attempt to articulate and thus connect the Army's

increasing social service activity to a serious missional or theological mandate or framework of understanding. Where such a framework was clear, it was usually individually, rather than organisationally, held. Generally, it could be argued that Christian pragmatism rather than Christian theology influenced how the Salvation Army undertook its social and public ministry. This was not necessarily a bad general landscape from which to be offering ministry; however, it was insufficient for continuity and validation within a Christian mission approach.

The last decade has seen a reaction to this from within the organisation and a demand that ministries of social service and social reform are more unified with faith and evangelism.[25] Part of this was a growing international awareness of our Wesleyan doctrinal tradition.[26] The rediscovery and reaffirmation of our Wesleyan roots appears to have been strongest in the older Commonwealth countries of Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. A variety of factors has contributed to this drive to connect theology, evangelism, worship and ministry in the public sphere. The Church is always impacted by its cultural environment – in negative and positive ways. This has certainly been true for the Salvation Army in New Zealand. The rise of economic liberalism since the 1980s has contributed to the Salvation Army reconnecting in greater depth to its theological foundations. Economic liberalism has brought with it tendencies for self interest, dominance of the individual, dominance of the market, secularism and competitiveness. Additionally, there has been an increasing gap between rich and the poor. Inequality in any society has been postulated by Wilkinson and Pickett as being responsible for significant social harm and distress.[27]

John Wesley's concern for the plight of the poor is in stark contrast to the outcomes that economic liberalism delivers. Wesley understood that God always sided with the poor. Therefore, he reasoned, Christians must always be with and for the poor. The Church must reject and resist cultures that worship wealth, power, consumerism, materialism, and individualism. Holiness of heart and

---

[25] *Shaping the Future of the Army, Territorial Strategic Mission Plan* (Wellington, 2006).
[26] Earl Robinson, 'Wesleyan Distinctives in Salvation Army Theology,' http://www.salvationist.org/extranet_main.nsf/vw_sublinks/8E93913570C2699B80256F16006D3C6F?openDocument accessed 11 December 2012.
[27] Richard G. Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level*: *Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better* (London: Allen Lane, 2009).

life calls Christians to be with the poor, because when we spend time with them, know their names, listen to their struggles and support them in their efforts to live in dignity, we do the work of Christ. In his sermon 'Visiting the Sick', Wesley writes:

> One great reason why the rich, in general, have so little sympathy for the poor, is because they so seldom visit them. Hence it is that, according to the common observation, one part of the world does not know what the other suffers. Many of them do not know, because they do not care to know: they keep out of the way of knowing it; and then plead their voluntary ignorance an excuse for their hardness of heart. 'Indeed, Sir' said a person of large substance, 'I am a very compassionate man. But, to tell you the truth, I do not know anybody in the world that is in want.' How did this come to pass? Why, he took good care to keep out of their way; and if he fell upon any of them unawares 'he passed over on the other side.'[28]

More economically liberal policies in New Zealand have increased the number of people in poverty turning to The Salvation Army for help. In the face of this, the Salvation Army has not been limited to operating in a more academically-influenced, professionalised approach, but to find ways of creating community and connection with people.[29] The result has been that the poor have become known and named and included within our Christian community. In the past ten years the Salvation Army at a congregational level seems to have become less middle class, and many of its congregations are increasingly comprised of people whose first contact was with the social and community services of the movement. An external context of economic liberalism seems to have challenged the Army to rediscover its roots and the essentials of its theology. At the same time, there has been more enthusiasm to understand the theology and early history of the Salvation Army.

Another external factor influential in this reconnection with the roots of faith has been an increased awareness in the public space of bi-culturalism and the vital importance of honouring the Treaty of Waitangi. The impact of Māori on the way public policy is viewed in New Zealand in recent years in terms of public organisation and policy has started everyone on a journey to better recognise elements of the partnership for which the Treaty provides. Although

[28] John Wesley, Sermon 98, 'On Visiting the Sick,' in Albert C. Outler, ed. *The Works of John Wesley vol. 3 Sermons III, 71-114* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1986), 384-397.
[29] *Shaping the Future of the Army, Territorial Strategic Mission Plan* (Wellington, 2006).

New Zealand is very secular in outlook, the impact of recognising our partnership with Māori has been to cause public policy to have a greater regard for faith and the spiritual dimension of life. This is, in my experience, unusual in Western democracies.

One public aspect of this is found in the religious ceremony and prayer associated with pōwhiri (welcomes) and other Māori cultural protocols at government occasions. This recognition of Māori religious ceremony and spirituality has provided new opportunity and acceptance for faith communities to be who they are and to have some acknowledgement of their own faith heritage. An example of this is found in a Memorandum of Understanding that the Salvation Army has with the Ministry of Social Development. In that document, the following statement is made:

> The Ministry of Social Development acknowledges that The Salvation Army is an evangelical church and human resources provider, with its message based on the Bible, its ministry motivated by the love of God and its mission to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human need without discrimination. This involves The Salvation Army in caring for people, transforming lives through God in Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and working for the reform of society by alleviating poverty, deprivation and disadvantage and by challenging evil, injustice and oppression.[30]

That statement represents a significant acknowledgement of the faith tradition and motivation of a service partner. But it is not only recognition of the uniqueness of our faith tradition; it is also recognition that part of that ministry may be to challenge government itself. The Salvation Army works in over 120 countries in the world and, to date, I have not been able to find one other instance where a government has included in a contract such explicit reference to the faith-based role of our organisation. In fact, in some Western democracies the Salvation Army is forced to operate two organisations and have an organisational and governance split between its church base and its social base. So, for us in New Zealand, an outcome of the Treaty of Waitangi is that it has nurtured a unique opportunity to foster a rediscovering and reemphasis of the Salvation Army theological story and journey. That rediscovery has included a greater understanding of the biblical theme of justice, a deeper faith-to-life connection, increased biblical literacy, and a

[30] 'Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Social Development and The Salvation Army,' 2006.

desire to be missional in a way that makes a real difference in people's everyday lives.

Wesley's social impetus was always integral to his wider commitment to holiness and was a direct expression of it. This trait is seen in the contemporary efforts of Salvation Army ministry in corps and social centres in New Zealand, to place more importance on theological direction and consistency in our social services. Frequently Salvation Army social services now integrate worship and mission in more relevant and connected ways. Worshipping Salvationists are more likely to be on the staff of our social services, thereby providing a connecting bridge between these activities and the worshipping and congregational life of the Salvation Army. Our Community Ministries centres which used to be separate services for welfare provision are now largely integrated with a local Salvation Army congregation. There is more of a ministry 'with' than a ministry 'for' occurring, with reflection of this in our strategic planning and social reform agendas. Ten years ago, few Salvation Army corps would have had organised social or Community Ministries expressions as part of their congregational life. Or, if it was present it would have been undertaken by a corps officer. Now, the great majority of congregations have a community or social expression, training and engaging members of their congregation in that ministry. The community itself, rather than the church building, is increasingly seen as the centre of the mission. We understand that wherever human activity occurs is important to God and therefore the public space is a vital context of ministry. The importance of that public space is seen in the development of the Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit which undertakes a specific ministry focused on the issues and people at the centre of New Zealand public policy.

There is also a new awareness that part of our theological DNA is to believe that no one is beyond redemption or cast aside from the grace and love of God. About five years ago, the Salvation Army in New Zealand started to work alongside a chapter of the Mongrel Mob one of New Zealand's largest and most troublesome criminal gangs. The Mongrel Mob is perhaps one of the most despised groups in New Zealand society. This work has been difficult to undertake because the almost universal rejection of these gang members by New Zealanders means that it is almost impossible for the Salvation Army to find locations where neighbours are comfortable for us to run programmes with the Mob. It has also meant that, at times, our ministry methods have been challenged by members of the Mob leading to changes in how this ministry is undertaken. A key

determinant throughout this partnership journey has been a determination to remain 'with' the Mob, continuing this connection and ministry despite any organisational threats. I think this demonstrates a greater adherence to our theological and mission purpose in an activity reflecting principles that are at the heart of Wesleyan theology.

Joseph Benson's biography of Wesley cites Woodfall in the following description of Wesley:

> He penetrated the abodes of wretchedness and ignorance, to rescue the profligate from perdition; and he communicated the light of life to those in darkness and the shadow of death. He changed the outcasts of society into useful members; civilised even savages, and filled those lips with prayer and praise that had been accustomed only to oaths and imprecations.[31]

In ministry with the Mongrel Mob, this theological tradition is maintained. Wheeler notes,

> When Wesley confronted problems as massive and widespread as poverty in 18th century England, or the international slave trade, or the decay of justice and respect for law in his own day, he did not stop with condemnations: he searched for causes. He looked for patterns and relationships that explained why problems existed and how they might effectively be attacked.[32]

The Salvation Army has focused in its ministry more on causes as it has rediscovered its Wesleyan roots with a greater understanding of biblical justice. Eight years ago, the Territory was led to question the effectiveness of its social services operation in achieving real change for those it served. A survey of New Zealand social indicators in 2003 revealed that despite significant efforts in social provision, the Salvation Army had failed to arrest a decline in the social circumstances of New Zealand's most vulnerable groups in all the areas in which it was working.[33] We were bringing some people to faith, we were doing a huge task of offering loving care to individuals through a wide range of social services, but in the Gospel

[31] Joseph Benson, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley* (London, 1811), 489.
[32] Sondra Wheeler, 'Wesley and 'Social Ethics"
http://www.livedtheology.org/pdfs/wesleyt.pdf accessed 10 December 2012.
[33] Work undertaken by Bonnie Robinson in 2001 looking at the effectiveness of Salvation Army Social Services in South Auckland.

imperative to create a more just society we were doing and achieving little. Causes were not being addressed.

In an effort to make some impact on this situation, Salvation Army leadership approved the establishment of a specialist unit focused on engaging with social policy and areas of social justice in New Zealand. This new entity, of which I have served as Director since its inception, was formed in January 2004 and christened 'The Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit.' It was deliberately housed not at our Territorial Headquarters in Wellington or with the seat of government, but in a Salvation Army social service centre in South Auckland, a location where some of New Zealand's most deprived neighbourhoods are located. In this we hear echoes of Wesley's call to be with the marginalised. The Unit's purpose was defined as 'working towards the eradication of poverty in New Zealand.' It undertook this purpose by seeking to engage with the four hundred or so individuals who were seen to be the most influential in setting New Zealand's social and economic agenda. These individuals were generally leaders in the community, government, politics, business and commerce.

The methodologies used in the engagement with these leaders included:

- an annual programme of social policy research;
- regular publications to provoke and stimulate debate from our theological and biblical understandings around issues of social policy and social justice;
- organisation of an annual national (Just Action) conference focused on issues of biblical justice, social policy and social justice;
- judicious use of the media to raise public awareness on key social policy issues;
- the establishment of relationships with individual politicians and political parties represented in the New Zealand Parliament.

The initial research project of the Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit, a State of the Nation report entitled 'A New Zealand that Demands Attention,' identified what grassroots community and social service workers in New Zealand saw as the main drivers of need for those at the margins of New Zealand

society.[34] The release of this report was greeted with an immediate response from politicians, the media and the Units' target group of influential leaders.

In ensuing years, one area of social policy the Unit has focused on is criminal offending in New Zealand. A 2007 report, 'Beyond the Holding Tank,' was influential in driving a public and government reconsideration of crime and punishment policy.[35] In this document, the Salvation Army reflected on its own theology and missional foundations and made a case for significant reform. The report captured the attention of Government and was distributed by the Prime Minister Helen Clark to every member of Cabinet.

One of the most influential pieces of work undertaken by the Unit each year is the ongoing publication of its State of the Nation reports. At the beginning of each year the Salvation Army reports to the nation the progress it sees in five areas: the state of New Zealand's children, the adequacy of work and incomes policies, adequacy of housing provision, progress in eliminating crime and moving towards a more rehabilitative punishment regime, and progress on a range of social hazards. An attempt is made to reflect on the state of the New Zealand nation in regard to the foundational values that drive the ministry of the Salvation Army today. Another area of particular interest to the Unit has been to raise awareness of and combat human trafficking. There are strong parallels to the issues Wesley challenged when he confronted slavery in his age.

The work of the Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit has been influential in supporting a renewed understanding and outworking of the foundational beliefs of biblical justice in the life of Salvationists. Firstly, there is evidence of a deepening awareness that a more complete integration of biblical truth is required. Salvationists and staff are grappling with the biblical concept of justice, along with mercy, faith and love. Social justice has become part of our missional agenda. The Salvation Army has adopted as one of its four strategic mission goals to work toward the eradication of poverty. Ten years ago this would likely never have been accepted as such a clearly articulated strategic goal.

Without lessening our place as an evangelical church and social service provider, the Salvation Army in New Zealand has become increasingly known as a movement for social justice and

---

[34] 'A New Zealand that Demands Attention,' Auckland: Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit, 2005.

[35] 'Beyond the Holding Tank,' Auckland: Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit, 2007.

institutional change. We are better articulating the truths of the Gospel into collective situations and environments. We have also found that it is possible to be a provider of social services receiving government funding and still provide robust critique and criticism of government social policy from our theological and biblical understandings. All of this sometimes brings controversy, tension and some strain, but for many people the willingness of the Salvation Army to fight for what it believes has been a welcome development. In this, of course, we are returning to our roots and reflecting the heritage of our formative years.

Contemporary Salvation Army ministry in New Zealand reflects what we have described as Wesleyan responses. The first of these is 'pastoral.' The impact of economic liberalism, the global economic crisis and the breakdown of community have brought an onslaught of new people through the Salvation Army's doors. Part of our pastoral response has been to link people to community, a source of hope, and to social and spiritual holiness in new and exciting ways. One example of this has been a more holistic approach to addiction treatment, which has seen the rise of Recovery Churches, which are now among our largest Salvation Army congregations. Within these congregations people are finding a pastoral support and hope that radically changes lives. This is reflected in Sondra Wheeler's observation, that 'Wesley did not entertain the illusion that we could bring the good news of God's limitless love to those immersed in suffering without addressing that suffering.'[36]

Secondly as Salvation Army communities have reflected more deeply on the genesis of their organisation they have been drawn to a more integrated community approach that sees holiness not only in individual terms but in collective terms. As there has been an increasingly outward focus, faith has been re-energised in the lives of Salvation Army worshipping communities. Wheeler captures an important aspect of why this may be the case:

> [T]he loneliness of guilt and the intensely personal affirmation of knowing oneself embraced by God, Wesley addressed in much of his preaching. But I suspect that this tells us more about the effects of sin than about the nature of God's grace. It is because we are encountered by God in our sins that we are encountered alone; as in the Garden, where the first disobedience leads immediately to the first recrimination, our relation with others is the first casualty of sin.

[36] Sondra Wheeler, 'Wesley and 'Social Ethics"
http://www.livedtheology.org/pdfs/wesleyt.pdf accessed 10 December 2012.

> Conversely, the first effect of grace received is to unite us into a body, and to turn us outward toward the world as the immediate venue of Christian life and growth. To be born again is immediately and essentially to be born into a family constituted by God's universal grace.[37]

Jonathan Raymond asserts that when we look closely at Wesley's nurturing communities as continua of grace reflected in his continua of small group social contexts, a number of principles emerge that are useful in our own nurturing of faith communities. I suggest that these six principles capture the shape of public sphere and social service ministry currently emerging within the Salvation Army in New Zealand.

1. It has something for everyone – regardless of where they are in a faith journey, the faith community is there for them.
2. Ministry is based on the premise that everyone's nature is perfectible – by God's grace mediated and provided by God through the means of others. All people can and should reach toward perfection – the likeness of Christ.
3. Human progress is possible through doing – not by acting as isolated individuals. Community is something to be experienced – doing something, doing something that makes a difference, and finally knowing what difference it makes; being 'doers of the Word and not hearers only.'
4. The spirit and practice of primitive Christianity can be recaptured – in pursing the models found in the earliest faith communities (and in Wesley's legacy as well). The church, like all human organisations, can drift from its divine moorings and get off course. It is possible to correct these deviations and return to a faithful orthodoxy and orthopraxy of authentic Christian community.
5. Authentic Christian community is inclusive – it includes the oppressed, and the marginalised along with everyone else, and its inclusion is reflected in its leadership as well as its membership. The primary function of leadership is to equip others to lead and minister – not to perform the ministry personally.
6. Social evil is not simply to be resisted, but overcome with good – authentic Christian community promotes social

[37] Sondra Wheeler, 'Wesley and 'Social Ethics"
http://www.livedtheology.org/pdfs/wesleyt.pdf accessed 10 December 2012.

> reform by creating change in systems and individual members of the faith community are strengthened and equipped to help redeem victims of social injustice by overcoming evil with good.

There is no doubt that the spirit of Wesley, is contributing to a unification and renewal of the missional purpose of the Salvation Army in New Zealand. It is helping us bridge the great divide between church congregations and social expression by bringing us back to the intention of God for the Church – that we would be integrated in our own mission expression, and that we would proclaim the actuality of God's integration with the social and public spheres of his world. He is present and invites us to be present also.

This is a purpose well observed by Mark Maddix and one that provides both challenge and impetus for our activities today:

> Wesley is convinced that God's Spirit is at work everywhere in the world extending prevenient grace among all peoples. Thus, as Christians we can be assured as we go into the world to proclaim the gospel knowing that the Spirit is already present before we arrive, even as God is present in our own lives, making possible reconciliation and new birth. God's presence in every human life gives each person infinite value as the object of God's caring. If the Spirit is not intimidated by unbelief, should we be?[38]

Wesleyan sources and theology continue to play important roles in the social work of the Salvation Army and also in its efforts to impact public policy within Aotearoa New Zealand with some unique features distinctive to the Army's own traditions and theology. Undoubtedly the renewed interest in Wesleyan roots over recent years has granted the movement fresh surety as it has sought to be relevant to the current social, political and cultural scene.

[38] Mark Maddix, 'Wesleyan Theology: A Practical Theology: A Response.' http://didache.nazarene.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=65 accessed 10 December 2012.

RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH: JAMES BARKER, AN ADELAIDE DOCK STRIKE AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR MISSION OF REWRITING HISTORY

Jennifer Hein

A post-graduate thesis is expected to provide new insights, proving that previous conclusions on a topic were at best incomplete and preferably wrong. However, theology students have additional responsibilities to their fellow believers and to engage in Christian mission. This paper outlines the ethical considerations of rewriting a cherished Salvation Army historical myth which is often cited to inspire mission and reliance on the providence of God in service.

I. Introduction

If you pick up almost any book on the subject of mission you will gain the impression that it is performed by ministers of religion or at the very least those engaged in full-time Christian service. The term can be expanded to include short-term overseas mission trips to foreign countries or forays into particular contexts. These are often presented as a kind of 'taste-and-see'; participants can determine whether or not they are called to more intense mission, so they are generally seen as 'pre-mission.' With such an understanding of mission being the norm, I think I can be forgiven for initially viewing my postgraduate research as preparation for mission, rather than mission itself. Once I had completed a research masters – now upgraded to a doctorate – I would be qualified to teach at undergraduate level. I could then find a lecturing position and my real work would begin. I saw study and its accompanying responsibilities as the necessary requirements to reach my actual mission. However, I have come to realise that my research *is* part of the mission to which God has called me, rather than merely its preparation.

Before starting my thesis I completed a subject on research methods which covered ethics, most of which was irrelevant to my own work. I was not dealing with animals or chemicals and I was only interviewing humans from the distance of time. Flinders

University still required me to apply for ethics approval to gather oral history from great-grandchildren and I submit what is usually a nil report every year. I also considered the aspect of appropriate behaviour to fellow researchers and the responsibility of behaving in such a way that materials remained accessible to future researchers. What I did not consider was the implications of my research for mission. What follows is a description of a specific situation from Salvation Army history to explore the ethical issues involved in historical research and to illustrate how it impacts on the nature of mission itself; what it is, who is involved in it and the tensions it creates for researchers.

II. The Beginnings of the Salvation Army in South Australia

The first meeting of the Salvation Army in Adelaide, South Australia, was held by immigrant soldiers (lay members) on 5 September 1880. Captains Adelaide and Thomas Sutherland arrived in February 1881 and were met by sixty-eight committed soldiers carrying a huge banner proclaiming them to be the Salvation Army. This was soon replaced by the official Army flag which had been presented to the Sutherlands by Catherine Booth. The Sutherlands also brought with them twelve uniforms and a determination to grow the Army in Adelaide.[1]

The Sutherlands were typical of officers sent from Britain to the Australasian colonies. They were young, enthusiastic and had already experienced opposition, often violent, in their home country. An already-commenced hall was soon opened. It was able to hold 1200 people, and was often filled to overflowing, with additional meetings being held concurrently outside.[2] Open-air meetings continued in Light Square, the Central and East End Markets and Whitmore Square where Sutherland enthusiastically preached 'a real Hell and real Heaven and a real power to save from sin.'[3] Weekly Sunday meetings were held in Botanic Park.[4] Open-airs were

[1] *Victory,* 1897; Robert Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: vol 2 1878-1886* (New York: The Salvation Army, 1950), 245.
[2] *Chronicle*, 30 July 1881.
[3] *War Cry (London),* 30 June 1881; *War Cry* (*Adelaide),* 6 April 1883.
[4] Tradition holds that there was an open-air in Botanic Park every week from 5 September 1880 until 1947. This is supported by reports in the Adelaide *War Cry* from the first edition of 6 April 1883 onwards.

supported by the band Thomas Sutherland founded to accompany the marchers.[5]

Captain Sutherland received requests to 'open fire' from Sydney, Melbourne and 'many of the surrounding townships.'[6] A second corps at Bowden was formed by November 1881. A new hall was commenced in the centre of a brickyard, with donated bricks and labour by the soldiers themselves.[7] Corps at Port Adelaide and Norwood were operating by April 1882, all under the officership of Sutherland, assisted by part time lay leaders.[8] He was also investigating starting corps in rural areas, particularly Moonta, and expanding into other colonies, sending copies of the *War Cry* to be sold as far away as Ballarat, seven hundred miles away in Victoria.[9]

As the Australasian corps grew in number and strength, it was necessary to appoint an overall commander to maintain unity. In August 1882 Majors James and Alice Barker were sent to Adelaide to form a territorial headquarters for Australasia. James Barker had been an Anglican compositor from the Midlands when he was attracted to a Salvation Army meeting at Bethnel Green by a man calling 'fire!'[10] He was mentored in the faith by Alice Sutton who was a supervisor in a boot factory.[11] Barker worked in the Salvation Army's Whitechapel printing works before becoming an officer at Manchester I Corps, then became Assistant Divisional Commander to Colonel Josiah Taylor.[12] He was married to Alice on 9 August 1882, the day before the couple sailed for Australia.[13] It took great sacrifice to leave Britain as Alice Barker's father was terminally ill and died the following week.[14]

We come now to the problem. Tradition states that the Barkers had intended to sail to Adelaide to establish the Australasian headquarters but a waterside dispute had prevented the ship, the

---

[5] Percival Dale, *Salvation Chariot* (East Melbourne: The Salvation Army, 1952), 5.
[6] *War Cry* (London), 29 December 1881.
[7] *War Cry* (London), 22 December 1881; 2 February 1882.
[8] *War Cry* (London), 20 July 1882; *War Cry* (Adelaide), 28 September 1883; *War Cry* (Melbourne), 20 November 1897.
[9] *War Cry* (London), 30 November 1882; Percival Dale, *Salvation Cavalcade*, unpublished manuscript, 59.
[10] Minnie Carpenter, *Three Great Hearts* (London: The Salvation Army, 1921), 111-112.
[11] Carpenter, 114.
[12] Carpenter, 120, 123.
[13] Carpenter, 125.
[14] *All the World*, November 1889.

Cotopaxi, from landing in the colony and sent it on to Melbourne.[15] From this point the stories deviate. Some state that Melbourne newspapers had reported the Barkers' wedding and the diversion of the ship, so that when the couple arrived at the Williamstown docks on 21 September 1882 they were met by two immigrant Salvationists. There is some doubt as to the identity of the two men, but they are commonly identified as a young Cardiff Salvationist, William Whitchurch, and Isaac Unsworth, to whom we shall return later. Others paint the more colourful picture of the Barkers arriving alone, friendless and penniless on the dock, but managing to start the Salvation Army in Melbourne despite all opposition. Whether or not they were met, there was no reason to doubt this widely reported story.

Salvation Army historian R. G. Moyles has written of the joy of browsing and the thrill of discovering anecdotes and corroborative evidence.[16]Postgraduate students know this as creative procrastination (i.e. avoiding doing what you should be doing by doing something else that looks like work, but is really completely unnecessary). Australian history postgraduate students are also familiar with TROVE, the Australian National Library's on-line search engine, gateway to digitized newspapers and effective tool for creative procrastination. One day, while engaged in 'vital research,' I decided to search for the Melbourne reports of the diversion of the Barkers' ship. Failing on that score, I searched for details of the waterside dispute in Adelaide. However, there was no report of a dispute in the Adelaide newspapers and ships were arriving and leaving as scheduled.

Intrigued, I searched further, creative procrastination now having become a genuine mystery. Newspaper advertisements showed that the *Cotopaxi's* normal route was via Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, not the other way around, as in the original story.[17] However the run on which the Barkers arrived was not advertised. More TROVE searches revealed that it was an additional sailing, designed to give experience to the ship's new captain. Although it carried passengers and cargo, the ship had never been intended to continue to Adelaide, and the *Cotopaxi* returned to London via Sydney, leaving the Barkers to find their own way to their

[15] For example Dale, *Salvation Chariot*, 7; Barbara Bolton, *Booth's Drum: The Salvation Army in Australia 1880-1980* (Sydney: Hodder & Stoughton, 1980), 17.
[16] R G Moyles, *Exploring Salvation Army History: Essays of Discovery* (Edmonton: AGM Publications, 2009), 81-88.
[17] E.g. *Queenslander*, 11 March 1882 and *Illustrated Sydney News*, 13 May 1882.

destination. In fact, the report of the voyage gives no indication of diversion from a planned route and boasts of how quickly and successfully the trip was made.[18] It seems unlikely that the Barkers were sold a ticket to a destination the ship would not reach, so they presumably intended to continue to Adelaide via one of the many regular costal connections between Melbourne and Adelaide. Later officers sometimes arrived the same way.

A further difficulty arises in that no reports of the Barkers' arrival appeared in the Victorian newspapers and it is hardly likely that London newspapers would have reported an obscure Salvation Army wedding, let alone reached Melbourne in time to inform the local population of the Barkers' intended arrival.[19] The two men who reportedly met the Barkers pose a separate problem. While some historians have identified them as immigrant soldiers of The Salvation Army, it is more reasonable to conclude that they were members of the YMCA who commonly met the ships when they docked. They would have recognized the Barkers as Salvation Army officers, as they were familiar with the uniform from their association with Captain Isaac Unsworth. The two men took the Barkers to the YMCA General Secretary, Mr W. G. Marsh, who arranged accommodation for them.[20] The warm welcome decided Barker to open fire in Melbourne, although he could still report in the *War Cry*, 'Newspapers against us, public against us, but God for us.'[21]

III. Isaac Unsworth's Role in Salvation Army Beginnings in Australia

How Isaac Unsworth came to be in Melbourne forms an integral part of this story and is critical for our understanding of how it relates to mission. His early history in The Salvation Army is

[18] *Argus*, 22 September 1882.
[19] The reporting in London and Victorian newspapers was suggested respectively by Carpenter, 127, and Dale, *Salvation Chariot*, 7.
[20] *War Cry* (Melbourne), 25 December 1926. Sandall, 247; Carpenter, 128.
[21] *War Cry* (London), 30 November 1882. The Army tended to exaggerate difficulties – it made a better story. The image of Barker alone and friendless in Melbourne is a persistent one, suggested in 'History Making in Australia,' *All the World* (May 1897), 258, and repeated by writers such as John Cleary, *Boundless Salvation* (Salvation Army Southern Territory: Radiant Film & Television, 2008), and Derek Linsell, '"Thank God for the Salvos": An Historical and Contemporary Assessment for the Public Acceptance of the Salvation Army in Australia,' Master of Arts Thesis, National Centre for Australian Studies, 1997, 4.

shrouded in controversy. 'Happy Isaac' was born on 23 December 1860 in Lancaster, Durham, and became, in his own words, a 'drunken sailor.' He was converted at Runcorn and became attached to the Consett corps. After becoming an officer in 1879, part of his initial service was in Bristol, where he assisted with the training of Frederick de Lautour Tucker.[22] Tucker subsequently pioneered Salvation Army work in India. When appointed to Salisbury, the home of the Fry family, he enthusiastically reported the benefits of music to his home corps. The Consett corps band was formed shortly afterwards and is recognized as the first brass band in the Salvation Army. Unsworth's next appointment, Hull corps, also started a brass band.[23] Unsworth was a musician in his own right and his melody *I Know Thou Art Mine* is still featured in band marches.[24] By the time Unsworth had made his way to Adelaide in 1882 he had been dismissed due to an unnamed difficulty.[25] His long-term friend Captain Sutherland reinstated him, placing Unsworth in charge of the Adelaide I corps.[26]

The general secretary of the YMCA, Mr Marsh, had heard Unsworth preach in Adelaide and invited him to Melbourne to speak at the tenth anniversary of the YMCA on 25 August 1882.[27] Marsh planned to raise £100 to employ him for a year to work with young men and outdoor missions. Of particular interest was the meeting of ships as they docked at the wharves. Whether or not Unsworth set up the mission is unclear, but it was operating soon afterwards. Unsworth returned to Salvation Army work in Adelaide, possibly anticipating the Barkers' arrival.[28] Unsworth remained in Australia

---

[22] *War Cry* (Melbourne), 7 July 1923; St John Irvine, *God's Soldier: General William Booth* (London: William Heinemann, 1934), 542.
[23] Sandall, 114-115.
[24] *Salvationist*, 4 July 2009.
[25] *Argus*, 26 August 1882; letter from Percival Dale to Madge Unsworth 22 July 1947; letter from Percival Dale to Lt Colonel H Scotney 5 March 1956, held in Salvation Army Archives, Melbourne.
[26] *Observer*, 16 September 1882; letter from Percival Dale to Lt Colonel H Scotney 5 March 1956.
[27] *Argus*, 12 August 1882 and 26 August 1882.
[28] Dale, *Salvation Chariot*, 7. Note that there is no evidence to corroborate Robert Sandall's assertion that Unsworth had been sent to Melbourne by Booth to start the Salvation Army in Melbourne. As far as Booth was concerned, Unsworth had been removed from officership and would have approved no such appointment. Sandall, 10, 247; Letter from Percival Dale to Robert Sandall, 7 May 1947, held Salvation Army Archives, Melbourne. Barbara Bolton also places Unsworth in Melbourne at the time. Bolton, 17.

until early 1883, travelling with Sutherland to Sydney.[29] He was officially a soldier, but was referred to as Captain Unsworth by the local Salvationists and newspapers. Promising to return soon, he subsequently returned to Britain, to a warm welcome from one of his old corps in Hull, where reportedly thousands turned out to welcome him back and carried him through the streets on their shoulders.[30] He became an officer again in 1885, eventually reaching the rank of Commissioner, and many reports give this date as his first appointment as an officer, presumably to avoid acknowledging why he left the first time.

Unsworth's story indicates one issue in historical research; history is about people and people have relatives who may not wish to have their family secrets widely reported. Isaac Unsworth's daughter, Lieutenant-Colonel Madge Unsworth, was vehemently opposed to his early history appearing in Dale's book on the history of the Salvation Army in Australia. The omissions were to respect her wishes.[31]

IV. Implications of this Discovery

The method of the Barkers' arrival in Melbourne is not significant in historical terms. There has been little analysis of the role of serendipitous events or the use of personal connections in the establishment of the Salvation Army in new locations. Academic historians are unlikely to be concerned with the seemingly minor correction of the Barkers' ship being intended to arrive in Melbourne, rather than a dock strike preventing them landing in Adelaide.

However, as both a researcher and a person of faith who has been brought up in the Salvation Army, the discrepancy between received collective memory and primary documentation creates a personal dilemma that cannot be easily resolved. The story of the Barkers' unanticipated arrival in Melbourne is often cited to inspire mission and reliance on the providence of God. Salvation Army officers and soldiers are encouraged to see that even though unexpected events

[29] *Observer*, 16 September 1882.
[30] *War Cry* (Adelaide), 20 April 1883.
[31] Letter from Percival Dale to Madge Unsworth, 22 July 1947; letter from Percival Dale to Lt Colonel H Scotney, 5 March 1956; letter from Percival Dale to Robert Sandall, 7 May 1947. To avoid the difficulty Sandall gives the impression that Unsworth's service was unbroken. Sandall, 247. Note that Madge Unsworth has since been 'promoted to glory.'

might appear to thwart God's mission, God may have planned such setbacks to create new opportunities to spread the message of forgiveness. Like the Barkers, those who have entered God's service can trust God to achieve success out of apparent disaster. It is a very useful, loved story.

Should I simply ignore my discovery that there had been no unplanned arrival in Melbourne and therefore no need to place unexpected trust in God? Would this reduce the seemingly miraculous start of the Salvation Army in Melbourne to merely being opportunistic? Would this affect how Victorian Salvationists viewed the providence of God? After all, the findings were the result of procrastination, rather than serious research. They bear no real connection to my thesis, are based on circumstantial evidence and may even end up being cut from the final version. Is it better to leave the accepted version of the beginning of the Salvation Army in Melbourne as an inspirational story, even if a not totally accurate one? Who would know but me? As an academic researcher should my primary concern be the accurate reporting of history, rather than what effect such discoveries have on other people? Can I realistically separate my responsibilities as a researcher from my pastoral concern for fellow believers?

Obviously, I decided to release this corrected version of events. Apart from any other academic consideration, there is the practical problem that anyone with access to TROVE can do the same checking as I did. While the spiritual implications of the new account have no place in my thesis, as a Salvationist I hope that the real story will also inspire mission. I feel that it shows even more clearly the providence of God, in what could be regarded an act of prevenient grace, God paving the way for the Barkers' mission in Melbourne. Captain Unsworth felt prompted by God to a mission of meeting passengers arriving on ships. People of influence supported the Barkers and opened doors to allow thousands to be brought into the family of God. Would the Melbourne branch of the Salvation Army have started without this perfect storm of circumstances? Undoubtedly. Captain Sutherland in Adelaide had already been investigating the possibility of branching out into Victoria.[32] Barker may have arrived with a pre-existing plan to branch out into new Australasian locations. There had been reports of a group calling themselves 'The Salvation Army' in Melbourne, though by now they

[32] *War Cry* (London), 29 December 1881; 30 November 1882; Dale, *Salvation Cavalcade*, 59.

had disappeared from records. There were probably scores of immigrant Salvationists in Melbourne that when found could be conscripted to the cause. However, it would not have happened as quickly or as successfully without God's providential care.

The tension between academic discipline and personal faith has also forced me to think more deeply about the significance of the event to my argument that the Salvation Army in South Australia developed differently to its sister colony. The unexpected welcome of the Barkers in Melbourne led to the Australasian headquarters being established in Victoria, rather than South Australia, and this had a considerable effect on the relationship between territorial and divisional leadership. Far from interfering with academic rigour, personal convictions have prompted new insights.

V. The Role of Ordinary People in Mission

There are a number of other implications from this revised story, relating both to academic research and the training of those involved in Christian service. The first relates to what we use to inspire involvement in mission. I am something of a Titanic buff. I love the stories of courage and faith. I find it ironic that the words, 'Lady, God himself could not sink this ship' were said by a baggage handler to Sylvia Caldwell, a missionary's wife returning from Thailand. I find very moving the story of John Harper, a young Scottish minister who urged that the lifeboats be filled with the women, children and unsaved first. He refused to accept a place in a lifeboat because he knew he was going up, not down. Having initially survived the sinking, he witnessed to those in the water and urged them to be saved. His final convert reported that he continued this until he sank beneath the waves. So it is perhaps no surprise that I am not a fan of James Cameron's movie. I found it historically inaccurate and the main characters unbelievable. With so many good real stories why did Cameron feel the need to make one up? I suspect he didn't think them interesting enough and thought they lacked a certain punch.

There is the temptation to do the same thing with mission. We don't think that ordinary stories are sufficient, so we have to embellish them, give them that extra 'oomph.' The picture of the Barkers arriving alone and friendless on the docks of Williamstown but triumphing over all obstacles can make an inspiring story to those who are facing their own difficulties. However, an

overemphasis on the extraordinary can also be a deterrent to those who are less certain of their call to mission or their ability to carry it out. It gives the impression that mission is only performed by capable, talented, spiritually-blessed professionals, when the real story is that God uses ordinary, everyday people to do extraordinary things.

Those who are mentioned in this article were not particularly well-connected, educated, talented or even well-grounded in the faith. They were ordinary people – a boot factory supervisor, a compositor and a sailor. They included a man who made a serious enough mistake that he was dismissed from full-time Christian service. What made them extraordinary was their willingness to be used by God to grow the Church. The amended story should give encouragement to us that the Barkers were not exceptional human beings without whom Salvation Army work in Victoria would not have started and whose actions could not possibly be emulated by us mere mortals.

It is significant that Salvation Army work in South Australia was started by enthusiastic laypeople, not officers with a plan and a strategy. The Adelaide Corps was already well-established by the time officers arrived. The 'professionals' regulated work that was already occurring and provided direction. They didn't do it all themselves, even when they arrived, but conscripted local talent to help them. They were prepared to take risks with people who might disappoint them, behave less than ideally, or even fail.

The world has changed. Officers now have to contend with ever-increasing rules, regulations, legal responsibilities and liabilities. However, even that cannot account for a decreasing involvement in mission by laypeople. I suspect that the Salvation Army has developed a culture that feels it has too much to lose to take risks, combined with a lack of expectation that anyone will be prepared to become involved in matters outside of filling a pew. In the nineteenth century, brand new converts were expected to play their part in the life of the corps; in today's corps very little is expected from even seasoned members. I hope I am overstating the case. As an insider, I fear I am not.

VI. Research as Mission

This paper is intended to raise questions about the nature of mission, rather than to answer them. The circumstances of James and Alice Barker's arrival in Melbourne are a minor element in the

history of the Salvation Army. However, it demonstrates the tension between academic and religious expectations and raises questions of whether researchers should be mindful of how research in church history – or for that matter, research into any aspect of Christian thought and practice – might affect other people and therefore the importance of being cautious in how we present the correction of long-held beliefs.

The usual expectation of a post-graduate student is merely to produce a thesis which will pass. However, this assumes that apart from the obvious requirements to avoid plagiarism and to ensure the ethical treatment of test subjects, research is an activity that can be conducted in isolation. Nevertheless, the students themselves will often have additional concerns, and these will not be restricted to religious convictions. Given total objectivity in academic research is desirable but improbable it would be helpful to post-graduate students if this issue was raised in research methods subjects.

Far from happening away from the public eye, research is a profoundly social activity.[33] For Christians, how we behave while conducting research and completing post-doctoral work is important. Behaving appropriately is a reflection of a life lived in holiness and part of our Christian witness. It is an area where Christians should stand out as having a higher standard than those around them. Christian theology students have an additional responsibility to their fellow believers. We are required to consider the spiritual impact of our research upon the faith of others. This includes non-academic brethren who may have cherished convictions that underpin their understanding of Christian belief and mission. So how I relate the story of the Barkers is just as important as the story I tell. In this case I have been able to resolve the tension. There will be cases where this will be more difficult.

[33] A premise that underpins the ethics section of Wayne C Booth, Gregory G Colomb & Joseph M Williams, *The Craft of Research* 2nd ed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 285-287.

JOHN WESLEY, CHILDREN, AND THE MISSION OF GOD

Peter Benzie

This article considers John Wesley's belief that children should be given high priority in the church's mission. Wesley's views on education and how he implemented them are considered and placed alongside recent research in order to inform the shape and nature of ministry to, and with, children in the twenty-first century. It is argued that the low view of children in matters of faith development that underlies present practice is not an appropriate view for those who seek to work in concert with God's mission.

> But what shall we do for the rising generation? Unless we take care of this, the present revival will be *res unius aetatis*; it will last only the age of a man. Who will labour herein? Let him that is zealous for God and the souls of men begin now.
> (1.) Where there are ten children in a society, meet them at least an hour every week.
> (2.) Talk with them every time you see any at home.
> (3.) Pray in earnest for them.
> (4.) Diligently instruct and vehemently exhort all parents at their own houses.
> (5.) Preach expressly on education, particularly at Midsummer, when you speak of Kingswood. 'But I have no gift for this.' Gift or no gift, you are to do it; else you are not called to be a Methodist Preacher. Do it as you can, till you can do it as you would. Pray earnestly for the gift, and use the means for it. Pray earnestly for the gift, and use the means for it. Particularly, study the 'Instructions' and 'Lessons for Children.'[1]

With these words John Wesley reflected the priority that he placed on the training and educating of children ('the rising generation') in the love and knowledge of God. Such was the priority he placed on this that he saw it as a vital role for Methodist preachers and he questioned the calling of those who would argue that doing so was not their role.

---

[1]John Wesley, 'Minutes of Several Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and Others; From the Year 1744, to the Year 1789,' in *The Works of John Wesley, Vol 8: Addresses, Essays, and Letters*, ed. Thomas Jackson, 3rd ed. (1872; Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), question 33, 315–16. All references to Wesley's *Works* in this article are to the Jackson edition.

This article seeks to advance discussion on the shape and nature of ministry to and with children in the twenty-first century. It considers Wesley's work with children in order to inform the church's present ministry and asks what it might mean to place the same priority on the evangelism and discipleship of children as he did. I hope that this paper and my earlier work – 'as a little Child: Children in the Theology of John Wesley'[2] will provide a base from which further thought and work can be undertaken on this vital area of the life of God's church and of the Kingdom of God.

I. Wesley, Children and the Mission of God

Given the scarcity of literature on the subject one would be forgiven for thinking that John Wesley had little interest in children. Relatively little has been written about the time he spent with children, of the schools he set up, of the 1,729 pages of textbooks that he edited and wrote, of the many instances where he wrote of the faith, prayerfulness and evangelistic ministry of children. Yet his journals, sermons and letters are full of references to children and it is clear that he had a deep and abiding love for and interest in them. Clearly they held a special place in his heart and for him it was vital that their salvation and education in the knowledge and love of God should be a priority in the life and work of the church.

In Wesley's sermon 'On Family Religion,' based on Joshua's declaration in Joshua 24:15, 'as for me and my house we will serve the Lord,' written sometime after 1779 and not long before his death, he wrote:

> What will the consequence be…If family religion be neglected? If care be not taken of the rising generation? Will not the present revival of religion in a short time die away? Will it not be as the historian speaks of the Roman state in its infancy, *res unius aetatis*, an event that has its beginning and end within the space of one generation? Will it not be a confirmation of that melancholy remark of Luther's that 'a revival of religion never lasts longer than one generation?' By a generation (as he explains himself) he means thirty years. But, blessed be God, this remark does not hold. With regard to the present instance; seeing this revival, from its rise in the year 1729, has already lasted above fifty years.[3]

[2]Peter Benzie, 'as a Little Child: Children in the Theology of John Wesley,' MA thesis, Laidlaw-Carey Graduate School, 2010.

[3] John Wesley, Sermon 94, 'On Family Religion', in *Works Vol 7,* para. 3, 77.

Clearly Wesley was concerned that the then current revival, during which so many had been brought to the point of exercising justifying faith and been born again, should continue. He was also clear that for that to happen the church must, whilst recognising that salvation is always a work of God's divine grace, do its part by giving priority to teaching children about the love of God. He saw it as the Church's responsibility to introduce children to Christ so that they can accept God's justifying grace through exercising saving faith.

The priority Wesley placed on evangelising and discipling children is well illustrated by his endeavours in the field of education. Not only did he have an abiding interest in education but he exerted considerable influence on it in the eighteenth century and beyond.[4] This is indeed one of his legacies. He was an educator, a voice for educational reform who was totally committed to ensuring that children were provided with at least the opportunity of a basic education.[5] He was also committed to ensuring that the education children received was of high quality in order that the aim of education as he saw it (Christian perfection) could be achieved.[6]

II. Implementation of Beliefs

Wesley's interest in the education of children can be traced to the 1720s when he began to financially support the Grey Coat School in Oxford. Then in 1739 when the first purpose-built Methodist meeting hall was built on land he obtained in the Horse Fair, Bristol he ensured that it served as a school for local children alongside its being an indoor preaching place for the local societies.[7]

Wesley gave the education of children a high priority as an outworking of his primary interest in bringing people to faith and his call to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land.[8] And so education for Wesley was not the secular education we know today.

---

[4] Green, for instance, notes that Kingswood school was possibly Wesley's greatest interest throughout his life. V.H.H. Green, *John Wesley* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1964), 135.

[5]James Riley Estep Jr., 'John Wesley's Philosophy of Formal Childhood Education,' *Christian Education Journal* 1, no. 2 (1997): 43. Whilst our discussion here focuses on the child we note that for Wesley education was a lifelong process so that what applies to the child also applies to the adult.

[6]John Wesley, Sermon 95, 'On the Education of Children,' in *Works Vol 7:* 87–88.

[7]Stephen Tomkins, *John Wesley: A Biography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 75.

[8]Wesley, 'Minutes of Several Conversations,' question 3, 299.

In his schools he required that every boy undertook a course of study in reading, writing, arithmetic, English history, geography, chronology, rhetoric, logic, ethics, geometry, algebra and physics - but he was more concerned that children were enabled and empowered to live lives of Scriptural Holiness – Loving God with all the heart, soul and mind, and one's neighbour as oneself.[9] Education for Wesley, then, had more in common with what we might call religious education as he saw the aim of education as being to equip the child to live in both this world and in eternity in right relationship with God.[10]

III. Why Teach?

For Wesley education was the responsibility of parents as well as school teachers. He firmly held to the belief that parents in particular should follow the scriptural command to start children off on the way they should go, so that even when they were old they would not turn from it (Proverbs 22:6). It is in his sermon *On Family Religion* that we get the most comprehensive picture of his views in this regard as it is here that he expounded on why this scripture is true. It is also here that he explained to parents how they can best ensure that they achieve the outcome God promises in the text. Here he noted the bad consequences for the children of those parents who, whilst having their own personal relationship with Christ, fail to adequately teach their children the knowledge and love of God. These children either never enter into a personal relationship with Christ or if they do they backslide. Consequently their behaviour is sinful.[11]

Once the children were old enough to go to school Wesley believed that the primary responsibility for their education shifted from the parents to school teachers.[12] And this is where he struck a problem because he was scathing in his criticism of the state of eighteenth century schools, which from his research and

[9] Matt 22:37, 39; cf. Mark 12: 30-31 and Luke 10:27.
[10]Wesley, Sermon 94, 'On Family Religion,' para. 13, 83.
[11]Wesley, Sermon 94, 'On Family Religion,' para. 4, 77.
[12] Wesley, Sermon 94, 'On Family Religion,' sec. III. 3–15, 80–83. Given that Kingswood School, which Wesley founded, catered for boys from six years of age we can surmise that Wesley saw parents as having primary teaching responsibility up until that age. John Wesley, 'A Short Account of the School in Kingswood, Near Bristol [Published in the Year 1768],' in *Works Vol 13: Letters*, para. 2, 283.

conversation with others, he had identified as failing to accomplish what he was convinced was the aim of education.[13]

Wesley first sought to find existing schools which measured up to his standards. Finding none he founded Kingswood School in 1748.[14] Here, as in the other schools he set up, religious education was paramount, with Kingswood School, for instance, being one which for him 'was to be a model Christian institution, which would not disgrace the apostolic age.'[15] Green asserts that Kingswood School was possibly Wesley's greatest interest throughout his life. The numerous references to it in his *Works* support this view.[16] He seems to have visited the school on at least most occasions when he was in the area, often preaching to the children.[17] The last journal entry in which he records having visited the school is of particular significance as it was for 11 September 1789 - less than eighteen months before his death. Not only does the school appear frequently in his journal entries; he also wrote three substantive papers where Kingswood was the subject matter.[18]

---

[13]Wesley, Sermon 95, 'On the Education of Children,' para. 3, 87–88.

[14]John Wesley, 'A Plain Account of Kingswood School [Printed in the Year 1781],' *Works Vol 13: Letters*, para. 8, 292; John Wesley, 'Journal Entry for June 24, 1748,' in *Works Vol 2: Journals from December 2, 1745 to May 5, 1760*, 101. Note – while Wesley clearly states that he founded Kingswood School there is some dispute among scholars as to whether this was in fact the case or whether he merely took over a school founded by George Whitefield.

[15] Cited in Elmer L. Towns, 'John Wesley and Religious Education,' *Religious Education* 65:4 (July 1970): 326.

[16] The index to the fourteen volumes of the Jackson edition of Wesley's *Works* lists more than seventy references to Kingswood School. See also John Wesley, 'Abridgments of Various Works: Instructions for Children (3rd Edition) [1747],' in *Works Vol 14: Grammars, Musical Works, Letters and Indexes*, 443.

[17] See for instance John Wesley, 'Journal Entry for March 15, 1744,' in *Works Vol 1: Journals from October 14, 1735 to November 29, 1745*, 457; John Wesley, 'Journal Entry for March 14, 1749,' in *Works Vol 2: Journals from December 2, 1745 to May 5, 1760*, 129; John Wesley, 'Journal Entry for September 6, 1771,' in *Works of John Wesley, Vol 3: Journals from May 6, 1760 to September 12, 1773*, 442; John Wesley, 'Journal Entry for March 15, 1782,' in *Works Vol 4: Journals from September 13, 1773 to October 24, 1790*, 222; John Wesley, 'Journal Entry for September 11, 1789,' in *Works Vol 4: Journals from September 13, 1773 to October 24, 1790,* 471.

[18]Wesley, 'A Short Account of Kingswood School,' 283–89; 'A Plain Account of Kingswood School,' 289–301; 'Remarks on the State of Kingswood School [1783],' in *Works Vol 13: Letters*, 301–302.

IV. Whom to Teach?

The maximum age for admission to Kingswood was twelve (the minimum was six). It was Wesley's belief that before that age the bias towards sin inherent in all people from birth as a result of the fall had not completely taken root and hence there was the possibility that through education this bias could be corrected and the child turned toward God.[19] It was also Wesley's contention that a child's worldview was more capable of being changed before the age of thirteen.

Two hundred years later George Barna's research led him to the same conclusion, demonstrating that the religious beliefs a person develops by the age of thirteen are pretty much the set of beliefs they will maintain until they die, and that people's major spiritual choices are generally made when they are young.[20] A maximum admission age of twelve also accords with Wesley's belief that by the age of thirteen a person must have accepted God's gift of faith.[21] I suggest that he assumed that if a child had not chosen to accept God's gift of faith by then they had effectively chosen not to have a relationship with God and as such had ruled themselves ineligible to receive an education designed to empower them to live holy lives.

V. Taught by Whom?

In order to ensure that education empowered children to live holy lives, Wesley was adamant that teachers needed to do more than express concern about developing children's faith; they had to do something about it otherwise they would do more damage than good.[22] So concerned was he that the chance of children being educated in the love and knowledge of God should be maximised that he placed more importance on teachers' spirituality than on their skill in teaching. Indeed it was on this that he judged the

[19]Wesley, 'A Short Account of Kingswood School', para. 2, 283; Wesley, 'A Plain Account of Kingswood School,' para. 10, 293.
[20]Sue Miller and David Staal, *Making Your Children's Ministry the Best Hour of Every Kid's Week* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 11.
[21]John Wesley, 'Journal Entry for April 29, 1759,' in *Works Vol 2: Journals from December 2, 1745 to May 5, 1760*, 477–78.
[22]Wesley, 'A Plain Account of Kingswood School,' para. 5, 290–91; John Wesley, 'A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children [Printed in the Year 1783],' in *Works Vol 13: Letters*, para. 4, 475.

suitability of applicants for both teaching positions and the role of Headmaster at his schools.[23]

Despite his advantage of being acquainted with many fine teachers, gained from his extensive travels throughout the length and breadth of England, Wesley found it more difficult than he expected to find suitable teachers for Kingswood. He was not prepared to compromise his standards however and waited to appoint teachers until he found those who had a God-given passion for teaching children, whose motive for teaching was purely to glorify God, and who met his high standards with respect to their own spirituality.[24] What a contrast this is to those churches today who, finding they need someone in Children's Ministry, give no real thought to whether that person has the gifts, passion or ability to work in this vital area of the work of the church and just appoint anyone so there is at least 'someone there.'

VI. How to Teach?

This concern with the spirituality of teachers was echoed in the expectations he had of his preachers. For instance he required them to visit each home.[25] Whilst there they were to give the children the tract *Instructions for Children* ensuring that the children learnt all it contained by heart. This was to be done through the use of encouragement.[26] Additionally each preacher, having spoken with the members of the household as a group, was also required to spend individual time with each person, including children, in a separate room. For this one-on-one time with the children Wesley laid out a very particular methodology for his preachers to follow. By adhering to it the preacher could be satisfied that the child understood what he or she was learning. It is here that we see what some may think is an uncharacteristically deep compassion for children as he instructed his preachers on ways not only to elicit the child's responses but also how to ensure the child did not get too stressed by the exercise and hence discouraged. One example he

[23]John Wesley, 'Letter to Mr. Richard Tompson (dated August 2, 1745),' in *Works Vol 12: Letters*, para. 9, 292. and John Wesley, *Methodist Magazine* (1876), 324, as cited by Elmer L. Towns, 'John Wesley (1703-1791),' in *A History of Religious Educators*, ed. Elmer L. Towns (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975), 222. as quoted in Estep Jr., 'John Wesley's Philosophy of Formal Childhood Education,' 50.
[24]Wesley, 'A Plain Account of Kingswood School,' para. 8, 292.
[25]Wesley, 'Minutes of Several Conversations,' 299 n.
[26] Wesley, 'Minutes of Several Conversations,' question 13, 305; question 33, 315.

gives, for instance, is to answer the question for the child thereby relieving the child of the stress of answering.[27]

With the methodology he outlined Wesley was confident his preachers could be sure that the child knew God's role in the world, as well as in their lives, and most importantly that they understood the way of salvation. To reinforce the desirability of the latter he required that this session conclude with an exhortation designed to convince the child that they needed to be born again and that they needed to avoid sin in the future.[28]

VII. Where to from Here?

How does this help us in ministry in the South Pacific? How does Wesley's ministry to children over two hundred years ago in a relatively mono-ethnic and mono-cultural society on the other side of the world where Christianity was the norm help us who are ministering and working in the twenty-first century - in a world which is vastly different in many ways and where we are ministering and working in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural context where secularism is increasingly the norm? The answer becomes clear when we read these words that Wesley wrote in his journal on 8 June, 1784. 'God begins his work in children. Thus it has been also in Cornwall, Manchester, and Epworth. Thus the flame spreads to those of riper years; till at length they all know him, and praise him from the least unto the greatest.'[29]

Wesley's conviction has been confirmed by recent research. A survey conducted by the Barna Group in 2009 provides new insights into the age-old question – What is the long term effect of spiritual activity among children and teens? The survey asked adults to think back on their upbringing and to describe the frequency of their involvement in children and youth ministry. The Barna researchers then compared those reported early-life behaviours with the respondents' current levels of faith activity and faith resilience. What they found was that those who had attended children or youth ministry programs were much more likely to attend church and much more likely to have an active faith as adults than those who hadn't. For instance, among those who frequently attended such

[27] Wesley, 'Minutes of Several Conversations,' question 13, 305–7.
[28] Wesley, 'Minutes of Several Conversations,' question 13, 305–6.
[29] John Wesley, Journal Entry for June 8, 1784 in *Works of John Wesley, Vol 4: Journals from September 13, 1773 to October 24, 1790*, 279.

programs, half said they had attended a worship service in the last week, which is slightly higher than the United States national average and well ahead of those who rarely or never attended such programs.[30]

In a separate study Barna researchers found that nearly half of all Americans who accept Christ as their Saviour do so before reaching the age of thirteen with only one out of every four born again Christians doing so after their twenty-first birthday. These figures have been shown to be consistent with similar studies conducted during the past twenty years.[31] While these are US based figures I know of no evidence to suggest that they would be markedly different here in the South Pacific and my anecdotal evidence from experience as well as conversations with other children's ministry leaders suggests a strong similarity.

What then can we learn from how Wesley implemented his belief that children are a priority in the mission of God? How can we answer such questions as - What does it mean for the church if we place children in the midst as Jesus did? What would it mean if children were to be placed at the heart of the church rather than being segregated into their own spaces away from the rest of the church as so often happens in Christian churches? How can the church support families in fulfilling God's mission as regards children?[32]

If we are to learn from Wesley we first need to decide whether we accept that he was right to believe children are a priority in the mission of God. Do we accept that children are important to God? Do we believe, as Wesley did, that in order to have strong churches we need to teach the children? Do we believe as he did that God begins his work in children and that the work spreads from there to those who are older? After all, what Wesley was saying was no different to what Jesus said:

---

[30]'New Research Explores the Long-Term Effect of Spiritual Activity among Children and Teens', *The Barna Group*, 2009, http://www.barna.org/family-kids-articles/321-new-research-explores-the-long-term-effect-of-spiritual-activity-among-children-and-teens, accessed 16 July 2012.

[31]'Evangelism is Most Effective among Kids,' *The Barna Group*, 2004, http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/196-evangelism-is-most-effective-among-kids.

[32]Keith J. White, 'Insights into Child Theology through the Life and Work of Pandita Ramabai,' (October 31, 2006): 97, http://www.childtheology.org/new/docuploads/OCMS%2031.10.06.pdf.

> One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him. When Jesus saw what was happening, he was angry with his disciples. He said to them, 'Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.' Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them (Mark 10:13-16, NLT).[33]

Like so many adults throughout history, Jesus' disciples considered children to be unimportant. Children were to be seen and not heard at best and they certainly should not take up Jesus' time. They believed that his time was precious and therefore felt that he should spend it on the 'important' people, that is, adults. But Jesus put the disciples in their place and made it clear that children are important for they show us how we are to accept God's offer of justifying grace and so be able to receive the kingdom of God – by receiving it with simple faith. And because children believe with simple faith they are more open to the good news of the Gospel and more readily accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour than those who are older. God can work with, and through, children in a way that is far more difficult to do with adults.

Eighteen centuries later, Wesley came to believe that children were important to God because God's plan of salvation depended on them.[34] Unfortunately this is a truth that the body of Christ seems to have forgotten again. My experience in the latter part of the twentieth century in New Zealand, and my discussions with Children's Ministry workers in recent years have convinced me that we have made it harder for the truth of the Gospel to be received because we allowed Children's Ministry to become a 'babysitting' service. Consider, for instance, the children who were part of our churches in the 1980s and 1990s. Sadly far too few of them are in our churches today. By merely 'babysitting' those children we have done exactly what John Wesley said would happen if teachers did not employ the correct pedagogical techniques. His concern was that the child would equate bad teaching practices with Christianity causing it to 'stink in the[ir] nostrils.' This was a concern for him

---

[33] Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

[34] Wesley, Journal Entry for 8 June, 1784, 279.

because under such circumstances any move to accept God's offer of salvation would be at least delayed, if not frustrated altogether.[35]

By not actively equipping and empowering children to live in this world and the next the church of the late twentieth century has caused Christianity to 'stink in the nostrils' of so many. The proof of that is in our churches as those who were children in the latter part of the twentieth century are now parents who stay away from the church in droves. Many are missing from our churches because they were not introduced to Christ at a young age. They did not learn what it meant to be a follower of Christ because they were just tolerated in church at best or consigned to being babysat in a back room of the church so that they would not distract the 'important' people (adults) from worshipping God. We did not educate them in the knowledge and love of God in a way that enabled them to accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour. We did not equip and empower them to live holy lives. They are not in our churches today because we did not give them priority in the mission of God.

Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to advance discussion on the shape and nature of ministry to and with children in the twenty-first century. I have shown how recent research and Wesley's beliefs and actions accord with the importance Jesus placed on children in matters of faith (Mark 10:13-16). In contrast, the enumeration of some of the negative consequences of children's ministry practices in the late twentieth century has shown that the low view of children in matters of faith development that underlies such practices is not an appropriate view for those to hold who seek to work in concert with God's mission. Taken together the consideration of Scripture, theology, practice and research in this article shows that if the twenty-first century church wants to work in concert with the mission of God it must place the same priority on the evangelism and discipleship of children as Wesley did - and which God does. The question of 'how' is part of the discussion which this article seeks to advance.

[35]Wesley, 'A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children,' para. 6, 476.

YOUTH MINISTRY AS MISSION

Amber Livermore

This article considers the implications of approaching youth ministry from a missiological perspective, enhancing the receptivity of youth to the Gospel and mobilising them as partners in God's mission. The goal of a missional youth ministry is defined as 'To make disciples of Jesus Christ who are authentically walking with God, actively partnering in God's mission and appropriately developing into maturity within the context of an intimate, multi-generational church community.' These goals are divided into two sequential categories: reaching youth and releasing youth. Challenges to reaching youth are identified and a number of strategies offered for the meeting of such challenges. A case study drawn from the Aotearoa New Zealand context is provided.

I. Introduction

In a time when youth ministry has become highly specialised, ministering to young people is often left to professional youth workers. Certainly there is a need for those people who have committed themselves vocationally to the development of young people, but a proper understanding of youth ministry reveals that students require the active influence of multiple Christian adults in their lives. While reaching youth with the Gospel and releasing them into partnership in God's work in the world may appear to be the job description of a youth pastor, this is actually part of the commission to and mission of the local church as a whole.

It is important to acknowledge that the spiritual formation of young people is primarily the responsibility of parents. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 makes this clear: 'These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.'[1] This passage communicates that godly parents are responsible for partnering in God's mission to reach their own children. However, Scripture also teaches that the local church community takes on

---

[1] All Scripture references are from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

some of this familial responsibility. Thus, Paul is able to write to Timothy as his 'true son in the faith' in I Timothy 1:2. Also, local churches have the opportunity to minister to youth who come from non-Christian families. With these things in mind, this article will focus on the local church community and its youth programmes, specifically considering what understanding youth ministry as mission means for all Christian adults in a local church community.

The term 'youth' often refers to those in the life stage of adolescence. It has been said that adolescence begins with puberty and ends with culture.[2] In other words, 'youth' is a culturally defined term. Adolescence can be defined functionally as, 'the [time period between the] onset of puberty to the assumption of adult responsibilities (socially, legally, and economically).'[3] In today's society, the adolescent stage of life sometimes extends well into a person's twenties. However, this article will consider 'youth' to generally refer to people between puberty (approximately 11-13 years old) and the age of nineteen.[4]

In order to pursue youth ministry as mission, it is important to define the missional goal of a local church youth ministry. I propose that the goal of a missional youth ministry is, '(1) To make disciples of Jesus Christ who are (2) authentically walking with God, (3) actively partnering in God's mission and appropriately developing into maturity, (4) within the context of an intimate, multi-generational church community.'[5] These goals can be divided into two sequential categories: *reaching youth* and *releasing youth*.

II. Reaching Youth

When considering 'Reaching Youth,' the first two parts of the goal of missional youth ministry will be considered: '(1) To make disciples of Jesus Christ who are (2) authentically walking with God…' In his article, 'Cross-Cultural Outreach: A Missiological Perspective on Youth Ministry,' Paul Borthwick makes the case that youth ministry

[2] Chap Clark, *Starting Right: Thinking Theologically About Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), ch. 2.
[3] Keith Puffer, 'Adolescent Growth and Development' lecture at Indiana Wesleyan University, 29 January, 2005.
[4] 'Young people,' 'teenagers,' and 'students' will also be used in the same general sense.
[5] Adapted from Chap Clark, *When Kids Hurt: Help for Adults Navigating the Adolescent Maze* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 191.

possesses every trait of cross-cultural mission work.[6] The generally accepted lifestyle, perspectives and values of adults in a given community are not necessarily shared by the youth in that same community. In other words, a cross-cultural mission field walks right in the church doors any time a young person does. In order effectively to reach youth with the Gospel, caring adults must take on the role of cross-cultural missionaries.

A. Missiological Foundation

When Christian adults become missionaries to young people in their own communities, like all missionaries, they must recognise and seek to understand the unique culture of the people they are trying to reach. This involves 'doing their homework' to better understand the youth in their communities.

The 'backdrop' of youth culture can be found in the most distinguishing factor of adolescence: change. The changes of adolescence have only just begun at puberty and are not limited to the physical. A young person is in a constant state of changing. Psychosocially, the intense transition from childhood to adulthood involves a new questioning of and searching for personal identity.[7] Cognitively, neurological research shows that the human brain does not fully develop until people reach their mid-twenties.[8] Thus, a young person's brain is constantly changing, and they are often only able to focus on their immediate experience.[9] While much more time could be given to this 'backdrop' of youth culture, it is sufficient for now to realise that youth culture is inherently influenced by a season of questioning, constant change, and the need for wise input from the adult world.

After understanding the 'backdrop' of adolescence, missionaries to young people must consider current influential factors on youth culture. A few current key factors include advances in technology and media, the presence of extreme variety in 'youth culture' and the phenomenon of 'systemic abandonment.'

---

[6] Paul Borthwick, 'Cross-Cultural Outreach: A Missiological Perspective on Youth Ministry,' *Christian Education Journal*, 3 NS, 1999.
[7] Clark, *Starting Right*, ch. 2.
[8] Joe S. McIlhaney, Jr., MD and Freda McKissic Bush, MD, *Hooked: New Science on How Casual Sex is Affecting our Children* (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2008), 51.
[9] Merrilyn Withers, 'Youth Ministry Today,' *New Vision: New Zealand Vol. IV* (Auckland: MissionKoru, 2011), 260.

Incredible developments in technology today have a great influence on youth. Merrilyn Withers, professor of youth ministry at Carey Baptist College and National Youth Consultant for the Baptist Union of NZ, expressed it well when she wrote:

> Adolescence has always been a time of huge change, challenge and development, but in a world getting busier, more technologically centred, and more socially fragmented, many of those challenges are being exacerbated. We are now working with a teenage generation which is hugely, media-saturated, convenience-oriented, entertainment-focused, and short-term committed. The constant media bombardment leaves little time for reflection, an intolerance for the ordinary or boring, a shorter attention span, and a higher value on fun and entertainment as giving life significance.[10]

These drastic changes in technology, and therefore way of life, form a natural divide between the way older generations and today's youth 'do life.'[11] Also, with constant access to media, including social networking platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, youth are exchanging and receiving information at an incredible rate. This means that the culture of young people itself can evolve at a ridiculously fast pace. Thus, adults can become even more quickly cut off from such a technologically savvy and oriented generation. While it would be nearly impossible to keep up with all the trends and changes, missionaries to youth can refresh their general knowledge of mainstream popular culture through a few minutes spent on Google. A lot can be gained by simply looking up current top songs/artists, hit movies, best selling adolescent fiction, and popular videos on YouTube.

The variety in 'youth culture' proves to be a rather tricky factor. The very terminology of 'youth culture' is slightly deceptive. The culture of an individual young person is formed through the mixture of many cultural ingredients, including their ethnicity and family background. Many young people belong to youth sub-cultures that are drastically different from each another. Within those sub-cultures, some youth are very committed to the group's distinct values, while others may only wear the associated clothing and listen to the culturally-approved music. Still, other youth would not

[10] Withers, 'Youth Ministry Today,' 257.
[11] Lloyd Martin, *The Invisible Table: Perspectives on Youth and Youthwork in New Zealand* (North Shore: Cengage Learning, 2009), 53.

identify themselves with any specific sub-culture.[12] All this means that there is no such entity as *the* youth culture of today; while missionaries to young people can seek understanding of general trends, the culture of a particular individual or group of young people will vary drastically even within the same community, youth group, or class room. Missionaries must take on the role of learners before they aspire to teach.[13] Youth listen to popular culture because they feel pop culture 'listens' to them; however, youth feel greatly unheard by the adult world and specifically by the Church.[14] Thus, Christian adults must learn to observe, ask questions and listen. Also, they must respect the fact that an individual is much more complex than just his or her culture.

According to experienced youth workers in both New Zealand and the United States, the sense of youth being 'cut off' from the adult generation is possibly the strongest commonality among youth cultures. Chap Clark in his book *Hurt* describes this phenomenon as 'systemic abandonment.'[15] His theory is that youth generally feel abandoned by the adult world.[16] Breakdown and even simple busyness in the family contribute to this, as youth are more and more left to look after themselves.[17] Clark argues that the very structures that are meant to serve young people only cut them off further from adult society. From the school system to specialised youth programmes, youth are predominately placed in contact with their peers rather than adults. As a result of this perception that the adult world has turned its back on them, youth feel forced to create their own world, which Clark calls 'the world underneath.' He describes this world as one in which youth are desperately seeking to belong, a world where they experience deep hurt from their sense of isolation. Their hurt can lead to varying levels of destructive and sexual behavior, depression, and self-harm.[18] In an attempt to find belonging and survive their perceived abandonment, 'clusters' (small groups of friends) form intense bonds that can only be described as familial. While peer friendships (even 'cliques') have typically been a dominant part of adolescence, these clusters seem to serve a deeper

[12] Martin, *The Invisible Table*, ch. 2.
[13] Martin, *The Invisible Table*, 105.
[14] Robert Mueller, *Engaging the Soul of the Youth Worker: Bridging Teen Worldviews and Christian Truth* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2006), 27.
[15] Chap Clark, *Hurt: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers* (Chicago: Baker Book House, 2005), 54.
[16] Clark, *Hurt*, 44.
[17] Clark, *Hurt*, 34, 51.
[18] Clark, *Hurt*, 53-55, 122-135.

purpose of replacing the intimacy that has been lost in relationships with adults. A cluster will abide by agreed upon 'family rules,' such as what other clusters are to be associated with, what routes are to be taken when walking between classes on campus, what delinquent behavior is or is not allowed, etc.[19] When living in the adult world in relationship with adults seems hopeless, youth create substitute relationships and what seems to be a rather dark, alternative world.

While Clark's research was in the North American context, his conclusions seem to resonate with what youth workers in New Zealand are observing. Merrilyn Withers observes that, 'Young people are…more broken than ever before…I have been aware for many years of a growing increase in emotional problems, depression, self-harm, eating disorders, and low self-esteem…'[20] This brokenness is not limited to the unchurched; churched young people from Christian homes are not immune to the influence of 'the world underneath.'[21] Clark observes that even youth who come from involved dual-parent families seem to absorb this culture of abandonment from their peers and the media.[22]

After considering these commonalities of youth culture, the call continues to go out for caring Christian adults to identify themselves as missionaries to youth. While the need may seem bleak, the exciting news is that youth desire to have authentic relationships with adults who care for them.[23] In fact, it is through authentic relationship that the cultural gap between 'us' and 'them' can be bridged. The challenge in building such relationships is twofold. One, youth who feel the adult world has abandoned them are often slow to trust adults.[24] This means that bridging the cultural gap will take time. Two, youth are unlikely to be the ones to make the first move. Adult missionaries must take the initiative and persevere through any walls of distrust that are thrown in their path. The best missional example comes through the Incarnation of Christ, the Son of God, who came down to dwell with humanity. He entered this world rather than expecting people to somehow join him in his. As Christian adults partner in God's mission of reaching young people, they should adopt such an incarnational model of youth ministry.

---

[19] Clark, *Hurt*, 69-86.
[20] Withers, 'Youth Ministry Today,' 258.
[21] Withers, 'Youth Ministry Today,' 258.
[22] Chap Clark, *Hurt 2.0* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), Kindle edition, location 2285-2298.
[23] Clark, *Hurt*, 54.
[24] Martin, *The Invisible Table,* 105-106.

They cannot expect youth to come to them - they must go to youth, spending time on their turf, in their world. Whether it is in a school, on a sport field, or at the church youth programme, missional youth ministry requires Christian adults to humble themselves, become learners, and take the initiative in building relationships with young people.

B. The Gospel and New Life

As adult missionaries learn about young people and build authentic relationships with them, those relationships become bridges for the Gospel. It is important to note that relationships with youth should not hinge on what response those youth make to Jesus. As partners in the Mission of God, missionaries are called to love people unconditionally. A relationship with a young person is not a means to an end - it is the recognition of the intrinsic value of a person created in the image of God. However, as missionaries learn about youth, bridges should be discovered between youth culture and the Gospel. Relationships with youth are not authentic unless those relationships involve sharing the most important part of a Christian's life - his or her relationship with God. While talking about spiritual things most definitely should be happening in the context of church youth programmes, these conversations can and should happen over a cup of tea, at a rugby match, or while driving on the motorway. It is in offering the opportunity for youth to know God that youth work becomes youth ministry. The Church must offer the truth of Jesus Christ with as much wisdom and love as possible, even if it may seem counter-cultural. In a time when it is popular to be different, the difference between the Gospel and secular society may actually attract young people to the church.[25] Either way, the content of a missionary's message cannot be compromised. While the message does not change, the methods used to share it should change. Part of a missiological approach to youth ministry is presenting the Gospel in ways that resonate with the culture of young people.

When youth encounter the good news of Jesus Christ, Christian adults must be intentional about helping them understand the big picture of the Mission of God. It is one thing for a young person to

[25] Paloma Migone, 'Teens Tuning into God's New Beat,' http://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/6706378/Teens-tuning-in-to-Gods-new-beat

respond to an evangelistic message with a prayer asking for forgiveness of sins; it is another thing for that young person to encounter God through the redemption story and then surrender his or her personal story to him. One-off evangelistic moments without appropriate follow-up and discipleship are simply not good enough. In fact, as we minister in a more and more secular society, the worldview of young people often needs adjusting by the biblical history before they can sufficiently respond to the Gospel in the first place. As Michael Novelli proposes, it is when youth are given the opportunity to 'enter the Story' by learning the history of God's pursuit of his people - the history of the Mission of God - that they begin to understand God's intentions for their own lives.[26] For missionaries who are sharing the Gospel with youth, this means starting at the beginning. I will never forget the first time I asked a group of teenagers who had been attending my youth group, 'Who knows who Abraham was?' and no one could respond. I had to re-think my entire approach to youth ministry, going back to the crucial histories I learned as a child in Sunday School. Also, as previously noted, adolescence is a time of questioning. Church youth programmes and relationships with adult missionaries should be safe places for youth both to ask real questions about life and faith and to find real answers.

Given our understanding of adolescent cognitive development and how youth typically focus only on their immediate experience, it is helpful to provide opportunities for response to Christ that include long-term reminders. I have adopted and adapted God's practice in the Old Testament of instructing the Israelites to build memorials. The Israelites seemed easily to forget God's activity in their past, and in the same way, youth are prone to forget. Any student who spent much time in a youth ministry where I pastored could tell you all about memorials in the Old Testament, and many of them could probably go to their dresser drawer or bedside table and pick up some sort of physical memorial from their adolescent journey of faith. I have used everything from note cards to rocks, and towels to puzzle pieces as memorials of their encounters with and responses to God. God told the Israelites to make big piles of stones, so the value of the object is not really the issue. The value is in connecting the object with their experience with and decision for Jesus.

[26] Michael Novelli, *Shaped by the Story: Helping Students Encounter God in a New Way* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008).

After a young person has made a commitment to Jesus Christ and begun their walk with him (accomplishing the first two parts of the goal of youth ministry), the important role of the adult missionary continues through the journey of discipleship and transformation. The Wesleyan tradition emphasises the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual; the church can have high hopes for the work God will do in the individual lives of young people.

III. Releasing Youth

After youth have been reached with the gospel, a missionary to young people must consider what it means to release youth. A missional youth ministry should develop young disciples who are '(3) actively partnering in God's mission and appropriately developing into maturity (4) within the context of an intimate, multi-generational church community.'

A. Mature Missional Lifestyle:

Youth ministry programmes and missionaries to youth in our local churches must release youth into a mature missional lifestyle. While these two characteristics are related, they will be considered individually. Part of the responsibility of a church community is to release young people into maturity. While this includes spiritual maturity, it also involves preparing youth holistically for adulthood. Rather than only catering to the present maturity level of students, the church is meant to challenge young people. Again, the church cannot replace parents in this role, but the Christian adult community is meant to supplement the family through aiding young people's development into adulthood. Alvin Reid asked a seventeen year old girl what advice he should give to people who work with youth. She responded by saying, 'Tell them we know how to be teenagers. We want them to show us how to be adults.'[27] What better place to find holistic modeling and mentoring for developing adults than in the church? Lloyd Martin explains that youth are looking for recognition from a community of the advances they are making into adulthood. It is when they do not receive this recognition from caring adults that they look for it elsewhere, such as through gang

[27] Reid, *Raising the Bar,* 29.

involvement.[28] Church leaders, then, should ask the question, 'Is my church offering rites of passage for youth within our community?' Some common approaches might be public recognition of college graduation or 21st birthdays, but I would encourage churches to consider additional rites of passage starting at puberty that are built into the life of the church community on a regular basis. Perhaps youth entering a certain class level in school are taken on a special trip, encouraged to attend a retreat, or given a spiritual gifts test and offered new opportunities to serve. If youth learn what it means to be an adult from their church rather than from the world, they will be much better prepared to take on the responsibilities and challenges of adulthood.

One of the aims in developing students toward spiritual maturity is ensuring that they internalise solid, Christian theology. In her book *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church,* Kenda Creasy Dean, a United Methodist minister and Professor of Youth, Church and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary, wrestles through some startling findings of a research study called the *National Study of Youth and Religion*. For this study, churched youth in North America were interviewed between 2003 and 2005. Specifically, the study focused on what beliefs were held by youth who were committed to local church ministry programmes. The research showed that these 'committed Christian youth' were only 'almost Christian,' a reference to John Wesley's sermon of the same name. Dean refers to the belief system of these young people as 'Moralistic Therapeutic Deism.' After being faithful members of the North American church community, these youth had taken away a religious belief system that consisted merely of a set of morals and a 'feel-good' belief in a God who did not affect their daily lives in any way. Dean proposes that the beliefs of these young people actually reflect the practice of the churches they represent. While the churches in question would have orthodox theological statements, the lifestyle modeled by the adults in these churches would better align with Moralistic Therapeutic Deism. Dean writes:

> Once, the church was known for lavish grace, reckless hospitality, utter devotion to Jesus Christ as God-with-us. Once, people viewed the church as being shackled to the *missio dei*, the extraordinary measures God took to woo us back into God's arms through the Incarnation. Yet as

[28] Martin, *The Invisible Table,* 46.

> the NSYR dramatically demonstrates, today it is not only possible to think about the church apart from the mission of God, it is now *normative* to do so - even for young people who call themselves Christian.[29]

Dean suggests that Christian parents and adults in church communities are not necessarily at fault for failing to teach orthodox Christian theology. Rather, she believes they are unintentionally showing unorthodox theology through their lack of missional passion and lifestyle. Instead of being shaped by official doctrinal statements, youth are being formed by modeling.[30] As young people observe adults who claim to believe orthodox Christian theology and yet do not live a missional lifestyle, these young people inductively form an unorthodox theology that they believe to be Christian.

The implications of this study go beyond its cultural context. First, the theology of young people is significantly impacted by their relationships with adults in the church community. After over fifteen years of youth work experience in New Zealand, Lloyd Martin wrote, 'Because the medium for your work with youth is the relationship that you build with them, you become the message. Your life will speak more powerfully…than anything that you might have to say.'[31] Thus, if a local church wants to develop youth who are more than 'almost Christian,' that local church must be a missional church. Secondly, Withers writes that youth 'need a mission for which to sacrifice, a call to life-changing service, an opportunity to develop their gifts and abilities and a safe place to use them.'[32] It is when youth are able to engage in this over-arching mission within a missional church that they will take hold of what it means to be fully Christian.

A missionary's task does not end with conversion and discipleship; a missionary's task is to participate in the process of full circle development, so that the person who was being reached becomes the person doing the reaching. Thus, in order for youth actively to partner in God's mission in the world, adult missionaries in the church must believe in the role of youth in God's mission and release them into that role. The often un-recognized, enormous potential of young people to participate in God's kingdom work on

---

[29] Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 89.
[30] Dean, *Almost Christian*, 89.
[31] Martin, *The Invisible Table,* 116.
[32] Withers, 'Youth Ministry Today,' 272.

earth is evidenced in Scripture, modern history, and even current events.

Scripture is filled with examples of young people who were instrumental in God's work such as David, Daniel and his companions, Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Timothy. Based on cultural-historical and contextual evidence in the Scriptures, an argument has been made that most of the disciples were likely teenagers when Christ called them to follow him.[33] In Ecclesiastes 12:1, the writer instructs, 'Remember your Creator in the days of your youth.' Paul advises in I Timothy 4:12, 'Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.' Clearly, the Scriptures affirm the role of youth in the Mission of God.

In *Raising the Bar: Ministry to Youth in the New Millennium*, Alvin Reid encourages today's churches to learn from history how invaluable youth are to carrying out God's mission in the world. He refers to seasons of revival and shows how crucial young people were to these times of spiritual awakening. For example, Reid examines the reflections of Jonathan Edwards on the First Great Awakening in North America; 'Edwards stressed that awakenings were not only inspired and led by young people, they particularly affected the younger generation.'[34] Closely connected with missional activity, the 'Haystack Prayer Meetings' were started and attended by students at Williams College in Massachusetts in 1804-1806. Out of those student prayer meetings, a mission to Asia was born which sent out missionaries such as Luther Rice and Adoniram Judson.[35] These are just a few examples from modern history that confirm the scriptural value of youth to the Mission of God.

Moreover, in recent times, individual young people have risen to the forefront in fulfilling God's mission. As an American junior high student, I was personally impacted by the missional lives and deaths of Cassie Bernall and Rachel Scott, teenagers who were martyred by their peers in a high school shooting because of their faith in Jesus. More recently, teenage brothers Alex and Brett Harris wrote a book together called *Do Hard Things: A Teenage Rebellion Against Low*

---

[33] Ray Vander Laan, 'Follow the Rabbi: To Be a Talmid' http://followtherabbi.com/journey/israel/to-be-a-talmid1

[34] Alvin Reid, *Raising the Bar: Ministry to Youth in the New Millennium* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2004), 67.

[35] Reid, *Raising the Bar,* 69.

Expectations.[36] Their message, based on I Timothy 4:12, proclaims to young people that they do not have to live 'down to' the world's expectations of adolescents. Rather, they can live 'up to' God's expectations and lead the way in participating in the mission of the upside down kingdom. Their blog and book have sparked a spreading movement among Christian youth across the globe which has been labeled 'The Rebelution.'[37]

The question, then, is whether or not local churches and missionaries to youth in those churches believe in the role of youth in the Mission of God. Youth can discern if adults view them cynically.[38] Lloyd Martin puts it bluntly, 'If you are unable to believe in a young person, you should not be in contact with them.'[39] Thus, Christian adults must examine their attitudes toward young people to ensure they are seeing the missional potential in them that God sees. If the church will, as Alvin Reid suggests, 'raise the bar' of its expectations for youth, then youth can be empowered for missional service and evangelism. This is done by inviting youth into the missional work of a church community through: organizing corporate service activities; evangelizing *with* them; offering them ministry training; helping them identify personal spiritual gifts and passions; providing appropriate ministry supervision; and most importantly, making space within the life of the church community for youth to serve in significant ways that correspond with their individual interests and strengths.

B. Church Community

Finally, the last piece of the goal of missional youth ministry is that it takes place (4) within the context of an intimate, multi-generational church community.' After examining what it means to release youth into a mature missional lifestyle, it should be obvious that this is only accomplished by releasing youth into the wider church community. Unfortunately, it is often tempting for youth ministry programmes to settle for instant results rather than long-term ones. Youth will more easily connect and belong in a youth programme where a limited number of adult leaders are involved. However, youth need to connect with multiple Christian adults in

[36] Alex Harris and Brett Harris, *Do Hard Things: A Teenage Rebellion Against Low Expectations* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2008).
[37] 'The Rebelution,' http://www.therebelution.com
[38] Martin, *The Invisible Table,* 145.
[39] Martin, *The Invisible Table,* 125.

order to reach the other goals of missional youth ministry. In addition, it is no secret that the drop-out rate of young people from local church involvement after high school graduation is extremely high. I would argue that this is a result of young people not belonging to the wider church community during their time in youth ministry. Once youth outgrow the youth group, they no longer belong anywhere within the Body of Christ, and their faith journey may be in grave danger.

One might argue that youth pastors and youth leaders are members of the adult church community who are connected with youth - why is this not enough? I believe there are three reasons. First, youth leaders may exit the church community for a variety of reasons, leaving youth without any adult connections in the church. Second, one adult can only effectively serve as a model and mentor to a few youth in a community. Third, young people need relationships with several caring adults, not just one. Thus, youth pastors and youth leaders are meant to serve as bridges between youth and other adults.[40] This can be done through bringing a few youth along to church community events, encouraging their involvement in corporate worship experiences, and inviting adults who are not regularly involved in the youth ministry to visit youth events or even share personal testimonies in youth group.

Ultimately, however, releasing youth into the church community requires other adults to own the vision of Youth Ministry as Mission. Christian adults must answer the call to be cross-cultural missionaries to the youth in their community. Creating a culture of Youth Ministry as Mission in a church will probably not happen overnight. However, it can begin by identifying key adults in a local church who care for young people and inviting them into this missionary adventure, slowly creating a missional youth ministry culture in a church from the inside out. A simple 3 x 5 rule (or some variation of it) could be an easy place to start. The '3' stands for encouraging adults to connect with three youth on a weekly basis whether at a corporate worship gathering, at youth group, or even better, in an incarnational setting. The '5' means this only requires five minutes - a greeting, a handshake, a couple of questions about school and life. Of course, as time passes and youth begin to trust this adult who consistently shows care for them, the five minutes could turn into ten or twenty. It is when adults in the church

[40] Martin, *The Invisible Table,* 151-152.

community answer this call to missional youth ministry that youth pastors and youth leaders are empowered to minister effectively.

IV. New Zealand Case Study

A movement called 24/7 Youth Work is growing in New Zealand and clearly identifies the need for incarnational ministry among young people. While the goals of 24/7 Youth Work are not directly evangelistic, this movement intentionally places Christian adults into schools where they can build relationships with youth and help guide them through adolescence. This work depends on a solid relationship between the local school and the local church, marked by the trust that both entities are seeking to reach the same goals in the lives of students. 24/7 Youth Workers make a three to five year commitment to serve for ten paid hours plus ten volunteer hours per week in their local school. 24/7 Youth Work provides regular training and support for these workers while also depending on local church leadership to ensure that the workers are properly equipped.[41] While most of these workers are professional youth workers or university students (since their schedules allow for such a commitment), the idea behind 24/7 can be and is implemented by other Kiwi Christian adults at a simpler level.

At one church, a bi-vocational solo pastor started attending his local college rugby matches to support a few students from his church. After being a faithful fan, the team started to recognise him. Now, he serves as a volunteer chaplain for the team (at the coach's request) and has been able to build relationships with most of the students on the team. Another church that is located next door to a school started a 'drop-in' programme one day a week after school dismissal. Students stop by the church for a snack and to play basketball or pool, use computers, and play video games. Volunteers of all ages from the church attend every week, building relationships with the students. In the past two months, this church has watched a mother and two of her children make commitments to Christ as a result of this programme. In every church and every community, the incarnational aspect of youth ministry will look differently. However, as the growing presence of 24/7 Youth Work affirms, schools and communities in New Zealand are very open to the involvement of caring adults in the lives of young people. As each church examines its own resources along with the possibilities and

[41] '24/7 Youth Work,' http://www.24-7youthwork.org.nz/

needs in its community, ways of fostering relationships between Christian adults and young people in the community will surface.

Of course, church youth ministry programmes in New Zealand provide an opportunity for a certain level of incarnational youth ministry. In many ways, youth ministries can serve as the bridge between youth and adult culture. Many youth will attend a youth ministry at a church when they would be unlikely to attend a Sunday worship service. This is in large part because the cultural jump needed to attend a youth group is smaller than the cultural jump into an adult-oriented worship service. In the same way, Christian adults who might feel uncomfortable in a totally secular youth setting may have the courage to engage with students at a youth ministry. The key to this element of semi-incarnational ministry is balance. The youth ministry should maintain a strong enough presence of Christian adults to effectively build significant relationships with all the youth who attend, while at the same time ensuring that adults do not 'take over' the youth ministry programme in such a way that students no longer feel like the programme is designed for them.

In my observations of many youth ministries in New Zealand, I have noticed that ethnic-based Pacific Island churches and European-dominant churches could learn from each other in keeping this balance. Traditional Pacific Island youth ministries seem to have no trouble recruiting adults from the church to be involved. However, youth in some of these ministries feel stifled by too strong of an adult presence. Their 'youth ministry' can become very similar in appearance and structure to the adult ministries of the church. Rather than seeking to understand and engage youth culture, these programmes can reinforce the cultural divide. In European-dominant youth ministries, however, it seems that youth pastors struggle to keep adult volunteers involved and committed to the youth. The ratio of adults to students can become too low, and the unfortunate result is that students can attend on a regular basis without any significant relationships with adults or even sometimes without any adult knowing them by name. Some intercultural dialogue along these lines could prove extremely beneficial for youth ministry in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In addition, in recent conversations with Kiwi youth workers and young adults in the church, I have gained one specific insight regarding the involvement of young people in the mission of the church. It seems that churches are quick to provide opportunities for young people to be involved in ministry and mission to other young

people or children, but it is more unusual for youth to be released to serve and lead outside of these contexts. For youth truly to be connected to the local church, they should be integral parts of the mission of the local church as a whole. This means allowing young people to speak into corporate worship gatherings and community projects rather than only giving them a voice into children and youth ministry programmes. It is when youth are entrusted with responsibility and authority outside of their own generational sphere of the church that they will begin truly to take ownership of both the local church and its mission as their own.

V. Conclusion

It is a privilege to partner in God's mission in the world through youth ministry by seeking 'to make disciples of Jesus Christ who are authentically walking with God, actively partnering in God's mission and appropriately developing into maturity within the context of an intimate, multi-generational church community.' There are challenges that stand in the way of accomplishing this goal: an intimidating cultural gap, the distrust of youth who may have been hurt by the adult world, wrestling with culturally effective ways to share the truth and scope of the Gospel, learning appropriate expectations for youth as missional participants, helping prepare teenagers for adulthood, and challenging the ways local churches have or have not incorporated youth into their wider community. However, the challenges can be overcome when adult missionaries answer the call to engage with the culture of young people; persevere in pursuing relationships with youth; journey with students into the realm of adulthood and provide meaningful rites of passage throughout the process; share the Gospel by modeling; teach the biblical history of redemption in memorable ways; connect youth to the local church through missional involvement; and appropriately release young people into God's mission in the world.

BOOK REVIEWS

THOMAS C. ODEN. *John Wesley's Teachings*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012. 3 vols. published to date (Revised edition of *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*, 1994). Vol 1 *God and Providence* pp. 240; Vol 2 *Christ and Salvation* pp.319; Vol 3 *Pastoral Theology* pp. 304 (Vol 4 *Issues of Ethics and Society* is yet to be published).

These books are a revised and greatly expanded version of Oden's 1994 book, *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*. The series is intended as a readers' guide to John Wesley's doctrine and practice, demonstrating his adherence to the work of the early church Fathers and the core teaching of the Reformation. The focus is largely on Wesley's own writing with minimal clarification and commentary, so that the modern reader can understand Wesley's intent in 'everyday modern English' (1:13). The three volumes issued thus far cover the major Christian doctrines and the nature and practice of the Christian ministry, seeking to provide scholarly resources for the Wesleyan family of churches and evangelicals generally. Oden seeks to recover the vital historic roots of the Wesleyan movement while providing a 'reference work for identifying the range of Wesley's ideas and opinions' (1:29). This is enhanced by extensive indexing of each volume and the provision of further reading selections for exploring the topics of each chapter more fully. The book achieves its purposes in the main and makes a very useful addition to the library of anyone interested in Wesley, his theology and its pastoral/practical implications.

The first volume specifically covers the doctrines of God and Trinity, revelation, theological method, creation, human nature and sin. In each case the chapters utilise extensive material sourced or quoted from Wesley himself, with additional recommended readings. The second volume I think is the strongest of the three in providing a clear picture of his understanding of the order of salvation. It begins with the Person and Work of Christ before coving the key soteriological doctrines, the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit and eschatology. The third volume concentrates on the nature of the pastoral office, its varied tasks, the sacraments and ecclesiology, particularly in terms of leadership and evangelism. Each chapter in the three books is set out clearly, with headings and sub-headings that are drawn largely from Wesley's own writings, enabling the reader to follow his train of thought.

The strength of each volume lies in Oden's desire to let Wesley speak for himself. There is inevitably some clarification, minimal explanation and commentary from Oden himself and this necessarily reveals Oden's mind, and not necessarily Wesley's, on these matters. The selection of material used is from the whole Wesley corpus and the footnote references enable other selections to be studied. This is where the books really contribute to those interested in Wesley and Wesleyanism. The second volume is especially helpful in enabling readers to engage with Wesley on the controversial points of his soteriological framework that are so often misunderstood and misrepresented, particularly in the areas of grace,

predestination, assurance and sanctification. Oden does a very good job of demonstrating the links between Wesley, the early Fathers and the Reformers. This is particularly true for the section on grace, where the agreements with Augustine and Calvin are brought out - even if not everyone would agree with Oden's reflections.

The strength of this work is also its weakness. Each book is clearly set out according to Wesley's own priorities when dealing with the doctrinal and practical issues of his own day. The questions raised are predominantly those of Wesley's time, not ours. This gives the reader a strong sense of the historical setting of Wesley's thought and ministry but leaves many issues of our day either not addressed or only superficially addressed. For example, Oden gives us Wesley's understanding of creation and time, showing how classically orthodox they were. Today some pointed debates have arisen on our acceptance of *creatio ex nihilo*, the relationship of God to time, the implications of free will and providence, the nature of original sin, Spirit-baptism, the nature of justification, and the human constitution. Wesley has material that enables us to engage with the modern questions, but the style and content of the book make this hard to do effectively. In many ways it is the third book that shows this weakness most by following Wesley's own classical understanding of the nature of pastoral ministry and its work. It does not provide easy access to Wesley's own material that can be utilised in the current debates surrounding such things as the continued need for ordination or the current forms of the institutional church. While the sacraments are covered, there is almost nothing on his rich conception of the means of grace, especially his understanding of works of piety and works of mercy. The section on the pastoral care of the family fails to engage the dominant social and personal problems we face today; for example, divorce, drugs, human sexuality, the nature of marriage, euthanasia, and pornography. To be fair, this may be covered in the final volume of the series but I would have thought it a vital part of a chapter explicitly on the family. What will not help the reader seeking to pursue current Wesleyan scholarship is that the material listed for further reading is overwhelmingly pre-1990 and there is very little after 2000. The Wesley bibliography supplied by Ken Collins of Asbury is a very useful resource to overcome this (http://www.asburyseminary.edu/files/wesley-bibliography-feb-2013.pdf).

The real strength of these books lies in giving the general reader, as well as students, easy access to the richness of Wesley's thought and practice. From their pages, the reader can trace many other passages in Wesley's rich corpus that will help them to build a fuller picture of his theology and practice. Oden has done an outstanding job of capturing so much of Wesley's material in three relatively small volumes. It is not possible adequately to cover every aspect of Wesley's thought and practice in this limited scope, and there will always be personal preferences involved in the selection of material and topics. Letting Wesley speak on his own terms and within the framework of the questions of his own day does mean that it will require a

lot more work by the reader to work through a Wesleyan response to many contemporary theological and practical issues. Overall, I think they are a worthwhile addition to any library.

David B. McEwan
Nazarene Theological College, Brisbane

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine London: Salvation Books, 2010. $23.50, available from Salvationist Supplies, Sydney and Melbourne.

Salvationist Handbooks of Doctrine have come a long way since the first edition appeared in 1881. While the doctrines have remained unaltered, each new Handbook has reflected the thought-forms and style of the era in which it was written. The 1998 edition, entitled *Salvation Story*, represented a significant departure from its predecessors and, with its impressive workbook, proved to be an excellent resource for personal, congregational and basic theological study. The earlier Handbooks set out each doctrine in concise, almost homiletical style, along the lines of Maldwyn Hughes' Methodist doctrine book, *Christian Foundations*. The 1998 authors chose a more contemporary, narrative style.

Following the warm reception afforded *Salvation Story* and its creative approach to the teaching of the denomination's faith some were disappointed to learn that it was to be succeeded by a new *Handbook of Doctrine*. Thus it was good to discover that the best of *Salvation Story* and its study guide is to be found in the new work, plus a lot more. It is written in a style both scholarly and readable. It represents a middle-of-the-road theological position - evangelical without being fundamentalist - and respectful of contemporary scholarship without embracing liberalism. It is clearly committed to the spirit of Wesleyan teaching 'in which Salvation Army doctrine has its roots' (p.140), with that tradition's emphasis on a free, sure, and full salvation and 'Wesley's distinctively optimistic understanding of the workings of God's grace' (p.123). It sets out the positions of those with whom Salvationists do not agree in a spirit of Christian courtesy. For example, in a fine discussion regarding the teachings of classic Calvinism and that of the Army (the Arminian-Wesleyan position) it says, 'it is important to remember that both Calvinism and Arminianism are systems of theology which were developed by godly, scholarly, biblically-focused Christians. Both trace their roots to the Bible and contain elements of truth. The Calvinist emphasis on the absolute sovereignty of God can be traced in Scripture, as can the Arminian insistence on the free will of humanity' (p188). Such rancour-free language is a mark of mature writing and of a movement come of age.

Many will welcome the inclusion of the International Spiritual Life Commission Report, as well as a fine chapter on the doctrine of the Church. This Commission, which was held over five weeks in 2009, provided helpful statements on such issues as Baptism, Holy Communion and worship. While

no significant changes were made to the Army's long-held position on the sacraments, the statements were irenic, pastoral and helpful.

The Handbook contains what it terms a 'lectionary' of major Church and Salvationist Festivals and special days, each of which is linked to an appropriate section of the work's doctrinal study. This will be of value to the creative corps officer and worship leader. It contains a brief but useful description of many of the major figures in church history, and glossaries of theological terms and English usage. It does, of course, give a new definition to the word 'lectionary.' Perhaps 'Calendar' would have been more appropriate.

The work provides a solid exposition of Salvationist theology while at the same time introducing the reader to the wider world of theological scholarship. It does this in such a way as to not overwhelm the reader. Every topic is presented in bite-sized chunks and is accompanied by built-in study resources. These are all practically focussed, relating the respective doctrines to the mission of God's people, their personal witness and their spiritual life. Throughout there are suggested group activities, as well as Bible studies, and useful tools for preaching and teaching the doctrines. This is a unique book amongst theological textbooks, combining as it does solid theology with practical resources.

As with all theological writings, there are items (or at least one item) which some readers will find disturbing. One such is a paragraph in its chapter on Scripture, 'The Word of the Living God.' In the context of a well-written statement we read

> The inspiration of the Bible provides a foundation for our understanding of the reliability of the divine revelation in Scripture. It is uniquely inspired in a way that is different from other writings or works of art. However, this does not mean that the Bible is infallible or inerrant, so that it is incapable of misleading and contains no human error (p.11).

Most in the Wesleyan tradition have not endorsed the doctrine of inerrancy as generally held by contemporary evangelicals. However the statement quoted is gratuitous, unnecessarily creating a barrier between Salvationism and the wider evangelical community. It is also pastorally unfortunate, as many Salvationists *do* affirm biblical inerrancy. Nothing would have been lost, and much gained, by the omission of this statement. It should be noted that the paragraph in question goes on to say

> Whereas we believe that the overall message of the Bible is inspired and reliable, each individual passage must be read and interpreted carefully, in context and with careful reference to the whole of biblical truth.

Again, the suggestion that initial opposition to Calvin's predestinarian teaching found its origins within the Anabaptist movement, and that 'the fullest expression of that Anabaptist reaction was found in the works of

Jacobus Arminius' (p.140) will also cause some eyebrows to be raised. While some similarities exist between the teachings of the Anabaptists and Arminius, the latter had a much stronger emphasis on divine grace. In fairness, the book is packed with references to church history and historical theology and these are overwhelmingly useful and accurate. It should also be acknowledged that historical events such as the one just referred to are interpreted differently by scholars and writers.

Larger than its predecessors, the *Handbook* is a hard-cover work with a conservatively-designed dust jacket and a user-friendly format and type face. It is visually attractive, instructive to the mind and resource-filled for ministry and mission (even if the statement on the Scriptures cited above prompts a call for a revised edition). It avoids the solipsism sometimes evident in older Army writings, and could well be a useful resource for others within the Wesleyan family. It certainly would be beneficial for those within the wider Wesleyan family to get to know what their Salvationist cousins believe.

Alan Harley
Tyndale College, Sydney

INDEX TO ALDERSGATE PAPERS VOLUMES 1-10

Issue Index

Author Index

Couchman, Adam. 'Always Changing, Always the Same: Gregory of Nyssa on Holiness,' 7 (2009): 74-89.

_____. 'Sin and its Relationship to "True Godliness" in John Calvin's *Institutes*,' 8 (2010): 69-82.

Cruickshank, Joanna. 'Charles Wesley, the Men of Old Calabar, and the Abolition of Slavery,' 7 (2009): 8-16.

Dobson, Peter. 'Self-Differentiation and the Christian Leader,' 6 (2006): 87-98.

_____. 'The Influence of Mysticism on the Spiritual Development of John Wesley,' 3 (2002): 5-20.

Drayton, Dean. 'Wesley at Aldersgate and the Discovery of a German New Testament,' 9 (2011): 67-91.

Edgar, Brian. 'From Practical Divinity to Public Theology,' 7 (2009): 30-39.

Frappell, Samantha. 'Methodists and the Campaign for Six O'Clock Hotel Closing in New South Wales,' 10 (2012): 30-49.

Gros, Jeffrey. Review of Frank Macchia, *Justified in the Spirit: Creation, Redemption and the Triune God*, 8 (2010): 83-84.

Harley, Alan. 'Jesus, the Incarnation, and Holy Living,' 7 (2009): 60-73.

_____. 'Methodists in Military Garb: The Salvation Army as a Living Expression of John Wesley's Movement,' 2 (2001): 5-15.

_____. 'Putting It All in Perspective: A Survey of a Half Century of Doing Theology, 1961–2011,' 9 (2011): 92-106.

_____. Review of *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine*, 10 (2012): 170-172.

Hein, Jennifer. 'More Inspirational than Penetrating: The Salvation Army's Use of History,' 8 (2010): 27-46.

_____. 'Responsible Research: James Barker, an Adelaide Dock Strike, and the Implications for Mission from Rewriting History,' 10 (2012): 129-139.

Hilliard, David. 'Looking Again at the History of South Australian

Methodism: Twenty-Five Years after Arnold Hunt's *This Side of Heaven*,' 10 (2012): 71-84.

Hopgood, Donald J. 'Methodists in South Australian Public Life,' 10 (2012): 85-95.

Khor, Moses. 'The Role of the Elihu Section in the Book of Job,' 6 (2006): 73-86.

Livermore, Amber. 'Youth Work and Mission,' 10 (2012): 151-167.

McEwan, David. 'Denominational Identity in a World of Theological Indifferentism: Some Insights from John Wesley and "the People Called Methodists,"' 8 (2010): 9-26.

_____. 'Quality Theological Education from a Wesleyan Perspective,' 2 (2001): 69-80.

_____. Review of Thomas Oden, *John Wesley's Teachings*, 10 (2012): 168-170.

McKinney, Andrew. 'Grace in the Wesley Hymnology,' 1 (2000): 25-39.

Nestor, Maurice. 'Augustine's Renunciation of Classical Literature,' 6 (2006): 56-72.

Noakes, David and Campbell Roberts. 'The Influence of Wesleyan Sources and Theology on the Salvation Army's Ministry in Social Services and Public Policy in New Zealand,' 10 (2012): 112-128.

O'Brien. Glen. 'A Trinitarian Revisioning of the Wesleyan Doctrine of Christian Perfection,' 2 (2001): 17-68.

_____. '"Just Another 'Queer Sect' from Over the Pacific": Anti-Americanism and the Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia,' 4 (2003): 29-58.

_____. 'Methodist Religion among the Soldiers of the American Civil War,' 7 (2009): 90-105.

_____. Review of Jay Richard Akkerman, Thomas J. Oord and Brent Peterson, eds. *Postmodern and Wesleyan?: Exploring the Boundaries and Possibilities*, 9 (2011): 141-144.

_____. Review of *Joseph Coleson, ed. Be Holy: God's Invitation to Understand, Declare, and Experience Holiness*, 8 (2010): 92-95.

_____. Review of Kent Brower, *Holiness in the Gospels*, 8 (2010): 89-90.

_____. Review of Kevin W. Mannoia and Don Thorsen, eds. *The Holiness Manifesto*, 8 (2010): 90-92.

_____. Review of Mark A. Noll, *Christians in the American Revolution*, 9 (2011): 144-147.

_____. Review of Richard Waugh, *A New Church for a New Century: East City Wesleyan's Early Story*, 9 (2011): 148-150.

_____. Review of *Robert Gribben, Uniting in Thanksgiving: The Great Prayers of Thanksgiving of the Uniting Church in Australia*, 8 (2010): 95-96.

_____. 'The Divine Apatheia and the Problem of Evil,' 1 (2000): 5-24.

_____. 'The Effects of the Arian Controversy on the Liturgy of the Post-Nicene Church,' 3 (2002): 21-28.

_____. '"The Empire's Titanic Struggle': Australian Methodism and the Great War,' 10 (2012): 50-70.

_____, Jon Case and Judy Rigby, 'Review of Michael Parsons' *Luther and Calvin on Old Testament Narratives*,' 4 (2003): 69-75.

Ong, Jenny. 'Karl Barth and Ben Witherington on Romans 7:1-14,' 5 (2004): 68-74.

Oord, Thomas J., Review of Diane Leclerc, *Discovering Christian Holiness: The Heart of Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, 8 (2010): 84-89.

Parsons, Michael. 'Passion and the Nature of God: Theology and a Biblical Text,' 3 (2002): 29-49.

Pender, Graeme. 'Improvisatory Musical Practices in the Wesleyan Methodist Tradition,' 6 (2006): 8-33.

Rees, Janice. 'A Free Man's World: Open Theism and the Feminist Critique of Autonomy,' 9 (2011): 22-32.

Rigby, Judy, Jon Case and Glen O'Brien, 'Review of Michael Parsons' *Luther and Calvin on Old Testament Narratives*,' 4 (2003): 69-75.

Roberts. Campbell and David Noakes, 'The Influence of Wesleyan Sources and Theology on the Salvation Army's Ministry in Social Services and

Public Policy in New Zealand,' 10 (2012): 112-128.

Schultz, Carl. 'God's Role in the World: The Informing but Disturbing Depiction of Job,' 3 (2002): 50-67.

Seaman, Matthew. 'Red, Yellow, Blue and Green: Eco-justice within the Salvation Army,' 9 (2011): 48-66.

_____. Review of Joseph Coleson, ed. *Care of Creation: Christian Voices on God, Humanity, and the Environment*, 9 (2011): 138-141.

Shelton, Larry R. 'Covenant Atonement as a Wesleyan Integrating Motif,' 5 (2004): 7-36.

Smith, Dean. 'The Failure of Classical Theism Demonstrated in a Noteworthy Christological Puzzle,' 9 (2011): 33-47.

Sullivan, David. 'The "Problem" of the Holy Spirit in Trinitarian Theology,' 4 (2003): 59-68.

Wilson, David R. 'Toward a New Testament Model for Church Leadership in the Twenty-first Century and its Implications for Training,' 1 (2000): 41-67.

Wong, Tik-Wah. 'John Wesley's Understanding of the Christian Life: A Doctrinal Analysis of Wesley's Thirteen Discourses on the Sermon on the Mount,' 5 (2004): 53-67.

Wright, Stephen John. 'Apocalyptic Beauty: God's Priority and the Ontology of the Future,' 9 (2011): 9-21.

_____. 'Overtures of Grace: Prevenient Grace and the Sacramentality of Music,' 6 (2006): 34-55.

_____. Review of Thomas J. Oord, *The Nature of Love: A Theology*, 9 (2011): 135-138.

Young, Norman. 'Methodist Ministerial Education in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference, 1874-1977,' 10 (2012): 96-111.

Subject Index

Cruickshank, Joanna. 'Charles Wesley, the Men of Old Calabar, and the Abolition of Slavery,' 7 (2009): 8-16.

Frappell, Samantha. 'Methodists and the Campaign for Six O'Clock Hotel Closing in New South Wales,' 10 (2012): 30-49.

Hein, Jennifer. 'More Inspirational than Penetrating: The Salvation Army's Use of History,' 8 (2010): 27-46.

_____. 'Responsible Research: James Barker, an Adelaide Dock Strike, and the Implications for Mission from Rewriting History,' 10 (2012): 129-139.

Hilliard, David. 'Looking Again at the History of South Australian Methodism: Twenty-Five Years after Arnold Hunt's *This Side of Heaven*,' 10 (2012): 71-84.

Hopgood, Donald J. 'Methodists in South Australian Public Life,' 10 (2012): 85-95.

Nestor, Maurice. 'Augustine's Renunciation of Classical Literature,' 6 (2006): 56-72.

O'Brien, Glen. '"Just Another 'Queer Sect' from Over the Pacific": Anti-Americanism and the Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia,' 4 (2003): 29-58.

_____. 'Methodist Religion among the Soldiers of the American Civil War,' 7 (2009): 90-105.

_____. Review of Mark A. Noll, *Christians in the American Revolution*, 9 (2011): 144-147.

_____. Review of Richard Waugh, *A New Church for a New Century: East City Wesleyan's Early Story*, 9 (2011): 148-150.

_____. 'The Effects of the Arian Controversy on the Liturgy of the Post-Nicene Church,' 3 (2002): 21-28.

_____. '"The Empire's Titanic Struggle': Australian Methodism and the Great War,' 10 (2012): 50-70.

Pender, Graeme. 'Improvisatory Musical Practices in the Wesleyan Methodist Tradition,' 6 (2006): 8-33.

Young, Norman. 'Methodist Ministerial Education in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference, 1874-1977,' 10 (2012): 96-111.

Theology

Baxter, Gary. 'Art and the Church,' 5 (2004): 75-84.

Breen, Peter. 'An Address to Art Students,' 5 (2004): 85-87.

Case, Jonathan P. 'Beyond the Violent God?: A Primer on Girard,' 7 (2009): 40-59.

_____. 'Conventional or Revisionary?: Situating the Doctrines of Sin and the Works of Grace within Contemporary Theological Paradigms,' 5 (2004): 37-52.

_____. 'Digitalised Spirituality?,' 4 (2003): 17-28.

_____. 'The Death of Jesus and the Truth of the Triune God in Wolfhart Pannenberg and Eberhard Jungel,' 2 (2001): 81-96.

_____. 'When Two are Three: Jung Young Lee's *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*,' 1 (2000): 69-100.

_____, Glen O'Brien, and Judy Rigby, 'Review of Michael Parsons' *Luther and Calvin on Old Testament Narratives*,' 4 (2003): 69-75.

Couchman, Adam. 'Always Changing, Always the Same: Gregory of Nyssa on Holiness,' 7 (2009): 74-89.

_____. 'Sin and its Relationship to "True Godliness" in John Calvin's *Institutes*,' 8 (2010): 69-82.

Edgar, Brian. 'From Practical Divinity to Public Theology,' 7 (2009): 30-39.

Gros, Jeffrey. Review of Frank Macchia, *Justified in the Spirit: Creation, Redemption and the Triune God*, 8 (2010): 83-84.

Harley, Alan. 'Jesus, the Incarnation, and Holy Living,' 7 (2009): 60-73.

_____. 'Putting It All in Perspective: A Survey of a Half Century of Doing Theology, 1961–2011,' 9 (2011): 92-106.

_____. Review of *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine*, 10 (2012): 170-172.

O'Brien, Glen. 'The Divine Apatheia and the Problem of Evil,' 1 (2000): 5-24.

Harley, Alan. 'Methodists in Military Garb: The Salvation Army as a Living Expression of John Wesley's Movement,' 2 (2001): 5-15.

McEwan, David. 'Denominational Identity in a World of Theological Indifferentism: Some Insights from John Wesley and "the People Called Methodists,"' 8 (2010): 9-26.

_____. 'Quality Theological Education from a Wesleyan Perspective,' 2 (2001): 69-80.

_____. Review of Thomas Oden, *John Wesley's Teachings*, 10 (2012): 168-170.

McKinney, Andrew. 'Grace in the Wesley Hymnology,' 1 (2000): 25-39.

Noakes, David and Campbell Roberts. 'The Influence of Wesleyan Sources and Theology on the Salvation Army's Ministry in Social Services and Public Policy in New Zealand,' 10 (2012): 112-128.

O'Brien. Glen. 'A Trinitarian Revisioning of the Wesleyan Doctrine of Christian Perfection,' 2 (2001): 17-68.

_____. Review of Jay Richard Akkerman, Thomas J. Oord and Brent Peterson, eds. *Postmodern and Wesleyan?: Exploring the Boundaries and Possibilities*, 9 (2011): 141-144.

_____. Review of Joseph Coleson, ed. *Be Holy: God's Invitation to Understand, Declare, and Experience Holiness*, 8 (2010): 92-95.

_____. Review of Kevin W. Mannoia and Don Thorsen, eds. *The Holiness Manifesto*, 8 (2010): 90-92.

Oord, Thomas J., Review of Diane Leclerc, *Discovering Christian Holiness: The Heart of Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, 8 (2010): 84-89.

Shelton, Larry R. 'Covenant Atonement as a Wesleyan Integrating Motif,' 5 (2004): 7-36.

Wong, Tik-Wah. 'John Wesley's Understanding of the Christian Life: A Doctrinal Analysis of Wesley's Thirteen Discourses on the Sermon on the Mount,' 5 (2004): 53-67.