THE CHAPELS SOCIETY

Newsletter 50 May 2012

This Brethren Hall at Lovacott in Devon proudly boasts a date of 1827, confounding Brethren history and witnessing to a previous Baptist existence (photograph copyright Roger Thorne)

ISSN 1357–3276

ADDRESS BOOK

The Chapels Society: registered charity number 1014207

Website: http://www.chapelssociety.org.uk

President: Dr Christopher Wakeling, BA, PhD, 22 Gladstone Street, Basford, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 6JF; phone: 01782 621 440

Secretary: Sara Crofts, 47 Salisbury Drive, Midway, Swadlincote DE11 7LD; e-mail: ChapelsSociety@googlemail.com (for general correspondence, case work and website)

Visits Secretary: Tim Grass, 1 Thornhill Close, Ramsey, Isle of Man IM8 3LA; e-mail: tgrass.work@gmail.com (correspondence *re* visits)

Membership Secretary: Paul Gardner, 1 Sunderland Close, Borstal, Rochester, ME1 3AS; e-mail: pgpaulyg@gmail.com

Treasurer: David Watts, 24 Sandhurst Avenue, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY9 0XL; e-mail: david@drwatts.co.uk; phone: 01384 829580

Editor: Chris Skidmore, 31 Melrose Avenue, Reading RG6 7BN; e-mail: chrisskidmore@waitrose.com; phone: 0118 966 3452 (correspondence *re* the *Newsletter* and other Society publications). **Copy for the next (September 2012) *Newsletter* needs to reach the Editor by 31 July 2012, please.**

NOTICEBOARD

CHAPELS SOCIETY EVENTS

7 July 2012	North-west London visit (Andrew Worth) and AGM
22 September 2012	Harrogate and Nidderdale visit (David Quick)

PERSONALIA

Jean West became a member of Council at the 2011 AGM. Here she introduces herself to members:

In introducing myself to you as a new member of Chapels Society Council, I bring no qualifications in building or heritage, but a love of our old churches and chapels and a desire for their conservation. What a privilege it is to have the opportunity to visit these historic buildings, to see what an important part they played in the lives of those who went before us, places where traditions and worship have seeped deep within the materials of which they are built. My childhood was spent at Anglican Church schools but I attended the local Gospel Hall Sunday school, so from an early age was familiar with the contrast between grand and lowly places of worship. I must add that my preference was then and still is the simplicity of the Free Church where I have been a member for many years serving in the past as Church Secretary and at present Elder within the United Reformed Church.

PROCEEDINGS

CONFERENCE ON 'SITTING IN CHAPEL', 2 MARCH 2012

Pews are increasingly being replaced by chairs, making this an opportune time to reflect on the history of seating in churches. The Ecclesiological Society has produced an impressive volume of essays, *Pews, Benches and Chairs*, relating primarily to Anglican churches. The Chapels Society conference 'Sitting in Chapel', held on 2 March at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham, considered the seating in Nonconformist churches which has often been different. The event attracted more than sixty people from conservation groups, several denominations, as well as members of the Society.

David Butler, drawing on his extensive study of Quaker Meeting Houses, considered the arrangement and construction of benches. The demand for greater comfort could be traced in the joinery which converted the upright back rest to an angled one, and the necessary addition to the width of the seat. In his absence, his talk was read by William Waddilove.

The work of carpenter-turned-architect, James Simpson of Leeds, was the subject of the second talk by Ian Serjeant. Typical of Simpson's work were raked seating in the gallery, hinged doors and Bible boxes under seats. Having found a successful formula, he continued to seat his chapels in the same way throughout the middle of the nineteenth century, although by the 1860s box pews had become old fashioned.

It is ten years since the study of chapels in Cornwall, *Diversity and Vitality*, was published. One of the authors, Jeremy Lake of English Heritage, explained that since then the status of the chapels had been reconsidered, resulting in a considerable increase in Grade I and II* listing, often based on the surviving pews. However, it was proving difficult to find a use for those listed chapels which were sited in rural areas, unlike those in towns which could more readily be converted to serve the community.

After a substantial buffet lunch, Christopher Wakeling traced the arrangement of pews in chapels from the early eighteenth century to the present day. The

Angela Connelly addressing the conference in Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham (photograph copyright William Waddilove)

central block of pews appeared early — a major difference from Anglican seating. Also unique to chapels are the early table pews, curved rows of benches, and blocks of seats placed at an angle to the main axis. A complete oval gallery is not to be seen outside Nonconformist places of worship.

Finally Angela Connelly introduced us to the Wesleyan Alhambras. In the late nineteenth century it was observed that free seats were those least used, so it was argued that class, rather than money, kept the poor from attending chapel. A visiting evangelist could fill a Music Hall hired for the occasion, so the Methodists built their Central Halls in the style of Alhambras, with tip-up seats and all mod cons. They were successful in attracting many who found chapel off-putting.

In a brief discussion before closing, ideas were sought for maintaining and adapting pews for modern use.

It was an interesting and worthwhile day, focussing on a neglected topic, and an opportunity to bring the Chapels Society to the attention of a wider audience.

Rosalind Kaye

A pew mystery

It is widely understood that Victorian and Edwardian pew designers often refined the basic article. Shelves or ledges for books are almost universal, umbrella holders are common, and kneeling boards are familiar enough. Small cupboards or drawers can be seen in places, and ingenuity was given to the neat stowing-away of hats. Something a little out of the ordinary, however, was spotted in Henley United Reformed Church, during the Society's rewarding visit last October. Can anyone suggest its purpose?

The building (originally Congregational), which dates from 1908 and was designed by Hampden W. Pratt, is handsomely fitted out. The pews are well made, with sloping backs. Along the length of each pew is a book ledge, and along half of its length at a lower level is a railed shelf in which books can be placed upright. All this is straightforward. But the remaining length of each pew has a wooden pole below the book ledge. What might its function have been? The poles, perhaps a little thicker than a broom handle, show no signs of wear (such as might have occurred if hooks or rings had been used), and it is not at all obvious that they could have been used to stow hats. They seem to be integral to the design of the pews. The poles are permanently fixed in place, and have a decorative terminal. It might be relevant to add that the poles always occur next to gangways, and that beside the pew end is generally a hinged panel, giving access to a storage space under the seat in front.

If you have seen anything similar or know what these features are for, please contact the editor.

RETURN TO RANELAGH — WILLIAM FULLER POCOCK AND THE SLOANE TERRACE AND RANELAGH CHAPELS

AN ARTICLE BY CLYDE BINFIELD

William Fuller Pocock (1779–1849) properly claimed pride of place in *Newsletter 47*, May 2011, for he was the very model of an upwardly mobile Wesleyan Methodist. From 1811 he lived in Knightsbridge, in what was then called Trevor Terrace. He was already comfortably off thanks to shrewd and consistent property development. He was also an architect, rising with his profession, as credible with fellow architects as with his clients. In 1811 his specialism lay in domestic architecture, his clientele was gratifyingly respectable and his practice at that point owed relatively little to his Methodist connections.

Pocock's Methodism was lifelong. He inherited it from his parents, he passed it on to his children, and later Pococks turned into the best sort of Wesleyan Forsytes. So why did ecclesiastical work come relatively late in Pocock's career, and where did he stand with regard to Sloane Terrace and Ranelagh Chapels?

The prime source for Pocock's life and work is an exemplary memoir, agreeably critical and fact-packed, by his elder son, William Willmer Pocock (1813–99).[1]

The younger Pocock too was a successful property developer, a respected architect, and a lifelong Wesleyan Methodist. His insights into his father's practice of architecture and Methodism are instructive.

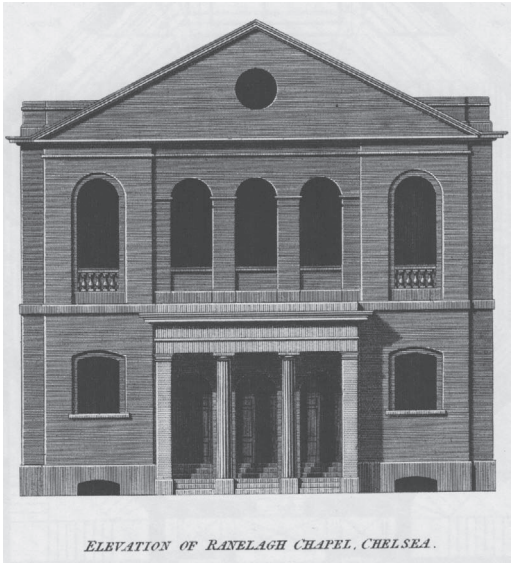
Before they moved to Knightsbridge, with Chelsea Chapel on Sundays, the Pococks worshipped at Great Queen Street Chapel. Three months after their move, Sloane Terrace Chapel was opened and they transferred their allegiance to the new cause. W. F. Pocock got to know Joseph Butterworth (1770–1826), the chief promoter of Sloane Terrace and an MP from 1812, and Adam Clarke (*c.*1760–1832) who preached at Sloane Terrace's opening (15 January 1812) and was Mrs Butterworth's brother-in-law. It was thanks to Butterworth that Pocock received an order for a stove for Sloane Terrace in May 1819. The society was then in financial difficulties; the chapel had cost £5,000 of which £4,500 had been borrowed. The crisis was weathered; Pocock went on to alter Adam Clarke's house at Eastcote, Pinner, and one of Clarke's Sloane Terrace sermons entered Pocock family lore. Clarke was illustrating God's ownership as creator, so he pointed to Pocock whose family pew was in the front row of a side gallery: 'There's friend Pocock, if he makes a design for a building it is his own because he has created it'.[2]

Given the *richesse* of circumstantial detail and W. W. Pocock's regular references to his father's commissions, it is striking that there is no suggestion that Sloane Terrace itself was one of those commissions. I suspect that is because W. F. Pocock was not its architect.

The memoir makes it clear that while Pocock's familial commitment to Methodism was not in doubt in 1811–12, his spare time was as likely to be devoted to the militia as to Methodism. It was only from 1814–15, well after the

opening of Sloane Terrace, that his personal commitment intensified and that he played an increasingly prominent part first in circuit life and then in wider connexional life. It was from that point that chapel and institutional work came increasingly Pocock's way: hence the Sloane Terrace boiler in 1819, although not Sloane Terrace's enlargement in 1845. That, it seems, was undertaken by Thomas Archbutt.[3] The Archbutts were friends who became family. They too were builders and developers, with useful legal expertise. Some lived near the Pococks and worshipped at Sloane Terrace. It was not too surprising that W. W. Pocock married an Archbutt.

This brings us to Ranelagh Chapel, which seems to have been W. F. Pocock's first major chapel commission.[4] Its foundation stone was laid 1 January 1818. It was designed to seat 900 at a total cost (including school rooms and fittings) of £4,090. Whatever the family likeness, this should not be confused with Sloane Terrace. That chapel was to the north-east of Sloane Square. It was eventually (1905–7) replaced by the commanding Christian Science church which, in its present guise as the Cadogan Hall, was the focus of a notable Chapels Society visit, 26 April 2008. Ranelagh Chapel was to Sloane Square's south-east, in Lower George Street, now subsumed in Sloane Gardens. This chapel was demolished *c.* 1887 but from *c.* 1870, after a short spell as a dancing saloon (or academy), it had housed what has since become the Royal Court Theatre, now firmly on Sloane Square.[5] Ranelagh was built for Congregationalists but passed amicably to Presbyterians who then migrated successively north-east to Belgravia and west to Kensington, worshipping in two more of the buildings visited by the Society in April 2008.



Design by W. F. Pocock for the elevation of Ranelagh Chapel, Chelsea

Ranelagh Chapel is now forgotten but it has a multiple significance quite apart from its place in W. F. Pocock's oeuvre. Its name is suggestive. Its Congregational years shed light on an elusive aspect of evangelical, metropolitan Dissent: more Independent than Congregational, its Congregationalism more a matter of personal association, friendship, and ordered convenience than denominational *esprit de corps*, marking the first wave of that suburban Nonconformity which was increasingly characteristic of religion in London. Ranelagh's Presbyterian years might be seen as an outworking of its particular type of independent

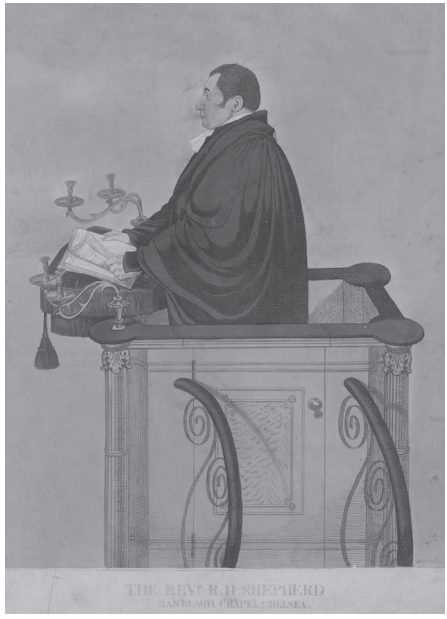
Congregationalism. They also illustrate Victorian Presbyterianism's uneasy evolution as a naturally English Free Church which was nonetheless quite as much an immigrants' church as any London Welsh church or many, perhaps most, Catholic churches.

The chapel was in Chelsea, in 1818 and for years to come a goldmine for developers of all classes. Chelsea's population grew from 12,000 in 1801 to 88,000 in 1881, and in Ranelagh's Congregational years from nearly 30,000 to over 40,000.[6] The chapel stood at a demanding social confluence: Chelsea proper to south and west, Pimlico to the south-east, Belgravia to the north-east, the Cadogan estates to the north, shading west into Brompton, all within walking distance. In 1818 the likeliest pew-holders were tradesmen and lesser professionals of rising respectability, but increasingly they included those who benefitted most from servicing the new mansions of Belgravia.

The chapel's name, Ranelagh, was a delightful improvement on history. In late Stuart days Ranelagh House had been an aristocrat's villa, all but rural. For much of the eighteenth century the estate was on a par with Vauxhall Gardens as a place of public resort, famous for its Rotunda.[7] From 1805 some surviving premises from the recently defunct site were rented for day and Sunday schools whose prime movers were two local floor-cloth manufacturers, Thomas and George Downing, father and son. Sunday services were also held, led by well-disposed evangelicals, regardless of denomination. Among them was a youngish layman, Richard Herne Shepherd (1775–1850).

Shepherd and Ranelagh were synonymous for the rest of Shepherd's life. He was an attractively forceful man, successful in business (none of the sources is specific as to what business), with a gift for friendship, a passion for reading, and some skill in communicating what he had read. He felt called to ministry. Friends urged him to consider Oxford and Holy Orders but weightier (and wiser?) Anglicans dissuaded him: there was a need for faithful laymen who would be 'living sermons' in the world.[8]

Shepherd's evangelical credentials were at once impeccable and eclectic. His family worshipped at Spa Fields, the London heart of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion. He himself sat under Thomas Scott, 'the Commentator' (1747–1821), whose Anglican



Portrait of the Reverend Richard Herne Shepherd, preacher at the Ranelagh Chapel, Chelsea, London (reproduced with permission, Look and Learn/Peter Jackson Collection)

ministry 'was the means of spiritual good to the ruddy youth';[9] he was married at St Mary Woolnoth by the revered John Newton. His wife's sister, however, was married to John Cooke of Maidenhead (1760–1826), the apostle of renewed Congregationalism in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire; his brother William Shepherd (d. 1836) became a Wesleyan travelling preacher, and his younger son, namesake, and future co-biographer became an Anglican (and Oxford) clergyman. It almost followed that Shepherd's own ministerial path, wholly appropriate for an 'eminently pious and somewhat peculiar man of God', should be, *de facto*, Congregational.[10]

The Ranelagh Sunday congregation grew. It reached 400 and consolidated into a church which in December 1813 called Shepherd to its full-time pastorate.[11] In January 1814 he was ordained and within four years a site had been leased in Lower George Street, a chapel built and vested in trustees, among them the two Downings. It took the name, Ranelagh Chapel.

One suspects that Shepherd's business investments sustained the cause; it certainly developed in his distinctive image. Shepherd was a gown and bands man; the services — shades of his Spa Fields upbringing — followed the Anglican liturgy; the hymnody was improved by his own collection of hymns and an organ which remained his property; and he was on easy terms with leading local Anglican Evangelicals. He was also on easy terms with leading London Presbyterians, and in 1845 there was an apparently seamless transfer of the chapel's ownership and the congregation's allegiance to the 'English branch of the Free Church of Scotland'.[12] This was clearly engineered by Shepherd, whose health was now faltering. He preached at the Presbyterian reopening and occasionally thereafter; he retained ownership of the organ, now discreetly obscured by a curtain (it would be several decades before Ranelagh's Presbyterians could condone such an instrument); and the cause's apostolic succession was ensured by the lifelong service of Shepherd's daughter, Elizabeth (d. 1882), as the Sunday School's Lady Superintendent.

In 1866 it proved impossible to renew Ranelagh's lease and the congregation took over a struggling cause in West Halkin Street, which had begun as a Church of Scotland mission for converted Jews: Ranelagh Presbyterian Church now became Belgrave Presbyterian Church. Miss Shepherd was still a stalwart, and the Jewish connection (which had been one of her father's interests) was revived in the 1880s with the distinguished ministry of the learned Hungarian convert, Adolph Saphir (1831–1891).[13] The remainder of Belgrave's story is quickly told. In the twentieth century Belgrave moved west to join St John's Presbyterian Church, Allen Street, Kensington (where Saphir had preached in his retirement), and in 1975 St John's, now United Reformed, joined with Allen Street United Reformed Church, the former Kensington Chapel of Congregational fame. St John's is now St Mark's Coptic Orthodox. The Congregational and Presbyterian witness, now conjoined, is maintained in Allen Street, which is probably quite unaware of the Ranelagh connection.

There are other continuities. Shepherd was an original but he was a clubbable original. He was on terms of lifelong friendship with two neighbouring Congregational ministers, E. A. Dunn and John Morison, whose chapels are now

as vanished as Ranelagh. Edward Alexander Dunn (1778–1850) was minister of Buckingham Chapel, Pimlico, from 1805. Shepherd, who lived nearby, joined Dunn's church and was ordained in Dunn's chapel. Dunn was a leading figure in the Home Missionary Society, whose magazine Shepherd edited for many years.[14] This was one of the ways in which Shepherd made his mark within Congregationalism. It was from Dunn's Buckingham Chapel that the famous Westminster Chapel evolved in 1841, where Samuel Martin's alluring ministry put Buckingham and Ranelagh wholly in the shade. John Morison (1791–1859), minister of Trevor Chapel from 1816, was the best known of the three friends.[15] Morison had a national reputation. He was Chairman of the Congregational Union in 1850, edited the *Evangelical Magazine* for thirty years, and served on the committees of innumerable denominational bodies. Like Dunn, he linked Shepherd to a rapidly shaping denomination and in due course he preached funeral sermons for both of them. He also returns us to the Pococks and the building world of Westminster, Chelsea, and Kensington.

Trevor Chapel, to the south east of Trevor Square, was built on Pocock land. Young W. W. Pocock went to a dame school in its school rooms, and his brother Thomas in 1844 married the daughter of Seth Smith, one of Morison's leading supporters. Morison officiated and Samuel Martin was a witness.[16] Seth Smith (1791–1860) prospered greatly as a builder and developer. He developed significant portions of Belgravia and Pimlico and by 1844 had moved from Brompton to Eaton Square. His property investments provided assured incomes for several generations of his descendants, Pococks among them.[17] The Seth-Smiths maintained their Congregationalism, transferring in due course to Samuel Martin's Westminster Chapel but also building and putting in trust another off-shoot of that now forgotten Buckingham Chapel; this was Eccleston Chapel (1848), deep in the heart of Pimlico and perhaps the true successor to the Congregational Ranelagh Chapel. In some ways Eccleston Chapel had the most interesting posterity of them all, because between the Wars it was better known as The Guildhouse, where Maude Royden (1876–1956) ministered from 1921 to 1936.[18]

So it was that chapel-building marched with speculative development, often to the credit of all concerned. The Pococks, Archbutts, and Seth-Smiths should not be forgotten; neither should the personalities and friendships of Shepherd, Dunn, and Morison. There can be no doubt as to the strain of Christian extension in a rapidly urbanising metropolis; and there can be no doubt as to the opportunity thus extended. As to the constraints — given that Ranelagh, Belgrave, Trevor, and Eccleston Chapels all ceased when their leases fell in — who dare tell who proposes and who disposes?

Notes

[1] W. W. Pocock, *In Memoriam William Fuller Pocock FRIBA (1779–1849). A Genealogical and Biographical Sketch*, privately printed, 1883.
[2] Ibid., p. 41.
[3] Ibid., p. 56.
[4] Ibid., p. 31.
[5] *Blackmanbury*, Vol. 9, Nos. 3–4, June–August 1972, p. 95.

[6] Bridget Cherry and N. Pevsner, *London 3 North West: The Buildings of England*, London: Penguin Books, 1991, p. 554.
[7] *Jubilee of Belgrave Presbyterian Church*, London: G. W. C. Shield, 1896, p. 7 and *passim*; R. and S. Shepherd (eds), *Memoir of the Rev. Richard Herne Shepherd; With a Selection from his Publications and Correspondence*. www. General-Books.net: General Books, 2009 [repr. 1854 edn], p. 6.
[8] Ibid., p.3.
[9] *Congregational Year Book (CYB)*, 1850, p. 105.
[10] Ibid., p. 104.
[11] *The Home Missionary Magazine*, Vol. I, October 1820, p. 229.
[12] *Evangelical Magazine*, 1850, p. 343.
[13] For Saphir see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (*ODNB*), and *Jubilee of Belgrave, op. cit*., pp. 44–81.
[14] *CYB*, 1850, pp. 95, 105.
[15] *ODNB*; *CYB*, 1860, pp. 200–203.
[16] Marriage Certificate 4 June 1844; *In Memoriam, op. cit*., p. 54.
[17] Will, proved 30 July 1860.
[18] *ODNB*; Sheila Fletcher, *Maude Royden: A Life*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.

CHAPEL BEGINNINGS OF A SECULAR ARCHITECT: THE CASE OF EDWIN LUTYENS

AN ARTICLE BY CHRIS SKIDMORE

Overstrand, a small village on the North Norfolk coast, two miles south-east of Cromer, is an unexpected place to find Edwin Lutyens' first effort in designing a Nonconformist chapel. Overstrand Methodist Church in Cliff Road, is an intriguing building. It was built in 1898 on a small site given by one of his patrons, Cyril Flowers, Lord Battersea, for whom he had just converted two modest seaside villas into a rambling house in an eccentric combination of styles, called The Pleasaunce. He had also designed Overstrand Hall for Lord Hillingdon in red brick and Norfolk flint in a fusion of Italian and Tudorbethan styles.

This was all part of a building boom in Overstrand initiated by the selling off of the estate by Lord Suffield in 1888. The area had been made popular in the preceding years by newspaper articles by the theatre critic, Clement Scott, describing this section of the North Norfolk coast as Poppyland, a rural English idyll. Neighbouring Cromer had had a railway connection to London in 1877 and Overstrand itself was connected by a branch line from North Walsham in 1898.

Lutyens' Methodist Church still has the power to shock in the twenty-first century. A bare ten years since he set up in practice he had produced a revolutionary design that prefigures some of the elements of more recent architecture. A basic red-brick rectangular chapel with a central aisle, it is overwhelmed first by a clerestory provided with ten massive semi-circular windows and second by an equally massive recessed brick porch leading to the entrance door. And then you realise that the side walls are completely windowless!

What, if anything, is Lutyens referencing here? The pantiles and the clerestory take us back to Italy and to the Roman basilica. Preliminary drawings in the

Overstrand Methodist Church (photograph copyright norfolkchurches.co.uk)

RIBA collection show that he might have been playing with the idea of a small apse for the east end. But in seeing the structure as prefiguring modernism, I am also reminded that Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple in Chicago's Oak Park, designed in 1905, has only clerestory windows and roof lights to permit light into the building. Remarkable as the clerestory is, it is also necessary to admit that its proportions compared to the rest of the building remind one of nothing so much as an overgrown railway carriage! It is the least elegant element in the whole structure.

The entrance porch is a different matter: it is simple pared-down elegance. It harks back to the Norman church doorway, with its receding rows of moulded arches. However it is also extremely contemporary in the Arts and Crafts style: a similar doorway, although with applied terracotta decoration, occurs in The Watts Cemetery Chapel in Compton, Surrey, finished the same year, and Lutyens uses the design again for the garden entrance at Deanery Garden, Sonning-on-Thames, in 1901. However at Overstrand the red brickwork is set off by the horizontal bands of tiling set into the fascia, which are brought down where they intersect the arched porch to give the impression of the voussoirs and keystone of a stone arch.

The final striking feature of Lutyens' design is the three brick buttresses on either side of the structure which carry the lead-clad beams to support the clerestory. These could be considered as a modern take on the flying buttresses of a Gothic cathedral. They were always central to Lutyens' conception,

as indicated by his preliminary drawings. In some versions they stand proud of the main structure, like a classic flying buttress, sometimes they have more highly decorated capping, but they remain. As Pevsner remarks, they are aggressively functional. Perhaps not until the structural expressionism of Rogers and Piano were the structural elements of a building again so nakedly displayed to view.

Altogether then, this is a remarkable building from an architect who is not remembered either as a revolutionary or as a builder of chapels. In fact Lutyens was responsible for very few religious buildings, the most well-known being St Jude's and the Free Church which face each other across the Central Square of Hampstead Garden Suburb. But here the two buildings are designed as part of a townscape and, although contrasting examples of church architecture, it could be argued that either one could have been assigned to either of the congregations. The Hampstead Garden Free Church (1909) is a remarkable building but in no sense is it a chapel in the way that the building at Overstrand clearly is.

Lutyens' next religious buildings were the headquarters of the Theosophical Society, an organisation in which his wife was much involved. The buildings in Tavistock Square were to be in his 'Wrenaissance' style. The foundation stone was laid in 1911 but the building was incomplete at the outbreak of war in 1914 and was eventually sold to the British Medical Association, who completed it in 1925 and who still occupy the site. The Great Hall, which was to have been the Theosophist temple, was divided vertically in the 1980s and is now a conference centre.

As is well known, Lutyens' designs for Liverpool Roman Catholic Cathedral suffered a similar fate, being started on in 1933 but only erected to the crypt level before work was stopped by the war in 1941. His final religious building to be completed was Campion Hall, Oxford for the Jesuits in 1935.

Lutyens could hardly be said to be a chapel architect – his country houses, his mercantile buildings, his Great War memorials and his work in New Delhi will remain his lasting memorial. The Methodist Church at Overstrand can almost be said to be his only essay in the form but one that is well worth remembering. Perhaps Lutyens himself remembered it for, although Campion Hall is in stone and overall in his mature style, his last religious building has interestingly an entrance porch in the same style as that at Overstrand.

VISITS

Christopher Wakeling makes some suggestions for places to visit in 2012.

A Pugin museum for the centenary

This year, to celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of A. W. N. Pugin, a Pugin centre has been established in Cheadle, Staffordshire. The centre is expected to remain open until the end of 2012, generally each weekday and alternate Saturdays. At the time of writing it houses a selection of drawings from the RIBA collection and items from the Hardman collection of metalwork and stained glass. In addition to the exhibitions, a full programme of visits, talks and other

events is being planned. For further details of events or to join the event mailing list send an e-mail to pugin@uvns.org. Cheadle, not to be confused with its Cheshire namesake, is close to some of England's most Romantic scenery, and was nicknamed Pugin-land by Pevsner. Just a few yards from the Pugin centre is the great Catholic church of St Giles, Pugin's most gorgeous creation, and its attendant buildings of convent, school and presbytery. But the whole district is a happy hunting-ground for Pugin visitors. In Alton, some four miles away, can be found his small chapel of St John, the adjoining Hospital and Alton Castle, dramatically situated above the Churnet Valley.

Two miles to the north is St Wilfred's, Cotton, which later served as the chapel of Cotton College. In marked contrast to the seclusion of Cotton Dell are the renowned grounds of Alton Towers, where Pugin's architecture is literally overlooked by many visitors. A range of publications, including Pugin guide books, is available at the Pugin Centre in Lulworth House, High Street, Cheadle, ST10 1AR.

Britain's Top Ten Synagogues

Britain has recently joined an international Jewish heritage trail (the European Routes of Jewish Culture) by nominating its top ten historic synagogues. Any such top ten is open to the criticism that it omits somebody's favourite, but this selection of synagogues is pretty good. The oldest building on the list is London's celebrated Bevis Marks synagogue of 1701, built by the Quaker Joseph Avis, and next oldest is the externally understated Ashkenazi synagogue of 1762–3 in Plymouth. Completing the pre-Victorian selection is the Montefiore synagogue in Ramsgate, a Neoclassical design of 1832–3 by David Mocatta, beside which sits an eye-catching mausoleum. From Birmingham there is Singer's Hill synagogue, an accomplished piece of Renaissance design of 1855–6 by the leading civic architect, H. Y. Thomason, and Manchester makes an appearance with the former Spanish and Portuguese synagogue (now Manchester Jewish Museum) of 1874 by Edward Salomons. The 1870s are richly represented, with Princes Road synagogue in Liverpool (1874 by George Audsley) as the brightest star, followed by its architectural satellite, the New West End synagogue in London (1879, and also by Audsley), and finally the glittering Middle Street synagogue, Brighton (1875, by Thomas Lainson). From the next decade are Bradford's Reform synagogue (1880–1 by T. H. and F. Healey), with its exotic polychrome facade, and the stately Garnethill synagogue, Glasgow (1881 by John McLeod) as the sole Scottish representative. It's a great pity that there's nothing later than this: an interwar modernist synagogue could usefully have extended the architectural and social story of British Jewry. But, with that caveat, the top ten is a wonderful starting point for anyone who wants to explore the wealth of Jewish architecture in Britain. Visit www.jewish-heritage-uk.org for full details.

NEWS

Forthcoming tour of Italy

Anthony Earl writes to inform members of the Society of his next study tour **In Italy — the ideas for reform** to be held 24 September — 1 October next. The tour will aim to visit places connected with the reforms of the Catholic Church in the mid-sixteenth century alongside Protestant themes. Hotels will be in Bergamo and Monselice and there will also be visits to Padua, Ferrara (Protestant and Jewish centre) and Trento, with an option to Venice. Flights, main meals, four star hotels, for £850. The advisors are Dr Ken Carleton and Dr Ruth Chavasse. Full details are available from Anthony at anthonyjearl@googlemail.com.

The Lord giveth…

The Government has responded to concerns about metal theft from buildings by announcing in January that it would amend the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill to include a new offence to prohibit cash payments to purchase scrap metal and to increase the fines for current offences under the existing Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964.

…and the Lord hath taken away

The Government has announced the withdrawal of zero rate VAT on approved alterations to listed buildings from 1 October 2012 as part of its measures to 'rationalise' the tax system. As some form of recompense, the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme will be widened from the same date to allow for alterations as well as repairs to listed places of worship.

Details of how to make the Government aware of the strength of feeling on both these issues can be found on the Churchcare website [http://www.churchcare.co.uk/index.php].

Echoes of 1662

Many Nonconformist activities this year have inevitably included reference to the Great Ejectment of 1662. The Chapels Society visit to Kidderminster in April was one such. The AGM of the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and cognate Libraries (ADHSCL) will hear a lecture from the Revd Professor Alan Sell entitled 'A Bold Baptist, an Intrepid Independent and a Pithy Presbyterian: three ejected Ministers of the 'B' team.' This is on Thursday 18 October at 2.00 pm at Lumen, the URC church in Tavistock Place, London. The Revd Professor David Thompson will give the URC History Society Lecture on a related topic (yet to be announced) at Highgate URC, London on Saturday 22 September 2012. Those interested in attending this latter lecture should register their interest with Mrs Margaret Thompson, c/o URC History Society, Westminster College, Cambridge CB3 0AA.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Diaries of Cornelius Ashworth, 1782–1816, edited by Richard Davies, Alan Petford and Janet Senior: indexed by Nigel Smith. Hebden Bridge Local History Society, 2011. viii + 368 pp with 42 illustrations (some in colour) and a pull-out map, hardback. ISBN 978-0-9537217-2-6. £19.00. For contact details, see www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

This lavishly produced and illustrated volume, which arises out of the work of a research class organised by the Hebden Bridge Local History Society in the upper Calder Valley of West Yorkshire, makes available for the first time in a modern edition four volumes of diaries, covering the months from 4 October 1782 to 23 November 1783, 1 January 1785 to 25 February 1786, 1 January 1809 to 31 December 1809, and 1 January 1815 to 1 April 1816. The author, Cornelius Ashworth (1751–1821), was a small-time hill farmer, one-time handloom weaver and latterly hop-dealer who lived at Walt Royd farmhouse (the property of his wife and then of his stepson) in Ovenden township in the parish of Halifax. Above all, from the point of view of readers of this review, he was a deeply religious man, whose brief almost daily diary entries record where he attended worship each Sunday, who the preachers were, and on which texts they preached.

For six days he laboured on his farm, sometimes helped by neighbours, family and hired men; sometimes helping his neighbours and doing odd building and maintenance jobs on their or his own property. He kept a few cows, a pig or more, and grew oats which he harvested, threshed, and used to feed both cattle and humans alike. In an excellent introduction to the text, several pages are devoted to abstracting from the diary, reconstructing and explaining the farming processes and routine at Walt Royd, day by day and season by season. Interestingly, the editors observe that the farm still continues to follow similar ways today. During the years covered by the first two volumes, before February 1785, there are also frequent mentions of handloom weaving, especially in winter when farm work was less demanding. Again, an excellent section of the introduction provides a clear account both of what the diary entries are telling us, and what the technical terms and processes mean. Ashworth also spent some time as a jobbing builder and quarryman, but from December 1785 he appears also as a dealer in hops — his brother-in-law was a hop factor in Southwark — supplying both commercial and home brewers in the area. Economic diversification, the ability to turn his hand to many things and the willingness to work hard appear to have helped Ashworth prosper — in 1785 he 'began wearing a wig' and he bought himself a hat costing 12 shillings.

And on the seventh day he (mostly) rested and worshipped his Lord, usually walking the 2½ miles to Halifax to hear morning and afternoon sermons in his chosen chapel. Ashworth's theology can best be described as Evangelical Calvinist, and initially he was attracted to the Independents who were ministered to by Titus Knight who had led a Calvinistic break-away from the Methodists. They were meeting at the Gaol Lane chapel in Halifax when Ashworth joined them in

1771 and he moved with the congregation (as member no. 24 out of 25) when they opened the new Square Chapel the following year. Sunday by Sunday he heard Knight (or a visiting preacher when Knight was preaching at Whitefield's Tabernacle in London) and it is possible from the recorded texts to reconstruct some of what that experience might have meant. By 1786, though, he was also going to hear William Ackroyd at Pellon Lane Baptist chapel and in April 1795 he became a baptised member of the church there. There were also cottage meetings, some on weekdays at Walt Royd but, although such assiduous recording and the keeping of a diary of time spent might have had a spiritual purpose, there is little of overt religious comment in them. On Wednesday, 25 December 1783, 'being Christmas day', he went to Halifax to hear Titus Knight preach twice from Galatians 4, verses 4, 5, 6 and 7 ('But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons' &c) but the next time the diary covers a Christmas day, which fell on a Sunday in 1785, there is no special mention of the day at all. Indeed, Ashworth does not even recall which verses from 1 Timothy furnished Knight with his text (presumably it was verse 15: 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners'). Again, he notes Easter only once, 20 April 1783, when Knight preached on Romans 14 verse 9 ('For to this end Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living'). Yet on the preceding Friday the full entry reads simply: 'a Dull droughty day with a little rain in the Morning I wove 9½ yds & carried a Piece': no mention of Good Friday but work at the loom as usual. Most entries are of this nature: the daily round, the common task, the weather, the work and the Sunday text. On their own these might have made for difficult and repetitive reading, not least because of their cryptic nature and the decision of the editors to provide an unyieldingly precise transcription; but the quality of the introductory section, supplemented by the footnotes to the diary and complemented by a biographical appendix of ministers mentioned, and a glossary of terms ('droughty' means dry) turn this into an enjoyably accessible and informative volume which opens up for the reader the life of the sort of Christian layman for whom the chapels of Nonconformity were built and who faithfully filled their pews Sunday by Sunday.

Edward Royle

Churches 1870–1914, edited by Teresa Sladen and Andrew Saint. Victorian Society, 2011. 168 pp and 94 plates, paperback. ISBN 978-0-901652-7. £25.00

Late Victorian church architecture has often been regarded as the disappointing second half of a story that began with great excitement. This welcome publication is not so much a head-on challenge to such views, but for the most part a gentle undermining of the thesis. It is generously illustrated, with a good number of attractive colour plates, often of unreservedly little-known buildings or features. The two chapters likely to be tackled first by members of the Chapels Society are Peter

Howell's essay on Catholic church-building after Pugin, and Julian Orbach's contribution on Welsh chapels, and both begin in the late 1850s.

Howell's starting point is the English translation of Charles Borromeo's *Instructions on Ecclesiastical Building*, which was published in 1857 'to assist in removing from our English Catholic Architecture the Anglican tendency with which it is threatened'. As Howell shows, the resulting revival of Counter-Reformation church plans did not necessarily lead to the abandoning of Gothic design. Indeed, much of the essay charts the wide repertoire of medieval Gothic architecture adopted by Catholic architects — from Edward Goldie's richly-finished Dominican church at Hawkesyard to Leonard Stokes's subtly pared-down church of St Clare, Sefton Park. The final nail in the coffin of Gothic hegemony (at least for Catholic England) was the Brompton Oratory, as Howell notes, by the time its Birmingham counterpart was built, even Pugin & Pugin were willing to forsake Gothic.

The starting point for Orbach's thoughtful survey is the religious revival which swept across Wales in 1859, and this is taken as the convenient divide between an era when Welsh chapels were 'essentially products of the congregation that commissioned them' and a time of new architectural ideas. For the Welsh-speaking congregations, an extraordinary number of the later chapels was designed by a handful of prolific designers (most notably the Revd Thomas Thomas of Landore and Richard Owens of Liverpool), and Orbach cautiously suggests that some of their favoured architectural motifs derive not from a knowledge of Alberti or Hawksmoor, but from the middle rank of chapel architects in England. After showing that many Gothic chapels in Wales were built for English-speaking congregations, Orbach draws attention to several prominent exceptions (without mentioning the eighteenth-century precedents at Trefecca, however). In contrast to the Catholic story, there is said to be relatively little change in the plan-forms of later Welsh chapels, save for the widespread introduction of organs in the last decade or two of the nineteenth century. The chapter ends with the religious revival of 1904 and the new century's architectural freedoms, epitomised by Llandudno's Ebenezer Wesleyan chapel, of red brick and sandstone, in Wren's Hampton Court fashion.

Each of the other chapters is of interest, even to determined Nonconformists. Lynne Walker's account of women and church art, for instance, reproduces an unbuilt design for a Bible Christian chapel by Ethel Charles (first woman member of the RIBA) and shows Phoebe Traquair's ambitious murals in the Catholic Apostolic Church, Edinburgh. Similarly, Teresa Sladen's revelatory essay on surface decoration features the magnificent mosaics and iconostasis of Santa Sophia, Bayswater (the Greek Orthodox church visited by the Society in 2010) and the refined Byzantinism of Westminster Cathedral. Alan Crawford observes that his reflections on Arts and Crafts churches could be extended to Edgar Wood's chapels or Leonard Stokes's Catholic churches, and Philip Ward-Jackson traces a revolution in episcopal memorials back to the Kidderminster statue of Richard Baxter. In the opening and concluding contributions, Andrew Saint and Gavin Stamp write with real insight about some of the overarching themes. Both focus on Anglican matters, but hint also at the slightly different conclusions that

might be drawn from a synoptic history of British religious architecture in the half-century before the Great War.

Christopher Wakeling

To The Glory of God by Ray Oakley. Leamington Spa: published by the author, 2011. 191 pp, illustrated with 183 colour and black and white photographs, hardback. ISBN 978-0-85412-827-3. £20.00

With its martial music, uniformed corps and castellated citadels, the Salvation Army is nothing if not visual. In how many English towns has the Salvation Army articulated its message of militant Christianity through the architecture of fortification? Yet familiar as its buildings are, they have received little attention. This book sets out to tell the story of the Salvation Army through its buildings. As the subtitle of the book explains, it is:

> *A history of the development of the Salvation Army in the British Isles as expressed, illustrated and symbolised through its buildings and some paintings.*

Almost half the book is devoted to explaining the development of Salvation Army meeting halls. In the early years General Booth improvised brilliantly. His first meeting hall was a large dancing saloon in Whitechapel which he rented in 1865. As the mission grew, the Army moved into theatres and music halls. These were ideal for William Booth's purpose. They held large numbers of people who all had a clear view of the stage from which the mission was preached. A bench could be placed at the front, enabling penitents to proclaim their conversion in full view of the whole assembly. This very public confession was a powerful and enduring element in revival meetings and the penitents' bench or mercy seat became an important feature of Army halls. A clearly visible stage and mercy seat have been the most important requirements of Salvation Army halls throughout the history of the organisation. It is also true that the early adapted premises were, by definition, devoid of any ecclesiastical overtones which was a positive advantage in the Army's mission to recapture those who had rejected institutional Christianity in Victorian England.

The Salvation Army grew rapidly. At the beginning of 1881 there were 172 corps, by the end of 1883 the number had more than trebled and stood at 528. Premises were needed quickly and in abundance. In a number of cases they were provided by redundant roller skating rinks which had closed their doors as this ephemeral craze evaporated. In York, Chester and Oldham, to name but three instances, the Army converted skating rinks, attracted by their large capacity, low cost and immediate availability. In many places however completely new buildings were commissioned and from 1880 the Army had its own architect's office. By 1885 the *Orders and Regulations for Divisional Officers* offered advice on building, suggesting that halls should be planned, 'after the fashion of theatres and places of amusement'. Equally important was the need to make Army meeting halls architecturally distinctive and *Orders and Regulations* observed that;

In appearance at least, they may be made more in accordance with our military system. This can be carried out at a trifling extra expense by a little castellated work on the elevations, or by turrets, or the like.

From the mid-1880s onwards most meeting halls conformed to this style and so by the end of the century the Salvation Army had already made its mark on the English urban scene, adding its distinctive voice to the cacophony of architectural styles employed by the dissenting denominations.

Castellated facades continued into the twentieth century but the buildings they proclaimed became more complex as the Army's range of mission broadened. Thus by the twenties a young people's hall was a necessity and ancillary rooms such as band practice rooms and officers' tea rooms highly desirable. As bands became an integral feature of Salvation Army worship halls were modified to accommodate them, most obviously by replacing the tiered seating at the rear of the stage with a flat platform, which had the additional advantage that it was much better suited for the production of pageants and plays.

As this book makes clear however, Salvation Army architecture is more than meeting halls. It embraces the very extensive range of buildings used to house the Army's social mission and it has included hostels for the homeless, housing for the elderly, hospitals, schools and complete model communities. These are very diverse types of buildings. However they have had a degree of common design because of the existence of the Salvation Army's architect's office. Between 1880 and 2003 there were just nine architects in charge of the office and their influence on the Army's diverse buildings is one of the themes of Ray Oakley's book. This is not surprising as he was the seventh chief architect and he brings to this study his intimate knowledge both of the office and the Army. He is particularly good on the twentieth century development of the meeting hall and on the evolution of the design of the buildings for social service.

It is possible to argue that the Salvation Army succeeded in reaching lower down the social scale than any other denomination. Certainly the success of its urban missions brought it face to face with the problems of the Victorian city. Prostitution and homelessness impelled the Army into social work. Rescue homes and hostels were soon required to help alleviate the effects of poverty and their development is traced in some detail in this book. To tackle the causes of poverty a farm colony was established at Hadleigh in Essex to train unemployed men in agriculture as a preparation for their emigration to the colonies and Ray Oakley paints an interesting picture of this institution.

Other sections cover the headquarters buildings, notably that designed by the Quaker architect Hubert Lidbetter in 1963, and a number of special buildings. Perhaps the most interesting of these is William Booth College built to a design by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott with echoes of Cambridge University Library.

The paintings promised in the subtitle prove to be those by Rosa Branson depicting aspects of the life and work of the Salvation Army. Six are reproduced but at rather too small a scale for their imagery to be fully appreciated. Although little commentary is offered, perhaps not much is needed as their symbolism is self-evident, rather in the manner of the realist paintings favoured by the Soviet

regime from the thirties onwards. They prove, if nothing else, that evangelism can have its iconography.

As befits a book written by an architect who has clearly made a very considerable contribution to Salvation Army architecture himself, the book goes into more detail on the later twentieth century buildings. Indeed one of the valuable features of the book is the personal knowledge that Ray Oakley brings to the subject. In this context it is a shame that he has not provided any footnotes which might help the future student. It is a fascinating introduction to a neglected subject but as time passes readers will increasingly lament the fact that the author left only the most sketchy guide to the sources upon which his study has been based.

Self-publication is an onerous and often lonely business. There are places where the guiding hand of an editor could have reduced repetition and usefully tightened the organisation of the book. Inevitably the resources of an individual are not the same as those of a professional publisher and it is understandable that some printing errors should slip through the net. It is perhaps less excusable that no index has been compiled, perhaps this could be rectified in a future edition. There is no doubt that anyone wanting to understand the architecture of the Salvation Army will need to read and reread this book, which is both a distillation of a lifetime's work and a reflection on the buildings of the Army. Ray Oakley is to be congratulated on producing a handsome book and, more importantly, a pioneering work of permanent value.

A. J. Petford

This foundation stone from the Primitive Methodist Chapel in Aqueduct, Telford has been rediscovered and re-erected by the local history society [details at acqueductlocalhistory.wordpress.com] aptly illustrating 1 Peter 4:18 — 'And if the righteous scarcely be saved…'

DESIGNED AND PRODUCED BY OBLONG CREATIVE LTD, WETHERBY, WEST YORKSHIRE