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NONCONFORMITY IN NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE 1662-1962.

GEORGE HENRY WHITTAKER.

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts

in

The Department of Theology,
in the University of Durham.

1981.

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS.

NONCONFORMITY IN NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE 1662-1962.

GEORGE HENRY WHITTAKER.

This thesis examines the beginning of a religious movement in the north of England in an area nestling in the Pennines, on the boundaries of West Yorkshire. This area of North East Lancashire includes Bacup in the south, Cl^{rk}er^oe in the north, Colne in the east, and Blackburn in the west.

This movement with its roots in the Continental Reformation and the Reformed Tradition was first expressed in this area through the belief and action of Puritan ministers in the Church of England, who in 1662, refused to conform to the Act of Uniformity and Prayer Book worship. They were called Dissenters or Nonconformists. Catholics formed their own Dissent.

The Puritan ministers who dissented were ejected from their livings. The first leader of this movement in the area was Thomas Jolly, the Puritan minister of Altham Parish Church, near Padiham. Jolly inaugurated the Independent or Congregational form of church government.

In 1670 Jolly, established in Accrington, linked up with the Presbyterians already established in the Blackburn area. About the same time other Nonconformists accepting the principles of Believers' Baptism, moved into the area from West Yorkshire and made contact with the Independents.

The thesis examines the introduction of Methodism into the area around Colne through the influence of William Grimshaw the Puritan minister of Haworth. It traces the extension of Methodism through Colne, Nelson, Burnley, Blackburn and the Rossendale Valley. It also considers some of the divisions within Methodism.

With the beginning of the Industrial Revolution and the development of the textile and ancillary industries, the thesis looks at the effects

of population movement and growth and the attendant social problems on Nonconformity.

The author gives an account of the growth of Nonconformist leadership in civic life, the entrepreneurial ideal, the conflicts between church and chapel on civic disabilities and the relevance and mission of Nonconformity in the new circumstances of the early twentieth century. The thesis concludes with an account of decline supported by statistics in the appendices and the options opened in a positive way to Nonconformists today.

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Abbreviations.

1. P.R.O.L. Preston Records Office, Lancashire.
2. M.A.R.L.M. Methodist Archives. Rylands Library, Deansgate, Manchester.
3. A.P.L. Accrington Public Library.
4. B.P.L. Blackburn Public Library.
5. Bu.P.L. Burnley Public Library.
6. C.P.L. Colne Public Library.
7. N.B.C.L. Northern Baptist College Library. Rusholme, Manchester.
8. D.W.L. Dr. William's Library. London.
9. B.U.L. Baptist Union Library. 5, Southampton Row, London W.C.1.
10. N.P.L. Northallerton Public Library.
11. U.L.D. University Library, College Green, Durham.
12. B.L. The British Library, Boston Spa, near Wetherby.

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NONCONFORMITY IN NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE 1662-1962.CHAPTER 1.Preface.

Every historical period depends on the immediate past... this suggests what those studying history are so often apt to overlook, that every period is inevitably interrelated and interlocked with every preceding and succeeding period. 1.

This is particularly true of Christian Church History. The stream which burst forth from the spring of Pentecost was turbulent where there were rocks, meandering where there were plains, turned to floods after rains and sometimes almost dried up in drought, but it persisted to flow into the great oceans of faith. Dr. Latourette has referred to this faith of the church in more modern times, in the analogy of tides, ebbing and flowing, but never ceasing.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the upsurge and decline of the Dissenters, Nonconformists, or as they have been more recently named Free Churchmen, in North East Lancashire. It is essential to set the story in context, to paint in the broad background in order to give clearer and more precise tone value to the foreground details.

What happened in North East Lancashire in the minds and hearts of the Nonconformist forbears, namely the Puritans, in the year 1662, began much earlier, when Luther nailed his theses to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg. In the following introduction I hope to set out the chronological and historical context.

1. Vivian Hubert Howard Green, The Hanoverians 1714-1815 (London, 1976) p.12.



The Continental Reformation, making as it did, a break with the ecclesiastical authority of the Roman Church from the days of Constantine, prepared the way for those Nonconformists making new tracks in the footsteps of Luther and Calvin. There was a more questioning approach to the Bible, Christian theology, doctrine, and church government. The Bible was more frequently read, discussed and expounded by clerics to the laity. Zwingli, among others, emerged from the Reformation as a radical, preparing the way for the more extreme radicals and Anabaptists of Munster. Following the Anabaptists attempt to set up an ideal Christian community in Munster, which foundered on their own intolerance and the consequent violence, the more moderate Anabaptists fled to Holland and came under the influence of Menno Simons and joined his Mennonite Movement.

The Reformation in England, after the death of Henry the Eighth, developed through English refugees who had taken shelter in Geneva, and through others who had later made contact with the Independents and Mennonites in Holland. Notable among these were John Robinson, founder of the Independent or Congregational Churches in England, together with John Smythe and Thomas Helwys who returned to England to found Baptist Churches. Among those not subscribing to such independent views were William Whittingham, appointed Dean of Durham, and Bishop Coverdale, who returning from exile in Geneva and hoped that England might adopt a position like that of the Reformed Churches on the Continent. These were the materials underlying the religious disputes which have lasted to the present time.

1.

Queen Elizabeth, confronted by a legacy of bitterness and bigotry in 1559, 'Restored the Reformation in its Anglican form, by passing the Act of Supremacy and the Act of Uniformity, which made the Prayer Book the only legal form of worship.'

2.

The House of Lords was with difficulty brought to accept extensive changes in ritual and doctrine.

1. D. Horton, The English Free Churches (Grahamstown, 1964) p.2.

2. G.M. Trevelyan, History of England (London, 1926) p. 328.

The Bishops in the Upper House resisted any change. Outside Parliament the Convocation of the Clergy of the Province of Canterbury reaffirmed the supremacy of the Pope and the doctrine of transubstantiation, but these views were over-ridden by Parliament. The Settlement was, supported by the Commons, and many of the laity, who had no representation in the Church Assemblies. The Settlement was a valiant and shrewd attempt to bring an accepted peace in English religious life, but there was to be no peace.

Catholics were agreed and resentful and eventually resorted to plots to upset the Settlement. The Puritan party was also dissatisfied but mostly hoped to work toward further reforms in the Church of England. There were however Puritans who saw no hope of any compromise and turned towards the Presbyterian system, adopted through John Calvin, John Knox and Andrew Melville in Scotland. The radicals decided to separate more distinctly. These could not even accept the Presbyterian system but claimed to return to the conception of the gathered Church.

There were no clear lines of demarcation at this stage between the Established Church and the Nonconforming bodies. Some clergy who remained within the Church of England did not preach and practice Prayer Book religion, and others who began to hold their own separate religious meetings still attended Morning Prayer. Christopher Hill unfolds one reason for the emergence of Puritanism in the early seventeenth century. There was a dearth of good Protestant preaching.

The ministry in Durham was said in 1560 to be barren and destitute of the sufficiency of worthy men. The Bishop of Carlisle in 1561 described his clergy as 'wicked imps of Anti-Christ and for the most part very ignorant and stubborn'. Bernard Gilpin the Apostle of the north, said in 1552 that 'a thousand pulpits are covered in dust'. Preaching was regarded as an antidote to popery and rebellion, William Bradshaw observed. The rebellion in 1569 occurred in areas where 'the gospel is not effectively preached'. Lancashire gentlemen who in 1604 petitioned in support of puritan preachers claimed that by means of their good doctrine and example we have found it more

easy to contain the common people in the duties of their subjection and loyalty to the supreme power. 1.

Few of the Puritan preachers emerging at this time would have claimed that their motive for preaching was either to promote the authority of the Crown or to preserve order, although later John Wesley urged the poor, 'to be content in their lot'. Christopher Hill tells us that London Merchant members of particular guilds, men born in the same county, subscribed to promote preaching and education in their counties.

Those of Lancashire origin supported five or six preachers in places where there was neither preaching nor means to maintain it, and there are many more examples. The movement for preaching and piety spread. Under the influence of Peter Hill, Cromwell wrote to the **Speaker** in Parliament in March 1650 advocating a college for all the sciences and literature at Durham, which may much conduce to the promotion of learning and piety in those poor, rude and ignorant parts. 2.

This indirectly was to influence and help the promotion of learning in Lancashire. Since the early days of the Reformation in England there had been close connections between Durham and Lancashire through the Pilkington family. James Pilkington an early Lancashire reformer exiled for a time in Geneva, returned to England at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign in 1589 to preach the doctrine of John Calvin. He became the Puritan Bishop of Durham in 1561. From time to time visiting his home near Farnworth, he supported and encouraged Puritan preaching in Lancashire.

Hearnshaw described the religious attitude which confronted James the First on his arrival in London.

The Puritan party in the English church, presented the so-called Millenary Petition begging for the relaxation of the ritualistic requirements of the Anglican Rubrics, but James made it clear following the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 that there would be no concessions. The Roman Catholics had high hopes that James would repeal the Recusancy Laws and that he would formerly announce reconciliation with Rome. They were bitterly disappointed. James was a convinced Protestant and could speak well in theological controversy. He was however concerned to bring

1. Christopher Hill, Chance and Continuity in Seventeenth Century
2. Ibid. p.8. England (London, 1975) p.6.

about religious toleration and prevent persecution. Extreme reactions from Puritans and Catholics confirmed the King with the Lords and Commons in his view, on the necessity of repression. 1.

The early seventeenth century, saw a hardening of the popular hatred of Roman Catholicism, with the eventual tragedy of the Civil War. In this conflict the religious lines of demarcation were not precise; some Protestants fought alongside Catholics in the Royalist army, whilst Cromwell's army was made up largely of Presbyterians and Independents, the main bodies generally called Puritans.

The main reason for the stiffening of Puritan attitudes, was the deep suspicion that the Church of England still cherished Romish practices and traditions in its conception of catholicism. In religious controversies, memories are long standing. Twenty one years earlier, (1640) before the restoration of the 1662 Prayer Book, Archbishop Laud had worked in co-operation with Charles the First, during the years of the most despotic government. It must be said that Laud's deep concern was to bring discipline and order to the Church of England and to try to unite the religious life of the country but his attitude and autocracy alienated the Puritans.

Sir Edward Deering expressed the feelings of the Puritans when he said; 'I had rather serve a Pope as farre as Tyber than to have hime come to me so neare as the Thames; a Pope at Rome will doe me less hurt than a Patricarch may doe at Lambeth'. 2.

When therefore the restoration took place and Charles the Second tried to unite the nation, Puritans remained deeply suspicious, that the Establishment would move further in the direction of high churchmanship, and that Prayer Book usage would perpetuate what they considered to be, Romish practices. Charles promised a conference to try to settle the differences between the Puritan and Anglican clergy.

1. F.J.C. Hearnshaw, Outlines of the History of the British Isles (London, 1937.) p.3.
2. J.R.H. Moorman, A History of the Church in England (London, 1953.) p.230.

The Conference met at the Savoy Hospital, London, on April 15, 1661. It was attended by twelve bishops and twelve puritan divines. (Edward Reynolds, Bishop of Norwich, Edmund Calamy, and Richard Baxter.) Sheldon, Bishop of London, presided and assumed that the restoration of episcopacy inevitably meant the restoration of the Prayer Book as it had been, and left it to the Puritans to make objections.

If the Puritans had concentrated on one or two main points of doctrinal differences, they might have found some reconciling revision of the book, though in the prevailing atmosphere of the time this is doubtful. Baxter produced a long list of objections covering many pages of print. Among them was the abolition of the surplice, worn by Catholic clergy, the cross in Baptism, the habit of kneeling for Communion, a demand for extempore prayer, the alteration of the word 'priest' to 'minister' and the substitution of the 'Lord's Day' for 'Sunday'. 1.

During the time of the Conference, Convocation met, but it was not until the winter session of 1661 that a liturgical committee presented a revised version of the Prayer Book, which was approved.

Even then the wording in the Preface was bound to stir up a bitter reaction and response, referring as it did to those 'men of factious peevish and perverse spirits,' who have always a greater regard to their own private fancies and interests than to their public duty, the liturgical committee had rejected all such proposals as appeared to them to be 'either of dangerous consequence, or else of no consequence at all, but utterly frivolous and vain.' The main additions were the provision of a form of 'Baptism for those of Riper Years,' to meet the needs of those who had grown up unchristened during the Commonwealth or for the use of converts, 'in our plantations', the commemoration of the dead in the Prayer for the Church, and the rubrics governing the manual acts in the Prayer of Consecration and the restoration of the 'Black Rubric', but with the phrase 'no real or essential presence' changed to 'no corporal presence' of Christ in the Sacrament. 2.

1. J.R.H. Moorman, A History of the Church in England (London, 1953.) p.240.
2. Ibid. p.241.

The doctrinal differences still remained, but important though these were, the much graver issue for the Puritans was that the new Prayer Book, like its predecessors was introduced in the Laudian spirit, as part of an Act of Uniformity, which ordered the use of this book from St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662 under penalty of deprivation. The Act also required all clergy and schoolmasters to make a declaration that they believed it unlawful to take up arms against the King and that they will use the Prayer Book of 1662 and none other.

The new government, under powerful church influence proceeded to take action against all its opponents. Above all, religious disputes and bickerings must be controlled. Church and State were to be one, and such as refused to conform to the discipline of the Church could not expect the privileges of citizenship. This led to the severe penalties imposed on 'nonconformists' arising from a series of Acts of Parliament known collectively as the 'Clarendon Code'. 1.

This was anathema to the Puritans. Many of the clergy who previously rejected episcopacy and entered Presbyterian 'Classes' and governed their parishes on Presbyterian lines, were ordained in order to keep their benefices. Others went abroad or sought new occupation in England. The ones who chose the sacrificial route, went into hiding, and continued their ministry of teaching and scriptural preaching in secret meeting places, either in the open air or in secluded farm dwellings, these were the forerunners of Nonconformity.

1. J.R.H. Moonman, A History of the Church in England (London, 1953.) p.252.

CHAPTER 3.

The specific area of concern, defined. North East Lancashire.

The North East Lancashire area with which we are concerned, corresponds with the old Blackburn Hundred, a county area of 1660 (Map 1). It takes the form of a rhombus, the northern parallel linking Blackburn and Colne, the southern parallel linking Tockholes south of Darwen with Bacup, the western side linking Darwen with the northern parallel and the eastern side linking Bacup with Colne and skirting the Yorkshire boundary.

In the seventeenth century, roads as we know them today were non-existent. Wheeled traffic for heavy goods was still exceptional, since the packhorse was used to carry fuel in the form of faggots of wood or baskets of peat, grain in sacks, slung across the animals' backs, and wool packed hard in bales and supported on paniers. The roads in winter were quagmires with packhorses sinking up to the girths and the very few light wagons bogged down. With these conditions prevailing in North East Lancashire the three main routes led from Blackburn through Clitheroe to Skipton in Yorkshire, the route from Blackburn through Accrington and Colne over the Moss to Keighley, and the valley route from Accrington through Haslingden through the Rossendale Valley to Bacup. There was however a network of packhorse trails and footpaths criss-crossing the area so that one could travel from the main route at Burnley over the separating hills to Padiham and then over the lower part of Pendle, called the Nick of Pendle, to Clitheroe. In the same way one could reach Blackburn by packhorse trail from Bacup through Haslingden and over the moor. The villages were linked by rough trails, well worn by cattle and horses. The area was remote but was open to outside religious influence from Yorkshire in the east and Manchester to the south.

This part of the ancient Duchy of Lancashire on the eastern boundary, in 1660 straddled the Pennines, with Pendle Hill a prominent hump of millstone grit in the north eastern corner and the Forest of Rossendale in the south east. It is a land of upland moors and boggy peat tracts, with fast flowing streams in the

valleys feeding the rivers Ribble, Calder and Hyndburn. The valley slopes were then well wooded, and in the sixteenth century were the home of deer, wild boar and a plentiful variety of game, hares, rabbits, pheasants and woodcock, and among the cotton grasses of the lower moorlands, peewits and curlews cried. The main land owners in the seventeenth century were squires, the Asshetons of Downham, the Shuttleworths of Gawthorpe near Padiham, the Starkeys of Huntray, the Noels of Read, the Osbaldestons of the Ribble Valley, and the Houghtons to the west at Houghton Towers near Blackburn. Much of the land was rented out to yeomen farmers, and around them were the artisans and craftsmen associated with agriculture, wheelwrights and blacksmiths, carpenters and the supporting husbandmen and peasant labourers, living in small hamlets and crofts.

The homes of most Lancashire gentlemen were very similar, they were rarely well furnished. Important items such as the dining table, or the great ark or chest served three or four generations. Floors were mostly uncovered. Such carpets as they had were used to cover the benches and walls. Linen and silver were prized but used only on very special occasions. In all but the bigger homes, pewter-ware, holland sheets and canvas towels were for everyday use. The kitchen was well stocked with bacon, salted beef, and trout. They had their own garden produce. In the outhouses at the back of the main building, beer was brewed and cheese and butter made from surplus milk. Outside in the walled garden in these large homes there would be a row of four to six bee houses, producing honey for sweetening and medication. At the poorer end of the social scale, below the farmers and shopkeepers, there were the journeymen and household servants and a large miscellaneous group of unskilled workers and labourers. Then there were the paupers. Both the Tudors and the Stuarts were vexed by the problem of the sturdy beggar... In 1620 the Lancashire Justices opened at Preston a County House of Correction, 'to set rogues, vagabonds or other idle vagrant and disorderly persons on work.

1.

This social background is the setting for an independency in which later Nonconformity thrived.

1. Christopher Haigh, Reformation and Resistance in Tudor England (Cambridge, 1975.) p.28.

Compared with this North East Lancashire area, the western coastal plain of Lancashire with its rich farm land and productive estuaries of the Mersey, Ribble and Lune, was feudal and predominantly Catholic. Dr. Haigh writes,

The survival of feudal forms tended to keep authority in private hands and as Dr. John Bossy has noted, 'where seigneurial powers remained extensive, Catholicism tended to survive, this was partly because the influence of the Conservative local gentry remained strong, partly because the ability of the government to enforce change was thus limited, and partly because Protestantism was not likely to flourish in a semi feudal society'. Dr. Haigh continues 'how far it is justifiable to consider these Conservatives as Catholics is however another question; and Dr. Bossy has suggested that we ought to regard Catholics as nought per cent of the population of England in 1570 and thereafter count as Catholics only those claimed for recusancy by the Seminarians. Dr. Bossy has suggested that for security reasons such gentry households became religious 'closed shops'. In Lancashire entire households might be represented as recusants. In 1587 most of the households of half a dozen members of the family and about thirty servants attended regular masses on the estate of South Worth. 1.

Lancashire has been described as the most Catholic county in the country. Certainly this applied along the western seaboard of the county. This western part held the means of communication by the one main road through Warrington, Preston, Lancaster and Carlisle to Scotland.

It afforded access to and from Ireland from the mouths of the rivers Mersey, Ribble and Lune at Liverpool, Preston and Lancaster. This part of the county was dominated by the two influential Catholic families the Stanleys (Lord Derby) and Lord Molyneux with the very strong support from Sir Gilbert Hoghton of Hoghton Towers near Blackburn. Lord Derby had also

1. Christopher Haigh, Reformation and Resistance in Tudor England (Cambridge, 1975.) p. 31.

great influence as owner of the Isle of Man, a half way house between England and Ireland. The other principal Catholic laymen were Sir John Girlington of Thurlane and William Farrington of Worden Hall near Chorley, Sheriff of Lancashire in 1636 .

Anyone looking over a map of the county in which these manor houses are designated, may observe that Lathom, Nowsley, Worden, the Haigh, Standish, Duxbury, Myerscough and Hoghton Tower, the residencies of the Catholic families mentioned, are situate in the two western Hundreds of South Lancashire. Of these Hundreds of West Derby and Leyland, these families had the principal and almost entire government and control. 1.

There were Puritans but they were in the minority and had to suffer considerable hostility and pressure from Catholic land owners. One has to remember however, that Roman Catholics were also nonconforming, rejecting the Elizabethan Settlement and the Prayer Book. Catholics therefore were strong in the west but weak in the east of the county where Puritan Nonconformity was strong.

Like the Catholicism of the west just described, the Nonconformists of the east owed much to a similar kind of patronage by the squires and gentry. The most notable Puritan families in the Blackburn Hundred were of a strong independent type. The Asshetons of Downham were descended from the Black Knight who had gained honour and renown at Flodden. The Shuttleworths who had settled at Gawthorpe near Padiham in the reign of Richard the Second, produced a Puritan Member of Parliament for Preston in the Long Parliament. Five of his grandsons distinguished themselves in Cromwell's army. Richard, the eldest who was Member of Parliament for Clitheroe was among the first of the Lancashire gentry to arm his tenantry in opposition to the arbitrary proceedings of the King. The Starkeys of Huntroyd nearby, close to Padiham were Puritans and completely loyal to the Parliamentary cause. The Nowels of Read hemmed in by protestants remained neutral however.

1. Robert Halley, Lancashire, Its Puritanism and Nonconformity (Manchester, 1869) Vol. 1. p.281.

Following the Civil War and leading up to the great events of 1662, landlords and tenants in North East Lancashire, staunchly supported the Puritans within the Established Church, providing a background of confidence to those ministers, though few in number, who decided not to conform to the 1662 Act of Uniformity.

It is important to note that although this geographical enclave was isolated there were contacts and communications between the leaders here and the Puritans in Manchester and London. The journey on horseback to Manchester took a whole day and it was a four days' ride to London. Nevertheless Catholic and Protestant leaders represented Clitheroe, Preston, Manchester and Liverpool in the capital. City merchants financed itinerant preachers who also made journeys to meet Independent and Baptist ministers in London. The Nonconformist upsurge in North East Lancashire was therefore by no means insular or uninformed as to the latest developments on the Continent or for that matter in other parts of the country. Books and pamphlets by Calvinist and Arminian writers and theologians were passed on to the dissenting ministers of the north. Moreover there were early warnings of the new Clarendon Laws and the attitudes at the court.

CHAPTER 4.The ecclesiastical setting in North East Lancashire. The two Parishes Whalley and Blackburn in 1662.

The Blackburn Hundred itself was divided into two main parishes, Blackburn and Whalley, served by the two main parish churches at Blackburn and Whalley. In the South of England it was different. Dr. Haigh gives the reason.

The fundamental geographical feature of the church in Lancashire was the size of its parishes. We have seen how this influenced the incomes of rectors and vicars, and therefore the whole character of the beneficed clergy. But the significance of parish size extends ^{still} further. Most parishes in southern England were co-extensive with the manor and contained only single townships, but in Lancashire four-fifths of the parishes had three or more townships and the huge parish of Whalley had no fewer than thirty. This meant that most Lancashire men lived far from their parish churches. When local people attended a chapel rather than a parish church, they ^{naturally} lost contact with their rector or vicar, who came to have only a nominal oversight of their spiritual welfare. 1.

This lack of direct pastoral oversight by the Church of England in this area of two enormous parishes helps to explain the emergence of a strong Puritan dissent.

Blackburn Parish.

In the Blackburn parish there were the minor parish churches of Chipping, Ribchester and Mitton. The Chipping church was founded in 1041 A.D. and rebuilt in 1526 A.D, the living at this time being in the gift of the See of Chester. Prior to this date it was in the See of Lichfield. 'John King was instituted rector on August 27th, 1647 and was a man of moderate views. He had earlier accepted the Presbyterian Order of church government and his name appears among the clerical members of the Third Manchester Classis.' Following the Restoration he rounounced Presbyterianism and conformed, yeilding for peace and quietness' sake in what he deemed non essentials. 2.

1. Christopher Haigh, Reformation and Resistance in Tudor England (Cambridge, 1975) p.31.
2. E. Baines, The History, Director and Gazetteer of the County Palatine of Lancashire, With a variety of commercial and statistical information (Liverpool, 1824) Vol. 4.p.61.

He was ready to accept successive changes without demur and so the stern decrees of Parliament did not affect him.

The Rev. Christopher Hindle of Hindley was presented to Ribchester parish church by Dr. Thomas Morton, Bishop of Chester and instituted on February 6th, 1617. He was a man of ability and learning. During the Civil War he was a prominent Royalist. He came from an old yeoman family, residing at Cowhill, Rishton, near Blackburn. In his youth, he attended the Elizabethan Grammar School at Blackburn. He became a staunch churchman and would have nothing to do with Presbyterianism. When the Presbyterian Classis was established in Lancashire in 1646, Hindle refused to submit to the new Order and was summoned to appear before the Classis at Whalley and dismissed from his living in 1647. Hindle contrived to regain possession of the parish but was forcibly ejected by William Ingham, an unseemly struggle taking place on the pulpit steps during a service on the Lord's Day. When the Parliamentary Commissioners surveyed the district in 1650, they refused to recognise Ingham's ministry, and Hindle was reinstated, remaining there until he died. Ingham left the district and no more was heard of him.

Whalley Parish.

This second and major part of the Blackburn Hundred standing near the confluence of the rivers Hodder and Ribble sprang out of the ancient Abbey of Whalley, which was second in importance to Furness Abbey in the whole north western part of England.

This parish was divided ecclesiastically into the chapelries or sub divisions of Burnley, Colne, Goodshaw, Haslingden, Newchurch in Rossendale, Padiham and Altham. In the period immediately before 1660 the resident ministers were
 Burnley, Henry Morris, instituted 1634, inclined toward Presbyterianism and a clerical member of the Third Classis.
 Colne, Thomas Warriner, instituted 1635, a Royalist. John Horrocks, instituted 1647, inclined to Puritanism and put in by Parliament.
 Haslingden, Robert Dewhurst, instituted 1640, Royalist. Robert

Gilbert, instituted 1650, Puritan. John Kippax, instituted 1653, Presbyterian but later conformed.

Altham, this chapelry comprised Altham in the valley between Pendle Hill and the Habledon Moors, with Clayton-le-Moors and old Accrington, approximately two miles to the west. In 1650 Altham was under the supervision of Roger Kenyon, an able and orthodox minister of Accrington. He was followed by the Rev. Giles Clayton who later transferred to Coley in Yorkshire.

Between 1640 and 1660, the chapelries of Goodshaw, Newchurch and Whitewell had no resident incumbents, so that there were two rectors at Chipping and Ribchester with five resident ministers in the chapelries of Colne, Burnley, Haslingden, Altham and Padiham, supervised by the incumbents of the two parish churches at Whalley and Blackburn.

The incumbent in Blackburn in 1647 was Leonard Clayton, M.A. When, in the Restoration of Charles the Second, the old Order in the Church was resumed, the Directory for public worship which Parliament had set up was withdrawn and the Book of Common Prayer was restored. Mr. Clayton renounced his Presbyterianism and conformed to the changed condition of things. His parishioners at the time petitioned the King to give him a legal Title to his Benefice and augmentation of income. 1.

The incumbent in Whalley in 1645 was William Walker, M.A. His name occurs in the Third Presbyterian Clasis, (Manchester) by which it must be assumed that he was put into the living by the dominant Presbyterian party, though he did not sign Heyrick's Harmonious Consent in 1648, which does not appear on the agreement of the people the following year that he was holding the living by Commonwealth Consent. He was described as an able and orthodox divine.

1. E. Baines, The History of Lancashire (Liverpool, 1824)
Vol. 4 p.9.

The direction of the prevailing theological winds was therefore in favour of the orthodox Church party, for even those who had adopted the Presbyterian order had no conscientious problem in conforming in 1662. When the moment of decision came for or against conforming to the Prayer Book worship, only four ministers in the area refused to conform and were therefore ejected, Thomas Jolly of Altham, Robert Town of Accrington, Kippax of Newchurch and J. Sandford of Harwood.

THE EJECTION OF PURITAN MINISTERS IN 1662 AND THE
CONSEQUENCES.

The Act of Uniformity enforced by Parliament and the Established church in 1662 was the moment of decision for ministers and their supporters who refused to conform. In this enclave of North East Lancashire Thomas Jolly of Altham was the leader. The chapelry of Altham from which Jolly was ejected stands on the south bank of the river Calder; half way between Padham and Clayton-le-Moors. It was designated the Chapelry of St. James. From 1547 to 1722 the patronage of the church was with the vicar of Whalley. In 1650, the year of Jolly's induction from Cambridge, the chapel at Altham came within the supervision of Roger Kenyon of Accrington, mentioned earlier as an able and orthodox minister. Jolly was responsible for establishing the Independent Nonconformist movement in the Hundred of Whalley.

He came from a distinguished parliamentary family. His father James Jolly, originally a clothier became Quarter-master General of the Parliamentary army in 1643, under Sir Thomas Fairfax, and in 1647 was commissioned as Provost Marshall to the garrison at Chester under Colonel Dunkinfield. In August 1647 he was in Ireland with a Company of Foot fighting against Irish rebels. On the 2nd October, 1646, he had been elected as lay representative to the Manchester Classis of Presbyterians of the Manchester Presbytery. He writes that having before made provision and bestowed portions upon his four sons, James, Thomas, John and Nathan, he leaves them only five shillings, and a like sum to his three grandsons, children of Thomas, together with his silver seal to Thomas. Thomas Jolly was born on the 14th September, 1629 and was christened in Gorton chapel Manchester. As a boy he was attacked by a wild boar which got him down and wounded his head. At the age of sixteen he took the hazardous journey in those days, on horseback and began his higher education at Trinity College, Cambridge. There is no record of him graduating. 1.

Toward the end of his Cambridge days he was nominated as a candidate for Altham and received a certificate to the effect that he was studiously and piously affected though he received no degree.

1. Thomas Jolly, Notebook, Copy (P.R.O.L. 1660-1720).

He was twenty one years old in 1650 the year of his induction to Altham. The vacancy had occurred through the removal of the Rev. Giles Clayton, to Coley in Yorkshire.

From the beginning, his was a ministry of reconciliation. There were clear divisions in the church in England between orthodox Presbyterians and Independents who followed a congregational form of church order. The Presbyterian church at the local level was governed by a meeting of Elders, appointed by the congregation with absolute authority to govern the local church. In turn, this Session of Elders sent two members to a Classis or Presbytery which governed an associated local group of churches. The Presbytery was the final authority in any matters in that local group, relative to doctrine and church government.

On the other hand the Independent or Congregational order of church government, differed from the Presbyterian in that there was no higher authority than the local church meeting, which each member of the congregation was eligible to attend and vote. Each church locally, was self governing and independent. The sole authority rested in the gathered church meeting. The Baptists also held this same independent view of church government. Thomas Jolly received ten pounds a year from Whalley parish, thirty pounds a year from the County Commissioners and fifty pounds a year by order of the Commission of Plundered Ministers out of the sequestered estate of Thomas Clayton, who was a Papist. It seems that he had no sensitivity of conscience in this matter.

Jolly did not confine his interests to Altham. In May 1654 he went to London and is said to have found favour in the eyes of the Commissioner of the Approbation of ministers who made use of him to prevent corruption. His father's standing prepared the way and gave him access to important and influential officials. During the years 1651-1655 his domestic life caused him great sorrow and not a few problems. He had married and lost three wives in death during four years.

It is clear from the note book, that he travelled widely as circumstances allowed. In 1656 he visited Chesterfield and Wakefield, stopping off en route to consult with other ministers on the question of Communion in the churches.

In 1658 he was again in London, attending the General Meeting of Congregational churches and the Savoy Conference of ministers and preached before the Assembly. By 1659 he was regarded as one of the leading ministers of the North of England. His activities caused suspicion and in 1660 (November), he received a warrant against him from three Deputy Lieutenants in Lancashire, and was arrested by three troopers who escorted him to Preston where he was charged with sedition.

So militant was Thomas Jolly's congregationalism (there had been a change in attitude since his induction) while minister at Altham that the Church Wardens presented him at the Bishop's Court on the 9th of December, 1661. Amongst the complaints made against him, was that he never used the Book of Common Prayer and restricted the Lord's Supper to three families.

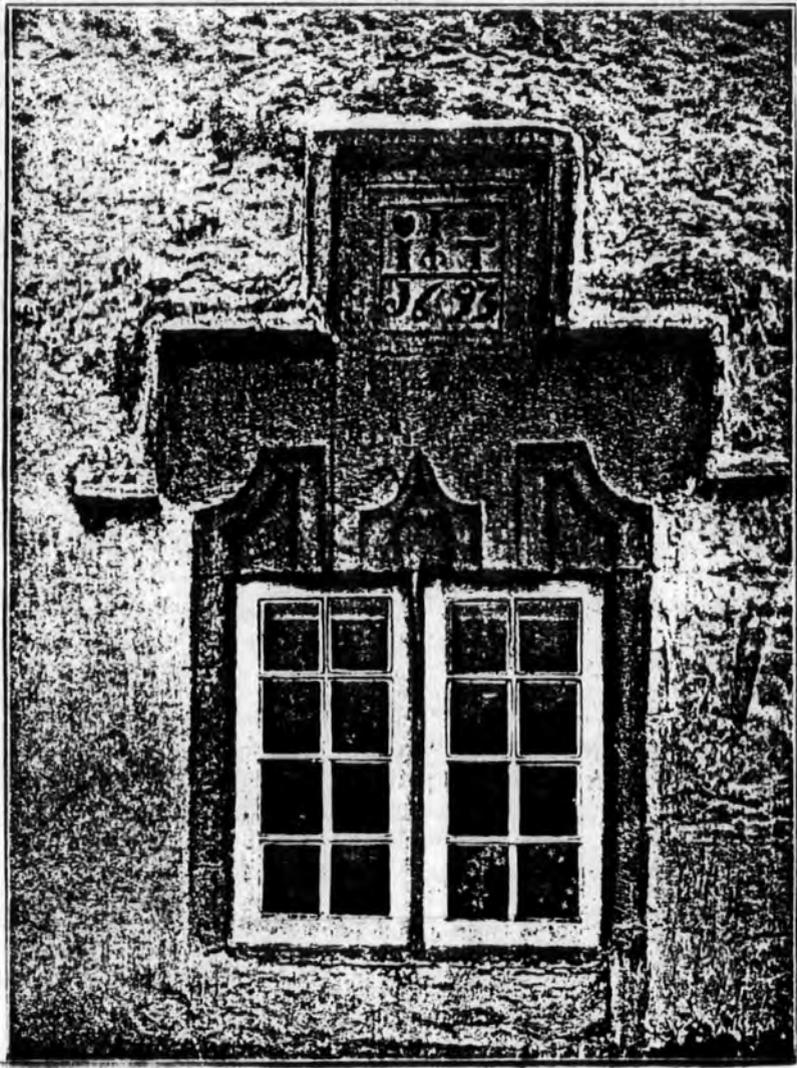
His diary and note book continues with the story of his ejection.

Upon the August 17th, 1662, Captain Bannister, Captain Alexander Nowell and Ensign Grimshaw, brought a suspension, though it was not published and forced me out of the Publique place Upon my exclusion from Altham, I broke up my house, myself and three young children and put to wander for a considerable time without any certain dwelling place. 1.

The words 'certain place' can only mean that he was homeless. Although he had much local support, his parishioners it seemed were afraid to give him permanent shelter for fear of the authorities although someone must have cared for the children.

He continued to preach wherever opportunity occurred and was encouraged by many people in the vicinity to give them 'the Word of God'. Fortunately for him and others in the near neighbourhood who had refused to conform, influential and well to do sympathizers came to the rescue.

1. Thomas Jolly, Note book, Copy (P.R.O.L. 1660-1720).



PENDLETON: JOLLY'S INITIAL STONE.

The influential squires in the area supporting Jolly and his independents were, the Asshetons of Downham, the Starkeys of Huntroyd, the Shuttleworths of Read, to a lesser degree the Nowells of Read, and the one to give immediate help and shelter Lady Hoghton of Hoghton Tower, near Blackburn. Following the capture of Hoghton Tower by the Parliamentary party, the next in line to Sir Gilbert Hoghton, a staunch Catholic, had become a Presbyterian. The new Lady Hoghton and the others mentioned together with Richard Lawton of Hapton, kept two days of prayer each week, led by Thomas Jolly. The tenants of these estates, yeomen, farmers, artisans, craftsmen and labourers, gave Jolly and the other two ministers supporting him, strong support and cover. These were the people with their ears to the ground for rumour substantiated by fact, of impending investigation by the State officers.

Eventually, Jolly, with the help of well to do friends, settled in a farmstead, standing at the foot of the western slopes of Pendle Hill, near Wiswell, between Whalley and Downham. This farm 'Wymondhouses', at Pendleton, became his home and preaching centre and the source of a stream of nonconformity which was to nourish the whole of North East Lancashire and further afield. He now, the more openly conducted meetings at his home.

To this lonely farmhouse, worshippers came from miles around, Accrington, Burnley, Padiham, Altham, Haslingden on the edge of the Rossendale Forest and Darwen near Blackburn. 1.

The meetings consisted of exposition of the Scriptures and of the fundamental teachings of John Calvin.

In those difficult days, informers were at work. Jolly had invented a way of overcoming a sudden swoop on his meetings. The stairs door leading from the large kitchen, was hinged across its width half way, and the upper half let down on chains to provide a pulpit desk, with Jolly during the meetings standing behind in the stairway for the purpose of preaching. Whenever a warning of

1. Robert Wylie, The Baptists of Accrington and District (Accrington, 1923) p.4.

came he pulled up the top half of the desk and remained hidden in the stairway with his Bible and notes and the door locked. Meanwhile the congregation in the kitchen engaged themselves in local gossip as the inspectors entered.

Between 1662 and 1666 Jolly was in York Gaol five times. In a period when nonconformists were being closely watched by Government spies and when contact between individual meeting places was both difficult and dangerous, the independence of congregations was part of their strength. They were learning by the hard way of self reliance, but the fellowship and communion were not neglected, not that Thomas Jolly seemed concerned at his own failure to persuade the churches of the north to keep up their association with each other. 'We are greatly wanting, the Lord knows'. 1.

Yet his notebook provides evidence of this close contact between the meeting places in the area and between the North and London.

In 1672, Charles the Second granted an Act of Indulgence, though this was not approved by Parliament. This was to give temporary relief to dissenting or nonconformist preachers, although Charles also was led to assist the Roman Catholic recusants. The King ordered that all kinds of penal laws on matters ecclesiastical, against whatever sort of nonconformists or recusants, should be suspended. Ministers came out of hiding and the Mass was more openly celebrated among Catholics. During this short interim, hundreds of Independents and Baptists, among them John Bunyan from Bedford Gaol, returned to their flocks. Quakers who had carried the real brunt of persecution in appalling conditions in Lancaster Gaol, were released and returned home.

In October 1674, Jolly continued his contacts with Independents beyond the immediate locality of Wymondhouses. He records a meeting of the Messengers of the Churches in London. In August 1675 he made another journey to London, to confer with John Owen and others about the problems worrying the churches, and while he was there, Elders and Messengers from surrounding churches held a meeting. He also records the meeting of ministers near Woodchurch in the West Riding in May 1680, which lasted three days, and which considered the accommodation and association of the churches. 2.

1. R. Tudor Jones, Congregationalism in England and Wales (London, 1963) p.83.
2. Thomas Jolly, Notebook (P.R.O.L.) p.40.



LANCASHIRE,
COUNTY.

WESE are to certify that at the General Quarter Session of the Peace,
held by Adjournment at Bretton in and for the said
County, the fifth Day of April in
the seventh Year of King William the Fourth's Reign.

A newly erected Building or Chapel situated in the Township of
St. Accrington, in the said County of Lancashire, which
Building is a Minister of an assembly or congregation
of Protestant Dissenters of the Denomination of
Evangelical Baptists
was duly registered as a Place of Religious Worship for Protestant Dissenters.

Deputy Clerk of the Peace for Lancashire.

With the Proclamation of Indulgence of 1672, four churches in Lancashire had been registered for worship although at this time they were not recorded in Preston. The four meeting places were Thomas Jolly's own home at Wymondhouses, the house of Richard Sagar at Slade, Richard Cotton's house at Sparth, Clayton-le-Moors, and Robert Whittaker's house at Healey. The dates of these registrations were May 2nd, 1672.

1.

From these tiny congregations, leaders trained and prepared by Thomas Jolly moved out. Robert Ward an Elder at Wymondhouses was ordained to the ministry by the laying on of hands and dismissed to begin his work at Tockholes Dissenting Chapel, near Darwen in 1682. Another member at Wymondhouses, Charles Sagar, a native of Burnley, who had held an appointment at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Blackburn but had resigned his post there in 1666, became minister at Walmersley and Darwen.

2.

James the Second's Declaration of Indulgence of 1687 and the Toleration Act of 1689 made it more possible for Nonconformists to register openly and formally, although there was the uncertainty of a change of the royal mind.

The earliest church lists in the Preston Record Office date from the sixteenth day of July, 1689 when the following were registered.

Blackburn, the house of Charles Sagar, associate of Thomas Jolly, Lower Darwen, the house of William Harwood, Pendleton, a new chapel adjoining the dwelling belonging to Thomas Jolly, Over Darwen, the house and barn of Thomas Livesey, Read, the house of John Holker, Clayton-le-Moors, the house of Agnes Cotton, Haslingden, the house of Abraham Haworth, called Sikeside, Tockholes near Darwen, (still in existence as Tockholes Chapel), Upper Darwen, the barn of Lawrence Livesey, Whalley, the barn of Thomas Dugdale, Tockholes, the house of Ralph Walmsley.

3.

The registrations with the Preston Quarter Sessions, establishes the fact of the growth of nonconformist strength in North East Lancashire.

1. Dissenting Meeting House Register, 1689-1852. (Q.D.V/4 P.R.O.L.).
2. Robert Wylie, The Baptist Churches of Accrington and District (Accrington, 1923) p.4.
3. Ibid. p.5.

Bearing in mind however the number of previous registrations within such a short time it is not improbable that there were many more meeting places than those officially registered, not taking into account secret open air rendezvous.

Jolly died in 1702 and was buried in Altham churchyard. Matthew Henry the great expositor of the Bible, described him as a minister of the first rank, for gifts and graces. He had been imprisoned seven times at Lancaster, Chester and York, for various periods. His son Timothy who had had training with the Presbyterians became a Congregational minister in the footsteps of his father and endured much suffering in the cause. Thomas's brother John followed in his footsteps too.

On October 29th, 1672 in the house of Robert Heaton of Deansgate, in Manchester was conducted what I have no doubt was the first ordination in England of nonconforming ministers, according to their own new rites. Among the candidates was John Jolly a younger brother of Thomas. John became the minister at Sparth near Clayton-le-Moors.

In Jolly's church book, now continued by his brother John there is an interesting note.

1710, December 10th, Robert Riley was received into Communion with us at Sparth, he was formerly a member with Mr. Gillibrand and Mr. Walkden at Hesketh Lane. The latter chapel (Hesketh Lane) is near Chipping, Ribchester, an interesting old relic of nonconformity erected in 1705. It still stands though it is no longer used for religious worship. Over the doorway is a stone tablet with a replica of the inscription once used at Wymondhouses, 'For he loveth our nation and he hath built us a synagogue'. This passage from St. Luke chapter 7, verse 5, appears to have been a favourite with Dissenters at the time. 1.

A. Accrington Independents.

Near to the chapel at Sparth was another small hamlet at Oakenshaw, in greater Accrington. From this meeting, yet another shoot reached out to the more northerly part of North East Lancashire, in the Rossendale Forest region, to Bacup. About

1. Robert Wylie, The Baptists of Accrington and District (Accrington, 1923) p.6.

this time a group of nonconformists led by David Crossley, with contacts over the border in West Yorkshire had established themselves in Bacup. Crossley had met Jolly and had endeavoured to impress him with Baptist beliefs. Jolly had invited Crossley to preach at Oakenshaw, and in his preaching Crossley endeavoured to influence the independents at Oakenshaw toward Baptist principles. This unfortunately led to a division in the nonconformist community in Accrington.

B. Blackburn Presbyterians.

In the Blackburn area the main dissenting form of church order was Presbyterian. One good reason for this may have been the proximity to Preston and the northern route to Scotland with Parliamentary troops using Preston as a staging post. We do know that the Presbyterians were well organised here in the Third Lancashire Classis. We know also that the Rev. Edward Clayton, M.A. vicar of Blackburn 1647 had renounced his Presbyterianism with the introduction of the Act of Uniformity, but up to this time he had been a staunch member of the Third Lancashire Classis. 1.

Dr. Halley gives an outline of the Presbyterian order in Lancashire in 1646.

There were nine Classes or Presbyteries, a Presbytery being formed by elected ministers and laymen representing each church in the Presbytery and all nine Classes composing a Synod. Classis Three in this list comprised Blackburn, Whalley, Chipping and Ribchester. There is no mention of Tockholes until the Presbyterian Meeting House was built there in 1710. 2.

In the Blackburn district, in the extension of both forms of meeting and church government i.e. Independent and Presbyterian, Hoghton Tower had become a centre. Thomas Jolly and his friends in their association with Lady Hoghton, and encouraged by her hospitality, used this centre (Blackburn district), as a rendezvous, and from this centre extended their influence in this western part of North East Lancashire.

1. E. Baines, The History of Lancashire (Liverpool, 1824)
Vol. 4 p.9.

2. Robert Halley, Lancashire its Puritanism and Nonconformity
(Manchester, 1882) Vol. 2. p. 242.

From the beginning of the eighteenth century until well into the nineteenth century, the Independents and Presbyterians had worshipped and worked together in the Blackburn-Darwen area with Tockholes as the centre. Under the Indulgence of Charles the Second, a Preaching Licence was granted, December 9th, 1672, for a joint Independent-Presbyterian Meeting House in Blackburn, but this was withdrawn in 1673. The congregation met secretly until the Toleration Act of 1689 allowed more freedom. The records of St. George's Presbyterian Church, Blackburn, shew that from 1689 the joint congregation met and worshipped in several places, Tockholes, Blackburn, Darwen and Belthorn.

C. Bacup Baptists.

Along the southern border of North East Lancashire, about twelve miles from Manchester, stood the hamlet of Bacup in the sparsely populated district of Rossendale Forest. Bacup stands in the Pennine Hills surrounded by moorland tracts. reaching eastwards into the West Yorkshire valley of Heptonstall, where the Independents, as mentioned earlier, came under the influence of dissenters who had already accepted the principle of Believer's Baptism. In other places in this dissertation we have considered Puritan ministers in the Accrington and Blackburn area who had become Presbyterians and Independents, accepting the doctrine of Infant Baptism without question.

During the later part of the seventeenth century a number of religious people who had separated from the Established Church, are met with in Rossendale, known as Protestant Dissenters. Their ministers or leaders were itinerant preachers, the two most notable being David Crossley and William Mitchell. Both men were born at Heptonstall Slack near Todmorden. 1.

There is an interesting reference about the early history in a pamphlet written by Mitchell, 'Joachim and Boaz' which remained unpublished until after his death. Mitchell, imprisoned in York 1686-87 received a letter from Crossley. A few days before the Toleration was extended to those who were persecuted for conscience sake, Mitchell was freed through the influence of Sir Walter Volverley.

1. Frederick Overend, The History of Ebenezer Church, Bacup (Bacup, 1910) p.30.

In 1691 Mitchell says they had about twenty places of worship, meeting houses, over an area of forty miles. John Moore, who acted as agent for the Crossley and Mitchell itineracy, arranged specific meeting places. He had his own hired house in Rawdon, registered at Leeds Quarter Sessions, 1689 also at Brownhill, Skipton at the house of Thomas Deelston of Esholt near Shipley, in the parish of Otley, 1690 at the house of Thomas Feather at Norris near Haworth, 1693, his own house in Guiseley 1685, and in Horsforth 1697. 1.

It was from these Yorkshire meetings in the sixteen eighties, with their discussions about Baptism and the question of the response by personal faith that there was a turning towards Baptist principles, Believer's Baptism as distinct from Paedo-Baptism. Neither Crossley nor Mitchell regarded themselves as ordained ministers, simply because they were concerned to profess, as they understood it, the priesthood of all believers. Eventually, they adopted Bacup as their headquarters for preaching along the Lancashire-Yorkshire border.

In 1692, an important date in Rossendale Nonconformity, a school house and meeting place was erected in Bacup on the site of the present town hall, known until 1912 as the Mechanic's Institute. The Trust Deed was drawn up between John Whittaker, the owner of the land and John Lord on the 16th April, 1692. It was specified that the building erected on this land, the cost being defrayed by voluntary subscriptions, was to be used for the following two purposes.

1. A school house for educating children and adults.
2. A meeting house for worship to be used only by permission given by William Mitchell and David Crossley. 2.

From this centre in Bacup developed a confederacy of churches which became distinctively Baptist, as compared with the Independent order at Wymondhouses and the Presbyterian order around Blackburn.

1. A. Haslam, A Sketch of Early Baptist in Yorkshire (Leeds, 1908) p.35.
2. Frederick Overend, The History of Ebenezer Church, Bacup (Bacup, 1910) p.30.

Following his own complete commitment to the Baptist faith and order, (Crossley was baptised on the 10th June, 1692 at Bromsgrove), Crossley made a spirited appeal in his letters to Mitchell. Soon afterwards, Mitchell himself was baptised and the churches to which they both preached formed themselves in 1710, into the Strict Baptist Churches, known as the Particular Baptist Church in Rossendale. Richard Ashworth became the first pastor.

The only other source for the Bacup foundation, was the Baptist influence from the Rawdon group of churches in West Yorkshire, but it is doubtful whether these would have found a foothold if Thomas Jolly had not prepared the way. Jolly's background, even if he did not graduate, was Cambridge, and his discipline was that of the Established Church. In some respects Jolly could be compared with John Wesley, who coming later set out to reform the church from within. On the other hand, Mitchell and Crossley, fervent and sincere though they were in their adoption of Baptist principles, lacked a sense of the deeper historic church traditions which Jolly maintained, and which led to his concern for a trained ministry, with ordination conferred by the whole church

Why had Nonconformity advanced so rapidly since the lowly beginnings in 1662?

First of all throughout history, movements of protest though nonconformity was more than a protest, have been attended with intense evangelical fervour and emotion. Having refused to conform the early leaders accepting ejection had nothing to lose, apart from their own personal discomfort, and everything to gain for their cause. There was however a deeper reason why their appeal was so readily and earnestly accepted. If the church was somnolent it was at least alive, and this is a fact not always remembered by those who write about the eighteenth century. 1.

But is this enough? Dr. Green continues -

1. Vivian Hubert Howard Green, The Hanoverians 1714-1815
(London, 1976) p.280.

The learning and erudition of the prelates were often great, but they themselves lacked the faith and flame of guidance to give their Christianity the reality of an experience, or to translate it into a faith for the conversion of souls. Their principles and policy were too closely wrapped up with what Bishop Gibson defined as the foundation of the ecclesiastical policy of the higher clergy; 'the maintenance of the Protestant Succession, the Church Establishment and the Toleration Act of 1689'. The purpose of the Bench of Bishops was shaped by the secondary objects of the Protestant Succession and Church Establishment, rather than to 'know Christ and be known of Him'.
1.

Now this seemed to have been the official ecclesiastical attitude from immediately before 1662 well into the eighteenth century. It is so easy to bandy about the cry 'give us the simple Gospel', but a large minority after the sufferings of the Civil War, the family divisions, the hardships and reactions, could not be spiritually satisfied by the ~~status~~ status quo, hence the response to the fervour and appeal of the simpler form of worship, the more fundamental Bible teaching, and the greater participation on the part of the laymen in church government. This principle was applied in the Accrington, Blackburn and Bacup districts of North East Lancashire, by the particular emphasis of Thomas Jolly and Charles Sagar in the Independent-Presbyterian order, at Oakenshaw, Tockholes, Over Darwen and Darwen itself with Blackburn and the surrounding small meeting houses, through the calling out of new leaders and the emphasis placed on the responsibility of local church members. In the same way William Mitchell and David Crossley in the Bacup district, prepared men like Thomas Lord and others for preaching and Biblical teaching, as well as responsibility for the local meetings and churches to continue in their footsteps

1. Vivian Hubert Howard Green, The Hanoverians 1714-1815
(London 1976) p.280.

CHAPTER 6.NONCONFORMITY IN NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE AT THE
BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The beginning of the eighteenth century was a critical time for Nonconformity. John Wesley and Methodism had not yet appeared in the religious life of England. The Presbyterians, oldest among nonconforming bodies, with the Independents next, led in North East Lancashire by Thomas Jolly, and the Baptists led by Mitchell and Crossley, might with sufficient Christian forbearance and tolerance, have at that time presented a United Free Church within the boundaries of North East Lancashire. What hindered that rapprochement? It is doubtful even whether it was ever considered. Certainly nothing doctrinal separated the Presbyterians and Independents. Only the form of church government divided them. Nowadays they are completely organically united in the United Reform Church. But the Particular Baptists, Mitchell, Crossley and later Lord, and their associates, were fervent and rigid dogmatists, in respect to the profession of Believer's Baptism, and the Paedo Baptists, Independents and Presbyterians for them were outside the pale.

Moreover, each group, Presbyterians, Independents or Congregationalists and Baptists, were beginning to have associations elsewhere. The fact is, that at the opening of the eighteenth century in North East Lancashire, these three bodies began to go their separate ways in association with the denominational churches.

The Ecclesiastical Climate and Nonconformist Extension.

The intense religious discussion that had provoked so much feeling and had been one of the main elements of the Civil War, had practically ended by the accession of George the First. It was not, that men and women had ceased to be moved by religion - though there were more sceptics and agnostics in the eighteenth century - but the fundamental articles of seventeenth century belief had been so flayed and moulded in the process of debate, and the appeal to arms, that an inevitable reaction had set in. Religion was more tolerant, appeared far more spacious and providential, and lost through this metamorphosis the enthusiasm which piety and discord had stimulated. The eighteenth century was

more matter of fact and rational than the previous period, and it is these very factors that give the rather delusive appearance of calm. 1.

After the Toleration Act 1689 had given the Dissenters more freedom to open and establish their places of worship and register them, there had been a unity in their struggle for freedom but now in the calmer climate,

they embarked on furious and interminable doctrinal controversies - Presbyterians, Independents, Unitarians and Baptists, wrangling about their respective tenets. 2.

Hearnshaw's words do apply to the Independents and Baptists in North East Lancashire, for though worshipping together for a time, they did separate and Crossley's dealing with Jolly at Oakenshaw leaves much to be desired. Moreover the Baptist and Independent churches regarded the attempt made by some Unitarians during this period of calm, to revive Arian and Socinian tendencies as a threat to their own fundamental acceptance of the Trinitarian position and the Divinity of the Christ. The Latitudinarianism of ministers both in the Established Church and among Presbyterians was a clear departure from the Calvinist doctrine which most Dissenters of the early part of the century, regarded as the true Biblical foundation of faith.

Lancashire Nonconformists were alerted to the dilution of their doctrine in the early days of the century. Dr. Halley refers to the names of ministers settling in Lancashire and to their influence.

Many of the ministers who in the last century settled in Lancashire in their youth and became Arians, avowed like Dr. Priestley, Socinianism in their old age. 3.

The ministers who spread this influence throughout the county were John Seddon of Manchester, John Holland of Chowbent near Darwen, John Seddon of Warrington, and George Walker of Warrington. The situation was so serious among the Independents that before the middle of the century following the failure of the Academy at Kendal, it was considered essential to set up a new theological institution.

1. Vivian Hubert Howard Green, The Hanoverians 1714-1815 (London, 1976) p.19.
2. F.F.C.Hearnshaw, The Outline of the History of the British Isles (London, 1938) p. 477.
3. Robert Halley, Lancashire its Puritanism and Nonconformity (Manchester, 1882) Vol. 1 pp. 491-503.

The Established Church played an important part in the civilizing work of the eighteenth century. The two leading defects of its qualities, were its discouragement of all forms of zeal, and its neglect of the poor, especially in the great towns, the colliery and the industrial districts

The dissenting bodies of the Bunyan tradition which had been founded in the heat and zeal of the Cromwellian era still served the needs of the poor in some districts, but even they were becoming more 'respectable' less enthusiastic and more bourgeois. 1.

In North East Lancashire however the zeal of the nonconformists was not quenched. The deep emotions and passions, stirred by the ejection of ministers, and the subsequent persecution had died down, and a new spirit of steady, dogged persistence, and gradual progress, took its place. It is more difficult to plod on over a long rough course than to run in the first flush and excitement of a race.

North East Lancashire had a good share of the permanent registered places of worship from 1688-1740. Between 1700 and 1750, twenty two permanent places of worship were registered at the Manchester and Preston Quarter Sessions and this in a sparsely populated area of the Blackburn Hundred. This, however, was a matter of consolidation, rather than of the rapid expansion which had occurred before 1700.

The Dissenters were aware of the changing circumstances in the economic and social environment. People began to drift from the isolated small hamlets toward the larger villages. As yet there were no towns as we know them today. In 1700 Blackburn had a population of fewer than two thousand inhabitants. Those engaged in handloom weaving in their cottages began to move, in small numbers at first, into the larger villages to be more accessible for the collection of their products, by merchants. Lancashire saw the beginning at this time of the transition from woollen to cotton manufacture, with Manchester and Liverpool, the two principal centres of exchange.

1. G.M. Trevelyan, The History of England (London, 1923) p.519.

In 1733, John Kay, a twenty six year old weaver, invented the flying shuttle, to be used in larger looms, in machines provided for small communities of hand spinners and handloom weavers. This was the birth of a new more centralised industrial society. Water from the turbulent streams, and coal from the shallow mines became the new sources of energy and power in mechanising industry in this area.

The Dissenters were not tied or hampered by a parochial ecclesiastical system. They assembled in what became known as the gathered churches of believers, coming to live more closely together in the larger industrial communities. If there had been in these early days, a central denominational meeting of dissenting ministers and leaders, to consider and work out a united strategy for the extension of their churches in North East Lancashire, relative to geography and population, the development which did take place could not have been better planned. Three centres were established in the most populated industrial heart land of the area. These three centres became the bases for extension.

A. The First Extension at Oakenshaw near Accrington.

The Independent Nonconformist community at Oakenshaw had grown out of Wymondhouses and had been from the first under the influence of the Jolly family, but now through the visits of David Crossley from Bacup, Baptist influence was beginning. Although Jolly had chosen to leave the Church of England and elected to form his communities on independent principles, his Christian experience was nevertheless deeply rooted in church order and discipline. David Crossley irritated Jolly on account of his casual and undisciplined approach to the conception of the ministry. Furthermore he did not take kindly to Crossley's use of the pulpit at Oakenshaw during his visits for the advancement of Baptist principles.

David Crossley approached Jolly wanting to be ordained. We have Jolly's reaction.

As to the business of Mr. David Crossley, wee met at Rathmell, hee had desired our advice and assistance about his being set apart for the ministry, the work whereof hee had taken upon himself too rawley and rashly, for his accomplishments were very inconsiderable, yet hee presumed to preach and to baptise also without ordination. Upon his acknowledgement of his irregular procedure wee were ready to set him right, but it then appeared hee had fallen into further irregularity in being re-baptised and in joyning himself to a people of that persuasion after he had begun to treat with us on the matter. Wee were taken off from being helpful to him as wee designed. 1.

Nevertheless Crossley continued to visit Oakenshaw and to preach there, making contact with the Independents and on occasions expressing himself dogmatically on the question of Baptism. Oakenshaw, originally established by Jolly and his followers, became a cuckoo's nest for Baptist eggs. Not only did Crossley himself express his own Baptist beliefs but other members of his congregation from his meeting-house in Bacup, visited Oakenshaw to support him. Following the deaths of Thomas Jolly senior in 1710 and his brother John in 1725, Crossley's influence gained more support and about the year 1725 Bacup and Oakenshaw became more closely linked, strengthening and extending the Baptist influence in Accrington and district.

Up to the year 1753 all the services of worship at Oakenshaw were held in the dwelling house of John Ellison. In 1754 Ellison, a man of some substance, sold the congregation a portion of ground situated close by Fort's Arms Hotel in Barnes Street, Clayton-le-Moors where a new chapel was built and opened in 1755.

In 1758, the two churches, Oakenshaw and Bacup separated. On the 14th September, 1760, the Oakenshaw church invited Charles Bamford to be the minister. Under his leadership the church immediately considered and approved thirty nine articles of Christian belief, renewing their Calvinist foundation and 'agreeing within them to live the holiness of the Bible'. 2.

1. Thomas Jolly, Church Book Copy, (P.R.O.L.).
2. Robert Wylie, The Baptist Churches of Accrington & District (Accrington, 1923) p.15.

During this time the congregation increased. Accrington in 1765 had grown to a large village with three thousand inhabitants. One of the members of Oakenshaw, Richard Fort, introduced from London, was interested in the development of a cotton calico printing works and had found a site at Broad Oak, Accrington. He encouraged the minister, Charles Bamford and his fellow members of the church at Oakenshaw to move to a new site for a chapel, which site he provided, and in the same year Oakenshaw transferred to Macphelah on Hyndburn Road, Accrington and became the first Particular Baptist church there. This church was to become the centre of Baptist extension in North East Lancashire.

The area of growth is defined by the location of signatories of a petition addressed to Parliament in 1792 by the nonconformist ministers of the area, praying for the extension of the Toleration Act with respect to Dissenting ministers and schoolmasters. The signatories were, Charles Bamford, Accrington (Baptist), Henry Walkden, Wymondhouses, (Independent), John Pilkington, Walton, (Unitarian), Robert Smalley, Darwen, (Independent), James McQuhae, Tockholes, (Independent), John Rawlins, Hoghton Tower, (Congregational), John Nuttall, Goodshaw, (Baptist), James Miller, Blackburn, (Baptist), John Hirst, Bacup, (Baptist), Richard Whittaker, Rawtenstall, (Independent), and Thomas Clayton, Cloughfold, (Baptist). An extract from a copy in Dr. Williams Library, London, of a return of Dissenting ministers in each county in England, made in 1772-1773 enumerates the following foundations in the Blackburn Hundred. Six Baptists - Accrington, Bacup, Blackburn Cloughfold, Goodshaw and Rossendale. Four Independents - Darwen, Rawtenstall, Tockholes and Wymondhouses. One Unitarian, Walton. There was of course no denominational difference between the 'Independents and Congregationalists'; this is simply an early occurrence of the word 'Congregational', which was then first coming into use.

The Macphelah church established from Oakenshaw 1764-65 agreed in the first church meeting to adopt a church covenant which each member signed. It became a regular practice in Baptist

churches in the area, to agree in church meetings on a form of covenant obligatory on all church members. The Macphelah covenant stated its Calvinist foundations and outlined the responsibilities of church membership, namely, attendance at Worship and Communion with a solemn pledge to maintain the church through dutiful offerings. The final clause deals with the individual church member's Christian behaviour in the world.

We will behave ourselves in a humble, friendly manner to them as neighbours and fellow creatures, having our conversation honest among them, not cheating and overreaching them in buying and selling, or defrauding them of what they have a right to, nor exacting more of them than what is our due. 1.

This was a step forward from what in the past had been less clearly defined, as the Christian's responsibility in the world. Now it seems, that the church was relating spiritual conviction in more definite Christian commitment to Christian principles in every day life.

B. The Second Extension from Wymondhouses to Tockholes, near Darwen.

According to the returns of the Parliamentary commission in 1650, the number of families in Tockholes was about four score, and from a list of Wills registered in Chester, we find that one at least was a miller. In the early eighteenth century there was a small coal mine with handloom weavers and farmers in this hamlet, together with a silk mill owned by Adam and Ralph Richardson, who lived at Silk Hall, and one of the cottages was converted into a dye house. Here then was a small community, linking agriculture and small industries. There was no minister here at Tockholes at the time of the ejection in 1662, nevertheless careful watch was kept on the congregation by informers, and although conventicles and worship were held in the village, meetings more frequently took place in secret in isolated moorland hollows.

1. Robert Wylie, The Baptist Churches of Accrington & District (Accrington, 1923) p.33.

With the granting of Indulgence, the Presbyterians who had shared the chapelry of the Established Church at Tockholes, jointly, between Darwen and Tockholes, with Mr. William Stones, curate appointed by the vicar of Blackburn, (during the time of the Commonwealth), applied to the Preston Quarter Sessions for registration, which was granted on the 18th July, 1689. This was only a temporary meeting place in a barn. 1.

The first minister, Robert Waddington, came to Tockholes from Jolly's church at Wymondhouses. Jolly himself proceeded to give the charge about an hour, and then prayed and he pronounced the blessing and so we took Mr. Waddington by the hand to give him the right hand of fellowship, so we had broke up and gave it under our six hands what we had done; Mr. Jolly, Mr. Benson, Mr. Frankland, myself, Mr. Kay, Mr. Issol, some ten or twelve of Mr. Jolly's society being with us, besides Mr. Greenwood and John Hey. 2.

On the 20th September, 1693, Mr. Joshua Sagar the son of Charles Sagar, a master at Blackburn Grammar School in 1662 who had been ejected for nonconforming, was ordained at Wymondhouses, to take charge of the nonconformist chapel at Darwen. Robert Waddington, minister at Tockholes, assisted at this ordination. The first meeting house in Darwen, the barn of Robert Livesey, was registered at Preston Quarter Sessions, the 18th July, 1689, John Sagar thus becoming the first ordained minister there.

A new chapel erected in 1710 by the church members at Tockholes, bears testimony to the diligence and skills of the committed people in the village. Both Sir Charles and Lady Mary Hoghton, who had earlier sheltered and assisted Thomas Jolly, had become patrons of Tockholes, which was only five miles from their home at Hoghton Tower. Two large square pews in the new chapel were provided for their own use, with their coat of arms affixed to the door panels. The first minister Robert Waddington, was a voracious reader, borrowing books from his friend Oliver Heywood of Manchester and approving himself in a most influential teaching ministry. 3.

1. Preston Records Office, (Q.D.V./4).
2. Oliver Heywood, Diaries, (Manchester,) Vol.2. pp.209-211.
3. Thomas Nightingale, The History of Tockholes Chapel (P.R.O.L.).

There is no record as to the exact date of his death, but Peter Valentine succeeded Robert Waddington in 1715. A list of Dissenting meeting houses in 1717-1729 refers to Tockholes.

Tockholes' preachers, Robert Waddington, Peter Valentine 1715, James Towers; number of hearers, two hundred and sixty five; votes for the county thirt; votes for the Borough (Preston) one. 1.

The Valentines were an influential Presbyterian family in the district around Darwen, Chowbent, Astley, and Eccles. Peter Valentine was the son of Richard who entered the Rathmell Academy, May 1st, 1690. Nonconformist influences with an emphasis on Presbyterian order were extending from Tockholes in wider circles. Peter Valentine's nearest Presbyterian neighbour, Rev. James Woods of Chowbent, three miles from Tockholes to the west, was often referred to as 'General Woods' or the 'fighting parson'.

He earned these sobriquets by his heroic conduct during the Rebellion of 1715, when the Pretender advanced as far as Preston at the head of a Scottish army. Mr. Woods collected all the able bodied men in his congregation, and having armed them with muskets, pitchforks, scythes, spades and whatever else would be of service, marched them to Preston. He was set to guard the fords of the Ribble and so well did he discharge his task that he afterwards obtained the thanks of Parliament. 2.

These were unsettling times, but in spite of the threats to the peaceful existence of the inhabitants of the North East Lancashire countryside, and diversions from the normal routine of daily work, the Tockholes dissenting community became more strong and influential in faith. The successor to Peter Valentine, James Towers, 1722-1749 confronted the growing Socinianism of the Lancashire churches with strict Calvinist orthodoxy. Calvinism was still the firm foundation of his preaching and yet according to a neighbouring

1. P.R.O.L. Q.D.V/5

2. Thomas Nightingale, Two Centuries of Nonconformity in Tockholes, (Manchester, 1896) p.84.

minister's diary the regular meeting places were questionable. Until the end of the century Tockholes was served by outstanding scholarly nonconformist ministers, men of deep faith, with a true sense of their calling.

Rev. James Scott, 1750-54, trained in Edinburgh and literally walking south because he had heard there was great dearth of ministers in England arrived at Tockholes, in 1755. Once again we come across the intermingling of Independents or Congregationalists and Presbyterians at Tockholes.

It is said when he came (James Scott), he found the people buried in the grossest ignorance. After some time he prevailed upon the whole congregation to learn the Presbyterian Assembly's Catechism, and repeat it as children did. Some of those who got the Catechism off by heart were nearly seventy years of age. In consequence of this, a happy change succeeded and many were brought to a saving acquaintance with Christ It has already been pointed out that Socinianism was spreading with amazing rapidity but Mr. Scott's earnest, faithful, evangelical preaching did much in the raising of the life of the Tockholes church. 1.

After four years at Tockholes, James Scott had moved to Heckmondwike in Yorkshire, where through the influence of Ernest Hitchin who had led the movement to form the Northern Education Society, May 1756, Scott became the first tutor of the Heckmondwike Academy for training ministers and through the academy he raised the religious and academic standard of churches throughout North East Lancashire.

The following is a complete list of ministers at Tockholes, from which it is clear that from the time of James Scott, the ordained ministry received a collegiate and rather special preparation.

1. Thomas Nightingale, Two Centuries of Nonconformity in Tockholes (Manchester, 1896) p.85.

Rev. Samuel Mercer, one of Dodridge's students from Northampton, 1754-55.

Rev. Thomas Waldgrave, trained at Heckmondwike, 1755-71.

Rev. James McQuhae, trained at Edinburgh University, 1771-77.

Rev. James Grimshaw, trained at Heckmondwike, 1782-86.

Rev. Noah Blackburn, trained at Heckmondwike, 1782-86.

Rev. Thomas Whiteley, trained at Heckmondwike, 1787-1819.

James Scott's emphasis on a trained ministry helps to explain why Tockholes is still existent today. Members of the church at Tockholes were thoroughly grounded in the Faith and constantly reminded of their tradition.

In respect to church extension, the ministry of the Rev. James McQuhae was significant.

As his thoughtful preaching brought several Scotsmen from Blackburn to hear him, they induced him to remove to their town where they could regularly attend on his ministry. He removed from Tockholes to Blackburn in 1777. The few English nonconformists who resided in Blackburn, had been connected with the Congregational meeting in the lower chapel Darwen. 1.

This was an off shoot from Tockholes. Mr. McQuhae had built up the church in Blackburn, establishing a sound teaching of the Catechism to young people, preparing young men for the ministry and evangelising in the surrounding villages. By the end of the eighteenth century this second base of nonconformity seemed firmly established.

C. The Third Extension centred at Bacup.

Bacup stands in the Pennine Hills on the edge of the upland moorland tracts reaching over to the West Yorkshire border near Heptonstall, where as we mentioned earlier, the foundations of the church were based on Baptist principles and practices.

In 1692, an important date in Rossendale nonconformist history, a school house and meeting place for worship was erected and set apart, to be used solely by Crossley and Mitchell. This was the

1. Robert Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism & Nonconformity (Manchester, 1869) Vol.2. p.440.

original meeting place and occupied the site of the present Town Hall, known until 1912 as the Mechanic's Institute. This church called Bacup Ebenezer, became the centre for Baptist extension in the Rossendale Valley. Before Crossley died in 1744, Henry Lords one of the members of the church, was preparing to follow him. When Crossley died, it appears that Lord became self assertive and arrogant. For a time the church entered an unhappy period with Lord's leadership. There was something unreliable about him and Robert Wylie refers to this.

Mr. Lord being subject to like passions with the rest of mankind was led away of temptation, his character being stained, and at last he broke off all his connections with his family and church and left his country in an unChristian manner and was known no more. 1.

The progress of Nonconformity in North East Lancashire developed therefore in three ways.

1. In the purely Independent or Congregational tradition.
2. In the joint Independent-Presbyterian tradition.
3. In the purely Baptist tradition.

Wyndhouses. The original Independent Church, established by Thomas Jolly.

Oakenshaw, Accrington, - at first Independent becoming Particular Baptist through the influence of David Crossley.

Tockholes near Darwen,
a combination of
Independent and Presbyterian
tradition.

Macphelah, Blackburn Rd.
Accrington.
Particular Baptist.

1778. Blackburn, Chapel Street,
Congregational.

Bacup, Cloughfield,
Rossendale.
Particular Baptist.

1793. Darwen, Belgrave.
Congregational.

1785. Haslingden.
1798. Ramsbottom Park.
Particular Baptist.

1. Robert Wylie, The Baptist Churches of Accrington & District (Accrington, 1923) p.14.

D. Circumstances leading to the Evangelical Revival in England.

Why was the progress of the nonconformist movement not more rapid than appears in the diagram?

It is, it should be admitted scarcely possible to exaggerate the mood and spiritual paralysis, which had brought religion, almost to its death bed in the England of the mid eighteenth century. 1.

The flame of nonconformity in the first three decades of the century had been kept burning by the faithful ministers and committed members of the small churches and meeting houses already registered throughout the country and by the fervour of the leaders in North East Lancashire. One of the reasons which preserved life in the movement was the encouragement and inspiration in their meetings of hymn singing. New hymn writers like Isaac Watts and Philip Doddridge gave the people of God in the free churches,

the right to sing in soaring verse the glories of their God, after they had been filched from them by trained choirs, and they reformed the prayers of the Pastors by urging them to refrain from dependence on 'sudden motions' for ex tempore, worship. 2.

Philip Doddridge was distinguished among early nonconformists for his founding of the Doddridge Academy at Northampton and also the founding of the Northampton General Hospital. His remarkable essay on personal religion 'The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul' revived the waning enthusiasm and devotion of nonconformists and in particular influenced the young cobbler of Northamptonshire, William Carey, the founder of the modern Missionary movement.

These two men, Watts and Doddridge, helped to hold the nonconformist movement on course. They were the forerunners of the Wesleys and Whitfield.

If the situation were serious in the Established Church and amongst the Dissenters, it was incredibly dark in the general social life of the nation. 3.

1. Horton Davies, The English Free Churches (Oxford, 1952) p.126.
2. Ibid. p.127.
3. Ibid. p.128.

According to Hume the English people had settled into a cooler indifference to religious matters than was to be found in any nation in the world.

Life in the villages, particularly in Lancashire was undergoing a rapid change. Apart from the cottage garden which helped to sustain the householder and his family, people were turning away from the land as a means of livelihood, toward cottage industries, in hand spinning and hand weaving. They became more and more dependent on merchants who collected the woven cloth, taking it to a town for bleaching, dyeing, finishing and marketing. Lancashire merchants had begun selling cotton cloth in the London market and were now beginning to export.

The cotton worker's cottage was a miniature factory; the women and children were engaged in picking the cotton, the men spinning and weaving it. This domestic system was a source of independence and livelihood to many families and many single women, who otherwise would have been paupers, but it was not an ideal mode of life. When the home was a workshop for cotton, it could neither be clean nor comfortable, and the housewife who was in fact a manufacturer could only give odds and ends of her time to cooking and household duties. 1.

Under the influence of the collecting merchants however a more centralised system of manufacture in factories in towns, emerged. This led to a steady evacuation of the villages and a corresponding increase in town populations. During the later nineteenth century this led almost to the total industrialisation of North East Lancashire with its consequent social problems. However in the eighteenth century the effect of the cottage industries, the tiredness at the end of the day, the neglect of home life, and the driving of children to exacting menial duties, led to an indifference to religion and in many instances among the men an escape in liquor. But there were those who kept the faith, and as they moved into the towns found Christian fellowship and help among the dissenters of their own persuasion. By eighteen hundred, the dissenters having to a great extent won their battle for freedom of worship and assembly settled for a more comfortable life. The minister was content to preach and visit his flock heedless of new trends of thought.

1. G.M. Trevelyan, The Social History of England (London, 1923)p. 389.

A PLAN FOR PREACHING IN THE COLNE CIRCUIT
IN THE YEAR 1786.

DAYS.	PLACE.	TIMES.	SERVICES.	MILES.	DAYS.	PLACE.	TIMES.	SERVICES.	MILES.		
1st Sunday	Colne	Morning	3	0	4th Sunday	Bolton Hall	Morning	3	5		
"	Do.	noon & night			"	Blackburn	noon				
"	Do.	night			"	Do.	night				
Monday	Stocks	Noon	1	6	Monday	Ribchester	Noon	1	6		
Tuesday	Caxton				night	Tuesday				Blackburn	night
Wednesday	Mawen	Noon	2	13	Wednesday	Grave	Noon	2	8		
"	Long Preston				night	"				Flaxmoss	night
"	Settle				night	"				Bank-Top	night
Thursday	Wigglesworth-row	Noon	2	8	Thursday	Mill-end	Noon	1	2		
"	Newhurst				night	"				Syke Side	night
Friday	Gisburn	Noon	2	7	Friday	Haslingden	Morning	1	1		
"	Rimmington				night	"				Do.	noon
Saturday	Padiham all day	and rest		10	Saturday	Mill-end	noon	3	7		
"	Padiham				night	"				Bacup	night
2nd Sunday	Do.	Morning	3	0	Monday	Do.	Noon	1	0		
"	Do.				noon	Tuesday				Wardlefold	night
"	Do.				night	Wednesday				Longclough Top	night
Monday	Do.	Noon	1	0	"	Todmorden	Noon	2	8		
Tuesday	Burnley				night	Thursday				Rothwell-end	night
Wednesday	Rough Lee	Noon	1	3	Friday	Luddington	Noon	1	2		
Thursday	Colne				night	Saturday				Stocks	night
Friday	Haggat	Morning	1	3	6th Sunday	Do.	Morning	1	2		
Saturday	Rothwell End				noon	"				Heptonstall	noon
3rd Sunday	Todmorden	Noon	3	2	"	Do.	Noon	1	0		
"	Do.				night	Monday				Do.	night
"	Do.				night	Tuesday				Widdup	night
Monday	Top o' th' Close	Noon	1	14	Wednesday	Southfield	Noon	2	10		
Tuesday	Harwood				night	Thursday				Fowltrigg	night
Wednesday	Blackburn	Noon	1	12	Friday	Colne	Noon	1	4		
Thursday	Preston				night	Saturday				Barrowford	night
Friday	Do.	Noon	1	0	"	Colne	Noon	1	2		
Saturday	Chorley				night	"				Colne	night
"	Bolton Hall	Noon	1	10	"	Colne	Noon	1	2		
"	Do.				night	"				Colne	night

THE BEGINNING OF METHODISM IN NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE.

It is not within the bounds of this thesis, to examine John Wesley's early life, from the miraculous escape from the fire at the Epworth rectory to his conversion in London. It is enough to state that though his conversion led to a deep emphasis on personal religion through the Pauline doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, he was opposed to the rigid Calvinist doctrine of Election and Predestination, being Arminian and preaching universal salvation through repentance and faith in Christ. He steadfastly claimed to remain Anglican in doctrine and conservative in politics. His meeting with George Whitefield, who like Wesley had been influenced by the Moravian, Peter Böhler, led them both to outdoor preaching, although it was Whitefield who pioneered this kind of evangelism.

From the beginning of the Methodist movement in London and Bristol, only a short time elapsed before Methodism spread north. At the Third Methodist Conference in Bristol in May 1746 reference was made to the formation of Circuits. Haworth, in West Yorkshire is mentioned as the Twelfth Circuit, probably because it was the residence of William Grimshaw the Anglican rector, an evangelical, and Wesley's personal friend. Although Grimshaw continued to be rector of Haworth, he was recognised as one of Wesley's assistants and paved the way for the introduction of Methodism over the nearby eastern border of Yorkshire, into North East Lancashire.

A. Colne Methodist Circuit.

William Darney, a friend of William Grimshaw and an evangelical, had settled in Roughlee near Colne, and had gathered round him a small group of like minded evangelical Christians. In August 1747 William Grimshaw who had visited this meeting, wrote to John Wesley and said he had found the meeting in good heart. Wesley, it seemed, was already acquainted with Darney and the meeting, and had visited Roughlee before Grimshaw. Wesley writes,

At three, I preached at Great Harding (Great Harwood), in the evening at Roughlee, a large society. But since the men of smooth tongues, broke in upon them (Moravians) they are every man afraid of his brother, half of them ringing in the ears of the other 'no works no law, no bondage'. However

we gathered about forty of the scattered sheep who are still minded to stand in the old paths. 1.

The second visit was on the 25th August 1748.

I rode with Mr. Grimshaw to Roughlee, where Thomas Colbeck of Keighley was to greet us. We were stopped again and again and begged not to go on, for a large mob from Colne was gone before us. Coming a little further, we understood they had not yet reached Roughlee. So we hastened in so that we might be there before them. All was quiet when we came. I was a little afraid for Mr. Grimshaw (who up to this time does not seem to have met with any violent opposition,) but it needed not; he was ready to go to prison or even die for Christ's sake. 2.

Wesley went on, preached at Roughlee that same day and later in the evening at Barrowford on the southern slopes of Pendle. He records a long letter of protest to the vicar of Colne the Rev. G. White, who had instigated the mob to harass Wesley. The third visit to Roughlee was on June 8th 1752. The Journal records,

We rode to Roughlee, a large, serious, and quiet congregation. There have been no tumults since Mr. White was removed. 3.

The vicar of Colne, the Rev. G. White had a notable record of drunkenness and misdemeanour. It is recorded that he bribed the worst characters in the community to incite people against Wesley, and even served a term of imprisonment for violence. The fourth and last visit to Roughlee was on May 20th, 1757. Under that date Wesley writes,

I preached near Padham to a large and wild congregation, and about noon at Roughlee, where those who stood firm were gathered. At Keighley I had neither voice nor strength left, but while I was preaching my strength returned. 4.

1. John Wesley, The Journals of John Wesley Vol. 3 p. 294.

2. Ibid. Vol. 3. p. 369.

3. Ibid. Vol. 6. p. 371.

4. Ibid. Vol. 6. p. 371.

At this time there are no records of organised Methodist society meetings. Darney, the founder of Roughlee, remained in the area to begin organising, to prepare lay preachers, which was to become the foundation of Methodism, and to continue his itinerant ministry. His interest extended to Padiham, where Wesley had faced the mob. In turn he was driven away, but not before John Wood, the uncle of Thomas Wood, had courageously defended him. This John Wood was one of the first Methodists in Padiham. The first Society was formed in Padiham in 1748 and became known as Darney's Society.

Wesley came to Padiham first in 1757. In 1758 the first Methodist preaching house opened with a dwellinghouse and stables attached, to lodge itinerant ministers and their horses. On three other occasions Wesley visited Padiham, July 13th, 1761, he writes,

About five, I preached at Padiham, another place eminent for all manner of wickedness. The multitude of people obliged me to stand in the yard of the preaching house. Over against me at a little distance, were some of the most impudent women I ever saw; yet I am not sure that God did not reach their hearts. July 29th, 1766, in the evening I preached again near the preaching house in Padiham and strongly insisted on communion with God as the only religion that would avail us. April 29th, 1776, I preached at Padiham in a broad street to a large congregation. I think the only inattentive persons, were the minister and a kind gentleman. 1.

It is clear that Padiham was a strategic centre for the northern part of North East Lancashire, for it stood at a junction of very secondary roads through to Blackburn, Accrington and Burnley, and although Thomas Jolly's original Independent Meeting House at Wymondhouses was only about five miles away, the Independent were not yet established here in any strength.

From Roughlee to Padiham the work extended to many surrounding hamlets and villages. The Colne Methodist circuit consisting of the larger villages Padiham, Burnley and Colne was established between 1776 and 1810. Wesley visited Colne on four

1. John Wesley, The Journals of John Wesley, Vol. 4. p.469.

occasions, July 20th, 1759, July 13th, 1761, July 29th, 1766, and April 28th, 1777. By the latter date only one anglican pulpit was open to him and that was Colne Parish church, occupied earlier by George White who had fulminated against the Methodists. That Wesley, whose Anglican traditions were still evident in his preaching and ecclesiastical affirmation, had so little access to the Anglican churches of the area, shows the extent of Anglican opposition to the new movement. By and large Anglicans were suspicious and to say the least discouraging in their attitudes.

In June 1777, John Wesley opened the first chapel in Colne where William Sagar was appointed leader. During this time there were interruptions of the Methodist work in Colne with its predominant Arminian preaching, by local Calvinists. Wesley wrote to Sagar, and this is yet another insight into his painstaking attention to detail, in respect of all Methodist societies

August 11th, 1782

Certainly nothing can more effectively stop the work of God than the breaking in of Calvinism upon you. I hope your three preachers will calmly and diligently oppose it although not so much by preaching as by visiting the people from house to house, dispensing the little tracts as it were in both hands.

Your affectionate brother,
J. Wesley. 1.

Joseph Entwistle was appointed by Methodist Conference to Colne in 1794. There had been setbacks, his son and biographer writing

The congregations at Colne and some other places were small and religion was but at a slow ebb.

In spite of such difficulties and setbacks, Methodism still continued to expand in the Colne circuit. A number of Young Methodists from Downham, a village on the other side of Pendle Hill, established a Society in Barley, in 1803.

1. John Wesley, The Journals of John Wesley, Vol. 6. p.79.

Little is known of the very early beginning of Methodism in Burnley, although as early as 1794, Goodshaw not far away but in the Rossendale Valley, is mentioned in the Circuit Book, a sign that in this predominantly Calvinist Baptist area, Methodist Arminianism had begun to make inroads. John Wesley himself, preached in Burnley on July 13th, 1784 which meant that there must have been Methodists there to invite him and prepare for him, if only in small numbers. On that day his text for the sermon, was from the Book of Proverbs, chapter 30, verse 17

The eye that mocketh at his father and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, the young eagles shall eat it.

Both the text and the sermon expounding it, were too much for the congregation and a shower of stones and clods of earth soon began to fall upon the preacher.

William Livesey, the first convert from this particular meeting, began a Methodist Class in Burnley in 1787 and was joined by Martha Thompson, a Methodist who walked each Sunday from Preston, a distance of twenty miles. Wesley visited Burnley again on April 18th, 1786. The previous day he had preached in Blackburn to a large crowd attracted by a fair, then on to Padtham, Burnley, Southfield and Colne.

The only churches at that time solely set apart for public worship in Burnley were the Established churches of St. Peter's and Keighley Green. The first Methodist chapel opened in 1788. St. Peter's was only opened once on Sunday. An extract from the diary of the Rev. Joseph Entwistle, the Colne Methodist minister, 24th April, 1794 reads

Set out early from Colne to Burnley. Preached three times at Burnley with considerable freedom and warmth and I hope will profit the people. 1.

B. Methodism in Rossendale.

Through Wesley's relationship with Grimshaw of Haworth, Methodism began spreading in the area of North East Lancashire known as the Rossendale Valley.

We now pass over the mountains into the picturesque valley of Rossendale, which was one of the outlying portions of the Haworth circuit . . . Into this interesting region the Gospel had already been introduced by the zealous labours of the Baptists. 1.

The writer refers to the work of David Crossley and William Mitchell, who had set up their headquarters at Bacup.

Methodist preachers from Haworth and Colne had begun visiting the Rossendale Valley at the time of William Grimshaw's death in 1763. There is a record as early as 1749 regarding the affairs of a very small Methodist Society which had contributed four pounds, four shillings to the Colne circuit funds. This was at the very beginning of Wesley's work in Colne. George Whitfield had visited Rossendale in 1749, he writes from Leeds to Lady Huntingdon that

I have preached to many thousands in Rossendale, Aywood (Heywood) and Halifax. 2.

Wesley and Whitfield came into Rossendale together in 1761 and lodged at the house of Robert Cunliffe, farmer at New Hall Hey, near Rawtenstall.

We rode in less than four hours the eight miles to New Hall Hey. Just as I had began to preach, the sun broke out and shone exceedingly hot on the side of my head. I found if I continued, I should not be able to speak for long and lifted up my heart to God. In a minute or two it was covered with clouds which continued till the service was over. Let any who please call this chance. I call it an answer to prayer. 3.

1. William Jessop, Methodism in Rossendale and the Neighbourhood (Manchester, 1880) p.71.
2. Ibid. p.71.
3. John Wesley, The Journals of John Wesley, Vol.4. p.112.

In 1751 the small society of Methodists built Lane Head Chapel, which became known as Mount Pleasant. In 1752 Wesley again visited the district and preached at Miller Barn, giving a cheerful account of somewhat dismal lodgings. The Methodist cause developed and although the people of the area were poor, there were among them, well to do benefactors, converted to Methodism, who contributed generously. Mr. George Whittaker, a member of the society at Mount Pleasant, built another chapel at Rawtenstall Fold and dedicated it to his son Richard.

Rossendale Methodists, who from the beginning had had contact with the Colne circuit through local preachers visiting, officially were included in the Colne circuit from 1766 to 1786, but the society was not strong enough to maintain a Rossendale circuit by itself until 1811. Meanwhile, from 1787 to 1794 it came within the Blackburn circuit, and from 1795 to 1811 within the Rochdale circuit. In 1811 Bacup became the circuit town of the Rossendale area.

C. Methodism in Blackburn.

The first record of Methodism in Blackburn is 1758, when a Society met in a private house at Top-o-the Coal Pots. Henry Burler, a staymaker of Blackburn, had responded to John Wesley's preaching and inaugurated this meeting. Another Society began about the same time at Brimmicroft, not far from Houghton. In 1764, this Society claimed to have thirty six members.

The Methodist lay preachers held open air meetings in the streets, particularly in the poorer districts, on the outskirts of the town, in farmsteads, and in private houses in Blackburn. They were greatly encouraged and the cause prospered, through John Wesley's visits in 1759 and 1761, when William Grimshaw of Haworth accompanied Wesley to Lower Darwen. The first chapel which stood in Old Chapel Street, Blackburn, was first known as The Old Calendar House and was opened in 1781.

Originally Blackburn was included in the Colne Methodist circuit, but in 1809 Blackburn formed a new circuit to include the following places.

Blackburn.	195 members.
Lower and Over Darwen.	70 members.
Mellor.	98 members.
Hoghton.	96 members.
Tockholes.	16 members.
Bankfoot.	6 members.
Rishton.	6 members.
Great Harwood.	12 members.
Stanhill.	28 members.

Stanhill, on the Accrington border, later initiated the spread of Methodism into Accrington, which up to this time had been predominantly Independent and Baptist. Methodism's ~~connec~~ tional system enabled the circuit to link up from Blackburn with the churches in the Rossendale Valley. Wesley mentions visiting the town where he met with a gracious reception in the year 1780

In the afternoon we went to Blackburn. It seemed the whole town was moved. But the question was where to put the congregation. We could not stand abroad for the sun. So as many as could, squeezed into the Preaching House. All the chief men of the town were there. It seems as if the last will be first. 1.

In 1784 Wesley visited Blackburn again

I preached at Blackburn, where also the Society is lively and increasing. On Sunday April 8th, after preaching at five to a numerous congregation, (but not one rich or well dressed person among the, either morning or evening), poor Blackburn! I hastened on to Gisburn (beyond Clitheroe). The chapel was so full that a few were obliged to stand without the doors. The word was quick and powerful. So it was afterwards at Settle. Sufficient unto the day is the labour thereof. 2.

By the end of the eighteenth century Methodism was established in the whole of North East Lancashire, but more strongly concentrated around Colne, where there were nineteen chapels and meeting places.

1. John Wesley, The Journals of John Wesley (London,) Vol. 4. p. 178.

2. Ibid. p. 271.

The Divisions in Methodism.

The reasons for these divisions can only be explained by the resentment against the growing authoritarianism of Conference or the Legal Hundred (of ministers). Up to this time and beginning with the hold which John Wesley himself intended to keep over the Methodist movement, there was no lay representation in Conference. The Legal Hundred, composed entirely of ministers, held supreme authority. Following the death of Wesley the Rev. Jabez Bunting was elected secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, at the age of thirty five. A good and dedicated Christian, he brought to the leadership, the same ecclesiastical statesmanship and concern for the unity of the Connection as Wesley had done. He too was a Tory in politics, eager to keep the Connection loyal to the State, and united within itself. He nevertheless came into conflict with some ministers and laymen who reacted against the restrictions of Conference.

Professor Ward has collected a most important selection of Jabez Bunting's correspondence. In the introduction he brings out the significant points of dispute, which ultimately led to the forming of the Methodist New Connection, the Primitive Methodist, and Independent Methodist.

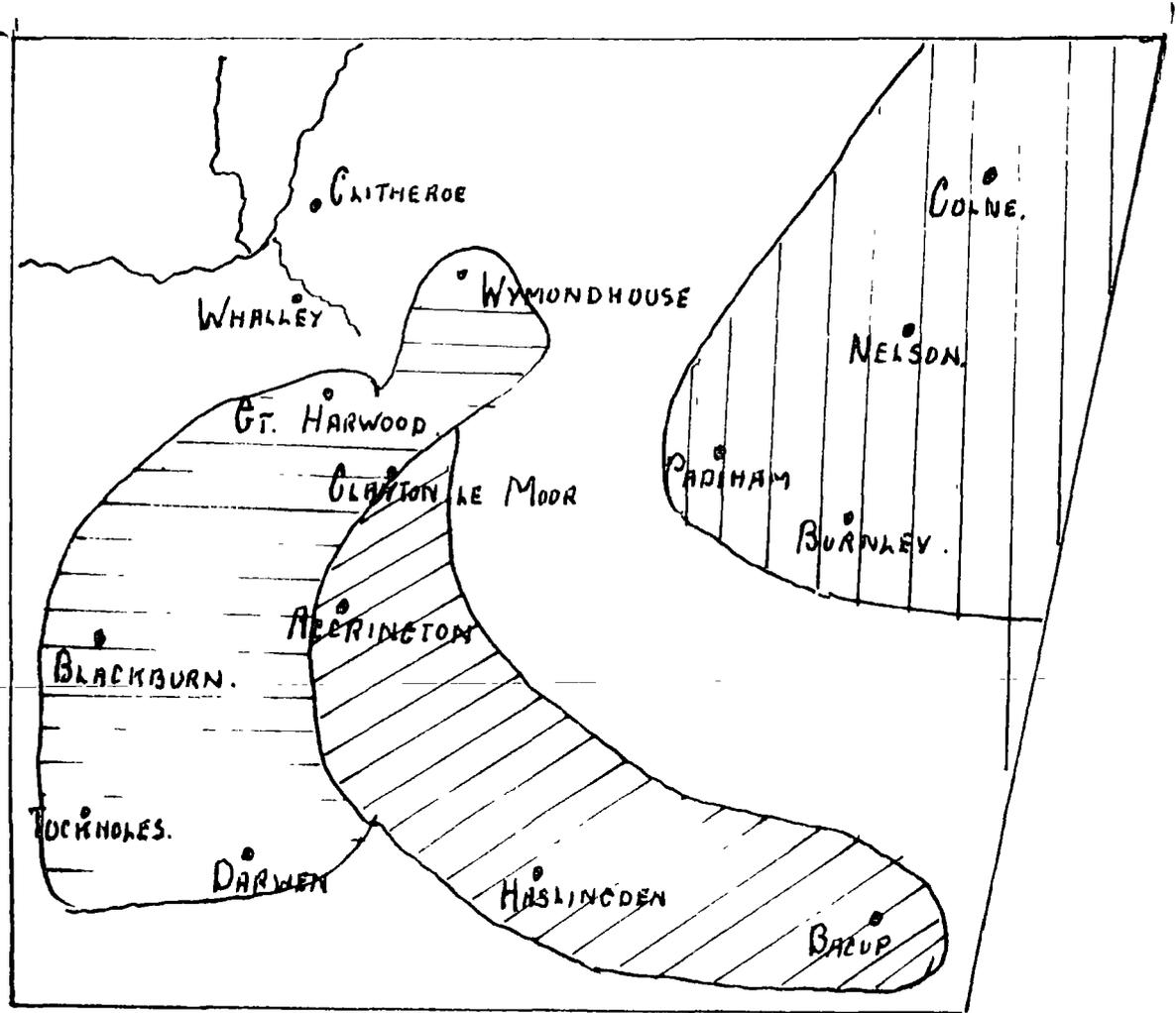
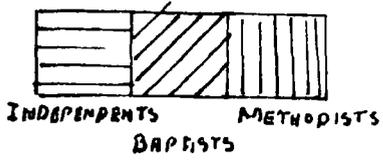
The hardening of Methodist sentiment towards and around Bunting, had long been foreshadowed in the mind of the great man himself. 'I belonged to a school of revivalists in Manchester,' he confessed to Conference of 1846, 'but not a good one, but good in design'. But this had been at the turn of the century; once he had given himself to the creation of an ecclesiastical system, there was, notwithstanding his fertility in administrative resource, no room for basic development.

Methodism's 'superior Bishop' was also in lay demand for political purposes; his old friend Gillyard Scarth besought him to accept appointment to Leeds East, in the name of the 'noble stand you have taken against that overwhelming flood of democracy and misrule which was so recently breaking in upon us almost everywhere'. 1.

1. W.R. Ward, Early Victorian Methodism (University of Durham Publications) (Oxford, 1976) p. 16.

NONCONFORMITY IN NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE.

AREA OF INFLUENCE ABOUT 1750 A.D.



If Bunting's own station was crucial, it was assumed right through the Methodist Connection that his influence was decisive in the Stationing Committee of Conference There is no evidence that Bunting used his power to manipulate a party in Conference but it is not difficult to see how the suspicion arose that he did so. 1.

It was proving difficult in this atmosphere to contain 'enthusiasts' within the Wesleyan Connection. Valentine Ward writing in 1815, while insisting upon the loyalty and patriotism of Methodists, was ready to admit that there had been disloyal Methodists, but in 1797, nearly, if not quite all of that description left the Society.

During the sixty years following the death of Wesley, Methodism had divided into seven separate bodies

1. The Wesleyan Methodists.
2. The Methodist New Connection, seceding in 1797.
3. The Independent Methodist Connection, formed in 1805.
4. The Primitive Methodists formed in 1807.
5. The Bible Christians, seceding in 1815.
6. The United Methodist Free Church, beginning in 1849.
7. The Wesleyan Reform Union, formed in 1849.

We shall confine our examination of the Methodist division in North East Lancashire to the Independent Methodists and the Primitive Methodists.

1. W.R. Ward, Early Victorian Methodism.
(University of Durham Publications)
(Oxford, 1976) p.18.

The eighteenth century came to a close with the three branches of nonconformity, each claiming predominance in the three distinct parts of the area. (see diagram.) There was some overlapping, but generally the Independents occupied the Blackburn sector and the Baptists with Accrington at the centre the area leading up into the Rossendale Valley to Bacup, with Methodism strong in Colne.

A. The Inghamites.

There was however a local alternative to Methodism, whose early history is bound up with that of Methodism, the Inghamite Church which still survives. This sect of dissenters was formed by Benjamin Ingham and actually preceded Methodism in establishing societies and churches in North East Lancashire. John Wesley had arrived in the area first in 1746. The first Inghamite cause began at Colne Edge near Colne in February 1743.

Benjamin Ingham was born on June 11th, 1712 of a fairly well to do family in Ossett in the parish of Dewsbury in Yorkshire. Following private tutorship at home, he attended Batley Grammar School and from there entered Queen's College, Oxford where he continued a classical education. In Oxford he met the members of the 'Holy Club', formed by John and Charles Wesley and William Morgan. He shared their bible studies and disciplined prayer life. They fasted twice a week, prayed and examined themselves twice every hour of the day, received the Sacrament every Sunday, visited the sick and prisoners in gaol, and taught poor children to write, giving alms to the parents.

Following his graduation at Oxford, Dr. John Potter of Oxford ordained Ingham. He began to preach at Oxford Castle. In October of the same year, he joined his friends John and Charles Wesley, sailing to Georgia where he ministered to the plantation settlers and visited Carolina and Pennsylvania. In 1737 he returned to Ossett and renewed his ministry in the Established Church with the emphasis in his preaching on the 'doctrine of justification through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, imputed to the guilty'.

35

The work of Ingham is a notable example of the diffuse origins of the evangelical revival, which while contemporaneous with the work of Wesley and Whitfield, was none the less independent from them.

At this time there was a dearth of evangelical preaching in the borders of Yorkshire and Lancashire, Grimshaw of Haworth the close friend of Wesley was quite alone in keeping the flame burning. The clergy of the area prohibited Ingham from their churches and church yards, but he broadened his ministry, preaching in fields, barns and private dwellings and attracting great crowds of people.

In 1743, William Batty, a native of Colne, joined him and they together, founded the Society at Colne Edge in 1743, adding within the next two years Societies at Newsholme, Slaidburn, Wigglesworth, and Swinden, not far from Clitheroe in the Ribble Valley.

John Wesley came to Roughlee near Colne in 1746 and tried to persuade William Batty, 'to connect with his party, but Batty could not be induced to embrace Mr. Wesley's idea on Perfection'. Ingham was in Germany at this time and on his return, hearing of Wesley's attempted inducement of Batty, was both sad and angry. From that time there was little hope of joint evangelical effort between the Inghamites and the Methodists.

The followers of Ingham seemed to be even more disciplined in their devotional life than the Methodists. They extended their cause from 1752-1756 to York, Thirsk, Selby, Leeds, Settle, Tadcaster, Bradford, Wibsey, Long Preston, Salterforth, Grindleton, Barnoldswick, Winewall, Wheatley (Burnley), Kendal, Grayriggs, Dent and Kirkby Stephen.

The following extract from their journals shews the manner of admitting new members into their Societies

If no objection be made, the person is to be received without making any promises or subscribing to any rules or orders. They are at liberty to leave the Society, whenever they please, but to be faithfully told that so long as they remain members of the Society, it is expected that they have their salvation at heart, and live and walk as becometh the followers of our Lord Jesus Christ. If any member shall

give offence by acting contrary to his profession, the stewards are authorised to take notice thereof and inform the preachers. If there is no repentance, then he is to appear before two or three stewards together and if there is then no sign of repentance, he is to be disowned. 1.

Members of the Societies contributed an agreed twopence per month toward the whole Society, but in addition there were contributions to maintain the local Societies and such buildings as they had. A person wishing to be admitted must state his experience publicly before the local membership gathered together, and commit himself to the responsibilities. Most meeting houses were built between 1750 and 1760.

Wheatley. (Burnley)	May 1st, 1750.	
Rothwell.	April 3rd, 1754.	
Dent.	April 10th, 1754.	
Salterforth.	April 15th, 1754.	
Winewall.	June 18th, 1752.	
Birks.	March 8th, 1757.	
Burton.	March 16th, 1757.	2.

At one of their general meetings at Winewall on Dec. 30th, 1753 Mr. Ingham gave the following advice to all his fellow labourers.

In preaching, keep to your own gift and experience and do not go beyond your own depth. Avoid all affectation in words and gestures, and endeavour to express yourself in plain ^{plains} scriptural language. In the first place, preach Christ crucified as the only foundation, let His Godhead, blood and righteousness be the chief topic of your discourses. In the next place, preach such points of doctrine as are essential to faith and practice, as the corruption and weakness of man's nature, and the insufficiency of his own righteousness. The necessity of God's Holy Spirit, to call enlighten, convince, and convert sinners, justification and sanctification as

1. R.W. Thompson, Benjamin Ingham, The Yorkshire Evangelist & the Inghamites (Kendal, 1958).
2. Historical Sketches of the Rise of the Scots Old Independent and the Inghamite Churches, with the Correspondence which led to the Union (Colne, 1814).

inseparable; for where Christ's righteousness is imputed, His life, spirit and nature is imparted. Preach repentance and obedience as concomitants of true faith, and good works as the fruit thereof Lay the axe to the root of the tree and declare roundly and boldly that nothing but an experiential knowledge of Jesus Christ can make us happy here or hereafter. Exhort people to the constant use of praying, watching, meditating, reading the scriptures, hearing sermons, and meeting together. 1.

In 1760, Ingham received letters from John Sandeman of Dundee, the leader of the Scots Old Independent Connection which had separated from the Church of Scotland. These letters caused Ingham to examine more closely and scripturally the basis of his own Society. At his initiative, Batty and Allen two of the elders went into Scotland to visit Sandeman and Glass, to observe the order of their Societies. They visited Perth, Dunkeld and Dundee, which circuit had a membership of a thousand five hundred. They discovered that the members were received by the laying on of hands by the elders, and the kiss of charity. The monthly Lord's Supper was followed by a feast of charity. Although Sandeman visited Colne and tried to influence the Colne Society, the relationship between Ingham and Sandeman soon petered out.

The Inghamite cause continued to grow and extend as far as Todmorden in 1770 and Haslingden in 1805, but toward the end of the nineteenth century, weakened with the growth of Methodist dissident societies. Today only two Inghamite churches remain in the area, Wheatley Lane, Burnley, which is still progressive and able to maintain a minister. This church is quite outstanding in its architecture, in its semi-gothic style and an attractive rose window set within the eastern end of the building. In comparison most of the Inghamite chapels were more like the Quaker meeting houses. The only other chapel in the area is at Salterforth with a membership of twenty five.

1. R.W. Thompson, Benjamin Ingham, pp. 62-63.

B. Independent Methodism in North East Lancashire.

In 1805, an American evangelist, Lorenzo Dow, met some Methodist revivalists in Leeds, some Quakers in Warrington, the Tent Methodists of Manchester, the Band Room Methodists of Manchester, and some Independent Methodists of Oldham, and persuaded them to come together to discuss a form of union of revivalists. Peter Philips of Oldham welcomed Lorenzo Dow into his home together with Hugh Bourne, who was subsequently one of the founder members of the Primitive Methodists. Proposals for a form of union of these societies were accepted and a representative meeting was held in Manchester in 1805.

Meanwhile John Broadhurst had established a group of Independent Methodists at Hanover Street, Manchester, which was to become later the mother church of the North East Lancashire Independent Methodist churches. Broadhurst was born in 1790, the son of a Manchester draper of good standing and well respected. Broadhurst's parents were High Church and were shocked when their son came under the influence of an itinerant Wesleyan Methodist preacher, Joseph Benson. Broadhurst's conversion led him away from the Established Church to a more independent churchmanship than even the Wesleyan Methodists observed. He believed that the Christian ministry should consist of laymen only, who followed a secular occupation and became leaders of independent congregations, accepting no payment for their ministry.

It was here at Hanover Street, that the meeting instigated by Lorenzo Dow, alluded to earlier, took place in 1805. In January 1806 the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion disowned them. Those meeting in Hanover Street in 1805 would not submit to be regularised by Jabez Bunting, (the secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion), or by any Methodist minister, but chose to maintain their freedom.

By the year 1838, Hanover Street Independent Methodist church, Manchester had extended her influence through their lay

ministers into the surrounding area. In 1838 and again in 1857, Thomas Oxley, the son of a working tanner, who was in violent conflict with the Wesleyan Methodists, became President of the Independent Methodist Connexion, which began to spread rapidly in two particular areas in Lancashire, namely Bolton and Colne.

This thesis is concerned with the Colne and district circuit. The Independent Methodists began in Colne through a meeting of Free Gospelers, who chose as their leader, William Sanderson. He was proud of the fact that no one need pay a preacher of the Gospel and of course this meant less financial demands on the congregation. He loved the title 'Free Gospelier' as it was the antithesis of what he terms, 'the hireling system of the ministry'. In 1855 this meeting came to be known as the first Independent Methodist church in Colne and the same year was accepted into the Manchester and Liverpool connexion meeting. The church in Nelson (Salem) was formed about the same time. The first report of the Colne (Waterside) church to the connexion meeting in Liverpool in 1855 contained these words

When we consider our distinguished privileges, particularly as regards those glorious free principles, which distinguish us as a people, we can and will rejoice. We desire to make common cause with you, in spreading the truth as it is in Jesus, and in removing from the Church of Christ, everything like 'Lordship over God's heritage'. 1.

On account of the Independent Methodist lay ministry there were fewer financial demands on congregations, which meant that poorer people found the denomination more attractive to their circumstances. Although the Independent Methodists had left the main body of Methodism, they preserved the connexional system, which with its agreed discipline and oversight through connexional meetings, saved them from the divisive squabbles which seemed to break out in other churches. Another factor worth considering is that in the long run, the Independent Methodist connexion

1. James Vickers, The History of Independent Methodism, (Bolton, 1920) p.167.

channelised the evangelical fervour and the strong emphasis on lay leadership which could have wrecked the Wesleyan Methodist connexion, if the radicals had remained inside the main body. This movement ran its course and served a good purpose in emphasising 'true revivalism', at a time when the main body of the Christian church was apathetic. Working people were attracted by a ministry which sprang from their ranks, and remained within their ranks. The following were the main churches in the area -

Manchester	1805	Nelson	1855
Oldham	1806	Barnoldswick	1859
Oldham	1839	Burnley	1867
Colne	1855	Colne, Primet Bridge	1871
		Accrington	1872
		Rishton	1873

C. Primitive Methodism in the Area.

The Primitive Methodist movement began under the leadership of Hugh Bourne and William Clowes who had adopted the camp meeting technique of the American frontier. This followed a 'revivalist pattern'. Mow Cop in Staffordshire was the historic meeting place, where there were scenes of great emotion, stirred by the preaching of Bourne and Clowes, with their emphasis on immediate conversion and the call for repentance of sins. Their preaching was more akin to that of Whitfield, who had stressed the immediate attainability of Christian perfection, through faith in Christ. From the early days of this movement there was much hostility from the Wesleyan Methodist leadership, but with the Primitives more closely identified with working people and the political aspirations of the working classes, Primitive Methodism spread into Derbyshire, Lancashire, Cheshire and Staffordshire. It was particularly successful in the industrial areas. In 1819 the Primitive Methodists had a membership of seven thousand eight hundred and forty two, and in 1824 the membership had grown to

thirty three thousand five hundred and seven.

1.

The Primitive Methodist church began first in Blackburn and then Burnley, the first services being held in Blackburn on January 29th, 1822 conducted by J. Batty. This was about the same time that the Primitive Methodist missionaries held meetings for 'Gospel hymns and Exhortations', and called upon the people of Burnley to repentance and salvation.

Blackburn and Burnley were both part of the Hull circuit which held quarterly meetings in Hull, occupying two days, beginning each day at 9.0 a.m. The preachers travelled either on foot or by stage coach at their own expense. A letter to the quarterly meeting, cost nine pence, hence the instructions in the plan that all letters had to be post paid by them that sent them. With this cost in mind Society stewards thought twice about sending letters of complaint, about preachers neglecting appointments.

In 1823, Burnley together with Clitheroe, Low Moor, Pendleton, Barley, Sabden, Barrowford, Colne, Trawden, Gisburn, Padiham, Oakenshaw, Accrington and Rawtenstall, all within the North East Lancashire area, separated from the Blackburn branch and formed the Clitheroe branch of Silsden in Yorkshire under the care of the Revs. Jonathan Clews and John Oxby. In 1824, there was another change. Clitheroe, Low Moor, Burnley, Barley, Trawden, Salterforth and Gisburn, left the Silsden branch and formed their own circuit, Clitheroe, becoming the circuit town with the Rev. J. Bastow, the Superintendent minister.

Barley was the first Primitive Methodist church building, to be built in 1823. The other Societies rented rooms, Burnley in the Salford room with fifty members. In 1832 the Burnley Society purchased a site in Curzon Street, Hammerton Street followed, purchasing a freehold site in 1851. This was followed to meet the needs of a growing congregation in 1902 when a new organ was installed at a cost of five thousand pounds.

In December 1861, at Bethel, Burnley, it was resolved that Colne be made centre of a new circuit, comprising Burnley, Colne, Wycollar, Barnoldswick, Barley, Blacko, Bradley Row, Barrowford and Trawden. Prinet Bridge was added in 1871. The minister's house in Nelson built in 1876 cost one thousand pounds, at today's price this would be forty thousand pounds, which not only indicates the prosperity of the congregation but seems to contradict the earlier views of the Primitive Methodists as to the simplicity in the lives of their preachers.

In Blackburn, Thomas Batty, who had preached through Yorkshire, and had been called the Apostle of Weardale, made contact with Primitive Methodist friends in Preston and gained their support for strengthening the mission in Blackburn. This was at a time following the Napoleonic Wars when trade was stagnant, food dear, unemployment rife, and people poor. The founders of Primitive Methodism in Blackburn were so poor that they could not furnish their rooms even with the bare necessities. They rented a warehouse and begged what they could.

In 1824 brother Hugh Bourne opened a room in Easter Street, Blackburn and in the same year the Primitive Methodist Conference made Blackburn into a circuit, to include Haslingden, Mussburrow, Grane, Mellor, Tan Pots, Wensley Fold, Hoghton, Hoghton Bottoms, Oakenshaw and Accrington. Through this circuit and the membership already in Haslingden, Primitive Methodism spread into the Rossendale Valley, despite the influence of the Baptists, but their methods and evangelical doctrine were so much akin, that the new movement gained little in this district, Wesleyan Methodism retaining its hold.

From 1824 to the beginning of the twentieth century, Primitive Methodism extended in Blackburn to five places of meeting.

1824. Montague Street.
1825. Waterloo.
1865. Audley Street.
1869. School Chapel at Witton.
1878. Salisbury Street.

By the year 1922, Blackburn's first Primitive Methodist circuit plan included Branch Road, Montague Street, Witton, Waterloo, Audley Street, Salisbury Street, Grimshaw Park, Greenfield Street, Daisy Field and Mill Hill, each with a resident lay preacher.

Together with the five Primitive Methodist chapels in Blackburn and their branch meetings there were the following chapels in the area, Colne 1880; Primet Bridge 1890; Nelson, Scotland Road and Bradley Street 1870; Burnley, Hammerton Street, Bethel 1850; Padiham 1883; Accrington, two chapels, 1860, 1864; Oswaldtwistle, Foxhill Grove 1864; Rawtenstall, two chapels, 1867 and 1868; Haslingden, one chapel, 1861. The pattern for the denomination was therefore, one of steady expansion throughout the nineteenth century, the greatest rate of increase occurring in the years 1850-1900.

NONCONFORMITY IN NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY.

From 1750, until the end of the eighteenth century, the three branches of Nonconformists, Baptists, Independents or Congregationalists as they were now called, and Methodists, seemed to be most preoccupied with their own beliefs, minor disputes and an inward looking attitude. They were certainly unprepared for some of the rapid changes about to take place in the area, in the new industrial development, the social consequences and the migration of people from the country to the rapidly growing towns. The increasing population in the towns can be seen in the Table 1. (Appendix).

The growth of the textile industry, mainly cotton, with some silk in the Darwen district, the development of coal mining and iron smelting, with the ancillary industries, in textiles, calico printing, dyeing, bleaching and finishing, and following the iron smelting textile engineering and light engineering, brought thousands of people into the growing towns. Families were uprooted from close communities, from the membership of their village chapels and fellowships, to make new social adjustments. What was to be the future for a Faith, born principally out of a yearning for independence, a freedom of worship, with more of a Biblical than Ecclesiastical foundation, fostered in the village communities? Anglicans were accustomed to the parochial tradition and looked more easily to the new parish church but the Nonconformists found it more difficult to settle.

Before 1830, Lancashire had only two great towns, Manchester and Liverpool. The rest of the county consisted of a mass of growing industrial communities, surrounded by open country. As the agricultural writer John Holt put it, cottages were built near large factories, being frequently built in long ranges adjoining together. 1.

1. J.D. Marshall, City and County Histories, Lancashire (Manchester, 1964) p.66.

Consequently the development of these new communities was a piecemeal affair, resulting in strings of sordid settlements along the valley bottoms of Rossendale, Burnley, Accrington and Blackburn. Most of the industrial communities in North East Lancashire from Blackburn through to Church, Accrington, Burnley, Nelson and Colne, were established in these valleys where the factories had access to water from the swiftly flowing rivers.

For many people who know North East Lancashire well, this enclosed world, marked by the factory chimney at the foot of a moor or in the bottom of a ravine is typical of the region. 1.

There was no control over land values, nor was there any effective local government. Consequently the sanitary arrangements were quite inadequate, and up to twenty families used a privy with a tub closet. Until 1850 a properly designed sewer or adequate land drainage was unknown and families lived in foul conditions. There was need for change and this came partly because of the seething social unrest, but more especially through the beginning of a change in the local administrative affairs. Burnley had Improvement Commissioners as early as 1819. Towns began to be governed by a mixture of Bodies; local church vestries, the Courts Leet, Commissioners of Sewers, Highway Committees and Poor Law Guardians in 1844.

North East Lancashire contained in a nutshell, all the suffering and privations brought on by periods of industrial adversity, but it also provided the circumstances in which the character of the people developed over the past years through independence and hardship, could make a positive contribution. Two points of view seemed to emerge in the early days of the century. One was predominantly evangelical, the belief that through conversion and the renewal of a man's spiritual life, a new and

1. J.D. Marshall, City and County Histories, Lancashire (Manchester, 1964) p.72.

responsible citizenship would emerge and would be evident in the stewardship of talents, money and labour. On the other hand there were those, principally among the Independents, some Presbyterians and the Primitive Methodists that they should take a more active part in politics. Among the first group were leading Baptist ministers, Joseph Harbottle of Accrington, Alexander MacLaren of Manchester, James Lister and C.M. Birrel of Liverpool, who ^bpublicly refused to participate in civic affairs. This does not mean to say that they were complacent in respect to the hardship of their people, or of the public, for all of them contributed to the relief of the poor in very practical ways. In the second group there were those who took an initiative in politics. An exception among Baptist ministers was Archibald McPhail, of Huncoat, who was convinced that Christians should be involved in radical politics. Against the wishes of the majority of his church members he held Chartist meetings in the church, which led to a complete division in the church, ending in a bitter law-suit. McPhail took possession of the key to the church and the premises and locked out the more orthodox church members. The church was closed for public worship for seven years from 1844-1851. The outcome was that McPhail was banished from the denomination, and eventually the church members regained possession of the building and it was reopened for worship. 1.

Between the two points of view, the one evangelical, none related to party politics and the other which believed that Christians should be involved in politics, there was growing body of dissenters, who after the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, felt the need to face some of the civil disabilities which still remained against Nonconformists.

The renovation of town governments bringing them into congruence with the culture that had grown up in many provincial towns, gave new prominence to many Dissenters.

1. Robert Wylie, The Baptist Churches of Accrington & District (Accrington, 1923) p.349.

Although they had been a political factor before 1832 and although the repeal of the Test and Corporation Act in 1828 had merely ratified a largely accomplished fact, the Dissenters in the thirties experienced a new elation at their wholesale entrance into power in the towns. 1.

They began to challenge the disabilities they suffered, namely the enforcement of church rates, inequalities in educational opportunities, the refusal of marriage in their own chapels, or burial in the established graveyards, and the exclusion from the two universities, Oxford and Cambridge.

A. Presbyterianism in Blackburn.

Blackburn was the only town within the North East Lancashire area, where Presbyterianism had taken any root, and even then it had been grafted on to the Independent system. However, in 1810, a body of seceders from Chapel Street Independent (congregational) church, established a separate meeting in the town and returned to pure Presbyterian principles of church government. They were influenced by the Burgher Seceders of the Church of Scotland, many of the Scots representatives and their families having settled in around Preston and Blackburn. There was no formal connection with the Church of Scotland until 1828.

Early in 1828, Dr. John Stewart of Liverpool, the Rev. George Brown of Holcombe, and the Rev. William McKerrow of Manchester, were informed that a chapel in Blackburn was unoccupied and they waited on the owner, Mrs. Grime and agreed to buy it. This chapel in Mount Street opened as a place of Presbyterian worship in 1828, and was connected with the United Associate Presbyterian Synod in London. The congregation applied to this synod and also to Dr. Stewart, who was appointed to organise the congregation and place it under the inspection of the presbytery. In conformity with the instruction and liberty given by the Presbytery of London, Dr. Stewart officiated at the formal

1. R.K. Wear, Modern England, the Eighteenth Century to the Present (London) p.224.

opening of the church in Mount Street, on September 7th, 1828. The eight members proceeded to elect William Taylor and Andrew Watt, elders. They were ordained according to the practice of the Presbyterian church on April 12th, 1829 when other five members were admitted. The first session meeting was constituted in March 1830 by Dr. Stewart, along with the Rev. Francis Skinner, Andrew Watt and William Taylor, elders, Mr. Taylor also being appointed the representative elder to the Presbytery and Synod.

The Rev. Francis Skinner, minister of the church immediately saw the need of relating the church's life to the spiritual and social needs of the town. He inaugurated a Dayschool, a Sundayschool, a Young Men's improvement class, and a Young Women's society, and demonstrated his concern for the poor with practical help. In 1852 a session minute records an average attendance at all services on the Sunday of four hundred and the actual church membership of one hundred and fifty one. The income of the church came partially through seat rents, which amounted to £154. 13. 0d. annually, although there were many free seats. Other sources of income amounted to £29. 5. 5½d. The church subscribed annually £116 to overseas missions. There were three hundred and twelve Sunday-school scholars and forty four Sundayschool teachers. In 1853 the church appointed a town missionary to assist the minister.

Skinner made a great impact on Christian thought in the North of England by a lecture on 'the need for Christian Unity'. It seemed strange and to some, inconsistent, following so soon after the break with the Independents, although Skinner was not responsible for that. The lecture was printed in a pamphlet form which was widely circulated, (unfortunately, there seems to be no available copy of this pamphlet).

At a meeting of the church session on July 29th, 1864, the elders accepted proposals to build a new church at the corner of New Park Street and Preston New Road. This was opened in July 1866 by Skinner, who by this time had been honoured by Glasgow

University with the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Dr. Skinner died on Dec. 28th, 1866.

On June 13th, 1876, the two Presbyterian denominations in England, the Presbyterian Church in England and the Scottish Presbyterian Church in England, consolidated their position and became known as the Presbyterian Church of England. This meant a new allocation of presbyteries and on the 29th June, 1876 the Manchester Presbytery met for the first time for over a hundred years, that is since the Manchester Classis and Blackburn came into membership. Dr. J. McKerrow was elected Moderator.

The Presbyterian churches in Blackburn extended as follows

- 1879 Leyland Street Mission in a poor area of the town.
- 1884 Sundayschool at Whalley Range.
- 1901 New Church at Whalley Range. 1.

The Presbyterian church in Blackburn became known as St. George's, and prospered until 1926 when decline set in. In 1968 through the Congregational Presbyterian Union into the United Reformed Church, St. George's united with the Congregational church at Whalley Range.

1. (Booklet). St. George's Presbyterian Church, Blackburn.
B.P.L.

B. The Conflict between Church and Chapel. (Church rates, education and civic disabilities).

In the early part of 1834, the tension between the Church of England and Nonconformists reached the point when the Independents called for the disestablishment of the Church of England, on the grounds that a State church could not be Christian. The Wesleyan Methodists would not support this view. John Wesley had always remained loyal to the Anglican communion and Jabez Bunting, the leader who followed him had no sympathy with the radicals who called for disestablishment.

A Body known as the Protestant Dissenting Deputies, had sought to protect the civil rights of Dissenters for more than a century. It was composed of two persons elected from each local congregation of the three denominations (Presbyterian, Independent and Baptist) within twelve miles of Westminster. This Body brought pressure to bear, to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts of 1828. Dissenters throughout the country sought to help and advice from this Body and were encouraged by it, to seek the redress of their grievances, in each local situation. At this time, 1834, Tory clergymen were also discontented and the ranks of the Established Church disarrayed, which provided an opportunity for Dissenters once again to raise the question of their own civil disabilities. These grievances were reduced to five.

1. The State registered births, only in the baptismal register of Parish churches, therefore some dissenters took their children to be baptised in Parish churches.
2. Since an Act of Parliament of 1753 a man and woman could only be legally married in the Parish church unless they were Quakers or Jews.
3. The church yard belonged to the Church of England, but was the graveyard for everyone in the parish. In big cities, private companies ran cemeteries neutral in religion, and little Nonconformist chapels had their own graveyard gardens, but often the dissenters must be

buried in a cemetery with rites which his family could not approve.

4. Every citizen, unless too poor, was liable to a local rate not only to help the poor and repair the highway, but also to repair the Parish church. The dissenter was compelled by the State to subscribe to the Parish church besides maintaining his own church.
5. The degrees of the two great universities Oxford and Cambridge were awarded only to those who qualified and subscribed to the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England. The new college in Durham demanded the same subscription. 1.

It was unfortunate that the misuse of these grievances should be confused with the much greater issue of disestablishment. There were those within the church, who saw the need for reform and had sympathy with the dissenters, but who were driven to high church views to protect the church against the radicals who would gladly have seen the church disestablished. The lines of dispute were not clearly drawn. In some areas high churchmen and radical dissenters were so far apart in their extreme doctrinal views that bitterness followed, with little hope of understanding on either side. Even within Methodist circles loose talk about re-union between the Church of England and Methodists provoked the Rev. J.R. Stevens, a radical minister in Lancashire to propose a separation between church and state. A number of Lancashire congregations followed him. Other dissenters, however, who held establishment wrong on principle, disliked the shouts of their colleagues.

They had real grievances, and believed it was enough to campaign for the end of these grievances without raising a claim which many Englishmen regarded as revolution. They were saddened that the violent language of their friends created panic in Anglican breasts. 2.

1. Owen Chadwick, The Victorian Church, (London, 1966)
Vol.1 p.60.
2. Minutes of Methodist Conference. (1834) p.417.

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was extensively circulated and posted on the walls of the town.

LEY-PAYERS

OF THE
PARISH OF
BLACKBURN.

The VICAR of Blackburn, with his FOUR CHURCH-WARDENS, have *this day*, given Notice of a Vestry Meeting, to be held in the Parish Church, to take into consideration the Expediency of "**AIRING & LIGHTING**" the Parish Church.

Now Mark!—the expence of this must come out of your Pockets, in the shape of Money. For pulling-down and re-building the Church,—this remember, will have to be liquidated, over and above the Thirty-three Thousand Pounds, which the Two Grants, gave for that purpose.

Come forward then and do your duty!—Similar unholy practices have been defeated recently, at LEEDS, at CHORLEBY, and at CAMBERWELL, LONDON.—Will you then suffer yourselves longer to be doped out of your Money—I am sure you will not.—Be then in attendance in the

PARISH CHURCH,
ON MONDAY NEXT;

At Ten o'clock precisely, in the Forenoon;

And EXERCISE YOUR VOTES, in a manner that will convince your Countrymen, that at length you will beatir yourselves—that you will not longer slumber ingloriously, and suffer your Children and Relatives to be robbed, in so infamous a manner. *I am your's, &c.*

A LEY-PAYER.

Blackburn, Saturday, Sept. 8th, 1827.

At ten o'clock, the hour fixed for the meeting, the Church was about half filled, principally with persons of the labouring classes. At half-past ten the Revd. JOHN WILLIAM WHITTAKER, the Vicar of the Parish, was called to the Chair.

After reading the notice by which the meeting had been convened, the Revd. Gentleman addressed the assemblage in explanation of the object of the meeting.—He observed,

Notice of Rates Meeting, Blackburn.

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lately blustering but now chop-fallen faction, which still keeps up a sulky but unavailing contest, every hour of which overwhelms them with additional ridicule, discomfiture and disgrace. Those Ley Payers who still wish to avail themselves of the present opportunity of testifying their attachment to Protestantism in preference to Popery, are respectfully informed that the Hustings will re-open at ten o'clock to-morrow morning for the reception of their Votes.

State of the Poll.

	For the Church.	Against the Church.
First Day, (Monday) - - -	253	225
Second Day, (Tuesday) - - -	317	248
Third Day, (Wednesday) - - -	384	197
Fourth Day, (Thursday) - - -	255	86
	1209	756
Majority in favour of the Church - -	453	

THE

Popish Faction

IN A

FUNK !!

The Dirty Shirt Committee

Are almost put to their *last Shift*: they begin to quake for the event. It is said that they intend to meet this evening at their Rendezvous, for the purpose of receiving the hopeless reports of their *Scouts*!!

The out-voters on the *Rump Side* of the question, are requested to come to the *SCRATCH* to-morrow at 10 o'clock as a destructive fire from the *CHAIN-SHOT BATTERY* is expected to be kept up the whole of the day.

LOST.

Supposed to be Stolen.

The *OVERSEER* of the Township of Rishton. Whoever will produce him at the Sessions' Room, on Friday Morning, at Ten o'clock, will be rewarded handsomely.

The *OVERSEER* was last seen on Monday Night, the 24th inst. in very doubtful company, and it is strongly suspected, that he is headed up either in a *BROWNE-Sugar Hogshead*, or a *Soap Box*.

Blackburn, 27th September, 1827.

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TO THE

DISSENTERS

OF

Blackburn.

LET not the specious pretexts of any one who would persuade you to vote against the Lighting and Airing the Church, have any influence on your minds, contrary to the dictates of common sense. The Party in opposition set out with circulating falsehoods as base as the Cause which they espouse. The state of the Poll shews the progress of *Illumination*, on the minds of your fellow Ley Payers. Consider the Established Church necessary to the welfare of the state, as the History of our Country abundantly proves. We have had Popish Rulers before, but let us take care that we do not come again under their yoke.

Vote for the Church and extinguish for ever, the hopes of a faction which would gladly re-kindle the flames in which your Ancestors perished.

A DISSENER,
FROM ALL JESUITICAL INFLUENCE.

Blackburn, September 27th, 1827.

State of the Poll.

	For the Church.	Against the Church.
First Day, (Monday) - - -	253	225
Second Day, (Tuesday) - - -	317	248
Third Day, (Wednesday) - - -	384	197
Fourth Day, (Thursday) - - -	255	86
	1209	756

Majority in favour of the Church, - **453**

TO YOUR TENTS,

Oh DISSENTERS!

Will you allow an humble individual to submit to your candid consideration, a few strictures on a Hand Bill addressed by "a Dissenter" to the Dissenters of Blackburn.

It is lamentable that, in contests like the present, the respective parties should so far forget what is becoming, as to impugn one another's motives, and "a Dissenter" very pertinently observes, that "you have nothing to do with the motives which dictate the

Total
522
Majority

Church rates and dispute in Blackburn and Burnley.

Of the five grievances, the one which caused the most opposition and bitterness was the question of church rates. As early as 1827 there was an outcry at Blackburn. The Vicar of the Parish Church, John William Whittaker, had published a booklet entitled 'A short statement of facts relative to the Taking down for Rebuilding of the Parish Church in Blackburn'. This gives an account of the proceedings of a vestry meeting convened for the purpose of airing and lighting the church. The meeting was announced at divine service and posted on the church door on the second and ninth of September, 1827 and the announcement was circulated through the town by handbills.

On the morning of the day appointed for the meeting a large printed placard (copy on opposite page,) was extensively circulated and posted on the walls of the town. At ten o'clock, the hour fixed for the meeting, the church was about half filled, principally by artisans and labourers. By ten thirty the Vicar began the meeting, first explaining its purpose, which was to raise money for the airing and lighting of the church, by raising additional church rates. William Holker, one of the church wardens, proposed and John Makinson, solicitor, seconded a resolution, 'that it is expedient to air and light the church and that an appropriate additional rate be fixed to pay the cost'. The vicar was on the point of putting the resolution to the meeting, when Edward Hammond, an operative spinner, said that as a lay payer (it was established after the meeting that he was not a lay payer), he wished to address the meeting. He had only heard of the meeting that morning and expected a different motion from the one he had heard. The Reverend chairman had talked about the inconvenience to the public in the want of air and light, but the Vicar seemed to forget who the public was. Were the Primitive Methodists, the Wesleyan Methodists, the Presbyterians and the Roman Catholics, no part of the public? Still they came not to the parish church and

were not therefore inconvenienced. He said that he was a labouring man and moved an amendment that the members of the parish church should pay for the improvements themselves. The chairman said that he did not wish to interrupt but he wished to act upon the constitutional principle that when the people were taxed, they should tax themselves. Hammond replied that the chairman had proposed, that if the church were not lighted or aired it would be deserted, but how did the dissenters act when they wanted their places of worship lighted and aired? Did they call a vestry meeting to tax the public? No, replied Hammond, they assessed themselves as members of their churches, and the members of the parish church should do the same. It was too much to call for a tax like this after the breechless Highlander and the wandering Irishman had been made to contribute to the church. (Here there was applause, mingled with loud shouts and other tumultuous marks of approbation). The meeting broke up in an uproar. 1.

Following the success of the Reform Bill of 1832, a new sense of confidence led dissenters to form the Anti-State Church Association, at a conference held in London on April 30th, 1844. This organisation was typical of the pressure groups of the time and included some Anglicans and some Nonconformists. There were critical reactions to the movement in the *Congregational Magazine* and the *Eclectic Review*, both Nonconformist journals. The Anti-State Church Association and its successor were both active in North East Lancashire, where one of its best leaders was Dr. Skinner of Blackburn. In a pamphlet published in 1837, he set out his principles. It is a sad commentary on the Nonconformist position that his last letter contains the words, 'the existence of a State supported church is temporary'. This conflicts with the present situation in Blackburn in 1980. The parish church is now Blackburn Cathedral and Dr. Skinner's church, St. George's Presbyterian Church, has now had to unite through weakness with Whalley Range Congregational Church.

1. J.W. Whittaker, A Short Statement of Facts relative to Taking Down, or Rebuilding of the Parish Church in Blackburn. (Blackburn, 1827) B.P.L./B.283 p.20.

There was also opposition to church rates in the towns surrounding Blackburn. The Burnley Advertiser, the newspaper circulating in Burnley, Accrington, Colne, Marsden, Padiham and Rossendale, published an advertisement calling a public meeting in the Assembly Rooms of the Mechanic's Institute on Thursday, March 22nd, 1860, for the purpose of petitioning Parliament, in favour of the total and immediate abolition of church rates. John Kay and J.T. Shawcross, both congregational ministers moved the first resolution for the abolitionists. This was supported by R. Evans, a Baptist minister. There was an amendment proposed by C. Owen, seconded by John Bussons, to the effect 'that it will satisfy all the legal requirements of dissenters if they are exempted from church rates'. The motion was carried. It was clear that there was a minority not concerned about complete abolition of church rates, which wished to leave the Church of England free to decide in respect to their own members. The meeting became more rowdy when J. Stroyan minister of Bethesda Baptist chapel, moved the next resolution, declaring 'the impolitic and unscriptural nature of church rates'. R. Hasley, the Independent minister of Brighouse seconded the resolution and was supported by Charles Williams, Baptist minister of Accrington, who was a leading opponent of church rates in his own town.

At this point in the meeting, two Church of England ministers were seen hiding in the back gallery, one of them being the vicar of St. Peter's, Burnley. The chairman called on them to shew themselves and asked why they were 'skulking behind a pillar'. The vicar came into full view of the audience whereon there was an uproar. After the chairman had quietened the meeting, the vicar said that he had never 'skulked' anywhere, but had attended the meeting simply to hear at first hand the views of the opponents. 1.

In a subsequent leading article of the Burnley Advertiser, the editor criticised the unchristian demeanour of the opponents of

1. Burnley Advertiser, (March 17th, 1860) p.3, Col.3.

church rates and pointed out that the supporters were quite as conscientious as the opponents, and that there was a large body of Christians who were separate from the Church of England, who nevertheless did not want abolition. He said that The Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Control had other aims than merely to abolish church rates. No one could dispute the fact that the radicals in the Liberation Society stood for complete and absolute disestablishment, and the radicals of North East Lancashire were at this time in the majority.

Nonconformists and Education.

The early emphasis among dissenters through the academies for a more educated ministry, had spread to members of the congregations seeking wider literacy for themselves. The Mechanics Institute movement among the artisans and craftsmen and lower middle classes, had also led to a desire among the working classes, outside the church to be able to read and write. John Holt writing in 1795 had commented on Lancashire that

There are more readers among the lower class of the people it is supposed, than in any part of the kingdom. 1.

The chapels and meeting houses had already begun their Day and Sundayschools and although lessons were confined to reading, reciting and learning portions of scripture by heart, and writing, the curriculum extended to arithmetic, English grammar and geography.

The average period of attendance at the Cloughfold schools, (Rossendale Valley) through which four thousand children and adults passed in the fifty years after 1825, and with about a third of the Accrington population attending the Blackburn Road Chapel School, (Baptist), the contribution of Baptists alone to improved literacy was of tremendous importance. 2.

1. I. Marshall, City and County Histories. Lancashire. (Manchester, 1964).
2. J. Lea, Victorian Lancashire (London, 1972) p.60.

Many parents sent their children to Sunday school, not primarily for the religious and ethical teaching they undoubtedly received, but for improved knowledge. Only the middle-classes or the wealthy could afford private schools and these were not always up to standard.

Nonconformist Sunday schools in the North East Lancashire Area had a proud record from their beginning. The Accrington Baptist Sunday school was instituted on May 19th, 1805 and two years later in 1807 the Wesleyan Methodists opened their school. In 1820 Rossendale Valley had Sunday schools at Bacup and Goodshaw, with Burnley and Blackburn following soon afterwards in 1824. The Wesleyan Methodists in Burnley established Sunday schools in 1831. The schools grew rapidly in numbers of scholars and teachers, the response coming mainly from working-class and labouring families, from parents who saw the new schools as a chance to give their children, a better opportunity to improve their lot.

In 1805 Machpelah Baptist school, Accrington had twenty scholars. By 1829, the roll had increased to two hundred and sixty eight scholars with fifty three teachers. In 1842, there were three hundred scholars and fifty five teachers. From a return prepared in 1843 for a Government inspector, the population of Accrington was nine thousand seven hundred and fifty seven, and the number of Sunday school scholars in all three denominations, was three thousand two hundred and ninety three, or more than a third of the total population. In 1871, when the population of Accrington was twenty one thousand seven hundred and eighty eight, there were eight thousand one hundred and sixty five scholars and teachers in the schools. In 1893 out of a population of about forty thousand, there were thirteen thousand six hundred and seventy one connected with Sunday school. In the early days, the Sunday schools performed the educational work of the town, and the larger portion of the people of Accrington were educated there. 1.

1. Robert Wylie, The Baptist Churches of Accrington and District (Published Accrington, 1923)
pp. 98-101.

Sunday schools were closely aligned with the day schools which continued during the week in the same buildings. Oak Street Congregational day school, Accrington, held classes in the three R's, reading, writing and arithmetic. Pupils paid two pence per week for these three subjects. Geography, history and book-keeping were available for older scholars in the curriculum, for an extra four pence per week. Scholars had to provide their own slates and slate pencils, with other necessary books.

Nonconformist and Anglican alike therefore in the early days of the nineteenth century were pioneers in education, and saw this enterprise not only as a way of laying good religious and ethical foundations in the lives of children and young people, but as relating the Christian faith to the social problems of the time. It was a distinctive effort to help to educate the children of working-class parents so as to give them new opportunities to improve themselves. The churches saw this enterprise as a way of serving the whole nation, but up to this time the state had not given the support in this work that it ought to have done.

Against this background the Education Act of 1870 could not but have a beneficial effect. By 1877 it was being said 'to many . . . it seems superfluous now to go to God's House for instruction'. The chapels had at least pioneered the way.

1.

There had been much conflict between Church and Chapel over education. At the beginning of the century, Dr. Andrew Bell, an army chaplain in Madras had shewn concern for education and had thought out an idea of 'pupil teachers' to instruct young scholars in day schools. Out of this movement developed the National Society closely linked with the Church of England. In 1809 Joseph Lancaster, a young quaker started a school in London along the same lines, but Lancaster was a Dissenter and objected to

children receiving religious instruction under the auspices of the Established Church. His was the beginning of the British Schools Society. From the beginning these two movements were in conflict, and each was determined not to give way on the religious issue.

Every one with responsibility was agreed that the education of the poor must be Christian, but two ideas of religious education contended for the nation's money. Religion, said one side, cannot be taught like arithmetic. It is a life, a community, a tradition. The child must be educated in worship and the community of the church, and without that education will understand little of the meaning of biblical information. Religion, said the other side, cannot be given to the labouring nation, unless we give them that which is common to religions, for today each denomination has its equitable place in the sun. And that which is common to the Christian denomination is the Bible. Whether the Bible could be sensibly taught without interpretation remained to be seen. 1.

Dissenters, deeply resentful about their civil disabilities, reacted strongly against the disproportionate allotment of money by the treasury for education. Of one hundred thousand pounds paid in the five years prior to 1837, the National Society (Church of England schools) secured seventy thousand pounds. Dissenters saw that what was supposed to be an equitable distribution of money, favoured the Established Church. In 1839 Lord John Russell proposed an annual increase from twenty thousand to thirty thousand pounds, in educational grants, but this modest increase came along with a package that no grant should be paid unless government inspectors were allowed into the schools. Both the Church of England and Nonconformists objected to this scheme with the result that what might have been the ground for an undenominational system of education, was killed at the outset.

1. Owen Chadwick, The Victorian Church, Part One, (London, 1966) p.346.

However, Lord Russell did succeed in establishing a committee of education. The secretary Dr. Kay, who changed his name to Kay-Shuttleworth, was the son of a Lancashire nonconformist, and himself once a teacher in a Congregational Sunday school. He had qualified as a Doctor in Edinburgh and worked in many Lancashire towns among the poor. Although now at this time (1839) he was a practising anglican, he remained a liberal and a friend of the dissenters.

Unfortunately, Church of England clergy and especially those of the High church had great power and influence in the rural areas. In these circumstances the schoolmaster must be a member of the Church of England, approved by the Bishop of the diocese, able to teach the catechism, and Prayer Book, one hour a day. The incumbent determined the syllabus and the books, and every child was obliged to attend church on Sunday unless his parents objected. Dissenters saw in the growth of this influence the growth of power in the combination of State and Church and were convinced that this could only hinder their freedom. Much confusion was caused by the radicals on both sides. By the middle of the century Anglican clergy allowed dissenting children to absent themselves from church and school on grounds of conscience.

In North East Lancashire the education question caused deep interest and excitement in both the Baptist and Independent Associations. In the meeting of the Lancashire Baptist Association in 1851 there was this proposal.

That this Association regards the results as to the progress of Education, as brought about by the census of 1854, with gratification and encouragement, shewing that progress to have been fourfold greater than that of the population, mainly attributable to the utter self reliance of the people, and the success of the voluntary principle; that it would be impolitic on the part of the government to interfere with these natural and salutary operations; that to do so in the manner proposed by Her Majesty's Government in 1853 would not only vastly augment the unconstitutional power and patronage of the Committee of the Council, but would prove a fearful source of municipal discord in corporate towns, a

grievous wrong to the proprietors of private schools, would ultimately crush all independent voluntary effort for the support of congregational schools, and very seriously extend the teaching of religion by the agents and resources of the State. 1.

This proposal was the outcome of local initiative on the part of dissenters in different parts of the area. One of the leaders George Foster, of Sabden, near Whalley, a deacon of the Baptist church there had called for a Baptist educational conference which resolved to encourage the growth of Day schools and not to accept any aid which would give control over the plan of education, or hinder the use of the school premises for public worship. Public meetings took place in Blackburn under the leadership of Dr. Skinner, the Presbyterian minister, supported by all the nonconformist bodies in 1866. There were similar meetings in Haslingden, Burnley and Accrington. On Sept. 2nd, 1871, at a united meeting of all the Sunday schools of Accrington, held in the Peel Institute (now the Town Hall), the Bishop of Manchester, Dr. Fraser, indirectly referring to the conflicts said;

I don't know whether you have been correctly reported to me or not, but certain little birds whispered into my ears that political bitterness and religious bitterness existed to a considerable extent in the thriving town of Accrington. Whatever may have been the case in the past, I am exceedingly glad you are beginning to see with St. Paul, that there is a more excellent way of promoting religion than by quarreling about it 2.

1. W.T. Whiteley, Baptists of North West England, 1649-1913 (London, 1913) p.200.
2. Robert Wylie, The Baptist Churches of Accrington and District (Accrington, 1923) p. 162.

C. Ministerial Education.

Nonconformists were deeply conscious that the clergy of the Church of England had the advantages and opportunities of education at the two universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and that Dissenting ministers were deprived of this privilege. There had been earlier attempts to prepare ministers with a classical and theological background, namely the Independent Academy in Blackburn opening in 1837 and the Baptist Academy in Accrington opening in 1840, but these had had to close down through lack of support and the insufficient number of students, the former in 1843 and the latter in 1849. Horton Academy established by the Baptists in Bradford had had considerable success and in 1856, supported by a grant of three thousand five hundred pounds from the Lady Hewley Charity, a committee had found a site at Victoria Park, Manchester. There was opposition to this site by the West Yorkshire Baptist churches and eventually a new site was found overlooking the River Aire at Rawdon, near Leeds. Until 1970 students from Rawdon having received a three years theological education there and in addition, in many instances, a three years classical education in Leeds University, went out to lead the churches of Lancashire and Yorkshire, with great distinction. Some of these students went overseas to become missionary pioneers in India, China and Africa.

In the development of ministerial education, sadly there had been controversy, among Baptists. In 1842 Joseph Harbottle and David Griffith, both tutors in the old Accrington academy, prepared a circular letter on the New Testament Faith and Order, with strong Calvinist overtones. The Lancashire Association declined to issue it, substituting in the yearly report a sermon by Hugh Stowell Brown. Three years later a sermon by Charles Williams of Accrington raised objections to the Harbottle and Griffith Statement, whereon Harbottle, now the minister of New Lane, Oswaldtwistle, withdrew from the Association. Peter Prout, one of his pupils now at Haslingden, was appointed to draw up an important letter on the

'Death of Christ, a Satisfaction for Sin'. But though this was adopted, some of the churches felt that they could not remain in fellowship with others whom they felt were on the 'down grade'. Seven Rossendale churches sent in resignations and before long there was a Strict North Western Association. Efforts were made to prevent more losses without success.

In 1865 a committee of the Baptist Evangelical Society met at Salford. The editor of their magazine, William Stokes, ministered in Manchester and was in close touch and fellowship with the separated churches. These brethren were deeply suspicious of the theology being taught in Rawdon and sought ways and means of establishing a new Academy. With promises of seven hundred pounds annually from the separated churches and friends, the New Baptist Theological Institution was formed at a meeting in Manchester 1872, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon laid the foundation stone at Brighton Grove. The college opened there in 1874. 1.

For many years, churches throughout the denomination remained suspicious of the theological teaching in Rawdon, whereas the Baptist college in Manchester gained more and more support. However in 1964, the independent committees of the two colleges, Rawdon and Manchester mainly through financial stringency and the failure to recruit candidates for the ministry decided to amalgamate and become in name and in one centre at Brighton Grove, Manchester the Northern Baptist College.

The Independents or Congregationalists as they were now known in North East Lancashire had also seen the need for improving ministerial education. The Rev. William Roby, the founder of the Itinerant Society in the Lancashire Congregational Union, knew from the beginning that the Union could not hope to maintain the continuing work of the churches, unless steps were taking to give improved standards of theological education to

1. W.T. Whiteley, Baptists of North West England, 1649-1913
(London, 1913) p.210.

young men who answered the 'Call to the Christian Ministry'. He had the same vision as his Baptist counterpart, the Rev. Joseph Harbottle, the difference being that Harbottle partly for theological reasons, had depended only on local support, whilst Roby went for the Lancashire Congregational Union support as a whole.

In October 1815, the Congregational Union, meeting in Preston, decided to appoint a committee to enquire into an eligible place or site for a Theological Academy. This committee also went to the length of nominating the Rev. Joseph Fletcher M.A. the young and scholarly pastor of Chapel Street Congregational Church, Blackburn, as President and Theological Tutor. The interviewers were Rev. William Roby, Dr. Thomas Raffels of Liverpool, and the Rev. S. Bradley. Mr. Fletcher intimated his readiness to accept. The General Meeting of the Union on February 9th, 1816, ratified the proposals and resolved that a new Academy 'to educate young men of decided and competent talents for the Christian Ministry, be called into being at Blackburn.' In the Annual Report of the Congregational Union read at Blackburn on April 11th, 1816, reference is made to active measures for the establishing of a Theological Academy in the county. After a period of thirty years the Academy was transferred in 1846 to the noble pile of buildings at Whalley Range, Manchester to become the new Lancashire Independent College. From these Nonconformist Colleges and Theological Institutions, the churches of North East Lancashire were supplied with students and ministers. 1.

D. Nonconformist Lay Leaders in Industry, Civic Life and Church,
with reference go the Entrepreneurial Ideal.

With the growing enthusiasm for both religious and secular education, the Nonconformist laymen in the churches, gained confidence to speak and to lead in the social and civic life of the area. Dr. John Lea has shewn that although most Baptists were discouraged from radical political alignments, they were through their contacts with the working-class parents of Sunday school children, very much aware of the sufferings and deprivations of these families and did not stand aloof.

1. B. Nightingale, The Centenary of the Lancashire Congregational Union, 1806-1906 (Preston, 1920) p.64.

Church histories, denominational journals, official reports and records reveal that many congregations were working-class in character. 1.

Halevy, writes about the attitude of Dissent towards the working-class.

The Nonconformist sects were not Churches of the proletariat. The only Nonconformists who set out to evangelise the working-classes were the Methodists. It was in the open air that Wesley and his followers had reached weavers and miners and Wesley had instituted by the side of his regularly ordained ministers, 'lay preachers', unpaid assistants of the latter, in their work of preaching whose unofficial character would re-assure their audiences and bridge the gap between pastors and their flocks . . . The Baptists, it is true and the Congregationalists had attempted to copy the Methodist mission to the lower-classes, but it was a simulacrum and their Home Missions gave poor results. 'So Long as their zeal fires them', a French observer wrote, 'the Protestant sects can still make converts, but by violating and not charming souls . . . Where this uncultured enthusiasm is extinct, society is cut literally in two'. 2.

This is a biased observation. It is so easy when speaking about the classes in society, to generalise. Statistics do shew that on the whole none of the churches succeeded in winning even thirty per cent of the population to a committed allegiance to the churches, but it was not for want of trying. Nor were Nonconformists diffident towards the sufferings and problems of the working-classes in the difficult days of the mid nineteenth century.

The Rev. Charles Kirtland of Sabden explained that 'the majority of our brethren are able to do no more than provide for their present wants'; they were involved by periods of recession, in distress from which they could never recover; they were embittered in sickness, by loss of income and by threat of death which would leave dependents without provision, even to defray funeral expenses; and they were soured in old age under the shadow of the workhouse. 3.

1. J. Lea, Victorian Lancashire (London, 1972) p. 60.

2. Elie Halévy, Victorian Years, 1841-1895
A History of the English People in the Nineteenth
Century, Vol. . 1. (London, 1951) p. 394.

3. Burnley Express Souvenir, 1897, Col. 19.

Kirtland, therefore, protested in the name of Christ against such conditions which compelled some families in Sabden to emigrate. One family elected to go into the workhouse. Kirtland published an Actuarial Benefit Scheme applicable to workers with wages between thirty shillings and ten shillings a week. According to subscriptions, between two shillings and three pounds a week was provided in sickness, from one pound to thirty pounds at death and from two shillings to one pound a week on retirement.

Another example which encouraged laymen to take a more active part in public life and to relate Christian concern in the distressing circumstances of 1862 in the area, was the part played by the Rev. Charles Williams of Accrington, who travelled the country to make appeals for help, at the same time personally visiting destitute homes in the towns. It was he with the support of lay leaders who instigated the Lancashire Baptist Relief Fund, administered by a committee of business men which raised nearly seven thousand pounds. This was distributed among the churches whose congregations were most severely affected. The chapels became effective social centres around which the needy gathered in search of help and security. There were Dorcas societies, where the women of the churches mended clothes, knitted blankets and established food centres, together with a system of visiting the sick with soup and hot gruel.

Nonconformist laymen were not alone in co-operating with their ministers in civic action. Mr. Peregrine Townley, a leading Roman-Catholic layman, residing at Townley Hall near Burnley, became chairman of a relief committee on which all the churches were represented. Probably this was the first occasion in North East Lancashire, when Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Nonconformists, priests and laymen together, found themselves in unity of Christian purpose. In Accrington, Charles Williams and the senior Roman Catholic priest, jointly visited individual homes and relief centres.

There was then at this time the emergence of a new type of leader. One writer uses the word 'Christian entrepreneur'. 1. I prefer to think of these men as Christian stewards of their talents, labour and property. Many of these men had taken more advantage of the improvement in educational opportunities than their fellows. They had learnt to read and to spell in the Sundayschools but had gone on to extend their education in a wider field in other subjects. They worked hard as youths and developed keen business insights. The initial incentive was not to make more money, although that followed their diligence, but to use such talents as they had for the well being of others.

The growth of the Lancashire Textile industry is often explained in terms of favourable geographical, climatic, and economic conditions, but while these are vital, the importance of the entrepreneurs should not be overlooked. It was these men who succeeded in making use of the opportunities offered by favourable circumstances. 2.

There was a deep rooted Calvinism within the Independent Baptist chapels from which new leaders in industry emerged. These men expressed their faith in the discipline of hard work, study and effort. They believed that success in business through the stewardship of labour and talents, was a sign of God's blessing. Methodists although Arminian in theology, nevertheless from the Nonconformist climate around them, caught the enthusiasm and applied themselves in the same way to the task of leadership. One of the Methodist leaders in Accrington was F. Chambers. The leaders came from two main groups from the Nonconformist chapels, that is from families living in poor circumstances, with few advantages and sometimes with real handicaps in their early life. We shall consider a few examples.

1. J.H. Fox, in J. Lea's Essays Victorian Lancashire
(London, 1972) p.103.

2. Ibid. p. 103.

Among the first group was George Foster of Sabden, born on March 20th, 1796. He began work in the Sabden Calico Print works, situated only four miles from Jolly's church where Nonconformity in North East Lancashire began. As an apprentice block printer Foster studiously prepared himself for all the other branches and processes in the print industry and eventually became managing partner with three friends, Cobden, Sheriff and Gillet. He was a founder member of the chapel called Ebenezer, Sabden, which was licenced as a place of worship in 1837. He erected and presented Baptist chapels at Billington, near Whalley, at Padham, and gave generously to the chapel at Nelson and the Jolly Memorial Church at Barrow, just over the Nick of Pendle from Sabden. George Foster was a pioneer in educational circles. In 1831 when the Government granted twenty thousand pounds to build new schools, Foster led a Baptist Educational Conference refusing to apply for government grants because the Government Board claimed the right to inspect. In the Conference it was resolved to establish day schools, self supporting without government grant aid. In spite of what some critics thought of his Calvinistic rigidity he was well respected by Arminian Methodists and Anglicans. He was appointed a Justice of the Peace and became benefactor to many causes within and without the denomination. His only son, after receiving his early education privately, and his further academic training in London University, Heidelberg, Ghent and Paris, returned to England and eventually became Principal of University College, London. George Foster was associated with Richard Cobden, the Free Trade advocate, a partner in his Calico Printing business.

Another member of this first group of Nonconformist leaders was Sir George Macalpine, born in 1867. As a young man from an upper-class background he became a member of the Baptist cause at Blackburn Road, Accrington and supported generously the building of the new church, a Cathedral of Nonconformity at Cannon Street, Accrington. For twenty five years he was church secretary and a Sunday School teacher. He was an accomplished Greek scholar and read Hebrew. He frequently served the

surrounding churches as a lay preacher and was often consulted in church affairs outside his own denomination. In 1910 he was elected President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and later on two occasions served as Moderator of the Lancashire and Cheshire Baptist Association and Chairman of the Baptist Missionary Society. It was during this period as Chairman of the Society that he spent six months visiting missionaries on the field in India.

He was equally at home in a miners' meeting, in the boardroom, in the prayer meeting, which he attended regularly, and at the Rawdon Baptist College committee meetings. 1.

His concern for the welfare of miners and their families and his fairness, was recognised and respected by the miners' leaders. Wherever and whenever he met human need, he gave time and money liberally and generously.

There are no precise historical records in Nonconformist church minute books of the class divisions within the churches. At this point, I am dependent on family records and reminiscences. My grandfather was born in 1807 and lived and worked and was a church member at Oak Street Congregational Church, Accrington, at this time. From family references, I have no impression of class divisions in the churches.

In the second of the two groups of lay leaders emerging, that is from the working classes, was James Barlow. He was born in 1817 at Oswaldtwistle, next door to the Black Dog, and began work at the age of seven. His father died when he was nine, leaving a widow and six children, James being the eldest. As a youth he not only worked a full day in the cotton factory, but mended chairs in the evening at a charge of one shilling each. In those early

1. Robert Wylie, The Baptist Churches of Accrington & District (Accrington, 1923) p.196.

difficulties, he determined to educate himself with the help of a dictionary and such books as he could borrow. His parents were of Presbyterian origin, but James first attended the Anglican Sunday school connected with Church Kirk and later because the nearest Presbyterian church was in Blackburn, he attended the newly opened Baptist church transferred from Macphelah to Blackburn Road in Accrington. Joseph Harbottle, the scholarly minister referred to earlier, encouraged young James to read and helped him to a good foundation in English grammar, later preparing him in Biblical studies for lay preaching. Eventually, he became a successful cotton manufacturer, was adopted Moderator of the Lancashire and Cheshire Baptist Association, a member of Accrington's Relief Committee, Accrington's second Mayor, a Justice of the Peace, and a prominent reformer.

Another leader in this second group was Eli Higham, a contemporary of my grandfather. His parents who were Congregationalists in Accrington, sent him to the mill to learn to weave, before he was seven years of age. While he was still a half-timer at the age of ten, (half-time meant school in the morning and factory in the afternoon one week and vice versa the following week), his father, a factory worker, was killed, leaving Eli the family breadwinner. Through dedicated and disciplined study together with initiative, he eventually bought his own mill, by working and paying off the loan through annual profits until it became his own. He was a founder member of Oak Street Congregational church, a Sunday school teacher, and deacon. The firm he founded prospered and gave continuing employment to all its workers, even through the cotton slump of the 1930's and it is still a successful manufacturing business.

J.H. Fox named fifteen leaders of the three denominations, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, in the North East Lancashire area, in Blackburn, Darwen, Bury, Colne, Nelson, Burnley and Accrington. 1.

1. J.H. Fox, J. Lea edit., Essays, Victorian Lancashire (London, 1972) p. 104.

The prosperity of the later nineteenth century in North East Lancashire, stemmed for the most part on the initiative of the many leaders, some of whom we have described, who provided employment through their industrial enterprise. These men were frequently attacked by radical political agitators as autocrats, but at least, it was a benevolent autocracy.

Baptist chapels in mid-Victorian Lancashire were attended by members of the working classes; they provided for working class needs and eventually acted politically in working class interests. 1.

The same tribute could be applied to all the Nonconformist chapels of all the denominations in the area at that time. The workers recognised and appreciated the enterprise and vision of many of their own class who had ventured out and risked all in order to provide employment. If the new enterprise prospered, it was to the benefit of everyone, employer and employee alike.

Nonconformists and Association, Local and National.

The Presbyterian system had helped to safeguard local Presbyterian churches against the dangers of isolation and independence. Grouped as they were in a Presbytery, each church was guided through the intricacies of calling and maintaining a minister, and through any eccentric independent actions by groups of members which might bring division or schism in doctrine, in a church.

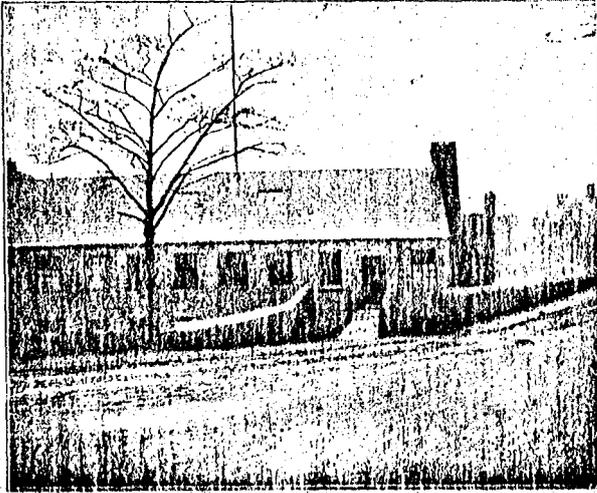
The Methodists too, with their connexional system, linking churches in circuits under a superintendent minister and class leaders, helped to secure the unity of the church, although as mentioned earlier in the early nineteenth century there had been the separation from Wesleyan Methodists of the three main groups, the United the Independent and the Primitive Methodists.

1. J. Lea, Victorian Lancashire (London, 1972) p.82.

The Congregationalists and the Baptists still clung to the idea of the independent local church, or the 'gathered church' as they called it, which was self governing.

In North East Lancashire, the Congregationalists were the first to move in the direction of a district grouping of churches. This had been first mooted at a meeting of ministers and representatives in 1786, but the first association of churches did not take place until 'the Itinerant Society' was formed in 1801.

ACCRINGTON.



MADDER ROOM.

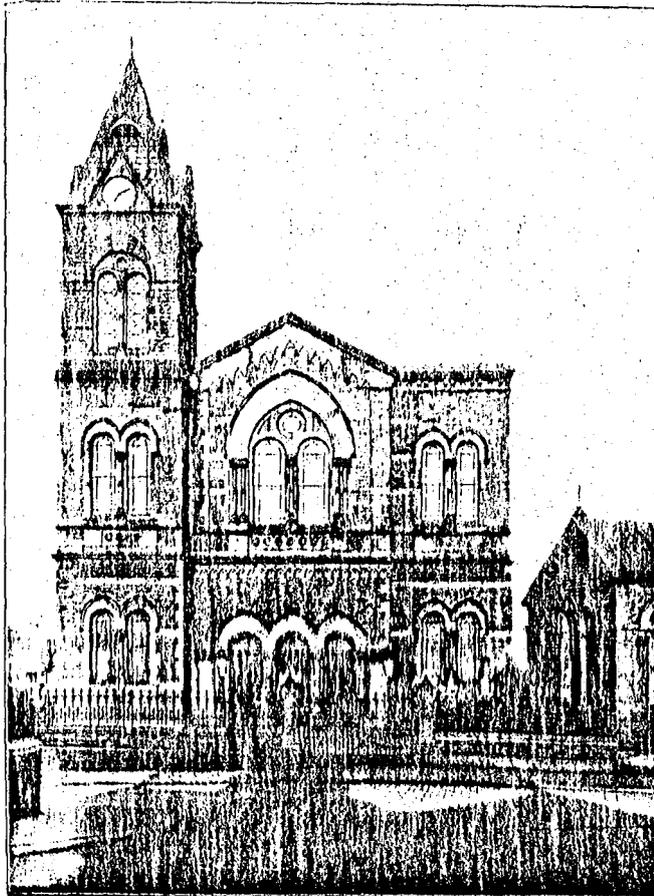
First used as a Sunday
School, Jany. 18th, 1863.

WESLEY CHAPEL

AND
SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Opened Jany. 21st. 1866.

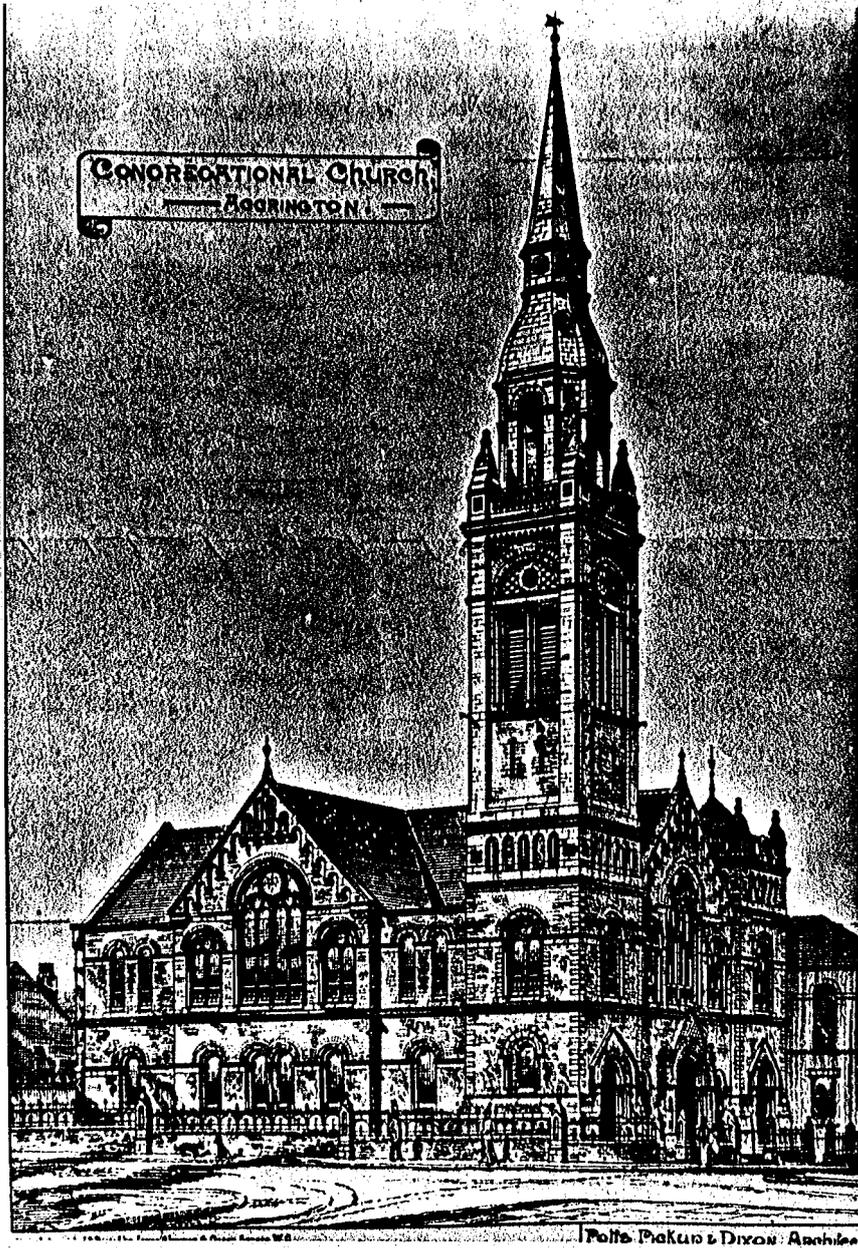
HEPWORTH, TYP. CHURCH.

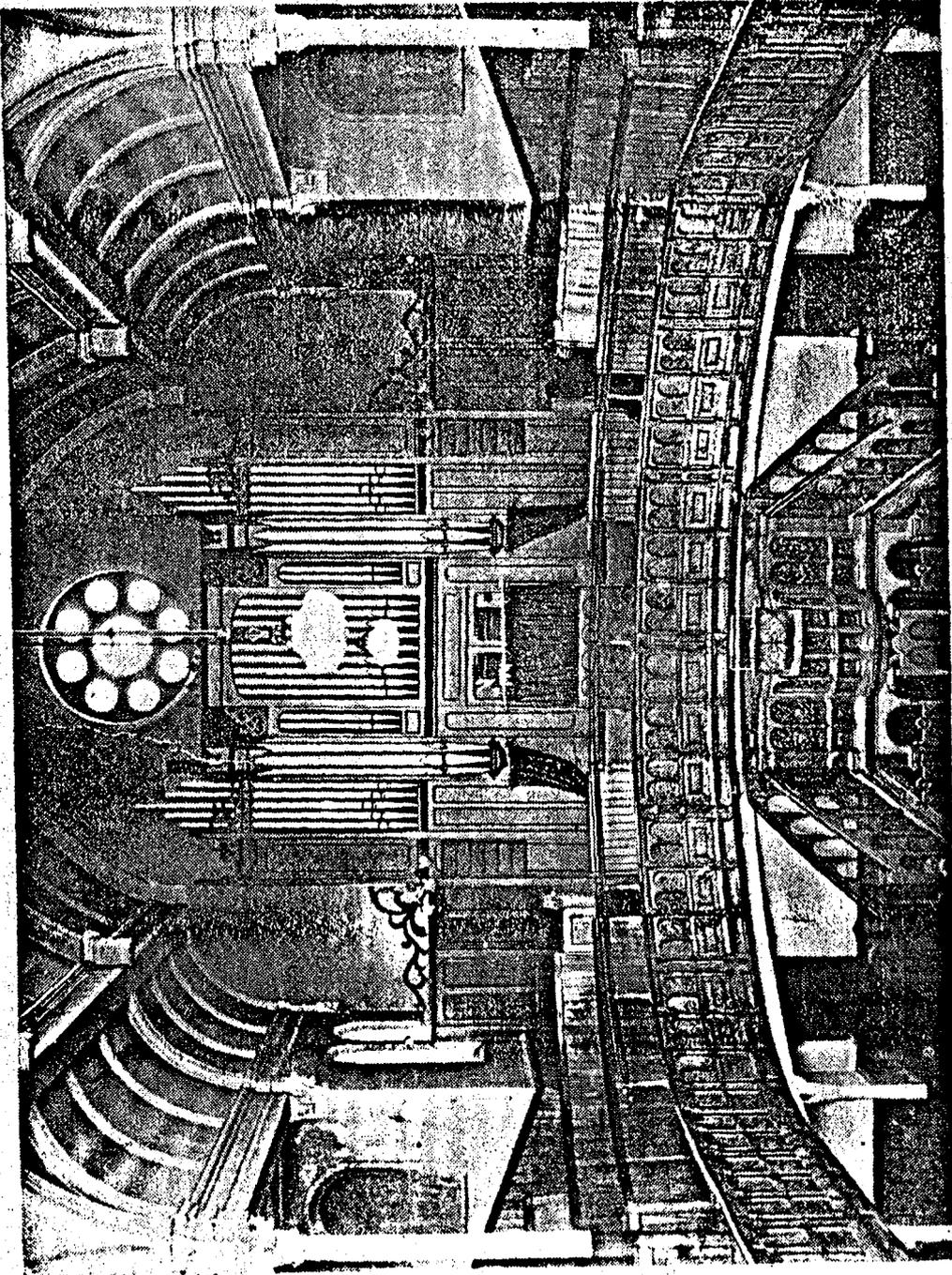


OAK STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

ACCRINGTON

1866





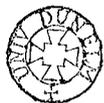
INTERIOR OF CHURCH.

ORR ST. CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
ACCRINGTON

CANNON STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

ACCRINGTON

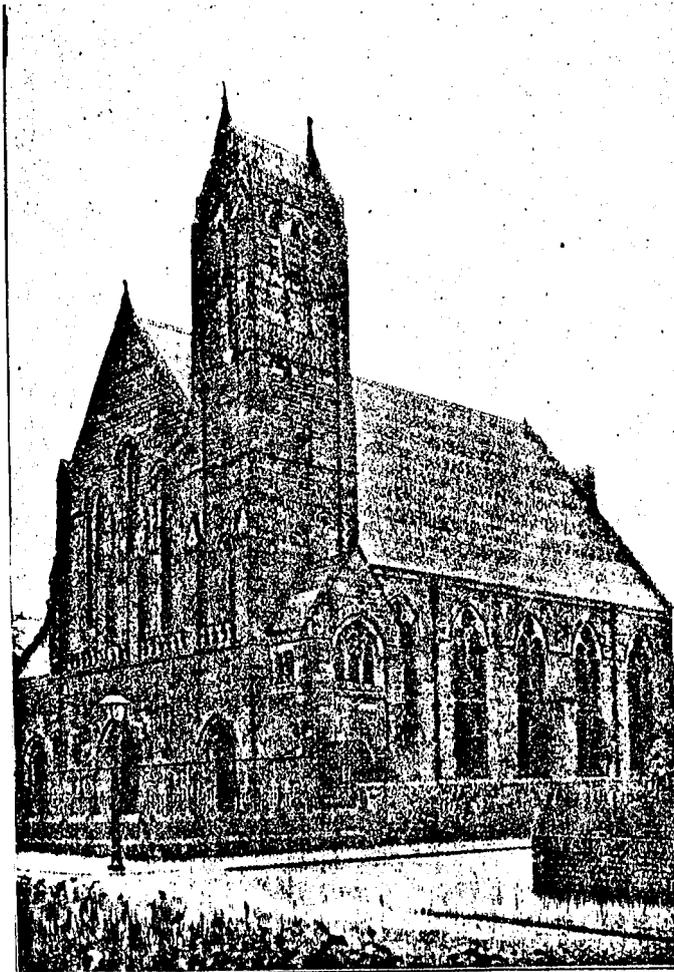
1868



COLNE ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

BURNLEY

1880

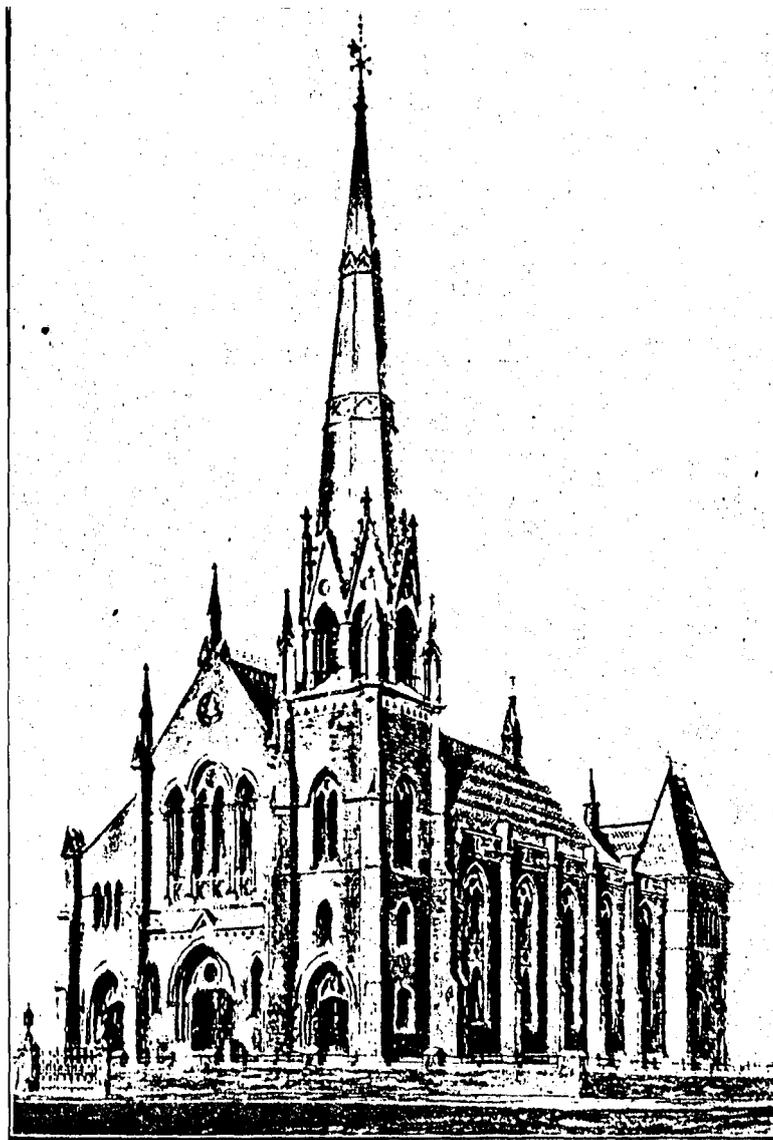


COLNE ROAD CHAPEL.

ST. GEORGE'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BLACKBURN

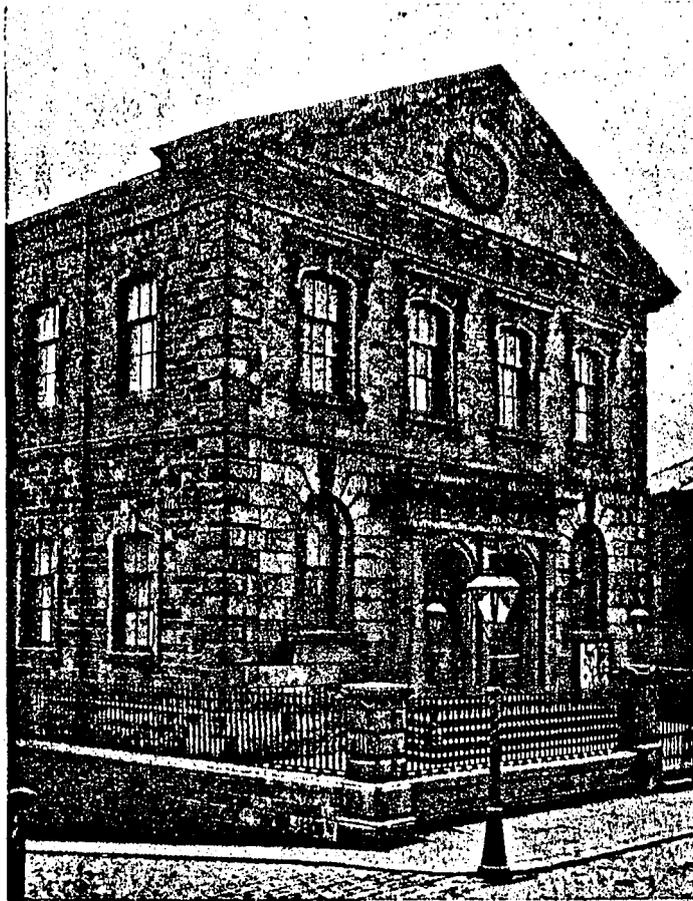
1878



ST. GEORGE'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

BRIERFIELD METHODIST CHAPEL

1899



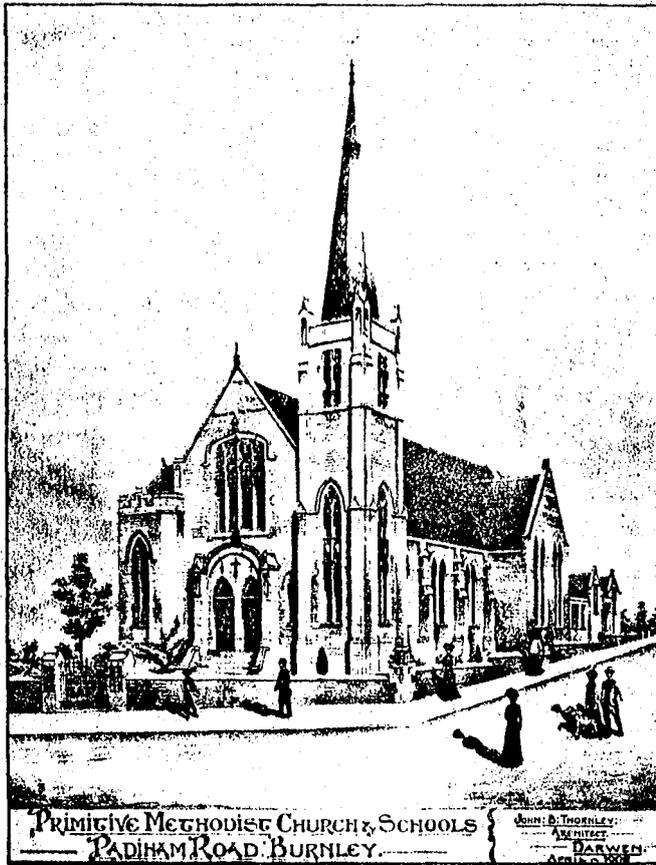
BRIERFIELD CHAPEL.

PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH

PADIHAM ROAD

BURNLEY

1902



Padiham Road New Church and Schools.

MEMORIAL STONES

TO BE LAID ON SATURDAY, JUNE 28TH, 1902.

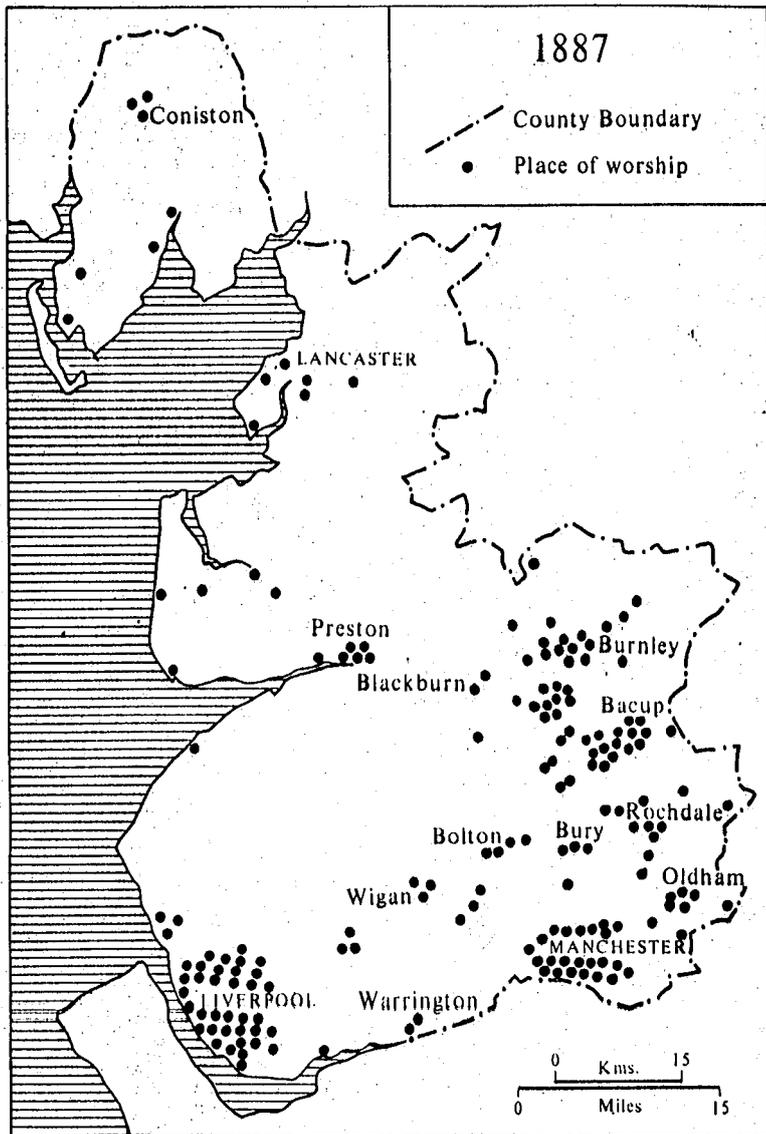


Figure 7

BAPTIST PLACES OF WORSHIP IN LANCASHIRE, 1887

Losses in the Baptist Denomination, N.E. Lancs.

- (K) Losses by death.
 (L) Losses by dismission to other churches.
 (M) Losses by withdrawal from membership.
 (N) Losses by exclusion from fellowship.
 (O) Erasures of useless names from church rolls.

	(K)	(L)	(M)	(N)	(O)
1838	52	28	6	36	
9	56	27	5	53	
1840	63	31	29	40	
1	57	63	18	44	
2	64	66	45	52	
3	60	68	121	92	
4	75	57	30	81	
5	80	63	100	68	
6	72	96	102	82	
7	100	70	25	62	
8	85	88	83	78	
9	60	64	76	59	
1850	54	79	61	69	
1	89	90	52	100	
2	73	96	64	64	
3	87	82	31	61	
4	78	129	181	58	
5	68	97	185	49	65
6	69	93	52	50	40
7	97	105	34	64	109
8	97	77	37	27	28
9	83	113	53	48	95
<hr/>					
1860	62	66	19	30	52
1	83	91	51	41	24
2	91	113	78	26	60
3	79	117	68	37	—
4	96	194	78	40	80
5	91	142	47	36	76
6	110	226	125	29	68
7	89	193	77	52	165
8	97	195	40	28	118
9	112	175	54	46	69
1870	109	262	34	50	264
1	121	173	45	30	125
2	151	199	40	30	238
3	120	271	52	32	260
4	100	272	103	26	134
5	144	293	55	36	227
6	190	417	120	47	177
7	172	347	233	44	221
8	186	325	145	50	249
9	No figures available for this year				
1880	183	383	195	53	250
1	176	428	91	44	384
2	192	398	68	49	662
3	208	397	172	45	665
4	231	462	122	36	440
5	234	362	48	38	357
6	190	427	191	26	469
7	195	407	76	29	609

TABULATION OF ANNUAL STATISTICS
OF THE LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION
OF BAPTIST CHURCHES, 1838-1887

The figures below have been abstracted from the annual 'Tables of Statistics' in the Minute Book and/or Circular Letters of the Lancashire and Cheshire Association of Baptist Churches, all the records of which are to be found in the North West Area offices of the Baptist Union in Manchester. During the mid-Victorian period the Association absorbed all the Baptist churches in the region, with the exception of the Strict (hyper-Calvinist) congregations.

It is very rare, in compiling denominational histories, to find such a series of statistics as this. Not only do they help to reconstruct general patterns of religious worship, both before and after the Religious Census of 1851, but being reasonably accurate, detailed and covering a wide variety of activity, they also provide useful information upon several aspects of church life.

- (A) Number of baptisms.
(B) Additions by letter of commendation.
(C) Number of restorations.
(D) Additions by profession of faith.
(E) Number of mission preaching stations.
(F) Number of Sunday school teachers.
(G) Number of Sunday school scholars.
(H) Membership.
(I) Number of churches.
(J) Number of lay preachers.

	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)
1838	277	71	7					2790	30	
9	300	64	5					3038	33	
1840	353	56	4					3312	36	
1	270	40	10				7600	2936	39	
2	312	67	17			990	7522	3391	38	
3	558	133	8		53	1021	8269	3941	37	
4	550	113	36		73	1056	8505	4352	35	
5	247	124	14		60	1153	9467	4248	39	
6	224	144	48		69	1198	10092	4272	39	
7	239	139	14		68	1211	10388	4367	39	
8	290	176	19		61	1184	10776	4404	39	
9	313	112	35		65	1265	11276	4510	39	
1850	286	130	14		70	1337	12202	4726	39	
1	243	162	20		67	1292	12327	4758	39	
2	273	143	14		60	1298	12209	4984	44	
3	273	127	14		48	1315	11623	4873	42	
4	222	158	21		—	1311	11498	4644	42	
5	158	113	22	35	52	1293	11617	4741	44	
6	191	77	23	55	53	1329	12183	4841	46	
7	292	104	33	84	47	1437	13022	4967	48	
8	363	97	27	58	54	1518	13182	5226	49	
9	528	139	16	73	41	1546	13350	5484	48	
1860	433	125	12	41	53	1318	11420	4959	41	
1	386	157	13	73	53	1322	11913	5247	41	
2	457	144	14	55	48	1406	12722	5526	41	
3	540	137	15	66	46	1567	15028	6068	48	
4	437	177	22	80	48	1592	15292	6415	48	
5	379	189	26	73	48	1627	14729	6736	50	
6	321	182	23	54	38	1569	14331	6688	50	
7	582	232	27	76	47	1729	15217	7303	54	
8	618	238	32	101	62	1771	15987	7740	55	
9	413	214	23	83	49	1819	16429	7994	54	
1870	521	257	34	135	55	1813	16801	8133	56	
1	341	236	36	159	53	1842	16814	8432	57	
2	352	324	12	116	53	1865	16869	8375	56	126
3	798	415	30	104	47	1954	17103	9014	59	110
4	789	378	26	258	55	2020	19452	9932	62	116
5	887	382	40	106	55	2090	20133	10819	66	134
6	1264	533	42	141	65	2663	26225	14454	88	194
7	883	481	41	122	56	2741	26561	14317	91	196
8	786	432	32	115	54	2639	26458	14365	91	189
9										
1880	1048	432	47	134	50	2954	28691	15533	101	191
1	743	496	43	173	48	3041	30055	15927	102	100
2	940	483	28	147	49	3168	31503	16342	106	226
3	1070	446	73	164	44	3237	32817	16630	107	217
4	967	585	45	162	57	3314	33550	17014	107	254
5	971	451	30	135	58	3321	34674	17443	111	238
6	762	422	55	155	46	3171	33097	17534	111	238
7	759	347	121	151	41	3390	36086	17512	110	240

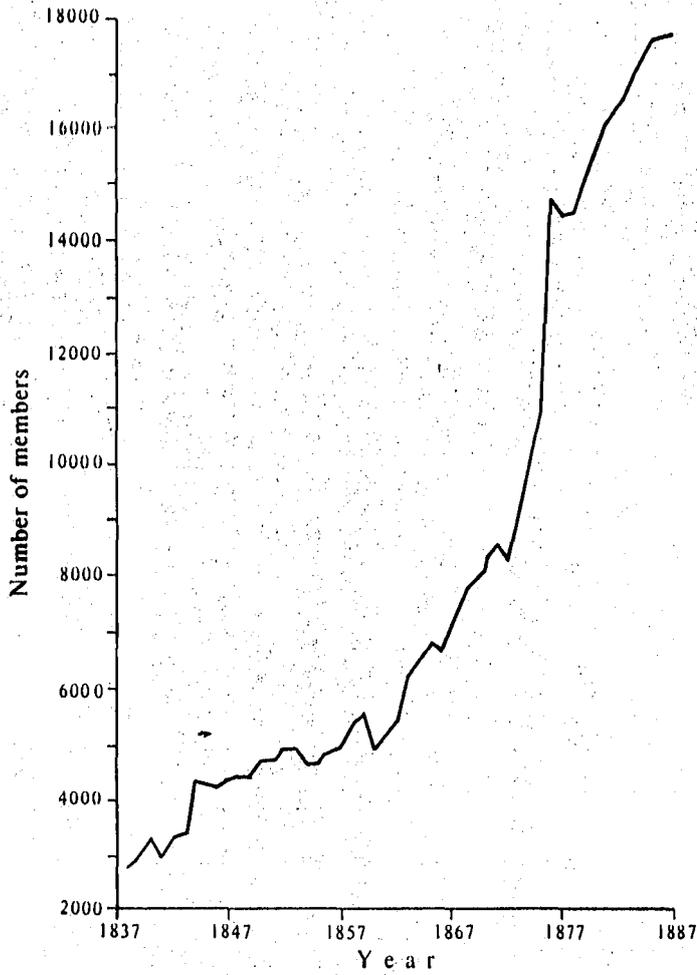


Figure 6.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN THE LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF BAPTIST CHURCHES, 1837-1887

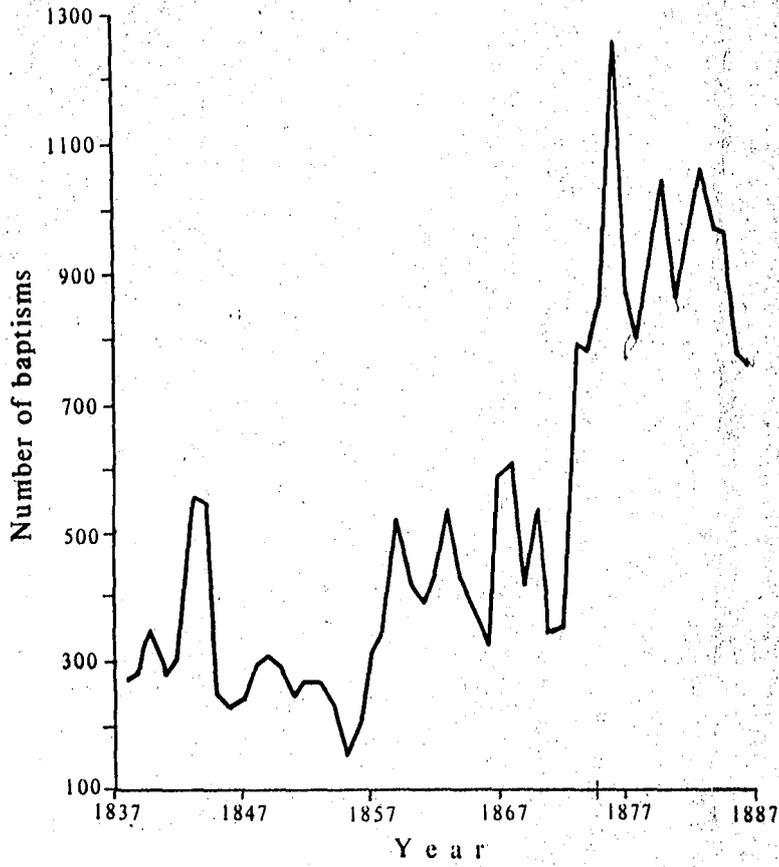
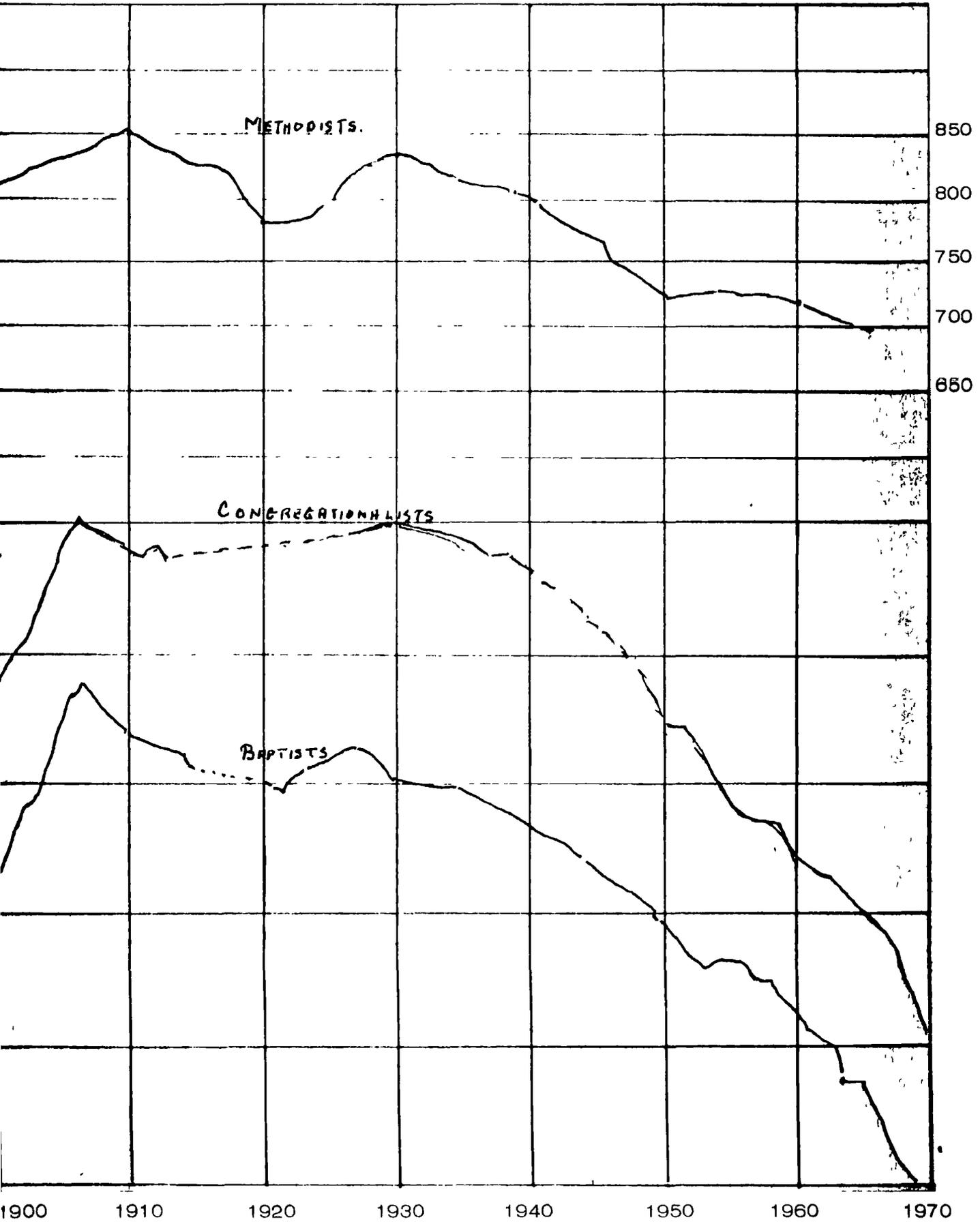


Figure 5

NUMBER OF BAPTISMS IN THE LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF BAPTIST CHURCHES, 1837-1887

Membership of the Baptist, Congregationalist and Methodist Churches in Great Britain at Annual Intervals, 1900 - 1970.



CHAPTER 9.NONCONFORMIST SERVICE TIMES, CHURCH BUILDINGS,
ARCHITECTURAL COSTS.

Following the Second Evangelical Revival, the prospects of increased numbers of church members in all the denominations seemed good, particularly in the more thickly populated areas, i.e. in the industrial towns of North East Lancashire. Worship became more formal and alike in all the denominations and the churches began to be known as Free Churches. The services on Sundays usually began with morning Sunday school, varying in time between 9.30 a.m. and 10.0 a.m. with an assembly of all the scholars led by the Sunday school superintendent, followed by a division into classes in age groups led by class teachers. Generally in the mid century and onward until the nineteen twenties, the scripture lessons in the classes were left to the discretion of the individual Sunday school teacher. At 10.30 a.m. there was Morning Worship in the church, led by the minister and attended by the congregation and the older Sunday school scholars. This took the form of four hymns interspersed with prayers and Bible readings, with the offertory half way through the service and the sermon lasting between half an hour and three quarters of an hour, before the concluding hymn and benediction. At 2.30 in the afternoon there was Sunday school for all ages, including two adult classes for men and women. In the evening, worship began at 6 o'clock, lasting until approximately half past seven. This followed the same order as Morning worship, but whereas the Morning sermon was scripturally expository, the evening sermon followed a more evangelical line and usually ended with an appeal for a decision and commitment to Christ. In addition to the Sunday services there were mid week meetings, the main one being a Prayer meeting led by the minister who also expounded on a Biblical topic. There were also in most Nonconformist mid week meetings and classes for the young men and young women of the church with the emphasis on preparation for church membership.

Nonconformists began to extend their premises, building Sunday schools and institutes, extending also to new churches on new sites. Many of the leaders of the churches who had succeeded in industry

and commerce, sought to set their church life in more modern and central buildings along the main roads. The growing enthusiasm in church life, led members to believe that congregations would grow in each church, varying in size according to its location in respect to a well populated district. The expectation seemed to range from five hundred to a thousand or even more of a congregation, both morning and evening.

Most of the new churches built from 1850 and onwards, were designed with the Victorian square frontage, some entrances, colonnaded with pillars after the Grecian style and the front completed with a classical cornice. The interiors were generally arranged with a central block of pews facing the pulpit, with aisles either side, giving access on each side to the central block of pews, and also to the two side blocks of pews ranged along the side walls. The pulpit was central and usually of the high platform pattern, mounted on either side by a spiral staircase, with an ornate wrought iron rail which continued along the front of the platform either side to the central rostrum and reading desk. An upholstered seat to accommodate about six people was fitted against the wall, behind the reading desk, and below the choir stalls. The presiding minister had a separate, well upholstered Victorian chair, set forward on the platform immediately behind the desk. A gallery, supported on pillars from the side aisles of the church fitting on to corbels and sloping up to the outside walls, accommodated about half the congregation both on the two sides of the church and over the entrance facing the pulpit. Immediately behind the pulpit and raised up in an alcove stood the pipe organ and in front of this the choir stalls. Below the pulpit there was a space surrounded by a rail of wrought iron work, for the communion table, behind which the minister sat central, with deacons on either side. In Methodist churches, only the minister presided here, except on the occasion of public meetings. In Baptist churches, this area contained the baptistry. The arrangement varied from church to church. In some churches the baptistry remained an open tiled watertight recess in the floor, approximately four feet deep by twelve feet long and six feet wide, with steps at either end. Sometimes this was left open as a witness to the principle of believer's baptism, and sometimes it was covered with a false floor.

Several of the Nonconformist churches in the area were built in a more Gothic style, with tall steeples and more elegant interiors, in conscious competition with the parish church. Cannon Street, Baptist church, Accrington, was known as the Nonconformist Cathedral of Lancashire. The interior of this church was also Gothic, the open boarded roof supported on open king trusses and resting on stone corbels set in the side walls and Italian marble pillars in the two side aisles. There was a very fine Gothic stone archway over the pulpit. The plan of the church was cruciform, with two transepts, one on either side of the pulpit, and side galleries over them. Behind the pulpit and beyond the stone archway there was a hexagonal nave accommodating the organ and choir stalls. This church seated nine hundred people. St. George's Presbyterian church, Blackburn, was similar in design. Oak Street Congregational church Accrington, again had its tall steeple, built in 1860 about the same time as Cannon Street, but the rest of the building both outside and inside followed the normal Nonconformist design with its galleried interior.

The congregations and leaders of these three churches were fairly well to do and prosperous, sensitive to the status held by members of the Established church, which they wanted for themselves. In erecting these churches, there is no doubt that the leaders aimed to put Nonconformity on the social map and that they could hold their own, aesthetically and culturally with their Anglican neighbours. Whether the interior design was in keeping with Nonconformist worship, in its enthusiasm and informality, was another question. Significantly through lack of endowment by the earlier and wealthier leaders of Nonconformity and through lack of support, Oak Street Congregational church, Accrington, is now demolished, St. George's Presbyterian Church, Blackburn, has had to unite with Revidge Edge Congregational church in the United Reformed Church and Cannon Street Baptist Church, Accrington, has had to adapt the church building to a smaller congregation and at the time of writing is anxious to dispose of the costly maintenance of the Sunday school premises in Willow Street. Unfortunately, the leaders who initiated

this ambitious programme of church building left little or no endowments to maintain them.

From the year 1850 to 1900, the Baptists in North East Lancashire, erected twenty two new church buildings, most of them with additional premises attached for Sunday schools. The estimated cost from figures available, published in the respective town registers, was at least fifty thousand pounds. This does not take into account the expenditure on the purchasing of manses for ministers or maintenance. Congregationalists in the same area and in the same period erected twenty four new churches with Sunday school premises attached, at an estimated cost of sixty six thousand five hundred pounds. Again this does not take into account, manses or maintenance. Methodists in the same area, from 1850 to 1900 erected sixty five new churches and Sunday school premises, at an estimated cost of one hundred and ninety five thousand pounds. Bearing in mind that the estimate is on the low side, the total expenditure of the three denominations in the hundred years 1850-1950 was three hundred and eleven thousand. The present day value of the money spent on new buildings during this period amounted to no less than six million two hundred and twenty thousand pounds. 1. This reckoning does not take into account the cost of Primitive Methodist, United Methodist, Independent Methodist and other Methodist buildings.

It is easy with hindsight, to criticise the leaders of Nonconformity for this vast expenditure of money on buildings, which today are a great burden and anxiety to existing and diminishing congregations, congregations which depend for their income on the sacrificial loyalty for the most part of middle aged and elderly church members. However, there is a pointed lesson here for those who would hasten in a mood of a temporary revival, to enshrine it in a building, before its continuity is really tested.

1. 'Values of Conversion', New Law Journal (25th August 1977) p.847.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS, STATISTICS, ATTENDANCE.

This church extension was obviously undertaken to provide accommodation for increasing numbers of worshippers, and we have some evidence as to what those numbers were. Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert and Lee Horsley, have together examined patterns of church growth and collected statistics in the British Isles, from all the organised religious institutions since 1700, including the Established Church, Roman Catholics, Jews, Nonconformists and the lesser sects.

On balance we conclude that the religious statistics presented here are reliable in the sense that they are honestly compiled; that they shew few signs of tendentious manipulation; that they measure something sensitively; that that something is church membership; and that church membership is a good indicator of religious activity. 1.

This view by Currie, Gilbert and Horsley is viewed with some scepticism by two American scholars, Charles V. Glock and Rodney Stuart, who claim that 'there are simply no reliable statistics on church membership'. 2. However Currie, Gilbert and Horsley point to a general historical pattern whether in growth or decline. In particular their analysis of growth can be a positive contribution to the efforts of church leaders, concerned to stimulate new growth, which seems so vital for Christian church life in this particular area of North East Lancashire.

Church growth can therefore be separated theoretically, if not empirically, into primary, secondary and tertiary growth. Primary growth arises from individuals with a sense of deep spiritual need, which can only be satisfied in the assurance of the supernatural. Secondary growth arises from individuals who find an interest in a cult, in and for itself, namely a church. Tertiary growth arises out of an interest in the cult, in its political, social or economic influence in the community. 3.

1. Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert and Lee Horsley, Churches & Church-Goers. Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles Since 1700. (Oxford, 1977) p.20.
2. Ibid. p.20.
3. Ibid. p.21.

Furthermore, Currie, Gilbert and Horwley, collect data and present it from the two main records of Religious Affairs, 'The Compton Census of members of the Established Church, Nonconformists and Catholics in England, 1676 and 'The Census of Religious Worship in England', directed by Horace Mann, 1851 and refer to the statistics reproduced in 'The Parliamentary Papers 1852-3'. They have also collected data from the records of each denomination.

Can one produce an exact quantitative analysis of the state of the Christian church or the various movements within it by collecting and presenting statistics? Statistics can certainly assist the leaders of churches and the central organisation to process their resources to the best advantage, and who can doubt that this proper use has not helped the weaker churches. If one examines the statistics of church membership of the Wesleyan Methodists in North East Lancashire from 1848-1962 (Appendix VID) as compared with the other free church denominations, the connexional system in its process of rationalising held the membership fairly constant. The other denominations, more loosely organised and locally independent, shewed a steep decline in membership. However the 'systematising', of the church in itself may prove to be a real danger, for we are considering the movement of the Holy Spirit in the minds and hearts of men and in their churches. On the whole however the figures of attendance and membership shew a rise, particularly during the nineteenth century.

The Census of Religious Worship in England on March 30th, 1851, directed by Horace Mann in Division VIII referring to the North Western Counties (Lancashire), following page, gives statistics for four of the main towns in the North East Lancashire area with which this thesis is concerned. Significantly they represent Haslingden, (477), which is in the South of the area, Burnley, (478), which is in the East, Clitheroe, (479), which is in the North, Blackburn, (480), which is in the West. Of the four, Clitheroe was the more rural, covering the Northern part of the area along the upper Ribble valley.

The population of these four towns in 1851 was as follows:-

Haslingden.	50,424.
Burnley.	63,868.
Clitheroe.	22,368.
Blackburn.	90,738.
Total	<u>227,398.</u>

Nonconformist attendances in these four towns was as follows:-

Total morning, afternoon and evening attendances.

Haslingden.	24,294.
Burnley.	23,196.
Clitheroe.	6,855.
Blackburn.	9,215.

Haslingden. Population. 50,424.

<u>Nonconformists.</u>	Morning.	Afternoon.	Evening.
Independents.	462	348	224
Baptists.	2929	3606	1180
Wesleyan Methodists.	4863	2561	2884
Primitive Methodists.	649	1360	753
Wesleyan Association.	664	1096	715
Total	<u>9567</u>	<u>8971</u>	<u>5756</u>

Burnley. Population. 63,868.

<u>Nonconformists.</u>	Morning.	Afternoon.	Evening.
Independents.	1,857	1,146	828
Baptists.	1,504	1,233	416
Wesleyan Methodists.	3,555	3,288	2,743
Primitive Methodists.	950	1,550	867
Wesleyan Association.	1,101	496	584
Inghamites.	430	588	60
Total	<u>9,397</u>	<u>8,301</u>	<u>5,498</u>

<u>Clitheroe.</u> Population	22,368		
<u>Nonconformists.</u>	Morning.	Afternoon.	Evening.
Independents.	552	892	452
Baptists.	292	282	134
Wesleyan Methodists.	548	1,298	901
Primitive Methodists.	48	118	90
Wesleyan Association.	417	381	435
Inghamites.	15		
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	1,872	2,971	2,012
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<u>Blackburn.</u> Population	90,738		
<u>Nonconformists.</u>	Morning.	Afternoon.	Evening.
Independents.	1,340	228	761
Baptists.	437	-	282
Scotch Baptists.	23	23	-
Wesleyan Methodists.	1,965	302	1,702
Primitive Methodists.	528	111	439
Wesleyan Association.	536	-	538
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4,829	664	3,722
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

1.

However, the attendance figures of these four representative towns relate to the three services held each Sunday, morning, afternoon and evening and it is clear that many members of the Nonconformist churches would attend more than one service, some of the more zealous members even attending the three services. The figures therefore enumerated and compared with the population figures in the four towns are estimated on the basis of a low and high percentage. The low percentage attendance refers to attendance at

1. The Census of Religious Worship in England on March 30th, 1851. Division VIII (Parliamentary Papers, pp 96-97).

one service, the morning service, and the high percentage attendance relates to additional members who attended either in the afternoon or evening. On the figures available in the 1851 census therefore, there is the following estimate :-

Haslingden in the south of the area

Low estimate 20% attendance of the population.

High estimate 30% attendance of the population.

Burnley in the east of the area

Low estimate 15% attendance of the population.

High estimate 25% attendance of the population.

Clitheroe in the north of the area

Low estimate 10% attendance of the population.

High estimate 18% attendance of the population.

Blackburn in the west of the area

Low estimate 6% attendance of the population.

High estimate 7½% attendance of the population.

These are attendance figures, as distinct from committed church membership figures.

These statistics shew that in the south and the east part of the area, nearer the Yorkshire boundary, the localities more effectively influenced in the early days 1662-1730, by the Baptists and Methodists, the percentage of the population attending public worship remained higher than in the western part of the area. In this western locality, namely Blackburn and the rural districts around Clitheroe percentage attendances of the population were much lower. This could partly be accounted for by the proximity to the Catholic west of Lancashire and later the Presbyterian influence, the Presbyterians returning to the Established Church after 1662.

Although Currie Gilbert and Horsley vouch for the amazing accuracy of the 1851 records of religious attendance, Nonconformist churches seemed to be more preoccupied with the content of beliefs and placed the emphasis on a qualitative rather than a quantitative analysis of church life. The Census however compelled

Nonconformists in the mid and late nineteenth century to keep statistical records. The grouping of churches in County Associations and the growth of central church government led to a greater emphasis on the preserving of records of church membership. There were problems, in that church officers in the smaller churches had little or no administrative experience, neither were they always meticulous in keeping records. Up to this time the most reliable information available was the date of the founding of the local church, recorded in the Certificates of Registration, copies of which are still to be found in the County Records Office, Preston.

The earliest accurate membership statistics of the three main Nonconformist denominations in the North East Lancashire area, available to me are -

1848	Wesleyan Methodists	3,758
1875	Baptists	5,043
1900	Congregationalists	5,301

The graph in Appendix 2 Figure 5 showing the number of baptisms in the Lancashire and Cheshire Association of Baptist Churches 1837-1887 shows extraordinary fluctuations from the year 1875 to 1887. In the Baptist church believer's baptism at this time was essential for church membership and the graph therefore demonstrates the fluctuations in church membership. This raises particularly for Baptists as well as other free churches a question mark over the permanent value of the baptisms which took place. It seems to suggest that a number of emotional decisions took place and that the candidates soon fell away from commitment. The year 1900 was the peak of the size of these three main Nonconformist denominations in the area,

Wesleyan Methodist church members	10,434
Baptist church members	7,645
Congregational church members	5,301.

Comparing these statistics with the population figures for the area in 1901, which was 428,620 for the towns, - this would mean at least 500,000 to include the villages and hamlets, - the proportion of church

members compared with the population would be

Wesleyan Methodists	2%
Baptists	1½%
Congregationalists	1%

Nonconformity therefore at its peak numerically in 1901 represented a very small minority of the total population. However, the moral and spiritual influence of this Nonconformist minority far outweighed its numerical standing. It is clear that the Nonconformist churches had failed to win the working classes to committed membership. The percentage figures above represent committed membership, but the attendances were more.

The statistical facts themselves of decline are indisputable. The figures below show the rate of decline in the three denominations, Methodists, Baptists and Congregationalists in the area, between 1900 and 1975. Methodists were least affected, on account of their connexional system. They were able, more easily, to rationalise in the use of church buildings and to economise on manses, placing a lesser financial burden on church members.

Rates of decline in respect to the three denominations.

	<u>1900</u>	<u>1925</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1975</u>
Methodists.	10,434	9,810	10,002	10,385	7,579
Baptists.	7,645	6,121	5,845	5,307	4,212
Congregationalists.	5,301	5,228	4,712	3,264	2,105

CHAPTER 10.Principal Factors in Decline - Internal and External to the Church.Internal Factors.

Professor A.J.P. Taylor refers to religious decline in 1922

The English, though almost exclusively Christian in background fell into three warring groups; the Established Church of England; the Roman Catholics; and the Free Churches (first called Dissenters and after that Nonconformists) . . . The Roman Catholics held up best. They had a hard core of believers. The Church of England reaped the advantages of Establishment . . . The Free Churches were hardest hit. They had rested on belief and preaching. Their influence faded as belief declined. None of their ministers repeated the fashionable success of Sylvester Horne. 1.

In this observation, Professor Taylor reveals either through lack of space in his book, or intimate knowledge, the importance and influence of the many more well known national Free Church preachers and their wide spread influence in the whole community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. North East Lancashire in particular had the strong tradition of the 'Annual Sermons', or Sunday School Anniversary, when outstanding preachers like Dr. Scott Lidgett, Dr. Dinsdale Young, Dr. Leslie Weatherhead and Dr. Sangster (Methodists), Dr. John Clifford, Dr. Shakespeare, Dr. S.W. Hughes and Dr. Townley Lord (Baptists) and among the Congregationalists, Dr. A.E. Garvie, Dr. Campbell Morgan, together with the Presbyterians, Drs. R.C. Gillie and James Reid, came to preach. Among the many acceptable and distinguished lay preachers were Dr. T.R. Glover, pro vice Chancellor of Cambridge University (Baptist) and Mr. John Hugh Edwards, M.P. (Congregationalist). There were many more.

1. A.J.P. Taylor, English History, 1914-45 (Oxford 1945) p. 73.

Another important observation in respect to Professor Taylor's judgement, is that preaching does not necessarily follow in the pathway of belief, but more often preceded a revival in belief. In the critical moments of church history, when the flame of faith has burned low, a revival in preaching has quickened the hearts of men and brought the church to life. Classical examples in history have been the preaching of Ambrose and Savonarola in Italy, Luther and Calvin in Germany and Switzerland, Spurgeon in London and Moody in America. To argue that the Free Churches had rested on belief and that with the decline of belief, preaching ceased to remedy the situation, is not the whole story. Despite the eminent preachers listed, it would be truer to say that the Nonconformist decline reflected a decline in the standard of preaching in the local churches.

The decline among the Free Churches in Lancashire began much earlier than Professor Taylor describes. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Sir George MacAlpine of Accrington, in an address as Moderator of the Lancashire and Cheshire Baptist Association (1901),¹ reviewed the past year and warned the delegates from the churches, that decisions in the churches and factionalism endangered the future. All the Free Churches in the north at the turn of the century were beginning to see signs of a falling away. The tragedy is that the slow downhill trend, led to the present weak position of the Free Churches in the northern industrial area. To drive along the main roads connecting the major towns from Blackburn to Accrington, and then in one direction towards Bacup through the Rossendale Valley, or in the other direction through Burnley, Nelson and Colne is to see huge Nonconformist churches built with seating accommodation, some of them for a thousand people, converted into furniture depositories, small industrial premises or clubs, is a sad sight for those who knew the more prosperous days. Along the routes mentioned I have counted twenty two churches built after 1850, now closed down.

1. Report of the Lancashire & Cheshire Association Meetings 1901. Manchester.

The purpose now is to examine some of the reasons for this decline, bearing in mind that the Nonconformists were not the only ones affected. Anglicans and Catholics have also felt the pinch. We shall look at

1. The Internal Factors in Decline.
2. The External Factors in Decline.

A. The Internal Factors of Decline in the Nonconformist Churches.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Congregationalists and Baptists had recognised the value of the Methodist Connexional System, and had begun to develop a deeper Associational life, their smaller mission churches benefited through the help given by financial schemes set up by the County Associations and later by the Central Headquarters of the denominations. The stronger churches contributing through a central body, helped the weaker churches. This help had to be supervised, and certain tests were applied to the level of grants. This procedure inevitably led to supervision and gradually a secretariat began to develop at county and national level, together with the growth of administration. In both the Congregational and Baptist churches, Moderators and Superintendents were appointed, at first with a restrained Pastoral oversight over the churches in their area. However with the growing authority of the central organisation, churches dependent on the financial help of the central body came to be more dependent on the Moderators and Superintendents for the 'Call' and appointment of ministers. Unfortunately, whereas at one time in the later part of the nineteenth century one of the strong emphases in local church life was to give responsibility to local leaders, (church secretaries, treasurers and deacons) the effect of the new centralising seemed to transfer that responsibility to Area committees, and local church leaders tended to depend more and more on the central body. The thought seemed to spread, that if a church got into financial or ministerial difficulties, the central body would come to the rescue. This seemed to lead more to a state of resignation and timidity

before a problem, rather than a determination to face it locally and overcome it. At least the development of a national and central influence and approach did not stem the decline. The central body was too remote from local situations and in many instances ignorant of and uninformed about local problems. In effect, the calibre of local leadership, as compared with that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, declined. Furthermore throughout the country there seemed to be with the growth of national schemes, a process of rationalising in respect to the number of ministers at local level.

The Free Churches, too, lost many potential leaders through the growing prosperity of middle class parents, who seemed attracted by the more promising social prospects in the Anglican church. Men who had come through poverty and built up businesses in Lancashire industry, looked for a better education for their sons. Free Church public schools were few and far between. Methodists had good public schools in Bristol and Woodhouse Grove, near Leeds, whilst some Baptists and Congregationalists sent their sons to the Free Church public school at Taunton. However many of the more prosperous Nonconformist parents in the North sent their sons to public schools with an Anglican foundation. If the headmaster were not an ordained priest, most members of the staff would be Anglicans and there would certainly be an Anglican chaplain. When Nonconformist boys reached the age of fourteen, the influence in school seemed stronger than that in the home and many boys accepted Confirmation, with parental consent. With few exceptions, the boys when they left school, either became nominal Anglicans or attended no church at all. Certainly many Free Churches were deprived of the kind of leadership which their grandfathers and fathers had given, although it seems that a question mark hangs over the home, if in the spiritual tug of war, the school won.

In Accrington, in particular, Thomas the son of Eli Higham succeeded his father as head of the cotton manufacturing firm and continued faithfully in his father's footsteps as deacon and generous

supporter of Oak Street Congregational Church. However his son Alec Eli's grandson, went to Harrow public school, was confirmed and became an Anglican. The link with Oak Street ceased, and at the same time the leadership which his father Thomas gave in the town's civic life also ceased. The grandchildren of Sir George MacAlpine were also confirmed at public schools and became Anglicans and again abdicating from public life. The Bulloughs, the Burys and the Haworths, all families giving strong support through their grandparents to the Nonconformist cause, became Anglicans.

Another of the internal reasons for Nonconformist decline lies in the lack of credal authority. It must be said for the boys who went to Anglican schools, that they found at the formative period in their lives what they would never have found in their home Free Church, the holding power of a definitive creed. Only latterly in Congregational and Baptist churches, (Methodist churches had their Book of Offices,) and in very limited circumstances have young people growing up in the Free churches learnt or repeated the Apostles' Creed. Catechumens in the Free churches relied on the few classes held by the minister of the church to prepare them for church membership, and these varied in depth, from church to church. Usually, following the classes, a minister would ask the candidates to consider their decision privately and let him know the outcome. Following the candidate's decision, the church meeting would appoint two visitors to assess the sincerity of the candidate and report back. More often than not the candidate's application for church membership was accepted without question.

The one authority which all the Free churches ought to have had in common namely the authority of the Bible was not expounded as it ought to have been. In addition, the Free churches grounded their church practice in the authority of the Holy Spirit, which they claimed activated the 'gathered' church meeting. When the church met to consider her life and purpose, it was, or should have been,

to seek corporately among the members, the guidance of God, and to wait upon the Presence of the Holy Spirit, in silence and in prayer. As it happened, the church meeting became a place and an occasion for expressing personal views and opinions on mundane matters, raising money, maintenance of church fabric, and the growing social activities of the church fellowship, ostensibly intended to draw people in. Generally speaking, very little time was given to the discussion of the spiritual condition of the church and her witness.

There were occasions in church meetings, when it would have been more appropriate in disagreement, if the Minister (Chairman) had said "Brethren, it is evident we have no clear guidance tonight, let's go home and pray about the matter and delay a decision until we are united if that be possible." Unfortunately, decisions were taken prematurely and churches divided. The fact still remained that the Free churches lacked a credal foundation.

Another reason for decline was possibly the low conception of the Communion service. The observation of the Lord's Supper among Nonconformists in North East Lancashire varied from church to church, although most of them were all very far from the doctrine of the 'Real Presence'. Some churches especially among the Baptists, (significantly in the Rossendale Valley near to the beginnings of the Baptist church in this area) practiced 'closed communion' i.e. communion was only offered to church members. In the Accrington and Blackburn district, Baptists held open communion and for the most part the Congregationalists held 'open communion'. Open communion meant that the minister announcing the celebration, invited all 'who love our Lord Jesus Christ'. Closed communion needed no announcement. The dates and times were fixed in the church calendar and all the members of the church knew this. With very few exceptions, the celebrant in the Free churches was always an ordained minister, but in emergencies, in the event of a minister's sickness, the deacons would set apart a respected deacon, to celebrate.

For most Nonconformists however, the Communion was a mere remembrance of our Lord's death. This was the view taken by the Zurich Reformer Zwingli in his early days. Later in life he acknowledged the Risen Lord's Presence at the Table, but this later belief did not seem to have penetrated the minds of those who called themselves Zwinglians. There was no sense of compulsion of church members to attend the Communion service and quite frequently it was an appendage to a rather long preaching service in the evening. It was a reflection on the importance of the Communion service in the lives of church members, to see many of them depart after the preaching service, leaving half the congregation behind to celebrate.

In consequence the service lost a certain sense of value, solemnity and awe, or as the German theologian Otto called it the sense of the 'numinous'. In many churches it became merely a fellowship, a gathering of kindred minds, around a table holding symbols of bread and wine, distributed by the deacons, following the words of the Institution by the minister. When the members had partaken of the wine, usually drunk corporately, instead of a silence one could hear the clinking of the cups as the participants placed them on the pew shelves, which irritated rather than composed. Following the Benediction a congregation would explode into an unseemly chattering. It would have been better if they had dispersed quietly to think about what should have taken place. One could understand those who occasionally visited Anglican churches, and particularly Free church boys, having been confirmed, taking Communion for the first time in public school chapels, turning away from the casual attitude to Communion as they knew it. In all there was a lack of understanding of the meaning of 'grace' received.

Free church ministers themselves cannot be completely absolved from the responsibility of decline. Dr. R.C. Gillie the well respected Presbyterian minister at the Marylebone Church, London, impressed students in his pre-sessional lectures in Rawdon Baptist

College, with the need for the preacher to prepare himself. He must neither parade himself in the pulpit nor consciously play too much on the emotions of the members of the congregation, and must pay the closest attention to his own devotional life. 1.

Nonconformist churches in North East Lancashire as well as in other parts of the country valued the ministry for what they called its 'drawing power'. Deacons placed much emphasis on the personality of the preacher, his attractive mannerisms, what the Welsh call 'the hoile', rhetoric, and sadly in some instances the power to denounce the sins of the time, so long as they were outside the church. The attractive powers and qualities of the preacher were paramount in calling a minister to a church, and often ministers were in competition with one another, for what were called 'the important' pulpits in the area. Ministers who prepared their matter studiously, prayerfully, and diligently, and yet lacked a dramatic appeal were often misjudged and passed over. That is not to say that a man could not be eloquent and distinguished and at the same time thoughtful and devotional in his presentation. One might ask about the thousands of sermons applauded by the sermon tasters about this time, what good they did in the building up of the Body of Christ and sustaining the spiritual lives of the members? Many churches were built as vast auditoriums rather than houses of God.

Probably the most important factor in the decline was the lack of a deep spiritual unity between the denominations and within each local church. Anglicans were, despite the difference between High, Low, and Middle churchmanship, under the lightly held reins of a Bishop, united.

There were many Conservative Evangelicals within the Free churches who owed an allegiance outside their churches to men like Moody, Spurgeon and later the Keswick movement, and Dr. Billy

1. R. C. Gillie. The Minister in the Modern World (London 1934) p.70.

- Graham in the later twentieth century, holding the view that the Bible must be accepted literally, i.e. full stops, commas, paragraphs and capital letters, all as the inspired Word of God. The slightest deviation from this view, by ministers or laymen in the same church was unacceptable to these Evangelicals. The unifying Lordship of Christ seemed absent. On the other hand, there were Liberals who reacted against this view under the influence of positive modern criticism i.e. Peake and Dr. Fosdick and relied more on the spirit of the Word rather than the letter. They were not always tactful. Representatives of both parties frequently attacked each other in church meetings or openly from the pulpits. The story of divisions on these grounds is pathetic, but unfortunately still takes place. Many liberal ministers were also radical in political outlook and began to preach what was known as the 'social gospel'. The Kingdom of God had to be seen as coming on earth, and sincere Christians must put this into political practice. In Lancashire in the nineteen twenties the Rev. Ingh James, minister at Cannon Street Baptist Church, would shorten his evening service in time to speak regularly on the Labour Party platform, either at the Labour Hall or in a local cinema. His diaconate was charged publicly and accused of hounding him out, but this cannot be sustained by fact. The church divided, and in spite of valiant efforts by ministers who followed him, the church never recovered and at the moment the membership is reduced from nearly nine hundred at the beginning of the century to about one hundred today. 1.

B. The External Factors in the Decline of Nonconformity in North East Lancashire.

A.

Just as it is impossible, to separate the events of one epoch in history from another, so it is impossible to separate the internal and external factors in the decline or revival of religion. One must bear in mind that prosperous times may bring about self indulgence and

1. Cannon Street Baptist Church, Accrington. The Church Minute Book.

laxity in faith, and that hard times and extremities of suffering may turn people to God. It may be true that hard times lead people to seek remedies in new political movements. The second great depression at the end of the nineteenth century, once again led to industrial and social unrest, and working people began to rely on the Trades Unions and the upsurge of the Labour Party. Many Labour leaders in the early days of the Party had emerged from Christian backgrounds and church commitment, Philip Snowden being an example. There was also the cataclysmic shaking up of the life of the whole nation through the outbreak of the First World War 1914-18, although this did not affect the churches as much as is supposed. However, it is true to say that many sincere Christians suffered some disillusion in respect to the churches' influence in the nation's life and gave their allegiance more and more to the Labour Movement.

Another external factor in the decline of Nonconformity, was the new trend in amusements and the use of leisure time. Before the century began, work people had gained the Saturday afternoon and Sunday weekend holiday. Before the year 1875, men and women and children worked from dawn to dusk with no relief until the Sunday. About this time my grandfather walked from Accrington to Barrow Print Works, near Whalley, a distance of seven miles, to begin work at 7 a.m. finishing at 6 p.m. to walk home. The beginning of the twentieth century brought more leisure time and with it a taste for amusements and sports. The more diligent Nonconformists used some of this time for improving their education. Samuel Smiles's book 'Self Help' became for them a second Bible. Those on the fringe of church life, looked round for a way to spend their leisure time and where there was loose restraint at home, turned to the theatre, the music hall and the cinema.

The older Calvinist restraints and commitment to the chapel seemed gradually to disappear and before long there was an increasing number of Free church men still loyal to the morning service but absenting themselves from midweek prayer meetings

and the Sunday evening services. Many churches tried to cope with the new trend by introducing social activities in the way of institutes, conversaciones with visiting concert parties, dramatic societies, all in reasonably good taste, nevertheless it was a departure from the old Puritan ways. For young people in the churches, there were the new youth movements, the Boys Brigade, the Girls Life Brigade, these having a spiritual foundation and later the Scouts and the Girl Guides, the latter two not having a direct spiritual foundation linked with the church. An attempt also was made by the church to stimulate the spiritual life of young people in the mixed meetings of the Christian Endeavour Society. Some churches in the mornings replaced the Sunday school with the League of Young Worshippers which had a place in the regular morning service in the church.

As restraint weakened in church and home and there was less spiritual compulsion on the part of parents, sport and amusements took over. In this new social climate it was difficult for young Christians whose families belonged to the churches, to take root, and churches found they were soon competing with the attractions outside, even on Sundays.

Another important factor for decline was the growth of secularism. Both the Labour and Liberal parties which had drawn their early leaders from Nonconformist churches, particularly in the industrial areas of North East Lancashire, arranged political meetings on Sundays and gave the impression that they had no further use for the churches. Many of the leaders in politics believed that the churches were moving too slowly, if there were any movement at all to relate the Gospel to the everyday problems of working people. The writings of Engels from Manchester and Marx from London had kindled a spark near to the explosive unrest of working folk, awakening such class hatred that there could have been revolution if it had not been for the democratic and spiritual roots in the churches of Labour men like Arthur Henderson of Burnley. It was said with some small element of truth that the Methodist Revival in the

eighteenth century had saved England from following in the same steps as the French Revolution. In the same way, it could be said, that the early influences of Nonconformity in the minds of the new Labour leaders saved the country again from following the radical and secular Socialism. On the other hand, these same churches, while they moulded the minds of Labour leaders, did not always retain their loyalty.

The churches were not entirely blameless for the loss of great numbers of men and women who directed their hopes into new secular ideals. In one or two instances in the leading churches of the industrial towns, prosperous members of the churches, imitated the old squirearchy of the Established Church, and installed at their own expense specially upholstered pews, under the balcony at the back of the church, or in the transept of the church. A new procedure of church maintenance emerged in the paying of pew rents. Pews were numbered and the rents graded (Cannon Street, Accrington, Zion, Burnley) according to the position. Pews in the centre of the body of the church and toward the rear were more expensive than front pews. There was a particular night set apart for the paying of pew rents and a plan of pews placed in the room on a table at which sat the collectors, and cards were issued on which the payment and the signature of the collector were set down. There were also free sittings.

By the time of the second World War the churches were much weaker than they had been at the turn of the century. However the ministers and members did not have quite the same moral issue to face in respect to supporting the war. The records of the Nazis in Germany and the Fascists in Italy revealed the spiritual darkness underlying their movements. The Jews and German Christians together with many Italian Protestants suffered unimaginable persecution, and although there were a good number of Christian pacifists in the churches for the most part the churches were united against the aggressors. As the war ended and although the Chaplains had done a great work in the Armed Forces, the General Election of

1947 revealed the trend, which has persisted that people were more attracted to a Secular Society.

A new prosperity in the industrial areas like Lancashire led people into a more materialistic outlook. The industrial working-classes turned to new home gadgets, radio and television, and once again even church people seemed content to stay at home and watch Songs of Praise on Sunday Evenings instead of moving out to church.

CHAPTER 11.

CONCLUSION.

Reviewing the history of Nonconformity in North East Lancashire from its beginning in 1662, with the ejection of Thomas Jolly from the Parish Church at Altham, there seems to be no continuous flow in the story, gradually unfolding and leading to a satisfying conclusion.

Ernest A. Payne, the modern Baptist and Free historian commented

Baptist life in general, and that of the Baptist Union in particular, have been shaped partly by inner conviction and partly by the pressure of outward circumstances. The same is true of other Christian communions. 1.

Nonconformity in North East Lancashire was certainly shaped by the pressure of outward circumstances and by the particular characteristics of the area, together with the rapid industrial and social changes which took place during the three hundred years. It was like the Pennine brooks which followed the rugged contours of this region. When the sky filled with rain, a regular feature, and the clouds broke, the water cascaded and dashed over the lower moorland rocks, turbulent in its descent, the irregular terrain impeding the flow and throwing up spumes of angry foam, and the mountain brooks eventually reached the tributaries and the rivers in the valley bottoms, they brought with them in the dark brown peaty water all the flotsam and jetsam collected in their descent.

From the outset, Nonconformity, born out of protest, gave no semblance of an ecclesiastical movement with a co-ordinated

1. Ernest A. Payne, The Baptist Union - A Short History (London, 1959) p. 254.

flowing purpose. Before Thomas Jolly died, he and his Independent followers were in conflict with Crossley and Mitchell, the Bacup Baptist, on the issue of Paedo and Believer's Baptism. There was also an uneasy peace between Jolly and his Independents of Tockholes near Blackburn and the Presbyterians there on the question of authority in church government, over whether this was vested completely and entirely in the local church or an Association of churches, namely the Presbytery.

Benjamin Ingham a close friend of John and Charles Wesley in their Oxford days and a member of the 'Holy Club' sailed with them in the mission to Georgia. Returning to England, Ingham began evangelical work near Colne but soon came into conflict with Wesley at Roughlee, rejecting Wesley's idea on the Doctrine of Perfection. Inghamites and Methodists separated to form their own churches.

Following Wesley's death in 1793, Jabez Bunting, the general secretary of the Wesleyan Connexion endeavoured to hold the church together united, but his tight statesmanship – some preferred to call it authoritarianism – led to divisions in the Methodist ranks and the rapid growth of the Primitive Methodists and the Independent Methodists in North East Lancashire. All this, together with the examples of divisions in local churches described earlier in this thesis reveals the turbulence within the Nonconformist movement. Event after event, with discord following discord, turned what ought to have been a free flowing stream into a foaming unruly torrent.

This however does not nullify the great and positive contributions which Nonconformity brought to the area, through its evangelism, its reaching out into areas where people worked and gathered in the open air. The Nonconformist preachers were earnestly concerned to present Christ as a personal Saviour and bring people to a deep peace of mind in their struggles and afflictions during the Industrial Revolution. They were active in relieving physical and social distress during the great Lancashire cotton famine and forerunners in the cause for the civil rights and the dignities of men, women and children. In the sphere of education they were pioneers. The question arises, would there have been the

same Christian progress if England and this particular area had been left to an Established Church which in 1662 slumbered and from time to time since assumed an attitude of indifference to people's needs?

From the very early days of the primitive church, contentious divisions spoiled the Christian fellowship and from those early days, each century has had its controversies with the rigid hard line postures of opposing contenders. There seems to have been an unwillingness to accept, that large bodies of truth exist in all the varying theological statements. In the period we have discussed Independents and Presbyterians, happy to co-operate in such situations as Tockholes, before long, divided. Baptists were impatient and intolerant of Paedo-Baptists and only in exceptional instances could they find common ground. Baptists were so convinced that their understanding of New Testament principles was the only one, that they kept separate and apart, and even then there were churches accepting 'open' membership and others emphasising 'closed' membership.

In spite of the growth in co-operation toward the end of the nineteenth century through local Federal Free Church Councils and more recently the Ecumenical Movement, the Free Church denominations stood for their own separate sovereignties, except for the uniting of Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the United Reformed Church. In the past twenty five years, all the Free Churches have rationalised in the use of ministerial man power, put more simply, in accepting the principle of fewer ministers to supervise more church buildings. This has meant the lowering of the standard and efficiency of pastoral care. In some denominations, the proposal to call out laymen into a limited training scheme, to prepare to help the ordained men, has filled a need. There are however, serious drawbacks to this proposal. The lowering of standards of preparation and the period of time spent in preparation certainly does not help men to be adequate to meet the needs of a more educated constituency.

In the beginning of the twentieth century Free church manse were open at all times to people who had problems or who were in trouble, but nowadays ministerial claims of financial stringency mean

that ministers' wives have taken on jobs and the ministers either have to stay at home to look after the small children, or the manse has been closed and the telephone silent.

It is stated that one of the hindrances in the way of greater efficiency of the local church has been the limitation in its finances. Yet if one were to consider the amount of money still being spent on Separate and Independent denominational colleges despite some amalgamations, on central denominational headquarters and an increasing number of ministers engaged in the Secretariat there seems room for economy in this direction and a releasing of funds to be used in the local situations.

To economise locally in the use of church buildings some Methodist and United Reformed churches worship together in the same building, but as yet within the area of North East Lancashire there seems to be no comprehensive movement in this direction. Three options seem to be open to the churches.

1. For the different denominations to remain separate and sovereign as they are, with the probability that Methodists will sooner or later unite with the Anglicans.
2. To unite all the Free church denominations, the United Reformed church, the Methodist church and the Baptist church into a United Free Church of England. (A move in this direction would probably divide the Baptist church.)
3. For the churches to be prepared to lose in each denomination, the Conservative Evangelicals, who oppose ecumenism, into an Evangelical Alliance and those remaining in the churches to become a United Free Church.

In the area we have been considering, North East Lancashire, where the decline in church attendance is so acute, and the problems of maintenance of buildings, heating and lighting so costly, it seems to me, that the second option deserves immediate local consideration.

What may be the future of Protestant Nonconformity in Lancashire, much as I desire to be assured of its continued usefulness, honour and prosperity, it is not for me to

foretell or even conjecture. In its principles I have confidence, not weakening, but becoming stronger with advancing years. With some reverses and some failings it has done great and good work in Lancashire and will I believe, do a greater and better for the vast and growing population of the county. Much as I love it, I dare not say, 'Esto perpetua', but I do say, may the truth that is in it prevail, and may the errors that attach to it be overcome. May that truth be established and those errors be refuted, with as little of ill feeling as possible. May the rivalry and strife of parties so long as they continue, work for the instruction and peace of all. May the Nonconformists of Lancashire, retaining their evangelical principles, and faithful to their hereditary traditions, as the friends alike of piety and of freedom, ever act worthily of their venerable fathers, their illustrious history, their rich inheritance, their great country and their common faith. 1.

These words, reading like the peroration of a great speech, were written by the outstanding historian of Lancashire Nonconformity in 1869. At that time . . . and there are indications in this conclusion of party strife . . . there nevertheless seemed to be great hope, 'I dare not say Esto perpetua' ! Was Dr. Halley thinking of the developing institutionalism of Nonconformity in all its branches, or was he thinking of the expiring zeal of Nonconformists? He hopes the cherished principles of piety and freedom will remain. Was that all Nonconformity expressed?

The social and spiritual climate in this part of the country seemed at this particular time from 1870 onwards to be affecting the work of all the churches. The cotton ports of Liverpool and Manchester with their world markets, the developing associate industries of cotton manufacturing, i.e. Textile Machine Engineering

1. Robert Halley, Lancashire, Its Puritanism and Nonconformity (Manchester 1869) Vol. II p.278.

and more intensive mining and the connection with the lucrative selling fields in India, South Africa and South America, brought more economic development and prosperity. With this increasing prosperity, as we have seen in the later chapters of this thesis, until 1900, the churches had grown in numbers and strength, but strength in terms of what? Can there be any doubt that Nonconformity in North East Lancashire, bowed to the growing prosperity of the area and to a great extent succumbed to secular influences?

The most striking effect of secularisation, so far as the churches are concerned, is simple disbelief in the supernatural. Plainly, once such disbelief becomes widespread, individuals need unusual qualities to be sure of the church's religious function. But churches do have other functions, and these may be perceived to have a utility more or less independent of that strictly religious function. A church might therefore attract many recruits even in a highly secularised atmosphere, were it not for a less dramatic but very important effect of secularisation, namely the tendency of a population that does not accept the existence of the supernatural, to lose interest in, and even knowledge of, the church's ideas and concern. Since new church members cannot be made of persons quite ignorant of a church and its teaching, the preparation of a secularised population for church membership becomes a lengthy process. 1.

This observation is borne out in the many exercises which the churches carried out following the First and Second World Wars in an attempt to win back particularly the men into their fellowships. There was the growth of Mens' Institutes and during the 1929 slump many of the churches established centres for the unemployed, serving free meals and establishing classes to create interest against the boredom, but as soon as any mention was made of the real spiritual purpose of the church, it was regarded as 'pie in the sky', and men turned away. Such centres were created in Cannon

1. Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert and Lee Horsley, Churches and Church Goers (Oxford, 1975) p. 41.

Street Baptist Church, Accrington, Union Street Methodist Church, Accrington, the Central Hall Methodist in Blackburn and in other churches Carr Road Congregational Church, Nelson, in Burnley, Colne and Haslingden.

The decline of Nonconformity in North East Lancashire proceeds at an ever increasing rate. Here and there Charismatic groups in both Anglican and Free Churches try to stimulate new life. There are those too whose cry is, 'back to the Bible,' and by that they mean a return to the fundamentalist interpretation of Scripture. Others come together from all the churches in the ecumenical movement and put all their hopes for renewal in organic church union.

In an interview with Ludovic Kennedy on television Professors Asa Briggs and A.J.P. Taylor recently argued that we learn no lessons from history. Looking back into the history of the Christian church and especially over the past three hundred years of Nonconformity, the moments of new life and light have come through men who had an intense and deep experience of Christ and gave evidence of a new spirit within them. They went out to share this new life with men and women, degraded and disheartened in a dismal industrial scene, and many responded and found joy and life. The sad fact is that as soon as these experiences were programmed and systematised, they began to lose their spiritual momentum and influence. The Free church denominations today, to meet the need, have to find some way out of the rigid organisation and systems against which they protested at their birth. Karl Barth's words seem particularly pertinent to the situation of Nonconformity today in North East Lancashire, 'let the church be the church'. Gratia Christi floreat.

APPENDIX IA.NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE. POPULATION TABLES. 1801-1901BLACKBURN HUNDRED.HIGHER AND LOWER DIVISIONS.

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>Acres.</u>	<u>1801</u>	<u>1811</u>	<u>1821</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1901</u>
ACCRINGTON (New Town)	2633	2246	2381	4109	8108	12952	43122
ACCRINGTON (Old Town)	792	831	815	1261	2266	8836	
HUNCOAT.	991	450	514	629	839	854	12811
BLACKBURN.	48254	33631	39899	53350	84919	131978	206291
BURNLEY.	1996	3305	4368	6378	14706	21501	44405
BAKROWFORD.	2365	1224	1721	2168	2875	3110	5448
COLNE.							
PADIHAM.	1953	2118	2556	3060	4504	6914	10500
WHALLEY.	1601	876	1004	1058	945	747	1100
DARWEN (Lower Town).	2667	1646	1805	2238	3521	3876	6597
DARWEN (Over Town).	5134	3587	4411	6711	11702	21278	35438
TOCKHOLES.	1991	758	1107	1269	939	646	496
GREAT HARWOOD.	2868	1659	1676	2104	2548	4907	12015
CLAYTON-LE-MOORS.	1050	1130	1423	1963	3292	5390	8153
HASLINGDEN.	4342	4040	5127	6595	9030	12000	16327
NEW CHURCH IN ROSSENDALE.	5868	5046	6930	8557	16915	26823	26917
TOTAL.		66547.	76807.	101450.	167079.	272212.	428620.

APPENDIX IB.NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE. POPULATION FIGURES 1951 and 1961.

Laid before Parliament pursuant to Section 4. (1) Census Act 1920.

	<u>1951</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>Increase.</u>	
<u>County Boroughs.</u>				
Blackburn.	111,218	106,104	-2,652	-3.9%
Burnley.	84,987	80,586	-4,399	-5.2%
Administrative County.				
<u>M.B.s U.D.s</u>				
Accrington M.B.	40,685	40,987	302.	0.7%
Bacup M.B.	18,374	17,295	-1,079.	-5.9%
Barrowford.	4,766	4,531	- 235.	-4.9%
Brierfield.	7,009	6,958	- 51.	-0.7%
Church.	5,200	5,880	680.	13%
Clayton.	6,825	6,421	- 404.	-5.9%
Clitheroe. M.B.	12,062	12,147	85.	0.7%
Colne. M.B.	20,670	19,410	-1,260.	-6.4%
Darwen. M.B.	30,827	29,452	-1,375.	-4.5%
Great Harwood.	10,739	10,718	- 21.	-0.2%
Healingden.	14,513	14,370	- 143.	-1.0%
Nelson.	34,384	31,950	-2,434.	-7.1%
Oswaldtwistle.	12,130	11,915	- 215.	-1.8%
Padiham.	10,041	9,893	- 148.	-1.5%
Rawtenstall.	23,437	23,869	432.	6.2%

APPENDIX IIA.BAPTIST CHURCHES NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE.STATISTICS OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP. 1875 - 1962.

<u>Name of church</u>	<u>Date.</u>	<u>Seats.</u>	<u>1875</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1962</u>
<u>ACCRINGTON.</u>					
Cannon Street.	1760	900	360	609	198
Barnes Street.	1858	700	126	136	Closed.
Royd Street.		550	-	-	51
<u>BACUP.</u>					
Ebenezer.	1710	800	329	288	139
Zion.	1821	600	217	234	United with Acre Mill.
Irwell Terrace.	1821	500	197	128	-
Doals.	1865	320	70	124	64
Acre Mill.	1889	420	-	128	106
South Street.	1851	300	35	47	47
Briarcliffe Lane.	-	-	127	173	107
Briarfield.	1886	150	130	-	69
<u>BLACKBURN.</u>					
Montague Street.	1838	700	122	236	United with Leamington Road.
Leamington Road.	1886	395	-	112	195
<u>BURNLEY.</u>					
Ebenezer.	1787	850	266	383	186
Yorkshire Street.	1818	400	222	198	216
Enon.	1850	365	-	241	109
Mount Pleasant and Hammerton Street.	1865	500	90	180	94
Immanuel.	1850	1600	-	19	-
Mount Olivet.	1893	120	-	75	57
Angle Street.	-	200	-	-	132
Haggate.	1767	800	214	480	144
BILLINGTON.	1850	100	-	-	38
<u>COLNE.</u>					
Trinity.	1772	750	142	245	50
<u>CHURCH.</u>					
Ernest Street.	1870	750	365	278	201
<u>DARWEN.</u>					
	1858	350	-	122	40
TOTAL.		13,120	3,096	4,436	2,326

APPENDIX IIB.BAPTIST CHURCHES NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE.STATISTICS OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP. 1875-1962. Continued....

<u>Name of Church.</u>	<u>Date.</u>	<u>Seats.</u>	<u>1875</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1962</u>	
<u>NELSON.</u>						
Carr Road.	1874	150	36	291	114	
Woodlands Road.	1896	350	-	60	60	
<u>PADIHAM.</u>						
Burnley Road.	1852	400	-	69	34	
Pendle Street.	1866	200	263	81	-	
<u>OSWALDTWISTLE.</u>						
New Lane.	1840	700	141	217	117	
<u>HASLINGDEN.</u>						
Trinity.	1811	-	234	367	235	Churches unite 1969.
Bury Road.	1842	-	152	191	127	
<u>ROSSENDALE VALLEY.</u>						
Cloughfield.	1672	750	278	255	175	
Goodehaw.	1756	300	62	109	126	
Lumb.	1828	250	140	279	104	
Ramebottom.	1851	600	-	319	135	
Rawtenstall.	1872	750	26	81	137	
Sunnyside.	1847	-	96	-	37	
Waterbarn.	1847	750	267	366	209	
Waterfoot.	1854	-	110	199	167	
Mt. Zion Edgeside.	1853	-	-	88	147	
<u>SABDEN.</u>						
	1798	300	142	157	72	
TOTAL.		5,500	1,947	3,209	1,996	
Carried forward		13,120	3,096	4,436	2,326	
		<u>18,620</u>	<u>5,043</u>	<u>7,645</u>	<u>4,322</u>	

APPENDIX IIIA.STATISTICS. CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE 1900-1975.

<u>Name of church.</u>	<u>Est. Since.</u>		<u>Sunday school scholars.</u>				<u>Church Members.</u>				
			1900	1925	1950	1975	1900	1925	1950	1975	
<u>ACCRINGTON.</u>											
Oak Street.	1839	900	430	260	50	79	248	248	248	101	
Higher Antley.	1929			90	20		62	26			
Park.	1890	400	309	140			92	160			
Whalley Road.	1877	300	286	200	172		73	136	131		
<u>BARNOLDSWICK.</u>											
				200	60		55	108	55		
<u>BARROW(WHALLEY).</u>	1876	160	85	45	25	40	22	35	45	35	
<u>BARROWFORD.</u>	1846	520	205	118			102	92			
<u>BELTHORN.</u>	1850			160	42	12		103	94	39	
<u>BLACKBURN.</u>											
Adley Range.	1888	750	665	400	270	100	144	198	144	133	
Brownhill.	1929					183			168	132	
Chapel Street.	1778	1350	421	150	80	26	435	420	251	100	
Cherry Tree.	1888	400	210	114	70	47	100	48	139	80	
Four Lane Ends.	1885	250	240	171	134	77	81	63	105	265*	
Furthergate.	1874	800	916	632	285	98	300	355	253	173	
James Street.	1841	1000	611	125	150		306	90	200		
Montague Street.	1862	750	180	100			55	95	150		
<u>LOWER DARWEN.</u>											
Park Road.	1852	950	540	147	180		197	92	125		
Witton.	1884	400	175		95		75		50		
Mill Hill.	1848				149	66			199	110	
Bretherton.	1819	320	103				69				
<u>BRIARFIELD.</u>	1836	600	330		56	5	175	94	33	30	
<u>BURNELY.</u>											
Bethesda.	1807	650	341	142	48	20	187	125	86	109	
Hollingreave.	1890	670	592	392	140	100	129	106	95	54	
Rose Grove.	1901	380		109	72			27	24		
Salem.	1849	800	431	273	100		302	277	125		
Westgate.	1859	1000	500	248	50		195	125	41		
Thursley Road.	1914	240		117				80			
<u>CHIPPING.</u>	1898				12				16		
<u>CLITHEROE.</u>				179		38	124	132	175	102	
<u>COLNE.</u>				252		20	130	192	130	48	
<u>NELSON.</u>								530	200		
TOTAL.							3,558.	3,967.	3,204.	1,511	

APPENDIX III B.

STATISTICS. CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE 1900-1975.

<u>Name of church.</u>	<u>Est.</u>	<u>Stnqs.</u>	<u>Sunday school scholars.</u>				<u>Church Members.</u>				
			1900	1925	1950	1975	1900	1925	1950	1975	
<u>DARWEN.</u>											
Belgrave.	1793	1120	627	314	75	25	250	270	180	104	
Bolton Road.	1883	600	502	400	165	47	90	187	137	45	
Duckworth Street,	1687	1100	632	480	140	55	247	266	203	122	
Highfield.	1860	350	120	230	150		42	92	110		
Holline Grove.	1876	460	430	300	140		105	155	128		
Lower Chapel.	1687	900	454	496	86	38	177	256	100	79	
Pickup Bank.				160	70			71	60		
<u>GREAT HARWOOD.</u>											
	1841	600	460	280	90	57	112	236	127	94	
<u>READ.</u>											
	1884	400	132	150	41	14	48	42	25	16	
<u>HASLINGDEN.</u>											
	1785	700		193	75	51		267	125	85	
<u>NELSON.</u>											
	1865	750	500	254	156	34	330	200	150	29	
<u>PADIHAM.</u>											
	1895	60		50	28			44	30		
<u>RISHTON.</u>											
	1874	300	273	80	20		68	45	48		
<u>TOCKHOLES.</u>											
	1662	230	80	100	20	5	55	50	48	20	
<u>BACUP.</u>											
			170	140			82	58	43		
<u>OSWALDTWISTLE.</u>											
	1870	420	58	65			37	32			
TOTAL.							1,643.	2,271.	1,514.	594.	
Carried fwd.							3,558.	3,957.	3,204.	1,511.	
							<u>5,201.</u>	<u>6,338.</u>	<u>4,718.</u>	<u>2,105.</u>	

APPENDIX IVA.

WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCHES NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE.

STATISTICS OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP 1848 - 1962.

Name of church.

CIRCUIT. 21/1

BURNLEY.

Hargreave St.Cent.	1967	240				
Parkside Cog Lane.	1907	105				
Ighten Hill.	1903	400				
Worsthorne.	1877	400				
Westhill	1965	150				
Towneley.	1883	240				
Woodtop.	1892	150				
Briarfield.	1860	560				
Wheatley Lane.	1867	310				
Harle Syke.	1904	100				
Elim.	1894	580				
Brunshaw.	1957	120				
Colne Road.	1872	220				
Circuit membership.	-		1148	1475	1336	1700

PADIHAM. 21/1

Trinity.	1892	450				
Sabden.	1844	40				
Higham.	1874	350				
Hapton.	1885	150				
Lower House.	1898	280				
Rose Grove.	1902	425				
Circuit membership.	-			459	552	644

BLACKBURN. 21/3

Central Fielden St.	New	-				
Central Queens Hall.	1922	1120				
Wiltshire.	1904	250				
Derby Street.	1876	200				
Griffin Street.	1882	650				
Knuzden.	1867	128				
Feniscowles.	1865	170				
Mellor.	1895	170				
Langho..	1914	102				
New Row	1860	300				
Bentham Road.	1910	110				
TOTAL.		7,610	1,148	1,934	1,888	2,344

APPENDIX IVB.

WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCHES NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE.

STATISTICS OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP 1848-1962 continued

<u>Name of church.</u>	<u>Date.</u>	<u>Seats.</u>	<u>1848</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1925</u>	<u>1962</u>
Hoghton.	1794	175				
Lammack.	1960	200				
Hawthorne Street.	1966	120				
Oxford Road.	1874	500				
Haslingden Road.	1880	130				
Highecroft.	1952	50				
Circuit membership.			-	1928	1619	1743
<u>GREAT HARWOOD 21/3.</u>	1915	373				
Central.	1883	460				
Orchard Street.	1902	280				
Clayton-le-Moors.	1914	570				
Rishton Barnes Square.	1862	520				
Circuit membership.				417	497	817
<u>DARWEN 21/4.</u>	1970	180				
Park Road.	1894	175				
Lower Darwen.	1871	250				
Spring Vale.	1867	100				
Circuit membership.				408	352	431
<u>HASLINGDEN 21/5.</u>						
Manchester Road.	1857	932				
Wesley Blackburn Road.	1880	420				
Helmshore.	1896	290				
Baxenden.	1870	100				
Irwell Vale.	1893	100				
Circuit membership.				693	698	621
<u>ACCRINGTON 21/7.</u>						
Central Whalley Road.	1926	320				
Antley.	1961	350				
Rhyddings. Osw.	1836	545				
Green Haworth.	1903	249				
West End.	1938	158				
Stanhill.	1836	145				
Huncoat.	1869	300				
Cambridge Street	1883	150				
Springhill	1868	150				
Circuit membership				1246	1225	1183
TOTAL.		8,178		4,692	4,391	4,795

APPENDIX IVC.

WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCHES NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE.

STATISTICS OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP 1848-1962 continued.....

<u>Name of church.</u>	<u>Date.</u>	<u>Seats.</u>	<u>1848</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1925</u>	<u>1962</u>	
<u>COLNE 21/8.</u>							
St. Johns.	1968	240					
Prinet Bridge.	1871	148					
Langroyd Road.	1890	200					
Trawden.	1810	110					
Foulridge.	1872	310					
Laneshaw Bridge.	1858	120					
Cotton Tree.	1893	145					
Circuit membership			749	715	476	709	
<u>NELSON 21/10.</u>							
Central Carr Rd.	1865	434					
Cooper Street.	1884	330					
Temple Street.	1904	215					
Southfield.	1796	100					
Hollins Road.	1953	100					
Higherford.	1895	626					
Reedyford.	1874	240					
Barley.	1910	118					
Circuit membership			-	1118	926	406	
<u>CLITHEROE 21/11.</u>							
Trinity.	1868	430					
West Bradford.	1904	120					
Whalley.	1872	240					
Waddington.	1907	130					
Low Moor.	1892	250					
Chatburn.	1883	250					
Slaidburn.	1889	197					
Grindleton.	1862	146					
Harrop.	1819	88					
Paythorne.	1830	90					
Circuit membership			517	409	541	627	
TOTAL.			5,377.	1,266.	2,242.	1,943.	1,742.

APPENDIX IVD.WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCHES NORTH EAST LANCASHIRE.STATISTICS OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP 1848-1962 continued...

<u>Name of church.</u>	<u>Date.</u>	<u>Seats.</u>	<u>1848</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1925</u>	<u>1962</u>
<u>BACUP 6/16.</u>						
Central.	1898	400				
Heald.	1867	250				
Beulah.	1884	225				
Sharneyford.	-	150				
Shawforth.	1875	150				
Stacksteads.	1958	180				
Circuit membership			1350	932	815	604
<u>RAWTENSTALL 6/17.</u>						
Rawtenstall.	1842	450				
Rakefoot.	1810	832				
Newchurch.	1948	90				
Hareholme.	1873	140				
Whitewell.	1848	240				
Eden.	1874	120				
Circuit membership			-	634	673	900
TOTAL.			1,350.	1,566	1,488.	1,504.
Carried forward			1,148.	1,934.	1,888.	2,344.
			-	4,692.	4,391.	4,795.
			<u>1,266.</u>	<u>2,242.</u>	<u>1,943.</u>	<u>1,742.</u>
Total Methodist membership in the area.			<u>3,784.</u>	<u>10,434.</u>	<u>9,719.</u>	<u>10,385.</u>

APPENDIX VA.COLNE RELIGIOUS CENSUS. (BURNLEY GUARDIAN 1882 JULY 1st).

<u>Church of England.</u>	<u>Sittings.</u>	<u>Morning.</u>	<u>Evening.</u>
St. Bartholomews.	900	436	420
Christchurch.	800	100	112
Trinity Sch.Church.	200	-	-
Waterside.	150	-	-
<u>Wesleyans.</u>			
Albert Road.	1200	300	294
Windy Bank Mission.	120	61	47
Primet Bridge.	150	146	156
<u>Baptists.</u>			
East Parade.	500	198	312
<u>Primitive Methodist.</u>			
Market Street.	700	120	384
Primet Bridge.	200	52	22
<u>Congregational.</u>			
Dockray Square.	650	218	176
Waterside.	500	88	178
Primet Bridge.	500	104	125
<u>United Methodists.</u>			
Mt. Zion.	450	97	88
<u>Inghamites.</u>			
Colne Lane.	320	133	150
Winewall.	600	198	304
<u>Unitarians.</u>			
Stanley Street.	300	No returns.	
<u>Roman Catholics.</u>			
Mission Room.	110	77	-
Total number of Anglicans attending		536	532
Total number of Nonconformists attending		2,291	2,778

These figures demonstrate that in the extreme Eastern part of the North East Lancashire area the Nonconformist roots were strong and that until the beginning of the twentieth century Nonconformists outnumbered Anglicans by approximately four to one.

APPENDIX VI.COLNE RELIGIOUS CENSUS. (DURNIFY GUARDIAN 1892 Mar. 25th p.5.C.6)

<u>Place of Worship.</u>	<u>Sittings.</u>	<u>Morning.</u>	<u>Evening.</u>
Colne Parish Church.	820	426	450
Christchurch.	550	138	171
Church Green.	250	117	112
Church Mission.	60	27	31
<u>Wesleyan.</u>			
Albert Road.	970	376	380
Collingwood Street.	210	86	78
Langroyd Road.	350	63	59
Cotton Tree.	150	32	-
<u>Independent Methodist.</u>			
Bethel.	600	196	203
Providence.	450	76	140
Blucher Street.	250	39	42
<u>United Methodist.</u>			
Exchange Street.	400	150	101
<u>Primitive Methodist.</u>			
Skipton Road.	800	225	187
Bunkers Hill.	250	56	76
<u>Congregational.</u>			
Colne Road.	600	205	215
<u>Baptist.</u>			
Colne Road.	760	484	246
<u>Inghamite.</u>			
Colne Lane.	360	133	132
<u>Unitarian.</u>			
Stanley Street.	320	82	64
Salvation Army.	500	64	43
Spiritualist.	250	63	69
<u>Roman Catholic.</u>			
Mission Room.	250	103	95

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