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JOHN BURGESS

THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF METHODISM IN CUMBRIA

This thesis examines the proposition that all religious influence in Cumbria has been weak and that Methodism was only partly an exception to this rule. The role and strength of the Church of England, the Protestant Dissenters and the Roman Catholics from the 17th century to the 19th century is investigated in order to introduce the rise and progress of Methodism to 1830. It is argued that Methodism developed out of the extraordinary economic and social development in the county in the two periods 1800 to 1830 and 1860 to 1880, and because of the influx of outside Methodists who made limited impact on native Cumbrians. However as economic decline set in after 1900 Methodism lost its dynamism and commenced its protracted contraction of resources in chapels, membership numbers and circuit importance which so depended upon the increase in population brought about during the two periods. The major secessions of the Wesleyan Association in 1836 and the Wesleyan Reformers in 1850 are explored, as is subsequent history of the Wesleyans into the 20th century and of their splinter Connexions who became the United Methodist Free Churches. The second largest Connexion, the Primitive Methodists, are described in their progress in the county and the issue of the ministry receives prominence in this section, and in the concluding chapter concerning the 1932 Methodist Union in Cumbria. Two major Appendices present a detailed survey of leading Methodist laymen and ministers in the Primitive, Wesleyan and United Methodist ranks in the county, and the significance of religious census material as indicative of the popular support for the Methodists amongst the population. Three shorter Appendices deal with the peculiar case of Methodism on Alston Moor, and the weak presence of Methodism in Dumfries, and of the Bible Christian Connexion in the county. The final Appendix explores the changes in membership in a detailed analysis of one circuit, charting the causes and significance of these annual developments. The sources and bibliography bring together all known primary material relating to Cumbrian Methodism.

The Growth and Development of
Methodism in Cumbria.

Thesis submitted to the
University of Durham
for the
Degree of Master of Letters
by John Burgess MA 1979.

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PREFACE

This thesis charts the rise and progress of the several Methodist Connexions in Cumbria during the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. It breaks new ground in that apart from a few localised attempts no serious research has been carried out on the subject, and bearing in mind the plethora of books and theses on aspects of Cumbrian history and life the Methodist omission is a strange anomaly. Much of circuit and society life was and is mundane and placid, so that inevitably attention has been focused on the more noteworthy parts of Methodist history: the Association and Reform issues in Wesleyanism, the stresses and strains and tensions within Primitive Methodism, and experiences peculiar to County Methodism. With a virtually unexplored field, the thesis could not dwell on individual circuits or societies unless these were illustrative of general themes, whilst the magnitude of the task left many avenues untapped: chapel building and Methodist architecture, the schools and multifarious chapel social activities to mention a few. Ruthless editing was needed in order to keep the sea of facts and details at bay and distant from the analytical study of the success and failure of the Methodists. Rather than lapse into a hagiographical narrative of the advances of the Connexions a critical and at times calculatedly cruel stance had to be adopted when dealing with circuit history.

The need to preserve uncluttered the themes of the thesis led to the present unusual design where the main thesis is smaller than the combined Appendices and Sources. The main body deals with the actual rise and progress of the Methodist movement and leaves to a substantial appendix the wealth of biographical material unearthed over the years, and reference to this should be made concerning names of characters in the text. To present it thus allows the thesis to be clear and concise and avoids an excess of complex footnotes which would detract from the work and confuse readers whilst contributing little of benefit. The second appendix deals with the several religious censuses in detail, whilst their general summary and findings are incorporated into the main text. To attempt to place 30 pages of extra statistics into the reduced main body of the work would unnecessarily complicate it. The peculiarities of the presence of the Bible Christians likewise requires a short Appendix, as do the

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strange cases of Dumfries and Alston, both part of Cumbrian Methodism and yet both quite distinct in their subsequent Methodist history. The 6th and final Appendix concerns the study of membership changes and influence within one circuit which would once again detract from the themes of the thesis because of its detailed tables and statistical approach.

The thesis was born out of the wealth of circuit records which until recently were hidden away in a diversity of centres, and there must be hundreds of ledgers and minute books still to come to light. However a good start has been made, and it was felt necessary to include details of all these manuscript sources in the Sources and Bibliography. This is almost of thesis length itself because of the amount of primary information not previously used or discovered. With a view to stimulating and fostering more Methodist studies in the county, copious details are given throughout the text for further advanced studies, whilst the Sources bring together all known material relating to Cumbrian Methodism. As a pioneer thesis it was believed vital that this material together with locations be placed on display.

To simplify and to prevent repetition, the place of publication of books and articles are given only in the bibliography unless of particular importance; page numbers for the county newspapers have not been given since material relating to Methodism (and it exists in huge quantities) is always to be found on the Editorial page (if comment or news) or on the one letter page^{3e} in each volume. The amount of printed material on Cumbrian Methodism apart from that in newspapers is slim, but hopefully the new Wesley Historical Society Branch in the county will remedy this by bringing to light further sources. Manuscripts and other sources of county significance are underlined throughout the thesis because of their considerable contribution.

None of the thesis has appeared in print except for the following:

Appendix E, Methodism in Dumfries (Dumfries and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society) p.441 in this thesis.

John Wesley in Cumbria, publication of the Wesley Historical Society (Cumbrian Branch) 1979, pp.62, 73, 74 in this thesis.

Primitive Methodism in Barrow-in-Furness, Journal Number 5 and 6 of the Wesley Historical Society (Cumbrian Branch) 1979, p.222 in this thesis.

It is hoped that a book will follow the thesis in due course. Unless specifically stated, all work is that of the Author's and has been done solely for this thesis.

Acknowledgements are due to the many Cumbrians and Methodists too numerous to personally name who provided all manner of material and hospitality. Thanks must go to the staff of the John Rylands Library, particularly to Mr. D. Riley, and to Rev. J. C. Bowmer and his staff at the former Methodist Archives and Research Centre in City Road. Mr. Bruce Jones and the staff of the Record Offices in Carlisle, Kendal and Barrow who spent many hours over the years in aiding the work and particular help was received from David Bowcock, Frederick Brown, Jeremy Godwin, Oswald Lawrence, Patrick Radcliffe and Evelyn Watson. The painstaking work of these Cumbrian archivists has ensured an excellent supply of circuit sources for future students of Methodist history. Thanks are due to the County Library service, particularly the Tullie House staff in Carlisle who frequently discovered (with me) new and extraordinary facts about the county in our search for newspapers, books, periodicals and theses, and in the process all benefitted. Florence Alves finally triumphed over my handwriting and idiosyncracies to produce an excellent typescript. Professsor W. R. Ward remained an inspired and inspiring supervisor, able to find the time to advise over important and trifling matters alike. Finally, my wife endured this thesis for years, providing support and commonsense advice when needed, contributing a first-class map, and a patient understanding of the work involved.

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Abbreviations.

The following abbreviations have been employed throughout the thesis.

Bunting Transcripts: The index and transcripts of the letters to and from Rev. Jabez Bunting, compiled by W. R. Ward, in Durham University Library.

Wes. Meth. Mag: Wesleyan Methodist Magazine.

Prim. Meth. Mag: Aldersgate and Primitive Methodist Magazine.

Arm. Mag: Arminian Magazine.

Meths. Mag: Methodist Magazine.

Un. Meth. F.C. Mag: United Methodist Free Church Magazine.

Wes. Assoc. Mag: Wesleyan Association Magazine.

WHS Procs: Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society.

Journal WHS Cumbria: Journal of the Wesley Historical Society, Cumbria Branch.

CWAAS NS (OS): Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, New Series (Old Series).

CRO: Carlisle Record Office, The Castle, Carlisle. (Cumbria's Record Office Headquarters).

KRO: Westmorland Record Office, Kendal.

BRO: Record Office at Barrow (Barrow and Westmorland being now under Carlisle's direction).

LRO: Lancashire Record Office, Preston.

Cheshire RO: Cheshire Record Office.

Rylands Library: The John Rylands University Library,
(University of Manchester).

TABLE 1

Formation of Circuits:

Wesleyan:

Whitehaven	1769
Carlisle	1801
Brough	1803 (Appleby head of circuit 1825/77, Kirkby Stephen 1877 on).
Kendal	1805
Alston	1808
Ulverston	1810 (Mission 1805).
Wigton	1818
Penrith Brampton Cockermouth and	1824 (1806/18 out of Brough, reunited 1818/24). 1836
Keswick	1854 (Out of Workington and Wigton).
Workington	1865 (1840/54 out of Whitehaven; reunited 1854/65).
Kirkoswald	1871
Sedbergh	1871 (Formerly under Hawes and Kendal; reunited to Kendal 1900).
Barrow	1871
Maryport	1876 (Out of Wigton; reunited 1900).
Ambleside	1878 (Out of Kendal; reunited 1900).
Millom	1892

Whitehaven District Formed 1798

Replaced by Carlisle in 1805

TABLE 1Primitives:

Carlisle	1823
Alston	1835
Whitehaven	1840
Brough	1849
Kendal	1857
Maryport	1862
Barrow	1866
Penrith	1876
Wigton	1883
Workington	1884
Cockermouth	1893
Dalton and	
Millom	1894
Brampton	1906

Under Sunderland District until 1886 formation of Carlisle and Whitehaven District; Barrow and Dalton under Liverpool.

INTRODUCTION

Cumbria is that region of northwest England covering the former counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, the districts Cartmel and Furness prior to 1974 belonging to Lancashire, and the Sedbergh area previously part of Yorkshire. It covers approximately 1.6 million acres, and the Alston locality apart, forms a geographical unity, having natural boundaries on all sides - the Pennines in the east, the frontier with Scotland in the north, the Solway to the west, and Morecambe Bay to the south. The long coastal plain provides sharp contrast to the mountainous interior in the Lake District, before the Pennine range once more joins the county to the inland areas after a leap across the Eden and Lune valleys. As a political frontier it rarely enjoyed peace until after 1745, remaining isolated from London and dependent on its own resources at all times. The tardy and erratic settlement pattern bears witness to the natural obstacles provided in the region to human habitation, and though the past 200 years of people have found the county beautiful, the previous 33 centuries found Cumbria experiencing hardship and privation. Little is known about the early history of man in the county and only with the surge of economic development during the middle ages - iron making, the woodland crafts, mining - did Cumbria come into the national stage (wars apart). In the general increase in population and the twin revolutions of industry and agriculture, Cumbria was slow to respond, but with the cessation of hostilities with Scotland, and the "discovery" of the Lakes, in the later 18th century the modern invasion of the area began. Allied to this was the growth of not only the woodland crafts but of quarrying and mining as the natural resources of the area were plundered. The commencing of major roads into Cumbria and 80 years later the first railways, ensured a speeding up of the pace of change, and by the 1860s Carlisle had risen to importance as service, communications and market centre. Though the old mining centre of Whitehaven, a supplier of coal for the Irish trade since the 17th century and a major port in the early 18th century, lost its dominance, there grew up new mining villages, new ports and Workington, a large industrial town based on iron and steel, in West Cumberland during the mid and later 19th century with the county's largest concentration of people. At the same time, the development of Barrow, the second town of the county, as a ship-building and industrial centre in the far south, and the iron mining

in Millom, gave brief economic growth to an area not usually associated with industry. The county remained predominantly rural, with market towns and large villages placed at regular intervals, around the central Lake mountain core. By the turn of the century, economic stagnation was taking a grip on an industrial economy based on old and declining trades, and with no alternative employment available the depression of the 1920s crippled the west and south which to this day have an air of decay. Carlisle and much of Cumbria were not damagingly affected but it was evident that new diversified industrial concerns were required, particularly because of the absolute refusal of Cumbrians to leave their county in search of work. Cumbria remains to this day split between the industrial and services centres of Carlisle, West Cumberland and Barrow; the congested tourist centre where the sheep farmers manage to maintain a presence in the Lakes; and the outer ring of the circle, the large area of good farming land and small market towns, of which Kendal is the largest.

In a harsh environment the inhabitants were tough, uncommunicative and independent, minding their own business and brooking no interference from outsiders. This state of affairs was modified with the onslaught of tourism and immigrant workers from all over the British Isles, though the native Cumbrians stayed aloof from the colonies of Staffordshire, Manx, Cornish, Irish, Scottish, Durham and other newcomers, and integration was slow. As far as religion was concerned, the Roman Catholic Church's presence has been measured in its provision of the rites of passage - baptism, marriage and funeral - and particularly its economic importance via the influence of the monasteries. With their passing, and the arrival of the Church of England, Cumbrians paid little heed and organised religion played little part in their day to day life. Attendance at Church was sporadic because of the inadequacies of church and priestly provision in areas of wild country and few inhabitants whilst the towns fostered early Dissent, though often amongst newcomers brought by opportunities of trade and commerce. The Cumbrians were impervious to the efforts of the various denominations, for their approach to life was a severely practical one in which religion offered little inducement for participation. More than a suspicion of paganism lingered in the fells and dales of the county and rebuffed an

imposed and alien Christian tradition, just as the natives ignored secular authority. The achievement of the Methodists, limited as it was yet more successful in producing a spirit alive to religious expression than other denominations, was due to their beliefs brought in to the county by outsiders who settled as workers and at length were able to recruit from amongst Cumbrian stock. It was nonetheless true that the Cumbrians' attachment to religion was tenuous and frequently non-existent from the earliest times into the 20th century. Against this background of indifference struggled the several denominations: the Church of England, Roman Catholics, Protestant Dissenters, and the Methodists. Whilst the others occupy a role in this book, the work gives the centre of the stage to the development and growth of Methodism in Cumbria.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The Church of England

The Church of England has figured prominently in studies of History ~~mainly~~ because of its impact and influence in the South and Midlands of England rather than in the North. The neglect, inefficiency and incompetence of the Church has received attention from both those who wish to uphold this blackened picture and more recently from those eager to show that the Church was nowhere near as "useless" as previous decades of scholars had maintained, certainly during the period 1700 to 1830 when the Church's fortunes were nationally at their lowest ebb (1). The Church reflected the society which bred it, and society received in exchange the Church it deserved, as has always been the case. The traumatic changes of the population and industrial and agricultural revolutions in the later 18th century and early 19th century presented such difficulties that society endured successive crises, as did the Church, and out of the challenges arose the Methodists, and later a reformed Church too (2). It has often been stated that the weakness and abuses of Anglicanism brought about strong Dissent, but this is questionable, since in Cumbria where Anglicanism was weakest, Dissent only grew significantly

1. A. Warne, Church and Society in the 18th Century, 1969, ch.1;
A. Armstrong, The Church of England, the Methodists and Society, 1969, ch.1.
2. A. D. Gilbert, Religion and Society in Industrial England - Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740/1914. 1976 p.68.

in the mid 17th century when the Church was supposed to be stronger. More-over during the 18th century decline of Anglicanism, Dissent too deteriorated in its fortunes until the rise of a new Dissent based on Wesley and his Methodists (3).

To a great measure the Church functioned satisfactorily in the southern part of England, near central authority, a wealthy and civilised area with a majority of the clergy, rich livings and strong local government. However, with the rise of urban industrial and mining centres in the Midlands and particularly the North, Anglican manpower and resources took decades to channel away from their centuries old homes and into newly developing areas (and to some extent never caught up with the changes until it was too late), with the result that the huge parishes, in area and population, of the North all too often furnished clear evidence of a Christian wilderness (4). The Religious Census of 1851 merely affirmed what many suspected - the failure of the Church in towns, and in the north and Midlands (5). The report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1835 revealed half of clergy not resident in their parishes, and 83% of these were pluralists, often of 3 or more livings. Only 42% of clergy could be discovered to be living in their parish. To the 10,553 beneficed clergy had to be added 4,250 curates who stood as helpers and replacements for clergy, but 753 parishes had no curate or incumbent. The average stipend was £285 for incumbents, £81 for curates, and hundreds of curates lived on starvation wages. Only 2,500 livings were under clerical control, 1,100 being in the hands of the Crown, the large majority in lay control (6). The distribution

3. C. K. Francis-Brown, History of the English Clergy 1800/1900, 1953; H. M. Brown, Methodism and the Church of England in Cornwall, London University Ph.D, 1946.

4. Gilbert, as in no.2, p.99.

5. Appendix B on the Religious Census and Cumbria.

6. Gilbert, as in no.2, p.100; Armstrong, as in no.1, p.129; Francis-Brown, as in no.3, ch.2.

of wealth reflected the north/south division, the more northerly the diocese the poorer it was, though every diocese had some rich livings. The Church was so closely tied to the landowners and the government that its clergy provided hundreds of magistrates, 30% of all clergy being Justices by the 1830s (7) dependent on landowners and government control. In much of the North the Church could expect little in the way of help from these two sources.

If the Church in the south was incapable or unwilling to reform and modernise, then there was no chance that this would happen in the North, and especially not in Cumbria, that most neglected outpost on the English borders and in some ways never fully assimilated into the mainstream of English life until the 19th century. The county was divided into the Chester Deaneries in the south and west, into the little Diocese of Carlisle in the east and north, and there were no changes in ecclesiastical machinery or attitudes on a large scale from the 12th century until 1856 when Cumbria became the new Diocese of Carlisle (8). The 2 Bishops controlled 50 livings, the Dean and Chapter 29, the Lowthers 36 (including most of the richest) and the rest were under lay control, by the early 19th century (9). The Lowthers were distinguished in Cumbrian landowning circles by being the richest and most powerful, and the most successful in keeping Dissent weak in their territory (except the western mining parishes), the nearest equivalent of the ability of landowners and clergy to control religion in the countryside. Unfortunately for the Church, there were only a handful of such magnates; in Cumbria large landowners were rare, and with the rise of industrial areas in the north, south and west, during the later 18th century and 19th century, there was scant opportunity for Church authorities to be influential.

7. H. B. Brown, as in no.3, p.33 and p.55.

8. R. S. Ferguson, Diocesan History of Carlisle 1889, p.191.

9. R. S. Ferguson, as in no 8, p.137.

The Church of England failed to operate successfully in Cumbria in any period of its history, and though it may not have been any worse in its inadequacies than in most parts of England, in Cumbria it perpetuated the inability of organised religion to cope with the situation. The Church had always played some part in community life but usually only directly affected the Cumbrian at baptism, marriage and death. The majority of people never attended communion, regarded as the test of membership of the Church, and, split as the diocese was between the Chester Deaneries of Kendal, Furness and Copeland under Chester Diocese, and the small diocese of Carlisle, the area felt little of the Anglican influence experienced by more southerly counties. Life continued alongside the Church and the two did not usually meet in the life of an average Cumbrian during any epoch. If religious life is judged by the influence of the Church, and measured by the numbers who attended it, then in Cumbria religious life was always at a low ebb and the differences between centuries were just a question of the degree of weakness of Church in the county, and never one of its strengths.

During the 17th and 18th centuries the weakness of the Anglicans in a stable society was the opportunity of the early Dissenters, though notably only the Quakers capitalised on this, and then solely locally and never in an organised fashion. Few Cumbrians took the conscious and deliberate decision to go to a Dissenting chapel after the failure of the Establishment, and even into the 19th century only the Methodists showed an ability to minister to the large percentage of folk who never attended a religious service. When population was in flux in the industrial changes of the 19th century the Anglicans failed to do much to keep pace with change, hence the success of the Methodists in the mining and industrial villages of the west and south, bereft of Anglican presence. Only in the later 19th century was there in Cumbria a sense of a religious awakening amongst the Anglicans, though this situation encouraged indifference, not Dissent.

The government of the country considered Cumbria only as a bastion against the Scots, and then limited concern to Carlisle (which

as 1745 showed was insufficient for an emergency) (10). The attitude of the Bishops appointed to the Diocese of Carlisle was that Rose Castle, their palace near Dalston, was fit for a country holiday of 3 or 4 weeks per year but for nothing else. As one of the three poorest dioceses, Carlisle was attractive to those men seek- to use it as a stepping stone to greater things, and interest in the county from the Bishops' point of view scarcely occurred. Immediately after the Restoration in 1660 Sterne took scant notice of his See in the 4 years before being translated to York, and his successor at Carlisle, Rainbow, spent more time disputing with Sterne over liability for repairs to Rose Castle than he did on the diocese. Like other 17th and 18th century Bishops, these men had to spend most of their year in London and the House of Lords, their appointments being by politics and influence, and the price their support of the government in office (11). William Nicolson, like his predecessor Smith a Cumbrian, was the first Bishop to win any praise for his work in the county during the early 18th century. He was son of the vicar at Great Orton, related to many of the gentry of the county, and a highly educated and skilled administrator and cleric (12). His Primary Visitation in 1702 provided a great eye-opener to himself, to the authorities at that time and to historians since, and Nicolson spared no pains in hunting down malefactors who incurred his wrath. He revealed an appalling state of affairs; churches and parsonages commonly non-existent or ruined, neglectful clergy and rectors, pluralistic and absentee clergy, all manner of scandals concerning incumbents and parishes, and a general indifference amongst Cumbrians to the Church. He even discovered clergy locking him out of their churches so that he would not discover the chaos and messes inside them, and was not sure of the boundaries of his Diocese with Durham in the east. 45 years later there had not been significant changes despite his efforts and those of his successors, with only

10. C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People of the Lake Counties 1948, p.319; R. S. Ferguson, Diocesan History of Carlisle.

11. C. M. L. Bouch, as in no.10, pp.269 to 300.

12. C. M. L. Bouch, as in no.10, p.301.

the scandals being reduced in number (13) and whatever may have been written about the period from an Anglican point of view, Cumbria stands with the worst of the country's Sees in its Anglican neglect.

Nicolson, himself, was involved in long and violent dispute, as were most 18th century Bishops, and only just managed to overcome the combined opposition of Dr. Todd and Dean Atterbury in order to re-assert his power in the Cathedral Chapter along with his right of Visitation (14). After Nicolson and until the later 19th century, each Bishop showed "nothing except the most perfunctory interest in the Diocese" (15). Venables was the first to station his family at Rose Castle in the 1790s, though he rarely managed to leave London with its government duties and social pleasures. Until 1856 Goodenough and then Percy successfully prevented change in the Diocese and discouraged ideas of an Evangelical Revival by frowning on the work of men like Fawcett and Milner in Carlisle. The few zealous or reforming clergy in those years were soundly kept in their place; it says much for Percy, one of the richest men in the Kingdom, son of the Duke of Northumberland, and taking scarcely 5% of his annual income from the See of Carlisle, that he spent £40,000 on making Rose Castle fit for his monthly holiday each summer whilst at the same time winning respect amongst some Cumbrians for becoming an expert on horses and racing. It was he who prevented the plans to unite Cumbria in the one diocese worked out in 1836 from being implemented until his death 20 years later (16).

The Chester Deaneries, of Kendal, Furness and Copeland, were the forgotten outposts of the huge unwieldy diocese of Chester until their

13. Miscellany Accounts of the Diocese of Carlisle, by William Nicolson, Bishop of Carlisle, 1703, with additions by Chancellor Waugh, 1747. (Ed. R. S. Ferguson, 1877.) Manuscript in CRO.

14. Bouch, as in no.10, p.296.

15. Bouch, as in no.10, p.368.

16. Bouch, as in no.10, p.382.

1856 union with Carlisle. They covered half of the county, were under the Archdeaconry of Richmond, and were ignored by successive Bishops and Archdeacons. Poor roads and a lack of suitable accommodation were insuperable problems to the Bishops and their officials, so that the state of ignorance concerning the area in the diocesan hierarchy was astounding, and as late as the 1830s one Bishop was startled to realise the extent of his See and to discover that no survey had been carried out in the 3 Deaneries since 1778. This latter investigation by Porteous, superseded that of Gastrell in the 1720s and was used as the sole basis for knowledge of the Deaneries. The Bishops were like those of Carlisle, political appointees, and spent most of the 18th and early 19th centuries taking part in bitter battles between Tory and Whig. These disputes were especially fierce in Cheshire and South Lancashire, so that there was little time and energy to spare for the area North of Preston (17). What alarmed Bishops Porteous and Gastrell was the apparent breakdown in relations between clergy and their parishes and the lack of clerical influence across great tracts of the county. The clergy were criticised by Porteous for being too worldly and selfish in their roles, and directed that they should encourage the participation of lay people in church affairs since there was general indifference towards the Anglican Establishment. The condition of the Deaneries did not improve over the period 1700 to 1830, and once it was taken as certain that the three would be absorbed by Carlisle when Percy died all interest in the Deaneries ceased.

On the creation of the new diocese in 1856 and the doubling of parishes and clergy from 130 and more to over 250, Villiers, Waldegrave and Goodwin spent the next 40 years trying to sort out the problems inherited by the new See (18). Parsonage and church

17. John Addy, Two 18th Century Bishops of Chester and Their Diocese, Leeds University Ph.D. 1972. pp.21, 27 to 30, 43, 123.

18. Bouch, as in no.10, p.420.

rebuilding and provision were for the first time catered for, livings were eventually brought up nearer to the national average, and the two halves were forced to co-operate. Until 1886 the two halves worked separately and refused to integrate, but there were major boundary changes in that year, a Furness Archdeaconry was created, and 19 Rural Deans appointed in order to enforce integration of sorts and to co-ordinate one diocesan effort (19). Harvey Goodwin found that the rumours and stories of the inability of the Church to function in Cumbria were not exaggerated, and when he came north in the 1870s he discovered the clergy split into a number of warring factions (20). Laymen took little part in church life, there were shortages of trained and graduate clergy, and able men avoided the diocese. The Deaneries retained their stubborn independence and landowners and leading parishioners encouraged this state of affairs, since it aided their desire to control the livings. At his Primary Visitation in 1872 he startled the diocese by suggesting to the Cathedral clergy that they might consider doing some work for their stipends by taking on a parish, for he felt that here, as elsewhere, the Chapter exhibited all the old abuses which were by then dying out through the rest of the county. He attempted to attract able clergy north, and promoted church schools in every willage in order to counter what he considered to be the bad influence of Dissent. He encouraged Anglican rivalry of Dissent, particularly the Methodists, and exhorted clergy to mission Irish quarters against the priests and Orders. With 340 church schools he could not rely on the Rural Deans and he appointed his own lay inspectors to do the job properly. He took laymen into partnership, recruited them into every organisation of the Church and diocese, and initiated the trappings of the modern diocese - conferences, committees, newsletters, meetings and the like. It came as a shock to many incumbents when their Bishop announced that the day of the part-time parson was over (21).

19. H. D. Rawnsley, Harvey Goodwin, Bishop of Carlisle 1896; Bouch,, as in no.10, p.433.

20. Rawnsley, as in no 19, p.149.

21. Rawnsley, as in no 19, p.175.

Central to discussion of the role of the Church must be the issue of poverty. Cumbria was one of the poorest regions of England into the 20th century, of this there can be little doubt, and so clerical and church poverty was a natural corollary to this. (22) To some extent the cry of poverty was used to justify abuses in the diocese amongst the clergy - for instance pluralism, where an incumbent could not live off one stipend but needed two or even three - but the proof of relative poverty exists in indisputable form. There were some rich livings, particularly those attached to the Dean and Chapter and Archdeaconry, though these too were poor compared with other dioceses, but the majority of parish clergy received such small stipends that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1835 found Carlisle to be one of the three poorest dioceses, the others being Durham and Chester (23). Chester was divided into the well-off south and the poor north where livings were on a par with those of Carlisle. Curates for the absentee and pluralist clergy were usually wretchedly paid, and Nicolson 132 years previously had been appalled at the extent of poverty amongst curates and some incumbents. (24). The average stipend in the diocese of Carlisle was £175 in 1835, compared to the national average of £285; by 1856 the new diocese had 118 clergymen paid £85 per annum or less, under one third of the national average of 30 years previously. (25). Improvements brought the average to £238 by 1889 but this was well below the national average. Able Cumbrians left the county for the South; able outsiders could only be attracted into the county with difficulty. It says much for the salaries of teachers at that time that they were often desperate to enter Holy Orders, being only matched by the desperate attempts of successive Bishops to prevent them.

22. See Table 2, p. 15

23. See Table 3, p. 18

24. See Table 2 and Miscellany Accounts throughout.

25. See Table 3, p. 18.

TABLE 2Value of Livings: 18th Century (1730s) Furness, Copeland and Kendal Deaneries.

<u>Value £</u>	<u>Rectory/ Vicarage</u>	<u>Perpetual Curacies</u>	<u>Parochial Chapelries</u>	<u>Other Chapelries</u>	<u>Total</u>
0/5	0	1	10	6	17
5/10	1	8	20	10	39
10/20	4	2	2	1	9
20/30	4	1	1	0	6
30/40	3	0	1	0	4
40/50	5	0	0	0	5
50/75	6	0	2	0	8
75/100	1	0	0	0	1
100/200	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	27	13	36	17	93

(Based on returns made to the Commissioners of Queen Anne's Bounty:
56 of 93 livings were worth less than £10 per annum).

Source: C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People p.333

TABLE 2

Value of livings of Carlisle Diocesan Clergy: based on the returns of Commissioners of Queen's Anne Bounty 1707/1739.

<u>Value £</u>	<u>Rectories/ Vicarages</u>	<u>Perpetual Curacies</u>	<u>Chapelries</u>	<u>Total</u>
0/5	0	4	5	9
5/10	4	8	11	23
10/20	6	3	4	13
20/30	5	8	4	17
30/40	10	0	0	10
40/50	12	0	0	12
50/75	20	0	0	20
75/100	13	0	0	13
100/120	4	0	0	4
125/150	4	0	0	4
150/175	4	0	0	4
180	1	0	0	1
300	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	84	23	24	131

Note: Archdeacon held Great Salkeld worth £70 and Greystoke, £300;
3 Carlisle prebends held ones worth £123, £120 and £240 respectively.

Source: C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People p.319, 360, 361

TABLE 2Stipends of Curates circa 1790 in Carlisle Diocese:

<u>Stipend £</u>	<u>Curates Receiving</u>
20	7
25	1
30	3
40	4
50	1
63	1

The last time a curate received £20 was in 1800; new curates by 1815 received about £30 per annum, rising to £60; however the curate at Bowmess got £120 per annum, the Borrowdale one £30 per annum in 1814; (C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People p.378)

Source: C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People, p.375.

Absentee Clergy's Pay to their Curates circa 1780:

Value of Living	<u>280</u>	<u>270</u>	<u>170</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>60</u>
Stipend to Curate	36	30	20	16	15

Source: John Addy, Two 18th Century Bishops of Chester and Their Diocese, p.70.

TABLE 3Report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners 1835:

<u>Stipend £ p.a.</u>	<u>Carlisle</u>	<u>Chester</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>Living</u> s	<u>Deaneries</u>	
Under £50	4	6	10
50/75	23	30	53
75/100	25	33	58
100/150	25	23	48
150/200	18	7	25
200/300	15	7	22
300/400	10	2	12
500/600	4	2	6
600/700	2	0	2
900/1000	1	1	1
1000/1100	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	127	112	239

Bishop paid £4,500 per annum: 25 livings augmented in Diocese 1841/44.
 216 under £285 = 90% of total livings.

Average Stipend:

For England and Wales	£285
Carlisle Diocese	£175 = 61% of average national stipend
York Diocese	£242 = 85% of average national stipend
St. David's Diocese	£137 = 48% of average national stipend
Sodor & Man Diocese	£157 = 55% of average national stipend

No other Diocese out of 26 had average stipend worth less than £250 pa.
 Chester Diocese had above the national average due to the many
 wealthy livings in the southern half of the diocese, south Lancashire
 and Cheshire.

Source: C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People, p.380/382, etc.

TABLE 3The New Diocese 1856:

11 livings were worth less than £50 per annum, a further 9 under £60, 7 under £70, 26 under £80, 21 under £90, and 35 under £100 per annum; a total of 118 clergy with an average stipend of £83 per annum, or less than one third of the national average 20 years previously; (total livings = 260).

Stipends of the Diocese, later 19th Century:

1864: 94 livings under £100 per annum, 64 more under £150 per annum;

Average stipend for Diocese:	1869 - £200 per annum
	1883 - £250 per annum
	1889 - £238 per annum

Source: C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People, p.422/423, 437.

The basic fact of poverty was held accountable to a large extent for the several widespread abuses of the day (the 18th and 19th centuries). Parsonages or vicarages were often ruinous or non-existent, for instance in 1778 the investigation by Porteous revealed about half of the livings in the Deaneries had ruined or non-existent houses. When the Ecclesiastical Commissioners reported in 1835 the proportion had increased to over half, and the situation seemed to be deteriorating throughout the county. Even the Bishops found Rose Castle a place to avoid except for a few weeks per year and regarded it as a holiday cottage until Percy's extensive alterations. The Dean in 1828 refused to visit the Diocese at any time because he alleged that no house worthy of him could be found anywhere in the county (26). The Church and Parsonage Building and Benefit Society was founded in the diocese in 1856 but despite its considerable income, made no impression on the numbers of buildings requiring improvement until the early 1870s, when matters gradually improved. Unfortunately by that date the policy of pouring resources into vast country parsonages with 6 or 8 bedrooms had started, whilst other buildings which were needed were neglected.

Poverty was held responsible for absenteeism due to the lack of adequate housing; it was held responsible for pluralism too. Numerous acts of Parliament dealt with the problems of absenteeism and pluralism, and laid down clear cut rules for the toleration of both these features of 18th and 19th century Anglican life. Legislation and rules were blatantly ignored by most clergy, from the Bishops down to the curates. Both abuses might be damaging, and it all depended on the circumstances, but combined with other factors - for instance a large parish and population - Dissent might be encouraged. Nicolson, Waugh and others were surprised that Dissent was not stronger in places where the incumbent held three livings or had been

26. Francis Brown, History of the English Clergy;
John Addy, Two 18th Century Bishops of Chester and their Diocese,
p.67,69,149. C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People, 1.381,435.

absent 40 years, to take just two examples; but by itself, one of these abuses did not determine the success of Dissent (27). Absentee and pluralist clergy were common, and as late as 1856 45% of Cumbrian livings were held in plurality (28). Bishop Percy held 5 very lucrative livings at one time; John Waugh, Archdeacon and Chancellor and an excellent parson, held 4, and it was accepted as normal that incumbents (who were supposed to pay for curates in their stead) might live for 30 years in the Isle of Wight or Dublin and never come to their livings. The impotence of ecclesiastical machinery to counter abuses, and the unwillingness to do so, meant that Cumbrian clergy, as elsewhere, usually did what they liked.

Nothing in Cumbrian Diocesan life was unheard of in other dioceses, but the combination of the sum totals of the Church's inadequacies proved disastrous to its influence and authority. Neither did the regular scandals over the centuries improve the image of the Church. Scandals involving clergy were similar to those anywhere to be found in the country, ranging from the permanent one of the Dean and Chapter neglecting their responsibilities to Hodgson of Armathwaite who kept a public house as well as being curate in the early 18th century and who defied attempts over the years to oust him from one or the other (29). Eccentrics like Jefferson of Cockermouth, incumbent for 63 years, who thundered against what he considered to be the prevalent vices of his parishioners from his pulpit shortly before succumbing (aged 89) to cold caught wooing a girl of 20 in 1768 were to be tolerated and probably caused little damage to the Church; more serious, certainly in the case of Cockermouth, was the

27. See the chapter on the Dissenters for their relative strengths and weaknesses.

28. C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People, pp.368, 380.

29. Miscellany Accounts under each Living; C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People, pp.265, 381; B. Nightingale, The Ejected of Cumberland and Westmorland 1911, furnishes vast details on most parishes for the period 1640 to 1730, e.g. pp.609, 681.

ability of owners of the living preventing a successor being appointed from 1768 to 1795 so that they might enjoy the tithes and stipend themselves. In spite of savage attacks on them, the Lowthers weathered this and other ecclesiastical involvements with hardly a shiver. The Bishop of Chester was unable to persuade the Lowthers to do anything at all in the matter until they were ready. By the Victorian period the reputation that Cumbrian clergy had for drunkenness was less deserved than before, but the vicar of Ambleside was deprived of his living for habitual drunkenness and refused to give up the parsonage, so that the new man, plus family, had to find rented rooms. The Great Orton incumbent lost his living for simony and there were occasional cases of immorality amongst the clergy, but these may not have been as harmful as the less publicised attempts of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and their allies' failure to reform the Cathedral Chapter (30).

To some extent it was just as well that Cumbrian clergy were left to their own devices in parochial matters bearing in mind the state of the Dean and Chapter and the Bishops. The Dean and Chapter, composed of 4 Cannons and 20 or so minor Cannons and officials of little importance, had been fair game for attacks by those wishing to expose the state of the Church at its most vulnerable; the Chapter was a bastion of pluralism, absenteeism, neglect and incompetence and contained more Anglican abuses than a score of parishes. It epitomised what was worst in the Church; the Dean and 4 Cannons held 3 or 4 livings each, sometime^s as many as 25 between them, at all times from the 18th into the later 19th century. They rarely took part in Cathedral or parish activities and spent most of their year as absentees in the south of England, in spite of criticism on all sides by the 1820s (31). They shared out the profits from the extensive

30. C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People, pp. 390, 424, 421.

31. C. M. L. Bouch, as in no. 30 above, p. 382; The county press made much of the activities of the Anglican clergy throughout the 19th century, the radical press dwelling on the exposures of the abuses, the Tory press on bolstering a failing Church against the depredations of Dissenters and Liberals. Reams of detailed comment were passed on the subject of the Church, and especially on the deeds and mis-deeds of the Cathedral clergy - e.g. Carlisle Journal 1833, March 16th.

lands of the Cathedral and by the 1830s received vastly inflated incomes from tithe commutations. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners showed how 10 poor curates in Chapter appointments earned less than £2,000 between them in 1855, though their livings gave a net income of £10,000 to the Dean and Chapter. (32). Bishop Percy successfully prevented attempts to establish some control over Cathedral lands and livings and on the income of the Canons and Dean, but after his death the fight was inevitably lost by the time Goodwin arrived in 1872; ironically, the initial act of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners once they gained control of Cathedral moneys in 1856 was to increase greatly all stipends, which were below those nationally acceptable for Canons, whilst not cutting land and tithe profits. The Dean and Chapter were reviled in the county's press and received extensive coverage throughout the 19th century. It was unfortunate for the new Dean in 1858 that when he tried to make the Precentor, Livingstone, provide the music that the Dean wished to have, he was defeated in a famous court case and found himself liable for considerable costs (33). In the same year the new Bishop called for all Christians to unite with the Church of England to counter the alleged 90% of Cumbrians who did not attend any place of worship; the Editor of the Carlisle Journal could not resist the point that the Dean and Chapter were prime examples of why people did not go to Church (34). Bearing in mind the condition of the Church in the 18th and 19th centuries, there can be no doubt that at that time, and both before and later, the Established Church did not command the loyalty of more than a very small proportion of Cumbrians.

Attendance at Holy Communion has been considered the true test of Anglican adherence. If this is the case, then the Church had few supporters in Cumbria. Evidence suggests that communion was rare at most churches during the 18th century, commonly 2 or 4 times per year,

32. Carlisle Journal, 1855 July 15th.

33. Carlisle Journal throughout 1858.

34. Carlisle Journal April 16th, 1858.

and that Cumbrians would only attend if there was a sermon to justify their journey (35). On the other hand, the rarity of communion encouraged others to make a special effort to attend, and they neglected other services without it. The frequency with which communion was held varied with the parish and incumbent, but successive Bishops held its infrequency as partly to blame for the indifference of Cumbrians towards Church services, and after 1856 much attention was paid to enforcing communion more than monthly and the great festivals. As late as 1872 47 parish churches gave communion quarterly or less, though within 30 years the situation changed radically as Goodwin enforced it monthly in every church (36). The Chester Deaneries had infrequent communion too, and in for instance Kendal parish there was some confusion between the vicar and his dozen curates spread across a huge area, as to the holding of communion in their chapels which resulted in many parishioners being deprived of the opportunity to attend communion more than annually.

The 1789 Visitation returns for the Deaneries illustrate the lack of people at communion services. In Furness 17 parishes gave returns of about 10,500 population, between 700 and 850 attended communion or 6.6% to 8% of the inhabitants. At Easter the Returns were inconclusive, with only two being made but increasing attendants by 2 or 3 times. In Kendal, 14 parishes with 16,700 population averaged 460 to 540 communicants, or 2.7% to 3.2% of the population, which doubled to between 4.8% and 5.2% at Easter when more could be expected to attend. The 30 Returns for Copeland gave 3.1% to 5.9% attending out of 37,000 population, depending, of course, on the day, according to the incumbents. The one Easter return put the figures at about 6% or three times the normal number. For the three Deaneries, between 4.1% and 5.7% of the population might be expected to attend a normal communion service, with between 10.6% and 12.1% at Easter (though this was based on only 10 returns as against 61 for the usual services). Noticeable amongst the figures were the

35. See Table 4 p.25; John Addy, Two 18th Century Bishops of Chester and Their Diocese. p.155.

36. C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People, p.439.

TABLE 4Diocese of Chester 1789 Visitation Returns: Copeland Deanery.Communion Attendances 1789:

<u>Living</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Communion</u> <u>Attendants</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Population</u>	<u>Communion</u> <u>Xmas/Easter</u>
Arlecdon	300	30/50	10/17	
Bootle	600	-	-	
St. Bridget	(400?)	30		
Brigham	1,345	20	1.5	
Cockermouth	3,430	60/70	1.7/2	200 (5.8)
Embleton	(350?)	30		
Lorton	500	30	6	
Setmurthy	10/12	-	-	
Mussar	320	-	-	
Buttermere	80	14	17.5	
Wythop	160	23/26	14/16	
St. Bees	20	60/160		
villages.				
Eskdale	300	50/100	17/33	
Ennerdale	340	40/50	12/15	
Loweswater	385	50	13	
Wasdale Head	40	20	50	
St. Nicholas (Wh.)	15,000	)		
Holy Trinity (Wh.)	as above	30/300)	0.4/4	
Corney	200			
Dean (Pardshaw)	785	40/50	5/6	
Distington	760	20/30	2.6/4	
Drigg	300	50	7.7	
Egremont	1,500	50/150	3/10	
Harrington	1,306	20/40	1.5/3	
Haile	170	20	11.7	
St. John Beckermest	(300?)	30	10	
Irton	350	(unites with Drigg)		
Lamplugh	350			
Millom	805	30/220	3.7/27	
Thwaites	(500?)	100		
Ulpha	265	48/70	18/26	

TABLE 4

Diocese of Chester 1789 Visitation Returns: Copeland Deanery

Communion Attendances 1789:

<u>Living</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Communion</u> <u>Attendants</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Population</u>	<u>Communion</u> <u>Xmas/Easter</u>
Muncaster	410	70/80	17/19.5	
Ponsonby	220			
Waberthwaite	220	30/40	13.6/18	
Whitbeck	225	-	-	
Whicham	170	60/120	35/70	
Workington	4,250	80/100	1.8/2.3	
Clifton	500	-	-	

TABLE 4Diocese of Chester Visitation Returns 1789: Kendal DeaneryCommunion Attendances 1789:

<u>Living</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Communion</u> <u>Attendants</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Population</u>	<u>Communion</u> <u>Xmas/Easter</u>
Beetham	1,822	25	1.4	50 (2.7)
Witherslack	300	-	-	15 (5)
Burton in Kendal	1,150	10	1	30 (2.5)
Preston Patrick	290	-	-	-
Grasmere	1,000	30/50	3/5	60/80 (6/8)
Ambleside	125	-	-	-
Langdale	170	-	-	-
Heversham	3,000	40/80	1.3/2.6	
Crosscrake				
Crosthwaite	550	-	-	-
Kendal	very large (5,000) 14 villages + Town	100	Less than 2%	
Burneside	500	-	-	40 (8)
Crook	220	-	-	16 (7)
Grayrigg	650	-	-	-
Hugill	250	20	8	
Helsington	125	-	-	-
Kentmere	200	20/30	10/15	
Natland	240	-	-	-
Longsleddale	230	-	-	40 (17)
New Hutton	400	-	-	-
Old Hutton	450	40	9	
Selside	275	45	16	
Staveley	1,000	20	2	
Underbarrow	(150?)	8/12		
Winster	80	15	19	
Silverdale	200			
Windermere	1,750 plus part Ambleside	60	less than 3%	
Troutbeck	365	30	8	

TABLE 4Diocese of Chester Visitation Returns 1789: Deanery of FurnessCommunion Attendances 1789:

<u>Living</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Communion</u> <u>Attendants</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Population</u>	<u>Communion</u> <u>Easter</u>
Aldingham	2,400	50	2	
Dendron				
Cartmel	1,000	40	4	130 (13)
Flookburgh	1,000	60/90	6/9	
Lindale	350	30	8.6	
Finsthwaite	140	18/20	13	
Rusland	135	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ /20	9/15	
Dalton				
Ireleth	80	30	37	
Walney	200	30/40	15/20	
Hawkshead	1,500	50/60	3/4	
Satterthwaite	300			
Field Broughton	225			
Broughton	1,500	150/200	10/13	4/500 (27/33)
Woodland	65	30	46	
Pennington	300	25	8	
Blawith	160	40	25	
Coniston	415	50	12	
Lowick	330	50/70	15/21	
Torver	300	(12 miles to parish church)		
Urswick	615	30/50	5/8	

<u>Deanery</u>	<u>% of Population at</u> <u>Communion</u>	<u>% of Population at</u> <u>Easter Communion</u>
Copeland	3.1 to 5.9	5.8
Kendal	2.7 to 3.2	4.8 to 5.2
Furness	6.6 to 8.0	21.2 to 25.2 (only 2 returns)

Total for Deaneries: 4.1 to 5.7 (61 returns) 10.6 to 12.1 (only
10 returns)

number of populous parishes with tiny numbers attending communion, whereas the smaller the population and area of the parish the larger the percentage attendance. Whitehaven and Kendal had large populations but few attenders, whereas Ireleth and Lowick had a high attendance, despite distance problems. The classic case of Anglican incompetence must remain Cockermouth, where the incumbency lay vacant for 27 years and local neighbouring clergy had to officiate; they could expect 60 to 70 at communion out of a population of 3,500. In nearly all cases of low attendances in large populations came a complaint too that "poor people" would never attend church. The attitude of the Church towards attendance at Communion in this county might be summarised in the case of Carlisle Cathedral, when Dean Tait found 10 at his first communion there in 1849, and when he broached the subject with the Chapter was brusquely informed that it was not the clergy's task to encourage the common people to attend services (37).

As regards attenders at services on census Sunday, March 1851, the Anglicans had the immense advantage of 161 churches in Cumberland, 78 in Westmorland and 43 in the Ulverston and Sedbergh sections of Cumbria, far more than any other sect and as many as all Dissent combined (38). Being the only place of worship in some areas had distinct advantages, though the Anglicans could only be called "successful" in the rural areas of Cumbria and not in the towns or industrial and mining areas. With the renewed expansion of Wesleyanism and the flowering of the Primitives, the Anglican dominance was greatly reduced from the 1860s to the 1900s with the growth of population in the west and south. Dissent was not hindered by badly sited churches or an inconvenient and inflexible parochial system, and in these growth areas had the upper hand. Nonetheless

37. C. M. L. Bouch, as in no.36, p.382.

38. See Appendix B.

the immensely superior resources of the Church ensured that in any war of attrition they would be victors against the puny strength of Dissent. There were without question several ways in which the Church involved itself in, or perhaps interfered with, the life of the Cumbrian, apart from its essential three services of baptism, marriage and death; Church Rates, Tithes and Education. Cumbrians might avoid Anglican services, and clearly did so, but these three themes involved and unsettled many who otherwise cheerfully ignored the Establishment.

Though many titheowners were laymen, it was against the Church and clergy that criticism was levied and on whom all the odium fell over the collection of the hated tithes (39). Most people liable in the countryside to pay tithes would oppose their collection or make things difficult for the tithe owner, so that some sort of compromise over them was necessary and often entered into before Tithe Commutation - that is, reduced to a fixed cash payment - became general in the 1830s and 1840s in the county (which process greatly benefitted many clergy). Something not so easily solved was that of Church Rates, for where individuals, particularly Quakers, ran into savage persecution over tithes, rates encouraged revolt in an entire parish against the clergy, which became part of the general assault on the Church from the 1830s onwards. That Church Rates were at best hard to collect is strongly suggested by the neglected state of church fabric in the 18th century, with churchwardens unwilling to prejudice their future relations with their neighbours by imposing a compulsory rate. It was common for churchwardens to collect the bare necessity for maintaining church fabric, and no more. When the clergy and churchwardens attempted to levy a compulsory rate, and there existed many Dissenters, (especially Quakers) and hostility towards the clergy over other matters, then head on clashes were inevitable and such matters were bitterly contested. Towns like Cockermouth, Kendal, Workington and Carlisle furnished notable rates

39. E. J. Evans, A History of the Tithe System in England 1690/1850. Warwick University Ph.D 1970.

battles in the early and mid 19th century with those against a compulsory rate generally winning (40). Such was this example that a majority of parishes by the 1830s levied a reduced voluntary rate which avoided trouble. If this was insufficient it was considered unfortunate but no other rate was attempted. It was too, common for outlying areas of a parish, with their own chapel or too distant from the parish church to be able to use it regularly, to defeat repeated attempts to raise a rate for spending on the church. This happened on a number of occasions at Kendal and the result was that by 1850 the church was unsafe and had to be closed. Cumbrians opposed church rates and tithes partly because they did not like supporting an alien church, partly because they did not like paying out money, with the result that by the early 19th century both methods of raising money were in-operative in large tracts of the county (41).

Education had long been considered the preserve of the Church but in a county of dispersed and small population like Cumbria attendance at other schools was inevitable, and there were as many non-Anglican schools as there were Establishment ones. In the areas of industrialisation and mining development after mid 18th century Anglican schools were inadequate and badly sited, and with the rise of Sunday Schools a majority of Cumbrian children attended non-Anglican places. The Anglican schools reflected the inadequacies and corruptions of the clergy and Bishops, and into the 1850s education in the county under Anglican auspices was in a sorry state (42). Efficient schools were rare, and Nicolson's criticisms of 1703 were

40. Carlisle Journal gives full details suitably embellished with diatribes against the Church; for the Cockermouth business see 1834 April 5th, for Carlisle 1834 April 19th, for Kendal 1846 December 3rd, for Workington 1860 March 16th; the Church Rate battles, of course, regularly cropped up in the same places and took months each year to sort out.

41. C. M. L. Bouch, Prelates and People, p.432.

42. Returns to the Bishop of Carlisle on the state of education throughout the Diocese 1854, Carlisle RO.

applicable to 1854 in the diocese of Carlisle. Masters were badly trained and poorly paid, schools still housed in pathetic buildings, or in the nave or choir of the parish church with subsequent vandalism, decayed school rolls with the rise of rival Dissenting British schools, often promoted by industrialists or those not happy with Church schools (of whom there were nearly 300 at that time in the county). Clashes between master or vicar and governors or parents were frequent, and there were perennial contentions over endowments and duties (43). The village schools of the Anglicans held the field in much of the county, but in the north and west the largest and reputedly the best schools were those of the factory owners like Dixons in Carlisle with 300 children, far bigger than most Anglican ones. By that time too the Dissenters had their own British schools of repute - for instance the excellent Wesleyan day school at Penrith which overshadowed the local grammar school throughout its existence. Later on there were to be large Wesleyan schools in Ulverston and Barrow (44). The Church schools were so inadequate that even Anglicans like the Lawsons⁶ of Brayton supported Dissenting or British schools and incurred the wrath of local incumbents. Though there was an Anglican school in almost every centre in the county they were considered inferior to the fewer but larger British schools or the many financed by townsfolk of note. The Cumbrians too rejected the Church in its role as educator, and willingly sent children miles to a better school, or used none at all.

The Church of England was not central to the lives of most Cumbrians at all times during its history, being for the most part irrelevant to the daily struggles of the people except for the basic rites of passage through life. In Cumbria the Church exhibited all those faults, shortcomings and abuses characteristic of the national picture, but where there may have been a time elsewhere when the Church

43. For example, the fight between the vicar of Crosthwaite and the trustees of the Grammar School in the mid 19th century received full treatment in the press.

44. Penrith Wesleyan Day School see Carlisle R.O. FCM/3/1/84 to 87; this was the smallest of the 3 Cumbrian Wesleyan day schools, but probably the most prosperous with an excellent reputation.

did function effectively, in Cumbria the Church merely carried on the general failure of the various organised religions. Bearing in mind the state of the Diocese of Carlisle and of the Chester Deaneries, that Dissent should grow here was not surprising. Old Dissent, prior to the coming of the Methodists, was very limited in its impact to towns and certain areas where special factors influenced its spread, and all other Dissent combined never carried the numbers and influence which came to be held by the Methodists of the 19th century. Organised religion, even Methodism, successful by Cumbrian terms, was very much alien to native Cumbrians and belonged to outsiders, or to those Cumbrians uprooted in the rapidly developing industrial and mining centres of the county. A study of Old Dissent - the Independents, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Quakers - plus the two small sects, the Salvation Army and the Brethren, is necessary in order to compare and to contrast them with the Methodists.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DISSENTERS

The Dissenters

Old Dissent, as opposed to the newer Nonconformists the Methodists, had some impact on Cumbria in the 17th and 18th centuries, but only in the case of the Quakers was there a significant presence of one denomination until the arrival of the Irish Roman Catholics in the 19th century. A weak Church of England did not necessarily offer considerable opportunities to other denominations, for after centuries of official neglect of the county by Church and State, an indifference to and independence of religion was bred in Cumbrian rural and urban society which perpetuated into the 20th century. Dissent, Quakerism apart, was brought in and fostered by outsiders, not native Cumbrians, so that the desire of the natives to revolt against authority symbolised by Church and local Justices (and others in authority) was not strongly developed due to the existence of little basis for either Church or government control in the region. In other words, there was relatively little for Cumbrians to revolt against and they were left to their own devices. Life was always hard and often a desperate struggle, and issues of religion were not relevant to this survival. The failure of the Church, except locally, was similar to the failure of the Dissenters. In the 19th century the expansion of Methodism and of Catholicism was not a reversal of this situation, but a response to major population and economic changes promising success for certain denominations only, and amongst the migrants.

The strength of Dissent was in certain parishes considerable, yet in others there were no Dissenters. In the 18th century there were about 600 Independents and Presbyterians, 200 Roman Catholics, 100 Baptists but 1,500 Quakers, in the Chester Deaneries, plus a further 60 Baptists, 200 Roman Catholics, 3,000 Presbyterians and Independents and 2,200 Quakers in the diocese of Carlisle (1). This would give about 7% or 8% of the population as Dissenters, which is roughly equal to the average number of communicant members of the Church of England at that time (2). However, 45% of parishes held over 85% of Dissenters, and a significant 25% held 75% of Dissenters. The Border with Scotland was heavily Presbyterian, the other strongholds being mixtures of Presbyterian and Independents in towns where "Ejected Clergy" had been active, and where sizeable Scottish communities existed. The other Dissenters were few in number apart from the large Quaker presence in towns and along the neglected Solway plain.

Once the parishes with least or no Dissent are compared to those with most, it becomes apparent why Dissent grew in some places and not in others. Parishes with strong Dissenting communities were usually large, over 15,000 acres and up to 50,000, with large populations of over 1,000 and often over 4,000 and with several townships or centres of population away from the influence of the main centre. The landowners were frequently independent farmers or enjoyed secure tenure, and if there was one large landowner the Howards or Grahams were likely to be there. There was an excellent chance that the incumbent had been involved in trouble with the parishioners, or some of them, or was absentee, pluralist or involved in scandal.

1. Chester Record Office, Visitation Returns 1789 EDV 7/2/166 to 313; Miscellany Accounts of the Diocese of Carlisle by William Nicholson, Bishop of Carlisle, 1703 with additions by Chancellow Waugh, 1747. Carlisle RO.

2. See earlier on the support for the Anglican Church, table 4.

Negligent lay rectors and ruined church or parsonage would accompany frequently this state of affairs. These features of parish life were to be commonly found in towns, down the Solway, inland to Caldbeck and Crosthwaite, the borderland between England and Scotland, and between Chester and Carlisle dioceses (3).

The other side of the picture shows that Dissent was weakest normally where parishes were small in area or population, where there was the strong presence of one landowner, particularly the Lowther family and their various allies, (the Musgraves, the Bishop, Dean and Chapter), and where there were few out-townships away from the main centre of population. Scattered and dispersed settlements likewise did not encourage Dissent. The area of Inglewood, and the Eden Valley were noteworthy for their lack of Dissent. In the Carlisle diocese, then, Dissent would tend to be weaker where clergy were resident or active and where they were in partnership with landowners in running the parish, and this was particularly the case where a landowner could control several adjoining parishes, and the appointments to livings.

Naturally this was not a hard and fast rule and Dissent might be found in parishes with one landowner and an excellent vicar, just as it might be absent from one where the church was ruined and an incumbent absent. As a rule the issue of population was most important, and in towns there was no chance of preventing Dissent. Large parishes too militated against clerical influence, whilst absentee landowners might encourage Dissent by their absence, or their agent might actively persecute. The poverty of livings used so often as an excuse for Anglican incompetence, did not mean a cleric was unworthy of his post, and the poorest men might well strike so good a relationship with their humble parishioners that Church influence was boosted rather than reduced. Scandals and abuses might alienate folk from the Church, but did not necessarily allow an opening for Dissent since the parishioners might be turned against all organised religion. Centres of population away from the main

3. See Table 5. p.38.

Dissent in the Diocese of Carlisle 1747

<u>Living</u>	<u>Area (acres)</u>	<u>Population (1747)</u>	<u>Presbyterians</u>	<u>Quakers</u>	<u>Roman Catholic</u>	<u>Baptist</u>
Hayton	7,650	735	10	5	0	0
Denton	5,390	250	15	0	0	0
Farlam	5,680	275	20	0	0	0
Westward	13,120	775	0	25	0	0
Thursby	3,190	405	0	0	0	0
Sebergham	5,890	555	5	20	1	0
Sowerby	7,905	800	10	20	10	0
Great Orton	4,630	335	12	38	0	0
Grinsdale	719	110	0	5	0	0
Rockcliffe	2,441	615	100	0	0	0
Burgh-by-Sands	5,421	960	0	140	0	0
Dalston	12,413	1,100	2	1	1	0
Kirkbampton	3,681	485	10	15	0	0
Bowness	11,500	775	0	10	0	0
Kirkbride	1,750	275	5	20	0	0
Aikton	5,270	740	0	20	0	0
Scaley	3,590	450	10	60	0	0
Beaumont	1,429	85	5	5	0	0
Wigton	11,800	2,400	0	315	0	0
Holme Cultram	24,920	2,375	20	150	0	20
Bromfield	12,850	1,535	20	85	0	5

<u>Living</u>	<u>Area (acres)</u>	<u>Population (1747)</u>	<u>Presbyterian</u>	<u>Quaker</u>	<u>Roman Catholics</u>	<u>Baptists</u>
Uldale	2,510	215	0	10	0	0
Bassenthwaite	6,930	305	0	0	0	0
Isel	6,760	370	5	10	0	5
Bridekirk	9,270	1,140	0	0	0	0
Camerton	2,880	500	75	15	20	0
Flimby	1,620	400	55	5	5	0
Dearham	3,870	630	0	5	0	5
Crosscanonby	2,400	320	0	20	0	0
Gilcrux	1,750	155	0	0	0	0
Plumbland	2,970	195	15	5	0	0
Torpenhow	9,670	870	40	5	0	0
Ireby	4,320	355	0	10	5	0
Bolton	8,760	775	35	65	0	0
Hesket	14,492	1,345	30	0	10	0
Caldbeck	24,280	1,215	0	145	0	0
Crosthwaite	58,330	2,780	100	20	0	0
Aspatria	8,610	742	190	20	0	0
All Hallows	1,920	160	0	10	5	0
St. Marys	Carlisle	1,850	135	70	0	0
St. Cuthberts	Carlisle	1,455	45	50	0	0
Stanwix	5,535	830	35	40	0	0
Crosby-on-Eden	2,269	300	0	30	0	0
Kirkclinton	11,290	1,580	30	160	0	0
Castle Carrock	3,640	205	30	0	0	0

<u>Living</u>	<u>Area(acres)</u>	<u>Population (1747)</u>	<u>Presbyterian</u>	<u>Quaker</u>	<u>Roman Catholic</u>	<u>Baptist</u>
Cumwhitton	5,670	400	10	5	10	0
Cumrew	2,760	205	0	0	0	0
Wetheral	11,426	880	20	40	50	0
Warwick	1,846	205	0	20	15	0
Irthington	7,100	730	10	40	0	0
Walton	4,150	300	10	5	0	15
Stapleton	13,980	420	30	80	0	0
Lanercost	36,510	1,480	75	10	10	10
Bewcastle	26,640	1,200	0	5	0	0
Brampton	16,970	1,180	260	5	10	0
Kirkandrews-on-Esk	21,630	1,564	620	0	0	0
Arthuret	17,390	294	10	15	5	0
Hutton	2,300	310	1	0	2	0
Greystoke	50,000	1,735	80	75	5	0
Dacre	6,234	755	15	20	1	0
Barton	35,312	164	5	15	0	0
Salkeld	3,635	275	35	0	0	0
Addingham	5,453	640	20	0	0	0
Melmerby	1,650	250	5	0	0	0
Renwick	4,220	200	15	0	0	0
Croglin	5,534	175	15	0	0	0
Kirkoswald	8,501	785	155	0	0	0
Lazonby	9,602	575	20	0	0	0

TABLE 5

<u>Living</u>	<u>Area(acres)</u>	<u>Population (1747)</u>	<u>Presbyterian</u>	<u>Quaker</u>	<u>Roman Catholics</u>	<u>Baptist</u>
Ainstable	4,200	490	25	0	0	0
Skelton	6,335	575	10	5	0	0
Newton	2,400	275	0	10	0	0
Penrith	6,519	3,000	58	31	2	0
Shap	27,770	910	0	15	0	0
Bampton	10,390	140	0	0	1	0
Askham	4,377	405	0	0	0	0
Lowther	3,520	360	0	5	0	0
Clifton	1,520	210	0	25	0	0
Brougham	900	140	0	0	0	0
Langwathby	1,397	180	5	0	0	0
Ousby	1,539	225	0	0	0	0
Newbiggin	1,184	155	5	0	10	0
Kirkland	6,361	725	0	0	0	0
Edenhall	3,354	175	0	0	0	0
Appleby	21,000	830	0	0	0	0
Kirkby Stephen	27,921	3,035	20	20	15	0
Cliburn	1,360	150	2	0	0	0
Crosby Ravensworth	15,024	790	0	0	0	0
Morland	15,260	1,355	5	30	0	0
Kirkby Thore	11,030	730	20	0	10	0
Ormeside	2,430	135	0	0	0	0

TABLE 5

<u>Living</u>	<u>Area (acre)</u>	<u>Population (1747)</u>	<u>Presbyterians</u>	<u>Quakers</u>	<u>Roman Catholics</u>	<u>Baptists</u>
Crosby Garrett		243	45	0	0	0
Ravenstonedale	10,450	1,125	275	0	0	0
Orton	24,430	1,800	20	5	0	0
Asby	8,395	410	10	0	0	0
Musgrave	4,080	190	0	0	0	0
Warcop	10,020	585	10	0	0	0
Brough-under-						
Stainmore	24,517	1,050	0	0	0	0
Dufton	18,129	300	0	0	0	0

Source: Miscellany Accounts of Bishop Nicolson and Archdeacon Waugh, 1703 and 1747, Carlisle Record Office.

Note: Number of Dissenters was given in either "families" or "individuals"; where "families" were given these have been altered to "individuals" based on 5 per family, which agrees with Waugh's estimates where both families and individuals were given.

parish community were notoriously given to Dissent and this could be an important factor in the spread of Nonconformity (4). The Border parishes suffered because their population found it more convenient to cross to Scotland for services rather than travel further into England, and hence were labelled "Presbyterian" in large numbers. Decayed centres of population, again liable to be full of Dissent, in Cumbria possessed fair numbers of Quakers - for instance at Hawkshead - but the settlement pattern too encouraged this proliferation of Quaker families. When Dissenters were actively persecuted over tithes and church rates this did not necessarily discourage or encourage Dissent and did not directly affect its growth or decrease. Anglican neglect did not encourage Dissent, rather it facilitated its spread once Quaker or Presbyterian preacher had offered sufficient inducement to people to support them. Centuries of indifference to religion of any form was not to be overcome by Dissent unless there were major changes in the situation, and the Methodists above all were to benefit, not "Old Dissent".

Prior to the Reformation the Roman Catholic church had made little impact on the region though its several monasteries were powerful economic and social influences and inevitably involved with Cumbrian folk. The county was ignored by the government apart from the problem of Border security, and priests and churches figured but little in day to day life. The natural inclination of the Cumbrians, their in-built independence, did not embrace religion at all deeply, and despite the "Northern Rising" of 1569 and other troubles, few Cumbrians apart from the nobility and their immediate entourage were at all bothered about the passing of Rome or of the monasteries. Noble households remained Catholic - notably the Howards and the Stricklands - but by the 1700s scarcely 80 to 100 families were left in Roman ranks in the county, and these few were centred on the noble households or in a handful of towns. Unlike North Lancashire, it was not a centre of recusancy, and by the 1790s there

4. See A. Everitt, The Pattern of Rural Dissent, 1972, for a detailed analysis of reasons for the growth of Dissent.

TABLE 6Roman Catholics in the Chester Deaneries:

<u>Place</u>	<u>Families</u>
Burton	5
Heversham	7
Kendal	"many papists of all ranks"
Grayrigg	3
Helsington	1 "rich man"
Burneside	4
New Hutton	1
Dalton	3
Cockermouth	1
Whitehaven	"many"
Workington	2

Source: 1789 Diocese of Chester Visitation Returns: EDV/7/2/166
to 254. CRO

Roman Catholics by Diocese:

	<u>Carlisle</u>	<u>Chester</u>	<u>London</u>	<u>York Sodor & Man</u>	<u>England & Wales Total</u>
1767	173	25,139	1,230	6,589	67,000
1780	128	27,288	13,379	6,708	69,000

Source: Addy, page 233.

were about 300 to 400 people of the Catholic faith in the whole county (5). During the early 1800s the first major change in Catholic fortunes occurred with the initial influx of Irish Roman Catholics via Whitehaven to the mining areas and to the textile centres of Carlisle and Wigton. During the 1840s this trend accelerated and new immigrants settled where their countrymen were already established. Priests and the various Orders, first on the scene in the 1830s, worked with increasing resources from that date and by 1860 there were considerable Irish communities in West Cumberland, Wigton and Carlisle, and within a further 10 years in Barrow and Millom (6). It was accepted at that time that there were few if any native Cumbrian Catholics in those areas, and the Irish were almost the sole converts for the priests eager not to lose their fellow countrymen. The Cumbrians themselves did not approve of the "clannishness" of the Irish who gathered in large numbers in a few industrial and mining centres, creating notorious reputations for drunkenness and vice as well as their "popish" beliefs. These encouraged the attempts by the Protestants to counter "priestcraft" and Catholicism with missions, but largely to no avail and the Irish remained confined to their own quarters and their own religion, apart from the roving bands who came across each summer for harvesting and crop gathering and who continued to tramp across the county into this century. That the Catholics continued to increase adherents was partly due to the success of their own missions amongst families of Irish descent who had earlier left their church, and this sect had particular success at a time when the Protestant churches were experiencing setbacks in recruiting members or hearers.

The Protestant Dissenters enjoyed considerably more success amongst native Cumbrians than did the Catholics, but once more on a

5. John Addy, Two 18th Century Bishops of Chester and Their Diocese, Leeds Ph.D 1972 p.233; Miscellany Accounts throughout.

6. J. D. Marshall, The Economic and Social History of the Furness Area, 1955; T. W. Carrick, History of Wigton, 1949.

most limited scale. One of the first in the county were the Baptists, by the 1650s scattered in little societies and encouraged by the Commonwealth toleration. Yet at the same time a tiny number of people were involved - perhaps 80 to 100 at anyone time in the course of the 18th century and scarcely noticed by the authorities (7). With the influx of mining and quarrying workers in the 1820s and 1830s in Furness (notably Coniston and Duddon localities) the Baptists formed several further societies and a handful of meeting houses, but the task of attracting native Cumbrians to any denomination can be illustrated by the experiences of the Carlisle Baptists Society: this had to be founded and refounded four times because it kept dying out with its members' deaths or removals. The relatively strong Maryport society was only established because of the numerous Scotch Baptists families resident there for trade in the 18th century (8). The new societies at Millom and Barrow depended on outsiders too, and the county's 18 or so societies in 1851 contained amongst them the poorest paid ministers and least successful of all the major denominations.

The only sect which in its time enjoyed widespread and fervent support in Cumbria during the 17th century was the Quakers. Cumbrians took George Fox to their hearts and a strong Quaker presence was maintained into the 19th century. Enduring great privations and persecution here as everywhere else in England the Quakers recruited liberally during the 1650s amongst the villagers and a number of

7. B. Nightingale, The Ejected of 1662 in Cumberland and Westmorland, 1911. See p.746, pp.1257 onwards; See Table 6.

8. W. Whitley, The Baptists of North West England, 1913. pp.163, pp.119, pp.334, pp.336, pp.357, pp.338 etc. Little note happened in Cumbria compared to the rest of the north-west; H. and M. Jackson, History of Maryport, 1958 ph.17 K. Young, Chapel, 1972 p.166; W. Butler, Scroggs Baptist Chapel, Transactions CWAAS 1932, Vol.32, NS pp.63/67.

famous Quaker names cropped up in the national history of the church (9).

A number of things about the Quakers appealed to Cumbrians where other denominations did not. It was a cheap church with no ministry to support and employed most thrifty buildings and furnishings - and expense was ever close to the hearts of the Cumbrians. Their ideas encouraged the independence which Cumbrians traditionally enjoyed from the secular and ecclesiastical authorities and emphasised their belief that a Cumbrian could usually do what he liked. Neglected by all authority, the Cumbrians of the mid and later 17th century saw no reason not to espouse a religion which alarmed the Establishment and posed threats to contemporary society. The small farmers and skilled workers saw no need to view themselves as inferior to those of higher station and enjoyed a religion which reduced all to the same level and allowed equality of thought and deed.

There is no doubt that the neglect of the Church of England was the opportunity of the Quakers, and they recruited amongst that small but important minority of people who needed a religion but not a Church. It is significant that the Quakers recruited somewhere in the region of 800 families into their ranks in the later 17th century, and by the 1740s there were estimated to have been about 400 families in Carlisle diocese and 250 in the Chester Deaneries who were still Quakers. Their numbers were concentrated in Lonsdale and Furness, particularly around Kendal and its villages, along the Solway Coast and inland to Cockermouth. Many were involved in farming, but there were a number of prominent businessmen amongst them - ironmasters in Furness, textile employers in the north. The Church and secular authorities spared no pains in hunting them down but the task except locally (for instance in Grasmere

9. Rise and Progress of Quakerism in Cumberland, CRO (Rise and progress of the Truth) written by early 18th century Friends in the county.

TABLE 7Baptists in the Diocese of Carlisle 1747.

<u>Place</u>	<u>Families</u>
Dearham	1
Walton	3
Lanercost	2
Holme Cultram	4
Bromfield	1
Isel	1

Source: Miscellany Accounts, 1903 by Bishop Nicolson, with additions by Archdeacon Waugh 1747.

Baptists in the Chester Deaneries 1789.

<u>Place</u>	<u>Families</u>
Flookburgh	1 (5 people)
Satterthwaite	1
Torver	2 (plus meeting house)
Ulpha	3
Distington	4 ("diminished considerably")
Lowick	6 (20 people)
Rusland	1
Hawkshead	10 (with Mr. Dawson as preacher)
Whitehaven	"a number"

Source: Chester RO EDV 7/2/166 to 313

TABLE 8Quakers in the Chester Deaneries 1789.

<u>Place</u>	<u>Families</u>
Witherslack	1
Burton	6
Preston Patrick	26 + meeting house
Heversham	6
Kendal	"many" (25?)
Burneside	4
Crook	8 + meeting house
Crayrigg	"several" + meeting house
Hugill	1 "much declined"
Helsington	1
New Hutton	1
Staveley	1
Underbarrow	1
Silverdale	"a good many"
Aldingham	2
Hawkshead	15 + meeting house
Satterthwaite	10
Brigham	33 + 2 meeting houses "much lessened"
Cockermouth	25 + meeting houses "static"
Embleton	6
Lorton	1
Setmurthy	3
Mussar	10
Whitehaven	"many"
Dean	8 + meeting house "increasing"
Distington	2
Lamplugh	2
Clifton	1
Workington	4
Ulverston	15 (an estimate)

Source: Chester RO EDV 7/2/166-313. Visitation Returns 1789.

where the Flemings determinedly rooted them out), was daunting and persecution alone could not stem Quaker numbers (10).

The Quakers were deeply involved in local politics during the period 1800 to 1835 and with the Unitarians attacked the Tories and the Church particularly in Kendal. What wrecked their numbers was the Beaconite controversy of 1835 when a local man, Isaac Crewdson, published a book encouraging Quakers to a more active evangelical role; because a majority of rank and file members opposed this move, the 8 leading Kendal families joined other churches (including the Church of England in Kendal!) and others created the first Brethren society in the town. In the rest of Cumbria this dispute cut numbers and other Brethren societies were formed.

Whilst the Quakers provided formidable opposition to the Church of England they did not materialise as the great force which might have been expected in the county. They were too disorganised and piecemeal in their work of missioning and consolidation to become a major denomination. The circumstances which gave rise to their growth were not those which stimulated Methodism into action; however relations between Quakers and Methodists were from the outset most cordial and harmonious. The Inghamites and early Wesleyans enjoyed Quaker hospitality; Ulverston Quakers loaned money and gave help for the first Methodist chapel and Elijah Dixon, a Quaker cottonspinner, became a trustee and official. At Hawkshead, a place not kind to Methodism, the so called "Union Chapel" of the 1860s was scene of the uniting of Quaker and Wesleyans in services and worship, whilst Sedbergh and Whitehaven furnish details of co-operation on a large scale. Gosforth society exhibited the same blend of Quaker and

10. Nightingale, pp.681, pp.746, pp.547, pp.609 and throughout the book, which deals in detail with persecution of Quakers, but also makes the point that Quakers did much to bring about their own persecution. Puritan clergy frequently persecuted Quakers more savagely than did the Anglicans; W. C. Braithwaite, The Second Period of Quakerism, 1919, pp.100 on; S. Brown, Middle Class Leadership In Kendal, Lancaster MA 1971. Histories of each town or district give sections to the Quakers of the locality.

Wesleyan, both complementing the other, with the society in its difficult days when Methodists were emigrating for work being maintained by Quaker officials who had dual membership in Methodism (11). The Primitives of the 1820s enjoyed Quaker aid, for instance at Maryport and Dent. The Quakers must rank as successful by Cumbrian standards and influenced a wide sector of the county in the period 1650 to 1700, decreasingly thereafter. By the time of the 1851 Religious Census their numbers were tiny and they were considered like the Baptists a rarity.

The English Presbyterian societies originated in the "Ejected clergy" of 1662 who lost their Anglican livings because of their Puritan views and their beliefs on the rule of Presbyteries rather than the hierarchy of the Church of England (12). In Cumbria they enjoyed some success amongst the natives, based initially on the parishes of the "ejected" men, but never attained the influence and numerical strength that they did in Northumberland, the other Border county with Scotland. This must be partly accounted for in the refusal of Cumbrians to be involved in any church, whatever its organisation or form of government. Due to their proximity to Scotland, the Cumbrian Presbyterians took their pastors largely from Scottish universities and remained untainted by the Unitarian divisions of the 18th century, save for Kendal. The idea of a Presbyterian form of government was impossible to effect in the huge area covered by a score or so of societies, and meetings between pastors took months of organisation and could not be on a regular basis. To all intents and purposes the Presbyterians of Cumbria remained very much Independents. The early societies contained both Congregational or

11. Centenary Brochures for Gosforth and Hawkshead Chapels, 1963 and 1974; W. M. Patterson, Northern Primitive Methodism, notes Quakers and Primitives often combining; so do other histories of the county, e.g. J. F. Curwen, Kirkbie, Kendal. 1900.

12. Nightingale, The Ejected of 1662, gives copious detail on the parishes and their clergy throughout the period 1640 to 1730. Nightingale counted 27 ejected clergy in 1662, though half left their posts before the actual ejection of 1662.

Independent groups and those who maintained Presbyterian beliefs, with splits between the 2 rare until the late 18th century and early 19th century. The issues at stake - the wish of the Presbyterians to have ruling elders and their refusal to take part in the active mission work which the Congregational element wished to embrace - created secessions, with the weaker section leaving to set up a separate denomination. Local assemblies or "presbytries" did not work and the 2 denominations looked similar to outsiders. The authorities recorded great Presbyterian strength along the Border parishes, with hundred of families preferring to cross the Border in order to attend ~~Scottish~~ services rather than Anglican ones. Numbers were mustered where Presbyterian or Puritan gentry had fostered the sect, as in Ravenstonedale under the Whartons and in the parishes where ejected clergy took charge of early societies and made a name for themselves as at Brampton and Kirkoswald. There were estimated to be over 600 families of Presbyterians in Carlisle diocese in the mid 18th century with a further 150 or more in the Chester Deaneries. With the continued strength of the Scottish element in every society major communities grew up along the main trade routes - for instance down the present A6, with Scottish Presbyterian societies at Carlisle, Penrith and Kendal along the way; and down the West coast for the Scottish merchants. The rejuvenated English Presbyterianism of the 19th century was forced to concentrate its attentions on the new areas of South and West Cumbria. The Presbyterians had closer links with the Methodists and Anglicans than did other Dissenters and were regarded as on a par with Methodists by the Church of England, both being considered as wayward Anglicans capable of merging with the Church against the hard line element of Dissenters, and each reclaimable for the Establishment. Nonetheless the Presbyterians remained a much weaker church than the Methodists or even the Independents (13).

13. See Table 5; The Transactions of the CWAAS contain a number of articles on Presbyterianism in Cumbria, including: J. H. Colligan, Penruddock Presbyterian Meeting House, NS, Vol 5 1905 pp.150/171; and H. Penfold, Early Brampton Presbyterianism, NS, Vol. 13 1903 pp.94/125.

TABLE 9Presbyterian and Independents in the Chester Deaneries 1789.PresbyteriansIndependentsPlacesFamiliesPlaceFamilies

Cockermouth	120 people "of both groups with 2 meeting houses"		
Heversham	a few = meeting house	Bootle	8 + meeting house
Watland	1		
Rusland	1		
Torver	1		
Arledon	2		
Embleton	3		
Lorton	1		
Whitehaven	"many"		
Muncaster	3		
Workington	12		
Clifton	9 = meeting house; " in decline"		

Source: Chester RO EDV 7/2/166-131. Visitation Returns.

The Congregationalists or Independents were at first part of the small Dissenting communities of the mid 17th century and hard to distinguish (14). Until the 18th century and longer the Old Dissenters happily shared meeting houses and pastors. Cockermouth witnessed the first Independent secession in 1764, followed shortly by those of a like mind out of the Presbyterian . turned Unitarian community in Kendal. Around 1818 the Whitehaven seceders united with the 2 small Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion societies to establish 2 Independent societies which only took the name Congregational in 1872. Even after the exertions of Whitridge and a few other outstanding ministers in the early 19th century, the Cumbrian societies could not be described as "flourishing" and centrally organised aid was always weak even when available (15). By the 1851 census they had more societies than other Dissenters except for the Methodists, but these were small in the main and reliant on a handful of well-off people to pay their ministers. They remained people of independent mind and freely entered into the attacks on the Anglicans and Tories of the 1830s and 1840s, and interfered in Wesleyan affairs during 1835 and 1850, making the latter wary of their behaviour. Their main strength lay in the old Quaker strongholds of Wigton, Carlisle, Cockermouth, Kendal and east Westmorland, and their form of worship and church government attracted a type of Cumbrian in many ways akin to the Quakers.

The peculiarities of Cumbrian religious history are well portrayed in the appearance of the Unitarians in just 2 places, one enduring, the other temporary. During the 1760s the Kendal Presbyterians followed most of their more southerly kin and turned Unitarian, the most wealthy and numerically strongest of all the

14. Nightingale pp.14 on. His introduction illustrates the thin line dividing the 2 sects for many years.

15. For the work of Whitridge family see: D. Hay, History of Whitehaven, p.107; and Journal of WHS Cumbrian Branch, No.3, "The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion", pp.7/9, April 1978; DKK, Reminiscences of People and Places 60 years Ago, 1890 pp.91 and 100; J. F. Curwen, Kirkbie Kendal pp.83 on and C. Nicholson Annals of Kendal, 1861 p.162.

Cumbrian Presbyterian societies and this was considered the reason for the lack of interest amongst Unitarianism in the county's societies: they were so poor and small, their pastors so indifferent and cut off from "civilisation", that Unitarianism could obtain no hearing or hold (16). The Kendal Unitarians enjoyed their exclusiveness, amongst a group of town shopkeepers and merchants, and led by their Pastor Hawkes effected sustained and vicious attacks on the Tories and Anglicans of the locality.

His notoriety occasioned a serious dispute over the original endowments of the Presbyterians of the 17th century when the new Scottish Presbyterians society took them to court and lost. "The infidel Unitarians" were not well liked and remained the most "foreign" of the sects here (17). Ainsworth, a mill owner on Cleator Moor, was a Unitarian and invited workers to attend in his mill services led by Lancashire Unitarians during the 1850s. There were some early attenders but the society died out quickly, leaving just Kendal to represent the denomination (18).

During the 19th century 2 smaller denominations had some effect on the county, particularly with their success amongst dissatisfied Methodists: the Salvation Army and the Brethren. The Army arrived in Cumbria during the winter of 1879/80 and made an immediate impact in the press and on the public who had not witnessed the like since the early days of the Primitives. During the early 1880s there was recruitment to Army ranks from amongst both Primitives and Wesleyans, who helped organise the missions and provided helpers and preachers (19).

16. Nightingale pp.1290 on; F. Nicholson, Kendal Unitarian Chapel and its Registers, Trans CWAAS, 1905 NS, Vol 5 pp.172/181; Baines' "Lancashire" lists 25 Unitarian chapels in and around Manchester alone, 1829; J. F. Curwen, Kirkbie Kendal, p.305.

17. Westmorland Gazette 14.3.1835 and Kendal Mercury 19.3.1835.

18. C. Caine, Cleator and Cleator Moor, Past and Present, 1916 pp.306 onwards.

19. Journal No.1. March 1977 of the WMS Cumbrian Branch, "an eccentric local preacher", for the start of the Army in Penrith by rebel Wesleyans.

There were loud complaints from the Cumbrian circuits, particularly in the west where there was much feeling at that time against a paid ministry, and over one hundred members and officials from the Primitives entered Salvation ranks. Not surprisingly, after initial welcome for the Army's work the circuits were alarmed at their own losses and exhibited great hostility by doing their utmost to hinder Army work (20). The old style fervency of the early Wesleyans and Primitives, and used by the Quakers of the 1650s, retained its attraction for some Cumbrians but the successes of the Army were the losses of the other Dissenters rather than benefits to a wider Christianity by reaching unchurched groups. This was likewise true of the Brethren, whose successes were at the expense of other denominations, particularly the Quakers and Methodists. A number of Quaker societies died out or were absorbed by Brethren in the later 19th century, particularly in West Cumberland and around Kendal. They offered, through several guises, a church without a ministry and at very low cost, and one lacking the enthusiasm of the Methodists; serious losses from amongst the Primitives were once more reported in the west, though every circuit was to some extent affected - for instance Penrith in the 1880s (21).

Old Dissent affected only a small proportion of Cumbrians throughout the 17th to 20th centuries, and only with the coming of Methodism was there to be an epoch of Nonconformist expansion. The 1829 "Return of Sectaries" (22) for "Lancashire North of the Sands" portrays dramatically the sparseness of Dissent and of Methodism in particular in that region, and not until the rapid changes of the 1860s and later was Dissent to experience sustained growth.

20. Records of Whitehaven and Wigton Primitive Methodist Circuits, particularly the Quarterly Meeting Minutes, circa 1879 to 1890.

21. The Quarterly Meetings of Penrith Primitive and Wesleyan Methodists for the period 1880 to 1888.

22. See Table 10, p.58.

throughout the county. Methodism in 1829 was tied to parts of the north, east and west of the county, but it had already exhibited the dynamic growth never characteristic of Old Dissent, and it had been called into existence by new factors which had at that time little influence on the spread of other sects. Except in a few centres in Cumbria, Old Dissent was to weaken or at best hold its own, whereas Methodism was to become the most active and influential county denomination over the course of the 19th century.

TABLE 101829 Return of Sectaries for "Lancashire North of the Sands".

<u>Township/Parish</u>	<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Adult Membership</u>	<u>Chapel</u>
Torver	Baptist	7	Yes
Staveley	Quaker	1	
Lowick	Roman Catholic	1	
	Baptist	14	
Kirkby Ireleth	Baptist		
Egton and Newland	Methodists	9	
	Baptist	12	Yes
Holker	Roman Catholic	1	
Burblethwaite	Quaker	0	Yes
Hawkshead	Quaker	6	Yes
	Baptists	6	Yes
Dalton	Wesleyan	24	Yes
Colton	Baptists	1	
Allithwaite	Quaker	22	Yes

Note: The strength of Dissent in Lancaster, an old port and trading centre similar in many ways to Whitehaven where there was too a strong Dissenting presence.

Lancaster	Roman Catholic	800	Yes
	Quaker	250	Yes
	Wesleyan	600	Yes
	Congs.	500	Yes
	Baptists	60	Yes
	Presbyts.	70	Yes
	Primitives	60	Yes
	Indep. Meths.	160	Yes

Source: Lancashire RO QDV 9.1 to 245.

Note: Omission of Ulverston. A majority of townships had no Dissenters.

Ulverston had	Methodists	50 people
	Quakers	35 people
	Independents	45 people
	Roman Catholics	50 people
		(estimates)

CHAPTER THREE

THE GROWTH OF WESLEYAN METHODISM TO 1830

The Growth of Wesleyan Methodism to 1830

The starting point for Cumbrian Methodism must be the pioneer work of John Wesley in his 26 visits to the county. What he found here makes by any standards illuminating reading, being a commentary on the state of the county at that date and on its particular problems of remoteness and poverty which had bedevilled successive denominations and made the region so impervious to organised religion.

John Wesley travelled thousands of miles across Britain, and a goodly number of these were across Cumbria during his visits to the county between 1748 and 1790, usually in transit to Scotland or Ireland rather than to visit the county.. His favourite place was Whitehaven, to which town and surrounding area he devoted most of his time, particularly since his trips there were necessary in order to take passage for Ireland and the Isle of Man. Bad weather and infrequent sailings meant he had time to spare, and typically he used it to good advantage by promoting Methodism. It remained too the only place where his work was effective within the county during his lifetime.

Wesley faced various hazards on his journeys - too much rain, appalling winds (especially the Helm wind of the Fellside and Alston), driving snow and intense cold, even intense heat once, not to mention the poor roads, normally just tracks, the lack of guides and hostility to strangers exhibited by many Cumbrians. He came between March and October each year to avoid the worst vagaries of

the climate, often had other preachers for company, yet could make little impression on Cumbrians. The indifference of the Cumbrian to religion had been evident from the days of the monasteries, with successive denominations finding small favour at any time. Methodism was no exception during the 18th century, and though Wesley initiated some of the work he relied heavily on the work of a handful of devoted preachers and local men of influence to establish permanent causes. Though by the 1770s he could guarantee a large audience due to his fame and influence, he was always in a rush, always eager to get on and get out of the county, not having time for areas with a small scattered population in which it was sometimes difficult to raise a congregation to make his efforts worthwhile. Only at Whitehaven and to a lesser extent at Carlisle did he concentrate endeavours, though his "Journal" and "Letters" bring to life the early days of the Methodists.

John Wesley first set foot in Cumbria in 1748 when he preached at Nenthead and at Alston to "a quiet, staring people", "little concerned" with what he said, the only noteworthy happening being the printing of the following declaration against "imposters";

"I found it absolutely necessary to publish the following advertisement: Whereas one Thomas Moor, alias Smith, has lately appeared in Cumberland and other parts of England, preaching (as he calls it) in a clergyman's habit, and then collecting money of his hearers: This is to certify whom it may concern that the said Moor is no clergyman, but a cheat and imposter; and that no preacher in connection with me either directly or indirectly asks for money for anyone. John Wesley". (1).

1. The 26 journeys through Cumbria were in the following years, and at the following references, volume and page in the Journal, (with occasional additional information in his Letters).

After this brief introduction to one part of the county he was at Whitehaven in 1749 preaching to "a multitude of people" and he warmly appreciated the enthusiasm of the mining population at Honsingham and the Ginns. He had come at the invitation of two preachers and wrote:

1. Continued

1748	vol.3 p.364	1767	vol.5 p.201.
1749	Vol.3 p.430 (3/18)	1768	vol.5 p.254 (5/188)
1751	vol.3 p.521	1770	vol.5 p.361
1752	vol.4. p.29	1772	vol.5 p.452
1752	vol.4 p.37	1774	vol.6 p.18
1753	vol.4 p.60	1776	vol.6 p.104
1757	vol.4 p.215	1777	vol.6 p.150
1759	vol.4 p.312 (3/119, 4/56)	1780	vol.6 p.276
1761	vol.4 p.447 (4/164)	1781	vol.6 p.318
1764	vol.5 p.78	1781	vol.6 p.322
1765	vol.5 p.110	1784	vol.6 p.497
1765	vol.5 p.139	1788	vol.7 p.161
1766	vol.5 p.172	1790	vol.8 p.68

1938 Edition of The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, edited by N. Curnock in 8 volumes; Letters of John Wesley, 8 volumes edited by J. Telford, 1931 Edition.

See: J. Burgess, Methodism in Whitehaven, 1749-1820. (WHS Cumbria Branch); J. Burgess, John Wesley and Cumbria, 1979. (WHS Cumbria Branch).

"Reflecting on the manner of God's working here, I could not but make the following remark: the work in Whitehaven resembles that at Athlone more than does any other which I have seen in England. It runs with a swift and wide stream; but it does not go deep. A considerable part of the town seems moved, but extremely few are awake; and scarce three have found a sense of the pardoning love of God, from the time of the first preaching to this day".

Joseph Cownley had invited him to visit the town, enthusing over the revival of religion and end to sin, crime, drink, swearing and the like due to the Methodist work. There was some trouble:

"One evening, when Perronet preached in my absence [a preacher who accompanied him on the Journey], a crowd of sailors procured a fiddle and made an attempt to interrupt; but they met with small encouragement. A company of colliers turned upon them, broke their fiddle in pieces, and used those of them they could overtake so roughly that they have not made their appearance since. Sir James Lowther [the Friendly Baronet, not the next Sir James, who hated Methodism], likewise, sent and took down the names of the chief rioters...".

Later that year there were over 200 members in the town society though the congregations numbered many hundreds. Whilst crossing in 1751 from Ambleside to Whitehaven Wesley experienced bad weather and was thankful to survive it; he and his companions found the society increased to 240, only one of whom missed class since the members were unusually devoted to their meetings. Preaching at Clifton and Cockermouth on his way to Gamblesby, Hartside and the North East he encountered problems with the accommodation of the multitude who came to hear him. Coming in 1752 to Penrith and then to the other Clifton, just to the south, it was there that he described in famous words the response of his hearers:

"I addressed a civil people who looked just as if I had been talking Greek".

Better times were ahead at Cockermouth, Lorton, Whitehaven, Oldfield Brow and as far south as Drigg where he visited a Mr. Blencowe since his ship's sailing was delayed. His congregation was serious but "I fear they understand very little of what they heard".

Later in that year he was unable to find a ship at Chester and travelled to Whitehaven where due to confusion between himself and 2 ship's masters he was delayed, but passed the time profitably preaching and meeting members.

At Kendal in 1753 Wesley preached to an uncouth assemblage in rooms previously occupied by the Inghamite society, and despite savage weather made it to the Salutation Inn as Ambleside where he was pleased to find the landlord was a Methodist. At Whitehaven "the love of many was waxed cold". He passed the following remark on the members:

"But surely here, above any place in England, 'God hath chosen the poor of this world'. In comparison of these, the society at Newcastle are rich and elegant people. It is enough that they are 'rich in faith', and in the 'Labour of love'". (Most members were miners, seamen and fishermen, though a few were better off). After the usual work in and around Cockermouth and Clifton he rode to Bowness, crossed the sands of the Solway and reached Dumfries.

On his brief visit in 1757 Wesley went from Kendal to Ambleside, Keswick, and on to Branthwaite, Cockermouth and, inevitably, Whitehaven before leaving the county via Wigton "a neat well built town", and on across the Solway to Scotland. It was his 1759 entry into the county from the south via the Sands crossing which was one of his famous adventures; not only was it a hazardous trip over from Hest Bank to Ulverston, Flookburgh, Millom and Kirkby Ireleth via the estuaries, but guides proved impossible to gain and the local inhabitants deliberately misled the travellers in order to protect

their smuggling trade and to prevent outsiders from viewing their activities. This did not please Wesley, who reckoned that the longer route to Ambleside and Keswick was always cheaper and quicker, as well as safer and away from "the generation of liars" who inhabited the Furness area. After this he was well satisfied with preaching at Lorton, the Ginns, Whitehaven and Wigton, and later in that year wrote to Matthew Lowes, preacher in charge, and the stewards with advice on how to stop the disputes which had broken out in Whitehaven as to the correctness of allowing 2 local men named Brownrigg and Hodgson to preach.

The route which Wesley followed in 1761 has never been ascertained with accuracy but may well have been to Ambleside, the Langdales, over Wrynose and down Hard Knott to the west. Successful at Branthwaite and Workington, Wesley's preaching at Lorton elicited:

"Who would imagine that Deism should find its way into the heart of these enormous mountains? Yet it is so. Yea, and one who once knew the love of God is a strenuous advocate for it".

And of Whitehaven society:

"As the people of Whitehaven are usually full of zeal, right or wrong, I this evening showed them the nature of Christian zeal. Perhaps now some of them may distinguish the flame of love from a flame kindled in hell".

At Wigton he commenced preaching to a woman, two boys and three girls, but within minutes:

"We had most of the town. I was a good deal moved at the exquisite self-sufficiency which was visible in the countenance, air and whole department of a considerable part of them. This constrained me to use a very uncommon plainness of speech. They bore it well. Who knows but some may profit?".

Passing through Carlisle in 1764 Wesley found no Methodist

society, and on reaching Whitehaven a depressing sight met him:

"What has continually hurt these poor people is offence. I found the society now all in confusion because a woman had scolded with her neighbour, and another stole a 2d. loaf. I talked largely with those who had been most offended; and they stood reprov'd. The want of field preaching has been one cause of deadness here. I do not find any great increase in the work of God without it. If ever this is laid aside, I expect the whole work will gradually die away".

He travelled on to Keswick and Kendal, where:

"A few years ago the fields were white for the harvest; but the poor people have been harrassed by Seceders and disputers of every kind, that they are dry and dead as stones; yet I think some of them felt the power of God this evening".

Wesley stayed with his old friends the Gilberts at Kendal in 1765 and was cheered by their taking charge of the society in the town. Later that year he was briefly in Whitehaven and Carlisle after landing from Ireland, whilst in June 1766 he and Duncan Wright crossed the Solway to Skinburness before arriving at Whitehaven and interviewing every society member; from there to Penrith and Appleby, described as "a county town worthy of Ireland, containing at least 5 and 20 houses". He declined to preach there and passed on to the Johnsons of Brough, where he also declined to preach since there was not time to raise a large congregation. 1767 saw a further brief trip from Kendal to Keswick, Cockermouth and Whitehaven to find a ship, but bad weather prevented sailing so he rode on to Dumfries and Port Patrick and sailed from there - always a restless man in a dreadful hurry.

Having passed some pleasant time with the Gilberts, by April 1768 at Chester, Wesley travelled on to Kendal where:

"Seceders and mongrel Methodists have so surfeited the people here that there is small prospect of doing good; hence I once more 'cast my bread upon the waters' and left the work to God".

The travellers went on to Ambleside, Keswick and Cockermouth where they intended to rest but found no accommodation or congregation due to the excitement of a parliamentary election, so having dried out they moved on to Whitehaven. The sight of Joseph Guildford's revival in Whitehaven gladdened the tired preachers, and he preached at Caldbeck to a very serious congregation, many of them Quakers, before passing over the Solway to Scotland. Later that year he was briefly at Brough where he spent the time seeing to backsliders and putting the fear of God into them.

Great things were hoped of Whitehaven once it was made a circuit in 1769, but when Wesley returned in 1770 the preachers were having problems over money and over supplying all the attention to societies that was required. Without asking Wesley Carlisle society had announced he would preach and the preacher had to travel there specially for this service, which did not please him. He found 15 members in the city, spent the night at Houghton, and preached there and at Carlisle before moving on to Longtown where he preached in the open. Continued Whitehaven problems of maintaining discipline over members led Wesley to write to the stewards and preachers indicating that all members should attend the Church of England and that none should attend Dissenting services - "let all that were of the Church keep to the Church"; to have truck with the Dissenters was a sure recipe for disaster, he believed.

Passing through Ambleside and Keswick without comment in 1772 Wesley enjoyed services in and around Cockermouth before passing on to the Carlisle society where he preached outside the city walls and spent the night in a cottage at West Linton. His trip in 1774 through the same places was passed over with scarcely a comment, whilst 1776 repeated his attentions to Cockermouth, Whitehaven, Wigton and Carlisle and scarcely anywhere else - the only note he made was on the increasing trade and industry of the area since he first came there in the 1740s.

The Isle of Man received its first visit from Wesley in 1777 when he sailed from Whitehaven. During 1780 he had a more detailed

account of his work in Cumbria, coming from Barnard Castle down to Heardale where the enthusiasm and fervour of the miners impressed him. Over Hartside and down to Gamblesby he remarked:

[At Gamblesby]"...a large congregation of rich and poor. The chief man of the town was formerly a local preacher, but now keeps his carriage. Has he increased in holiness as well as in wealth? If not, he has made a poor exchange".

At Penrith he commenced preaching to a packed room but moved outside and restarted when the crowd overflowed; a cancelled sailing to the Isle of Man meant he had time to meet a local celebrity, a Methodist negress living in the town, and preached in a new venue in Cockermouth - "the Town Hall", more comfortable than the Castle Yard. He then moved on to Carlisle, where he likewise preached in the town hall, and crossed to Newcastle.

May 1781 found Wesley coming from Lancashire to Ambleside, and on to Whitehaven where "intense heat" drove away some of the multitude who heard him preach in the market place. Two weeks were then spent in the Isle of Man, and on his return Wesley was invited to preach in a meeting house owned by a Mr. Lowthian of Cockermouth, which was very acceptable to the Methodists since it held more people than did the town hall. Wesley visited a Mr. White's house at Tallentire and preached there, showing the wondering villagers what a Methodist looked like before passing on to Carlisle where he preached in the town hall, and then on to Newcastle.

After years of saying nothing about the area from Kendal to Ambleside Wesley noted that he stayed at the Salutation in that town in 1784, and it was there that he both preached to a large throng and heard the story of the Jacobite prisoner who escaped from Carlisle Castle in 1745 after a miraculous dream told where the key to his cell might be found. He stayed as usual with Thomas Hodgson of Whitehaven, and was pleased to report:

"The society is united in love, not conformed to the world, but labouring to experience the full image of God, wherein they were

created. The house was filled in the evening, and much more the next, when we had the church ministers, and most of the gentry in the town; but they behaved with as much decency as if they had been colliers..." The Carlisle society was unable to hire anywhere better and had to use their own meeting house for his visit.

In spite of advancing years John Wesley continued to exhibit startling vigour; in May 1786 he came from Barnard Castle to Appleby, preached, rode to Brough and returned to Appleby, passed on to Penrith for the night and preached again. He shocked the society there by being able to fall asleep virtually at will for as long as he wished, which refreshed him. He rose at 3.15 a.m. was in Carlisle for an "early breakfast", and at Moffat for supper. From Kendal to Keswick and on to Whitehaven in 1788 on his penultimate visit, the society was delighted to receive him, but the old campaigner was depressed by the observation that in the 40 years since he had started to come to the port not one of the original members of society was left alive - he almost felt as though he was from a different time and age. At Carlisle he found the pleasant new meeting house completed but already too small for existing congregations, so great was its popularity. The society as elsewhere in the county, was "well united", and he passed on to Dumfries. There he preached in one of the most bizarre of the Methodists' meeting houses, and expressed his concern over the future of Methodism here as elsewhere in Scotland.

1790 was the last time Wesley came to Cumbria; he only preached in Carlisle on his way to Newcastle, remarking that a "small handful of people" had stood firm against a group of troublemakers whose influence had been destroyed, and the future was bright for the society in the city. John Wesley died the following year, having made his 26 visits to Cumbrian soil, and having encouraged the revival of religion in the county. The main work of consolidation was left to his lieutenants on the spot.

During Wesley's lifetime the only Cumbrian establishment of Methodism was in and around Whitehaven, with a handful of societies across the county and a promising beginning at Carlisle. Elsewhere the Methodists were unknown or could be counted on one hand. Christopher Hopper, Thomas Olivers and a number of other preachers of repute had been working in West Cumberland with satisfactory results. Hopper was there several times from the north-east, including 1750 and 1752 when he found large audiences most hospitable to himself and his wife (2). Olivers had a rougher reception and witnessed a near riot against his work five years later as he hurriedly passed on to London (3). Due to the stretching of Haworth's resources and the expense involved, Whitehaven was established as a circuit in 1769 after the fine revival work of Joseph Guildford the previous year. Membership at that time was only 115 in Whitehaven with societies of less than 20 at Cockermouth, Workington, Branthwaite, Caldbeck, Brackenhill, Wigton and Lorton: a total of 191 (4). The Methodist successes had been amongst the miners of the area but well before Wesley's death "respectable" families were attending services and enrolling in society. The Dickinsons, managing partners of Seaton iron works and with other business interests, helped finance the impecunious circuit and Robert Dickinson kept circuit accounts and ledgers in fine copperplate writing into the 19th century. Under his management the preachers were able to work many of the villages but not usually with lasting results unless important local people could be attracted to attendances at services and then into membership. The Whitehaven society contributed over a third of circuit income into the 1800's when Carlisle became a circuit and by which time Brampton was being missioned from Whitehaven.

2. Ed. T. Jackson, Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers, 6 vols, 1871: vol.1. p.200.

3. Arm. Mag. 1779 p.139.

4. J. W. Laycock, Methodist Heroes of the Great Haworth Round, 1734/84. 1909 p.285.

5. Cash Book of the Methodists, Whitehaven.

Disaster struck the circuit when in 1791 mining subsidence reduced the chapel and 40 neighbouring cottages to rubble; its continued existence as a circuit was due to the work of James Hogarth, a factory owner in the town who gave his newly built chapel to the Methodists, plus substantial amounts of money and two manses. He had upset the Lowthers by his business success, so that when they prevented the Bishop of Chester from consecrating his chapel he gave it to the Methodists whose original 1761 edifice was a poor and plain place unfit (it was generally agreed) to house an aspiring sect (6). Hogarth's continued support promoted the work of the circuit and congregations continued to be large. An outstanding product of Methodism in the 1780s was John Braithwaite who entered the ministry in 1790 and married Hogarth's niece and heir in 1795. In spite of its apparent success, Whitehaven Methodism in the period 1790 to 1820 was positively puny in its achievements compared with other circuits - Bristol, Newcastle, the larger towns, and Braithwaite, who travelled all over the Kingdom, unfavourably compared Cumbrian Methodism with circuits further afield (7).

In the early 19th century the Whitehaven circuit prospered as population increased and membership grew into the late 1820s as first Carlisle, then Wigton, were taken off Whitehaven's hands. With small groups of devoted workers like William Gladders and John Laybourn (8) scattered throughout the villages and towns, Methodism was ready for the opportunity of expansion shortly to be offered. The new migrants provided good converts, most of them employed in the iron or mining industries, and following the examples of their employers like the Brookbanks and Dickinsons. Workington society commenced in 1771 and was able in this slow but certain way to graduate from rooms via cottages, to a little chapel in Tiffen Lane by 1791.

6. Wes. Meth. Mag. 1819 p.7; D. Hay, History of Whitehaven, 1966.

7. R. Dickinson, Life of the Rev. John Braithwaite, 1825; Wes. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.14.

8. Appendix A; Wes. Meth. Mag. 1806 p.475.

Its early Sunday school in the 1880s helped train Hodgson Casson who came on plan in 1810 and became a brilliantly successful revivalist throughout the county after 1815 (9). A man of extreme eccentricity like Casson did more to attract a mass audience to services than even Wesley's fame in this county, and because of his work Methodism received a great boost forward particularly in Kendal and Brough circuits. Back in West Cumberland the early Cockermouth society, like Workington and Whitehaven, attracted working men of skilled trade status as well as miners; many of these workers travelled around the villages and took their religion with them. One of their number, cooper George Robinson, bought old maltkins and converted them into the first chapel for the bargain price of £70 in 1797. The early Methodists were economical and thrifty, and men of an independent frame of mind, in the mould of the Quakers of the mid 17th century (10).

Strangely, the only Lake District success until the coming of the railways in the 1840s was at Keswick, due entirely to work there by Penrith saddler Robert Gates in the 1800s, and nothing to do with the West Cumberland efforts which were spreading north-east to Carlisle and not inland. Gates recruited pencil manufacturer Robert Coupland and Featherstonehaugh Alexander, both men of property, and without their aid no advance there would have occurred. Wigton took charge of Keswick from 1818 to 1854 but was itself a weak cause, employing one minister after independence from Whitehaven and a lay agent expected to tramp the fells from Ireby to Bothel and down to Keswick itself each week (11).

9. A. Steele, Christianity in Earnest as Exemplified in the Life and Labours of the Rev. Hodgson Casson, 1851; C. Gough, "West Cumberland Metropolis", Methodist Recorder 16.8.1900; Sunday School Jubilee, 1860/1910.

10. E. Griffin, Watchers of a Beacon, 1954.

11. F. Benjamin and O. A. Matthews, Facet of Life in Keswick, 1975; Chapel Accounts, 1814/29; A. Humphries, A Wide Cumberland Circuit; Methodist Recorder, 12.4.1903.

There was a small number of Methodists in the two Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion societies at Bootle and Whitehaven, both created by the work of Joseph Whitridge. Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, had been one of the few aristocratic admirers of the Methodists and she created her own small connexion of Calvinistic Methodists which possessed 64 chapels and societies by the 1780s,

After her death it was unable to continue as a separate denomination and many of the societies merged with the Congregational Union in the early 19th century.

Whitridge came from Bootle, made his fortune in London and joined the Countess's connexion before returning home. By 1779 he had a society of 30 members and a chapel, as the rector wrote: "the chapel was built, it is said, by Lady Huntingdon's phanatical (sic) society; who took pains to pervert the whole parish to their idle notions - which cost the lawful minister much trouble - but who now hopes their turbulent spirit is cooling". (12). The comment was at the 1789 Visitation of the Bishop of Chester, by which date 8 of the 120 families of the parish were in the society. The Bootle society missioned Whitehaven in 1783 and established a cause which was prosperous enough in 1793 to open "the Providence", Duke Street Chapel. Thomas Cook was the successful pastor to both societies until he removed in 1819, when the two merged with the seceders from the Presbyterian chapel to become Independents at both societies (13).

By the end of the 18th century Methodism was a religion for few Cumbrians, the expansion being delayed by lack of suitable officials

12. Visitation Returns, 1789. Chester Record Office, EDV, 7/12/166.

13. Mannix and Whellan, Directory of Cumberland and Westmorland, 1847. pp.315, pp.385; D. Hay, History of Whitehaven, 1966; Journal No.3 of WHS Cumbrian Branch, The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion in Cumbria, April 1978, pp.7/9.

and local preachers. The Bishop's Visitation returns for West and South Cumbria noted the weakness of the societies in 1789. Naturally many Methodists at that date also attended the Church and would not be classed as "Dissenters", and this must have been the case since the only societies noted were in Whitehaven, Ulverston, Embleton (with "a few members"), 3 families in Lorton and 18 in Workington, and thus omitting mention of the Cockermouth society and others. (14). Nonetheless, though the returns ignored the existence of the Methodists in places, the societies and their activities cannot have been very noticeable or worthy of remark, and this was for instance true of Ulverston. There may have been Methodists in that town in the 1770s but its formation cannot have been much prior to 1780 when Dales circuit preachers attracted small numbers to services (15). With members scattered throughout the Furness villages, the Methodists did little beyond occasional preaching in most places until the famous work of Hodgson Casson in 1817 which really brought in the people to hear his words. He was there only on loan from Kendal, and it was with the conversion of prominent families - like the Ashburners - that a stable Methodist presence was established. This was a far cry from the great expansion to be experienced in the south of the county in the 1860s.

Ulverston was in the 1800s a mission from Kendal, itself a new circuit benefitting from Casson's work. It had been graced with Wesley's attention in the 1760s but the society died out and was refounded by Brunskill only in 1787 and placed under Lancaster for sometime (16). The Lancaster preachers walked

14.. Table 10. p.58.

15.. Early Methodism in Furness, G. W. Bancroft Judge, WHS Procs. vol. 27 1949; Neville Street Jubilee, Ulverston, 1901/51, H. Birkett; Ulverston Methodism, series of 10 articles by W. G. Atkinson in the Barrow News, 1925/26, though only 9 were completed.

16. Journal No.2 of the WHS Cumbrian Branch, July 1977, Chancellor Burnard and Stephen Brunskill, pp.11/14.; Bunting Transcripts, S. Ashton to J. Bunting, 4.11.1800.

between their base and Kendal but Methodism remained weak in Westmorland except in the fells of the east. There the Wesleyan preachers capitalised on the pioneer work of Ingham and his supporters.

Benjamin Ingham, once a close friend of the Wesleys, allied closely with the Moravians in Yorkshire during the 1740s, and founded religious societies along the lines of John Wesley. When Edward Simpson of Rownthwaite in Westmorland invited him to preach there in 1748 he already had 50 societies with 2,000 members, and over the next 10 years he and his preachers created societies in Cumbria at Kendal, Grayrigg, Warcop, Kirkby Lonsdale, Kirkby Stephen, Asby, Gaisfill, Dent, Sedbergh, Gayle and Crosby Garrett whilst missioning as far as Penrith and Crook (17). Leading preachers like Grimshaw of Haworth and Whitefield helped Ingham in the 1750s in the county, though the recruitment of local officials to run the societies spread the work on a firmer foundation - the Allans, the Battys, the Brunskills, Hunters and Faradays (18).

There was opposition from the start to the Inghamites: mob attacks, as at Kirkby Lonsdale in 1750, and Beetham where the preacher was thrown into the river, and refusals to bury Inghamite children or to give access to the Church and its rituals since Ingham broke with the Church of England (unlike Wesley) (19). With the existence of these Methodist type societies and the travelling preachers, Wesley steered clear of this area until the 1760s when the Inghamites were wrecked. Allen and Batty were sent to find out about the ideas of the Scottish Glassites (or Sandemanians) and on their return Allen demanded immediate radical changes which Ingham refused. In 1761

17. R. W. Thompson, Benjamin Ingham, The Yorkshire Evangelist, and the Inghamites. 1958

18. J. F. Riley, The Hammer and The Anvil: a background to Michael Faraday, 1958; D. F. Clarke, Benjamin Ingham, Leeds University M. Phil 1971.

19. Lonsdale Magazine, vol.1. 1820 p.347.

Allen seceded with 80 societies and 3,000 members, leaving only 13 societies with 300 members loyal to Ingham. One of these was at Kendal where the society had Pear Tree Barn as its home since 1756 and became known as "Calvinistic Methodists", the leaders being Thomas Rowlandson until 1797 and later Christopher Batty and William Wilson (20). The majority of the hundreds of Inghamite members in Cumbria did not become Allen supporters, but instead invited Wesley's preachers from the dales, and allowed an entry for Methodists who formed societies amongst them. Ingham failed to organise and to control the membership, unlike Wesley who maintained a strict oversight of all aspects of the work at all times. The former Inghamite members provided preaching centres and hospitality for the Wesleyans of the 1760s onwards, the Brunskills of Orton, Winton and Longmarton being particularly helpful (21). Nonetheless groundwork remained to be done when Brough became head of the new circuit covering from east of Kendal to north of Penrith in 1803.

George Smith was the first minister to the new Brough circuit in 1803 and found that many places still had no members (22), so that his work was much in the pioneer spirit of the 18th century. The circuit was so poor that when he rented a house for £3 per annum for his new wife he had to beg not only for the rent, but also for old furniture to fit it out. The societies at that date were: Brough, Appleby, Bolton, Gamblesby, Stainmore, Dufton, Morland, Renwick, Bleatarn, Longmarton, Little Strickland, Skerwith, "Gudenhill", Kirkby Thore, Penrith, Gaisgill Row (23). He established a Kirkby Stephen society which John Cleasby later took over and found Kirkoswald "A small market town where the people on my first preaching in the market place, appeared rude and uncultured, like savages in the wilderness". He was able to take a new building supposed

20. Annals of Kendal, C. Nicholson, 1861 p.164; Thompson and Clarke as above.

21. Appendix A.

22. Wes. Meth. Mag. 1833 p.73.

23. Brough Circuit Accounts 1803/22. Kendal RO WDFC M1.

to be a theatre for services and later reported favourably on the society formed. At Shap he deliberately provoked men taking part in racing, fighting and baiting in order to make his presence felt, and managed at the cost of abuse and threats to start preaching. By 1804 Kirkby Stephen was on plan, and by 1806 Keswick, Ravenstonedale, Asby, Warcop, Temple Sowerby, Penruddock, Murton and Woodhouse. The Circuit was very poor, with Brough raising £6 to £8 per annum and Penrith half of that during 1805 for circuit funds. The instability of many of the societies is shown by Appleby's repeatedly disappearing and re-appearing in the accounts. A society often depended on a single man or family here as elsewhere into the 19th century in Cumbria and their death or removal could mean disaster for the early Methodists.

Although Smith and others brought preaching across the area the mission work was still not complete by 1814, a significant date for the Brough and Penrith circuit because of the death of William Varty. Varty had been the promoter of Methodism in Penrith after being converted to it when on business in Yorkshire in 1776 (24). He found 4 or 5 Methodists meeting for prayer back in Penrith and provided them with rooms in Crown Terrace. As property and business owner, Varty was just the person to put Methodism on its feet and because of his work Penrith became independent from Brough between 1806 and 1818. When Varty died he left his sons to help Methodism, but neither of them was interested. They did, however, give the Sandgate chapel site and £200 for the building of a chapel, opened in 1815 and the first major Cumbrian chapel for the Connexion. In the longrun it marked the symbolic turning point for the Methodists by being a huge building and a most impressive monument. Later it gave the sect a boost in morale and in membership and attracted large congregations because of its dignity and imposing presence. On the other hand it marked too the commencement of the obsession of the Methodists with building huge and expensive chapels (which, of course, characterised all denominations at sometime) and saddled the new circuit with a debt for 45 years which forced the circuit to

24. The Christian Patriarch: The Life of Mr. Robert Gate,
GGS Thomas, 1869.

merge with Brough from 1818 to 1824 because it could not afford a minister and a chapel of these proportions. The little and economical chapels of the fellside villages - Gamblesby, Renwick - were far more practical in their way but the town Methodists were determined to show their rising affluence and prominence. The chapel symbolised the aspirations of the Wesleyans and their determination to become the major Dissenting sect, coming as it did at a time when many Methodists were being weaned off the Church of England and into the Connexion alone.

In the anti-clockwise movement of this chapter, from West to South to East and finally to North, Carlisle comes at the conclusion of the rise of Methodism in this early period to 1830. It was by Cumbrian terms a new society, started by a Longtown man in 1767 amidst fierce persecution (25). The society of a dozen managed to rent a barn in Abbey Street in 1769 when under Whitehaven, but progressed to a little chapel in Fisher Street in 1785. As their congregations increased, so the society expanded the building in 1795, but by the 1800s conditions were becoming cramped and when Penrith opened their new chapel Carlisle looked askance at their own little home. By that date they had over 500 members in what was the county's leading circuit, and a chapel to seat 1,100 was built in Fisher Street in 1817. It heralded nearly 2 further decades of Wesleyan expansion and the establishment of Carlisle as head of the new District as successor to Whitehaven.

By the time of the Association secessions in 1835 Cumbrian Wesleyanism had advanced from being a small obscure sect with few members, occasionally large congregations, a few eccentric well known personalities, and poky little rooms, into a confident, numerous body with preachers, both itinerant and local, ubiquitous across most of Cumbria and preaching not only in the open air but in grandiose expensive chapels. They had become a successful denomination. The causes of this sudden explosive achievement were unique in Methodism.

25, Carlisle Journal 1842 Feb. 26th; Wes. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.96; Appendix A, p.298 Robert Bell.

Methodism in the period ending 1831 grew to have over 5,000 members in Cumbria which represented just over 2% of the population. (26). New factors encouraged this startling change in the fortunes of the denomination which did not have much in common with the older Dissent (27).

Between 1801 and 1831 Cumberland's population expanded by 45%, the rest of Cumbria's by a third, and it was in these conditions of population and industrial expansion that Methodism flourished. The arrival of large scale cotton enterprises to Carlisle and Wigan in the third quarter of the 18th century, and its continued expansion into the 1830s, encouraged large numbers of immigrants from the surrounding area. With this upsetting of the traditional patterns of rural life dominated by the clergy of the village, new allegiances were sought by the uprooted thousands and the Methodists eagerly offered them a "home". The warm, friendly, spontaneous atmosphere of the Methodists provided a clan structure in each village and town unlike anything produced by other denominations, so that any person moving from one place to a foreign one could rely on help from the local Methodist society who in turn would do their best to look after one of their own. There is no doubt that Methodists were at the time aware of great changes in society and population increases and reacted to these stimuli with active mission work the like of which no other denomination was able to provide on such scale. Members moving from place to place for work would be glad to have their Methodist connections, and in turn this spread Connexional activity to new areas - for instance, the mining villages of the west.

In conditions of change the Methodists prospered, using their small societies to recruit from amongst the migrants and attracting thousands to their open air and chapel work. The migrants responded enthusiastically to this friendship and membership swelled. Later on

26. Table 10, p.58.

27. See chapter on "The Dissenters", p.34.

conditions of declining population were to hamstring the Methodists and to cripple their activities, but that was in the later 19th century and until the 1830s the Wesleyans believed themselves capable of scaling the heights.

Initially the Wesleyans relied on the work of local and itinerant preachers in whipping up enthusiasm and on the chance conversion of a leading local man or family in order to establish their work permanently. Thus safely ensconced in a locality, the little cells of members could await population explosion and then take advantage of it; should it not occur the society remained small. The arrival of itinerant workers, for example from the North East for minework, spread the denomination well, for such men lived for months in one place and then in another, taking Methodism with them and starting new causes wherever they could (hence the success of Gladders). It was unfortunate that after the days of expansion had passed, the Wesleyans found themselves struggling to make ends meet and imprisoned in vast debts due to overbuilding during the halcyon days.

In this setting of expanding economy and population, the existence of rival denominations did not pose too great a threat to the Wesleyans and later the Primitives. Larger centres like Carlisle or Penrith could support a number of churches without some losing out, though in villages rivalry could seriously affect one or other denomination. Normally the Wesleyans and the Primitives were the only denominations sufficiently organised to encounter the situation with success into the 1830s, though an active preacher like Whitridge of Carlisle in the 1800s who led Independent missions could make the most of his opportunities.

The Established Church provided instances of opposition to and persecution of Methodists throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, but this did not materially affect the spread of Methodism whose successes were independent of other denominations. The Anglicans tended to be aloof or disdainful of the Wesleyans, with the loss of evangelically minded laymen throughout the county from Anglican into Wesleyan ranks over the early 19th century not producing links between the two. Although Wesleyans continued for a time to attend the Anglican services those converted to active and zealous religion by the words

of evangelical clergy like Milner and Fawcett in the 1800s in Carlisle found the rest of the Establishment wanting, and ended up swelling the Wesleyan societies. Where populations were increasing rapidly the clergy took no great interest in the work of the Methodists until the reactions of the Warrenite secessions.

Areas of Methodist growth in this period experienced the large rise in population and economic development already discussed. This was true of Carlisle and Wigton; Whitehaven had had its first major growth in the early days of John Wesley with the rise of its port and subsequent economic and mining growth. It was not only the work of Wesley which led to Whitehaven becoming the early Cumbrian Methodist centre. On the other hand Workington the booming iron and steel port of the 1870s and 1880s experienced little change in population or economic stimulus from 1790 and 1830, hence its tardy Methodist development. The circuit originally embracing Brough, Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Penrith was at first successful because the preachers could count on the neglected Inghamite societies of the 1760s, though population too was rapidly rising and the Methodists exhibited their extraordinary ability to take over an entire village in the fellside communities. This was done by attracting leading members of the locality into services, and recruiting from their numbers which in turn led their social inferiors to follow suit - as in Kirkby Thore and Bolton. The area covered by Brough circuit became with Carlisle and Whitehaven the leading Wesleyan centres of the county, and these three suffered most in the 1835 storms.

Throughout the remainder of Cumbria the Wesleyans established small causes and awaited similar changes which had benefitted Carlisle and Whitehaven. The Lakes remained impervious until the arrival of the railways in the 1860s gave new opportunities on a limited scale to Keswick and Ambleside. Otherwise the Methodists remained very weak in the Lakes proper. In the south of the county around Sedbergh, Kendal and Ulverston there were little societies spread across a vast area but not especially successful until the sudden immense impetus of Barrow and Millom's development based on railways, iron, steel and shipbuilding. Until that watershed of the 1860s the Wesleyans maintained a discreet but restricted presence. Methodist heroics until 1835 were confined to Carlisle, Whitehaven

and Appleby circuits and it was to be their devastation in 1836 and again to a certain extent in 1850 which threw the 1860s boom years into such relief elsewhere in Cumbria.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE 1835 ASSOCIATION AND

1850 REFORM ISSUES

The Warrenite Secession and the Growth of the Wesleyan Association.

Methodism underwent a massive increase in membership in the period 1790 to 1830, and at the same time such expansion brought with it a multitude of problems. With a membership of 200,000 and more it was impossible to keep every member, society and official strictly within Methodist discipline and under control, particularly when there were over 1,200 ministers, some of whom were hard to control by the 1830s (1). The financial and organisational aspects of the Connexion were a gigantic headache to the Conference and in particular to the ministers and the few laymen responsible for them. With the Connexion relying heavily on the work of local preachers and leaders it was natural that the ministers, always very heavily outnumbered by their lay helpers, should delegate responsibility and functions to laymen. With Connexional rules being at that time ill-defined and not wholly formed, the opportunities for misinterpretation and bending rules existed on a wide scale (2).

There were discontented members in every circuit, and the issue of finance was ever the key. Members did not like having to pay

1. D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, 1830/1857. Manchester University Ph. D 1966. Ch.1; D. A. Gowland's book based on his thesis was published too late for inclusion in this chapter; R. Currie, Methodism Divided: a study in the sociology of ecumenicalism, 1966. p.30; J. C. Bowmer, Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism, from the death of John Wesley to the death of Jabez Bunting 1791/1858. p.130. Leeds University Ph. D 1966. Preference was given to J. C. Bowmer's Thesis rather than to his book which closely follows his work; see J. C. Bowmer, Pastor and People, Epworth 1975.
2. J. C. Bowmer, Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism, ch.4; J. H. S. Kent, The Age of Disunity, 1966, ch.3.

towards the upkeep of the ministry when laymen were carrying out virtually the same functions at no cost. To raise funds for Connexional uses which might not benefit the home circuit did not appeal to many members, whilst the control of finance in the early 19th century resided largely in the hands of ministers and a few wealthy laymen. When local preachers formed their own Friendly Society in the early 1830s, and the Local Preachers Mutual Aid Association in 1849, ministers regarded the actions as tantamount to defiance and an attempt to provide an alternative ministry (3). Lay officials found difficulty in taking orders and in co-operating with outsiders, the ministers, some of whom were most difficult to get on with. When Richard Watson and others formulated the idea of the "High Pastoral Office" for Methodist preachers in order to raise the preachers out of the mass of Methodists and to endow them with special "Divine Calling" and ability, laymen, particularly officials, looked askance at the thin argument differentiating the ministers from the unpaid local preachers and leaders who fulfilled a similar but unpaid role, and might justifiably be seen as more worthy of Divine Calling than was the hired ministry (4). Sunday schools were frequently beyond the control of the ministers and suspected of being nests of discontent, with successive Conferences and ministerial hierarchies attempting to reduce their independence and power. It did not take a great deal of misunderstanding on one or both sides to have a situation where mutual hostility and suspicion broke out into secession and mass expulsion.

The first major trouble occurred between 1826 and 1829 at Leeds,

3. R. Currie, Methodism Divided. p.52;

D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, p.36.

4. J. C. Bowmer, Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism, ch.6;

W. R. Ward, Early Victorian Methodism: The correspondence of Jabez Bunting 1830/1858. 1976. p.17;

J. H. S. Kent, The Age of Disunity, ch.2.

the celebrated "Leeds Organ Case" (5). When the Brunswick chapel was opened there in 1825 there was no musical instrument in use for the singing congregation of between two and three thousand; the trustees accordingly in 1826 wished to install an organ, despite Conference rules at that time discouraging this. By a very small margin, the trustees decided to ask permission to instal the organ, which immediately unsettled the circuit and its 6,000 members. The circuit was divided into two in 1826 to make it more manageable, but straight away there had been suspicion that this was a prelude to increased ministerial control over the reduced number of officials. Thomas Stanley, the Chairman of the District and Circuit Superintendent, and a man of balanced and wise judgement, was asked about the matter and announced that no organ ought to be installed unless a majority of the Leaders' Meeting agreed to it. Despite this advice, and the known opposition from the large majority of leaders and local preachers, the trustees, by 8 votes to 6 with 1 neutral, solicited subscriptions for the scheme after being advised by Richard Watson, John Stephens and other leading ministers in early 1827 that their superintendent and the other lay officials had no say in the matter. In the subsequent District Meeting (which was supposed in Connexional Law to have complete control in the matter of an organ) permission to instal the organ was decisively refused, by 13 votes to 7.

By design or oversight appeal to Conference was allowed. There was a failure in communications between the Conference and its leading lights, and the lay officials of Leeds, and when a Special District

5. J. C. Bowmer, Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism, ch.8; W. R. Ward, The Early Correspondence of Jabez Bunting, 1820/1829. 1972. pp.156 to 192 - the issue dominates much of the book; J. Hughes, The Story of the Leeds Non-Conformists, Vol.35, part 4 pp.81/87 December 1965; Vol.35, part 5 pp.122/124 March 1966; Vol.37, part 5 pp.133/138 March 1970; Vol.39, part 3 pp.73/76 October 1973.

Meeting was called to consider the matter the circuit was amazed. It was tragic for later events that the ranks of both trustees and leaders/local preachers had skilled and determined characters, and secret meetings with a view to undermining their opponents were being organised by the beginning of 1827. Each used the Organ Case as an excuse for their attacks on the other. With conflicting interpretations of imprecise laws, trouble was soon on the way with the Special District Meeting in December 1827; the various rebels had organised themselves into groups outside of circuit control, and broke as many Connexional rules as did their opponents, who summoned leading men from Conference to deal with the situation. The decision to allow the organ, given by Conference in 1827, was reaffirmed and rebels against this decision were suspended. Jabez Bunting and his allies maintained that the rebels were determined to flout Conference's laws and authority, and secession was inevitable by 1828. Thus came into being the "Leeds Non-Conformists" denomination which in 1835 joined with the Wesleyan Association after the Warrenite Secession. About 3,000 members of the Wesleyan circuit withdrew in this "pioneer secession", an example to the later much more serious divisions of 1835 and 1850 (6).

Issues raised in the "Leeds Non-Conformists" dispute re-occurred in 1834, the occasion being the decision by Conference to establish a Theological Institute to train ministers: the power of the ministry and especially of Conference; financial strains and worries; the apparent lack of power amongst circuit members and officials; the formidable presence of Jabez Bunting and his supporters. Coupled with the increasing size of membership and the scope for defying Connexional rules offered to both ministers and laymen, the Theological Institute offered unparalleled opportunity for each side to assail the other.

The idea of such an Institute had long been considered desirable

6. J. Hughes, The Story of the Leeds Non-Conformists.

by a major part of the Connexion, but the early 1830s witnessed the first chance to do so when finances permitted (7). Conference discussed the matter at length and a committee was established to see to the matter and to report back to Conference in due course. One of the members of the Committee was Samuel Warren, an expert on Methodist law and superintendent of a Manchester circuit. Initially he supported the scheme, but suddenly in 1834 came out strongly against it, partly it was assumed because he discovered Bunting was to be offered the Presidency of the Institute and not he himself. People concerned that the Institute would sacrifice piety and evangelism to education and intellectual attainment, and the less principled who viewed it as an ideal place to produce generations of ministers under Bunting's oversight (and who in turn would support his plans and ideas) seized upon Warren's disaffection and Warren became something of a pawn in the hands of less scrupulous men (8).

Warren was suspended for his attacks on Conference and other ministers during 1834 and took the matter to court to decide whether or not the superintendent of a circuit, or the Conference, was supreme in the circuit or in a given chapel. After much discussion the Conference triumphed and Warren lost any legal claims he might have had to stay as minister in Manchester. The matter took a more serious turn with the discovery that rules to give laymen more say in Connexional activities, dating from 1796, had never been placed in the official minutes, which alarmed considerable numbers of members. A revolt of laymen in Manchester, spurred on by the writings and

7. K. B. Garlick, The Wesleyan Theological Institution, vol. 39, part 4 pp.104/112 February 1974. WHS Procs;

R. Lowery, The Wesleyan Theological Institution, vol.39, part 5 pp.128/136 June 1974. WHS Procs;

8. J. C. Bowmer, Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism, ch.9;

W. R. Ward, Early Victorian Methodism, the Warrenite issue and Wesleyan Association take up much of the book;

D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, pp.25/74;

J. H. S. Kent, Methodism Divided, vol.37, part 1 p.17/19 February 1969 WHS Procs.

speeches of ministers not easily controlled by Bunting and eager to see him reduced in power, created the "Grand Central Association" during the autumn of 1834 and demanded changes inside Conference. The Association, encouraged by Everett, Bromley, Beaumont and other rebel preachers, demanded:

1. A revision of the power of the so-called "Special District Meeting", which Bunting had put to good effect at Leeds.
2. The opening of Conference proceedings to the public.
3. A revision of the rules of Conference dating from 1769 which they believed required updating, and regarded the participation of laymen in the proceedings of Conference and the Connexion.
4. Lay representatives to Conference and virtual self-government for each circuit (a later demand) (9).

Subject to mounting pressure, the Conference of 1835 refused to listen to the Association's words and demands and declared it illegal. The Association held its own Conference, and secession, or expulsion, created the Wesleyan Association denomination, with strongest support in Lancashire, though with much throughout the country.

Methodists with a score to settle against the ministry or more especially against Bunting, swelled the Association ranks, immediately presenting a great threat to the security of a Conference ruled by a few men amongst whom Bunting was outstanding. He had become so major a force in creating the bureaucracy which by the 1830s ran Methodism, that any attack on Conference had to be directed at

9. D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire. pp.32.

him as the architect responsible for the design (10). Laymen with a swelling tide of grievances against the Conference and ministry organised the thousands of new members unaccustomed to unquestionably accepting the discipline demanded via class and chapel and furnished large audiences (at least initially) for the seceders. Ministers were divided amongst themselves; some did nothing, others anticipated trouble and acted too hastily by expelling all rebels, imagined or real, and others attempted a middle course of doing little unless they had to. Both ministers and the Association were split in their leadership and a good deal of confusion characterised the affair. At the end of it, many moderates who had left the Wesleyans returned to the fold, whilst the extremists did battle amongst themselves. In part the revolt was due to antagonism between the well-off members taken in partnership by the Conference on one hand, against the small businessmen and craftsmen in declining trades or industries on the other, a situation exacerbated in some circuits with the removal of the wealthy out of certain societies, leaving them destitute of social leaders and prone to overtures from rebellious factions (11).

The Wesleyan Association proved to be traditionalist Methodists opposed to the growth of Wesleyanism into a Church movement in which evangelism and conservatism were replaced by bureaucratic rule, fixed forms of service and ministerial control based on the theory of "pastoral supremacy". Circuits felt they were fighting "ministerial tyranny" in the name of circuit freedom, though this reduced them to

10. J. H. S. Kent, The Age of Disunity, pp.103/126, ch.4;
 W. R. Ward, Early Victorian Methodism, introduction;
 W. R. Ward, The Early Correspondence of Jabez Bunting, introduction;

11. W. R. Ward, The Early Correspondence of Jabez Bunting, pp.5., introduction;
 D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, pp.82.

the role of Independent congregations unwilling to pay for a Connexional system which they at times needed. Many of the Association were small businessmen and the self-employed not used to taking orders from people they were actually paying to do a job, hence the clash in a power struggle (12). The Theological Institute issue was merely a part of the wider issue of who controlled Methodism.

In Cumbria the troubles surrounding the Leeds Organ Case of the 1820s did little to ruffle the calm in the county, where membership was on the increase and with it the wealth of the members although it remained a difficult place for ministers to work. The only noteworthy trouble was at Whitehaven, but this proved to be a storm in a teacup and was tackled skillfully by the circuit superintendent. On the other hand, in 1835 the Warren affair and formation of the Association scored notable successes at Whitehaven, Carlisle and Appleby, three of the strongest circuits. Themes such as the issue of paying for the ministry, relations between circuit officials and preachers, the relative freedom enjoyed by evangelically-minded leaders and local preachers because in such a county the ministers could not even attempt to supervise all their work, contained seeds for discord. Given the impetus and occasion of the Theological Institute Affair, the existence of discontented members and officials, and a few stubborn and determined ministers, dispute was inevitable. It was fortunate for Wesleyanism that it was at that time still weak and undeveloped in most of the county, which encouraged the limitation of the dispute to the few strong circuits; and that only after the development of the railways and industries of the mid 19th century was there a general immigration of population to the west and south of the county, amongst whom the Wesleyans of the 1850s and 1860s were able to make good the losses of 1835 and 1850.

12. D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, pp.63/74.

With the Leeds Organ Case in progress the Whitehaven dissident Wesleyans in 1827 carried out what they believed to be a most radical act: the removal of a "Crown", apparently "a part of the mourning furniture" in the Mount Pleasant Chapel placed there by the trustees, who had not consulted the congregation about the matter (as indeed they did not have to do). Local newspapers made great play of the so-called "Crown Affair" as example to the public how "a religious sect based on freedom" could become the "plaything" of radicals. Variouslly described as "a crime" and a "petty act of vandalism" the removal of the crown occasioned open criticism of the trustees and accusations that they did not control chapel affairs in a proper manner. A number of correspondents entered the fray, many with a determination to sow discord in Methodist ranks by demanding the trustees prevent radical local preachers from preaching in the chapel, whilst exerting control over hearers and their activities within the society. Not only were these correspondents seen by informed members of the society and of the public to be causing trouble, but their ignorance of Methodist laws and procedure was revealed in their letters; for example it was held by one that the trustees ran Methodism and were the most powerful men in it. The ministers took the side of the trustees in fending off trouble and trying to allay fears of a secession but entered surprisingly little into the correspondence. Sensible men stated that a "few well known firebrands" were finding it such hard work stirring up the Methodists in order to effect a "Leeds-type secession" that this was the only thing to which they could resort. In the end nothing came of the matter, though it was stated that the two "tradesmen and officials" involved had apologised for their actions and that an attempt to subvert members by the "Ranters" had been defeated (13).

13. Cumberland Pacquet 1827: January 9th, January 30th, February 6th, February 13th, February 20th and February 27th by which time the Editor closed the matter since the readers were "bored".

The people involved in the "Crown Affair" reappeared with a vengeance and in better organised and supported form in 1835, after 2 years of building up strength. By early 1833 there were grave deficiencies in circuit income because the Whitehaven town society refused to continue to pay the board and lodging of the two ministers who gave their attention increasingly to newer societies, especially Workington (14). Ill-will between the country and the town grew, so difficult had it become to pay ministers, that the only solution, to divide the circuit, was agreed to in March 1834 by 17 votes to 4. This would have made Workington and its environs a separate circuit and no strain on Whitehaven's resources. The plan fell down and back-fired on the preachers when attempts to make Whitehaven pay £19 and Workington only £6 of current circuit debts was refused by Whitehaven Society and scarcely a penny raised. By then the town classes numbered 20 with 4 being under ministers, and any idea or prospect of ministerial control of either the classes or the 16 leaders vanished. As the Warrenite controversy grew Richard Gordon, soon to lead the local Association men, was one of two chairmen at 13 hours of meetings of representatives from disgruntled circuits in the Manchester Baptist Chapel in September 1834 (15). Later that autumn a document outlining Association proposals was printed and circulated amongst classes in Whitehaven, requiring members to give no cash to the ministers or Conference, and demanding the authority and power of the ministers be reduced (16). When faced by the preachers, the officials concerned refused to secede, continued to work amongst societies for agitation, and seriously impaired circuit organisation. By January 1835 £21 in back salaries was owing to two preachers, by December 1835 £42 to three men, and the debts continued high - by 1838 circuit income was half that it had been in 1833 and it took a further ten years for it to recover fully. The preachers there until summer 1835

14. Whitehaven Circuit Accounts 1833/63.
15. Whitehaven Herald, 1834 September 30th.
16. A. Watmough. The Wesleyan Law of Expulsion and its Enforcement. 1836 Whitehaven.

did nothing beyond warning dissidents, but the arrival of Abraham Watmough set the seal on the fate of the circuit and made widespread secession inevitable.

Watmough discovered that the previous superintendent, Hudson, had done his best to keep the circuit in one piece but had had little success. Many Methodists had become involved in the virulent attacks then in progress emanating from the Presbyterians, Quakers and Congregationalists in Whitehaven, a real stronghold, like Kendal of Dissent. At least one mass meeting had been held in Michael Street Wesleyan Chapel, with Hudson as chairman, in the hope of containing the rebels. Hudson refused to continue the meeting because of its violent attacks on the Church, Tories and Conference, and was replaced as chairman amidst a near riot (17). The society was split between the rebels led by Gordon who wished to thoroughly involve himself in political and anti-clerical agitation, and those friends of the Anglican establishment led by copperas manufacturer Joseph Dutton of Harrington. Hudson's junior man at Cockermouth, James Kendall, was a keen Church supporter and had several confrontations with the numerous officials whom he described as "real Dissenters" as opposed to those peaceful Wesleyans adhering to Church and State (18). The issue of the Theological Institute was just the excuse that the Dissenters required for the happenings of late 1835.

Warren came to spur on his supporters when he spoke in Michael Street and the Duke Street Congregational Chapel before going south with "replenished funds" raised in the town (19). When Squance, Lusher and other Wesleyan preachers and laymen unwisely agreed to

17. Whitehaven Herald, March 4th 1834.

18. Bunting Transcripts, J. Kendal to J. Bunting, 2nd June 1835.

19. Cumberland Pacquet, September 15th 1835.

a public debate in the chapel, they were subject to merciless boos, noises, missiles and jeering, actually having their clothes ripped in the ensuing debacle despite their sensible words. About half of the audience were Wesleyans, many concerned about the agitation and eager to have it sorted out; many of these departed when the Association's uncouth element took over the "entertainment". Popularising the dispute did the Association little positive good and alienated many Wesleyans.

By September secession and expulsion were inevitable and fierce attacks were made by each side on the other. "A Methodist but no Waffrenite" scathingly attacked the way in which "indifferent cobblers and tailors" took up the position of preacher and harangued the societies of the area, trying to draw people to their banner and hoping to flourish by doing maximum damage to the Wesleyans (20). The Association leaders meantime worked amongst the classes and scored notable successes in Whitehaven. Their leaders came from the whole circuit but were concentrated in that town, led by Richard Gordon, a hardware merchant and shopkeeper, number 9 of 40 local preachers on plan, and member of society for at least 20 years. It was Gordon who had been superintendent of the Sunday school in the early 1820s where he made brilliant speeches and a lasting impression on both pupils and teachers before disgracing himself by irregular attendance and by delegating his tasks to others (21).

The first to feel the wrath of Watmough was William Baisbrow, a town shoemaker of substance and number 11 on plan and likewise a Wesleyan of longstanding (22). Joseph Sherwen, number 12 on plan, with John Faulkes and Robert Wilson rebel trustees of the town chapel were able to control the chapel, as they did for some months. These three were criticised for their relative calm amidst the 1827 panic and exacted nice revenge by preventing others from becoming trustees. Joseph Casson, tailor, shoemaker Richard Allason and brewer John Harrison suffered the sarcastic comments of their

20. Cumberland Pacquet, September 15th 1835.

21. Sunday School Teachers Meeting Minute Book 1818/1821.

22. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1845 p.465.

opponents. Other Association men were Joseph Nicholson, number 40 on plan, and a grocer, John Hogg, William Anderson, Joseph Ray, Allen Graham and Thomas Stephenson. Their opponent was Abraham Watmough.

Watmough was a veteran preacher, tough, independent and the one man who kept the Whitehaven circuit in existence, though it could be argued that his severity of action made the secession far worse than a gentler approach might have done. Later on he was to be involved in further serious secessions in Longton and Todmorden in the 1850s, and at all times remained self-assured and dogmatic.

On arrival Watmough, aware of the trouble in progress, determined to do nothing except watch the protagonists and speak to them whenever possible. This entailed accosting them at every turn, visiting their homes, shops and places of work, generally becoming a nuisance and being banned from their properties. By late August Watmough was convinced they were determined not to secede, to damage Wesleyanism as much as possible from within, and to create an unworkable rump of societies remaining properly Wesleyan. With this conviction he determined to expel them (23). They had "calumniated the whole body of our preachers as tyrants, and the system of Methodism itself as tyranny, popery and everything else that was abominable and not fit to be endured".

After being manhandled at a planned service in Michael Street and seeing local members flee the ensuing chaos, he finally and publicly warned the Association members he would call them before a leaders meeting to answer charges if they persisted. He acted when he found out that 12 town classes were channelling their money into the Association, and that all were having Association publications read out in meetings, the sight of loyal members having their money refused was too much for him. With what he described as the "poison and gangrene" spreading daily, he called 12 leaders to attend a leaders meeting in order to expel them.

23. A. Watmough's article to the "Illuminator" No.22, November 1835. pp.342/348.

When they met on September 14th all 12 were accused of:

1. Membership of the Association.
2. Opposing the discipline of the Connexion of which they were members.
3. Aiding and abetting the Association in its aims which were directly opposed to Methodism.

He determined there was to be no trial; if they admitted any of the three they were guilty, if they did not they must be guilty, and thus expulsion was obligatory. The meeting was also attended by the seven remaining chapel trustees, some of them being Association members. Of the four trustees not members of the Association, two were loyal to Watmough, two were neutral, with three leaders loyal and one neutral. Everyone expected a resounding Association victory with maximum publicity.

Watmough read the charges and names of the accused 12 (one was absent on business), addressed the four other leaders and told them he relied on their judgement, and asked William Baisbrown if he were guilty of all or any of the three charges. Baisbrown was instructed by Gordon not to reply; all 11 similarly refused to reply but demanded the issue and charges be fully discussed; Watmough refused to allow this, pronounced that all 11 were guilty as charged due to their silence, read a closing prayer, stood up and left with the loyal men and two assistant preachers, braving the dismayed, frustrated and angry mob of Association supporters all the way home. Thwarted of victory the Association party dispersed.

Watmough was soon away at a District meeting, but on his return had only one doubt to bother him: should he have found the men guilty? Three of the four loyal leaders said he had no choice but to expel all 12 and that he acted properly and correctly, not according to law but in order to give the circuit any chance of survival. Watmough then called loyal men to the depleted quarterly and local preacher meetings, ignored complaints about his tyranny, and

pronounced the 12 leaders expelled. Complaints about this were vociferous and membership was drastically reduced. There was no doubt that Watmough acted illegally, as he admitted to the loyal men, but he was convinced it was the only way to preserve any of the circuit for Methodism as he interpreted it, and believed no other course of action lay open. A formidable opponent, Watmough refused to deal more gently with the rebels; if he had done so, the secession might not have been so disastrous, with the town's membership being reduced from 360 to 120, the circuit's from 1,000 to 600.

Despite the expulsion the 12 leaders continued to disrupt Methodism; they monopolised Michael Street vestry, interrupted services, took trust funds and seat rents, announced from the chapel pulpit after planned services, and issued their own tickets and took in their own cash. Confusion in the circuit was immense, and Watmough was powerless to exert control over the majority of the town classes which acted as they wished. The Association issued its own plan, held its own lovefeasts and meetings, and arranged for their own men to preach whenever a Wesleyan who was not a minister or trustee was planned. They held that a trustee could plan anyone he liked in a chapel since each trust and society was independent of ministerial or connexional control. Watmough, by October 1835 irritated and appalled at what was going on, had a showdown over this.

On October 11th the Association displaced the appointed man at Egremont; the chapel keeper, alarmed for his job, locked the building, and the door withstood the attempts by the Association to break in. On the 18th they again displaced the planned man; Watmough gave instructions for the chapel to be kept permanently locked unless he arrived, which he did the next weekend.

Richard Gordon, "one of the most turbulent men" of the circuit led a party to take the chapel by storm, and broke in by smashing the vestry window and forcing the locked door. He preached, had his dinner in the pulpit in order to keep his place, and then commenced an afternoon sermon to about 40 people. Watmough heard of this, hastily arrived, consulted a trustee, obtained the chapel deeds, and took a place in the back row. After a while he could stand the

proceedings no longer, and incensed by Gordon's actions rushed to the pulpit and demanded he leave it. Both men appealed to the congregation, each stated he was the owner and the other a usurper, but Watmough brandished the Deeds. Gordon refused to leave, tried to give out and sing a hymn, and a tussle between the two over the hymn book and bible in Gordon's hands ensued, with Gordon losing. Watmough preached to the decreasing number of Wesleyans but increasing number of the curious, and refuted Gordon's statement of his illegal expulsion of the 12 leaders, of his "tyranny" and of his work for the "corrupt Conference".

The fight became public gossip and did both sides harm. Gordon naturally wrote disparagingly of Watmough under the newspaper heading "Proceedings at Egremont": outrageous conduct of the superintendent minister", alleging Watmough used physical force to stop the truth, uttered vile slanders and oaths, and had ruined Methodism by his "despotism" and unpopularity. He excused his entry into the chapel by saying as trustee it was his property, that Watmough provided insufficient services and that he, Gordon, wished to cater for the needs of the society. "10 Association men signed the statement by Gordon (24).

It was simple to refute Gordon, and Watmough came out of the affray the victor; "the reverend Richard Gordon and company: the brutal conduct of the Radicals at Michael Street" gloried in the expulsion of the 12 men and of Watmough at Egremont (25). "A Wesleyan Methodist" asked pertinent questions: who owns chapels on the Model Deeds, the Connexion and ministers, or the trustees, and who has a right to appoint preachers? Had the Association acted as Christians in their conduct? And it was pointed out that forced entry was illegal, but the 10 men had not agreed who had perpetrated this. Watmough found the Gordon statement easier to refute: he and the Association had broken Connexional rules repeatedly, could only expect expulsion, and his 10 witnesses were not at Egremont on that

24. Cumberland Pacquet 1835 December 22nd.

25. Cumberland Pacquet 1835 December 15th.

day - they were disrupting their own chapel services throughout the circuit (26). Other correspondents sniped at the appointment of unsuitable men like Gordon to be officials, and at the Wesleyans, "Tatling Dissenters, Reverends and would-be Reverends" (27).

Watmough brought out a lengthy pamphlet in an effort to finish off the Association campaign in early 1836 (28). It listed and explained the actions of the Association and their continued trouble making, aiming to illustrate how the preachers and the Connexional laws had not altered, and that the Association deliberately refused to honour their obligation to resign if they disagreed with either. Watmough justified his actions, admitted nothing that might prejudice his case, and continued in order to show ordinary members how what he did was correct.

Watmough stuck to the line of argument familiar throughout the county wherever preachers were faced with recalcitrant opposition: the preachers had a duty to protect their circuits, which in effect gave them "carte blanche" to deal with those regarded as malefactors and bad influence. An array of legal authorities were called on to support his ideas that since the Association men had indulged in activities to harm the Connexion, they forfeited any right to be heard or to be tried. Watmough had in fact given them their chance but they had not taken it. It was impossible to his mind to allow the Association to dispense with laws they did not like when they claimed protection from others. The accused 12 leaders could not possibly sit as judges or jury to their own charges, and their guilt had to be established by these leaders not charged with sentence passed by the minister.

The Wesleyan laws on expulsion and discipline were given in full and a dozen authorities quoted as to their excellence. Whatever

26. Cumberland Pacquet 1835 December 29th.

27. Cumberland Pacquet 1835 December 15th, and 1836 January 5th.

28. A. Watmough, Wesleyan Law of Expulsion and its Enforcement 1836

Watmough had done. (he admitted to no bending or contravening of the laws) had been in order to preserve the circuit, to defeat "evil men" who broke Wesleyan laws and then complained at their "sentences", and to maintain the authority of Conference. To many Watmough had appeared to act as judge, jury and executioner, and the trouble continued.

When the Whitehaven Herald launched several attacks on the Wesleyans for supporting the Church and Tories against Dissenters and Reform, Watmough was obliged to defend his name (29). He stated that not all Wesleyans were Tories, but that all true Wesleyans kept out of politics and did not mix them with religion, unlike the Association and other denominations. He took the opportunity to reply to other suggestions made in the press and in some churches that he refused to take Association children into the circuit Sunday schools, and that he encouraged Wesleyans to oppose the work of the Association. He maintained any child was welcome to circuit schools, that they were not to be held responsible for the "immoral actions" of their parents, and that all good Wesleyans had a duty to turn against their friends in the Association since they had become immoral and sinful in their Association activities. Bearing in mind he had expelled or forced to resign some of the leading townsfolk, Watmough scathingly attacked those who preferred wealth and the Association to Christianity and poverty, taking the chance to state that wealth appeared to have corrupted many of the town's leading churchgoers of several denominations, so he was glad to have few wealthy folk in his chapel.

The much reduced quarterly meeting unanimously invited Watmough for a further year, which he accepted, as did one of his two junior men (30). Attempts to cause secession at Maryport failed due to loyal officials, (31) but circuit finances, especially collections provided a lively correspondence in the press. The Wesleyan supporters, led by "A Wesleyan of Hensingham" replied to "AB, a Congregationalist", and described the Association members as

29. Cumberland Pacquet 1836 March 1st.

30. Cumberland Pacquet 1836 April 5th.

31. Cumberland Pacquet 1836 May 17th.

"scoundrels, wastrels, the effluvia of the Church of England and of Wesleyanism", maintaining that the Wesleyan societies were bound to do better now they were "cleansed", that respectable folk would now attend chapels with no radicals in the congregation, and advised AB to mind his business and to "reform his own dingy crew" (32). Others were eager to support the Wesleyan alliance with the Church and Tories and praised the stand of the ministers against the radicals, an "unprecedented coalition of hostile forces" defeated by the "pure religion" of the Wesleyans (33).

The Catherine Street Association chapel was shortly opened and coincided with continued attacks on Watmough, well able to defend himself and to denigrate his enemies (34). By November 1836 the Editor was bored with the tedium of the whole issue which weekly occupied the letters columns, and Watmough had the last word (35). He thanked the Pacquet and his supporters for their help in the cause of "true Christian order" and the maintenance of organised religion against "riotous assemblies of radical Associationists", feeling that such a "cleansing" was justified by the rosy future.

The Association circuit meantime occupied itself with active work against the Church hand in hand with other Dissenters, drawing up a petition against Church Rates and allegedly enticing passers-by into the chapel to sign it along with hundreds of forged names (36).

When the secession had burnt itself out despite sniping by both sides the Anglicans and Tories were pleased to see the Connexion without its radical membership even though that meant most of the town members with hundreds by them in

32. Cumberland Pacquet 1846 June 28th and July 5th.

33. Cumberland Pacquet 1836 July 5th.

34. Cumberland Pacquet 1836 September 27th.

35. Cumberland Pacquet 1836 October 11th, 25th and November 8th.

36. Cumberland Pacquet 1837 April 5th.

the opposed Dissenting camp. The Pacquet was full of letters and editorials praising the Wesleyans, of which the following was typical: (37).

"The Wesleyan Methodists seem gradually to have arisen above the foul calumny and abuse which were so plentifully heaped upon them some 2 or 3 years ago, by a party of disaffected and interested men, and we are glad to hear that, within the circuit of the labours of the Wesleyan preachers in the neighbourhood of Whitehaven, success seem to attend their exertions; and it cannot be otherwise so long as they tread in the footsteps of their venerable founder - John Wesley".

This all seemed very encouraging, but for Watmough, once the smoke had lifted, the damage was appalling and in places irreparable. There were two societies wrecked by the affair, Egremont and Whitehaven, and neither society recovered former prosperity or numbers of members. With 400 lost members, damage was savage, the Primitives had been encouraged to pick up disillusioned members, and finances were in a dreadful state. Gilgarron society was placed under Distington, and Windscale lost, though these were minor problems compared to Whitehaven. In the town the trustees were in disarray; one was in Liverpool, one had resigned and left the Connexion, four joined the Association and only three were loyal. Two of the three loyal men objected to releasing the rebels from their duties and responsibilities and Watmough's plan for a new trust collapsed in 1836. The Association had used the chapel whenever they liked since the rebel trustees held the deeds and allowed them to. The two sets of men refused to even meet to consider their position, and all pocketed seat and other funds whenever they could. Watmough was driven to distraction by the loyal men refusing to give in to freeing the others and to perhaps facing legal costs for a new trust. The seven active trustees could not agree on whom to appoint to a new trust, affairs seemed destined to fall into the hands of just two or three men whatever happened, and no circuit members were willing to involve themselves with the "notorious" town chapel (38). Chapel debts were £600 but the place was worth £2,000, and there were

37. Cumberland Pacquet 1837 November 28th.

38. Bunting Transcripts, A. Watmough to J. Bunting 27th January, 1837 and reply from J. Bunting to A. Watmough in March, 1837.

possible legal complications if a new trust were drawn up since the first deeds of 1780 were not properly enrolled in Chancery. To some extent too Watmough was seeking justification for his hard line with the rebels, and sought the advice of Jabez Bunting in the trying of rebel trustees. Watmough maintained that rebel trustees could not sit in judgement on others, and that the past framers of Connexional laws had never conceived of a situation in which a majority of officials would be non-Methodists and rebels. This was his justification for his actions, hence his own interpretation of what he held the Connexional rules to say. Bunting was in agreement.

When Watmough left in the summer of 1837 he left a statement of circuit affairs in the circuit schedule for his successor, and outlined the problems likely to beset the preachers concerning trusts, income and officials (39). He named the "traitorous" rebels, and the few loyal men - Philip Crane, William Wilson and others, but left his successor to "find out from experience," the problems in detail". Whitehaven circuit, from being the pride and joy of the District in the 18th century and early 19th century, was a wasteland for years to come, and as late as 1874 the ministers could not work out who the chapel trustees were or what state trust finances were in; circuit development passed to the new areas of Workington, Maryport and the mining districts, and away from the town.

Carlisle circuit like Whitehaven had grown rapidly in the 1820s from 500 to nearly 800 members, mainly in the city society. As with Whitehaven society, the events of 1835 were to destroy the Wesleyans in the city and to set back Wesleyanism for 40 years, a situation worsened by the renewed conflict and secession of 1850. As elsewhere in the county the Wesleyans, before the secession developed, contained a group dissatisfied with the "alliance" between Church and Tories and the Wesleyan Conference; some of the rebels came from a Dissenting background (Quakers, Presbyterian and Congregational) and

39. Whitehaven Circuit Schedule 1837; Whitehaven Circuit Schedule 1874. CRO FdM.

were involved in politics in the city which immediately put them at odds with the preachers. Whilst the rebels complained about the way the Methodists behaved towards the clergy, and criticised the Theological Institute and its creators, many supported the close Anglican links and defended the Methodists against attacks on their preachers for their supposed ignorance and humble origins (40). The Tory press changed over the period 1833 to 1835 from ignoring or satirising the Conference to acknowledging them "Friends to Anglicanism," whilst the Liberal press, describing the preachers and the Conference as "the embodiment of religious freedom and liberality", changed to describing them as "tyrants" over the same months (41). Ironically, "Edenensis", a stalwart defender of the Dissenters, remarked that the decision to open the Institute would be the occasion of a great step forward in the Connexion, with better trained and qualified ministers the pride and joy of their circuits; within months Carlisle society was reduced from 450 to 150 members by the action of the preachers (42).

Rumours about the machinations and intrigues of Bunting and the preachers filtered through the Carlisle classes throughout mid 1834, unsettling membership and providing an early crisis for Thomas Dunn, an experienced minister and like Watmough of Whitehaven, a man not likely to brook opposition or to stop short of mass expulsion of suspected opponents. Dunn later in life found favour with the Stationing Committee when landing the imposing post of minister to the Woodhouse Grove School, but in 1834 he was in the thick of the secession troubles and was alarmed to find respected leaders and local preachers inciting classes to revolt. At the September quarterly meeting certain resolutions were put forward by the rebels for discussion. These were:-

40. Carlisle Journal 1833 September 7th, October 26th, 1834 January 25th and August 30th.

41. Carlisle Journal and Carlisle Patriot over the period 1834/35.

42. Carlisle Journal 1834 March 1st, in reply to attacks by the Carlisle Patriot of February 1834.

1. That Conference ought to have asked the opinion of all quarterly meetings before agreeing to a Theological Institute.
2. That the committee set up to investigate the matter had acted in a deceitful and illegal way.
3. That Conference expected circuits to foot the bill for something which they did not want and had not been consulted about.
4. That a few rich laymen and the Conference had secretly acted in the worst interests and detriment of the Connexion.
5. That Warren ought to be openly praised for exposing nefarious practices at work within Conference (43).

Dunn played for time and agreed to discuss these issues in the January meeting if the proposers would withdraw the motions in order to allow an opportunity to consider them in detail. In fact Dunn then wrote to Bunting for advice and was told to stand firm and if necessary to act fearlessly and independently, and to expel all troublemakers in order to preserve the circuit. He gave this message to other county preachers, though until this became known in December 1834 he was well regarded in the circuit and assured that the Association attacks were not on him but on Bunting and Conference (44). When his true opinion became known, battle lines were drawn and backing down was impossible.

Sensible men counselled moderation to both sides, but by Christmas the rebels were in a strong position in control of a number of societies and in no mood to compromise with Dunn, armed

43. Carlisle Journal 1834 October 6th.

44. Carlisle Journal 1834 December 13th and November 15th.

with Bunting's words. Attempts to persuade both sides to do "battle with Satan" rather than to dissipate their energies in a trial of strength which could only harm Christianity were fruitless (45). At the January 1835 leaders meeting in Fisher Street Chapel most of the congregation refused to leave after the end of the service so the proceedings had to be carried on in the centre of the chapel with Dunn turning off all but two candles on his table in order to black out the audience. Dunn produced letters he had sent to leader T. J. Cox, calling him to attend the leaders meeting in order to answer three charges :-

1. Cox had written to societies and visited them in order to stir them up into opposition to Conference and the preachers, encouraging them to join the Association.
2. Cox had brought forward anti-Methodistical resolutions at the September quarterly meeting subversive to Methodism, and against the repeated pleas and warnings from Dunn.
3. Cox had called for Dunn to vacate the chair to someone else and tried to effect it in order to control the meeting, and to dictate its business and decisions.

Dunn then read a letter from Cox to a society calling upon them to join the Association and to oppose the preachers; he asked Cox if he had written it, but Cox refused to answer until he was properly charged with an offence to which he could reply. Cox declared the three items were not charges of themselves and that there was nothing wrong with the three. Other leaders supported his views, but Dunn declared that Cox had admitted writing the letters and the charges and that he was thus guilty of grave offences (46).

45. Carlisle Patriot 1834 December 13th.

46. Carlisle Journal 1835 January 31st.

John Lowthian, a leading member of the circuit, quieted the noise of dispute when he announced that the whole affair was a charade since what Cox had written and done was believed by all the leaders in the city, and that if Dunn was going to expel Cox he might as well expel all leaders and most members. Dunn retorted that he would proceed as he liked and would try and expel whom he liked, and continued to read for some minutes the laws governing Methodist discipline and expulsion from society; he ignored interruptions and pronounced that Cox admitted being a member of the Association and writing letters and that all three charges were thus proven.

This occasioned uproar. Cox demanded he be tried by the leaders as a leader, received the support of all leaders, and sent Dunn "mad with rage." There followed two hours of further argument with each leader in turn, vying with Dunn in their speeches. There was a good deal of abuse, threats and slander on both sides. Edward Harrison (47) exclaimed "This is downright Popery", a view shared by all the speakers save Dunn (there were no other preachers in attendance), and when Cox described preachers like Dunn as men of "humble origins" determined to enslave gentlemen of good class and learning, as well as making disparaging comments about Dunn himself, "Dunn nearly threw a fit! The idea of preachers possessing Divine Powers above that possessed by ordinary local preachers and leaders was ridiculed, as was the whole idea of the "pastoral office" in Methodism. Edward James and Mitford Atkinson were the only leaders to stand up and support Dunn out of 18 in attendance (48).

When Cox persevered with the notion that Dunn had broken every Connexional law as regarded trials and discipline, Dunn said a prayer, announced the meeting closed and prepared to depart from his fiery ordeal in front of many of the society. Shaw of Cummersdale,

47. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1850 p.346.

48. See Appendix A.

Lowthian of Carlton and Morgan of Cumwhinton told Dunn never to come to their preaching places again and that doors would be locked against him, and shortly afterwards Dalston society wrote to Dunn telling him never to set foot there again since there would be no congregation for such a "tyrant" and "Papist".

As for Dunn he went away and started crossing off names from class books, starting with the leaders. He found some supporters though:

"Sir, in an article in the Journal last week, Mr. Dunn, Wesleyan Minister of this city, is dragged before the public and described as a monster and a madman. That article has inspired a large proportion of the Methodists of this circuit with extreme disgust. They are not surprised the writer should withhold his name. An expression of their sentiments, relative to his extraordinary production, will probably in a few days time be before the public" (49).

The Editor of the Journal replied that only the facts were reported, that these had been checked amongst the protagonists and duly reported - only their interpretation was left to the public.

The Association leaders lost no time in argument but commenced organising a strong and effective opposition. As well as Cox, the most fervent rebel, Harrison and Lowthian, the main leaders were John Carrick, James Hogg, William Randleson and Edward Robson. Carrick was of a textile manufacturing family, affluent, well known, and Quaker until he joined the Wesleyans in 1800 when workers persuaded him to attend services. (50). Hogg had been a Presbyterian in Scaleby, joined the Wesleyans, used his home for services, and then believed the preachers to have too much power and supported the Association. Carrick was not keen on a strong ministry, or eager for "preachers" at all, whilst Hogg leaned towards a system where elders or leaders ran each society or chapel (51). Randleson was a

49. Carlisle Journal 1835 February 7th.

50. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1853 p.309.

51. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1850 p.296.

grocer in Botchergate, born at Warwick Bridge and being converted to religion by the leading Independent minister, Whitridge, before passing to the Wesleyans. He too disliked the seemingly great power of the preachers and leaned towards Independency for each society. (52)

Dunn was badly mauled in the press a number of times, being variously described as "monster", "tyrant", "despot" and "Jesuit", and being accused of acting as judge, jury and executioner in expelling between 4 and 500 members of society merely by crossing off their names if they did not agree to his and the Conference's authority and disowned the Association. (53). This may have been an overestimate but not by too many. The Association men quickly mustered their ranks, gave out instructions, held meetings at which only those with valid membership tickets could attend, and kept out the "rabble" so often attracted by meetings. They started their own preaching plan, took collections, recruited new Association classes and started to encourage complete circuit disaffection towards Wesleyanism and Dunn.

Dunn was faced with circuit revolt. Wherever he went people jeered and booed him, followed menacingly, lurked round places he stopped at, locked chapels against him or refused to allow hearers to attend by blocking the door, and he could not visit most of the societies for fear of violence (54). A document signed by 22 leaders had been circulated asking all to cease to give money or hospitality to him, and the Association had written to his previous circuits in order to dig up some error or indiscretion in his past life which they might use against him. Dunn believed that he had acted completely legally in expelling one "evil and immoral man", Cox, in order to protect the circuit and its members from "corruption and infection", and in doing this duty he had been exposed to unaccountable vilification of his character and the complete opposition of the societies. He believed that Cox and a few other "malign spirits" had

52. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1854 p.533.

53. Carlisle Journal 1835 February 14th.

54. Carlisle Journal 1835 February 21st.

whipped up the gullible and easily led members and forced them to revolt against "the good preachers". He had not allowed Cox to speak or to have a full trial since he knew the preachers were no match for the strength of the Association, and that he would have lost any such trial of strength at a Leaders' meeting where the Association dominated "against all common sense and reason". Cox had done the rounds of every society from Brampton to Warwick and Dalston in order to further his cause, addressing letters to dozens of members and posting them from all over the circuit in order to cause confusion by their postmark. Dunn concluded in one letter:

"I stand or fall by this great principle, that a Christian church must have and use discipline. What I am suffering is for the whole Methodist world; is on behalf of those very persons who are labouring to destroy my character and my ministerial existence; is in order to rescue this society from the dictation of a faction, and to place it under the canopy and safeguard of its principle!"

It was to little avail, and the secession got under way.

The "Grand Central Association" sent a strong deputation to the city in March 1835, and packed out the meeting in Fisher Street. The preachers had threatened those trustees who allowed the chapel to be used for this purpose with a law suit, but they took legal advice, paid for out of trust funds, and decided they were protected. A solicitor and three ministers from Conference arrived to attend the meeting and sat throughout taking notes and names (55).

Lowthian chaired the meeting and maintained he and the others were merely wishing to reform Methodism from inside it, and listed the tyrannical acts of Bunting and his party throughout the past 20 years, giving the Leeds Organ Case in detail and especially attacking the links between the Church of England and Tories, and the Conference. Misappropriation of funds was another of his fortes, and finally he lashed the preachers for the Theological Institute.

55. Carlisle Patriot 1835 March 27th; Carlisle Journal 1835 March 28th.

Cox called for an end to legislation against the power of circuits in order to limit Conference's authority. Barnes of Liverpool and Greenhalgh of Manchester described their own experiences in Lancashire and how they wished to unite all those members "scattered so carelessly and immorally" by the preachers. Carrick was delighted to hear so loud applause for his part in "bringing down the preachers" and an Association committee of Cox, Carrick, Lowthian and Robson was formed, and a petition sent to Conference demanded redress.

This and later meetings attracted many non-Methodists and led to rowdy behaviour on a large scale, which did no good to either Wesleyan or Association cause: some even believed that:

"The meeting illustrates a striking example of the evils of dissent from a legitimate establishment, and furnishes the strongest practical proofs of the mischiefs inherent in the VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE". (56).

There remained considerable confusion in Methodist and non-Methodist ranks throughout 1835 as to the state of the circuit, with many not aware that they had been expelled, others believing that they had been, and the disruption of services endemic. In May 1835 it was reported:

"A temporary wooden building, calculated to seat 700 persons, is now being erected in Lowther Street in this city, for the accommodation of those who refuse to submit to be foxed by Mr. Dunn. If similarly energetic steps be taken by the justly disconcerted of this body throughout the kingdom, then Mr. Jabez Bunting will very soon find himself at the head of a church without hearers, and guardian of a treasury which does not possess a penny at his disposal. In this way only can arbitrary men be brought to their senses". (57).

56. Carlisle Patriot March 27th 1835.

57. Carlisle Journal 1835 May 23rd.

The building was opened by Dr. Warren in July and Cox, leading the numerous speakers, concentrated on the positive achievements of the Association in organising itself, and on the chaos and confusion in Wesleyan ranks. There was a belief that the Association was too much concerned with recruiting the "rabble" of the city into their ranks to the detriment of religion and the increase of rowdyism and vulgarity, but Cox at least appeared pleased at his popular success. (58). Prior to the new building, the Town Hall had been used for services, with overspill ones in the old Wesleyan chapel in Fisher Street, lately occupied by the friendly Baptists. The Sunday school was held in rooms loaned by a Mr. Sawyer. The success of the Association amongst children was great in this city as in the rest of the country, with demands for a day school being thwarted by lack of funds and teachers. Nearly 300 pupils were at the central chapel, with 120 at Cumwhinton, 90 in Dalston, 55 in Stanwix, 70 at Belle Vue and 986 in the circuit. When Dixons the millowners threw a party for the massed Sunday schools of the town in 1836, 670 pupils attended, with only 106 Wesleyans. The combined Anglicans alone outshone the Association with 880 pupils, the third school being that of the Independents with 230 (59).

The Tabernacle, a new permanent building in Lowther Street was opened in September 1836 with long speeches about the work of the Association in making a permanent circuit out of the Wesleyan debacle. (60). The original schism had occurred, it was stated, because of "several tyrannical and absurd resolutions and acts of Conference", but the Association was confidently expected to supplant the Wesleyan as the main Methodist church due to its vigour and energy, and because it was "founded on more rational and liberal principles" than its rival. After the "monstrous attempts to ride roughshod" over them

58. Carlisle Journal 1835 July 4th and 8th, 1836 May 14th.

59. Carlisle Journal 1836 October 22nd; Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1847 p.48.

60. Carlisle Journal 1836 September 10th.

the rebels had "coped magnificently" and would before long make a major contribution to the life of the city and county. The future was guaranteed because of the vast promise of the 1,000 strong Sunday schools, and the continuing work of members amongst the poorer parts of the city where the Wesleyans had ceased to function. The public was urged to give generously to these missions and to help defray the cost of the Tabernacle, a huge building built on the shares principle and a "heavy but necessary" burden on the Association.

Though the future of the Association was not to be bright the damage done to the Wesleyans was severe. Hundreds of members were lost as was the prospect of recruiting replacements; finances were depleted and money could scarcely be raised from even the loyal minority. Dunn was unable to split the moderate men from the radical Association ones, to the circuit's cost, and numbers were never again to be the same until 50 years later when the circuit missioned the new expanding suburbs of the town. The re-occurrence of secession in 1850 provided more lasting damage though only the city society was involved. When Samuel Wilde took over from Dunn he noted the wrecked appearance of the circuit which he stated was the worst in the country. £3,000 was owed on the chapel, many trustees had resigned or joined the Association and spent trust funds on Association ventures, and a new trust was creating problems in finding men willing to act. He believed he had tripled city society membership, but this was a complete mistake and few had come back from the rebel ranks. Like the Whitehaven preachers he believed that more respectable and Church people would attend Wesleyan services because of Dunn's purges in getting rid of "troublemakers and radicals", and the circuit could only benefit from the secession in the long run. Wilde alleged that the Association were in a bad way regarding their huge debts on the Tabernacle and disagreements amongst themselves, though this was a loaded comment and as elsewhere in his letter he painted a rosy picture of his own work in resurrecting the almost defunct circuit (61). His successor Hugh Beech was not to know that he too was to suffer secession 13 years later. Beech noted the continuing hostility to preachers, the impossibility of finding hospitality in the countryside,

61. Bunting Transcripts. S. Wilde to J. Bunting, 9th February 1937, 30th May 1937 and 8th July 1937.

and the poor state of circuit and chapel finances. He admitted disliking being sent to Carlisle but naturally felt gratified by so greatly increasing membership and congregations. Like Wilde he grossly exaggerated since neither man increased membership by more than 40 to 50 in the circuit. Beech too noted the numbers of ex-Anglicans attending the chapels of the circuit, and felt that this foretold great things for the circuit which would "blossom as the rose" (62). Beech said that the Association men were desperate to clear their debts and to return to the fold, though again this was "trumpet blowing" and not justified by the facts; nor was it the case that the Wesleyans were recovering. In early 1842 a friendly report on the Wesleyans noted that the circuit had not recovered from the blow, and that income was well below pre-1835 years and debts remained unpaid. The writer noted how controversy and disputes had ruined the circuit and sought public support in helping the circuit to recover its previous leading role amongst city denominations (63).

One sidelight of the whole affair was the way the Primitives were affected by the widespread Wesleyan unrest in 1835 and in 1850, primarily in Carlisle. The Primitives had only been in the county since 1822 and were a small mainly poor denomination which could not afford to be involved in other denominations' disputes since it had enough of its own. To some extent dissatisfied Wesleyans left to join the Primitives and 1835 was a year of advance for them county wide. Wesleyans in Appleby, Wigton, Carlisle, Workington and Kendal are all recorded as having joined the Primitives due to the troubles of 1835 and to a lesser extent 1850, and included well established Wesleyan officials like the Golightlys of Workington (64). It was no

62. Bunting Transcripts. H. Beech to J. Bunting 22nd May 1838.

63. Carlisle Journal 26th February 1842.

64. Prim. Meth. Mag. 1844 p.78, 1855 p.388, 1858 p.507, 1854 p.455, 1860 p.656, 1848 p.265.

coincidence that a Primitive advance and great expansion was signalled in 1835 and 1836 with first assaults on Appleby,

amongst Wesleyans, and remarkable successes at Bothel and Maryport (65). In general Wesleyan problems usually brought members into the Primitive fold, though the exception of Carlisle proved very damaging to the County's Primitives.

Carlisle Wesleyans did indeed join the Primitives, but the Association seceders of 1835 worked on the Primitive society in the city and broke it up. Reports in 1833 and 1834 suggested the city Primitives to be doing well, (66) but during 1836 the minister reported: "the Association Methodists in this city have used their influence to unsettle, divide and plunder our society; strongly soliciting both our officials and our members to unite with them. They have hunted us as partridge are hunted on the mountains and have too far succeeded" (67). John North, the preacher in charge, was ill, depressed, had two children die during the dispute, and proved incapable of leadership; he took the haunting memory of the disasters here to his grave (68). James Jackson and other Primitives left the society and took half of the membership with them as well as destroying the fairly good congregations (69). The city society ceased to function, the remaining members were at loggerheads and the circuit appeared ready to disappear amidst the successes of the Association likewise wrecking the Wesleyans. The society survived and recovered in the 1840s, but once more suffered in the 1850 Wesleyan's secession when their own congregation and membership had moved to rooms, sold their old Willowholme chapel and were awaiting the finishing of the new Cecil Street one. Between late 1849 and 1851 they lost 50 of their 100 members, half of their officials and most of the congregation, many of whom went to

65. Prim. Meth. Mag. 1860 p.613.

66. Prim. Meth. Mag. 1833 p.121.

67. Prim. Meth. Mag. 1836 p.311.

68. Prim. Meth. Mag. 1873 p.613.

69. Prim. Meth. Mag. 1871 p.105.

the Association/Reformers' services. The two secessions greatly harmed the Primitives in Carlisle, though elsewhere Wesleyan troubles sent members scurrying into the relatively peaceful Primitive societies (70).

After the work of the Inghamites, the Sandemanians and Stephen Brunskill the Kendal Methodists were looked after by Lancaster until becoming a circuit in 1805. The Methodists found it hard to gain a strong foothold in the town because of the strength of the existing Dissenters who were involved in bitter struggles against the Tories and Anglicans. This struggle came to a head in the 1830s and both sides attempted to recruit the Wesleyans for their own cause. Despite these overtures the Wesleyans even in 1835 were able to steer a middle course and remained aloof from both Anglican/Tory party and that of the political Radicals, led by the "infidel Unitarians and Quakers" (71). Like the new Presbyterian society in the town, the Wesleyans were wooed by the Anglicans for the first time, and when some disaffection occurred in Wesleyan ranks the Connexion found the Establishment delighted to support the Methodist Conference and ministers against the rebels who joined the Association (72). The circuit strenuously denied links with the Dissenters and Radicals throughout the 1830s and whilst supported by the Anglicans and Tories, avoided more than a nodding acquaintance with them (73).

Circuit affairs remained calm during 1835 with the few Association members largely rebuffed in their work, for instance at Kirkby Lonsdale where leader Isaac Wilson gave them short shrift because of their close links with the political Radicals of the town (74).

70. J. Hawkins, "O'er Hill and Dale and By The Solway Shore", District History, 1906; Carlisle Circuit Quarterly Minutes 1823/1853. CRO FCM/1/1/1.

71. DKK, People and Places in Kendal 60 Years Ago; J. F. Curwen, Kirkbie Kendal; Westmorland Gazette 31st January and 24th May 1828.

72. Westmorland Gazette June 27th 1835.

73. Westmorland Gazette 1836 January 23rd and December 3rd; Kendal Mercury, 1835 November 21st.

74. Wes. Meth. Mag. 1837 p.878.

In Kendal, Jonathan Younghusband and his wife led a small band into the Association camp and an ex-minister, Thomas Graham, held meetings for a while (75). The group held services in the Mechanics Institute before George Robinson, a member of the Inghamite, "Calvinistic Methodist" society in Kendal gave them hospitality in his grocery business (76). The Association petitioned Conference during 1836 to have the superintendent Clayton removed, but a far larger petition asked for his restationing there. Clayton deliberately refused to do battle with the Association, maintaining a calm dignity and keeping the circuit functioning as usual. The Association, strongly influenced by Jonathan Banks, a local businessman and former Wesleyan, and by the Rev. Hawkes, the Unitarian minister and leader of the "Working Men's Radical Party", joined in the political conflict and immediately alienated most Wesleyans. Robinson and other Dissenters directed the Association society, but it was out on a limb, the nearest support being in the Appleby circuit, and there was no Association aid to be had (77). Some of the Association came from Dissenting backgrounds - the Younghusbands were both from Independent families - and readily merged with the Dissenters so that the Association society disappeared. Some joined Robinson and the Inghamites, and shortly were recruited into his new religious society or "conventicle" with ex-Quakers and Unitarians (this later became the Brethren), others entering the ranks of the Independent society.

Though Carlisle, Appleby, Whitehaven and Kendal suffered in the troubles of 1835 the issue upset the whole of Wesleyan Methodism and was felt, for example, in Wigton circuit. It was at this time that the Primitives were missioning the area from Wigton to Keswick, and

75. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1840 p.85; Bunting Transcripts, B. Clayton to J. Bunting, 9th March 1836.

76. DKK, p.84; Kirkbie Kendal p.34, p.86.

77. Westmorland Gazette 1836 April 16th and February 25th 1837; DKK, p.90.

several Wesleyans gave them a welcome and formed the first classes. Trouble was stirred up in the circuit by rebel Wesleyans from Carlisle, but was rebuffed by leaders like James Corson and James Cowen (78). Nonetheless the circuit was unsettled and was in the doldrums for years afterwards. Samuel Wilde, reporting on the state of the District in 1838 to Jabez Bunting, wrote that Wigton was "extremely low", that he did not know why this was, and that with its large population it ought to have been in a good condition (79). At that year's District Meeting it was agreed to remove the junior minister from Keswick, then under Wigton to Workington where he with another minister would run the new circuit to be carved out of Whitehaven. This would leave Wigton a single ministerial station but it deserved no better fate bearing in mind its condition. The Keswick man had little to do, whereas at Workington "he will be surrounded by plenty of work, and do something worth living for". From this one might perceive problems at Keswick. This was a small society permanently shuttled from the care of one circuit to another - at times under Barnard Castle, Penrith, Wigton, Whitehaven and Cockermouth. In 1838 there was only one other society near it with just 5 members. It was at this time that the Primitives made their first permanent gains in that area in part due to the Wesleyan decline and removal of the minister. There were strained relations between the Keswick officials and the ministers of the circuit: the Rev. Philip Hardcastle had come from Penrith in 1833, but during 1835 he found the Keswick officials refusing to take collections during services - so he took them himself. It was then too that Local Preachers defeated a move by one minister to obtain a pony for his own use - they wondered how he dare expect them to pay for a horse for him when they had to do just as much walking for no payment and they tended to be planned at remote preaching places (80).

78. See Appendix A.

79. Bunting Transcripts. H. Beech to J. Bunting, 22nd May 1838.

80. See Appendix A, under Tyson and John Rigg, molecatcher.

Covering an area long associated with the Inghamites and the early Methodists, Appleby was the worst affected of the three circuits to experience secession in 1835. Ministers appointed to it could not cope with the small dispersed societies and centres of Appleby, Kirkby Stephen and Brough, and oversight of all the societies was at best poor, with local leaders taking pastoral charge of members and resenting the occasional appearance of preachers with little time to spare. It resembled at times a score of Independent societies, and surprised even the experienced Abel Dernalley who had to try to help the circuit survive after ructions during the summer of 1835.

Dernalley estimated that 70 members had left the classes by autumn 1836, 60 going to the Association, the rest split between Primitives and other denominations. In this he was wrong, the real figure being at least 120 or a third of the circuit membership (81). Appleby had been reduced from 22 to 8 members and reaped the reward for building a chapel costing £1,200 when only 10% of the cost had been raised at the opening. There was no trust income: 4 trustees turned "radical", the remaining 10 men being poor, dead or emigrated. The seceders took with them the majority of hearers and held services in houses until Lord Lonsdale granted them a site for a chapel after the Earl of Thanet had refused them one (82).

The Appleby trustees, like those for the rest of the circuit, were divided between Association and loyal Wesleyans. John Dent, described as "presiding elder and superintendent" of Bolton was the chief Association leader, along with his brother, William, who was shortly killed in an accident (83). The huge Dent family were the major financial backers of the Association along with the Crosbys.

81. Bunting Transcripts, A Dernalley to J. Bunting 30th September, 1836 and J. Bunting to A. Dernalley, 29th October, 1836.

82. Carlisle Journal, October 1st 1836.

83. Appleby Circuit Schedule 1837. KRO WDFC/M1.

John Dent abandoned the Church of England in 1817 in order to devote himself to the Wesleyans (84). He was at once isolated amongst so many Anglican gentry who detested Dissent and also anyone with Whig beliefs in politics - which the Dents were. He built Bolton chapel for the circuit and during the troubles of the 1830s used his home for services and for planning the campaign to disrupt the Wesleyans. His wife was Agnes Crosby and her marriage cemented a close friendship between the two families which resulted in each throwing in their lot with the Association. Agnes had not been happy at leaving the Connexion but decided to do so because the family showed itself in her mind to be high principled and to be taking its rightful place as leaders of the new denomination (85). It was she who showed great concern for the poor of the Wesleyans, later of the Association, providing food and clothing in hard times for those attending Association services.

It had been John Dent who in 1823 was responsible for securing the site for the Appleby Wesleyan chapel off the Vicar of Appleby, Heelis, but a breach over political involvement and ministerial authority led him to his decision to secede. It was his several relations, farmers and landowners, who continued to support the Association in the Bolton area.

The Crosby family of Kirkby Thore took the society into the Association camp just as the Dents controlled Bolton and more. John Crosby of Powis House was a leading layman and close friend of the Dents; ironically his younger son, John, was to enter the ministry, but his other sons Samuel and James continued first the Wesleyan, then the Association work (86). Unfortunately James' son William was drowned in the Eden when only 23, robbing the circuit of a much needed local preacher (87). Whig in politics the Dents

84. United Meth. Free Church Mag. 1871 p.794.

85. United Meth. Free Church Mag. 1867 p.45.

86. United Meth. Free Church Mag. 1875 p.306.

87. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1849 p.83.

combined with the Crosbys and into the 1880s helped the Association make ends meet (88).

Most active amongst the Wesleyan rebels was Joseph Craig, a small farmer near Appleby, who from being a skilful and attractive local preacher, turned into a scorpion-like opponent of the ministers. Not only that but he led Association views on politics by being a strong Radical, influenced many to actively oppose the very strong Tory influence in the area, and worked to undermine the dominance of the Church of England and the landowners. It was he who mobilised the Crosbys to build a British school in the town, and who taught there for years; it was he who championed Temperance in its early days and who linked together whenever possible assaults on the to him inseparable topics of Clergy, Tories, Drink and Landowners (89). His brother Michael, though not outspoken, paid for Murton chapel and backed the circuit (90).

To the detriment of the Association, three leading men left the area: Thomas Worthington to Liverpool, Thomas Dixon to Canada, and George Middleton to Stockton; Middleton's father John lived in Brough, having been the first Wesleyan in the town (born in 1762) and delighted to raise whatever money he could for the Connexion until persuaded by his son to join the Association (91). Dixon's brother Charles continued the fray in Appleby, helped by Henry Thornborrow of Peaselands. Thornborrow too had been an eminent local Wesleyan since the early 19th century, using his considerable wealth to help the Connexion and becoming noted for his philanthropy (92). It was a pity that he like John Middleton was seriously ill in 1836 and for some years afterwards, and was only able to give money to the circuit and not his active help.

88. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1851 p.102; United Meth. Free Church Mag. 1866 p.194.

89. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1853 p.592.

90. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1842 p.77.

91. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1847 p.274.

92. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1846 p.525.

Despite attempts to boost the confidence of the loyal men and of the preachers the situation was grave. Dernaley and his fellow worker William Sugden had to give up their income in order to keep the circuit solvent, and only the devoted work of the Grahams of Brough and the Cleasbys of Smardale Hall raised enough money to cover expenses in 1836 and 1837 (93);

"The following have ranged themselves under the banner of the self-styled, agitating, 'GRAND CENTRAL WESLEYAN ASSOCIATION', and are carrying out its principles by 'stopping the supplies of every kind', and commencing hostilities of the most decided character to the great annoyance and discouragement of their more peaceful Brethren".

These were men like George Wilson, the Thompsons of Long Marton, the Gibsons of Kirkby Stephen and others; the problem was that these were poor men unable to combat the loss of wealth in the secession, and the "hostilities" ruined the circuit.

An Association preacher was early on the scene by summer 1836 and helping the seceding members to foment disharmony throughout the area. Where the disgruntled were strong, secessions were disastrous. At Kirkby Thore John Crosby had built the chapel in 1818, given it to the Connexion, but then extended it 19 years later and this had not been legally transferred. His heir, James, claimed the extension as his property (quite correctly) and the older part as his because of unpaid debts amounting to about £60 being owed him. 21 of the 28 members joined with the Crosbys and left the circuit, with the Association man holding alternative services with planned loyal Methodists in the same chapel. There was only one surviving trustee, but he was too old to act and though loyal could not prevent Crosby and his family taking charge of the chapel whose deeds were lost.

The Dent family dominated Bolton area, had built the chapel, and had claimed it as theirs due to outstanding debts. They then memorialised Conference about taking charge and settling the debts, but Conference instructed the preachers and District chairman to keep

hold of it for the Connexion. Dernaley had done this but despite regular services, not one person ever attended. Crosby continued to attack both Conference and the preachers. Meanwhile at Murton three trustees demanded to be released from their posts or threatened to sell the chapel which only had a £60 debt on it.

Bunting advised Dernaley to replace the Murton trustees, a simple task, but strongly criticised the circuit for allowing Appleby to take on such debts - "Were the people mad...?" (94) and advised legal advice be taken regarding it and Kirkby Thore, though Bolton ought to be given up if no new society could be raised.

The Association men found the going tough, and some early societies disappeared - as at Peaselands, Brampton and Penrith. The main centres in the 1830s were Appleby, Bolton, Kirkby Thore, Murton, Warcop, Penrith and Brough, with 10 to 36 members. Despite using Kirkby Thore chapel regularly, it was finally lost after a 16 year court case in 1852 to the Wesleyans (95), and when the senior Crosby died in 1861 it was discovered that for 20 years he had been insolvent and an immense debtor (96). The Association proved largely negative, able to destroy and to hamper the Wesleyans but unable to flourish in its own right, and after a number of members returned to the fold in the late 1830s there were attempts to secede by some members based in Appleby back into the Wesleyan circuit which ruined the town society (97). The Crosby and Dent families only just managed to prop up failing fortunes and the deaths of Craig, Yeats and Anthony Dent in 1852 sapped the circuit's liveliness and energy (98).

94. Bunting Transcripts. J. Bunting to A. Dernaley 29th October 1836.

95. Appleby Association and United Methodist Circuit Quarterly Minutes 1836 to 1852, 1852 to 1880 give all the details for a moribund circuit. KRO WDPC/M1.

96. Carlisle Journal throughout 1861.

97. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1843 p.125.

98. Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1852 p.592.

If affairs went badly for the Association, they were worse for the Wesleyans for 20 years after the event. Christopher Newton and Peter Prescott, the ministers there in 1855, were so concerned by the gravity of the situation that they produced and circulated a document called "A Pastoral Address to Wesleyan Methodist Societies In The Appleby Circuit 1855" (99) which explored the problems which beset the circuit and detailed ways in which matters might be improved. The document was first read and discussed at the quarterly meeting in February, and so impressed were the gathered brethren that they raised enough to print it.

The two men noted the problems caused by having no head society of wealth or large membership - "ours is a circuit without a head" - and how this dissipated and wasted the "scarce and precious" ministerial time available. Despite the settling of the Kirkby Thore chapel case there was still no new trust, one surviving elderly trustee, and if he died then a new legal battle would ensue. Brough trust was dead and the matter about to come to court with consequent delays, frustrations and costs because of the tardiness and lassitude of the circuit. Warcop and Milburn chapels had no trust at all, and at the former only devious and determined efforts had led to the eviction of a "detestable" Teetotal Sunday school and the commencement of a "decent Christian" school. Few would take seats or even attend Appleby services due to the chronic debts and embarrassing circumstances facing the depleted trust, and all these things were welling up into a new resentment against the preachers who were the least to blame for it all, the two men alleged.

In considering the circuit's capabilities, the preachers made full play of there being plenty of "rich men", men who had "enough" to live on and who could afford to give more to the circuit; £120 per annum was given to foreign missions yet less than £100 was raised for the ministry. Generous help by a few people would clear debts

99. Rylands Library, Manchester; Appleby Circuit Schedules 1837/47 KRO WDFC/M/2. Appleby never recovered and Brough and Kirkby Stephen replaced it as leading societies.

under which the circuit groaned, whilst lack of rivalry from all but the Anglicans in several villages "ought to guarantee" strong societies but this was not the case, and a "lukewarmness" pervaded the religion of each society. The future could be bright, with continued mineral exploitation and the proposed Brough and Appleby railway connections to raise population and money.

The preachers concentrated on inadequacies of the circuit which had bedevilled it since its formation, especially the dispersed societies, wasting of time of travelling between them, and perennial petty jealousies between societies about the amount of ministerial attention which each received. Farmers had horses, yet for their labours the ministers had to walk - "what a waste of time". All these factors were pertinent to the circuit of 1855 as they had been to that of 1835.

As to solutions, the preachers suggested one man work Appleby, the other Kirkby Stephen, as two separate sectors, with enough money raised to pay for a third man to facilitate a general revival in money and membership. Chapel stewards had to keep money and accounts properly, trusts with no debts must pay over their surplus to help those which had, one circuit steward in each sector had to control finances and regulate them properly, with only the "most Christian", astute and able of members appointed - in the past the job had gone to incompetent men since others refused what was really "an honour". All leaders and their funds ought to be strictly controlled, and all money passed over with accounts of money and membership at each quarterly meeting - and the use of substitutes for meetings needed abolishing. Members were to be urged to attend class weekly, to pay 1d. per week without fail, to raise a special fund to pay off debts and to finance a third preacher and to do away with all Connexional aid. The taking of such aid made Appleby "a pauper circuit", a disgrace the ministers concluded, and its faults must be rectified at once. What was not pointed out was that the 1835 secession had taken all the wind out of the sails of the circuit and the life out of its membership.

The last issue which divided Wesleyanism on a grand scale was rooted in the same mutual fear and suspicion as previous disasters. The background to the years 1850/52 was the "Fly Sheet Controversy", a series of 4 pamphlets published between 1846 and 1848 written, it was agreed but never proved, by James Everett, a supernumary in Manchester (100). Everett had been retired for a number of years because of "ill-health", but energetically took part in circuit life and found himself able to pursue the career which most appealed to him, anonymous pamphleteering. Always an individual and never fully absorbed into the Association or Reform movement, he was a strange mixture of motives for his attacks on Bunting and other ministers in The Fly Sheets (101). These were savage attacks in a scurrilous manner on the ministers who ran the Connexion from London, and on their control of the resources of the Connexion. Bunting it was said was most wary of Everett's peculiarly scathing pen and had always left him alone apart from a spell when Everett worked at the Book Room and uncovered what he believed to be the misappropriation of funds and the use of committees - for instance the Stationing Committee for ministers - to govern the Connexion in the interests of the Bunting clique. Everett, ever a vindictive and abusive man, misinterpreted some of what he believed to be the evils of the Connexion, but his sorties against the London clique were uncomfortably near the mark and discomfitted their victims so much that the Conference over-reacted and demanded all ministers sign a statement to say that they did not agree with the Flysheets. Instead of getting to the bottom of the matter by discovering the true author, or by completely ignoring the matter, the Conference suspended and then expelled the ministers who refused to be intimidated by Bunting's personal authority, becoming national heroes in the process.

100. R. Currie, Methodism Divided, p.67; W. R. Ward, Early Victorian Methodism, p.61.

101. D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict In South Lancashire, p.90.

The many Methodists chary of Bunting's personal dominance and not pleased to see the appearance of ministers who enthusiastically supported the ideals of their aging master as products of the Theological Institute, leapt into revolt and campaigned on behalf of the expelled ministers, notably Everett, Dunn and Griffiths, for changes in Connexional Law (102). Dislike of the manner in which the Methodist ministry had courted the Church of England and the Tories throughout the 1830s and 1840s played into the hands of the Wesleyan Reformers, and an open split along political lines emerged more clearly than in 1835. The Association involved itself on a wide scale and found its flagging fortunes revitalised by the Reform agitation. Many of the Association had been Temperance advocates against the ruling of ministers and Conference and small issues of this nature snowballed into a fierce conflict once more for the control of Wesleyanism (103). Every act of Bunting and his ministers was scrutinised - for instance the new Centenary Hall to house the Methodist Missionary Society had let its cellars to a wine and spirit merchant, and this received condemnation (104).

The so-called "Papal Aggression" of 1850 led to parallels between the Roman Catholic clergy and the Methodist ministry, and the whole Pastoral Office was once more subject to attack. As in 1835 other Dissenters eagerly joined in on the side of the Reformers against the Methodists, whilst the Anglicans largely joined against the Dissenters and tried to bolster the Conference. The ending of local initiative in Sunday and day schools during the 1840s encouraged criticism of the way Bunting had boosted central London control at

102. J. C. Bowmer, Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism, ch.10; D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, p.94; W. R. Ward, Early Victorian Methodism, pp.376 to 382.

103. W. R. Ward, Early Victorian Methodism, p.16 and introduction; J. C. Bowmer, Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism, ch.10; D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, pp.95/103, 436/450.

104. D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, p.153; R. Currie, Methodism Divided, p.69.

the expense of the provinces. Circuit ministers determined not to suffer the anguish of 1835 and considerably fortified by the new zealous Theological Institute - produced preachers, entered with relish into the fray and expelled thousands of members across the country in violation of Connexional rules on the matter (105). This in turn strengthened the hands of men like Everett who then used this to gain further support from inside the Connexion. Moderate men, appalled at the expulsions, seceded or were themselves expelled for objecting, and though many later returned, between 1850 and 1852 towards 100,000 members were lost to the Wesleyans. Around half joined the Reformers, who mainly elected to join the Association in 1856 to form the United Methodist Free Churches.

The Wesleyan Connexion remained intact at the expense of sacrificing thousands of moderate men between 1850 and 1852, but ironically, later in the century greater lay participation was granted. The Wesleyans did not manage to recover their numbers nationally until the 1860s when growth and confidence returned and massive rebuilding schemes developed. The old impetus of concerted evangelism however was ended and not recommenced; the idea of the Wesleyans as a serious rival to the Anglicans, so possible in the 1820s, had gone with their harmony in the secessions and expulsions, and the Connexion, though making little of the Association and Reform issues, was crippled in its recruiting drive between 1835 and 1860. Overall numbers thereafter increased but as a percentage of the growing population. Wesleyanism declined, and was not able to repeat the successes of 1790 to 1830 (106).

The Reformers and the Association, movements founded on schism, did not have the energy or capacity necessary for sustained

105. J. C. Bowmer, Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism, p.240; R. Currie, Methodism Divided, p.74.

106. A. D. Gilbert, Religion and Society in England: Church, Chapel and Social Change 1740/1914. 1976. pp.153, 154, together with the Tables on Methodist Expansion.

evangelism, proving to have little appeal beyond the lower middle class sector and alien to the poorer classes as to the upper echelons amongst both of which sections of society the Wesleyans had much greater success. Condemned to a life of survival at their secession strength, both sought progress in unity but this progress did not materialise.. Deprived of their reasons for being, opposition to the Wesleyan Connexional system and its development, the United Methodists had limited appeal and narrow vision allied to none of the appeal of Primitive or Wesleyan Methodism (107).

In the 1850 dispute in Cumbria the one serious secession took place in Carlisle circuit, which had not fully recovered from the damaging secession of 1835. The re-occurrence of secession in the same place was unusual and must be accounted for by several factors: the increased political agitation in the city and its environs after the failure of the Chartists, the recent work of the anti-Corn Law League, and continued distressed state of the textile workers from Caldewgate down the Caldew river to Dalston, plus the recent arrival of the first large number of Irish Roman Catholics and involvement of certain Methodists in Protestant campaigns against "Papal Aggression". During 1850 the city Methodists experienced the divisions of classes into those deeply committed to active political and other agitation who sided with the Association, and those who remained aloof from more worldly and less religious involvement. The strong Association body in the city freely poached amongst the Wesleyans in the hope of destroying once and for all the city society.

The superintendent minister was the kindly and elderly Hugh Beech who had seen Carlisle at its worst in the late 1830s when he reconstructed a city society destroyed by the Warrenite controversy only to see it beset by secession in 1850. He came out of the fray

107. D. A. Gowland, Methodist Secession and Social Conflict in South Lancashire, pp. 77, 131, 233 to 479.

with colours intact because he refused to take issue with the Reformers at their own level, trying to act firmly, decisively but at all times properly, and carrying half the city membership with him. It was his misfortune to meet a well organised and formidable array of Reformers (108).

The leading Reformers consisted of William Parker, a leading city manufacturer and longtime Methodist; James Nicholson whose two sons entered the Wesleyan ministry; H. L. McCutcheon, a city ironmonger; John Hargreaves, aged only 20, like the others a circuit official, partner to his father a clothing manufacturer, and the most active and virulent of the leaders; William Proctor, also an ironmonger, who with J. S. Cooper, a retired army NCO, returned to the Wesleyans during the 1850s. Some of them were active in rebuffing the so-called "Papal Aggression" of mid 1850 and when similarities between the Wesleyan Conference and the Jesuits were made at meetings, Beech stoutly defended the Wesleyan name (109). Both sides worked amongst the classes of the city society and things suddenly worsened in the autumn with a head on clash.

The occasion was the first mass meeting of those wishing to consider "the present alarming state of the Connexion, its cause, progress and the duties and responsibilities of the Church in reference thereto". "Held at Mr. Porter's schoolrooms" on West Walls in November, the meeting found the Reformers in organised mood, each man taking a well thoughtout theme in turn from the platform. Parker took issue over the power of preachers and Conference, demanding reform from within and an end to mass expulsions; Cooper asserted a failure of the ministry to be Christian, to obey laws which it had

108. J. H. Beech, The Good Soldier, The Life, Labour and Character of the Rev. Hugh Beech, 1856.

109. J. S. Richardson writing to a Carlisle Minister, 1st May, 1918, inside pamphlet of J. Hargreaves; "Methodism As It Is In Carlisle", see below and at Rylands; Carlisle Journal 1850 22nd November.

made, and pointedly remarked on Bunting and his clique; he concluded by demanding an end to a hired ministry and to the word "Reverend", Nicholson expressed general agreement but was not as radical as Cooper and he and Proctor called for a more democratic Conference and societies able to look after their own interests; McCutcheon called for a cessation of money being raised for the ministry until they fell into line with Reform demands, and Hargreaves described the Reformers as freedom fighters like Knox and Luther in between getting in abuse against the ministry and its "abominable usurpation of circuit power". Others mentioned the lack of Biblical support for the ministry's acts in attacking the Reformers, and had their penny worth of abuse against the preachers and Conference. It was decided to withhold all money from the preachers, to demand reform from within Methodism, and to enroll special classes of Reformers; the expelled ministers, Dunn, Everett and Griffiths were hardly mentioned (110).

As the Reformers mobilised, an attack on their activities was launched before the end of the year entitled "A Reply to the Wesleyan Reform Meeting on West Walls", and written by William Morley Punshon. Punshon had spent 1845/47 in Whitehaven, 1847/49 in Carlisle as a probationer minister before being promoted to better things in Newcastle. He had been a great success in the county, and later in life became President of both English and Canadian Conferences (111). Despite his biographer stating that Punshon did not like controversy, his attack on the Carlisle Reformers was full of evident relish of the task in hand.

Punshon held that the 1850 secession was just the same as that of 1835, dedicated to destroying Wesleyanism, at which it had conspicuously failed in 1835. As in 1835 a narrow clique was

110. Carlisle Journal 1850 29th November.

111. F. W. MacDonald; The Life of William Morley Punshon, 1888, pp.61/64; W. M. Punshon; "A Reply To The Wesleyan Reform Meeting Held On The West Walls, Carlisle, 20/9/1850. 1850/1 (?).

trying to "lead gullible members" into destruction of the circuit, Carlisle Wesleyanism having seemingly learned nothing from 1835. Each Reformer in turn was lashed and "exposed" by Punshon. Parker, a talented and promising businessman and town social leader had dissipated his talents in Reform by being led astray by scheming and corrupting men preying on his love of the limelight. Punshon countered the "tyrannical" comments about Wesleyanism by pointing out this could not be so of a freely joined denomination with no penalties to impose; more scathingly he noted that Parker's call to end ministerial extravagance was already keenly done in Carlisle where the quarterly meeting spared no pains in keeping preachers at starvation level. Punshon believed laymen controlled all finance at all levels anyway and that ministerial power was small.

Cooper was easily dismissed as "a radical in politics" as in religion who had been expelled in 1835, readmitted but clearly wanted another church altogether, and even fellow Reformers looked askance at his ideas on abolishing church government altogether. Cooper was demanding freedom yet once in authority would end the freedom of others, Punshon contended.

Nicholson was harder to deal with since he had been a popular and highly successful and respected evangelist in the city, and Punshon could only regret that his talents were being exploited by men like Cooper, rather than being employed in mission work where they properly belonged; the man was honest and devout and of unassailable character until his co-operation with the Reformers.

Proctor, like Cooper an extreme Radical in politics, was confusing politics with religion and trying to involve Wesleyanism in the politics of the city, which received the violent condemnation of Punshon in every way. McCutcheon, possibly the man most disliked by Punshon, was described as the "horsefly" of society for 20 years and more, forever causing trouble and stirring up the riff-raff of the poorer quarters into his schemes to lead a new denomination. His vile abuse and accusations were to respectable folk anathema and ruined any chance of Reform success before they started, Punshon maintained.

Hargreaves, the most active reformer, received detailed treatment. As son of a former whip manufacturer, sarcastic comments were many, as were comments on his youth, youthful escapades whilst Punshon was stationed there, and personal comments about his lack of beard!

In Punshon's general rebuff of Reform accusations, he made a lot of sense, but secession occurred because of extreme feelings on both sides, a determination not to give in, and a breakdown in communication between the two sides. Punshon marked out the following to be the telling weakness of the reform ideas:

1. You do not destroy an organisation because it has some faults; the Reformers alleged they were trying to reform from within, but this was impossible in the manner of their approach.
2. To suggest the preachers were alone guilty was nonsense, for laymen created the system with preachers and all agreed to what were unchanging laws.
3. Preachers swore allegiance to the laws and system of Methodism; if they went back on this they had to resign. Local preachers and leaders also took allegiance to Methodism, and Punshon believed they had no other course than to resign if they disagreed with the Connexional laws.
4. To starve the preachers would achieve nothing except perhaps changes based on force and lies; no honourable man would submit to agree to changes in which he did not believe at the point of a gun.
5. Most Carlisle Reformers were not evil or bad men, but misguided ones being used by a handful of individuals bent on destruction; the real

battle was against the Devil and Sin, in which people should be employed. Religion was needed by people as consolation in a wicked world, and "Reform agitation" was "a foul and greivous sin against morality, against honour and against God". He agreed that Wesleyan rules at times required altering, but not by violent upheaval and by sullyng pure religion by involvement in politics and making it a sort of popular entertainment.

Punshon tried to show up the Reform leaders and to split off from them sensible and moderate men, but he stirred up a hornets' nest. Hargreaves corresponded with Bunting and other ministers, and newspapers supported the Reformers against Punshon who received short shrift in a press with whom he had previously been popular. Demands were made for his expulsion once it was known he penned "the Cumberland Fly Sheet" (112). Punshon's interference was widely resented in Carlisle where hld jealousies over his popularity with women were aroused, and his remarks about the characters and physical looks of the Reformers were not appreciated. Beech had been saying much the same things to his congregations, and Punshon's glowing account of Beech's character and conduct, the ingratitude of many in the city who had sought and received his help over the years, did little to counter class meetings where leaders assailed him and sermons which dwelt on the merits of the local preacher and faults of Conference.

During December 1850 a mass meeting was held for Reform purposes in the Athenaeum Lecture Hall, but only with difficulty was a chairman procured, Dr. Robert Elliott, who refused absolutely to allow abuse and slander of Beech or other ministers, and received loud boos for his pains (113). Despite this control from the chair, Parker was able to liken Beech to the Pope, mentioning Beech furtively going

112. Bunting Transcripts, J. Hargreaves to J.L. Bunting 29th December, 1851 and 8th January, 1852.

113. Carlisle Journal, 13th December, 1850. Carlisle Patriot 14th December, 1850.

from place to place seeking to spy on the Reformers and to blacken their names, hoping to find weak links in their ranks and to thin their numbers before expelling them. Beech had indeed quietly seen most of the leading men, hoping to avoid the 1835 catastrophe, and he no doubt had read the detailed newspaper accounts of that affair. McCutcheon assailed the "overweening pretensions and priestly ambitions" of the preachers, and called for a union of the 1835 Association and the Reformers. Hargreaves, smarting under Punshon's attack, painted himself as a "virtuous victim of clerical despotism". Griffiths, one of the expelled ministers, recounted his case in glorious detail and dominated most of the 4 hour meeting, receiving much support from a Newcastle contingent of Reformers led by a Mr. Benson.

There was no doubt in any mind that most of the audience were not Wesleyans but people looking forward to a free night out and the Reformers attracted many undesirable elements of the common folk. As one newspaper commented, had such proceedings been carried on in the street all would have been arrested as drunk and disorderly. When Wingrave and Porter, the schoolmaster, both members of the Brethren, were allowed to speak, there was real danger of a riot, partly due to their length of speech, mainly because they counselled moderation and commonsense whilst describing the proceedings as irrelevant to the cause of God. Wingrave particularly used the time to attack the Wesleyans and all other Churches for the sins of sectarianism for which they were now "paying the penalty". Sectors of the audience had to be restrained, as did Wingrave.

Howie of the city Association society, and David Rutherford the preacher, called for co-operation between the two parties and offered all the help possible to disrupt Wesleyanism and to bring the preachers to heel at last. Close links were forged between Association and Reformers, and this made secession and expulsion inevitable from that month.

In the New Year Hargreaves brought out a pamphlet supporting Reform and showing his correspondence with Beech over the previous autumn. Hargreaves had started to militate for Reform in September,

and Beech had unofficially warned him that expulsion or repentance would be required. Beech wanted to face Hargreaves with Isaac James, his loyal class leader, in attendance, but Hargreaves demanded his case be brought before a leaders' meeting where a majority would oppose Beech, who thus could not risk the humiliation and adverse publicity which came to Thomas Dunn in the city at just such a meeting 15 years previously. Beech quietly removed Hargreaves' name from the class roll in order not to provoke an open revolt; Hargreaves harangued Beech, James and the class at its next meeting, published a long attack on Beech supposedly based every inch of the way on Biblical quotes, and simply moved to another more amenable class leader, intimating his desire to reform Methodism from within and to avoid deserting Methodism just when it needed people like himself (114). He concluded with "an address to the local preachers, leaders and members of the society of people called Methodists", attacking Beech, giving vast detail on his own case, and attaching a letter from members who could vouch for Hargreaves' good character and work as local preacher. He uttered the famous words at the end, "No secession! No surrender! No supplies!", and noted the "usurpage" of lay power by the ministry.

Hargreaves stirred up a pamphlet response very quickly: "Methodism in danger: an examination of the blow it has received in the pamphlet of John Hargreaves, Junior, by ONE OF US" (115). Anonymous, the author was never publically named, though it may have been Punshon again. It was easy to attack Hargreaves and the author did so with glee, concentrating on every grammatical and biblical error, every peculiarity of looks, dress, manner and speech to be found in the young Reformer. It was alleged that he was made a local preacher in error by a confusion of names, and that he would shortly have been expelled regardless of the Reform issue, since he refused to adhere to class leader or ministerial discipline and detested the ministry due to being thwarted in attempts to enter it.

114. J. Hargreaves: "Methodism As It Is In Carlisle: the correspondence between Hugh Beech and John Hargreaves of the Carlisle Circuit", 1851. (Rylands).

115. In Rylands.

On the less subjective level, there was support for the gentle unassuming approach of Beech who seemed to care only to preserve Methodism and its members without involving himself in the Reform affair, and praise of his steadfast refusal to be humiliated by "rabid reformers". It was obvious that Hargreaves wanted publicity for his case and Reform and Beech had driven him wild with anger by refusing to allow an opportunity. The concluding sentences called on loyal members to support Methodism against its enemies.

The circuit was seriously affected, though Beech kept down expulsions and gave most people a chance to remain in society. The rural societies were little affected - they were too small and weak to furnish secession possibilities to the Reformers after the 1835 affair - but the city society grievously suffered as scores of members joined the Association circuit and congregations plummeted. By June 1851 Miss Parker of Warwick and Isaac James were keeping the ministers fed by "subscriptions to the special fund in aid of those ministers who are deprived of their salary by the wicked agitation of those who have stopped the supplies" (115). Written probably by Beech, the entry continued: "In the villages everything is now on such a small scale that there is no regular steward appointed. The leader in the village is generally regarded as acting in this capacity". Membership in the city classes was reduced from 238 in 1850 to 166 by 1852, but it then continued to decline down to 102 in 1856. The Methodists appeared unable to recruit new members to replace their high annual turnover rate, and the secession also robbed the circuit of hope of expansion for some years. Only with the start of the Caldewgate mission in the 1860s was there a revival in the circuit's fortunes.

The secession of 1850/51 to an extent benefitted the Association at a time when its fortunes were flagging, though some members went to other churches not because of conscience or principle, but through the continued disruption of the circuit, of

115. Carlisle Circuit Schedule 1851, where also see membership returns. CRO FCM/1/2/70.

its classes, meetings, services and other functions. This unsettling influence was caused by the Reformers involving large numbers of non-Methodists just there for the enjoyment of the battle, and by the Association's continued involvement on the side of the Reformers. David Rutherford carried on a spirited correspondence in the Carlisle Journal and Carlisle Patriot on behalf of both seceders (117). He brought up the 1835 issues, the local secessions, and concentrated on the case of Dalston chapel where the Wesleyan society opened a fine new building paid for by themselves, which they were not allowed to take with them into the Association camp in 1835. Their leaders and members had been amongst the most active opponents of Dunn and other preachers in the 1830s, and had made the village a stronghold of the Association, including the entire congregation and Wesleyan membership - so much so that the Primitives could not maintain a presence and the Wesleyans could not raise a new class. However, the Wesleyans refused to give up the chapel and kept it until it became ruined by about 1850 and then sold it, making the Association build a new one. Besides expounding the Association's point of view in the 1835 and 1850 troubles, Rutherford used the Dalston case to lash the Wesleyans.

Several Wesleyans sprang to the circuit's defence, notably "A Looker On" and Crankshaw, one of the preachers, and in between explaining to the public about the righteousness of the Wesleyan preachers and Conference, personal attacks were made on the "tyranny" of Rutherford who acted "as though an Independent minister" with no checks on his authority, which actions he was attacking in the Wesleyan preachers. The Association was alleged to be full of bitter small minded men who could only thrive on the problems of others and who resented their own inadequacies and failures. The question was posed as to what Rutherford would do if faced with a revolt like that of 1835 and 1850 if it was not of his own making. As regards Dalston, the chapel was built for a loyal congregation and placed legally on the Model Deed; it could not be given to "rebels!" Whoever was believed by the readership, the chapel at Dalston was opened in July

117. Carlisle Journal 1850 November 22nd, December 6th; Carlisle Patriot 1850 November 23rd, November 30th, December 21st, December 28th and January 4th 1851 by which time the Editor was bored and frustrated by the interminable debate.

1851 with the 6 lay trustees having equal power with the members of society. Association involvement cost the Wesleyans more members in the same area, with greatly increased population, than it had had in 1831; the Wesleyans never recovered from the two blows.

In West Cumbria there were losses but no major addition to the existing Association camps, and the losses may have been to Primitives and other churches. Thomas Savage, Whitehaven minister for the Wesleyans, did have to reply to publicised comments on the impending secession nationwide, and strenuously denied rumours of a local conflict in the circuit. He expressed surprise about a suggestion of impending trouble in Whitehaven, since not only was the society at peace after the 1835 happenings (which he handled rather tactfully so as not to arouse the Association folk) but the Wesleyans were the "friends of all men and the enemies of none!" The Pacquet of the previous week had predicted "impending doom", but this was not to be believed, Savage stated. In fact he was right (118).

The Herald gave good coverage to the Association, with 1,200 to its tea in the annual meeting, and favourably commented on the work at Egremont and Whitehaven (119). In November 1851, after a relatively peaceful year, an article appeared entitled "Wesleyan Reform in Whitehaven", which put forward in detail the case of the expelled Wesleyan ministers, Everett, Dunn and Griffiths, and pointed out that the local Reformers were most respectable and true Wesleyans who campaigned quietly and discreetly for change. Such men had no intention of causing a secession. Griffiths, the Rev. Keene and local preacher James Smith of Whitehaven had spoken at Whitehaven in the Association chapel aided and abetted by the Associationists, and having tea in the Temperance Hall with a large audience composed of religious people with none of the chaos, confusion and rabble of the 1835 dispute which had characterised Association meetings (120).

118. Cumberland Pacquet 1850 January 22nd.

119. Whitehaven Herald 1849 July 21st, 1851 January 4th.

120. Whitehaven Herald 1851 November 15th.

The issue of Reform was again explained but not one reference to local matters was made. Griffiths was invited to speak elsewhere, and he had a good meeting in the Congregational chapel at Workington hosted by the minister there. James Smith again helped him, with

Wesleyan local preachers Quirk, Dixon and Batey who added their voices to demands for Wesleyan Reform. The mainly Wesleyan audience did not respond at all enthusiastically to the call, it was stated (121).

At the end of November passions were roused by the article "Wesleyan Reform - a Cumberland Fly Sheet", which described the "deadly assault" on the Carlisle Reformers by a former minister there and in Whitehaven, William Morley Punshon, and the way the Revs. George Osborne and Hannah had steadfastly refused on behalf of Conference, to take any action against Punshon for his "Fly Sheet" which grossly slandered every Wesleyan Reform leader. John Hargreaves, the Carlisle Reform leader, had kept up correspondence with the two Wesleyans concerning the matter and was furious at their refusal to take action. It was alleged that the printer, Stephen Kay of Preston, now regretted being roped into the business by Punshon and wished to withdraw his support from the venture since the facts and statements were known by him to be false. The correspondence had been published in the Wesleyan Times "of last Monday", implicating "the once popular minister of Whitehaven and Carlisle" in the plot. "What will the fair sex of Whitehaven, Cockermouth, Workington and Harrington and Carlisle think of the behaviour of their erstwhile great minister who attracted mass audiences; once they travelled hills and dales to hear him; doubtless Mission House clique will reward him for his evil behaviours by promotion" (122).

James Thompson of Whitehaven wrote attacking the Conference, Bunting and local ministers, alleging that by their illegal expulsions the local ministers were ruining Wesleyanism in Whitehaven just as

121. Whitehaven Herald 1851 November 15th.

122. Whitehaven Herald 1851 November 29th.

Watmough had done in 1835. Despite the persecution, especially by Thomas Ballingall, the expelled Wesleyans were still attending class and chapel and refusing to be cut off from the church they had done so much to help - they would not abandon it to its fate of being ruled by a clique led by ministers (123). It was impossible for Ballingall to ignore. He replied that every minister in the area adhered strictly to Wesleyan rule and law, and that Thompson, "an unstable man", had been expelled as member and steward for his activities in trying to promote a schism by leading others into the "wilderness of expulsion" with him, whilst the majority ignored his moves. Just as an infected limb needed amputation, so did this "infection" spread by Thompson (124). Thompson declared his opposition to the priesthood of Wesleyanism - it was he alleged a corrupt body with great pretensions, ridiculously inflated men from humble and obscure origins, trying to displace the true local leaders of Methodism, who made no such insane claims to divine leadership as the ministers did in their "lust for power and authority!" Thompson, a shopkeeper and merchant of standing and wealth, showed extreme notions in his letters, though there was no denying that others supported him - for instance Thomas White, of Newcastle, late of Whitehaven, who supported Thompson's attack on the ministry wholeheartedly. However, "H of Carlisle" defended both Ballingall and the Carlisle superintendent, Hugh Beech, "battling" with scores of reformers who had by then destroyed the city society. "H" alleged the "wicked Reformers" were trying to copy in the expectation of more success the notions of 1835 when wicked men had tried to gain more power because jealous of the success of the Godly and amiable ministry, the "true leaders of the Connexion" who maintained "peace by their wisdom." It was impossible to justify the actions of the Reformers in disrupting peaceful Christian societies (125).

123. Whitehaven Herald 1851 November 29th.

124. Whitehaven Herald 1851 December 13th.

125. Whitehaven Herald 1851 December 13th.

During 1852 the Herald launched a number of attacks on the doings of the Wesleyan Conference nationally and locally. The prime objects of attack were Bunting, the ministry and Ballingall, but their defenders adopted the familiar stance by accusing the Editor and his writers of blind prejudice, of being radicals desirous of disturbing a peaceful religious and non-political body of men led by Godly and Christian ministers.

The Editor felt that the point was proved by the refusal of most town Wesleyans to pay class money or other money to the ministers, illustrating their good sense (126). William Thornburn of Papcastle rightly pointed out that this was not so, that there was no secession, and that the few radicals had been soundly defeated in their attempts to cause major trouble: they had departed to join other churches where they would be more welcome until they caused more trouble there too. He ably defended Ballingall, ministers and Conference (127). A "local preacher of Workington" replied to Thornburn, and there was an exchange of increasingly acrimonious letters. The local preacher maintained that the whole area from Cockermouth to Whitehaven was "ripe for secession" and that this would shortly come given a favourable moment and leader. The local preachers were still generally working as to plan, but they were refusing to give money to help support a hired ministry and were ready at a given signal to stop work as one man - the ministry would realise the true value of their local, unpaid preachers so often "exploited" by the ministers. Should matters not improve very shortly, then trouble would ensue (128). The final word in any of the local papers concerning the matter was from Thornburn; the Pacquet ignored the matter generally, the Herald Editor said that people were getting bored and wondering why it was going on for so long with little happening. Thornburn defended ministry and Conference in one

126. Whitehaven Herald 1852 August 7th, 21st, September 11th.

127. Whitehaven Herald 1852 October 9th.

128. Whitehaven Herald 1852 October 16th.

and a half columns, attacking local preachers who concurred with the correspondent, as "mean and small men" jealous of the divine calling and response of the ministry who alone could guide and lead Methodism. Many of the locals, he continued, were jealous since they had not been found able, Godly, moral and Christian enough to join the ranks of the ministry (which in any case was paid little for its onerous duties) which consisted of a fine body of gentlemen in every way, unworthy to be abused by the local preachers (129). The revolt was aborted and no serious damage suffered by the Wesleyans.

When trouble arose over the 1850 Reform Issue in Kendal it was not against the same background of excitement as the Warrenite crisis, with no fervent attacks locally against the Established Church and no singular activity amongst the rest of the Dissenters. Circuit ministers and officials in 1848 had printed "The Means Of A Revival of Religion" in order to revitalise the membership with 12 detailed points to which all were expected to adhere in their daily life and devotions, and matters had improved (130). However, as part of their nationwide campaign, the expelled ministers, Dunn and Griffiths, were in Kendal in the Spring of 1850 to stir up support (131). No trustees or circuit officials could be found to give permission for Wesleyan premises to be used for the meeting, so that the Zion Independent minister was pleased to offer the hospitality of his chapel. It was acknowledged that most of the audience were not Wesleyans but people out to enjoy themselves, and a spirit of levity characterised the proceedings. James Thompson of Wray chaired the meeting, which lasted from 6.30 p.m. to 11 p.m. with much cheering, applause and merriment during and at the conclusion of the long speeches by the guests. The usual demands for an end to the "tyrannical power" of Bunting and his party were made, and resolutions unanimously passed to end "confidential powers", but not one mention of Kendal and its

129. Whitehaven Herald 1851 October 23rd.

130. The Methodist Archives, Rylands.

131. Westmorland Gazette 1850 March 2nd.

ministers was made. It was a most entertaining but unimportant event, and few Wesleyans were involved. There was no secession and little involvement of members in disturbance. When James Bromley, also in trouble with the Conference over his ministerial activities, visited Kendal later in the year, the Presbyterians and Independents hosted him and gave a tea for their audience (132). The same catalogue of Buntingite and Conferential tyrannies was reproduced at great length, and it was stated that a broadsheet had been produced by local Wesleyans and their ministers which advertised a rival meeting on the same night where the "Rev. A. Arthur of London would speak on the subject of Papal Aggression". It was a hoax, effected the Reform supporters stated to reduce the large audience for Bromley and to cause confusion. The Wesleyans strenuously denied all involvement and refused to enter into correspondence over the issue, or over Reform (133). Reform died a death and the most interested people in Kendal were the Independent and Presbyterian Membership, not the Wesleyans.

Penrith suffered some trouble in 1850 though little in 1835. Financial matters were so bad by 1850 that a Special Finance Committee was established with the permanent task of balancing the accounts, though affairs remained bad for several years and stipends were reduced for the ministers by £5 per annum in June 1851. There was an awkward trio of ministers stationed there in the early 1850s, and even loyal men felt they were harming the circuit which had experienced no great unrest. When there was trouble at Askham Gate and Lowthian, the two elder statesmen of the quarterly meeting, were despatched to deal with it, and despite having no luck in quelling rebellion there they at least avoided the threatened violence and abuse when the ministers visited the place. During 1852 the whole society was expelled for "its entire hostility to the Wesleyan cause" and "their utter want of sympathy" with the circuit. Attempts to refound the society failed in 1853 but with the departure of the three ministers better times came to the circuit. Even so, a list of defaulters over class and other monies had to be drawn up and circulated in order to

132. Westmorland Gazette 1850 October 5th.

133. Westmorland Gazette 1850 November 30th.

shame recalcitrant members. The circuit had been unsettled by the doings in Carlisle, and by the attitude of the ministers who followed a hard line with societies usually behind in money and stirred up resentment where none had previously existed. That the damage was confined to Askham and circuit finances says much for the good sense of the members there and the wise counsel of Gates, Lowthian etc. Irving summed it all up when he refused to penalise all ministers for the faults of the few, and threw himself into his work as a local preacher and revivalist rather than into rebellion (134).

Alston was notorious as a difficult circuit to work, and complaints from ministers stationed there, normally against their inclinations, were loud and profuse. Members were miners or poor farmers famous for their independent spirit, and it seems surprising that in 1835 the Association Wesleyans who supported Warren made no impact and failed to try to establish societies in that area. Their attention was concentrated on more inviting Cumbrian circuits where they could recruit influential members to instigate secessions. On the other hand there were often disputes in the Alston circuit, for instance in the early 1800s and around 1820 when resentment against ministers became open obstruction to ministerial control of societies and the finances of the circuit. Matters were smoothed over, though the coming of the Primitives gave dissatisfied Wesleyans an opportunity to voice their disapproval and to promote a rival and numerically stronger sect in the Dales.

In 1850 the Wesleyan Reformers made efforts to start a secession in the circuit. The Rev. Dunn, expelled Wesleyan minister and co-leader of the Reformers, spoke at a meeting in March 1851 (135). Local preachers, Stephens and Benson, both from North East circuits, also made speeches supporting reform of Wesleyanism. There was,

134. Penrith Circuit Quarterly Minutes 1846 to 1878. CRO FCM/3/1/1;
See Appendix A on Robert Gate and James Irving.

135. Carlisle Journal 1851 March 21st.

of course, a packed house at this as at other similar meetings, since it was free and just the place to go on a cold evening. It attracted a majority of non-Wesleyans just there for the entertainment - pay days in the mines were irregular and often months apart - but they lowered the whole tone of the supposedly religious meeting to the level of a music hall. The three speakers too concentrated on the troubles in the Newcastle area, which proved entertaining but can scarcely have been appreciated by the insular Alston audience. No substantial local support was forthcoming, perhaps because as one newspaper correspondent pointed out the Alston folk were expected to pay for the privilege. There were membership losses, as in the early 1820s and around 1835, but most went to the Primitives and no secession reform groups were created. Some losses were due to folk despairing of the issues then afflicting Wesleyanism, and "HK" found to his surprise in 1900 a number of families who had left Methodism in Alston around 1850 for these reasons (136). They wished to have a harmonious religion without strife, and had joined the Quakers; the members who had left Wesleyan Methodism with their families back in 1850 told HK that to join the Quakers was their way to secede from the strife-torn Wesleyans. "HK" was much impressed.

The revolts of 1835 and 1850 were serious for the county's circuits and ruined the previously promising prospects for the Methodists. To a large extent it was not the actual losses of membership which were so bad, though these in places were alarming, but the fact that future expansion was seriously impaired, finances ruined, circuit organisation completely disrupted and confidence destroyed. Out of a county membership of about 5,000 in 1835, towards 1,500 members were lost in 1835 when secession and expulsion were most serious; as regards the 1850 troubles, out of around 4,500 members

136. The Highest Market Town in England - Alston, by HK ; Methodist Recorder, Winter Number, 1900.

in the county, nearly 1,000 were lost. The 1835 Warrenite issue hit hard Appleby, Whitehaven and Carlisle, with some repurcussion in other areas but only the three major secessions; 1850 found trouble centred on Carlisle but serious disturbance occurred in several other circuits with only the one secession. Each issue hit recruitment for years afterwards and in terms of numbers it took nearly 40 years for membership to be made good. Despite renewed expansion after 1870, the earlier divisions made it impossible for Methodism to become the major denomination which it would have been without the revolts.

That the secessions, disputes and expulsions happened at all is due to a combination of circumstances locally which required the spark of first the Warrenite controversy, later the Reform and Fly Sheet business to ignite.

Firstly, membership had greatly increased within the county (as nationally) between 1801 and 1831, particularly in the 1820s; in places like Carlisle and Whitehaven this led to the creation of huge central societies divided into 16 and more classes, whereas 20 years previously there had been 4 or 5. Leaders had to be recruited, and were not always respectful of ministerial authority; with there being no general increase in the number of preachers per circuit over the same period, it was obvious that both leaders and their classes tended to be less under the control and scrutiny of the preachers and thus able to lead an independent existence until an awkward, authoritative or determined minister arrived to exert his control, or until the need for such control arose. Rapid recruitment meant that people of widely differing political views were enrolled by leaders and by ministers who increasingly could not know their members or control their views. In circuits like Appleby, with a weak centre, ministers faced the opposite problem of many small societies which without pastoral oversight became the preserve of leading members - like the Dents and Crosbys, who were looked to by their members for leadership both in the chapel and in their daily lives. Many leaders had roots amongst the Presbyterian, Independent and Quaker communities of the county, had no great respect for ministerial authority, and in a

conflict would be likely to challenge the authority of the preachers. The important Methodist families of the circuits - the Dents, Crosbys, Lowthians, Carricks, allied in such disputes with energetic and educated men eager to likewise assert their independence of both Conference and preacher.

A number of Association leaders were involved in Liberal politics, for instance in Kendal, Appleby and Whitehaven, and came into conflict with the insistence of the preachers that they remain aloof to all intents and purposes. Coupled with this was a strong element of active dislike of the Church of England and the Tories, with whom the Conference appeared to be forming a strong rapport and alliance in the 1830s; Methodists, often with family connections of Dissent over the generations, who were Liberal or Radical in politics, would be eager to oppose the Church and Tories in the mid 1830s, in common with Quakers, Presbyterians, Independents and Unitarians throughout the county at that time. It was no accident that Wesleyan troubles came to a head just as the anti-Anglican campaign was reaching new heights. Rabid anti-Anglican feeling was linked too with the first effective stirrings of Temperance amongst some Association members, which played its part in embittering relations between preachers and people. This latter was particularly true of Appleby circuit, where Teetotal schools were started.

In financial terms the Cumbrian circuits were poor, with members in 1835, and later sensitive about the amount of money needed by the ministry and the Conference for whatever cause. Both town and country members resented paying for anything beyond their own chapels, and much anti-ministerial feeling was based on the money issue throughout the county. Prior to 1835 evidence points to problems with raising money at all times, and a suggestion that money was being wasted or misappropriated alarmed and annoyed a poor population; not only that, but for instance in Whitehaven the original town society resented having to foot circuit debts and to pay for board and lodging of preachers when newer societies were allowed to escape more lightly. Whichever society was at fault, money remained a fundamental note of discord between society, circuit and preacher and Connexion during

the whole century, and leanings towards Independency (or to the abolition of a paid ministry) were at times strong.

The 1850 Reform retarded signs of Wesleyan advance, and as in 1835 the issues were the same locally: the fear and dislike of preachers and of Conference, a blend of radical politics and dying Chartist sympathies in Carlisle, continued frustration over bad employment opportunities amongst the textile workers, financial bitterness stirred up by Association men determined to wreak new havoc amongst the Wesleys, and the Buntingite clique coming in for more stick (the latter always the way to gain cheers). The streak of Independence remained strong amongst the Reformers, who throughout the county were absorbed by the Association within months.

The preachers played key parts in these happenings. There were only 18 to 23 preachers for the whole county, so that close oversight of societies was impossible and some places might see a preacher only annually or quarterly. The preacher was a "foreigner" to be respected and listened to, but not necessarily to obey or to pay for. If a preacher sought to exert effective control, or had to do so; or if laymen asserted themselves against the preachers, then the preachers were bound to lose, or at best to win a pyrrhic victory. Where preachers tried to delay any sort of confrontation, to avoid it and to advocate ignoring national events, then provided local members were not especially aggressive in their demands, secession and expulsion were avoided. Thus in Kendal despite rumblings there was no major trouble and everyone more or less played things down, though the threat was there and members were lost when other Dissenters involved themselves and endeavoured to drag the circuit into the attacks on the Church. In the newer West Cumberland societies, around Ulverston and the south, there was little trouble on either occasion and ministers played a waiting game, refusing to be involved in the argument. This was as true of 1835 as it was of 1850. Even where members were lost, as at Alston in 1850, they did not set up a rival denomination and try to ruin the circuit, but quietly and sadly withdrew into Quakerism.

Where a preacher was determined to be obeyed and viewed his task as one of keeping the membership "free from infection", then losses

were inevitable. Dunn in Carlisle and Watmough in Whitehaven were obsessed with the idea of keeping the circuit classes free from the Association, expelled leading members, suffered consequent wide ranging hostility, and lost hundreds through expulsion and secession. Where laymen were determined to exert themselves, then the same result was achieved, as at Appleby in 1835 and Carlisle in 1850, regardless of the preachers. Dernailey and Beech who were reasonable men who tried unlike Dunn and Watmough to conciliate and to reason. All that was needed for the destruction of a circuit - which effectively happened to two once, and to one twice - was for discontent over money, preachers conduct towards officials, the actions of the Conference, politics and Temperance, over views of the role of the ministry, relations with the Anglicans, the impossibility of controlling newly expanded societies and ones spread out across the county, to be forged together either by national events or by dogmatic and bigotted laymen or preachers, and the result was inevitable. The amazing thing was that the Wesleyans were able to recover at all after the bloodshed.

The focal point provided by first Warren and then the call to reform was enough to encourage the circuits to join in the call for changes. In this the personal element was important, the rift between rival groups, as at Whitehaven, where bad feeling existed in the 1820s between two groups ultimately to take different sides in 1835; one pro-Church, Conference and Tory, and the other pro-Dissent, Radicals and Reform. 1835 was an opportunity to settle old scores, to gain a victory denied earlier, to take advantage of increased membership and hearers in order to use this enlarged audience for one's views and to involve oneself in the great excitement of 1835 and 1850. Leading laymen who recruited many new members were able to take these with them into the Association and Reform ranks and the preachers could not stop them. What they also took was the ability of the Wesleyans to recruit, which was eventually more serious, but the Association and Reformers did not have the capacity to generate their own missions and recruitment and could only prosper on the discomfiture of the Wesleyans, and not in their own right as a separate denomination. They were even reduced to poaching off the Primitives, at that date a small and very poor sect.

Wesleyan membership and finance were badly hit by the troubles of 1835 and 1850, with the longer term effects being even more damaging. At Carlisle a huge town society was reduced from over 500 to nearly 100, and when Brampton struck out on its own in 1836 as an independent circuit the reduced Carlisle portion proved unable to properly recover; when hit by the 1850 troubles the recovering city society was once more reduced, and the inability of the few remaining members to recruit was marked into the 1860s. Whitehaven, the most prosperous county circuit, experienced rapid growth prior to 1835, like Carlisle, and its town society was once again destroyed in 1835. The town classes never recovered their former level, and nor did the circuit; Workington demanded independence and took with it the unaffected rural societies, but it proved unable to manage its own affairs and membership dropped by three-quarters in just 11 years when the 1850 troubles, though not leading to a secession, caused heavy losses. Appleby, the third circuit damaged seriously in 1835, was saved from the fate of the latter two by the growth of Brough and Kirkby Stephen sectors of the circuit, places stimulated by new economic development in the 1840s and untouched by the circuit troubles. They provided alternative growth points with their satellite villages, but even so in the 1850s experienced difficult years.

Penrith was little affected by either the 1835 or 1850 issues yet it too suffered membership problems at that time, and illustrates the county-wide tensions of the period. What it also illustrated was that a circuit unaffected by 1835 or 1850 could rapidly expand given favourable circumstances and did not have its recruiting machinery impaired except for a year or two; hence the rapid gains of the early 1840s. It did find members hard to recruit in the 1850s when there were particularly difficult ministers to contend with.

The gains of the new Association circuits of 1835 and 1836 were small compared with the Wesleyan losses. Overall 1,500 members were lost in Cumbria in the period 1835/37 and 1000 between 1850 and 1856, when the losses were continuing because the remaining members could not make good the natural turnover of deaths, removals and back-sliding. Of these, only about 500 went to the Association in 1835,

very few, certainly less than three figures in 1850. This means that the Association were only able to take a quarter of the Wesleyans disaffected into their own camp within the county, and the 1850 Reform issues did not appreciably benefit the Association wherever trouble occurred, even in Carlisle, the 1850 Reform centre. There was far more harm done to the Wesleyans than there was benefit to the Association, particularly in the long term with both Wesleyan and Association unable to recruit in affected circuits, though the Wesleyans proved capable of significant expansion after 1860.

The importance of the ability of the Methodists to recruit is highlighted by the details from Penrith, where over the period 1835 to 1870 annual membership turnover was over 15%, sometimes as low as 5% but often above 15%. Largely due to removals amongst single people seeking work (137), if a circuit could not recruit, then it could expect to lose 15% of its members each year.

The table of membership around the time of the 1835 and 1850 secessions demonstrates that even a peaceful circuit like Penrith in 1835 found recruitment difficult whilst there was strife in the District; and membership stagnated there. A loss of confidence, increased anxiety, a slight secession in 1850 caused circuit losses because of the inability to recruit. This same situation damaged the new Workington circuit in the early 1850s and forced it to merge once more with Whitehaven.

137. Penrith Circuit Schedules FCM/3/1/34, 35 and circuit accounts 11A.

TABLE 11Circuit and Society Membership at the Time of the 1835 and 1850
Secessions.

	<u>1831</u>	<u>1834</u>	<u>1835</u>	<u>1836</u>	<u>1837</u>	<u>1849</u>	<u>1850</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>1852</u>	<u>1856</u>
<u>Wesleyan</u>										
<u>Carlisle</u>	785	-	560	-	450	340	341	297	245	169
<u>City</u>	510	540	290	106	140	238	238	190	166	102
<u>Whitehaven</u>	827	983	705	624	656	353	330	325	331	291
<u>Town</u>	391	360	203	102	121	155	149	131	109	77
<u>Appleby</u>	390	-	-	-	346	524	570	509	438	342
<u>Town</u>	40	38	8	9	10	45	47	30	24	28
<u>Penrith</u>	326	471	493	483	520	769	771	711	722	659
<u>Town</u>	99	120	150	157	160	147	150	147	161	115
<u>Workington</u>						460	481	429	295	under
<u>Town</u>	(created circuit in 1844 with 569 members, 209 in the town) Then Town had 60 members in 1856.					136	137	131	101	White- haven
<u>Wesleyan Association</u>										
<u>Appleby</u>			111	111	135	128	126	130	131	132
<u>Town</u>			14	17	36	31	30	29	28	23
<u>Whitehaven</u>			-	142	132*	130*	130*	141	141	139
<u>Town</u>			-	120	121*	100*	98*	99	94	89
<u>Carlisle</u>			-	191	-	-	-	-	-	230
			-	140	-	-	-	-	-	190

N.B: Gaps mean the Figure is not known.

* indicates an estimate from sources.

Sources used: Relevant Circuit Schedules, Accounts and Minute Books.

Returns made to Conference were often inaccurate so that locally produced figures have been preferred.

The effect of the Reform split can be well illustrated with the 1851 Census of Religious Attendance which was taken whilst the Reform issue was in progress. Carlisle, the only place to endure secession at that time, was badly hit in its congregations, as its attendances of only just over 1,000 signify. The Association, of course, benefitted greatly and registered over 2,000 attenders at services in 12 places of worship in the district as against the Wesleyans' 5. In the general excitement of the Reform agitation it was only to be expected that not only members but hundreds of attenders who were not members, would abandon the Wesleyans for the Association services or leave Methodism altogether.

In Appleby and Whitehaven the Association attendances were doubtless swelled by the Reform troubles although with no major trouble in either and no secession, the numbers of the disaffected would be considerably less than in Carlisle. The Association's birth had destroyed entire Wesleyan societies in all three circuits, and particularly in Appleby and Whitehaven each denomination had exclusive hold on particular villages - for instance the Association at Kirkby Thore - so that there would be no Wesleyans to poach in any case in 1850.

One point must be borne in mind, and that is that in the three circuits of Association presence, there were 10 defective returns, or nearly half, and the small village societies would thus receive the average nationally for their denomination which would certainly boost their figures unjustly. There is no doubt that had the census been held 2 years earlier or 2 years later, the Association would have a vastly reduced number of hearers, the Wesleyans many more. Fortunately, in Carlisle a small census of attendance was taken on May 7th, 1848, and its returns make interesting reading when set against the earlier 1851 figures.

Wesleyan attendances at all services:	631
Association	165
Primitive	150
Roman Catholic	450

(see Appendix B).

The census was held by the Carlisle Journal in order to furnish facts with which to beat the Church of England; interestingly enough only Beswick, the Association minister, violently objected to the result as a gross underestimate of his hearers which he put at 400 or more. The Editor replied that Beswick may well have had 400 at Sunday services on average, but on that particular Sunday the Journal's agents counted 165 (or about double the membership of the town society). The great change in fortune in 1850 could not be more clearly made.

For the majority of circuits, suffering no secessions on a large scale despite grumblings and discontent, the 1851 census recorded their peaceful progress and that of the Primitives, though the latter was still on a small scale. Both denominations benefitted within a decade from the development of Barrow and Millom, the expansion of Carlisle, and within 20 years from the rise of Workington, and numbers of members and hearers considerably increased. The same could not be claimed for the Association or Reformers.

1851 Religious Census: Attendances During the Reform Agitation.

	<u>Attendances</u>	<u>Places of Worship</u>
<u>Whitehaven Registration</u>		
<u>District</u>		
Wesleyan	1,815	6
Primitive	966	4
Association	908	4
<u>Carlisle Registration</u>		
<u>District</u>		
Wesleyan	1,096	5
Primitive	410	2
Association	2,158	12
<u>East Ward (covers</u>		
<u>Appleby Circuit)</u>		
Wesleyan	1,897	18
Primitive	818	14
Association	1,145	12
<u>Penrith Registration</u>		
<u>District</u>		
Wesleyan	2,433	30
Primitive	375	4

N.B. Penrith was the only one of these four relatively unaffected by the 1835 and 1850 dispute hence its large attendances; it had no large central society out of the control of the ministers, nor important families dominating societies, as in the others.

For the full details see Appendix B.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE UNITED METHODIST FREE CHURCHES

The United Methodist Free Churches.

The immediate problems of the Association in 1835 were those of finance and accommodation for services. Both created lasting difficulties though the former proved more serious, resulting in the bare existence of the 3 small, isolated circuits of Appleby, Whitehaven and Carlisle. Initially the better-off members provided income, but in a number of villages no host could be found and causes died out, as at Kirkby Stephen and Penrith. The departure out of the circuit or the death of one member ruined a number of societies and robbed others of accommodation, so precarious was the existence of the early circuits. The Egremont members even had to take refuge in rooms by a public house, which mortally offended the Temperance-minded amongst them (1).

The societies tended towards Independency throughout their history, and at times strains between members and ministers occasioned bitter disputes particularly in the early years. Horsley, an Appleby man called on to take charge as preacher there was not paid

1. For all details of Appleby circuit see: Quarterly Meetings Minutes 1836/52, 1852/80, 1896/1913 and 1926/33; see also Register Of Members, 9 vols. 1840 to 1933 which gives the turnover in members in detail; and Circuit Plans 1888 to 1933. WRO, Kendal, WDFC/M1.

his expenses or salary and members were not willing to help him at all, so he took class and collection cash illegally. When this was ascertained a sustained campaign to prevent first secession back to the Wesleyans, and then attempts to get rid of a hired ministry were only just defeated between 1838 and 1842 (2). The Whitehaven minister scarcely surfaced in Egremont activities and a committee of 6 men ruled the society until the members revolted, led by William Ireland, a former Congregational teacher, and placed the running of the chapel and society into the hands of all members (3). That was in 1846, and when Ireland wrote briefly of the history of the society over 40 years later, he noted with satisfaction how the society embodied the best of the Independents' system with the good traits of the Wesleyan Connexion.

As far as chapel building was concerned, the first grandiose schemes at Whitehaven and Carlisle led to financial embarrassment with large debts exacerbated by the loss of early prominent members by removal, death or disaffection. These 2 were the largest and most expensive of the Association chapels and had debts on them into the 1860s, when a few members were able to pay off debts after revival work led to more stable finances. As with others, they were built by issuing shares to members but there were never enough takers, and squabbles about shares and building schemes themselves caused strife. At Egremont only half of the shares could be sold, so Isabella Dickinson took the remaining half as an act of faith and charity. Elsewhere chapels were small and very plain, built by the loyalty of one or two families and outstanding for their cheapness.

2. Quarterly Meeting Minutes above.

3. For Egremont see: Leaders and Church Meeting Minutes, 1846 to 1944; and Trustees Minutes, 1870 to 1944, Whitehaven Lowther Street.

There were 3 brief revivals in Cumbria amongst the former Association societies. Over the winter of 1850/51 Reform troubles, especially in Carlisle, added notably to Association congregations and membership, and consequently benefitted finances. Even Appleby managed 40 and more new members. Over the winter of 1859/60 and again 1860/61 all 3 circuits, by then United Methodist Free Churches, benefitted (as did the Primitives), particularly in Whitehaven where membership rose from 132 to 244 before falling away once more. Finally between 1871 and 1874 very good years were enjoyed by all 3 circuits, with debts paid off, members recruited, and chapels placed on the Connexional Model Deed after their shareholders had been repaid (4). These were, of course, 3 extraordinary happenings breaking the otherwise unaltered circuit stagnation, with recruitment pitifully inadequate and only just at times covering deaths and removals. Thereafter, new members were a most notable event and did not balance removals.

In spite of containing prominent local figures amongst its members, the United Methodist body was not able to mission successfully amongst the Cumbrians even when other Connexions did so. Many members were self-employed, skilled men in business, landowners and independent farmers, and, for instance, in Appleby and Dalston, it is striking how many of the Association were in these categories. They looked to no other group for leadership and had no great wish to mission the poorer people, even in West Cumberland where most Cumbrians were poor. Primitives and Wesleyans benefitted from the large scale immigration of the mid 19th century and missioned successfully, but the United Methodists noticeable failed to organise anything more than the occasional mission. It was as though the Primitives

4. Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1863 p.329 and p.738; 1860 p.1355 and p.328.

appealed to those who wished for colour, enthusiasm and fervour together with circuit and District independence; the Wesleyans attracted those who preferred the closeness to the Anglicans with a national church and linked strongly in with the Connexional dependency system; the United Methodists had appeal only for those who would in earlier centuries have joined the Congregationalists, and came into close rivalry with the Independents of the county in the 19th century.

The notable United Methodist successes were due to a handful of individuals: Armthwaite under the Bulmans, Longtown because of the removal there of Association Methodists for work; Parton, Bigrigg, St. Bees and Workington again because of removals of existing members for work, and inviting Egremont and Whitehaven preachers. The failure to recruit doomed the circuits to longterm decline, with none of the general success and achievements of the Primitives and Wesleyans.

Indicative of the protracted general decline of the United Methodists is Appleby circuit. Removals were frequently blamed for misfortune in the circuit, and losses could be most damaging - 10 local preachers in Association ranks left the circuit between 1836 and 1842 (5) - but the migration proved more telling in the last 30 years of the century. During the 1870s there were grumblings in circuit records about serious removals depleting Sunday schools and numbers of officials; the first facts relate to the period 1880 to 1910 when circuit Sunday schools declined by half in the 30 years and alarmed the members. After deciding to concentrate on making scholars into members, the Quarterly Meeting was distraught by the news of its loss of even this most basic membership pool. Circuit schedules for 1881 and 1919 (6) dramatically portray the fortunes

5. Register of Members, as above 1.

6. Annual Schedule and Report 1919, and Special Schedule 1881; RO, Kendal. WDFC/K1.

of the circuit; from nearly 800 attendances at circuit services in 1881, attendances were reduced to 266 in 1919 whereas membership slightly increased. The circuit was failing to attract non-members as hearers and its largest congregations had been drastically reduced. The decrease in numbers of local preachers on plan too shows the difficulties in providing preaching for all the chapels - from 25 in 1850, to 16 by 1910 and the situation deteriorating after then and until Union in 1932. Help had to be given by both Primitives and Wesleyans, and at times by Independent preachers, to the United Methodists, and when Union came in 1932 the circuit accepted it with alacrity. In Carlisle in 1932 proposed union was agreed to with the Primitives and Wesleyans paying all costs involved in the first year, the United Methodists being excused any expenses, so great was their decline since the early Victorian period. It was for the United Methodists in Cumbria always "the day of small things".

TABLE 13Appleby Circuit1881 and 1919 circuit schedules compared:

<u>Society</u>	<u>Date of Chapel</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>		<u>Membership</u>	
				<u>1881</u>	<u>1919</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1919</u>
Appleby	1870	£800	200	223	46		38
Colby	1874	£200	72	50	36		14
Maulds Meaburn	1878	£245	100	93	46		28
Murton	1841	£100	82	42	20		10
Warcop	1844	£120	80	72	0		0
Sandford	1848	£90	70	41	21		8
Bolton	1818	Gift	140	90	33		19
Kirkby Thore	1851	£150	120	123	28		15
Asby	1859	£140	<u>120</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>36</u>	Total	<u>23</u>
			984	774	266	140	155

Number of Local Preachers on Plan: 1850 = 25
 1888 = 20

1910 = 16
 1932 = 10

CHAPTER SIX

WESLEYAN METHODISM FROM THE 1850s

INTO THE EARLY 20th CENTURY

Wesleyanism after 1850 continued to expand generally throughout the county, with a notable increase in membership in the West and South of the county, and a conspicuous lack of recruitment in societies devastated in 1835 and 1850, particularly in Appleby and Whitehaven circuits. Continued expansion of population and widespread migration into the county encouraged Wesleyan activities into the 1880s when there were setbacks in some circuits which though lifting, were renewed with crippling effect in the 1900s as industries and mining declined and the rural depression encouraged emigration (1).

The South of Cumbria experienced immense changes with the rapid growth of iron and steel works and mining, plus allied industries and trades, between 1860 and 1880, with new circuits at Millom and Barrow formed out of Ulverston. Millom scarcely rose above 200 members in 6 societies, being unable to draw on a large population in its hinterland and desperately struggling for financial security, depending on a few shopkeepers and based on migrants from outside of Cumbria. Its surrounding countryside was free from Methodism in spite of concerted efforts at larger centres like Broughton where after 16 years of stationing a minister permanently there, with the help of a wealthy businessman, N. Caine, the society numbered single figures (2). What success Millom enjoyed was amongst the shopkeepers and miners of the town, and amongst the bobbin and other mill workers in the countryside, the rural workers being impervious to Nonconformity.

1. J. Jewkes and A. Winterbottom, An Industrial Survey of Cumberland and Furness, a Study of the Social Implications of Economic Dislocation, 1933, pp. 25, 62, 64, 124.

2. Ulverston Wesleyan Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 1866 to 1903, BRO BDFC/M/U.

Barrow had a far larger population upon which to draw and the circuit recruited a number of prominent businessmen and merchants capable of financing enterprises such as the new chapels. In the "boomtown" conditions reminiscent of Whitehaven and Carlisle in the 1820s and 1830s, Wesleyanism did well, suffering later when depressions started. The circuit had the third day school in the county, in Dalton Road, commenced in 1867 and with 500 pupils at its peak in the 1870s (3). The school was never expanded and its buildings caused government inspectors to deal sternly with this aspect in their otherwise favourable reports. It was complained that attendance was at 80% per day of those on the register far too high for the few rooms and toilets available. When inspectors called, classes were often outside in order to minimise the problem, until the inspectorate grew wise to this ruse and called unannounced to find "appalling" toilet accommodation in 1893. The guarantors of the school funds refused to continue and the school closed in 1895 because of overcrowding and its loss of scholars to newer and better sited town schools (4). Along with the boom of the town came a withdrawal of those Methodists who had made money out of the town to more salubrious quarters in new suburbs like Abbey Road, or even like the Crossfields moving out to Ulverston and the Lakes.

To the West, Whitehaven continued its importance as a circuit but based increasingly on the new mining and industrial development inland around Cleator Moor, with a number of strong village societies, and the old town one having few (but rich) members (5). The poorer members were to migrate out of the area in the early 20th century, but

3. Ulverston Wesleyan Methodist Circuit Dalton Road, Day School, Managers' Minute Books, 1871/1896; Correspondence regarding formation of the school 1867/72, BRO BDFC/M/1.

4. Ulverston Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Annual Reports of HMI on the Dalton Road Day School 1878/1894, and Trustees and Managers' Minute Book 1885/1912. BRO BDFC/M/1.

5. C. Caine, Cleator and Cleator Moor, Past and Present, 1916, gives detailed accounts on all denominations, industries and the life of the area; as does D. Hay, History of Whitehaven, 1966.

the rich moved inland to Keswick - the Randles and Walker families were typical of the prosperous Whitehaven members seeking a beautiful home away from their source of moneymaking and origins. This move took them into a new circuit, Keswick and Cockermouth, carved out of Whitehaven and dependent on a small membership mainly in Cockermouth until the arrival of the Randles and Walkers. Railway development signalled Keswick's advance and placed it equal in membership and income to Cockermouth, with a few small societies in the Lake villages (6). Whitehaven society illustrated its advance in wealth with its 1873 chapel, costing £10,000, paid for by 300 people of whom 20 gave over £100 in gifts each, the Walkers £1,000 and 6 others over £350 each (7). After years of precarious existence, Workington established itself on a permanent basis in 1860 and membership expanded after the arrival of Cammell's iron industry in 1883 (8). It was not coincidence that circuit prosperity, however shortlived, arrived with an influx of Methodists from the North-East and Midlands as population soared. The circuit estimated that it needed 2 years of prosperity in order to raise funds for a new central chapel; in 1885, 2 years after the initial influx of members, a new town chapel was opened. It was typical of the industrial and trading development of Cumbria as a whole that where the economy prospered, so generally did Wesleyanism. Maryport, another of Whitehaven's proteges, never did well and was forced to unite with Wigton because its finances were so weak and it could scarcely afford one minister (9). The town was too near to Whitehaven and even under the influence of Wigton and Carlisle to

6. O. M. Matthews and F. Benjamin, Facet of Life in Keswick:

Methodism, 1975; for the extent of Cockermouth and Keswick's societies and preaching see Local Preachers' Meeting Minute Book, 1854/1898, CRO FCM/6/1/4

7. Whitehaven Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, List of gifts promised in 1872 to the building of a new chapel.

8. C. H. Gough, West Cumberland Metropolis: Workington, Methodist Recorder, 16.8.1900; Workington Quarterly Meeting Minute Book, 1895/1913, CRO FCM/7/1/1; and FCM/7/1/7, Circuit Preaching Plans.

9. Maryport and Wigton Quarterly Meeting Minute Book, 1895/1907. CRO FCM/2/1A.

properly develop and lost many of its functions as a town to those centres (10). Its economic and social stunting by proximity to other larger towns went hand in hand with its Methodist failure. Nearby Wigton did not experience expansion in the town's industries or those of the surrounding countryside and villages. With population slowly increasing the Wesleyans found little scope and faced competition from 8 other denominations in a town of 4,000 people (11).

Though there was a Methodist presence in most villages, the "day of small things" lasted permanently, and the only considerable Methodist growth was in the several places affected by mining development near Aspatria in the 1880s.

To the East and South Kendal tried to cope with the several hundred square miles under its boundaries, and was able to encourage Sedbergh and then Ambleside into circuit independence although both had great difficulty in surviving and had to merge with Appleby and Kendal in 1900 to the satisfaction of none of the parties. Even jettisoning Sedbergh and Ambleside as far flung and hard to maintain outposts, Kendal faced frictions with Kirkby Lonsdale on its circuit boundary and there were perennial disputes between the two societies into the 20th century (12). Kendal faced the prospect of a number of small but determined societies financed by the town society yet demanding more than their share of ministerial attention and circuit resources, a policy disagreement which tested every Cumbrian circuit at some time. Its neighbour, Ulverston, after a quiet start as a circuit, enjoyed immense success as promoter of Barrow in the 1860s before it felt overstretched by the exertions, which extended from Arncliffe to Millom, a long straggling area which gave ministers an impossible task for

10. H. and M. Jackson, History of Maryport, 1960.

11. A. Humphreys, A Wide Cumberland Circuit: Wigton, Methodist Recorder, 12.11.1903.

12. See below; Kendal Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minute Book 1871/79, 1879/91, 1891/1901, 1901/1910. KRO.

pastoral oversight. Like Penrith, Ulverston was a pleasant and prosperous market town, losing in industrial and population advance to neighbours, but retaining its air of dignity and gentility and never subject to urban stress on any scale (13). Its societies did well and benefitted from the Barrow men retiring to its locality. Its day school experienced none of the overcrowding and financial harassment of Barrow though with similar numbers of scholars, and its freedom from responsibility for Barrow allowed the circuit to take advantage of new areas of expansion in the seaside villages, Grange, Arnside, and smaller villages.

A new type of growth was heralded by the work of the United Methodists during the 1860s at the little seaside village of St. Bees (14): the establishment of Methodism amongst the inhabitants of newly developing resorts. Though the Wesleyans from Whitehaven established a successful society at Seascale, and the Wigton members one at Silloth, the major resort advance of the Cumbrian Methodists was at Ulverston, where the twin towns of Grange and Arnside proved so fertile for the Connexion in the last 20 years of the 19th century (15). Such places proved to be continuing sources of growth for the Wesleyans into the 20th century and provided strong and stable communities of retired Methodists from all over the country. Arnside had had the services of a supernumary in 1881 when it was increasingly catering for holidaymakers of the better sort, and John Bamford, on sick leave from the ministry, retired there in 1883 with his daughter. The latter opened Oakfield School for young ladies, which became fashionable for some years with North-Western families, and which was run by her husband, Herbert Gamble (an Independent minister but from a long line of Wesleyans) on strict

13. W. G. Atkinson, Ulverston Methodism, Barrow News 12.12.1925 onwards in 10 extracts; Neville Street, Ulverston Jubilee 1901/51.

14. H. Birkett, St. Bees Centenary Brochure 1865/1965; Whitehaven United Methodist Free Church Circuit; St. Bees Trust Minutes and Accounts 1865/1956.

15. H. Jackson, The South Coast of North England, The Ulverston Circuit; Methodist Recorder 17.11.1910; HB, After 100 Years, some account of Methodism in the Ulverston Circuit; Methodist Times 13.10.1910.

Methodist lines. With the retirement of more preachers to there, and to Grange, the societies grew to become very strong ones in the circuit, and remain so today.

The Appleby, Brough and Kirkby Stephen circuit recovered from the 1835 Warrenite secession with the coming of the railways and various mining and industrial concerns spread across the region in the 1860s and 1870s, yet it remained (like all Cumbrian circuits!) a curious circuit split at times between three main societies resolved only in the 20th century by naming it with all three. Railway building of all economic activities encouraged Methodist evangelism in the county throughout every circuit without exception, and railway workers formed considerable membership groups (16). Little villages like Tebay were given new prominence by the railways, and over 100 members were there in the Wesleyan society by the 1880s, many of them not local folk but nonetheless brought into society by the initiative of the local circuit. The impossibility of getting societies to co-operate in joint ventures posed endless questions for the officials, and ministers ran into bother here (as elsewhere in the District) as did the Primitive preachers, with dogmatic, simple and determined local opponents (17).

Penrith, formed out of the latter circuit, and its co-partner along the Eden valley, Kirkoswald circuit, possessed a score of village chapels, strong fellside societies and the large Wordsworth Street town society, and this advance encouraged Kirkoswald to determine on independence at all costs. This left Penrith with a scattered group of weakly causes to support, but more seriously provided no strong central society for the new circuit when it needed one in the later 19th century rural depression. The town day school had

16. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Brough Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes Books, 1869/1890, KRO WDFC/M1; Circuit Schedule Book 1863/1878.

17. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Brough Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes Books, 3 vols, 1869/1931; and the Circuit Schedule Books, KRO WDFC/M1. The Primitives faced even more daunting obstacles to co-operation, see Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minute Book 1845/52 and 1853/65, KRO WDFC/M1.

only 300 pupils but a fine reputation for quality, experiencing none of the embarrassments which beset Barrow and most astutely managed by the Methodists until its absorption into the State system (18). The 30 or so Sunday schools possessed over 1,000 scholars and the Wesleyans had something of a monopoly of the best premises and most trained teachers (originally modelling their schools on those at Whitehaven). When the Wesleyans went on their annual Sunday school treats, they took 1,000 of their own members and children plus up to 500 from the other Dissenters of the town, such was their excellent management and organisation in all things (19). Their social life of clubs, societies, lectures, teas, special events provided most of the entertainment for all non-public house attenders in the town and much of the surrounding countryside, proving quite as important in the Wesleyan success as did their religious services by the 1900s (20). The 43 Methodist chapels which occupied nearly every village in the area by the 1890s across Kirkoswald and Penrith were witnesses to the presence of the Wesleyans, just as their numerical strength illustrated their remarkable influence. Both facets of circuit good health required careful organisational ability and adequate finance, provided by a ready supply of business and trading men in the town and helped by the money of several rich families, notably the Crones (21). With such influential backing, Wesleyan progress was assured. When in 1870 the new town chapel was being planned, the issue of architectural style was debated, many feeling that they had built most of their chapels without skilled advice and ought not to waste the money in hiring an architect. John Crone insisted, with some backing, that one was employed (and a good one too) and offered to

18. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Day School Managers Minute Book 1862/71, 1871/89. CRO FCM/3/1/84 and 85 amongst many other items.

19. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Circuit Sunday School Schedules and Minute Books 1909/14, CRO FCM/3/1/68; the local press was full of the activities of the Sunday schools.

20. J. Burgess, Methodists Social Life in Penrith, 1975, deals with the clubs and social activities in the Late Victorian period; See the Circuit Records for details too.

21. See Appendix A.

pay the complete bill himself. It was agreed to, and the chapel was opened in 1873, just after that in Whitehaven but at a quarter less cost. The Wesleyans had advanced to the stage where in Penrith circuit at least, status was needed and had to be maintained regardless of cost. An architect was part of that status (22).

Carlisle, head of the District throughout the 19th century and having the distinction of being the only circuit to be afflicted both in 1835 and 1853, recovered gradually its selfconfidence and membership in the 1860s with continued expansion of its population and industries (23). The first signs were the mission to the poorer parts of the city, followed by others in more respectable and growing areas, and extensive work in the new suburbs of Currock, Upperby and Botchergate which continued into the 20th century with the growth of strong outlying societies well away from the old Fisher Street centre. The circuit's city societies kept up the dying village causes with token help but concentrated efforts on their own chapels, early accepting the inevitable demise of the village concerns unless they were absorbed by the expanding city. The circuit had its fair share of businessmen and middle class in its membership though other denominations were strong in their rivalry, and the parish clergy of Stanwix, St. Cuthberts and the suburbs proved rather more active than did the Dean and Chapter. Hundreds of the "respectable" working classes joined the Wesleyan societies, but whereas the radical textile workers still inclined towards the Primitives or United Methodists, the "conservative" railway workers joined the Wesleyans. Carlisle was a major railway centre, the stations giving employment to many of the new residents, and the railwaymen joined the Wesleyans in large numbers. To judge from existing trust records, membership rolls and registers listing occupations, the Wesleyans' largest employment group was amongst the railwayworkers into the 20th century, followed

22. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Wordsworth Street Trustees Book 1867/97, CRO FCM/3/1/75; and Building Committee Account and Minute Book, Wordsworth Street Chapel, CRO FCM/3/1/101.

23. S. E. Howe, Aspects of the Industrial Geography of Carlisle; dissertation submitted for the degree of B.Sc. Department of Geography, Durham University 1971, which charts the progress of the city.

by other skilled workers and self-employed men (24). The growth of strong new suburban societies created a conflict with the old but small Fisher Street cause wherein remained most of the circuit's wealth. The at times bitter dispute lasted some years into the 20th century and became enmeshed in the work of G. Branwell ~~Evans~~ (or Romany) in the 1920s, when it was resolved (25). The mission work of the 1860s perpetuated into the 1920s, though surprisingly the Wesleyans failed to tackle that most prosperous suburb of the city, Stanwix. As the city continues to expand, against the Cumbrian trend, so does its number of Methodists.

The growth of the Wesleyans throughout the county in the second half of the 19th century was most significant in the new rising centres of Barrow, Millom and Workington, in the newly developing West Cumberland villages, in the old established but thriving market, industrial, communications and administrative centre of Carlisle, and in some specialised localities - notably seaside resorts, though on a small scale. There was no doubt that continued increases in the population, expansion of the industries and the arrival of new ones benefitted the Methodists and greatly augmented their numbers and income. Once more, however, prosperity often came from outsiders who were Methodists already, and not from the native Cumbrians, rarely receptive to organised religion. An expanding rural economy might likewise greatly benefit Methodism, as in Penrith and parts of other rural circuits. However, the going was harder for the Connexion, recruits fewer and advance more slowly gained. Largely rural circuits experienced less growth except locally and were less prone to sudden changes in fortunes than more urban ones. Part of the pattern of continuing growth from the foundations mainly laid prior to 1835 was the use of missions especially to work amongst the social classes from amongst whom Wesley had recruited, but who had somewhere along the line ceased to be widely influenced by Methodism.

24. Carlisle Wesleyan Circuit, Minute Book for Trustees for Village Chapels, 1888/1917. CRO FCM/L/2/6, and virtually every other of the trust documents over the 19th century and early 20th century.

25. Central Hall Jubilee 1922/72.

There is no doubt that prior to the 1851 Religious Census Cumbrian Wesleyans were aware of the lack of impact of religion amongst the poorer folk, particularly the new and increasing number of urban inhabitants (26). During the 1840s Joseph Vipond, Thomas Westmorland and Thomas Hodgson set up the Penrith Home Missionary Society in order to mobilise all the denominations of the town into concerted action amongst the non-churchgoers in the town, on an interdenominational basis, with enough funds to be raised and subscribed annually to pay for a lay agent who would encourage the poor to attend religious services, but with no stress upon particular denominations (27). To some extent the plan succeeded, but being formed by Wesleyans and financed by them, inevitably it was strongly biased towards Methodism in spite of 1,000 broadsheets and hundreds of house calls being made on its behalf each year. About that time too the circuit was trying to work up enthusiasm amongst the fell farmers, their workers and the miners of Patterdale, Matterdale and Ullswater, and employed a Home Missionary there for several years with good effect and a strong Patterdale society was established (28). The society was aware that past it at that time was a huge area with few Methodists, and regarded themselves as on the frontier of religion and in "close confrontation" with "the Powers of Darkness" just across the hills into central Lakeland. Prayers were given for future work which it was hoped would embrace that region, previously denied "Methodist solace".

Penrith was little affected by the ructions of 1850 or of 1835. In the South of the county Ulverston, likewise little involved in the secessions conflict, eagerly anticipated the expansion of Barrow area with its mission in 1856 (29), the result being that as Barrow grew

26. See Appendix B.

27. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Missionary Society Accounts 1824/78, 2 vols. CRO FCM/3/1/18 and 19; inside the volume is a copy of the broadsheets used to found the society.

28. Wesleyan Methodist Magazine 1848, p.648.

29. Ulverston Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1856/66. BRO BDFC/M/U.

the Wesleyans were on the spot to advance with a chapel in 1862 and a large day school in 1867 as part of its catering for the educational and spiritual requirements of that "boom town" (30). In so uncertain and unstable a situation the immigrants to Barrow benefitted from the circuits' activities - frequent teas and entertainments, services, social life, outings, schools, clothing clubs. In a totally different environment Henry Marchbank, Walter Briscoe and W. G. Beardmore from 1862 onwards attempted to place Ambleside Home Mission on a sound footing, with very limited progress being made in that large Lakeland district (31). As a mission it was a costly failure for Kendal circuit to run and it was made a circuit in 1878 in order to place its burden upon central resources. Unlike Barrow, solvent after being made a circuit in 1871, Ambleside did not attract wealthy people into its society ranks and lived a hand to mouth existence into the 20th century when it reunited with Kendal for some years.

The Barrow and Ambleside missions were attempts to start Methodist activities in an area, not missions to the poorer folk or to a particular class of society. In some ways they did particular work amongst the poor, particularly at Barrow with one mission worker noting the withdrawal of the better off members into more salubrious suburbs by the 1870s (32). After Penrith's limited effort, Carlisle, recovering from 1850, established an important mission amongst the working classes in the 1860s solely in order to reach the "heathen poor" on behalf of the respectable city societies.

With the increasing numbers of folk living in the Caldewgate slums, the city Wesleyans decided to try to counter the "effects of vice", ignorance and Roman Catholicism by concentrating mission work, mainly using local preachers, in that quarter (33). The only previous

30. Barrow Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Dalton Road Day School Minute Books 1867 onwards, BRO BDFC/M/1.

31. J. Burgess, Lake District Methodism: Ambleside Circuit, *JOURNAL* 4 p14/22
SEPT. 1978, WHS (Cumbria Branch); See Appendix A.

32. See Appendix A on William Taylor.

33. Wesleyan Methodist Magazine 1865 pp.277, 468; 1868 p.276, 468, 956, 1045; Carlisle Journal May 7th 1869.

Methodist presence, that of the Primitives, had ended in the 1850s with their removal from the Willowholme chapel to Cecil Street, a move occasioned by the "appalling locality" of Caldewgate and its worsening in the 1840s. The remaining Caldewgate Primitives society ended shortly after the removal due to internal disputes (34).

During the summer of 1864 Rev. J. E. Hargreaves was appointed to take charge of a mission to the poor people of Caldewgate, and by the autumn he had four "very large and well attended" class meetings in an old weaving shed converted by the classes into a mission hall. There were such crowds at services that extra rooms upstairs had to be used, and there were overflow congregations in adjoining cottages. The Sunday school had over 140 scholars each Sunday, and a night school was proving very popular for teaching both young and not so young to read and write and other skills. Summer 1865 found Hargreaves and his workers at the city races, fairs and in the pubs distributing leaflets, texts and persuading as many as possible to leave the "ways of the Devil" in order to partake of Wesleyanism. A new chapel had been commenced early in 1865 but funds were particularly hard to raise since the new membership was very poor. The mission workers were especially eager to counter the work of the Roman Catholic priests and there was unpleasant rivalry between the two, which spurred the Methodists to greater efforts to reach the "unchurched masses". Hargreaves' successor was Reynolds, who continued the battle against the Catholics and the slums and by Christmas 1867 had obtained extra land by the chapel for a school and out-buildings. There were 82 full members of the society and many hundreds attending services, with the day and Sunday schools doing particularly well. Reynolds and the leading city members were delighted to have the Mayor of the city open the chapel in 1868 for it was felt that the initial work had shown great promise and that consolidation could proceed with a permanent basis. The weaving shed continued to be used for functions and schools for a time.

34. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1852/74. CRO FCM/1/1/2.

What the circuit did not foresee was the inevitable result of their work: a startlingly successful mission to the poor decreasing its outdoor efforts which had been so praiseworthy, and concentrating on preaching to the converted by the 1870s scarcely a decade after its inauguration. Growing in strength it took, like Fisher Street became "respectable" and full of the better off of the area's inhabitants, who in turn wished to move to a better environment both for living and worshipping. The development of the area West of the city towards Wigton in the early 20th century, and its continued growth to the present, symbolised this advance of the Methodists out of the one-time Western end of the urban limits and into the expanding suburbs. This in turn encouraged Caldewgate to seek higher status as a society by challenging Fisher Street for circuit leadership and created considerable difficulties over a number of years into the early 20th century. Significantly too the Caldewgate society sought a better site and chapel, and in the 1920s erected the distinctive Wigton Road chapel, a sign that they had arrived as a leading District society full of promise, zeal and energy, their humble origins having evaporated along the road. The society continues to expand, against the run of play in the District, just as the Western suburbs continue to grow (35).

The West Cumberland Wesleyans too grew in influence and riches though not in membership numbers in their old strongholds, and with Whitehaven under the sway of a handful of rich industrialists and businessmen £10,000 was thought appropriate for their new chapel in 1873, at the time the most magnificent in the county (36). With merely a quarter of its 1830 membership, the Whitehaven society had infinitely more resources. Even so, the circuit was tardy in concern for the poorer quarters of the town, partly because of the compact nature of the settlement pattern which militated against a further place inevitably near to Lowther Street, and the society wished to believe that it attracted a congregation from all classes, rich and poor.

35. Wigton Road Methodist Church Jubilee 1929/79 to be published shortly.

36. Whitehaven Wesley Methodist Circuit, Souvenir Handbook 1949; Lowther Street Chapel Building Fund 1873/1878.

In 1899 the former Anglican place of worship, the West Strand Mission, became the new Wesleyan Hogarth Mission, and was joined in 1905 by the Kirk Mission (37). Each was well attended but firmly under the eye of the Lowther Street society with its ruling minds and purses. The one great virtue to the circuit of the 2 missions were their cost: virtually nothing, with furnishings, buildings and labour being free or self financing. That the management committees for each was composed largely of Lowther Street members gave the missions the air of charities to the poor of the locality and to a certain extent caused resentment between donor and recipient. Their services were excellently attended though, and swelled numbers nicely for the 1902 census (38).

Prior to Hogarth and the Kirk, Whitehaven, like Carlisle, had done battle with the looming menace of Roman Catholicism on Cleator Moor from the 1860s onwards (39). There was a considerable society but recruitment was from converted immigrant workers and not from the Catholics, the avowed targets of the mission. Down the coast at Workington the new circuit rose to the challenge of its fast developing poor industrial suburbs with energy. Cammell's steel works and other expanding industries in the 1880s stimulated the circuit into action and missions were established on a permanent basis at Siddick, Owen Street and Westfield (Derwent), plus a most important Seaman's Mission (40). Costs were considerable and the South William Street society, forced to foot the bill, soon abandoned more distant missions at Camerton, Ullock and Branthwaite and concentrated on the closer, more easily managed missions in the town. Large congregations here too were achieved and impact on the neglected quarters of the town achieved by being early into the fray.

37. Whitehaven Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Hogarth Mission Accounts and Minute Book 1900/1957, 5 vols; Kirk Mission Minutes and Account Books 1905/60, 4 vols.

38. See Appendix B.

39. Whitehaven Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Annual Circuit Schedules 1836/1932, 8 vols, lists the efforts.

40. Workington Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Preaching Plans 1873 onwards, CRO FCM/7/1/7; and for the missions in detail FCM/7/1/185 to 191, 206 to 215, 240 to 243.

The Cumbrian Methodists were aware of the decline of most village and country causes, holding migration to towns and outside of the area responsible, and to little avail took special missions to revive interest in Methodism. Those who could be attracted into Methodism were largely those who had left the area, and in unfavourable conditions of declining or stagnant population, the Methodists experienced no renewed advance in membership. In each of the Wesleyan circuits the central town society found it increasingly necessary to finance rural societies, but this subsidising was a rearguard action and not one with hope of success, unlike the urban missions. By the 1880s Penrith circuit, for example, was very concerned with the plight of the small village societies left to be supported by the large town society after Kirkoswald took the stronger societies into that new circuit in 1871 (41). Christopher Fairer and the leading circuit officials expended years of effort in trying to maintain a strong rural presence, but even Fairer recognised this as a hopeless task. Penrith town society at least was prosperous, and remained so; Kirkoswald had no strong societies, just a group of large village ones badly affected by rural depression and depopulation and with no resources comparable to Penrith town, the Kirkoswald circuit Wesleyans were planning for merging with another circuit by the 1900s (though this has not yet happened) (42). As the Cumbrian towns grew strong, the rural areas declined, and the central Methodist societies dominated circuits by the later 19th century as never before, with the overwhelming majority of officials living in the towns despite half the members being in the small outlying societies. Missions such as Fairer's in Penrith or William Moffitt's to Hethersgill (43) met limited response and were attempts merely to maintain a Methodist presence.

The strains and stresses of circuit life in the period 1850 to

41. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1878/91 and 1892/1915. CRO FCM/3/1/2 and 3.

42. Kirkoswald Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1871/1902 and 1902/1922. CRO FCM 4/2/1 and 2.

43. Wm. Moffitt, Autobiography of the Sark M.P. 1910.

1914 centred on certain themes: rising new societies challenging older established ones for circuit leadership which involved confrontation over that most expensive luxury, chapel building; the desire of outlying societies to be independent of central society control yet able to benefit from Connexional and circuit resources to which they did not wish to contribute (yet with the safeguard of Connexional aid). The permanent themes of awkward officials and stubborn ministers, financial headaches and overspending, large circuits and dispersed societies and a hundred and one problems of circuit life all cropped up in most circuits. Yet the power struggle within circuits, occasionally between the circuit and the District, which occurred in 1835 and in 1850, perpetuated in lesser form into the 20th century.

At Barrow-in-Furness conflict arose out of the desire for a new large "super chapel" in the town to emphasise Methodist power and prestige. Hartington Street was the head of the circuit and the largest society, but over the years the richest members had moved out of that suburb (leaving it to the largely artisan and working population) and had moved to the Abbey Road area, well away from the "masses" and industry. With the most important members based on the old tin chapel at Abbey Road, the superintendent minister decided to transfer his attentions to there, mortally insulting Hartington Street and encouraging further bitterness in the ensuing row. In August 1892 the Quarterly Meeting unanimously agreed to build a new large central chapel in order to cope with the "new needs" of the town, and "an influential committee" composed of all trustees, all officials and "all other interested parties", was appointed to look into the matter (44). By September the Abbey Road society was complaining over its poor chapel and of rumours that they would not get a new one. A deputation led by the ministers had to meet the society in order to placate it, and the situation called for a good deal of tact. By April 1893 the superintendent was re-affirming the need to choose a site but soft-pedalled the matter, and congratulated the circuit on clearing £1,400 of debts in three years. Crossfield

44. The following eposide is taken from the Barrow Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1887/1895, 1895/1906, 1906/1916.

BRO BDFC/M/1.

received especial mention, for his efforts and for his appointment as a Justice of the Peace. It was finally decided to have a "small select committee" to choose the site from an expert view point after considering all the issues, "to embrace and enhance the work now carried on by Hartington Street, Abbey Road and Greengate".

Successive Quarterly Meetings were almost exclusively concerned with the project. June 1893 found the committee seeing Sir James Ramsden for a site, but they refused to finalise the meeting until the Quarterly Meeting gave them the power necessary to take a site that he might offer, or to come to some other arrangement. This the Quarterly Meeting refused to do. The problem was that the 11 on the committee were a majority for the Hartington Street scheme, whereas the Quarterly Meeting had a majority against this and for Abbey Road. The matter dragged on with both sides increasingly unhappy; in March 1894 the committee reported on "the insuperable difficulty of dealing with the sites"; all interested parties were once more invited to participate. The select committee by June had gathered all materials and facts possible about the sites, and in September a 2 hour meeting was held to decide the issue. No decision could be reached and the committee was asked to provide more details. In March 1895 the matter was raised again for final consideration. Prior to this meeting the committee had recommended Hartington Street as the site in what was described as a "final decision", despite opponents from Abbey Road being absent on business; this naturally caused friction and there was a very heated discussion. Roberts and Mills proposed that the committee's decision be put to the final vote; Crossfield and Brockbank counter proposed Abbey Road. A further 2 hour meeting led to the chairman refusing to allow a vote due to the frayed tempers and the acrimonious nature of the debate, which did not serve as good example of how Christians were supposed to act. A former mayor, Justices of the Peace, councillors, local preachers, leaders, businessmen, all behaved improperly and were reminded of this. June 1895 found a further protracted meeting in this battle between the decayed but numerous central society against the smaller but rich and influential suburban clique, and a vote on the issue was not taken, due to all refusing to take part in a vote.

Behind the scenes there was trouble brewing. Determined to have

their new chapel the Abbey Road trustees announced in December 1895 that it could not afford to support its chapel due to the Chapel Building Fund recalling its loan and the fresh demands from the council for street and other charges. The chapel needed repairing but it was not worth doing to so poor a fabric. The trust announced it was to sell the property whether or not the Quarterly Meeting intervened; there was in fact only £300 in debts on the building and the trust could have afforded 10 times that, but it was hoping to force the hands of the meeting. The ministers and the Quarterly Meeting panicked. Desperate to avoid an unseemly and potentially disastrous dispute, the meeting guaranteed to pay all the chapels debts and to investigate the issue further. Concerned to avoid a clash, after some months of "wheeling and dealing", the Quarterly Meeting agreed to the proposal of Crossfield and Brockbank in September 1896 to build a £5,000 chapel at Abbey Road, by 36 votes to 14. Though the Quarterly Meeting might have called the bluff of the Abbey Road trust over the matter, to have done so would have risked the whole financial basis of the circuit and would have made relations between circuit and society untenable. In these circumstances many people voted for Abbey Road and against Hartington Street, who had no trump card to play and whose counter-proposals to first build on Hartington Street and then to allow that society and trust to draw up detailed plans for its own schemes, were rejected. Abbey Road contingent were well prepared and had all plans and costs worked out in detail. Before long, £8,500 had been spent on the Abbey Road chapel, and the fears of the Quarterly Meeting that funds might be denied to other more important tasks were realised. Proposed projects at Hartington Street, Greengate and Vickerstown took some years to complete and cost between them not much more than Abbey Road by itself. Abbey Road continued to dominate the circuit and went from strength to strength.

Equally bitter but more protracted and potentially disastrous was the Carlisle dispute. After the traumas of the 1830s and 1850s Carlisle Wesleyan circuit developed in the last third of the 19th century with the growth of population, of industries, of wealth amongst its membership, and with missions to the newer working class suburbs

and residential areas (45). In the early years of the 20th century there was a conflict between the representatives of the old central chapel and society, Fisher Street, and the newer societies in the outlying areas, led by Caldewgate society, originally one of the poorest in the circuit and composed of membership recruited at first in that poor and volatile industrial suburb. By the 20th century Fisher Street was viewed as outmoded and opposed to all advancement in the circuit by the more radical societies, and a struggle ensued to force the break up of this, still easily the wealthiest society of the area, by making it amalgamate in a new chapel and society with one of the suburbs.

During 1904 (46) some elements in the circuit Quarterly Meeting demanded Fisher Street be replaced as head of the circuit and that a new central chapel be built. Sites in Lowther Street or on Warwick Road were suggested, busy streets away from the relatively by-passed and poorly situated Fisher Street. Some representatives wished to force Fisher Street to combine with proposed societies in Warwick Road or involving Stanwix, which would break the hold of the relatively exclusive Fisher Street society and dilute it with new elements. Jealousy of the privileged position of Fisher Street underlay part of the trouble for the ministers tended to be planned there and many local preachers despatched to the newer and poorer societies which resented paying for seldom seen preachers.

This situation, fraught as it was with serious consequences, was complicated by the choice of sites, by the problem of costs, the need to sell Fisher Street, the continuing problem of Dumfries to pay for, and complaints about the cost of the ministry. Attempts to reduce stipends in 1904 and earlier had failed, but the feeling was there and the Quarterly Meetings were very stormy and uneasy. Currock had been promised a new chapel but any sort of central project would demand all circuit resources. Fisher Street was absolutely opposed to any change

45. For example see Carlisle Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Union Street Mission Minutes Book 1880/87, CRO FCM/1/2/31 and FCM/1/2/28 to 30.

46. The following account is given in unusual detail (for the Wesleyans) in the Carlisle Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 1891/1904, 1904/26, 1926/40, CRO. FCM/1/2/2, 1/2/115 and 1/2/3 respectively; all references to meetings are from these sources unless otherwise stated; See also CRO FCM/1/5/2.

and so too was Currock since the society wanted its own chapel. Stanwix members wished for their own chapel and did not favour a new central one which would deprive them of their opportunity, and the small rural societies attached did not really mind what happened so long as circuit life was not disrupted and no extra money had to be raised. These groups then opposed the other town societies, and serious problems were raised. Caldewgate and others wished to deprive Fisher Street of its prime place.

The large minority in favour of redevelopment of the central chapel either on the old site or on a new one petitioned Conference in 1904 to intervene and force the meeting to sanction the plans. This unfortunately was done without the knowledge of the main meeting which was furious. Such was the ill feeling that demands to partition the circuit were made. Conference despatched a Commission of Enquiry and it decided that the Warwick Road site ought to be used, and that a start be made very soon. Requests to divide the circuit and to appoint two men to each were refused without much ado. This was a relatively tactless way to handle a meeting already sensitive about its wishes being flouted by the actions of a minority. Not only did the meeting refuse to agree to the report of the Commission, but it protested against Conferential interference and the Building Committee, appointed when the meeting was in a more conciliatory mood, now decided to absolutely oppose the recommended Warwick Road site as widely extravagant, since they would have to pay, and not Conference. They chose Lowther Street site which the Commission had said was unsuitable. At this point too the Fisher Street trustees, including several of the most influential men in the city, adamantly refused to sell the property under any circumstances.

The matter dragged on in an unpleasant fashion. The meeting of June 1905 turned awkward and refused not only to implement the decision of Conference to agree to the Commission's report, but refused to consider the idea of a new central chapel at all. For the 3rd successive time the meeting alleged they had been overruled by Conference. The June meeting posed the following questions to the 1905 Conference:

1. Could a minority of the Quarterly Meeting impose its views on the entire meeting, by appealing directly to Conference, by by-passing the meeting, and by jeopardising in irresponsible fashion the whole future of the circuit?
2. Did Conference have the power to make the circuit build and pay for a new large central chapel it did not (by 1905) want?
3. Could the Commission over-rule the meeting and ignore its rights?
4. Did the Commission and the meeting's chairman, the Rev. Latham, have the right or power to prevent further discussion of the matter and to over-rule the meeting's decision not to build and pay for the chapel?

The meeting refused to develop the Lowther Street site, holding it to be not central enough, little larger and better than Fisher Street, and ignoring the needs of Stanwix which were desperate. Finance remained a sore point. The Fisher Street society was by far the wealthiest and demonstrated this in no uncertain way in order to "put one over" on the other societies who had been undermining their position. Fisher Street society had prepared a statement of finances over the past few years showing the average contribution to circuit income per member of each society. Union Street was giving 12s. per quarter per member to the circuit, Caldewgate 12s., Shaddongate 6s., and South John Street 9s; Fisher Street was giving a staggering 33s. per quarter per member. Not surprisingly this raised the temperature of the meeting, and the Fisher Street representatives demanded the other societies pull their weight and stop allowing Fisher Street to pay all bills and keep the circuit solvent. This was one way for them to get back at the other societies.

At the Christmas meeting, 1905, the superintendent, Latham, decided to try to pour oil on troubled water by bringing reasoned argument, tolerance and understanding to the discussion. He, like some of the meetings' members and Conference believed that a new central chapel was needed if the circuit was to keep up its leading position amongst the city's sects. Fisher Street premises were too

small, too crowded, and too poor a site to allow for redevelopment. Latham believed that much trouble and misunderstanding could still be avoided by his words of explanation. The Warwick Street and Spencer Street sites were popular, large and central, but costly, and too near Union Street society which would dislike its competition, and would likewise trespass on the territories of other denominations. They were also too far away from Stanwix to cater for them, which would mean a further chapel realistically at £3,000. The Lowther Street site had already been bought for a mere £1,425, which had to be considered a bargain, and there were no debts on it. It was an important road, good large site, would cater for Stanwix and Warwick Road area "for the foreseeable future", and was well away from rival churches. It could take advantage of the new suburbs, and measured 1900 square yards compared to Fisher Street's 812 and Warwick Road's 1455. It was the most airy and bright of the three, and when the race course was built on, as "it surely must", then the new chapel would be the best situated in town to take advantage of this (this did not happen).. Funds of "a considerable nature" were already available and could not be used on any other project, and the whole financial situation looked good. The chairman handled the meeting tactfully, pointing out the idea for the project had come from inside the circuit and was not being imposed on them by Conference. The new chapel would have the benefits of the old Fisher Street members plus all the new ones from the other developing areas, and would forge a link between the societies of the city which had been lacking; there was scarcely any co-operation or contact between the six city societies, "which must be regretted", he commented. £3,500 had already been promised from outside the circuit, and perhaps a further £4,000 would need to be raised by the circuit itself. The old Fisher Street chapel would become the Sunday school for the new chapel, and the chairman concluded his well considered speech by asking for a full and frank discussion on the topic.

It was to no avail. The issue had been discussed time and time again and did not come any nearer the agreement of the whole meeting. There had been a compromise in that the Fisher Street chapel would not be sold, but the trustees and the society there were not eager to combine with folk from new areas, and had the distinct impression that they would be left at the end of the day to foot the major part

of the bill for a chapel which they did not want. Latham must have despaired of the situation. Certainly none of the societies were willing to co-operate over even minor matters, let alone raising vast amounts of cash. The other societies had no desire to perpetuate the dominance of Fisher Street under its new guise of Lowther Street which they were likewise expected to help finance.

June 1906 found the meeting demanding a reply from Conference to its set of awkward questions of the previous year. The chairman pointed out with great patience that the reply had been to re-appoint the Commission of Inquiry to meet with the meeting. The meeting had refused to even meet the Commission, and refused to proceed with the chosen site until Conference replied properly and to their satisfaction. By 24 votes to 21, with some abstentions, a memorial was sent to the Conference demanding "a proper reply". However, after much behind the scenes manoeuvring, by 26 votes to 16 the Lowther Street site was accepted and plans given the go ahead, because of Latham's counsel and promises that all would progress smoothly.

Latham seemed to at last have satisfaction and success. The succeeding months were occupied by the drawing up of detailed plans, but then occurred a further unfortunate dispute over expenditure on the house, furnishings and salary of the third minister which seems to have roused some unpleasant feelings and the latent dislike of Cumbrians for paying ministers. How much this affected the situation is impossible to gauge, but it all came down to hostility between societies and to the consternation and shock of Latham the plans for the chapel were finally rejected in December 1906, by 28 to 18 votes. The battle went on behind the scenes and by December 1907 was causing much harm to the cause in the city and allegedly getting the Wesleyans a very bad name. This conflict was blamed for severe membership and income losses. A committee was formed for effecting a joint trust for the Currock and Lowther Street new chapels, but only the former went ahead. The issue remained the same as it had always been: the inability of Fisher Street and its supporters amongst the other officials to agree to co-operate with the other societies. In any conflict the latter would normally have prevailed, but at crucial votes "the Fisher Street diehards" were augmented by those officials who disliked ministerial interference when it was

too blatant, and were opposed to confessional interference - hence the impossibility of the project being concluded.

The matter dragged on in a lower key until 1914 (47), by which date the circuit Quarterly Meeting was calling for "aggressive evangelism" to win back the dwindling congregations, to increase membership and income. The War saved the circuit from further disasters and offered new opportunities with its large scale population influx.

1913 saw the arrival of the most outstanding of the city's ministers, G. Branwell Evens, later to become known through books and radio broadcasts as "Romany", a nationally famous minister. To a large extent his brilliant mission work amongst the munition and factory workers of the area from Gretna to Carlisle revitalised the circuit and more importantly he paved the way for the building of the famous central chapel, the Central Hall. Originally specialising in the Gretna and Dornock missions (at the latter he recruited 250 members), in 1917 he was invited to take charge of the richest prize, Fisher Street. Now this raised again thorny problems which caused at first much bitterness; it says much for Evens that he was able to overcome immense prejudice and to win over almost all the members of the meeting to his side by tact, ability, good humour and kindness.

The invitation extended by a majority of the meeting and by the society itself aroused the old jealousies. It also raised a serious problem in another way, since Evens was not the superintendent and had no wish to be, but Fisher Street wished to have him in order to revive their fortunes, which seemed likely since his missions had been so successful elsewhere. After difficult, heated and protracted meetings, resolutions were proposed to the effect that Fisher Street should relinquish its claims as head of the circuit. A majority of the circuit representatives wished for this to be passed, but the officials who led the campaign made a tactical error by associating it with preventing the re-appointment of Evens to the circuit. In other words if the move to defeat Fisher Street succeeded, it meant

47. The Quarterly Minutes continue the story in detail.

losing Evens. This right away, as always, split the opponents of Fisher Street, and the record voting was tied at 40 v 40. The superintendent and chairman, Rev. Smith, was placed in a very embarrassing position. He realised that whatever he did would be unpopular so decided to take the line of neutrality and refused to give his casting vote, a very unusual step and perhaps unique in Cumbria. Caldewgate and supporters, disgusted, drafted a protest to Conference, signed it, and sent it without meeting approval in a repeat performance of 1904.

On this occasion the Conference acted cautiously. It supported Smith's actions in stating the matter ought to be resolved by the society and circuit officials amicably and not in "bitter and hostile" meetings. The invitation by Fisher Street society, officials and trustees was legal, could not legally be altered especially since the meeting had had no majority against it. Evens, who was being used as something of a pawn in a bid by some to "depose" Fisher Street, must have been acutely embarrassed by the whole business, but he and Fisher Street were delighted at the outcome to the discomfiture of Caldewgate.

Such was Evens personality and ability that he revived the whole circuit. As late as 1925 he was asked by a majority of 73 votes to 6 to remain for a further three years in the circuit. By Christmas 1922 he had turned Fisher Street into a revitalised powerhouse of Methodism, and added 114 members in five years in what was considered a decaying area. Prior to his coming the society had lost members regularly and recruited few. Due to his work the work on a Central Hall or chapel was well under way by Christmas 1922 and the appalling troubles of the previous 18 years did not re-occur on either side. Evens, who stayed until 1927, received excellent comments on all sides throughout his ministry, and it seems fitting to close what was an unpleasant and protracted affair with the following from March 1924 (48):

48. The Quarterly Meeting Minutes are full of praise for his outstanding work which is remembered with great affection in the circuit.

"The Rev. G. B. Evens was invited to remain for another year. In view of the great and successful work being carried on at Fisher Street where the membership has been practically doubled and his influence upon the life of the city generally, it was felt that every effort should be made to retain his services. Mr. Evens, who had already refused the superintendency of the Sheffield Mission, accepted the invitation and expressed his intention of carrying out the terms of the invitation last year". Many were the tributes paid to a great peacemaker and evangelist by the meetings until he departed in 1927, four years after the completion of the Central Hall about which their had been such battles.

Occasionally, disagreement between circuit and District threatened the peace, as in Ulverston. For some years Ulverston had been under the Carlisle District, but the alliance with the rest of Cumbria's Methodists was not smooth and repeated attempts were made by the circuit to abandon its Cumbrian neighbours for a Southerly District. "A further attempt" was made in March 1856 (49) to join the Liverpool District, the Quarterly Meeting giving as its reasons that many prominent circuit members travelled to South Lancashire on business and were able to combine this with Methodist meetings: that all Ulverston's connections were with Lancashire to the South rather than with Cumbria with whom it had "nothing in common", and that District meetings in Cumbria were far more difficult to get to because of the distance and terrain involved. Apparently the boat service was so good to Lancashire that it was quicker to get to Liverpool than it was to get to most Cumbrian circuits by land. It was also believed that Carlisle District had "repeatedly" neglected Ulverston's interests over the years and that Liverpool, with far greater resources, would offer more aid to Ulverston. Should Ulverston join Liverpool, it would be one of the poorest circuits and qualify for immediate and substantial District aid, the Quarterly Meeting maintained; if it remained in Carlisle District it was just one of many all poor and all after much aid from a very poor District with little to offer.

These seemingly powerful arguments were not refuted by the District that June at Penrith; the statement alleged that it was

49. Ulverston Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1856/66. BRO BDFC/M/U.

contrary to Connexional policy "to rob a small District" in order to make a very large one even larger, and that geographical reasons militated against this "unwise" move. The reasons for separation were insufficient to allow consideration of a transfer. The Ulverston Quarterly Meeting were beside themselves with annoyance and appointed a committee to frame a reply to the District and to take the matter further. Little progress was made against a stone wall of refusal, in spite of the special circuit class prayer meetings held in aid of the proposed transfer in March 1857. Liverpool meanwhile agreed to the transfer but Carlisle refused in June to consider the matter further, the reasons for wanting separation being "too flimsy". During August 1857 the Ulverston Quarterly Meeting desperately appealed to Conference and Carlisle District, citing the same reasons for separation but finding neither willing to do anything about the matter. That was the end of the matter and Ulverston "had to resign itself" to partnership with "other poor circuits" in Cumbria for the future, however unhappy it was.

A desire to split circuits from within frequently and inevitably arose when there were clashes of interest between leading societies and members, usually over the apportioning of ministerial time and financial obligations, which led to struggles for supremacy in the Quarterly Meeting. The Brough and Appleby circuit never reached the heights of expansion and success initially envisaged in the 1820s and ruined in 1835, and increasingly after 1850 migration out of the area by hundreds of members was held responsible for circuit misfortunes. Rather belatedly the superintendent moved during 1877 to Kirkby Stephen from the tiny Appleby society, though Brough, the first circuit head, shared equal status. With societies scattered across a number of dales, it was recognised that most local preachers were neglectful of their appointments if they had to travel far, despite the coming of the railways (50). However, things looked up when nearly 200 new members were placed on trial after a revival over the 1878/79 winter. This prompted Brough and Kirkby Stephen to seek separation but during 1882 the long hoped for and planned division was refused by the

50. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Brough Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Local Preachers Minute Book 1872/1908. KRO WDFC/M1.

District which bred resentment and fostered trouble. By February 1883 (51) the Quarterly Meeting had to instruct all leaders to forbid "all allusions to ministers" in prayers and services since these were of a derogatory nature and most un-Christian, blaming the preachers for not supporting circuit division sufficiently. By December 1885 fresh attempts to split the circuit by dissatisfied societies were defeated by a small majority, but rural depression and the lack of a strong central society produced financial worries which in turn exacerbated feelings between ministers and members, and between societies. By 18 votes to 4 it was agreed to reduce ministerial stipends by £10 per year each in December 1885. The chairing minister declared this action to be illegal and sought help from the District. George Abbott, District chairman, wisely counselled caution and the reduction did not go ahead in spite of the meeting fighting hard with comments on the serious losses of young families and finance with the onset of agricultural depression. It was felt that members were suffering cuts in their living standards and that it was only fair ministers do the same. Somebody, probably a minister, wrote in the "Methodist Times" of the affair and created a stir, the Quarterly Meeting banning all reports being made on threat of serious consequences.

The circuit had a real struggle to survive and fought a rear-guard action from 1880 into the 20th century. Societies were notoriously awkward and this refusal to hand over cash for circuit and ministerial uses prompted the returning circuit steward to write in the 1892 circuit schedule (52) for the benefit of his successor that Mallerstang, Crosby Garrett and Espland Hill had to be handled with especial care or else they would do their best to create havoc in circuit finances; "but they are quite well off really" he concluded. When in 1900 Kendal refused to take over the ailing Sedbergh circuit

51. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Brough Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes Book 1869/90. KRO WDFC/M1.

52. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Brough Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Schedule Book 1878/1903. KRO WDFC/M.

as well as Ambleside, Kirkby Stephen and Brough were the only alternative, thus inheriting a circuit of 167 members in 10 societies (53). Ministers were stationed in the four main towns and the Brough, Kirkby Stephen and Sedbergh sectors were worked independently. They remained a nightmare to plan and only two traps were provided for local preachers, one each to the extremities of the circuit and only along one route, with no detours and never to be used by men with a journey of "only 10 miles" or less. When in June 1918 the District asked for one of its preachers to become an army pastor, this was refused, and when the District asked the meeting to organise its Sunday schools in a union the Quarterly Meeting replied that it was impossible to organise a union because of distances and size of the circuit; but that the District was welcome to try to organise the Sunday schools, and in fact to organise the circuit since it could not be done by the officials. The Quarterly Meeting spent much of its time trying to hold together three parts of a circuit which wished to be split up, which could neither be worked together or apart.

The permanent problems associated with working wide circuits, dispersed centres of population and difficult terrain plagued Kendal too. Kendal was in the middle of a huge unwieldy circuit measuring 40 miles wide by 18 long, having to cater for the central town and a number of little societies as far apart as Kirkby Lonsdale in the East and Ambleside in the West. Traditionally, the two or three circuit ministers were stationed in Kendal and ventured out on their tours of duty across the circuit, but this involved considerable travelling expenses and waste of time, and annoyed the outlying societies who disliked having to depend on the one society and its good offices towards them in providing ministerial talent. Poor relations between societies were heightened by the allocation of successive circuit quarterly debts, apportioned according to membership of societies or the healthiness of their chapel trusts. Kendal exhibited the problems which plagued circuits into this century.

53. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Brough Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Schedule Book 1878/1903. KRO WDFC/M1.

The Kendal Quarterly Meeting had "an obsession with money questions" according to one of its members, and neglected religion as a result (54). The issue of circuit finance was intertwined with the Ambleside and Kirkby Lonsdale matters which so occupied the Quarterly Meeting into the 20th century, and was never satisfactorily solved. Ambleside had had sporadic preaching since the days of Hodgson Casson before 1820, but it offered little scope and only in the 1840s was a society established in the town (55). Preaching and little societies at Windermere, Grasmere and Hawkshead followed in due course, and with the coming of the railway in the mid 19th century prospects brightened. However, Kendal had the job of providing preachers and most of the cost of the venture; in 1862 Henry Marchbank was the first minister appointed there as Home Missionary, followed by Walter Briscoe and W. G. Beardmore (56) who placed the area on the District map. Kendal did not appreciate paying for the succession of ministers and remonstrated with the four little societies that they should raise more money. By March 1873 the Quarterly Meeting was demanding the Home Missionary preach in Kendal sector too since they paid his salary, but on the other hand appointed collectors in every society in order to help the Ambleside sector. Ambleside was raised at each Quarterly Meeting and its financial situation worried the members. One of the rare instances of sympathy shown to a group of societies by the Quarterly Meeting was in June 1876 when Ambleside sector was excused two quarters debts because it had no money. Crisis was precipitated in October 1877 when the Home Missions Committee intimated its plan to reduce its grant to the circuit and placed all the burden on Kendal. The Quarterly Meeting appealed against this gradual disappearance of the grant and when the Committee refused to reconsider, in January 1878 Kendal announced it would simply employ just its two circuit preachers who would be resident in Kendal,

54. Kendal Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, January 1871 Quarterly Meeting Minute Book, 1871/1879. KRO WDFC/M2.

55. A. Steele, Christianity in Earnest as Exemplified In The Life and Labours of the Rev. Hodgson Casson. 1853; G. H. Bancroft Judge, The Beginning of Methodism in Ambleside; J. Burgess, Lake District Methodism: Ambleside Circuit, 1978. WHS Cumbrian Branch.

56. See Appendix A.

Leaving Ambleside sector to its own devices with occasional help from local preachers. The Home Mission Committee was forced to make Ambleside a circuit and Kendal escaped with just providing local preaching aid and no finance. For a time Ambleside's problems were removed.

A far more thorny problem concerned the Kirkby Lonsdale society and its local supporting societies of Cowan Bridge, Hutton Roof and Barbon. These societies, remote from a ministerial presence, resisted successive attempts to make them pay their proper circuit dues over the years until a clash of interests made definite action necessary. The occasion of the clash was a request by the Quarterly Meeting to the Kendal chapel trustees that they contribute to circuit funds (57). The trustees in no uncertain terms refused to do so and this stimulated the meeting's secretary, Bateson, a Kendal businessman, to point out that the real problem was that the four societies of which Kirkby Lonsdale was the acknowledged head, had not contributed adequately over the years, but expected Kendal trustees to pay their share. He instanced the Horse Hire Fund in March 1873, to which the four societies had given £6 in 4 years but had taken out of it £40; Kendal gave most of the money and took least. As circuit steward took, Bateson rose to the occasion and launched a sally against the four societies. At the next meeting in June Mallinson led the Kirkby Lonsdale reply, which alleged the poverty of the four societies and their consistent neglect by the Quarterly Meeting. Subsequent meetings spent hours on the matter.

Bateson requested that the £52 owed to him as circuit steward and the £16 owed to him as Horse Hire Fund treasurer be paid in March 1874. Kirkby Lonsdale was asked for a large contribution and in return in June demanded a minister be stationed there full time. After a long and heated debate, the motion to do this was defeated by 10 votes to 8. The 8 who lost did not rest there but encouraged the meeting to ask Kendal chapel trust for contributions, which exacerbated the delicate situation during 1875. Bateson retired as steward in

57. The following is based on the Kendal Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1871/79, 1879/91, 1891/1901, 1901/10.

KRO WDFC/M2.

January 1876 and noted with some justification the improved circuit financial situation since he had taken over. It was he who gave free teas each quarter to the meeting, and who rented the manse cheaply to the circuit for the ministers. With the Kendal trust still at loggerheads with the Quarterly Meeting, it was suggested that they place the chapel on the Model Deed in order to avoid further expenses. The one insuperable snag was £200 of debts for which they as retiring trustees were liable, and the circuit refused to pay them. With the setting up of Ambleside as a circuit, the Kirkby Lonsdale sector seized its opportunity and in January 1879 returned to the theme that they required a minister resident there. The Quarterly Meeting required the four societies to give a guarantee that they would pay most of the expenses involved, but this was refused and the issue unresolved.

June 1881 found the Kirkby Lonsdale society protesting about receiving little ministerial attention and inferior local preachers, and demanding the residence of the junior minister be moved to there. A committee was formed to report on the matter. This reported the following September and stated that one man could not work all the proposed Kendal sector, whereas the Kirkby Lonsdale man would have far too little to do and that society would not promise to increase its contributions to circuit funds whereas the rest of the circuit was expected to foot the increased bill. The matter came to be raised almost quarterly, and just as regularly rejected by a majority, as in March 1883. Sensing that they would never get anywhere whilst a minority of the Quarterly Meeting, the four ~~Q~~asterly societies tried a different approach: in March 1888 they asked to be attached to another circuit which would better cater for their interests. This alarmed the Quarterly Meeting and after protracted negotiations it was agreed to find a suitable lay agent to work the four. To the chagrin of Kirkby Lonsdale, no agent could be found. Their only comfort was that in September 1891 the Quarterly Meeting agreed "in principle" that the junior preacher ought to be stationed out of Kendal. No feasible scheme could be agreed, but a committee to investigate the matter was once more formed. The committee reported that Kirkby Lonsdale could have a preacher provided they within four years agreed to provide a manse plus most of the expenses

involved. Agreement could not be reached, and finally in March 1892 the Quarterly Meeting stated that to station a man in Kirkby Lonsdale was impossible, but that a search for a suitable (and cheap) supernumary would be made.

It was at that meeting that the awkward but very frustrated representatives from the four societies announced that they had been in official negotiation with Sedbergh circuit and had been promised a resident minister if they joined that circuit. The Quarterly Meeting, shocked, condemned this action but agreed to open negotiations with Sedbergh. The stumbling block to these proposals was never recorded, but nothing came of them. Sedbergh circuit may have required financial and preaching help of Kendal which the latter was not able or prepared to give, or the offer of a minister to live in Kirkby Lonsdale may have involved complications such as paying for him or sharing his services with existing Sedbergh societies. Sedbergh itself was in a bad way at that date and its finances were desperately poor. By June 1892 the Quarterly Meeting was offering Kirkby Lonsdale a supernumary provided they would pay £20 plus expenses towards the cost. Kirkby Lonsdale refused absolutely to pay a further penny.

From then onwards the representatives of Cowan Bridge, Barbon, Hutton Roof and Kirkby Lonsdale ceased to take part in circuit meetings or business, and did not pay towards circuit expenses. The circuit did not function properly and in October 1895 the Quarterly Meeting noted the impossibility of working it with one plan since the four societies ignored all the others. Negotiations were opened with Settle and again with Sedbergh circuits to see if they would take over the four, but fell through because both circuits required financial and preaching ^{aid} that Kendal was not willing to give. With these talks taking many months, circuit life returned to normality but failure to reach a settlement resurrected bad feeling. Realising that they were getting nowhere, Kirkby Lonsdale and its three little partners agreed reluctantly to pay £26 per year towards the costs of a supernumary in June 1899. Ironically, none could be found to take on the job. With bitterness between the two groups of societies interrupting circuit life once more, a serious situation arose concerning Ambleside and Sedbergh circuits.

Ambleside and Sedbergh had both once formed part of Kendal and were new circuits. Each experienced declining fortunes though their existence was at best tenuous from their inception as independent circuits. In June 1900 the District alarmed Kendal by requesting them to take over both circuits to be run as sectors of their own Quarterly Meeting. The Kendal Quarterly Meeting, shocked, was aghast at the idea of a circuit double its present unwieldy size but with only an additional 280 members across its huge area. With a large Home Mission grant the Quarterly Meeting agreed to take on Ambleside, with a most reluctant Appleby and Brough circuit being obliged to take on Sedbergh. Neither enlarged circuit prospered. Kirkby Lonsdale, for some months out of the spotlight, positively demanded it have one of the circuit's four ministers stationed in that town. After many hours of further discussions (one would have thought that everything possible would have been said on the matter) a committee was created to look into the matter; it reported that the idea was as impractical as it had been 30 years before. The Kirkby Lonsdale group proposed a division of the circuit in June 1902 but this was defeated, and then requested that Settle take them over. A committee was established to effect the transfer.

When the transfer was about to be completed in January 1903 it fell through over Settle's refusal to pay off any debts incurred by the four societies, and by Kendal's refusal to give financial help to the enlarged Settle circuit. In the face of all but violent revolt, the Quarterly Meeting pledged to provide a lay agent if the four societies would raise £60 per annum for his work. Fortunately the services of J. Wardle were obtained and after over 30 years of trying Kirkby Lonsdale achieved its goal of a resident preacher (58).

Kendal was not alone in having to resist demands for division, which had more success in the case of Kirkoswald. Expanding finances and membership in Penrith in the 1860s led to Kirkoswald demanding to be made an independent circuit. The demand originated in the refusal

58. P. Gaskins, Methodism in Hutton Roof 1976, deals with the Kirkby Lonsdale pastor and the work in the little societies of the area.

to move any of the three circuit ministers into the fellside villages as a resident in the early 1860s, and even after the appointment of a fourth minister in 1866 all four lived in the town despite an increase in income from the fellside villages (59). Some controversy ensued over the propriety of denying the several strong and old societies of a minister's presence, and one was moved to live in Kirkoswald shortly afterwards. However, the Kirkoswald area demanded circuit independence and by June 1868 the quarterly and leaders meetings reported on the refusal of the fellsiders to send representatives to meetings not held in their villages (60). A committee appointed to finally decide on the matter of circuit division exhaustively investigated the financial situation but in the ensuing vote split 10 v 10 on the issue of division and its advisability. To prevent a walk out of the fellsiders the chairman had to cast his vote for division, but when the committee decisively rejected financial proposals for the new circuit's contribution to its own upkeep the fellsiders refused to attend further meetings. The usual attendance of 12 or 14 at Quarterly Meetings increased to 45 in December 1869, however, when after adjourned meetings of 12 hours it was unanimously agreed to divide the circuit and plans for the division left to John Pattinson, Robert Gates' son-in-law. His plans were soon effected and division took place in 1871: amicably at last because of good sense, but many months of bitterness had been endured and some nasty moments experienced.

After a highpoint in membership reached throughout the county towards 1890, decline set in and, with occasional brief breaks, continued to the present. The decrease in Wesleyan membership is easy to chart through circuit records, going hand-in-hand with the changing fortunes of the county's industries and agriculture over

59. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1846/78. CRO FCM/3/1/1.

60. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Leaders Minutes 1867/74. CRO FCM/3/1/77.

the same period, and most importantly with changing demographic patterns (61). By the 1890s the industrial towns were experiencing depression and rural areas met a worsening future for agriculture which encouraged emigration out of the county. Large numbers of non-Cumbrians, attracted by the industrial development in Barrow, Millom, West Cumberland, left as easily as they had come once the work ended. The sapping of circuit strength and flexibility by emigration was not stayed by recruitment and the Wesleyans, in common with the other Connexions, were unable to effectively make good their losses. Finances were impaired, an obsession with spending money on chapels turned into a belief that expense should be cut and economy measures instigated in all matters, and the reluctance of Cumbrians to pay towards circuit expenses turned into a desire to save what money was available for their own chapel, which frequently remained in debt. The officials - local preachers, leaders and a host of financial managers - were difficult to replace since their natural successors, able and active younger men, were encouraged to search for a future elsewhere outside of Cumbria, in the cities of the North and Midlands and especially in London. Existing officials aged, younger ones were lacking, and the Sunday schools ceased to provide the usual fund of new members and officials which they had done for many years. Initially Wesleyanism grew by recruitment outside of its ranks, but during the 19th century the tendency towards taking most members from the children of existing members and via Sunday schools became the most important mode of advancing membership numbers. As younger families migrated, schools in rural areas faced problems of recruitment of both teachers and pupils, making the future bleak for the circuit's prospects. Rivalry from other denominations was never a major factor in Methodist decline except very occasionally. Far more serious was the decreasing need of society at large for the religious services, and especially the "social services", of the Connexion. The rise and progress of secular amusements and entertainments in the later 19th century were at first a stimulus to Methodism, encouraging chapels to form their own cycling, lecture, History and other societies, but with the increasing amount of variety people

61. Decennial Census Returns in Carlisle Record Office give the precise changes; the various local histories give details on individual areas, for instance: J. D. Marshall, Furness and the Industrial Revolution, 1958.

saw no reason to involve themselves with religion when such entertainments with no religious ties, could be easily had - for instance, organised sports. Though into the 1970s Wesleyan chapels give a good account of their many and multifarious social activities in the county, in towns and larger villages, they could not cope with strong rivalry. Stripped of their social functions, even as places for non-drinkers to meet, chapels found themselves under pressure in education too. Their day schools were supplanted or merged with local authority undertakings, their Sunday schools ceased to be significant save for the children of members and rather than for a wider society. The measure of the influence of Methodism has been both its membership and the number of non-members who attended services, and in the later 19th century and 20th century a significant decrease in hearers at services took place as Wesleyanism, in common with other denominations, lost its appeal to the public. Whereas in the mid 19th century the Wesleyans attracted nearly all members to services by nature of their duty as members, together with a larger number of non-members, by the 1900s indisputable evidence shows that hearers were mainly members (62.). By the mid 20th century few non-members, and only some members, attended services regularly. Faced no longer with a growth situation in which the future for the circuits was bright, the Wesleyans were forced to adapt to a situation of stagnation and then decline in their fortunes which produced new problems, stresses and strains.

Amongst the mainly rural Cumbrian circuits, Appleby, Brough and Kirkby Stephen early complained about migration out of their area on a significant scale in the 1850s (63), when they placed great reliance on recruitment from members' children in the Sunday schools

62. See Appendix B.

63. The circuit Quarterly Meetings complained virtually every quarter about their losses. Although every Cumbrian circuit dwelt at length on many occasions on migration out of their circuit damaging their fortunes, it was to an extent a convenient scapegoat.

until this source dried up increasingly after 1880 and occasioned alarm in official circles (64). Societies were determined to keep what little income some found that they possessed in their own hands and not give it to the circuit officials. This led to conflicts involving the ministers, ever anxious to expand circuit income along with some members, with those desirous to decrease income. The circuit was, however, well off compared to its neighbour Sedbergh, reduced to a single minister and 167 members in 10 little societies by 1900. As a circuit Sedbergh had been created too late, was hit by massive emigration, and never came to terms with its reduced income and lack of officials and active members. Kendal absolutely refused to accept Sedbergh as part of it, despite the two being linked for so long (65). It was forced to take oversight of Ambleside, another recent circuit which had never found its feet, with few officials and little in the way of resources of members (perhaps strangely, bearing in mind the by then considerable number of rich residents, though few were Methodists). Kendal at least had a permanently stable central society in the old market town to support its ailing rural societies. Sedbergh, Appleby, Kirkby Stephen bore no comparison to Kendal town, though both circuits presented massive problems of organisation and finance spread across numerous little societies in a huge area. Ulverston, though considerably smaller than Kendal, had no such concentration of Dissenting denominations this allowed the Wesleyans more room to recruit throughout the 19th century from the richer classes, who continued to lead expansion into the 20th century at the seaside resorts of the locality against the countrywide trend of inability to recruit (66). Naturally, small

64. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Brough Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Statistical Summary Books, 1895/1898, for example. KRO WDFC/M1.

65. Kendal Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes, June 1900. 1891/1901. KRO WDFC/M2.

66. Ulverston Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Circuit Accounts 1879/1927, giving membership, class leaders etc. BRO BDFC/M/U.

societies based on declining local industries, like Lindal and its mining (67), suffered badly as people left the area for work; but overall the circuit fared well, and better than its offspring, Millom and Barrow. The surviving records of Ulverston circuit are full of a cautious optimism and confidence which is noticeably absent from the records of Appleby, Kendal and Sedbergh.

Of the other rural circuits, Wigton was one of the few to complain of direct Anglican opposition to their work which had harmed certain societies. During 1900 it united with the more industrial Maryport circuit, hoping that union meant strength, more members and increased finances, which did not prove to be true (68). The only significant Wigton Wesleyan gains were at the expense of the Primitives, for instance at Bothel, where the society proved unable to cope with depression and shrinkage as well as did the Wesleyans, the stronger circuit (69). The Cockermouth and Keswick circuit experienced varying fortunes. To the West, mining societies like Dearham suffered great decline, whilst Keswick, newly advancing under the patronage of Randles, Walker and others in the early 20th century, took circuit leadership in the fresh impetus of influential members and expanding finances in the 20th century (70). To the East Penrith town society fought to preserve Methodism in its hinterland amongst a score of little societies, and channelled considerable time, effort and money into the project between 1890 and 1920, to no avail, and only delayed the inevitable decay with the onset of serious rural depression and de-population. The town itself remained quite balanced in its economy, a sizeable market and trading, as well as social and administrative centre which like other larger Cumbrian towns with no nearby rivals,

67. Lindal in Furness Centenary Brochure.

68. Maryport and Wigton Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minute Book 1895/1907. CRO FCM/2/1A; A. Humphreys, A Wide Cumbrian Circuit: Wigton; 12.11.1903 Methodist Recorder.

69. Bothel Primitive Methodism, J. Burgess 1978, issued for the Methodist Society there.

70. Keswick and Cockermouth Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minute Book, 1912/1955. CRO FC/6/1/1.

sucked men and industry out of the surrounding countryside. The town society provided trustees and officials for most of the rural societies, despite being numerically outnumbered by the combined village societies. Significantly, the town provided double the finance per member of the rural causes for circuit income and Connexional funds by the 1890s (71). Penrith society by the 1920s found it impossible to maintain the village causes, and closed down for most of the year or permanently services and activities in 8 villages between 1920 and 1930 (72). Ironically nearby Kirkoswald, so desperately fighting for independence in the 1860s on a wave of prosperity, by the 1880s was losing more members by migration out than it could recruit via the Sunday schools, which occasioned concern and later panic in the Quarterly Meeting, which turned to special efforts to recruit scholars and to train them for official posts (73). They described their own future as "bleak" and suffered internal disputes over finances, started by Kirkoswald having the benefit of the superintendent but providing no more members or finance than other societies (74). In a crisis situation such petty jealousy was exaggerated by worry and anxiety. On several occasions the measure of weekly collections in chapels for circuit finances was defeated (notably in 1899) because societies were unwilling to pay for ministers they rarely saw, though predictions of ceasing to exist as a circuit were overdone and it continues to this day, albeit with tiny membership and scattered, isolated societies.

71. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Circuit Accounts 1892/1916. CRO FCM/3/1/14; and the Circuit 20th Century Fund Accounts, CRO FCM/3/1/71.

72. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minute Book 1916/33, CRO FCM/3/1/4. A number were opened for services during the summer but closed for most of the year. Others closed permanently and merged with neighbouring societies.

73. Kirkoswald Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1871/1902 and 1902/33. CRO FCM/4/1/1 and 2.

74. Kirkoswald Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Accounts 1871/93, 1893/1912. CRO FCM/4/1/24 and 25.

The more urban and industrial Cumbrian circuits endured the same longterm future of their rural allies. Whitehaven circuit advanced primarily in the newer mining settlements on Cleator Moor, suffering protracted decline in the late Victorian period and particularly in the first quarter of the 20th century which afflicted all mining areas. Emigration out of the area was considerable, mainly to the Dominions, and the missions of the turn of the century were attempts to increase the number of hearers amongst the working poor. The central society was not always eager to promote Methodist quantity as opposed to the quality of membership, often preferring the respectable business and trading members to the poorer inhabitants, and hence the late attempts to reach the poor. The town society too never recovered from the blow it received in 1835, though its remaining members grew in status and wealth (75). Workington was newly developing as an industrial town in the 1880s and 1890s, but optimism was shortlived and with increasing unemployment and emigration the circuit was faced with Sunday school and membership recruitment stagnation which turned into a decline by the second decade of the 20th century. It proved to be more energetic than Whitehaven in seeking out wider work amongst the poor, but the decline of the port and shipping interest lost the society many members. Maryport fared worse and was forced to union with distant Wigton, each being working class in membership and lacking the resources of their neighbours (76). Carlisle, one of those neighbours, proved an exception and experienced little of the economic misfortunes which beset most circuits between 1890 and 1930. As a county town and centre for economic, social and administrative functions it had a diversity of employment opportunities which guaranteed stability whilst towns and areas dependent on a couple of staple employers

75. Whitehaven Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Whitehaven Society Accounts 1862/84 and 1884/1901.

76. Workington Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1895/1913. GRO FCM/7/1/1; Wigton and Maryport Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1895/1907, 1908/14, 1914/25, GRO FCM/2/1A, 1B, 2 and 3: By the 1920s it was hard to find a male member of either circuit in fulltime employment, and this economic blow was serious for Methodism in the locality.

endured periodic vagaries of unemployment and depression (77). Its Wesleyans prospered with the city, expanding into the new suburbs and continuing to experience progress in membership, Sunday schools and finances completely against the countywide trend of the 20th century Methodists. It acted as a magnet to many Methodists from elsewhere in the county reluctant to leave Cumbria, and benefitted from continued early 20th century immigration. The Great War offered new scope for mission work amongst 10,000 imported workers between Gretna and the city for the munitions factories, and Branwell Evens and other ministers had great advances in such an environment (78). The mass drunkenness fostered by such population displacement led to the State Management scheme for all public houses and licensed restaurants, and the Wesleyans responded with zeal to the new opportunities afforded by the war (79).

Those once booming industrial and urban circuits, Millom and Barrow, did not experience Carlisle's good fortune. Millom depended on the Hodbarrow mines for its existence as a market town of 10,000 people, many of them Cornish, Manx, Welsh and Midlanders who had brought their differing types of Methodism with them in the 1860s and 1870s (80). The outlying five societies were small and leaned on the town one, with half the 180 or so members, to foot the ministerial bill each quarter. Whilst the quarries died out at Kirkby, Coniston and Broughton, Millom too suffered mining depression,

77. T. H. Bainbridge, Carlisle: A Geographical Analysis, 1937; Se E. Howe, Aspects of the Industrial Geography of Carlisle; Industrial Carlisle: a Handbook 1909.

78. The Circuit Records are full of Evens' work, for example the Quarterly Meeting Minutes, Carlisle Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, 1904/26. CRO FCM/1/1/115.

79. For the State Management Scheme (fondly remembered now in the city) see Henry Carter, The Control of the Drink Trade: a contribution to National Efficiency, 1918; B. Oliver: The Renaissance of the English Public House, 1947.

80. J. D. Marshall, Colonisation as a Factor in the Planting of Towns in North West England, pp.215/230, in the "Study of Urban History", Ed. M. J. Dyos, 1972; for details on the immigrants to Millom and West and South Cumbria.

many left for the South, and in a piece of pure folly the town society spent £1,100 on renovation of its chapel, reputed in the 1880s to have the largest number of hearers at services in the District. By 1912 one half of the houses of the town were empty and total depression had set in (84). Ulverston absolutely refused to involve itself by taking over Millom circuit, which had to battle on with decayed church rolls and school registers. Barrow was a much stronger society in a large town by Cumbrian standards. Its influential financiers included a number of Methodists who aided and instigated such ambitious projects as the Abbey Road chapel and the three new chapels for a total of £19,000 between 1900 and 1910 (82). The ups and downs in shipbuilding iron and steel, mining, the hemp trade and other town industries affected the Wesleyans, although not until the 1920s was there the savage economic depression which ruined the circuit. Until that time the Wesleyans had enough fat to survive lean times, though after 1910 with little advancement or recruitment, and an ageing band of prominent officials who were not replaced by men of the same standing or calibre.

In the years between 1918 and the Methodist Union of 1932 the Wesleyans were less affected in their decline than the Primitives and United Methodists, their larger resources and membership guaranteeing resilience and stamina and a sterner action against decreasing membership and the inability to recruit. In spite of their difficulties the Wesleyans were able in Cumbria to form the major party in the Union, which was much less of a necessity for them than for the Primitives and United Methodists, spread more thinly and with a less hopeful future.

84. The Dalton and Millom Primitive Methodist Circuit described the sufferings of both town and Methodists in detail, Quarterly Meeting Minute Book 1882/1911, Circuit Accounts 1905/25, and the Annual Circuit Property Schedules 1925/32, BRO BDFC/M/U.

82. Barrow Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 1895/1906 and 1906/16. BRO BDFC/M/1.

Methodist Membership

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>% Growth of Population</u>	<u>Methodist Members</u>	<u>% Growth in Methodist Membership</u>	<u>% Methodist Members in Population</u>
1801	180,000		750		0.417%
		13%		60%	
1811	203,000		1,200		0.591%
		16%		92%	
1821	235,000		2,300		0.979%
		8%		126%	
1831	253,000		5,200		2.06%
		6%		10%	
1841	269,000		5,700		2.12%
		7%		14%	
1851	288,000		6,500		2.26%
		8%		12%	
1861	311,000		7,250		2.33%
		12%		14%	
1871	347,000		8,300		2.39%

Wesleyans made up between 65% and 70% of Total Methodists in the period 1851 - 1871, and brought into the 1932 Union 67% of the Methodists in the County.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PRIMITIVE METHODISTS

By old age, John Wesley had recognised the growth in his Methodist societies of a type of "bourgeois respectability", a disinclination to diverge from set forms of worship or ecclesiastical discipline, an aversion to displays of emotionalism, and a certain complacency amongst many of his converts (1). This tendency towards "respectability" was heightened in the period 1790 to 1820 as a response to the fear of social disorder, Reform and Revolution, occasioned initially by the French Revolution and its excesses involving the poorer classes. Agitation along the lines of mass meetings demanded political reform, whilst violence like that of the Luddites led to the Government enacting laws against all forms of political or group activity on the part of the working classes, the alleged "subversive elements" of society (2). The Methodists, inspite of their great displays of loyalty to Crown and country, were frequently accused of subversive actions which alarmed Conference and aroused fears that religious persecution might take place with official backing. The Conference in response to Government and other accusations, firmly condemned all activities amongst its members which could occasion concern in the ranks of magistrates and authorities (3).

1. R. Davies, Methodism, 1963 p.136. W. R. Ward, The Early Correspondence of Jabez Bunting, 1820/1829. 1973 p.5.

2. H. M. Brown, Methodism and The Church of England in Cornwall 1738/1838. 1946 p.215; M. L. Edwards, After Wesley, a Study of the Social and Political Influence of Methodism 1791/1849. 1939; R. G. Cowherd, The Politics of English Dissent 1815/1848. 1959.

3. J. Horner, The Influence of Methodism in the Social Structure and Culture of Rural Northumberland 1820/1914. 1971; M. S. Edwards Cornish Methodism; A Study in Division 1814/57. 1971.

The problem was that by the 1800s Methodism was so widespread, its membership so large and diverse, its non-members who attended meetings and services so numerous, that effective control of members' activities was impossible to carry out. Hugh Bourne, a carpenter, and William Clowes, a potter, both Wesleyan local preachers, were active in the Potteries circuit both within the confines of Connexional rules and without them in wider mission work (4). Bourne for instance built a chapel, held services and enrolled members without permission, but his work was recognised by the circuit as good and beneficial, and approval was invariably given. However, should the Connexional authorities wish to exert complete control over such men, trouble was bound to ensue.

In their work Bourne and Clowes invited over the famous American Evangelist, Lorenzo Dow, who had had great success in huge open air meetings which spent days in some remote place worshipping, praying and sermonising (5). The two local preachers organised a so-called "camp meeting" on Now Cop in 1807, a suitably remote spot, and several thousand people gathered to take part in the proceedings to the consternation of Methodist and civil authorities. Rumours of widespread "sexual licence" and uninhibited emotionalism in the meeting were exaggerated, Bourne and Clowes both being particularly stern towards suspected immorality, but the idea of thousands of poor folk gathered beyond religious or civil control alarmed magistrates and Conference who feared subversion of the worst kind. The circuit, aware that it could not hope to direct so many people in the unofficial agency being formed by Bourne and Clowes, expelled both men in 1808. Unofficial evangelism on so successful and influential a scale could not be allowed to constitute a threat to the relations between Conference and Government; nor could the Conference tolerate membership beyond the influence of the circuit authorities and ministers.

4. H. B. Kendall, The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church, 2 vols. pp.7/156.

5. H. B. Kendall, as in No.4, pp.58/61.

By 1810 Bourne and Clowes had united in their work and established a Connexion along strictly Methodist lines named the Society of Primitive Methodism which was to become the second largest of the Methodist Connexions, and in some parts of the country of immense influence (6). Generally speaking it recruited at first from amongst dissatisfied Wesleyans, many of them from the poorer classes, and gave circuit and district power into the hands of lay representatives in the proportion of two laymen to one minister in official meetings. Otherwise, its organisation and doctrine were all but identical to those of the Wesleyans.

The Primitives took their new ideas across the Midlands with great success, though not until the summer of 1822 was work into Cumbria commenced with Peter Ludlam and Francis Jersey, travelling preachers, working from Kendal to Ulverston and financed by the vast Hull circuit (7). Jersey at least met great persecution, as a number of the early Primitives were to suffer, being beaten up and arrested before ending up in Lancaster gaol, from whence he was released after a fortnight by Hull paying his fines. Before going East to his headquarters Jersey noted with satisfaction his 189 members spread out over the countryside between the two towns, but by 1824 not one society or member remained. A permanent Primitive cause in the South of the county depended on re-missioning by Richard Cordingly from Preston during 1829 when John Flesher took it over as a mission from Barnard Castle circuit, succeeded by William Harland (8). The significance of the initial Kendal work was its offshoot at Carlisle, 45 miles north, where the county's strongest circuit was quickly established.

Ludlam so impressed one woman that she determined on walking to see her brother-in-law, John Boothman, in Carlisle concerning the matter. Boothman was exactly the sort of person whom the Primitives

6. H. B. Kendall, as in no 4, p.159.

7. W. Patterson, Northern Primitive Methodism, 1909, p.118; J. Hawkins, "O'er Hill and Dale and by the Solway Shore"; A Centenary Souvenir of the Primitive Methodist Church, Carlisle and Whitehaven District. pp. 11 and 79.

8. William Harland's Circuit Book in Rylands; J. Hawkins as in No. 7 above, p.79.

needed in order to establish their presence; former Anglican, brought to evangelical religion by reforming clergyman, disappointed and joined the Wesleyans, and a man of some substance as a hat manufacturer (9). He was sceptical but sent James Johnson to hear the Primitives preach; Johnson reported favourably and preachers were invited to Carlisle during the autumn of 1822. A society was formed in the hat warehouse, mainly recruits from dissatisfied Wesleyans. This alarmed the Wesleyan circuit, and Boothman, Johnson and others peacefully withdrew in the face of stern warnings from Wesleyan preachers about their conduct. Clowes came over from Hull in the winter and formed it into the first Cumbrian circuit that Christmas; within three years Carlisle was the powerhouse of Cumbrian Primitivism and had missioned 150 villages in the triangle between Penrith, Carlisle and Whitehaven (10).

The Primitives encountered a good deal of opposition and prejudice, their early meetings receiving a most unfavourable press which concentrated on their noise, "irreligious activities", threat to law and order and the beggarly dress of the "so-called preachers". Thus the Carlisle Journal, later a stout champion of the rights of the Methodists:

"Ranters: on Sunday last a very numerous camp meeting of the anomalous sectarians calling themselves "Primitive Methodists", but generally denominated ranters, took place at Coal Fell hill, about a mile from this city; and, notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather, a vast multitude of people attended, drawn together by the novelty of the scene, it being the first time that so large an Assemblage of that denomination had been seen in this neighbourhood. Six speakers, called "preachers", officiated on this occasion, and from a cart, successively addressed the audience, who behaved with a

9. See Appendix B for these and other personalities.

10. J. Burgess, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes in Cumbria. WHS (Cumbria Branch) 1978; Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1823/1852. CRO FCM/1/1/1.

degree of decorum and propriety more to be hoped for than expected. The text chosen by the first preacher was of a very significant description, and could not be mistaken as to its object. It was from the 17th chapter of Acts and 6th verse - these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also. At an early hour in the morning the society assembled in the city, and walked in procession through several streets, singing hymns, set to very lively and popular tunes, very dissimilar to the music employed in divine worship. In this manner they proceeded to the place of meeting, where the preaching commenced about 9 o'clock and continued to 5 in the evening, when some of the preachers were completely exhausted by their exertions. A "lovefeast" was afterwards held at the house of one of the brethren, which concluded the business of the day. Although the Primitive Methodists have only recently appeared in this part of the country, yet they have been well known for some years in several counties of England and appear to be rapidly increasing in numbers and in notoriety. In most of their proceedings they seem to be faithful imitators of the original methodists, while under the direction of John Wesley; having travelling preachers, class leaders, a periodical magazine, resembling in some respects the old Methodist magazine, and several extensive circuits, one of which nearly 40 travelling preachers are already established, promising a great augmentation of disciples and of revenue. But the powerful measure by which this society will one day rise into importance, is the system of incessant collections, an object never lost sight of by these people, and which they seem to understand perfectly, as may be seen by some of the reports already published, which shows them to be no contemptible financiers. By this means, as their numbers increase, their funds will accumulate, numerous and expensive chapels will be built, schools instituted for their preachers' children, missionaries appointed etc., etc., so that probably, at no distant period, they will, in all these respects, rival their brethren of the old Connexion. We understand that a new chapel for the worship of the Ranters will be opened on Sunday at Brampton". (11).

11. Carlisle Journal, 12.7.1823.

Even after five years of work the Primitives continued to excite condemnation in the press, particularly where they were successful in recruiting. Thus concerning their work at Whitehaven during 1828:

"On Sunday last a numerous body of those enthusiastic sectaries called the Ranters held a camp meeting on Harris Moor near this town, which was attended by a vast assemblage of marvelling spectators of both sexes and all ages. About 9 o'clock in the morning the "saints" left their conventicle in Mount Pleasant, and proceeded in something like military array to the appointed place of meeting. Here a couple of carts were placed in juxtaposition, forming a kind of field pulpit, whence the scriptures were to be expounded and spiritual food dispensed to the hungry multitude. In the course of the day several enlightened orators mounted the rostrum, and with "holy clangour" and appropriate gesticulations, successfully harangued the auditory, a great majority of whom seemed to possess a very slight relish for the 'pourings out' of their ghostly instructors, whom they abandoned very uncereemoniously, and returned home to partake of more substantial nourishment. The desertion continued to increase until few remained except the 'rigidly righteous' and their sanctimonious leaders, who at 5 o'clock left the ground in solemn procession and marched homewards, seemingly bewailing the paucity of conversions after so long and arduous a wrestle with the wicked one". (12).

And near Wigton a month later:

"A heavy of Ranters held a camp meeting on Sunday the 15th inst, near the Red Dial, about a mile from Wigton. In the afternoon several hundreds of men, women and children assembled to listen to the ravings of these ignorant fanatics; their oratory, however, soon appeared to lose its charms, and by far the greater proportion of their hearers adjourned to the neighbouring public houses where the remainder of the day was spent in a manner which the reader will readily picture to himself. We should loath to curb the liberty of any man, but we have a moral certainty that no good can possibly arise from such quackery, and a positive proof that it is attended

with bad consequences, we should feel no compunction in sending every itinerant field preacher to the tread mill to partake of at least 6 months wholesome exercise. The individuals who thus prey on the incredulity of the public are for the most part men of bad character, grossly ignorant and illiterate, and in many instances we may safely add, they are graduates of those schools where the study of any of the modern sciences is deemed preferable to the old fashioned mode of obtaining an honest and respectable livelihood by manual labour..." (13).

The triumphant Carlisle Primitives brought out several of their local preachers from the Wesleyan ranks into fulltime travelling preachers, paid very little and reliant on hospitality locally plus their expenses. This way of mobilising to meet sudden demands for preachers facilitated Primitive growth though lowering the standing of the itinerancy and encouraging a very high turnover in preachers of little or no education their Bible studies apart. William Devlin was recruited to work Wigton in 1823, covering Bothel, Ireby, Bolton and Oulton (14). By 1825 the Carlisle Quarterly Meeting had to investigate irregularities in the mission's finances and work and "severely reprimanded" the officials and members involved, who had lost their preaching rooms and most of the congregation. Three preachers were in the mission by 1828, when further irregularities were discovered and the mission disintegrated. Not until William McReary, a Primitive, moved to Wigton in 1832 and invited Mary Porteous from Carlisle to preach was a society firmly started. Bothel was head of the new mission for a time until sufficient steady and reliable Wigton folk could be enrolled.

Where the Wesleyans were strong, then the Primitives proved to be successful in this early phase of their history. For example at Carlisle, but not in Kendal, Wigton or Keswick. Mary Porteous and Whitehaven preachers Lyon and Parrott worked Keswick during 1833 and a society led by the 7 strong White family initially flourished to

13. Cumberland Pacquet, 27.5.1828.

14. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting 1823/52.
CRO FCM/1/1/1.

nearly 40 members (15). When the Whites removed in 1836 the society collapsed as so often happened in the history of the Primitives in the county. Not until the late 1850s did Primitivism establish itself in this one Lakeland place. Lyon and Parrott encountered more favourable circumstances in Cockermouth after large camp meetings during 1834, and a cause was started there. The second centre of the county for the Primitives was Cockermouth's neighbour, Whitehaven.

Whitehaven, stronghold of early Methodism in the 18th century, proved to be equally strong for the Primitives and in the ensuing years became partner with Carlisle in the new Carlisle and Whitehaven Primitive District. Clowes, Johnson and Summersides visited there in 1823 hotfoot from Carlisle and enjoyed immediate success amongst Wesleyan and Quaker families, many of them seamen or colliery workers (16). A new preacher appointed to take charge after Clowes departure in 1824 broke with the Connexion and formed his own independent sect; John Flesher was sent at 24 years of age to take charge, and was able to repair the damage and to prevent an end to the cause there. Part of the success of the Primitives in Whitehaven and Cumbria, as in the rest of the country, was due to the employment of men as preachers who used the simple vernacular of the folk to whom they spoke. Harland, Flesher and the rest were northerners, usually north-easterners or native Cumbrians, of rough tongue and simple speech and language which poor folk understood and appreciated. There was no class gap between preacher and congregation as might exist within Anglicanism and increasingly within Wesleyanism. The Primitive preachers realised the rapport struck between themselves and congregation and used it to good effect - it was Harland who used his nautical and mining knowledge to impress the natives of West Cumberland. Likewise the

15. W. Patterson, Northern Primitive Methodism, 1909, p.146; Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 1823/52. CRO FCM/1/1/1.

16. J. Hawkins, "O'er Hill and Dale", p.12; Appendix B.

outstanding singing of the early missionaries attracted many into their congregation, and the all encompassing services brought warmth to hundreds. The success of the Primitives excited opposition and jealousy: the Cumberland Pacquet's columns contained many letters and editorial comments accusing them of "seducing gullible Christians" into their fold, and of poaching other men's souls from out of the congregations of other denominations (17). When the editor noted the "long visaged preachers who infest many of our villages" and correspondents complained of the way the Primitives stole their members (18), "a Nothingarian" (amongst others) pointed out that the Primitives were so successful because their chapel services were thoroughly enjoyable, and that other sects might do well to learn from the Primitives that religion ought to be pleasurable, as well as uplifting (19). Along the West Cumberland coast, the Carlisle and Whitehaven Primitives formed societies in Maryport and Workington during 1823 and 1824, though by 1826 Carlisle found its resources overstretched and refused to take permanent oversight of the west beyond Wigton which was causing enough problems by itself for the new circuit.

That Carlisle in these pioneer days found its strictly limited resources becoming exhausted was not surprising, for during 1825 the circuit had new oversight of the work down the Eden Valley and around Penrith (20), abandoned by Brough after a few months of unproductive labour. Societies at Glassonby, Renwick, Kirkoswald, Gamblesby and Penrith were started, regular preaching established, and optimism was in the air. At the same time, Carlisle despatched Johnson and others to establish the Glasgow and Paisley Primitive mission in early 1826,

17. Cumberland Pacquet 6.5.1828.

18. Cumberland Pacquet 9.1.1827.

19. Cumberland Pacquet 16.1.1827.

20. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Quarterly Minutes 1823/52.

CRO FCM/1/1/1.

financed by Carlisle for two years until they ran out of money and out of labourers who would expend their energy for tiny reward (21). Penrith proved as barren as Brough had alleged and Carlisle ceased the work there in 1828, being heavily committed to its new city chapel in Willowholme from 1826 onwards. For a year the Penrith mission lapsed until John Flesher at Kendal attached it to his work, before it was taken over by Westgate and finally Alston circuit from 1836 until circuit independence in 1876 (22). Meantime the newspapers had not welcomed the commencement of the Carlisle chapel. They expressed mock approval of the way the Primitives openly walked down Caldewgate and made collections in the streets, thus almost guaranteeing robbery by the "notorious inhabitants" of that quarter:

"This sect called the Ranters (a very appropriate name for men who profess Christian zeal without Christian order) opened their new chapel...The chapel is only small, but large enough, we dare say, to contain more than its own members: in its interior it is neat, comfortable and convenient..." (23).

Brough area remained one of the few not reliant upon Carlisle, the Primitive causes being established during 1823 by Thomas Batty and Thomas Webb from the Dales and Barnard Castle and sent in order to find new areas to bring under Barnard which had recently given up Westgate (24). Local Wesleyans fed, sheltered and entertained Batty in grand style and gave him protection from some famous instances of persecution at the hands of the mob and the Authorities. As ever people were concerned about itinerant preachers stirring enthusiasm and emotions amongst hundreds of ignorant and poor people. By 1830 the Primitives were there to stay, and covered most of the county, albeit sparsely, awaiting the opportunities

21. H. B. Kendall, The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church, 2 vols. p.139.

22. Appendix B; For Penrith see W. Patterson, Northern Primitive Methodism, 1909, p.121; J. Hawkins, "O'er Hill and Dale", p.69; For Alston see Appendix C

23. Carlisle Patriot 1.7.1826 and 29.9.1826.

24. W. Patterson, as in No.22 above, p.113 J. Hawkins, as in no.22 above, p.19 H. B. Kendall, as in no.21 above, p.149/150.

soon to be offered to all denominations in the industrial and economic expansion of the county.

Once established with societies across much of the county, the Primitive Methodists entered a phase of quiet growth into few new areas, primarily concentrating on consolidation from roughly 1830 to the 1850s when existing societies were augmented and chapels built in large numbers to replace rooms, barns, cottages and the open air (25). The initial enthusiasm for expansion died down and was replaced by a determination of each society not to seek new fields to conquer but a permanent home for their worship, and energy, effort and finances were used in this end rather than in promoting mission work as in the 1820s. What altered the picture of quiet development was the industrial and mining development in West Cumberland, the growth of Barrow and Millom in the south, and the increasing importance of Carlisle as communications and county centre during the late 1850s and 1860s. This growth in population and in the Cumbrian economy precipitated a migrational pattern which stimulated the existing Primitive circuits and encouraged the formation of many new enterprises which brought Primitivism to its peak of success in the 1870s. Membership grew from hundreds into several thousand and lifted the Connexion to the status of second Nonconformist denomination in the county in membership and chapels, if not in the quality and education of its membership and preachers. It likewise brought a crop of growing pains not easily countered and which hindered further progress, leaving the Connexion vulnerable to any worsening in this growth situation, and to more serious issues of decline should problems and unfavourable economic and emigration patterns disturb the optimistic future.

An examination of several episodes in the progress of Primitivism illustrates the triumphs and the failures of the Connexion in the county, as elsewhere during the 19th century and early 20th

25. For example see the Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes, the most detailed volumes extant amongst county archives for the Methodists; a real treasure trove.

century, and detailed investigation reveals both what motivated the membership and likewise restricted its influence well below that enjoyed by the Wesleyans.

Finance apart, the biggest single factor in the fortunes of a circuit was the work and quality of the travelling preachers employed to co-ordinate and organise Primitive work (26). Though under the control of the Quarterly Meeting, preachers were the one indispensable element of circuit life, and the one element which created most difficulties for Cumbrian circuits. Naturally the difficulties were often instigated by the circuit and not the preacher, but relations between circuit and preacher were essential to the advance of the Primitives, and at once the reasons for success and causes of failure. William Fulton was one preacher who became involved in serious ractions in two circuits and in disputes between one of these and its parent circuit at the time when Primitivism was maintaining a quiet existence.

William Fulton, aged 36 and with 13 years as a minister, was described in 1849 as an excellent revivalist and mission worker who once visited 50 families in an area 10 miles wide in order to form them into one society (27). For a circuit of widely dispersed population with 16 preaching places and four chapels he had just 24 local preachers and 17 leaders to help him. He had been stationed at Barnard Castle but on Brough being made into a Branch he was put in charge there a couple of years later.

During 1848 when he was settling in, trouble flared up between Brough and its parent, Barnard Castle circuit, over finances and the arrangement for mutual help and preaching assistance. In December 1847 Brough asked Barnard Castle to work Newbiggin since they could

26. J. Burgess, Methodist Ministers Who Served in Cumbria, 2 vols. 1977; J. Burgess, Primitive Methodism in Barrow-in-Furness, WHS (Cumbria Branch) 1979. Journal No.5.

27. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Circuit Report 1848. WRO WDFC/M1.

not cover it and Fulton was refusing to work it due to the travelling involved (28). This was the final disagreement before in 1848 a demand from Brough to be entirely separate from its parent. However, even though both sides wished for this, the problem over finance amongst other things remained. Income in the Brough branch was declining due to the unsettled state of relations between the two, with Brough not being able to pay Fulton his back salary and demanding that Barnard Castle pay it since he was one of their circuit ministers and Brough could not cope. The parent refused to do this, stating that part of the agreement was that Brough would cover their liabilities and pay for their minister. They themselves were suffering from a severe economic depression which left them with no money to give to Brough's commitments - they were on their own. Brough repeatedly refused to pay £5 in back salary to Fulton, who appeared to be the only loser in it all, Brough maintaining that it "was not according to rule" for Barnard to avoid paying its ministers. Fulton in fact never received the full amount of expenses and salary owing to him.

Brough had been a branch of Barnard since 1844, and for over 20 years previously had been under the guidance of that circuit since the days of Thomas Batty. Brough had always felt neglected, isolated as it was from most of the circuit, whereas Barnard felt it should be better able to stand on its own two feet, especially since they also had to run the Kendal mission for some time. In spite of Brough eventually being granted "Branch status", "unfriendly feeling" existed between the two sides for a long time afterwards. The Brough Quarterly Meeting in May 1849 begged the District Committee to make Barnard pay the monies owing to Fulton and disclaimed their own responsibility, claiming Barnard had always tried to make Brough pay far more than she needed to yet exploited her by giving little aid in return. As a Branch Brough had paid £10 per quarter to the parent body, yet despite repeated requests they had not given ministerial help. Brough maintained that Barnard and Kendal ministers had far

28. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1845/52. WRO WDFC/M1.

too little to do, the Brough man, Fulton, far too much to do; during 1845 they had sent £30 in one quarter alone to Barnard, and repeated earlier pleas for more ministerial aid. Requests for the same in September and December 1845, a minister to come four times per quarter to aid Brough, was refused (29).

Brough accused Barnard of robbing them of all their hard won extra income and yet of starving them of preachers' aid. On the other hand, it was well known that Brough was, to put it mildly, a place where the officials were awkward, and it was with relief that separation was suggested. Due to Barnard's repeated neglect, (Brough said) the Branch started to fail, the membership and officials became "dispirited" and "drooped", the Primitives became a laughing stock in the area and lost all desire to advance. By June 1847 there was a quarterly deficit of £17. By the time Fulton came in July 1847 membership in the little branch had dropped by 35 in six months, and Fulton was having to preach 29 times more per quarter than his circuit colleagues - four and a half times per week as against two and a half times for Kendal and Barnard men. Societies and mission work was neglected, unrest and neglect spread, members became awkward and undisciplined, Ravenstonedale was transferred back to Barnard since it was receiving no ministerial oversight. There continued bad relations with Barnard. In June 1848 the Brough Quarterly Meeting formally asked the District for entire separation, or if this was impossible, then oversight "by a better circuit", since all officials refused absolutely to be allied to Barnard again. In fact Brough took over Ravenstonedale and became an independent circuit (30).

However, Brough continued to criticise Barnard for abandoning it to its fate, leaving it with a membership of scarcely 100, with no guidance or even temporary help. While a decision was being reached by the District, the whole circuit remained in a state of

29. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1845/52; 1848/58 Circuit Report. WRO WDFC/M1.

30. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1845/52. WRO WDFC/M1.

limbo with nothing happening. Over 1848/49 an increase in membership of 60 was managed and over 200 were meeting regularly in class. The members sensed coming independence and were encouraged. The circuit confidently stated that with no links with Barnard, they would like to retain Fulton and were confident that within a couple of years would be able to support a second unmarried preacher who could work in the rural societies. 25 officials, 18 being local preachers and 16 being leaders, signed a document attacking Barnard, stating their case for separation, and outlining all their fears and hopes.

The business over Fulton's salary continued. He informed the circuit he would be leaving in March 1850, and the Quarterly Meeting asked all societies to contribute to the major part of his salary not then paid. This request met no response and was turned into a demand, but still without effect; several societies pointed out that they were paying all that was required of them, and if circuit officials could not make ends meet then it was their problem. At least one society felt it had been neglected by the minister and would not give any more money for services it did not get. The inference was that either the circuit officials and Quarterly Meeting were incompetent or they were "fiddling the accounts", and four societies as well as their leaders received official reprimands. Fulton, disgruntled after a hard time in the area, left without his back pay, received part of it later, and resolved never to end up in the same situation.

The Primitives kept more detailed accounts of their activities and experiences than did the Wesleyans or United Methodists, so that episodes in their chequered past are often given in a glorious detail usually missing from the records of the other Connexions, and fortunately many of these records still exist (31). William Fulton

31. See the List of Sources; unlike the Wesleyans the Primitives rarely censored their minutes.

moved to Whitehaven circuit as superintendent during 1854 inheriting a circuit experiencing serious mining depression and its first losses due to mass emigration to the Colonies. . . . Most of the chapels were unable to make ends meet, the circuit was in a permanent state of debt, and internal divisions were apparent, resulting in expulsions by the Quarterly Meeting dominated by a particular clique of officials (32). Blindcrake for instance had been given up because of internal society disagreements, Parton school abandoned when the vicar evicted the teachers, and the main incentive for poor people to join Workington society and school (special funds to help them save for food and clothing) had disappeared when a burglar stole the circuit chest and cash. . . . Over the 1854/55 winter Fulton was very ill and unable to work, unfortunately unable to control the factious spirit breaking out amongst officials and local preachers; missed appointments were running at 50 per quarter and leaders were leaving lapsed or emigrated members on their books (33). There was an even chance that societies would not receive a planned local preacher each Sunday, an abominable state of affairs. During 1856 one preacher died and there were doubts expressed about Fulton's ability to cope with the work demanded. Funds were embezzled by a disgruntled official named Melling, Whitehaven Sunday school temporarily closed down over strife between teachers and superintendent Steel, and debts continued to rise (34). What really upset Fulton was his inability to obtain back salary or expenses, and a lack of appreciation for his work, as in Brough.

Brough in particular had found it impossible to pay him, so that he had to go round begging for back salary and expenses when about to leave. Even so this did not recoup his losses (he had never been paid

32. Whitehaven Primitive Methodist Circuit, Annual Circuit Schedules 1842/69.

33. Whitehaven Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1851/54 and 1854/57 and Circuit Annual Reports 1842/69.

34. Whitehaven Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1851/54 and 1854/57 and Circuit Annual Reports 1842/69.

regularly over his stay in the circuit) and part of what was owed him was sent well after he left, yet he did not receive the full amount, just what Brough could raise. This must have annoyed him considerably when thinking about what he had to put up with in Brough. On coming to Whitehaven he must have vowed never to be left in the same situation again. Some ministers "fiddled the books" in order to avoid not being paid, and Fulton resorted to this. He put lovefeast monies into the Quarterly Accounts when they should have gone to the societies concerned, and when this did not cover the deficit in the circuit accounts (which meant he would not get paid) he took collections and class money in advance of their proper date, and put these into the early 1858 accounts so that he was paid his full share. Now whatever the justification for this action it was Connexionally wrong and damaged the circuit. On the other hand one can see his point of view, particularly when he was in desperate straits over medical expenses for his sick family and the tragedy of losing three of them. The circuit offered him no extra financial aid for the emergency - it could not, of course, afford it. The minister left and took with him next two quarters' income. The September 1858 Quarterly Meeting condemned him for this action and sent a report to the District Committee. Not only had Fulton done this, but he told his junior minister, Olivers, to do likewise, but the latter had not been able to act quickly enough and only took a part of what was owing to him. Olivers thus wrote to the meeting demanding £10 he claimed was owed to him - the meeting was outraged and furious at the losses (35).

The meeting held that Fulton and Olivers had come to a prosperous circuit in 1854 (this was an exaggeration to say the least), that they had caused a loss of 42 members and a decline in circuit income of £8 per quarter. December 1858 saw Fulton having the nerve to write to request expenses for himself and Olivers (36). This infuriated the meeting even further and they soundly condemned the actions of the two ministers in "stripping the circuit of members and monies".

35. Whitehaven Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1857/62.

36. Whitehaven Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1857/62.

Little then happened and the matter was dropped, Fulton continuing in service outside the county, Whitehaven able to benefit from an end to economic depression and most importantly from an influx of Primitives, together with several outstanding preachers who advanced the circuit and gave it a most secure hold in the new mining areas: Adam Dodds, Moses Lupton, local men Wannop, Fowler and Taylor (all called John) and evangelist Joseph Jopling (37), all responsible in the late 1850s and early 1860s for a great step forward in chapel building, recruitment and Primitive development.

A second example of strain in relationships between preacher and members was the case of William Saul. It involved the progress and history of Brough and Carlisle circuits, both like Whitehaven enduring embarrassing moments with earlier preachers. In Brough preacher Thompson, successor to the illfated Fulton, violently quarrelled with the circuit Quarterly Meeting, was sacked, reinstated by the District, stayed a further month and then ran off with circuit funds which he claimed as unpaid salary. Part of the success of the Primitives was their cheapness and economy, their thrifty preachers suffering privation in the name of circuit service; the danger was obvious and a considerable cause of anxiety. The following year, 1852, a junior preacher, Russell, unable to retrieve his back pay, again left with income not belonging to him but to missionary and other funds, causing a storm of resentment prevalent across the county against the hired ministry (38).

William Saul was appointed to Brough in 1856, aged 26, having been stationed in the very poor and small Penrith branch mission 1853/54. Being a Yorkshireman one might expect that he would fit in well with the Dalesfolk of Brough, but nothing could have been further from the truth.

On the December 1857 plan, the names of Saul and four local preachers were omitted. A letter from Saul on October 12th explained

37. See Appendix B; J. Hawkins, "O'er Hill and Dale", p.49; W. Patterson, Northern Primitive Methodism, 1909, p.138.

38. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 1845/52 and Circuit Accounts, 1851/72. WRO WDFC/M1.

his reasons in veiled terms for leaving Brough and the ministry. He had resigned because of bitter and unpleasant dealings with certain of the members and officials, who had tried their best to make him unhappy, "to compromise my ministerial usefulness", and to generally "oust" him from the circuit. He believed that he and his "oppressors" would benefit if he resigned, and though he was sorry to leave so many good friends, he looked forward to his removal "with relief" because he could no longer endure either the majority of the people or the area itself (39).

The cause of his resignation came to light during the course of the unhappy affair. In January 1858 the Quarterly Meeting refused to co-operate with Saul, or to offer him help (40):

"That Mr. Saul have NOT his credentials; as his conduct was such, while in our circuit, quite unbecoming a minister of the gospel; nor do we consider him to be a member of the Primitive Methodist Connexion; for although he had his last quarter's ticket, we think it was given to him unconstitutionally".

It was signed by John Hilton, as president (later he was to be main financier for the resurgence of the circuit in the 1860s), and James Barnes as secretary. By the end of March the Quarterly Meeting was faced with the prospect of no minister since the District refused to appoint one until the matter was decided, so on their own authority they called upon Barnes, a local man, to be their minister. The meeting asked the General Chapel Committee to sanction this, and told them that Saul had resigned as minister and as member, thus forfeiting a right to credentials for a new circuit.

During April the Saul episode was explained when the District and General Committees directly intervened (41). The circuit accused Saul of resigning his post of duty, and when Saul disputed their

39. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1853/65. WRO WDFC/M1.

40. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1853/65. WRO WDFC/M1.

41. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1853/65. WRO WDFC/M1.

evidence they suggested that the Rev. Marshall, Baptist minister of Brough and erstwhile friend to Saul, could verify their statement. Not only that, but to the horror of the circuit Marshall would be able to prove that Saul had intended to train as "a CHURCH CLERGYMAN". Saul had "spoken disparagingly" of the Primitives, their doctrine, rules, the circuit, its members and officials, "to a certain clergyman of Stainmore". He "was in company of Church ministers whenever possible", and "in Church itself at every opportunity".

In the autumn of 1857 Saul had written a peculiar letter to the circuit committee which they not surprisingly interpreted as resignation, though Saul claimed it was not. He then retired to near Appleby and refused to do any work, and after ten weeks the committee had no option but to remove him from the plan and assume his peculiarly worded letter meant resignation. The meeting accused him of attending no place of Primitive worship and no class for all that time, which he admitted, and with "trifling with females", "an imprudent marriage", and promised to explain all more fully if he would first explain "his dark insinuations" and "his strange experiences in the circuit". (42). Saul took up the challenge from his home village near Middleham in Yorkshire, though his reply merely confirmed his guilt in peculiar activities whilst in the circuit (43). He had indeed since leaving the circuit attempted to train as a clergyman but had failed in this. He maintained that the Quarterly Meeting had no evidence to support "vague charges" against him, and that Marshall, the Baptist minister, was a "man full of guile" who had tricked both Saul and the Primitives. Marshall and Saul had often met since Saul supposed him to be a kindred spirit working for God, yet all the while Marshall was "scheming for the downfall" of the Primitives and saw Saul as a convenient tool to use. "By guile" and trickery he had destroyed the peace of the Primitive societies and had persuaded their members to attend his own church. Only Marshall could profit from his "evil plans" to destroy the Primitives, his rivals, Saul continued.

42. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1853/65. WRO WDFC/ML.

43. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1853/65. WRO WDFC/ML.

When Saul had resigned from Brough Marshall had asked him what he was going to do - Saul, knowing how Marshall loathed the Established Church, had jokingly replied "join the Church of England" as a cleric. Saul had never had a real wish to join the Church, but he had seen it as part of his job to aid relations between the Church and the Primitives, to foster mutual respect and goodwill, and was thus often to be seen with Church clergy. He had had lessons in classics from the Vicar of Appleby, hence his often being absent in that place with the minister concerned and the growth of suspicion in the circuit about him.

Saul had held conversations with the Rev. Irving of Stainmore, he admitted, and he had indeed criticised the Primitive officials for their "narrow, bigotted and prejudiced" views, in which Irving had concurred. He had spoken against the circuit's officials and not against the ordinary members, and all had been said in supposed confidence. He had been hurt and upset by the actions of officials in interfering in his private life and with their accusations of his trying to enter the Church, so was bound to give vent to his feelings. He had also stated "that Primitive Methodist Policy gave certain unworthy individuals" in the circuit too much influence and power which they abused. He instanced the "unchristian and unworthy" attack on himself as example of this "corrupt use of power". Power in Primitive Methodism was all too often in the hands of the wrong folk, thus his desire to join the Church where power was in the "right hands" and not abused, he continued.

Saul asserted that he offered the circuit committee his services as a hired local preacher but they had refused to plan him, so he had left. He had gone to live for a time in "a remote village" eight miles from the nearest Primitive place of class or worship, hence his inability to attend either and his attendance at Church. It was thus unjust of Brough to withhold his credentials and to try to blacken his character further. There was no truth in the damaging and slanderous comment about his trifling with women - there had been only two women in his life: Miss Coward of Durham, whose father would not let her marry a Primitive minister, and his dear wife, a "wise match", and even if it had proved otherwise then it was none of the circuit's business.

Saul concluded by accusing the circuit committee of "contumacion", "falsehood", and a desire to hound out of the circuit anyone with different views to their own, any minister who would not do as they said, or who showed a spark of independence, broadmindedness and liberality. The committee was dominated by Brough, where four people, all related, ruled as an oligarchy. He demanded his case be tried in the open, away from the circuit where "corrupt influences" prevailed, and under the District meeting's authority. He told the circuit to apply to Sunderland about his good name, and he felt that before long his name would once more be cleared. If he were found guilty by the District he would resign from the cause for ever.

Saul was guilty - he had left the circuit in the lurch, had spoken in silly and tactless fashion to several people; had by his inexperience fallen under improper influences, and openly criticised the people he was supposed to guide and lead. The circuit committee regretted his hasty words and stupid actions, his "false accusations" against Marshall and "unchristian attacks" on the committee. The committee "had clear consciences" of being Christian in all ways, and were suitably appalled at a Primitive considering entering the ministry of the Church (virtually comparable to going to Hell in their eyes). He had never told the circuit committee he wished to work as a local preacher though they had heard rumours, but were not going to chase him all over the circuit seeking his work when he had failed to contact them and had already antagonised most of the societies into refusing to have him preach. The nearest Primitive society to him in exile had been Dufton, three miles from his residence and they assumed he was capable of walking there. Saul's "dreadful marriage" had hung round his neck like a millstone and his wife had poisoned his mind against the Primitives and against the circuit. His "flirtations" in an attempt to escape his wife were notorious in the area, and the affairs and his marriage had been the start of his fall from grace. The circuit officials had adhered to Christian actions and Connexional laws in all ways, but in the true spirit of Christianity wished Saul forgiveness and peace, hoped that he was happy and agreed to forget the whole unfortunate matter. The District committee and General Chapel committee would have a factual and unbiased report on the matter and the circuit would say no more about it but leave

all to the authorities (44).

This was the last of the matter, apart from the damage done to the circuit. One wonders what happened, but by 1859 William Saul was once more called upon to travel and spent a number of years in Cumbria - twice in Carlisle, later at Maryport. He became well known as a money raiser and missionary (45), but in Carlisle he ran into serious difficulties with several important laymen and circuit ructions developed which left further stains on his character.

After the dramas of 1835 and the Association poaching, the Carlisle Primitives had to face the growth of the Caldewgate Irish slum quarters which blocked their way from the more salubrious quarters to the Willowholme chapel (46).- When opened in 1826 it was thought to be a great step forward, but with the passing of the years came to be regarded as a major cause of their inability to expand in the city. It was abandoned in 1852, half the society was lost when the new Cecil Street building was not completed for a further 15 months, but during the 1850s and 1860s the circuit entered a new time of unparalleled advance with only minimal difficulties of finance and discipline and most aggressive evangelism in the area only matched by their performance in the 1820s (47). William Saul, the same man who had left the ministry at Brough, became the new 39 year old superintendent

44. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1853/65. WRO WDFC/M1.

45. W. Watson, Primitive Methodism in the Carlisle Circuit, 1907.

46. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1823/52. CRO FCM/1/1/1.

47. There was a battle concerning the site of the new Primitive Chapel, with the town council granting a site on West Walls near to the Cathedral and exciting considerable opposition from Anglicans who refused to rub shoulders with so shabby a band of Nonconformists. Fortunately for the longterm prospects of the Primitives, the council had to grant them the Cecil Street site, a far more convenient and better situated one; see the Carlisle Journal 1851 January 17th, 24th and 31st for the hotly disputed contest between pro-Anglicans and pro-Dissenters who weighed in against the Tories and Church.

in 1868 and became renowned for his ability to raise large sums of money for the multifarious building projects. After his departure disputes arose into which he was sucked ten years later when the circuit became divided in a power struggle between two strong groups of officials.

Little happened during Saul's first appointment in Carlisle. One of his successors, Anthony Wandless, created embarrassment between 1871 and 1873. On his arrival in Carlisle Harbury circuit demanded he be suspended for breach of promise in Harbury, to a Miss Eastwood. The matter was referred to a District Meeting since the circuit committee decided Wandless had been unjustly accused - and in any case should he be suspended, the circuit would have been even more neglected than it was. However, Wandless had married during 1872 and the circuit complained that it could no longer afford to have two married preachers (48). During 1872 Wandless was suspended by the District despite the annoyance of the Quarterly Meeting, and at the 1872 Conference he was expelled from the ministry. Trouble ensued on a limited scale between those who had supported the Quarterly Meeting and Wandless against the District meeting, Conference interference and anti-Wandless people.

This Wandless issue widened into a more serious dispute. At the end of 1872 there was a disagreement between the two ministers, men aged only 24 and 31 respectively, and a group of officials about their running of the circuit (49). Now to appoint two young and inexperienced men to a circuit like Carlisle, where the lay officials would have a "set way" of doing things, was inadvisable, and an error on the part of Conference. The two ministers came up against not only a set of experienced local men who opposed their ways, but found ministerial supporters more than a trifle awkward to deal with. Local preacher and leader John Richardson was the main "rebel", for

48. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1852/74. CRO FCM/1/1/2.

49. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1852/74. CRO FCM/1/1/2; Circuit Reports Annually 1860/90. CRO

nearly 40 years a Primitive and a city businessman (50). On several occasions he was to clash with the ministers, aided and abetted by local preachers Clark and Dalton, together with a number of lesser lights. Disagreeing with the ministers' ability to run the circuit properly and to preach adequately, the rebels left the Cecil Street chapel and held their own services in rooms in Botchergate, in premises owned by Richardson. Between 30 and 40 members joined them for the services which dispensed with the need for a hired ministry - some undercurrents of anti-ministerial behaviour, and over the following years opposition to a hired ministry was to reoccur. During 1873 two leaders, two local preachers and 27 members were expelled by the two young men "for sowing discord and trouble over a number of years", commenting on Richardson "as succeeding in destroying our society in Carlisle and damaging the circuit". By majorities the circuit committee and Quarterly Meeting had to support the ministers against the rebels in order to preserve the circuit intact. The meeting removed at least 49 names from the books over the crisis. Richardson, a well-known and connected Primitive, appealed to the District meeting to investigate the state of the circuit. The circuit committee, not happy at this turn of events when the District agreed to do so, appealed for the deputation to sit at Brampton away from Carlisle in order no pressure might be brought to bear on them, they stated. This advice was not heeded (51).

During early 1874 the deputation met, and by March offered a peaceful solution after finding justified grievances on both sides, but not stating what these were (52). They asked all to be forgiven and forgotten, and instructed the circuit committee to reinstate all

50. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1852/74. CRO FCM/1/1/2; Circuit Leaders Meeting Minutes 1873/79. CRO FCM/1/1/52.

51. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1852/74. CRO FCM/1/1/2; Circuit Leaders Meeting Minutes 1873/79. CRO FCM/1/1/52; Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, File of Letters 1850/75. CRO FCM/1/1/38.

52. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1874/1889. CRO FCM/1/1/3.

who wished to be reinstated provided no more agitation was carried on. This was a sensible idea. However, people who had supported the circuit authorities and ministers were not pleased, and led by Henry Miller and William Thompson, both like Richardson formidable and experienced characters of much standing who brushed with authority on a number of occasions, led demands for the investigation to be renewed and a guilty party found and punished (53). This came as a shock to both sides, the men were suspended and the matter passed over to Conference in May 1874. The 1874 circuit report stated that the dispute "had disturbed the peace" of the circuit, that financial problems were critical, and that the work of the circuit was being brought to a standstill by these two issues. Records and accounts were not being kept properly, not one class had met regularly for over a year, 17 members had changed classes over dislike of their leaders, 17 had joined other sects, 36 had been expelled for troublemaking, and others had left in disgust. The report admitted it might be inaccurate since nobody knew what was really going on in circuit affairs (54).

The row was still in progress in July 1874. Miller, Thompson and others were not satisfied with either the deputation's investigation or the results from this. They believed that either Richardson and his party ought to have been expelled or other officials and the ministers reprimanded or suspended. Underlying this was the knowledge that the ministers were at least partly guilty of incompetence - memories of Wandless (and William Ludlow who in 1866 left the ministry in Carlisle, and the circuit in an acutely embarrassed condition, after fathering an illegitimate child) (55).

By September 1874 the circuit committee and Quarterly Meeting announced that they wished to reinstate all involved in the fracas

53. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1852/74. CRO FCM/1/1/2; Circuit Leaders Meeting Minutes 1873/79. CRO FCM/1/1/52.

54. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Circuit Reports 1860/90. CRO FCM/1/1/26.

55. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1852/74. CRO FCM/1/1/2.

in order to restore peace. They were led to this by the wise counsel of Henry Yool, one of the men reserved by Conference for appointments to circuits torn with strife, and with a reputation as a peacemaker. Despite this, in 1875 the circuit reported "the circuit has been in a divided state for a considerable time". The people concerned "have AT LAST left society, leaving a withering influence behind them". Certainly the main participants remained in society. There were bad relations between ministers and officials, the District Meeting failed to keep the circuit committee and Quarterly Meeting informed of what they were doing, and everyone felt aggrieved over something or other (56). Everybody took sides, some wanting the whole misunderstanding forgotten for the sake of the circuit, others wanting either Richardson's faction or Miller's faction, or both, punished. Parsons and Moody, the two young ministers, had removed the men they could not get on with from official positions, replacing them with more amenable souls like Isaac Burns. This naturally split the three groups of officials from each other, exacerbating an already bad situation. Resignations were threatened on all sides by relatively loyal men. Real and imagined insults over the years were brought up and aired; peace proper only came in March 1875 when Conference, District and circuit all agreed to forgive and forget (57). All expulsions were cancelled and all members and officials reinstated provided no further disruption occurred. 1876 and 1877 were better years, but resentment once more exploded at the end of the decade with the second coming of William Saul

The Leaders meeting of March 1880 (58) suspended Henry Miller from his official posts and informed him that he would be reinstated

56. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Circuit Reports 1860/90. CRO FCM/1/1/26; See Letter of Isaac Burns who complained of the affair to the Circuit Secretary; File of Letters 1850/75. CRO FCM/1/1/38.

57. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1874/89. CRO FCM/1/1/33.

58. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1874/89. CRO FCM/1/1/3.

if he "ceased agitation". Miller then wrote to the circuit and the District to state his case. He had resigned as circuit steward in the autumn of 1879 after disagreements with William Saul the superintendent, whom he accused of misappropriation of circuit funds which he used to supplement and to make up deficiencies in his salary (these were mainly missionary funds.) (59). Miller discovered Saul doing this and in order not to create trouble resigned since he could not in conscience continue. However, no-one else would take on this thankless task since the circuit steward was usually owed considerable amounts by the circuit, so he again took up the reins. He had "sharp words" with Saul and Saul refused to pass cash or business to him. Saul interfered with Miller's running of his class, so Miller resigned as leader and steward. When the class refused to have another leader he had again become leader to keep peace. Saul then accused Miller of improper conduct in all this and the Quarterly Meeting agreed to suspend him on Saul's evidence whilst the matter was investigated. Now Saul had picked on a hard man to tangle with, for Miller knew some of the District Committee personally and appealed straight to them over the case, bypassing Quarterly Meeting and Saul. It was alleged by a number of people that Saul was persecuting him simply because he himself had been discovered embezzling funds.

Saul and his supporters on the circuit committee could hardly allow the rebellion to blossom forth without reply, and he pointed out that few if any of Miller's class regularly met and thus had no right to side with their supposed leader. A legal successor to Miller, who had resigned, had been appointed. At the same time Saul was stirring up old animosities against the ministry and created major disturbances with tactless attacks on leading laymen who would not take it lying down. A real revolt was the result for Miller was a well known Primitive in the North, and to criticise him was a risky business. So too was tackling John Richardson, a highly influential businessman and official. He too wrote straight to the

59. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Missionary Accounts for the Circuit 1878/93 and the most unsatisfactory nature of their being kept which allowed "mistakes" to be made. CRO FCM/1/1/18.

District for help against Saul (60). The District was frequently embroiled in problems over the ministry, and this was a further contest along the same lines. Richardson accused "Saul and his followers" of persecuting him in the same way as Miller. He in a four page letter painted a glowing picture of himself as a loyal, honest, respectable official hounded by an immoral and power-mad minister. He had been a member since 1834 and a local preacher for 25 years, and now ill and deeply involved in business affairs he could not easily get about the town, and had repeatedly asked Saul to come to see him, which the latter refused to do. Richardson accused Saul of persecuting him over his refusal to let Saul marry his daughter the previous year, considering Saul not a proper person for her hand. Saul had been busy raising money, for which he was famous, and had created resentment amongst some members anxious at his financial transactions supplanting his evangelical and religious devotions. Accusations of financial misconduct by Saul were therefore easy to believe. In September 1880 a petition "signed by a majority of the circuit officials" was sent to the District Committee supporting the officials (61). Richardson's case was quickly settled, and shortly afterwards he retired to Edinburgh, complete with full credentials and unimpeached character. There was certainly doubt about Saul's motives and actions in the case. Saul, however, instructed that Miller's name be removed from the membership roll in the same month, but that was not the end of the matter. The 1881 circuit report stated 1881 to have been a bad year. James Horney, the Cecil Street steward had resigned in similar circumstances to Miller, who had apparently taken to not attending a church when "certain people" preached there. Miller had not attended class or chapel, thus had been dismembered. During April 1881 Saul discovered that Miller's name had not been removed from membership rolls, and caused a scene at the

60. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1874/89. CRO FCM/1/1/3; Documents relating to the cases were put in at the relevant Quarterly Meeting, and letters in File of Miscellaneous Letters 1879/80. CRO FCM/1/1/40.

61. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Annual Reports 1860/90. CRO FCM/1/1/26. A most useful volume.

Quarterly Meeting. What then happened is not clear, but Miller remained a member (62).

During December 1880 Saul had been kept busy with the antics of William Thompson, another influential but crusty official and friend of Millers. He refused to hear a word spoken against any of his friends, and during Saul's preaching (or that of his supporters), would simply get up and remove his large family while the sermon was in progress, to the consternation of the congregation and discomfiture of the ministers. He was expelled for causing disturbances (63). Saul had two tours of duty in the circuit - 1868/71 and 1876/82. That there should have been such serious trouble must put a question mark against his conduct of affairs though he stayed some time in the circuit. The breach was mended by the retirement as supernumeraries to Carlisle in 1882 of Henry Yool and Powles Carrick, both known as peacemakers, who as active retired men helped heal the wounds (64). Certainly Miller remained an influential man, a leading fund raiser in 1873 and in 1886, as well as a trustee in the latter year for the new manse. To re-admit him after the superintendent minister expelled him was an awkward move, so he must have had a considerable amount of right on his side. Kendall in his "History" made Miller one of the few laymen he praised in the area (65). On the other hand a number of the circuit committee had supported Saul who had a reputation for fierce evangelistic work and an ability to raise money for any cause.

62. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1874/89. CRO FCM/1/1/3.

63. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1874/89. CRO FCM/1/1/3.

64. W. Watson, Primitive Methodism in the Carlisle Circuit, 1907 p.52.

65. H. B. Kendall, The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church, 2 vols. p.151.

From then onwards circuit peace was maintained but relations between ministers and officials were always open to question, and cliques continued to dominate in the circuit.

Naturally most Primitive circuits enjoyed able enough preachers, otherwise expansion would not have taken place. In the new boom town of Barrow came to reside a number of good men faced with great challenges in a place often more reminiscent of the Wild West than of Cumbria. Once the place settled down into something approaching normality, it exhibited features of stress and strain common to the rest of the circuits.

During 1865 Kendal Primitive circuit helped form a mission at Ulverston, to include Kirkby, Dalton, Lindal, Swarthmoor, Nibthwaite and Barrow, with the development of the latter seen as a great opportunity for the denomination to expand and obtain an early lead over rival sects (66). Robert Robinson was appointed minister in charge of the Barrow work, and with money loaned from Kendal he and a few helpers set to and built Forshaw Street chapel in 1866 when Barrow became a circuit. This early enthusiasm soon died out in the realities of the situation. By 1869 a "Petition to the General Committee for Aid for Forshaw Street Trust 1869" outlined the problems into which Robinson had led the Primitives (67). The early growth in Barrow of several years previously had encouraged Robinson and others to speculatively build a chapel for £500. Now this of itself was a bold step, but Robinson made a number of errors in expenditure, planning and construction, which ended in the building costing £1,300, nearly three times the estimate. Trade depression led to emigration of members from the town by 1868 and the remaining Primitives could not cope with large debts. Robinson could not cope with the strain, especially when everyone blamed him, and without being able to turn to anyone else for help, he had a nervous breakdown and left the ministry. "A feeble society" was left, "plunged into difficulties", and a majority

66. Primitive Methodist Magazine 1866, p.428.

67. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1865/69. BRO BDFC/M/1.

of officials and trustees left the area so that the circuit was not being run properly at all with no-one who could help it recover. Two remaining men of standing by chance went bankrupt, and annual circuit income could not even pay for the £50 per annum interest due on the outstanding loan of £1,080 on Forshaw Street. Against all Connexional rules Robinson and his cronies had only raised £200 of the total outlay, and "many would probably unite with us were we not so heavily burdened with chapel debt". The appeal concluded with a plea for aid, and the statement that as a circuit Barrow could probably never raise its head again, its very existence being in doubt. What they asked for was a £100 gift, permission for members to travel throughout the North to beg for cash and other aid. It was signed by ministers James Rimmer and John Rayner, the latter being the man left to sort out the mess of the finances. Robinson had amassed unpaid bills, lost bills, lost income, mislaid funds and Rayner did a good job of sorting things out.

This early setback was added to within a few years by three major disputes which seriously damaged the Primitives and prevented them from fulfilling their early promise.

Poverty was a fact of life for the Barrow Primitives throughout their history. Financial incompetence, showing in wild building schemes, poorly kept accounts, inability to balance income with expenditure, permanent current account deficits, the use of mission and Connexional collections for other purposes (usually to plug gaps in circuit income), and embezzling officials, characterised the business of the Quarterly Meetings, circuit committee meetings and trustees meetings (68). Monetary issues plagued the circuit. These difficulties were greatly exacerbated by the Haverigg chapel case.

Hoping to encourage the growth of new outlying societies, the superintendent minister, Thomas Bateman, (at Barrow 1873/79) asked the permission of three trustees of one of the two strong Barrow town societies, Forshaw Street, for the loan of £300 to help build

68. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1876/88. BRO BDFC/M/1.

Haverigg Chapel (69). The three trustees agreed to this, and the money was transferred by Bateman's own hand to the Haverigg trustees, who were delighted. Bateman decided to take a further £290 from the Forshaw Street chapel trust account without asking for permission to do so in the same year, 1878. The money was taken from the hard accumulated Bazaar Fund, used to prop up the society and the circuit in the frequent hard times, but Bateman received no receipt for the cash. Now the Circuit Committee had in March 1878 sanctioned the building of Haverigg chapel, but Bateman kept quiet about the financial deal and only after the spread of embarrassing rumours in late 1878 and early 1879 did the officials realise the full extent of the transaction. In July 1879 the Quarterly Meeting, informed of the whole affair, condemned Bateman in his absence for the loan, without permission of the full trust on the first occasion, without anyone's permission the second time, and without obtaining a receipt. Bateman played for time, assured the meeting that the money would soon be returned, that it was necessary to promote Primitive causes outside of the town, and placated the officials. He moved out of the area the same month, and promptly forgot about the matter (70).

Small wonder that Bateman complained about being unable to retrieve the salary and expenses owing to him during that summer and winter (71). The circuit did not forget about the money, and pestered Haverigg for it. The case was complicated by the formation of the Dalton and Millom circuit, to which Haverigg was transferred in 1892.

Relations between the two circuits were increasingly strained by this financial business, and Barrow, beset by other problems tried to grapple with the financial ones too. Foremost in the minds of the circuit was the recovery of the very considerable loan.

69. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1865/69. BRO BDFC/M/1; Forshaw Street Trustees Meeting Minutes 1878/83.

70. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1865/69. BRO BDFC/M/1.

71. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1865/69. BRO BDFC/M/1.

During 1888 matters came to a head. Under increasing pressure financially, the Quarterly Meeting backed by the circuit committee despatched a deputation to Conference to explain the Haverigg case and to demand that something be done to win back funds used by Dalton circuit yet belonging to Barrow (72). The Conference asked the District Committee to deal with what was a relatively trifling and local matter. The District Committee did nothing beyond advise the two circuits to amicably settle the issue. The years passed. The attention of the circuit officials was fixed on the desperate struggles of Marsh Street society in Barrow, and with the problems of looking after Coniston 20 miles away. The collapse of Marsh Street society, the virtual disintegration of the classes based on it, and the ending of any sort of Connexional discipline there created a crisis which the circuit was unable to survive without Connexional aid and advice. The Haverigg case was just one part of it, but it was responsible for starving the circuit of sorely needed funds.

The Quarterly Meeting stated that "the Haverigg case has damaged our prestige in this town to a lamentable extent, and only the recovery of the money can secure the confidence of the public". "It was "a barrier to every kind of progress. It has divided some hundreds from us in the years gone, and the deadness of Primitive Methodism in this town is largely due to this". They continued: "Its recovery would...have a salutary effect not only on our own church, but also on Haverigg church, which has not and can not prosper so long as it is in possession of our money" (73). The matter was public knowledge and had assumed the proportions of a scandal, preventing the advancement of the circuit's work, the recruitment of members and trustees and officials. People would not associate with such a denomination when it could not control its own finances, and when it was a laughing stock. Ministers would not come to the circuit because of it,

72. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1888/92. BRO BDFC/M/1.

73. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1888/92. BRO BDFC/M/1.

and folk were slandering the Primitives with all sorts of rumours and stories.

By July 1894 the Conference had asked for all documents and information regarding the case to be sent to the, and there began a hurried search by officials for the relevant papers, many of which had been misplaced or lost over the past 16 years (74). In response the Conference at last gave some help. A Conference delegation agreed to give substantial aid to the circuit, a revival "cannot be done by the station in its present broken, embarrassed and discredited condition". "Help must come from without" (75), it was announced. An extra minister and a grant of three figures was promised. As part of the help, the President agreed to settle the Haverigg business, and by November 1894 the Haverigg trustees were forced to agree to come to terms. It was agreed that they would repay the loan in one of three ways: by taking out a mortgage, selling eight cottages owned by the trust, or taking an interest free loan off the Chapel Committee. This settlement was authorised by the President and the Conference, and eventually Barrow agreed to settle for £450 off Haverigg and £50 from Bateman.

The whole damaging episode continued for a further six years. In that year the Haverigg trust was finally persuaded to part with the full £590, but only after Bateman personally implored the trust to do so. No more was heard of the case, so it must be assumed that most of the money was eventually repaid shortly after 1900 (76). It was merely one of three problems which so hampered the work and development of Primitive Methodism in southern Cumbria, and one which caused grave worries for Millom and Dalton too. That circuit complaints about having to be responsible for debts amassed before its

74. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

75. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

76. The Dalton and Millom circuit discovered in that year that the debt had still not been settled and severely reprimanded Haverigg trustees, who then provided the money; for the complete point of view of poor Dalton and Millom circuit, see Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1882/1900 and 1900/11. BRO BDFC/M/U.

creation as a circuit were mainly justified. The new Dalton and Millom circuit too had been damaged by its being made responsible for Haverigg's debt, but it at least did not experience a disaster like the Marsh Street episode.

Marsh Street was one of the three Primitive chapels and societies in Barrow, and catered for a largely working-class area constructed in the late 1870s and 1880s, and poor even by Barrow standards. As ever, the circuit was in financial straits from the word go, and the episode of Marsh Street troubles was one of the major causes of their impecunious condition. The District Committee gave permanent grants to Marsh Street, £10 per quarter by the 1880s, which was used to pay for a lay evangelist stationed there. When there was no pastor actually on site, there were disastrous consequences (77).

With the Haverigg dispute dragging into its 14th year, the Quarterly Meeting in September 1892 backed the call of the superintendent minister, Pearce, for a full enquiry into the appalling condition of Marsh Street and its finances (78). Rumours were in the air, so the circuit committee investigated. For some time the town had been in the grip of industrial depression, and the circuit was unable to grant extra aid despite Marsh Street pleas. Forshaw Street and Hartington Street themselves were struggling to make ends meet. The Jute works had been destroyed by fire throwing hundreds out of work; the Durham coal strike had laid off 1,400 hands, and the threatened shipbuilding workers' strike, if effected, would see 5,000 more out of work (79). The circuit's prospects were bleak and Marsh Street was advised to battle on against the odds and to do their best. The Quarterly Meeting abhorred the "rapacious demands" of the society,

77. The Forshaw Street society and trustees virtually ran the circuit; see Trust Minutes 1883/95. BRO BDFC/M/1.

78. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

79. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

and the embarrassment that they were causing to the circuit, and called for a District investigation of the society.

The Meeting, faced too with trouble at Coniston, tackled Marsh Street determinedly. Webster, the society steward and chapel treasurer had ripped up many of the papers and accounts of the chapel so that no-one might examine them. The accusation of embezzlement and fraud against him was easy to believe, and he was expelled on the charge of refusing to hand over £20 belonging to the bazaar fund (80). His replacement, Lewens, continued to misappropriate funds and had in his possession £10 given by the Mayor of Barrow and £10 from the Duke of Devonshire to the society. It was claimed that he too was embezzling funds, and he refused to hand over his funds to the Meeting. The Meeting complained to the District Committee in January 1893, but the latter pointed out that the Meeting could not take charge of Marsh Street funds unless the society willed it, and for the circuit to control society funds was not necessarily legal (81). The Meeting took this to mean that the District was siding with Lewens, and voiced their disapproval of this attitude. Lewens was alleged by Pearce and the circuit committee to be corrupt and inefficient, and all accounts were in chaos. On the other hand, the circuit accounts were little better - the circuit had to ask the District how much they had collected for the mission fund since their own accounts were ill-maintained and hard to understand. The District might well have believed that the circuit officials were attacking Lewens and Marsh Street for the crimes of which all were guilty. The District Committee refused the request of the circuit committee to control and investigate Marsh Street in February 1893, and the situation deteriorated (82).

The Quarterly Meeting continued to pester the District Meeting for an evangelist or minister to be stationed at Marsh Street fulltime,

80. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

81. The Primitive Methodist Circuit Letter Book covers this period but is not always dated; roughly all letters from 1895 to 1905 are in it. BRO BDFC/M/1.

82. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

for at least a two year stint. The circuit could do no more unless this was granted. A new trust for the Marsh Street chapel was urgently required due to removals and deaths, but it proved impossible to gather new trustees because of public knowledge of the state of the society finances. A mortgage for improvements and to pay old debts was also needed but without a new trust this too was impossible. The other two town societies were stretched to maintain themselves; circumstances were not improved in March 1893 when accusations against the circuit officials and ministers were made in the local press (83). There were no specific charges, just ones of official incompetence and neglect, but it was very damaging to the Connexion, and highly embarrassing. Open criticism of the officials was rife by May 1893, and nothing was achieved by September when attempts to obtain money by gifts, subscriptions and collections in order to hire a local preacher to work Marsh Street produced nothing. Over the following winter Marsh Street society and congregation had disintegrated and the Quarterly Meeting refused to strip its other societies in order to try to resurrect it. By March it was even impossible to get collections and other cash from officials of the society. The Meeting applied to sell the chapel "due to the embarrassed condition of its finances, the paucity of members, and its unpopularity" throughout the town. The only alternative was a full time man to work there, for "the withdrawal of the minister has in each case meant disaster". The suburb had resident ~~Anglican~~ **Anglican** ministers and ~~Catholic~~ **Catholic** priests, offering great rivalry to the Primitives who had little scope for their work (84). The circuit could not cope with four poor societies and one collapsed one, plus the issues of Haverigg and Coniston chapel too. There were £2,250 of trust debts, a minister and a hired preacher to pay, and a three figure standing circuit current debt. The District Committee sympathised, and advised the circuit to try harder.

83. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

84. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Circuit Letter Book and Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

The Meeting complained that the District Mission committee had refused help and that the circuit had to pour effort and money "into the slough without any apparent profit". They complained that the District and Mission committees were prejudiced against Barrow since they held the circuit guilty of causing its own troubles by its actions. Yet officials in the circuit felt unable to accept responsibility for the Marsh Street and other serious problems, which were largely due to the neglect of the Primitive Connexional authorities. The blame for Marsh Street was put squarely on the shoulders of the Connexional officialdom.

All this moaning had some effect. Conference agreed to send an extra minister or evangelist to work Marsh Street, and to give substantial cash aid to the circuit. Even better, the Conference in November 1894 stated that the circuit could in no way be held responsible for its problems, and had done all it could - "this cannot be done by the station in its present broken, embarrassed and discredited condition. Help must come from without", the Connexional men continued, the President signing the document. Things were looking brighter and the December 1894 Quarterly Meeting thanked the minister, Pearce, for his unremitting toil in sorting out the various problems afflicting the circuit (85). The Meeting was deeply disappointed when a report on public comments by the Home Missions Committee was received, stating that the Mission committee felt Barrow's problems to be so severe that no solutions could be reached. The Committee was also stipulating conditions late in the day concerning aid. The meeting protested vigorously against these since they had begun to renovate Marsh Street chapel, and had acquired a grand total of £4,000 in chapel debts. Soon the Rev. Hide was appointed in January 1895, and his term of office extended to three years in March (86).

This promising move was marred in May 1895 when the Quarterly Meeting complained that only £100 had been given to the circuit.

85. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1. Pearce was outstandingly successful, in Barrow terms.

86. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

by the Committee and not the promised figure of substantially over £200 all told. Pearce, despite pleas from the circuit, had been stationed elsewhere, and after much trouble this move was altered and he was allowed to stay on to use "his exceptional business ability", "untiring and selfdenying labour", in order to combat "so many longstanding difficulties". Praise was lavished on him. A new trust was executed for Marsh Street, and Lewens was finally prevailed upon to surrender the £20 purloined two years previously. All the old trustees had died, emigrated or wished to retire (87). It was sad for the circuit that the Marsh Street episode was not over, and that serious problems were to rise up so soon after it appeared all was going well for the first time. H. G. Hide, the evangelist at Marsh Street, became disillusioned and depressed by his job and the area, and caused trouble. In February 1897 26 officials of the chapels and circuits met to "enquire into the report of the deputation appointed to enquire into the veracity of statements made by Mr. H. G. Hide, the missionary who for a year and a half had been engaged in connection with Marsh Street, Barrow". The Rev. Trainer and Atkinson had been appointed by the Conference to lead the investigation, and gave "a fair and impartial report" on the matter (88).

Hide had made serious charges:-

1. That the circuit committee and Quarterly Meeting refused to give adequate aid to Hide or to the Marsh Street Cause, and had decided before he came to refuse any help to the society and missionary even if he were successful in his work.

2. That the circuit committee and others had prevented Marsh Street coming up at Quarterly Meetings in order to prevent discussion of the society and to prevent aid being given.

87. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

88. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

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There was no truth in the charges. The deputation agreed that it was proven beyond doubt that half of Forshaw Street choir had gone each Sunday to help Hide, but that he had told them not to bother to do so. Hide had been given a list of bandsmen willing to regularly attend his mission work, especially in the open air, but Hide had refused their help. Circuit local preachers had been planned to aid Hide for every service, and though several appointments had been neglected, the offending men had been disciplined, and neglect there was no worse than elsewhere in the circuit. Hide had refused to meet any preacher planned and had given them no help, regarding as informers to the Quarterly Meeting. This had conspired to upset many officials, and made Hide and his work unpopular (89).

Marsh Street had been the major topic of business at every meeting, and its problems created permanent work for officials. Hide's named witnesses in support of the allegations, did not support his statements, and he could say "nothing specific in his own defence". The work had apparently gone well for the first year, but then Hide became depressed and disheartened, and "circumstances arose which made it prudent he should leave". This he refused to do, despite demands from the circuit, officials, Marsh Street and Pearce. Hide was described as "a well meaning but weak man, totally unfit as an evangelist and Hide only resigned when the deputation arrived (90). Finally the Meeting and circuit committee begged Conference for an experienced and successful evangelist to take charge of Marsh Street, where most of the work was still to be done.

Marsh Street was never a success. In the 1900s ill luck continued to dog its steps, and there was no pastor in residence over the winter 1899/1900 (91). The Meeting wrote to the Mission Committee to

89. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

90. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

91. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Circuit Letter Book, March 1900. BRO BDFC/M/1.

praise "God for their survival, as the loss has not been as great as it might have been feared". Outdoor work was hampered by severe weather though there were over 50 members, but "the scandals of the past...are yet a cause of much difficulty in working amongst the people of the district".. By 1902 the society believed it would have to sell its premises in order to pay off debts, and the cause was at the same ebb as in 1895, slowly dying out since few would give it support, such was the lack of confidence in the officials and the Primitives. "Priestcraft exercises a vigorous energy in the locality of our church", which added to problems. The officials and society wrote to the Missions Committee seeking more urgent aid, in March 1902 (92); the year before they had reported attendances at services to be averaging 65, as against 35 in 1895, and the Sunday school up to 197 compared to 55. Trust debts had been reduced over the

same period from £725 to £500, but the change came when the evangelist departed to work Coniston for a while, and squabbles and disagreements

broke out. The Circuit Committee had tried to prevent this, but the Mission Committee were adamant and precipitated the crisis of early 1902. The society did recover but remained small, never more than one-fifth the size of the other two town ones, and its troubled past was never lived down.

The third problem which dragged on for years for the Barrow Primitives concerned Coniston. For some time Kendal ran as a mission of Hull, later of Barnard Castle, and in the late 1830s Primitive Methodism was taken to the Coniston area by their preachers. Christopher Hallam was one of the first travelling preachers to work the area and in 1845 he reported just one member at Coniston, with the whole mission only having 67 in total (93). Coniston was on and off plan, and not until 1857 was there a permanent society due to the

92. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Circuit Letter Book
March 1902 and January 1901. BRO.

93. Circuit Book of Christopher Hallam, at Rylands.

exertions of a Cornish local preacher who came to work in the quarries (94). He gradually formed a little society of six members, most of whom worked in the newly prosperous quarries too. Coniston was described at that time as "a notoriously wicked place", the Primitives being one of few salutary influences on the "totally immoral" inhabitants. There were Baptist and Anglican places of worship for an expanding population of 1,800, and under these conditions by 1858 there were 33 Primitives and a flourishing Sunday school. A chapel was opened in July 1858 measuring 36 feet long by 23 wide by 17 tall, to seat 180. John Barrett, managing director of the copper mines, had given the site, free stone and much more to the society, and though not a member was described as "a true Christian". Being poor the Primitives had to cart the stone themselves as well as doing most of the labouring tasks, the total cost being £260 with £140 raised by the society. The rest remained as a debt for nearly 40 years. The opening was a grand affair and a great event in the life of the circuit. On the formation of Barrow circuit Coniston was transferred to it, and for a while continued to enjoy moderate prosperity. However, the mines suffered recession, many families left the area as suddenly as they had come, and the Primitives were hard hit (95).

Before long the once flourishing society was moribund. One cause of friction for the remaining congregation was the chapel. The deeds transferring the site to the trustees and the chapel to the Connexion were not in order, and to save time and money the trustees had gone ahead independent of circuit authority or permission and in the rush job errors were made. The deeds implied that a new trust, namely the one of 1895, had to have the site conveyed to itself again, which did not happen. Nor was the building properly settled on the model deed of the Connexion, hence later questions about its legally being owned by them. This, and there being no proper specifications or plans for the chapel, caused "serious evils,

94. Primitive Methodist Magazine 1859, p.626.

95. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Minute Meeting 1866/69 and 1876/88. BRO BDFC/M/1.

needless costs, and injury to the infant cause, and much grief of mind". Kendal and later Barrow failed to correct the matter, and the trustees came to look upon the chapel as their own, especially the Knipe family, four of whom were trustees. Despite rows within the trust and with contractors, the job was completed in 1858 and the matter forgotten. Around the turn of the century Coniston became the scene of the third major Barrow circuit issue. The Primitives had been the first Methodists in the area, but the Wesleyans eventually made a successful entry and supplanted the Primitives. The Primitives had always had their problems with Coniston, for the society felt neglected and isolated over 20 miles from Barrow, though the opening of a railway line facilitated travel. The circuit for its part disliked having to subsidise an increasingly dependent society, and the local preachers resented the long journey for small rewards. Whilst Haverigg and Marsh Street were receiving attention in 1892, the mainstay of the society, John Knipe, accused the circuit committee of "gross negligence". Knipe was asked to substantiate the charge but he failed to do so and in October 1892 his (96) "important and damaging charges" were ignored as was his "insulting letter". He was asked to withdraw his letter but refused, though the matter was dropped. More was done for the society and chapel, and a new trust established in 1895, but to find men to serve had proved very awkward. The trust contained three Barrow men: John Timms, manager; Thomas Cowan, manager; Thomas Hodgson, insurance agent; the Coniston men were: James Knipe, farmer; Thomas Knipe, slate river; John William Knipe, tailor (all brothers); John Barrow, butcher; George Baines, slate river; John Thomas Millardship, tailor; plus circuit minister John Thompson.

The Knipes were allowed to run affairs as they wished, though occasionally they criticised a circuit which tended to ignore them. During the summer of 1900 one of the brothers died, and he was the mortgagee for the chapel. His heir, John Knipe, gave the circuit one month to pay the £110 mortgage before he took possession and made it his own property. His motives were mixed - he had lost

96. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1892/99. BRO BDFC/M/1.

interest in Primitive Methodism yet wished to stir the circuit into some sort of activity to rejuvenate the cause. He also wanted money for his family, as heir to his brother. The Quarterly Meeting wrote to the General Chapel Committee (97) at the Conference of 1900. "Coniston, a straggling village 20 miles by rail from Bafrow" had "for many years a prosperous cause", but had "declined for a number of years past". The reasons for this state of affairs were outlined. The mines had closed, and since these were what had attracted Methodists in the first place, most members had left in search of work. Just down the road from the chapel was a Wesleyan one in a more favourable situation and site, and with it being "a far better chapel", "the struggle of the survival of the strongest ensued".

The Wesleyans had received for some time considerable Connexional aid in the form of grants and possessed a resident evangelist. The Primitive society received what help a struggling Barrow circuit 20 miles away could spare. The society had complained of neglect for years, of preachers missing appointments, ministers rarely attending, and missionary money raised locally being taken by the preachers as travelling expenses. This led to the society suspecting the motives for every collection and refusing to allow any to be taken. The Meeting pointed out that there was only one Primitive family in the village, the Knipes, and three of the four had died within the past few months. The only member and trustee of the family, John Knipe, was the one demanding the mortgage be paid off. Over recent years 12 members had died, many more had removed, and despite extensive circuit efforts "none had been added to membership." The five resident trustees gave no ground for hope. Only Knipe was a member, one being a Wesleyan, two going to no church, and one, a Wesleyan turned Primitive, "has now no interest" in any church. There was certainly no scope for two Methodist chapels, there being only 600

97. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Letter Book, June 1900 onwards.

BRO BDFC/M/1.

people in the locality as opposed to 1,800 40 years before. There was a resident vicar, a Baptist Sunday school occupied by the Plymouth Brethren, and a Baptist chapel. The Wesleyans had a resident evangelist, a Home Mission grant, and a second lay agent happening to live nearby helped them out. The nearest Primitive society was Askam-in-Furness 16 miles away and under Millom and Dalton circuit, which was in a worse state than Barrow. The two Wesleyan workers had missioned the area extensively and attracted all those with Methodist leanings, leaving none to be picked up by the Primitives. The poor of the area had been "gathered in" by a resident Roman Catholic priest so there was no scope amongst that sector either this Catholic presence being seen as a particular stumbling block. Coniston had much scope as a tourist resort yet because of the local landowners' policies no land was being made available for new building, which included not allowing the Primitives to have a good site for a new chapel. "Not one visitor" had attended the Primitive chapel weekly services for four summer months the previous year, even though Primitive workers from Barrow distributed leaflets and visited every house. All this gave no encouragement to the Barrow workers. The trustees at Coniston had spent time "greatly disparaging many of the preachers we send", finding fault with men specially chosen to undertake services preaching there was a thankless task involving a 40 mile round trip for which men received no payment, spent a day taking one service received a congregation of three or four adults, and had no hospitality offered by a single person in the village. Many local preachers (unable to afford the fares) were refusing to be planned there, and having to wait at the chapel for five hours for the return train. No-one would board preachers for a night or even offer refreshment, and weekday services were impossible since the last train left a 6 p.m. and people were only able to preach at night due to working in the day.

The Meeting urgently needed over £100 to pay off the mortgage to Knipe, which it was impossible to raise, so help from the Connexional authorities was demanded. Otherwise the cause would be abandoned and the chapel sold though it was believed that the sale of the chapel would not bring in a sum sufficient to pay off debts. The circuit could not afford to end the cause or to continue to maintain it. Despite the plea, Conference did nothing and left it to the District

Committee in Liverpool, which Barrow had already found wanting in its attention to the area.

In September 1900 (98) the Meeting announced to the General Chapel Committee that the trustees were to sell the chapel with or without permission in order to discharge their debts to Knipe, since there was no income and no congregation, and scant chance that either would be raised. A few hundred people had five religious sects to choose from, the Wesleyans were doing nicely, and there was no need for the Primitives. "The Wesleyans have far superior chances of success and are in a prosperous way". The Meeting was suspicious of this since there were Wesleyans amongst the surviving trustees, and the Brethren too. were looking for a place of worship to buy. The General Chapel Committee had advised the Meeting to ask Liverpool District meeting for permission to sell, but the District had refused this since the Primitives had been there for so long and to re-establish a society at a later date would be impossible. 10,500 people had attended the recent Ruskin exhibition, so scope for a Primitive congregation existed if only a landowner would make a good site available, and help stimulate the village for tourist growth. The District had advised "urge the trustees to meet their responsibilities", a not very helpful suggestion. About the same time, Knipe allowed the circuit six months to pay off the mortgage owed to him and had intimated that he wished the society to remain alive there. The Meeting was asked to try to revive Coniston, but by November they reported that it would be wasteful of resources to do this, there being not one local person willing to work for them. Regret was expressed at the Wesleyans' refusal to aid the Primitives since some years before the Primitives had helped the Wesleyans by lending them preachers and holding combined services when the Wesleyans were weak. An evangelist was urgently needed but the Meeting could not possibly afford one due to its lack of cash and its Barrow commitments. Knipe was willing to aid a man, and the circuit suggested an active

98. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Letter Book September 1900.
BRO BDFC/M/1.

supernumerary, a "Sister" or a resting preacher, despite the opposition of the other trustees. The Meeting had to give priority to "the debts and financial burdens which have crippled and are crippling this circuit", and to the Barrow societies. A lay agent was likewise desperately needed by Vickerstown on Walney Island where hundreds of houses were being built and where people were demanding a Primitive presence, so in fact the circuit needed two men. There was an evangelist at Marsh Street; Barrow and the District wished to move him to Coniston, but the loss of his work would bring disaster to the notoriously unstable Marsh Street society. The Barrow circuit wished for Connexional aid yet opposed advice as to how to employ it. Conferential deputations had had to sort out the Haverigg and Marsh Street businesses, and during the summer of 1901 a further deputation was employed concerning Coniston and it placed all blame for the Coniston affair on the circuit's shoulders. The Quarterly Meeting in no uncertain terms let it be known what it thought of the report, charging them with neglect of preaching and other appointments, and overall neglect of Coniston over the years. It denied all charges. It was "appalled" at doubledealing behind their back concerning Millom and Dalton circuit which had been approached with a view to taking over Coniston in order to work it properly. It pointed out that Barrow had long supported that circuit and had regularly to send preachers to aid them even though the other circuit failed to reciprocate when Barrow needed aid. Barrow had all but ruined itself in efforts to save Coniston, they continued, yet real blame must be apportioned to the District and Connexion which had repeatedly refused the Meeting's requests of help, whereas the Wesleyans flourished due to the generous aid of their Connexion and District. Barrow had sunk years of labour and money into Coniston and the Connexion had betrayed it by asking Millom to reap any benefits. They believed there was some sort of conspiracy between the Connexion, Millom and the Wesleyans in order to ruin Barrow, so long had been their problems with Connexional help or understanding. The Barrow Primitives had aided Coniston Wesleyans when they had been nearly ruined by the defection of one local preacher, and "this was how they were to be rewarded". The Meeting held Coniston responsible for many of their own problems: their refusal to help the preachers despatched there, incompetent officials and trustees, refusal to take collections, the impossibility

of getting even one person to help the society in Coniston. The Meeting was pleased at the offer to pay off the chapel mortgage, but to give oversight to Millom was a recipe for disaster. It would mean that Barrow with two preachers and 11 local preachers would work just three societies, whereas Millom with two preachers and 12 local preachers would have six widely scattered chapels to care for. As everyone knew, Millom and Dalton were having worse financial and preacher problems than even Barrow. The Connexion appeared to wish to ruin both circuits in this "outpost of Christianity".

Later that summer, Wilson, the minister in charge of Barrow wrote to thank Conference for the lay agent appointed to work Coniston, but complained that so far the circuit had expended £25 yet the promised grant had not arrived (99). The Coniston trustees were refusing to co-operate with the circuit and ignored all its instructions, refusing to consider even trying to raise the mortgage debts by any means or to co-operate with a worker. The District Committee refused to involve itself despite repeated requests. Knipe as the only supposed member had neglected his post as trustee and as secretary, and "has it seems conspired to cause a loss to us". He had possession of all papers and deeds, refused to use trust and circuit money to pay off the interest on the mortgage owed to him, and in this default had declared himself owner of the chapel which he had put up for sale. It had been suggested in an article by an unknown author that the Meeting ought to sell the chapel; Knipe had read this with alarm and decided to beat them to it (100). The original deeds of 1858 were in Knipe's hands and nobody could get them off him to examine alleged irregularities on the transfer of the site off the original owners to the first trust, and from the first to the 1895 trust. It was not even known for sure if the chapel was on the Connexional Model Deed or if it was, whether it had been done

99. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Circuit Letter Book, August 1901. BRO BDFC/M/1.

100. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Circuit Letter Book, December 1901. BRO BDFC/M/1; "Christian World, 11.11.1901.

legally. The Meeting was not prepared to challenge his ownership of the chapel since if they lost, or even if they won any sort of legal case, they could still not afford to pay the mortgage or legal fees. Though disliking the situation, the Meeting must have felt a sense of relief at events passing out of their control.

It appears that the circuit agreed to pay off the mortgage owing to Knipe by the end of 1901, and themselves looked for a buyer. There was little demand for a chapel, and its value if only one buyer appeared was reported at £110, not enough to pay off all debts. The Freemasons offered to take it over by paying all debts and expenses, but the circuit tried to get the Plymouth Brethren interested in it to up the price to £180, its estimated true value. The Baptists' chapel was the one sought by the Brethren since the Primitives' was "dirty, cramped and badly sited", in the words of the circuit. However, the circuit minister investigated this and was pleased to note that if the Baptists' chapel society died out it had to revert to the London Baptist Mission, so could not be sold to another religious sect. Knipe, meanwhile, was hoping to benefit as much as he could and applied to Kendal solicitors for funds from a Primitive charity to aid Primitive causes. Wilson was delighted to thwart this attempt when Kendal asked him about Knipe's being a bona fide Primitive member and official hoping to use the funds for good Primitive work. Wilson reported he had been an obstacle to Primitive Methodism for some time, had had no status or membership in the Connexion too for "some time", and denying the man money. The chapel was sold in February 1902 to John Bell of the village, for unspecified purpose, with all expenses and debts to be paid by him, and all fittings, organ, books etc., to be given to the new Vickerstown Mission on Walney (101). Some good after all came from the episode but it meant the end of a society and large amounts of effort and money were wasted in the process, not to mention all the anxiety and bitterness both within the circuits and between them.

101. Barrow Primitive Methodist Circuit, Circuit Letter Book, December 1901. BRO BDFC/M/1; Number of Letters during 1901/2.

It has been noted how tensions over the changing role of preachers in the Primitive employ created secession and serious disturbances, especially during the 1870s (102). Difficulties over the role and activities of the Primitive ministry always caused problems in Cumbria, even during years of great expansion of membership and increased income for the circuit. Preachers like Fulton, Saul and to a lesser extent the Barrow men were suffering the consequences of anti-ministerial feelings endemic in Cumbrian Methodist circles and their actions added fuel to this fire and precipitated losses in the 1870s and particularly the 1880s to other denominations. Whilst they were highly successful evangelists working in harmony with lay preachers and leaders, and expansion was achieved and measured by increasing income and membership, problems were relatively few and the vast majority of the membership, and most importantly the officials, were satisfied (103). Should preachers dislike the task of begging for their salary and expenses annually in the face of a contentious and dogmatic Quarterly Meeting which did not appreciate their self-sacrifice, or should the Quarterly Meeting believe its preachers guilty of the slightest improper conduct or neglect, then trouble of a most serious nature later ensued. In Cumbria the Primitives continued to expand their membership into the 1900s and circuits were being formed until that date as the old circuits, particularly Carlisle and Whitehaven, gave birth to new ones. It was symptomatic of the changing attitude and status of the Connexion that Joseph Pennington of Kendal (104), himself only a working quarryman, was noted as one of the few who in the third quarter of the 19th century had a special mission to the unchurched and heathen quarters of that town. The decline of this outgoing working-class mission work in

102. G. Milburn, Tensions in Primitive Methodism in the 1870s, WHS Procs, Feb 1976, vol 40 part 4 p.93/101 and June 1976 part 5 p.135/144.

103. G. Milburn, as in No.102 above.

104. W. Patterson, Northern Primitive Methodism, 1909, p.118/121.

the open air, barns and cottages signalled Primitive stresses between those who feared that the old evangelism was dying as preachers strove for better status (which involved preaching in fine chapels to respectable audiences) and those who sought a denomination with aspirations to ministerial status, better chapels, and above all respectable congregations very different from the poverty stricken inhabitants of the 1820s.

The travelling preachers had become settled administrators obsessed by the need to regulate their circuits, to build and finance chapels, and to consolidate old gains, not to make new ones (105).

Jealousies between societies within one circuit led to inevitable demands for splitting of circuits - Maryport out of Whitehaven in 1862, then Maryport finding it impossible to control Wigton society and ending up in feuds in the 1870s culminating in the separation of 1883 (106). Within Wigton, first as a branch of Maryport because the two sectors could not agree to co-operate over finance or preaching plans from 1868 to 1883, there were permanent disagreements between the branch Quarterly Meeting, ruled by a Wigton clique

and outlying ones at Silloth, Blennerhasset and elsewhere (107). The "disinclination to support the hired ministry" perpetuated into the 20th century as the Wigton and then Aspatria societies, the largest of the circuit, had to foot the bill for the ministry's expenses and salaries whilst outlying societies repeatedly refused to contribute more than nominal amounts at irregular dates (108). The determination of individual societies to remain free of entanglement

105. J. Hawkins, "O'er Hill and Dale", p.54 onwards, noted the changes in the work of the ministry, and the modifications of the pursuit of purely evangelical goals by the burden of administration and organisation.

106. Maryport Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1864/69 and 1881/88. CRO FCM/1/101 and 102; Wigton Primitive Methodist Branch and Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1866/99. FC/M.

107. Wigton Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1868/99. FC/M.

108. Wigton Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1868/99 and Quarterly Accounts 1868/88. FC/M.

from circuit affairs was most marked in West Cumberland where the Primitives, after the setting up of most of the societies by the late 1860s, held a low estimate of ministerial ability and possessed little respect for the preachers frequently involved in disputes with lay officials over their salaries (109). Societies believed the preachers ought to have as hard a life as possible, as hard as many Primitive members endured, and were chary of financing ministers to the tune that they would be able to live more comfortably than the membership for whom they worked (110). In Wigton circuit, feeling against a hired ministry was so strong that over 40 members (out of barely 200) were lost between 1885 and 1890 to the Salvation Army, with similar losses in Maryport and Workington over the same period, and to the Brethren sects as well (111). In their parent circuit of Whitehaven, feeling against the preachers had frequently run high, and in 1867 40 members led by three local preachers were expelled or resigned over their failed attempts to cut ministerial expense at Quarterly Meetings (112). Efforts to obtain the cheapest men possible were frequently put forward by strong minorities, and at times preachers left the chair at meetings in disgust as attempts at economy were only just defeated. One such session during 1879 (113) was followed

109. For example throughout the Whitehaven annual Circuit Schedules 1842/1913 and the Quarterly Meetings.

110. Feelings about the pay of the ministry run high in parts of Cumbria today; at the time of Union in 1932, some Primitive ministers were receiving a salary of £65 per annum plus expenses, whilst the Wesleyans were commonly receiving £120 per annum plus expenses.

111. Maryport Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1881/88. CRO FCM/1/102; Workington Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1884/1892. CRO FCM/7/2/1; Wigton Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1868/99. FC/M.

112. Whitehaven Primitive Methodist Circuit, Annual Schedules 1842/1913. FC/M.

113. Whitehaven Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes and Annual Circuit Schedules.

by a number of members attending services of the "Hallelujah people", presumably the first Salvation Army people in the area. The officials investigated and then banned all members from taking part in their services, though the Army recruited at the expense of all the West Cumberland circuits and relations between Primitives and the Army were bad (114). During 1880 two local preachers, defeated in their efforts to dispense with ministers, seceded with over 40 members to the Plymouth Brethren in Whitehaven, and losses from the circuit to Brethren and Army ran into three figures over the decade. The desire above all else for cheap ministers led to the various Quarterly Meetings frequently calling upon young local preachers to travel in their circuit, and to a use of hired local preachers who were paid very little indeed and usually half as much as the preachers. As late as 1899 one preacher wrote a letter to his proposed successor, anonymously warning him not to come to Whitehaven because of the attitude of the people to ministers and their functions, which the lay officials believed they themselves could in the main do perfectly satisfactorily and far more cheaply (115). In an effort to cut down on expenses Wigton used one of its local preachers, John Graham, to travel in 1886, but so badly paid was he that when the meeting refused to reimburse his back pay and expenses he simply walked off with all the circuit income upon which he could lay his hands (116). Unlike the Wesleyans, by the later 19th century and earlier employing ministers who placed a gap between themselves and their main membership, the Primitive ministers in Cumbria found that they were expected to be of the people, not above them, and to endure the hardships of their lowliest members.

114. The Quarterly Meetings of almost every circuit in the county registered losses to the Salvation Army and many to the Brethren too, though the Primitives suffered most.

115. Whitehaven Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1862/1902. FC/M.

116. Wigton Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1868/99. FC/M.

The Cumbrian Primitive circuits advanced most in membership in the period 1822/30, 1858/68, with occasional brief revival works for instance around 1905 in West Cumberland. These years apart, expansion was by means of small yearly increases with setbacks - for instance in the late 1870s - and increasingly a use of what cash was available to build a chapel for every society in each circuit. Much depended on the influx of workers who arrived with the railways for example in the 1860s in Brough circuit (117), with the iron industry boom in Workington in the mid 1880s, and with the growth of Barrow and Millom during the later 1860s. Many were single men from the Midlands, the North-East and the other British industrial and mining localities where Primitivism was strong (118). These immigrants brought their Primitive Methodism with them, and found it hard to stir more than a few Cumbrian native hearts with their words. Recruiting from primarily very poor people, the circuits could not afford economic misfortune such as beset the south and west of Cumbria around the 1890s and 1900s. When this came the Primitives found it impossible to recruit from a decreasing or stagnant population, and hundreds of active members emigrated in search of work. Crushing burdens of chapel debts - for instance Millom chapel and the Haverigg case severely impaired Dalton's income - militated against the Primitives in the industrial and mining decline of the period, though the incentive of chapel debt clearing might have been strong in a time of economic prosperity when the future was bright. Barrow could not cope with the permanent debts owed to it by Haverigg, with

117. Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1853/65 and 1865/99 shows the great power of the railway presence in the circuit; Tebay alone had 80 and more members at times, exclusively railway workers. KRO WDFC/M.

118. For the significance of the immigrants see J. D. Marshall, The Economic and Social History of the Furness Area, 1711/1875. 1956; J. D. Marshall, History of Barrow-In-Furness, 1960: many Methodist societies were only commenced because of the work of migrants, for instance the Bible Christians in the west and south of Cumbria, Cornish Primitives in Coniston and Millom, Wesleyans from the Black Country.

the drain of Marsh Street and the worsening trade cycles. Dalton through no fault of its own had to manage Haverigg's inherited debts, had by the 1900s £2,500 circuit chapel debts of its own to be paid off by 196 members, and found the Millom society of 66 people supporting the minister, while the small outlying societies could not support even their own causes (119). The Millom and Dalton circuit benefitted from the failure of the Bible Christians' cause, for instance at Swarthmoor, and from the revival of numbers in the 1900s, but by 1912 precisely half of the houses of the two towns were vacant and a third of circuit income was from Connexional grants. Between 1905 and 1932 membership dropped from 245 to 140, hearers at services from 430 to 230, and Barrow refused to take over the ailing circuit (120). Naturally not every circuit maintained such a precarious existence - Carlisle for example did well - but the general picture of Cumbrian Primitivism was of a severe and worsening outlook and a struggle to survive at most times, even compared to the Wesleyans, not noted in this county for their wealth but immeasurably better able to cope with economic dislocation and emigration than the Primitives. The precarious nature of Primitive circuit existence can be illustrated for every circuit: when Hellawell, the Penrith circuit minister, died there in 1898 the circuit could not afford to bring a replacement with all the cost of removal, plus no incentive and low salary as well as funeral costs and money for the dead man's family. The Quarterly Meeting called upon John Robson, a local preacher of promise with no ties to be their new preacher, and within six months he had reduced attendances at services by a third and lost members before starting his own "special brand" of Christianity in the town and thoroughly embarrassing the circuit (121). The Penrith Primitives never recovered from this blow and within a few years had societies

119. Dalton and Millom Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1882/1900, 1900/11. BRO BDFC/M/U.

120. Dalton and Millom Primitive Methodist Circuit, Annual Schedules 1925/32 and Circuit Account Books 1905/25. BRO BDFC/M/U.

121. Penrith ~~Primitive~~ Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1868/1900. CRO FCM/3/2/1.

only in the town, Lazonby, Skelton and Catterlen. It was with relief that the circuit agreed to Methodist Union, for they had few hearers at services who were not amongst the 120 members, scarcely any young members or schoolchildren, a manse which they could not afford though it had no hot water system and outside toilet and washhouse (in 1928), and a preacher they could not afford to employ or to do without. They faced four Wesleyan ministers who possessed a motorcar and three pushbikes for their work across the same circuit boundaries (122).

The Primitive Methodists brought joy and living religion to many Cumbrians, to even more immigrants into the county, and enriched religious and social life with their multifarious activities. However, their "success" needs to be placed into perspective; when the author of the District History noted with satisfaction that the greatest success in the past 20 years (prior to 1908) had been in material prosperity and chapel building, he remarked membership and recruitment had also advanced but more slowly from the 1880s (123). What membership increase there was had been concentrated in Carlisle, not typical of Cumbrian circuits because of its relative prosperity and balanced economy (which factors perpetuated into the 20th century), and in Workington and Keswick, the former due to a large influx of iron and steel workers, many of them Methodists, the latter benefitting from the tourist and residential development of the late Victorian period (like the Wesleyans there). These three circuits accounted for 85% of the District's increase in membership. Elsewhere, as at Alston and Penrith, decline or stagnation had set in. Membership too was said to be 3,491 in 1908, compared to 2,674 in the District of 1886 (when the Carlisle and Whitehaven District was created). The

122. Penrith Primitive Methodist Circuit, Penrith Circuit Report to District Meeting 1929. CRO FCM/3/2/4.

123. J. Hawkins, "O'er Hill and Dale", p.88/89..

evidence strongly points to a juggling of the figures here and it would seem that whereas from 1886 every single person supposed to be a member was certainly not included in the total, since circuits underestimated their returns by up to 10% to take account of waverers and wastrels (124), the figures for 1908 included every person who showed some interest in the Connexion with an overestimate of 10% in places which gives a deliberately false appearance for the sake of "progress" (125). There had been too a revival between 1906 and 1908 in the Maryport, Cockermouth and Workington circuits, and the usual falling away of the hundreds of new converts had either not by then occurred or had been left out on purpose (126). This leaves solely Carlisle showing a substantial gain in membership, mainly due to its care not to start further ministerial difficulties, its bouyant economy, and a set of skilful circuit officials and run of good ministers. This was unlike the whole of West Cumberland and the south of the county; hence the great expansion in the city society from 100 to 250 members in 10 years, when its earlier divisions had been healed and problems overcome (127).

124. This was done from several motives; today circuits often overestimate their number of active members.

125. Reference to the relevant circuit schedules, quarterly accounts or Quarterly Meetings (since all three might be used to record membership) will bear this out.

126. For the remarkable West Cumberland revival Richard Crewdson was deemed the instigator; see Primitive Methodist Magazine 1906, p.833, and Appendix A.

127. Carlisle Primitive Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes. CRO FCM/1/1/2 to 7.

207.
The county's population by 1908 was over 430,000, so that Primitive membership was well below 1% of the population, and claims to having 9,000 hearers at services meant on "special occasions", not normally, and included attendances of members. The Primitives had appeal to a very small minority indeed, and one largely confined to the mining and industrial centres of the county. In Cumbria the Primitives did not have the power or the popularity of the Wesleyans and went little way towards the domination of village and town life that was achieved in other parts of the North (128).

128. The classic examples of Primitive strength were in the North-East, and nearer home in Nenthead and Garrigill. See Chester Armstrong, Journey from Nenthead, 1938, which explores the phenomenon of Primitive power.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CUMBRIAN METHODISM AND METHODIST UNION

Methodist Union has long been the subject of debate, primarily from the point of view that doctrinally there were few if any problems separating the several Connexions, and that Union was a panacea for all the ills which increasingly beset the Methodists (1). The inability of the Connexions to keep pace with the increase in population, their occasional setbacks and decreases in membership, led the Methodists to regard Union as a way towards a new strength and a way to improve their statistical showing which by the 1900s was an obsession. The Wesleyans in the early 20th century were alarmed at continued poaching of their membership by the Anglicans and all Connexions were concerned over the quarter of England's 15,000 villages with no Nonconformist chapel as alternative to the Established Church (2). It seemed logical that duplication of chapels, preachers and services created great waste and that such men and resources might be employed to better effect if the Connexions combined to further village and urban causes where none existed. Such a co-ordinated, national and rational effort seemed sensible. Opposition to union came from the groups opposed to centralised power, the many (especially the smaller Connexions) who disliked the overweening ambitions and authority of the Wesleyan ministry, those who were determined to keep their own society and chapel independence in the face of "rationalisation", and the circuits who would have suffered

1. R. Currie, Methodism Divided: a Study of the Sociology of Ecumenicalism. 1968.

2. R. Currie, as in N.1 above, p.183.

most as resources were channelled into newly developing suburbs of the South East, the new growth points of the early 20th century (3). Primitives possessed commitment to a chapel, class or society, and less to a District and certainly little to the Connexion. The issue of ministerial power was a key one, and in any union the Wesleyans great bulk would guarantee an uplift in "priestly pretensions" perhaps favoured by the ministers of other Connexions but not by their members.

The first major union in Methodist circles was that of the Association of 1835 and the Reformers of 1850, the latter bolstering up the sagging fortunes of the former; as the United Methodist Free Churches they maintained circuit independence at the expense of Wesleyan-type Connexional authority and kept ministers dependent on lay support. In order to improve membership, to increase the number of worshippers per chapel, and to increase the "effectiveness" of ministers, the United Methodist Free Churches united in 1907 with the Bible Christians, mainly confined to the South coast and particularly the Southwest, and the Methodist New Connexion, which though the oldest Connexion after the Wesleyans had less members and ministers than the United Methodist Free Churches. Surprisingly, the New Connexion predominated in the new United Methodist Church, effectively bringing the new United Methodist Church nearer to the Wesleyans in terms of circuit dependence on Conference and on the preachers; not only was the old circuit independence lost, but advances prophesied for the new body did not happen (4).

Despite occasional unofficial approaches, the Primitives remained beyond a union with the United Methodist Church, usually concerning the role of the ministry of which the Primitives were suspicious. With the worsening outlook of the postwar period fresh approaches

3. R. Currie, as in No.1, p.198.

4. R. Currie, as in No.1, pp.217/247.

met more success and talks between the three remaining major Connexions were held. In spite of considerable anti-Union feeling amongst some sectors of the Primitives and Wesleyans especially, Union took place in 1932. Opinions differ, but evidence is indisputable that after Union the Wesleyans, possessing 59% of the membership, dominated most aspects of Connexional life, taking nearly all major posts by the 1940s, elevating the status of the ministry, ending all semblance of circuit independence, and keeping Methodism on the road envisaged for the Wesleyan Connexion of earlier years (5). The long planned and hoped for expansion never came, hundreds of chapels were eventually closed down, and ex-Wesleyan impetus pushed the new Methodist Church into seeking Anglican Union. Had this occurred it is arguable whether the Methodist element would have been swamped by the Establishment, just as the old Primitive and United Methodist Church Connexions disappeared under the strength of the Wesleyans. What was not appreciated was that locally the continuation of a Methodist society depended on the retention of its chapel; should this be closed, the society would have no reason for being, and would fade away, and not join the unclosed chapel down the road or in a neighbouring village.

In Cumbria where Methodism was evenly balanced between strong town societies and small but numerous rural ones, Union in 1932 did not bring either advance or gain to the Methodist Church. The issue of Union remains to this day a cause of contention, and is thus avoided where possible in circuit life. The attitude of the circuits towards union varied greatly, with probably a majority in most Wesleyan circuits supporting it (and particularly the officials and ministers) because they were numerically and financially far stronger. The United Methodists provided no opposition, and nor did the Primitives where their societies were weak. Penrith Primitives, with 120 members, were just able to hang on until Union and easily integrated with the Wesleyans except for their Sandgate Chapel in Penrith, the

5. R. Currie, as in No.1. p.304.

original Wesleyan chapel and a splendid building (6). The Keswick sector of the Cockermouth Primitive circuit immediately agreed to union with the stronger Wesleyan societies, but it was significant that the stronger Cockermouth Primitive sector absolutely opposed union with the Wesleyans and maintained their independence, with all the Keswick Methodists united (though still with two chapels) whilst the Cockermouth ex-Primitives and ex-Wesleyans remained aloof from each other (7). Cockermouth Primitives refused to take part in District discussions in the 1930s over integration of circuits unless it had its own independence guaranteed, and in alliance with its strongest society, Dearham. The town society further insisted that the Wesleyans treat their chapel as head of any new proposed integrated circuit (8). Successive preachers found the matter a bone of

6. Penrith Primitive Methodist Circuit, Annual Circuit Report to District Meeting 1929, CRO FCM/3/2/4; and District Circuit Schedules, under Penrith Circuit, FCM/3/2/3.

7. For the intricate correspondence and behind the scenes activities relating to the proposed amalgamation of District Circuits, and especially of the West Cumberland ex-Primitive and ex-Wesleyan circuits, see Maryport and Wigton Circuit correspondence, statistics and minutes, CRO FCM/2/20, 1933 to 1949 when some settlements had been agreed upon; CRO FCM/2/162, correspondence relating to the suggested re-organisation of circuits for the District 1933 to 1946, which illustrates the complexity of the bargaining between circuits and the fervour behind opposition to mergers, especially for the area of Maryport, Cockermouth, Wigton and Aspatria where 5 circuits overlapped; See also Wigton ex-Primitive Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1942/49, FC/M; Wigton ex-Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, Quarterly Meeting Minutes 1945/49, FC/M; and Maryport ex-Primitive Circuit, Quarterly Meeting 1926/44, FCM/2/105 for the very mixed reception not to Union, but to actually amalgamation of circuits and having to rub shoulders with former rival Methodists.

8. Maryport and Wigton Circuit correspondence, statistics and minutes, CRO FCM/2/20, 1933 to 1949; CRO FCM/2/162, correspondence relating to the suggested re-organisation of circuits for the district 1933 to 1946.

contention to be avoided at all costs and successive committees and circuit meetings were unable for 30 years to sort out the jealousies and intrigues surrounding circuit amalgamation and chapel rationalisation in West Cumberland.

Each circuit was jealous of its own rights and independence; within a circuit societies guarded their chapel and ministerial presence like gold. Wigton ex-Primitive, Maryport ex-Primitive, and Wigton and Maryport ex-Wesleyan circuits could not agree throughout the 1930s and 1940s on the fate of Silloth, which society absolutely refused to give up its preacher and disliked the idea of being involved in circuit affairs in whichever circuit (9). Robert Watkin, the West Cumberland preacher given the task by the District of working out viable circuits from Carlisle to Whitehaven found the task too much and spent years simply trying to get circuit quarterly meetings to meet jointly, though with little success. His plans for integration and new circuits were so complex that the understanding of them was beyond most Methodists, given that no one society in 9 circuits would give up its chapel and amalgamate with another, and that it was hard to find a society which would willingly change its circuit (10). Suggestions of rationalising preaching by combining several societies in one chapel created disturbances so serious that it was thought prudent not to mention the matter, certainly in Primitive circles.

Due to rivalry, illfeeling and mutual fears, the "Carlisle Methodist circuit" was only established in 1958, for until then it had proved impossible to obtain co-operation between the ex-Primitive elements and the larger Wesleyan portion of the city Methodists. By 1958 some hostility to the idea of amalgamation and rationalisation

9. Maryport and Wigton Circuit correspondence, statistics and minutes, CRO FCM/2/20, 1944 to 1949; CRO FCM/2/162, correspondence relating to the suggested re-organisation of circuits for the district 1933 to 1946.

10. Robert Watkin had the onerous burden of sorting out some sort of working agreement, and entered into lengthy correspondence; see for instance his letter of 14.12.1934 to Rev. Jackson concerning the difficulties, and asking that the issue of amalgamation not be mentioned to anyone. CRO FCM/2/162.

had died down, diehards had grown thin on the ground and many newer members were not aware of the struggles of the Primitives against Union of 26 years previously (11). The Cecil Street ex-Primitive society headed its own circuit until 1958, the Wesleyans having their own based on Fisher Street. Nobody ever stated the reasons for this beyond words such as "expedient", "sensible" and "advisable", but the Primitives had a fear of the Wesleyan ministry which sadly proved justified at times throughout the county, the most famous incident being at Kirkbride. Whilst the city and other ex-Primitive societies would co-operate to some extent with the Wesleyans, the way in which Wesleyans attempted to enforce conformity to Wesleyanism in Kirkbride threatened the Union and illustrated what the ex-Primitives feared. For effective union, there had to be goodwill on both sides.

In Kirkbride there had never existed a "fund of goodwill" between Wesleyan and Primitive societies, each seeing the other as a deadly rival to be beaten at all costs. When the Wesleyans endured serious disturbances and losses in the late 19th century there, the rebels moved down the road to the Primitive society as sign of their complete rejection of the Wesleyan Connexion, and mortally insulted the remaining loyal members (12). Any hope that the two societies would combine was forlorn and the bitterness which made the two rivals and enemies was repeated in other parts of the county, and re-emphasised during attempts to make the theoretical Union of 1932 a practical one. Kirkbride ex-Primitive society was transferred to Carlisle from Wigton Primitive circuit after 1932 to allow for its integration with the ex-Wesleyan society already under Carlisle ex-Wesleyan circuit, against the wishes of the societies concerned. Attempts at joint services in the two chapels in alternate weeks were abandoned in 1935 when the "rampant ill feeling" just beneath the surface exploded

11. Carlisle Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting 1958/67, CRO 1/1/104.

12. CRO FCM/1/2/58: Correspondence relating to Kirkbride problems over amalgamation and joint services in 1935 between Revs. S. Swithenbank, W. Burnett and H. O. Brigg.

and involved both circuits, Wigton and Carlisle (13). The occasion for renewed hostilities was ex-Primitive Stormonth, a nurseryman, sacking an ex-Wesleyan worker, Coulthard, for alleged bad workmanship over many years; Coulthard, of course, claimed it was over his former religious affiliation and because the Primitives in Kirkbride felt the Wesleyans were gaining the upper hand in all circuit matters. H. O. Brigg, the Carlisle superintendent and former Wesleyan preacher, forced the Kirkbride ex-Primitives to unite on the plan with the ex-Wesleyans, and met complete revolt which he decided to crush at the local preachers meeting, where he commanded a much larger measure of support than in the full quarterly meeting (14). His attempts to discipline the society via this meeting led to the intervention of Seth Swithenbank, another Wesleyan, chairman of the District and a most wise and respected figure who warned Brigg that he was endangering the Union of all the circuits of the area by recreating all the old differences which others had sought to iron out, and that Brigg was responsible for unconstitutional measures in an attempt to force everyone to agree to his dictates. Brigg, hurt by this, refused to back down and continued to pressure the ex-Primitives, arousing the fear of the ex-Primitive sections of the area in the process who complained to the Wigton superintendent (15). The latter counselled moderation to Brigg and believed that understanding and tact was needed. On the continued refusal of Brigg to moderate his views on forcing union of the two societies, the Wigton superintendent investigated the case at the request of Stormonth and the ex-Primitives, and noted that Brigg was trying to steamroller his way over the society and individual rights in order to enforce

13. CRO FCM/1/2/58, correspondence relating to Kirkbride problems over amalgamation and joint services in 1935 between Revs. S. Swithenbank, W. Burnett and H. O. Brigg.

14. CRO FCM/1/2/58, correspondence relating to Kirkbride problems over amalgamation and joint services in 1935 between Revs. S. Swithenbank, W. Burnett and H. O. Brigg.

15. CRO FCM/1/2/58, correspondence relating to Kirkbride problems over amalgamation and joint services in 1935 between Revs. S. Swithenbank, W. Burnett and H. O. Brigg.

conformity. Brigg failed in the face of complete revolt by the former Primitive societies of the area and ran into some problems with the Carlisle Primitives, at that time running their separate circuit and feeling justified in their continued independence by watching the way Brigg determined on Wesleyan domination. After months of contention and unpleasantness, Brigg abandoned the Primitive society and only planned the Wesleyan one; Wigton was forced to take over the ex-Primitive Kirkbride society and to plan it in their circuit (the superintendent of the Primitive circuit was then resident in Aspatria) where it remained for some years.

In Cumbria, issues such as the Kirkbride one rarely disappeared; when the Carlisle ministers decided that two chapels in Kirkbride was a luxury the circuit could not afford, they determined to sell the ex-Primitive one in 1959 (16). What also upset the society, which regarded itself still as embodying the old Primitive virtues, was that it was decided by Carlisle initially to sell it to the highest bidder, the Roman Catholics, their great opponents. Circumstances militated against the dwindling number of ex-Primitives, and amidst scenes of sorrow and renewed conflict the sale of the chapel was eventually enforced by unsympathetic ministers and quarterly meeting. Even so, the enforced union hardly took place and the ex-Primitives drifted away from society, a sad end to an unpleasant episode in modern Cumbrian Methodism.

Most Cumbrian Methodist chapels survived the 1940s, with dwindling congregations as older members died off and were not replaced. Where there existed a duplication of chapels, this situation continued into the 1960s because of the determination of societies to maintain their own identity and to keep "their chapel" intact. When a chapel was sold it was common for the congregation to cease to attend alternative Methodist services, such was the allegiance to a building and not to the denomination or ministers. By the 1960s circuit authorities started to cut down on chapel numbers and from

16. CRO FCM/1/2/54 relates to the closing of Kirkbride and sale of the Primitive chapel; See CRO FCM/5 for the closure of many chapels this century.

then onwards numbers of societies and buildings drastically declined. If the choice had to be made between Primitive and Wesleyan building, all too often the Primitive one was sacrificed because of the strength of the ex-Wesleyan influence. To the present time, amalgamations of societies is still continuing and creating a good deal of trouble in consequence as beloved chapels are made redundant and become holiday homes or commercial and farming premises. The dispossessed congregation, rather than alter loyalty to a new chapel, breaks up and disperses, and the habit of church going disappears. A recent example of this breaking up of considerable societies in the name of "economy" was the closure of the ex-Primitive Queen Street chapel in Aspatria in 1972, where 50 members were lost to the circuit because of the move, the remaining 50 being persuaded to continue their churchgoing to the ex-Wesleyan North Road premises (17). Circuit statistics gloss over this, but the fact remains that as active members of chapel society, half of the Queen Street society was lost. With the loss of outstanding societies like this (and chapels like Sandgate in Penrith in 1967) the future for Methodism would appear to be bleak. Pressure for further rationalisation of chapels comes from the ministers, determined to reduce circuits still of 12 or 15 chapels, to 3 or 4, for this is the way, they believe, to improve circuit "efficiency" and "success". What seems to be ignored is that the whole success of Methodism has been based on its

17. The attitude of local Methodists to Union and the whole business of circuit amalgamation, Methodist policy in the county, and chapel closures is here expressed in conclusions reached after examining relevant documents and confidential conversations with 8 ministers, both retired and active, and 27 circuit and society officials. The confidential nature of the material will be appreciated when it is noted that three ministers involved in the 1932 Union and problems in their circuits between ex-Primitives and ex-Wesleyans are still very active indeed, and both they and officials need to protect their identity.

availability to as wide a public as possible, with a chapel in as many villages as possible; to go from a number of small chapels to just a handful of larger ones would reduce the already small appeal of the Methodists across the county still further.

As the old Primitives feared, power given to the ministers meant a decrease in the participation of the laity and a church run by professional administrators, not religious workers and evangelists. The future would seem to point to a continued decline in Methodist strength and ultimately enforced union with the Anglicans, forfeiting the whole tradition and history of the several Methodist Connexions.

CONCLUSIONS

Wesleyan Methodism spread into Cumbria when John Wesley encouraged his helpers into the Dales and then west to Whitehaven, and himself graced the county with a number of visits to spur on the good work and to oversee the progress of his converts. The existence of the Inghamite societies aided Wesley after their leaders ruined that cause, and there was help from Quakers particularly in the Solway area where this denomination had maintained a strong presence. Early influencing sailors, miners and skilled craftsmen in the towns, Methodism depended on the steadfastness to the new denomination of local laymen without whom the preachers' task was hopeless, and where men of influence, standing or substance could not be recruited Methodism did not take root. Although it is easy to exaggerate the remoteness and isolation of a region in the mid 18th century, Cumbria was notoriously out of the way for all except the hardy and curious traveller and the voyager seeking a shortened passage to Ireland. Isolation, poverty and remoteness were not of themselves insurmountable obstacles to religious progress and change, but they had encouraged the priests of religion to neglect their flocks throughout the Christian history of the county. It is significant that where a minister or priest showed himself to care deeply for his people by making little of physical, material and geographical difficulties, the Cumbrians responded right away, even enthusiastically at times. This was as true of the Dissenting ministers of the mid 17th century - men like Larkin, Gilpin and Fox - as it was of John Wesley and his preachers. Perseverance was needed in great quantities if Methodists were to stir indifferent Cumbrian spirits unused to religious activity: once moved, the Cumbrians could act as warmly and respond as deeply as other Englishmen. This need for perseverance and caring is well illustrated in Wesley's success, for only the area which he spent months in on his visits to the county, the economically advanced west around Whitehaven, showed a major response to Methodism in his lifetime. On the other hand Wesley and his helpers found towns more responsive to their message, hence their concentrated efforts on urban centres and especially on the big port of Whitehaven with its considerable hinterland. The presence of existing Dissenting communities in urban centres showed that where a large number of people of diverse trade, class and background were brought together, there

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existed opportunities for most denominations to recruit to a lesser or greater extent whilst some of the Dissenters aided the Methodists, as many opposed them. Methodism during the 18th century was strong where there were other Dissenters but largely because of circumstances encouraging all denominations.

As luck would have it, around the time Wesley ceased his labours Carlisle area was expanding in population and industry and favouring Methodism with new opportunities as economic and demographic patterns altered. Where industry developed and population was stimulated to concentrate and to grow then the Methodists freely recruited in the period 1790 to 1830 in Cumbria, whilst rural areas, though possessing cells of future Methodist expansion, remained small by comparison with the new growth areas. Penrith circuit alone was an expanding rural circuit, but even here Methodism was successful because of the existence of large scale domestic industry in large villages with at least one formerly important but much decayed market town, Kirkoswald, amongst them. During these years too the early societies were building fine large chapels to replace the open air, little meeting rooms, barns and cottages formerly considered good enough but not to be tolerated by an aspiring group of members as their financial standing increased. Quiescent Anglicans were recruited into active Methodism, often ironically because of evangelical clergy who converted the indifferent who in turn found a majority of Cumbrian clergy inadequate to the task as they had been brought to see it. It came to be the number one target of each society to have its own chapel in which they could meet and worship, however impractical this might be in terms of finance, membership numbers or future prospects. In the years of later decline, a host of chapels were a positive liability, though rebuilding projects continued to be mooted as means of rejuvenating membership and fortunes.

Growth on so large a scale, involving hundreds of members and scores of societies, led to strains within the ranks of the Methodists which burst forth in the Association and Reform issues around 1835 and 1850, with the former being more severe in Cumbria. At base the disputes were between on the one hand ministers seeking

a higher clerical status for themselves and a significant gap between themselves and the laity, and more particularly between themselves and lay officials opposed to the emergence of a central bureaucracy tending to regulate and to control all from London offices along set patterns of behaviour and worship with the ultimate aim of forming a clearly identifiable Church with full liturgy and developed ecclesiastical machinery, were determined local Methodists anxious to maintain their own independence of action and thought as they believed they had always done. Ministers in Wesleyan ranks were rarely Cumbrians, there was frequently a mutual antipathy between flock and preacher, and intolerance and misunderstanding on a wide scale might ensue should sufficient provocation be offered by either side. As elsewhere, Cumbrian Methodists would accept religion which offered benefits to them, but should the religion or its exponents seek to infringe Cumbrian "freedom", ructions would occur. The desperate battles of 1835 and 1850 were fought between a handful of hardy ministers and a majority of uncompromising circuit officials united amongst themselves only by common hatred of Bunting, the ministry and their grievances, which did not add up to what was necessary for a new denomination. Wesleyanism recovered and United Methodism was created. Neither gained much from the disruptions, each lost a great deal in the longrun, but the Wesleyans lost less than the United Methodists over the succeeding generations as their impaired machinery allowed for considerable recruitment from all sectors of society whereas the United Methodists were not to possess so wide an appeal to all classes of society.

As the Wesleyans drew towards the peak of their achievements in the 1820s the Primitive Methodists arrived on the scene, to some extent emulating Wesleyanism of two or three generations previously, attracting many from amongst Wesleyan ranks who might otherwise have pulled Wesleyanism in another direction or might have been a party to the strife of 1835 and 1850. Primitive success was sporadic in Cumbria but at times impressive and eventually wide-spread, in the same pattern of small societies across a huge area which had characterised early Wesleyanism. The Primitives excited more opposition than ever did the Wesleyans, with their

noise, antics and ability to raise large crowds of "lower class" folk seen as a threat of great proportions by a society without a police force and reliant upon remote militia and garrisons. By the 1830s Wesleyanism had become an accepted part of Cumbria, never being prone to the persecution from the Establishment which bedevilled Primitive-Anglican relations into the 1890s in parts of the county. The Primitives were indisputably poor people, their ministers as poor as their flocks, though there were exceptions on both counts. Comparison between circuit Quarterly Accounts for parallel circuits of Primitives and Wesleyans reveals that whereas the latter often possessed double the membership of the former, its finances would be quadruple in amount. Bearing in mind that the Primitives threw as much energy, effort and resources into chapel building as did the Wesleyans, that the Wesleyans possessed several times the resources of the Primitives even in a county as poor as Cumbria cannot be doubted when chapels of the two Connexions are compared. Nonetheless the Primitives found a niche for themselves, particularly with the growth of West Cumberland industries and the sudden boom in Barrow and Millom in the mid 19th century.

The opportunities afforded to all Methodist Connexions with the rise of Barrow, Millom, West Cumberland and Carlisle between 1860 and 1890 were taken by Wesleyan and Primitives. The United Methodists were a small limited sect too like the Independents which existed in some numbers in the county and neither had the organisational, evangelical and financial impetus or desire to mission widely. The little Bible Christian societies were an anachronism just as much as were the Cornishmen for whom they catered. This last fling of widespread evangelism and mission work saw Methodism enjoy great success compared to other denominations, though the Roman Catholics were regarded as a singularly successful and deadly foe into the 20th century, and one to whom the Methodists as a body were implacably opposed. Recruitment of members flourished as population rose, buildings enmeshed societies in expensive over-large edifices which had little relevance to Methodist life except on the handful of annual special occasions when most of the building was filled. The myth of packed Victorian chapels is based on the size of the remaining 19th century buildings and their emptiness today, but they were rarely half full even in the heyday of Connexionalism. The

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most worrying aspect of Methodist growth in the later 19th century was the way membership grew yet nonmembers' attendance declined sharply. Substantial evidence exists to support the view that whilst membership grew between 1880 and 1900, attending nonmembers at services were reduced to insignificant numbers as adherents were feverishly recruited and Methodism increasingly failed to make an impact on a wider society. As population fell, immigration increased, the economy became increasingly dislocated and with little flexibility became moribund, Methodism was sapped of its strength and enthusiasm and proved unable to adapt to a new role in a stagnant population and depressed economy. Country societies lost members to towns, as villages and the countryside lost their role and functions to larger centres, and though larger societies gained from this rural decline the chapels lost their various roles of social and communal centres for their areas to the rising number of places of urban secular amusements. Left with their purely religious role, the chapels and societies found it impossible to attract any but the already committed Christians rather than the many who must have been within the Methodists' sphere of influence due to their various other functions, from temperance gatherings to tea meetings and magic lantern shows. Coupled with the diversification of Methodist activities beyond religion in the later 19th century had been a process of all but complete formalisation in worship and the abandonment (in practice if not in theory) of class meetings, the repose of extempore expression. The price to be paid was the loss of members to the religiously enthusiastic yet less restricted worship of the several branches of the Brethren and to the Salvation Army, where there existed the extra incentive of no paid ministry to drain poor circuits. The Army itself did not gain much from beyond the ranks of the Christian society of the time in Cumbria and its performance here was impressive as much for its poaching of Methodist, particularly Primitive, members and officials, as for its battles with Satan and Drink.

At all dates in modern history a religious denomination will appeal to certain sectors of society, though this appeal varies with the epoch and circumstances of the time. It was thus inevitable that Methodism in its several guises would have appeal for hundreds

of Cumbrians. What restricted its appeal was the impervious nature of the Cumbrian to all religion, and the conflicts within the Connexions which broke out periodically across the 19th and into the 20th century, usually involving laymen in opposition to the ministry regarding finance and authority. Internecine disputes hampered the Methodists and used up much energy, resources and talent which would have been better employed on the majority of non-church or chapel-going Cumbrians. If the Methodists here had concentrated their energies and money on tackling the 97% of Cumbrians who were not Methodists, or on the hundreds of thousands who did not attend a place of worship, they would have enjoyed far more success. The Methodists, like the Monks, the Quakers and others before them were merely a phase of religious history in Cumbria.

The main conclusions of the thesis may be summarised thus:

1. Methodism required a nucleus of locally important or outstanding laymen in order to establish itself in Cumbria, as elsewhere; where they were unable to recruit such men during the 18th century no societies were formed.
2. Wesley's oversight was important during his lifetime and without his personal interest Methodism did not do well in the county.
3. Many of the leading county Methodists were not native Cumbrians, hailing primarily from Northumberland and Durham in the 18th century, and from the South-West of England, the industrial North and Midlands during the 19th century.
4. Perseverance was needed in order to convert the Cumbrians, impervious to organised religion throughout their history; other denominations had conspicuously failed to make their religion popular in the county.
5. The sudden rise in industry and commerce plus the growth of population concentrated in the towns in the two periods 1790/1830 and 1860/90 provided favourable conditions for recruitment by the Methodists based on the small societies already in existence.

Upheavals in society at large always benefitted the Methodists.

6. The Association and Reform disputes seriously damaged the Wesleyans, brought into existence a small new Connexion, and prevented promised Methodist expansion which threatened to make Methodism the prevailing religion amongst the minority of Cumbrians affected by organised religion.

7. The Primitives came to be the second denomination after the Wesleyans but much of their expansion occurred in the new urban, industrial and mining areas of the south and west, with the continued expansion of Carlisle throughout the 19th century and early 20th century providing further centre for expansion. In rural areas the Wesleyans were stronger, particularly amongst groups of craftsmen and independent farmers.

8. Serious disagreements in Wesleyan ranks were few after 1850, possible rebels having either left or agreed to sink their differences. The Wesleyans were able to grow apace into the 20th century but not as quickly as the expanding population, and after 1835 forfeited their hopes of being the major Church.

9. Disputes in Wesleyan ranks after 1850 concerned finance and the provision of new chapels, societies vying for limited resources available, with the new societies challenging decaying older ones for leading place in the circuits.

10. Primitive Methodist difficulties hinged on their overspending on chapels which put pressure on societies to cut costs by paying ministers as little as possible. This allowed them at times to have a flexible approach to ministerial provision and facilitated expansion by calling on local preachers to travel at minimum cost, but led to major disturbances over the cost of the ministry resulting in secessions locally and losses to other denominations.

11. All the Connexions provided multifarious social organisations to cater for every need of their members, from clothing clubs, schools and libraries to treats, outings, lecture clubs, temperance societies and organised sports. Chapels were placed in the awkward

position of having to provide for members in order to rival secular entertainments and to give alternatives to pubs, yet at the same time abandoning their purely religious functions which had proved so successful when members had less leisure time. By the later 19th century evangelism was a thing of the past and religion largely confined to chapels. Membership was increased because attendants were concentrated on by the Methodists and recruited; attendances of nonmembers started to die out and by the 1900s most people at services were members, whereas the exact opposite was true in the early 19th century.

12. Emigration out of Cumbria, usually from amongst the outsiders who had been instrumental in bringing Methodism to many villages, population stagnation and decline, and economic dislocation and misfortune, encouraged the Connexions to hang onto their chapels, an expensive burden, and to give all to their own society and chapel rather than to renew mission work and attempt expansion. The hope that fortunes would be reversed did not materialise and the circuits remained inbred and not part of the wider society.

13. The development of a dominant secular society in the later 19th and 20th century isolated the Methodists who in turn clung to Temperance and their own limited social functions, rarely partaking of the Cumbrian pastimes of houndtrails, hunting, drinking, sports and the like.

14. Whilst Methodism appealed to a large sector of society, it was like other denominations imposed from outside and effectively maintained by outsiders - ministers and immigrants - so that it possessed little of the staying power of Cumbrian occupations or, once the outsiders were weakened and depleted, the ability to regenerate itself in new guise and role.

APPENDIX A

METHODIST LAYMEN AND MINISTERS

Methodist Laymen and Ministers.

The following appendix is a detailed list of Methodist laymen and ministers who made distinctive contributions to Cumbrian circuit and society life. It is not an exhaustive one and many worthy folk have been omitted, but it aims to cover most of the leading Methodist figures from the 18th century to 1914, and most of those men and women are mentioned in the main body of the thesis. It would have been possible to write a book on some separate individuals, and rigorous censorship has been used to keep information down to a minimum unless deemed worthy of note in the wider context of Methodism.

There are 3 sections devoted respectively to the Wesleyans, to the Primitives and to the United Methodists; under each Connexion there is first a list of more detailed entries, plus sources, usually for the Connexional magazines or circuit records, followed by a second list of brief entries merely listing names, places and sources. Some of these brief entries are deceptive and the original can run to 8 or 10 pages or more of print. They have been reduced because the individuals concerned did not contribute to circuit or society history as distinctively as did those in the first detailed list. In addition, for the Primitives only, there is a list of references to places in the county, alphabetically as with the others, since this denomination frequently paid particular attention to places or circuits, unlike Wesleyans and United Methodists who usually concentrated attention on members. Where a source for a particular place contributes detailed information this has been noted.

To refer to a particular circuit ledger or minute book for details on a person or incident is not practicable, since it is common, for example, to find a minister's work praised and described in many volumes of records, and for many dates. Laymen too when outstanding as officials would be entered hundreds of times in circuit records making an adequate listing impossible. Reference is needed to the particular circuit or other sources used,

entered elsewhere in the thesis, for the dates and circuit involved.

The following pages give brief biographies for several hundred men and women, together with sources for their full biographies. Inevitably it omits as many as it includes and its limitations are clearly recognisable. Its value likewise will be obvious for the reader. Readily available information in detailed (and brief) form for 87 Wesleyans (112 in brief), 66 Primitives (145 in brief, 72 place references), and 42 United Methodists (24 in brief).

Abbreviations

Arm. Mag. Arminian Magazine (1778 to 1797).
 Meths. Mag. Methodist Magazine (1798 to 1821).
 Wes. Meth. Mag. Wesleyan Methodist Magazine (1822 to 1913).

All these are continuations.

Prim. Meth. Mag. Aldersgate and Primitive Methodist Magazine
 1820/1899, continued as the Primitive
 Methodist Magazine 1900 to 1932.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. Wesleyan Association Magazine 1838/1857.
 Un. Meth. F C. United Methodist Free Church Magazine
 1858 to 1891.
 Meth. Mon. Methodist Monthly 1892 to 1907.
 Un. Meth. Mag. United Methodist Magazine 1908 to 1932.

Where there is an entry such as :
 "Circuit Records", this means refer to the
 relevant circuit's records.

Wesleyan Methodists.

WESLEYAN METHODISTS

Main Entries:

Abbott George

One of the most popular ministers stationed in the county and serving in Penrith, Carlisle, Ambleside, Dumfries, Kirkby Stephen and Kendal between 1852 and 1895. His family remained in the county after his death. Abbott was chairman of the District and became famous for his conciliation in difficult cases - for instance at Appleby where the quarterly meeting wished to reduce ministerial stipends, and where a bitter controversy raged when the business was advertised in the Methodist Times; it was settled amicably by Abbott.

Allason Brothers

Bobbin mill workers in the 1840s near Ulpha, and small tenant farmers, very active in helping Methodism throughout the area and starting preaching in many villages from the 1800s. They had loaned money to the circuit on a number of occasions for building projects, the last being repaid to them around 1856 (on Broughton chapel) when both brothers were over 80 and wished to have their estate properly in hand for when they died.

Allen George and Esther

George from Kendal and his wife Esther from Dalton raised a large family and 3 of their sons, Richard, Samuel and William entered the Wesleyan Ministry. The family was one of the earliest Wesleyan stalwarts in an area hostile to Methodism; Richard served in several county stations.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1831 p.214, 1836 p.157

Ashburner John

Born at Wakefield 1793, moving to Dalton as a baby, and from a well-off family; due to an unwise second marriage his father lost control of his first wife's estate which was placed in the hands of the trustees for John. He attended Urswick Grammar School and was taught to despise Methodists, enjoying the occasional appearance of preachers as a chance to taunt and persecute; apprenticed to cotton spinner Elijah Stonehouse of Ulverston and succeeded him in the business. Stonehouse was a Quaker who first helped the local Methodists by financing their chapel and giving advice on accounts etc., and John came to appreciate their good points, being converted by the three Ashburner brothers (no relations) who themselves were converted when on business to Preston. Robert, from about 1818, became a devoted Wesleyan, started and ran Sunday Schools, and guaranteed the many and various circuit and society debts since few others had money. He met problems - "It was no trifling event, in the estimation of the vain world, for a person holding a respectable position in society to make a profession of religion, and especially to avow himself a Methodist. Mr. Ashburner at once lost caste, and met scorn and illwill". All the Ashburners felt the Established Church in their area offered them nothing, hence their complete rejection of it and great support for Methodism.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1860 p.396 and the circuit records.

Ashton S

Minister in charge of Lancaster circuit 1800, covering the area as far as Kendal, and responsible for restoring peaceful relations between preachers and members after his predecessor had serious problems, and had expelled large numbers who disagreed with his actions.

See Bunting Transcripts.

Atkinson Mitford

Born at Kirkby Stephen in 1790, prevented from becoming a minister and married to a vicar's daughter; trustee and steward for various chapels and in business in Carlisle prior to 1835 when he was "the **ONLY** leader who stood firm" against the secession - not strictly true, but the only one who stood up and openly supported Dunn.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1863 p.286. See Carlisle and the Warrenites.

Ballingall Thomas

The man who prevented a secession at Whitehaven in 1851 by a combination of firmness with tact; an experienced and moderate preacher who served at Kendal, Ulverston and Alston, where his qualities were much needed.

Bamford John

Minister who retired for health reasons to Arnside in 1883; his daughter opened Oakfield School there which became a famous establishment in the north west for young ladies' education. Her husband, Herbert Gamble, was of Methodist extraction but an Independent Minister, the school being run on Methodist lines and providing a large congregation for visiting preachers. With the retirement of other ministers and a number of Methodist members, Arnside grew into a considerable society of Ulverston Circuit in the 1890s and 1900s, and remains so today.

Beardmore W. G.

Successful third Home Missionary to Ambleside and responsible for the new Windermere Chapel, Grasmere success and 200 scholars in the Ambleside Sunday School. He was able to get coverage of his work there too, unlike his predecessor and successors.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1868 p.373; See WHS Journal Cumbria No.4.

Beech Hugh

One of the few ministers to have a biography, written by his son, which mentions Cumbrian circuit work. Beech came to Carlisle in 1837 and spent two years reconstructing a circuit destroyed in 1835. He returned for one of his last posts in 1849 and had to face a very unusual event: a reoccurrence of controversy on a wide scale in a circuit badly affected in 1835. He was a minister of moderate ability but particularly kind and known for his common sense, but the situation was beyond him and he did not know what to do about it. He tried to ignore the rebels who mercilessly attacked him, and when forced to act he did so quietly and without fuss, but the rebels were so organised and strong, that it made little difference and the city society suffered disastrous losses again.

See his letters to Bunting, his autobiography and Carlisle and the Warrenites section.

Bell Robert

The excise officer of Longtown to whom John Wesley penned a letter, and who successfully introduced Methodism into Carlisle despite considerable opposition in the 1760s.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.96. 1847 p.768.

Bell Thomas

From a large family converted to the Wesleyans in the 1770s and 1780s at Alston, and all experiencing various crises over their spiritual state. He "had the pleasure" of seeing most of his family dying "in the Lord", and was a man of substance in later life and able to give generously to the causes at Alston and Garrigill to where he retired.

Meths. Mag. 1815 p.412.

Benson Joseph

The most famous Cumbrian Methodist, raised in the Eden Valley near Gamblesby, and brought to the attention of John Wesley who promoted him as a teacher with success at Trevecca before the split with the Countess of Huntingdon. An outstanding minister, scholar and teacher who like most able Cumbrians had to seek his fortune outside the native county.

See Wesley's Letters and Journal.

Braithwaite John

Born in West Cumberland and raised in Whitehaven, he was influenced by John Crosby, the superintendent, to become a local preacher despite the objections of his Anglican family in the 1790s; never happy as an apprentice clerk he supplied a sick minister and was so successful that he entered the ministry. Stationed for over 30 years across the country, Braithwaite was three times in Whitehaven and once in Carlisle, married wealthy William Hogarth's niece and heir Mary Johnson, and inherited much property in his native town to become the main property owner there in the 1800s. Despite pressure the Stationing Committee refused to make him a supernumary and he continued in the fulltime work whilst his brother and his close friend and biographer Robert Dickinson, ironworks owner, ran his estate. Braithwaite lost his wife young after she had 8 children in 11 years and eventually returned to Whitehaven, only to find that due to local problems within societies he had to be made superintendent. This exacerbated his heart condition and he died crossing for a holiday to the Isle of Man in 1822. He often came back to Whitehaven area despite the problems of distance and travel and was thought to be the only man to whom all sides in disputes amongst the contentious members of West Cumberland would listen.

See "Methodism in Whitehaven"; Meths. Mag. 1811
pp.326, 287; Wes. Meth. Mag. 1822 p.415; See his biography.

Briggs John

Not a Methodist; but closely connected with them since the circuit gave him the use of their Cartmel schoolroom in 1816 provided he entertained visiting preachers. His father often heard Methodist preaching, hence the link, but the two schools he opened were not successes, and nor were his many schemes for publishing. Briggs' "Lonsdale Magazine" was illfated, (1820 to 1822), and he died bankrupt and ruined in 1824. Both the "Lonsdale" and his biography, published to raise funds for his children and widow, are expensive collectors' items today.

Briscombe Walter

Appointed to Ambleside as successor to Home Missionary Henry Marchbank in 1865. Briscombe was a young minister with a new bride and found the travelling, preaching, weather and local hostility too much in this remote neglected outpost of the Kendal circuit. He moved to Ulverston where his successes were many, and then to Barrow in the 1870s where distance was no problem but where the slums and teeming migrant population posed new challenges. He had several breakdowns in health, recuperating in Switzerland after his Barrow work and in Arnside after Ulverston. He was engaged in controversy with Roman Catholics and others whilst in Cumbria, entering into popular debate and into print over the issues raised and becoming a sort of Protestant hero.

See Journal No.4 of the WHS Cumbria Branch; his Biography was written in order to raise funds for his last circuit, Preston.

Brunskill Mary

Born and raised in Long Marton and apparently no relation of Stephen Brunskill. She was a Wesleyan whilst young in the 1780s and converted her husband. After his death she paid for a year's work by the Rev. A. Hutchinson for the circuit and gave to 14 chapel building projects in Penrith and Brough circuits. Methodists with a

plan or object in mind merely needed to see her and she would grant them aid, leaving £250 in her will for Methodist work.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1824 p.427.

Brunskill Mary

She was the daughter of people who had been Inghamites prior to their disastrous collapse in the early 1760s, and Wesleyan preachers had quickly capitalised on this opening to establish preaching in Winton and other Westmorland areas previously full of Inghamites. This family was related to the Brunskills of Orton but must not be confused with Stephen Brunskill's family who were Anglicans. Another Mary Brunskill was of a completely different family at Long Marton. This Winton branch hosted preachers from 1758 to 1829, Mary marrying a Monkwearmouth Methodist called John Robinson.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1837 p.400.

Brunskill Stephen

Born at Orton in 1748, converted in the 1770s to Methodism along with his family and becoming first an itinerant slater, then milkman and farmer. In the 1780s he was responsible for using his milk delivery as a means of reaching a wider audience in Kendal for his Methodism, and established it on a permanent basis in the town despite his business sufferings! Left property through his wife's relations he retired to concentrate on promoting the building of chapels and establishing Methodism throughout the Westmorland villages.

See his Autobiography; Journal No.2 of the WHS Cumbrian Branch.

Butterwith John

Born at Sedbergh in 1804 of a business family and first influenced by the Wesleyans when lodging with a Methodist landlady in Kendal when an apprentice, he held every office in the circuit

open to a layman, including superintendent of two Sunday Schools in outlying villages and leader of three classes due to a shortage of experienced men.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1876 p.673.

Caine N

Millom mineowner, a Baptist, who gave the Wesleyans at Broughton in Furness £50 per annum provided the circuit stationed a minister there fulltime, he believing that the Wesleyans offered most to the mine and quarry workers of the locality. This grant increased to £100 and was paid from 1873 until his death in 1888, but it did not do much for the Wesleyans and few members were recruited. Caine likewise aided the Primitives.

Casson Hodgson

Casson was born and raised in Workington and after remarkable revival successes there entered the ministry, serving first in Scotland where he had a wretched time, then in Kendal, Brough (Penrith and Appleby) and at Kendal and Dumfries. He had a deserved reputation for eccentricities, and by bizarre methods - like pretending to hang himself, ringing bells in villages at 4 a.m. and lecturing drinkers in pubs - attracted huge audiences. His preaching was down to earth and simply phrased, and was greatly appreciated by Cumbrian folk. He was once faced with too many hearers for the chapel, so he requested all who were there only for appearances to leave to make way for those who really wished to hear the gospel (and it worked). At Appleby he married into the Dent family, acquired considerable property there and a vote in county elections, where he delighted in voting Liberal just to upset other landowners already appalled at his behaviour and work. His wife died young and he remarried a Workington widow; he had great success in the North East and was unable to return to Cumbria due to his popularity. Probably the most successful Cumbrian Methodist evangelist.

See his biography; every circuit produced stories of his startling deeds and humour, still remembered today. (He was in Cumbrian circuits circa 1817/25).

Clarke John

Converted at Brampton when on business, Clarke lived on Alston Moor and was a property and landowner known as a good landlord once he was converted in 1789. He entertained free all ministers and defended them against attacks by a number of members around 1800 in an area famous for the independence and awkwardness of its population.

Meths. Mag. 1811 p.313.

Cleasby John

When he died in 1838 aged 88 Cleasby had been a Methodist for 60 years after being converted working in the hayfields of Stainmore. He started regular preaching in Kirkby Stephen in 1813 and paid for 2 chapels to be built. For 40 years he hosted all preachers and took the main part in preventing the Associationists from Appleby having much success in the area.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1838 p.551.

Corson James

Apprenticed to a watchmaker in Wigton he became a youthful convert to Methodism in the 1820s, was a backslider and finally returned to the fold in 1830. He wished to become a minister but was not strong enough to do so; he was able to oppose Carlisle Associationists trying to stir-up a secession in his circuit. He became a watchmaker in Maryport and made a fortune, which, by all accounts, ruined his health and led to his premature death aged 46 in 1857 at Lorton.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1859 p.146.

Cowen James and Jane

Held between them 10 official posts in Wigton society and friends of Corson, they supported him in 1835.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1832 p.158. 1833 p.864.

Cragg Esther

Sister to the three Allen brothers, ministers, and mother of a minister in Canada, for 59 years a Methodist and married to local preacher Robert Cragg in Ulverston.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1864 p.192.

Creighton William

An Ambleside man converted whilst a gardener in West Cumberland in the 1840s and who put Methodism in Ambleside on a permanent footing with the financial aid of the Independent minister, Coombs.

Crone John

Born at Abbeytown in 1807, educated at the village school and apprenticed to a Carlisle grocer after working as a farm labourer. In the city he was encouraged to attend the Methodist services and moved in the 1820s to Liverpool where he worked in his uncle's sugar refining business. He attended the Brunswick chapel and married the daughter of Joseph Russell, a shipbuilder. He and his wife inherited a huge fortune and retired to Penrith in the 1850s, but there is nothing to suggest why they chose that town. Due to their efforts Penrith became one of the richest of the Cumbrian circuits and owned property worth £18,000 in 1892, when 25 years previously it was only £4,000. It seems certain that they gave to every chapel project in Cumbria between 1860 and 1890 and to most in the North East, and were in permanent demand for opening services and stone laying ceremonies; they gave £2,000 and a new manse worth £1,000 to the new

project in Penrith in 1873, and over £15,000 to other county Methodist projects.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1892 p.529. p.647 and the circuit records.

Crosby John

In charge of Whitehaven 1790/93, he had to cope with the disappearance of the Whitehaven chapel due to mining subsidence in 1792. James Hogarth heard of the plight of the Methodists and gave his new chapel for their use when the Lowthers, jealous of his success, refused to let the Bishop consecrate it. Crosby enrolled Hogarth's help and two manses and much charity for poor members followed Hogarth's gift. It was hardly surprising that Crosby viewed the subsidence as a miracle.

Meths. Mag. 1819 p.7.

Crossfield F. J.

Of a North Lancashire business family, F. J. Crossfield made a fortune as a timber merchant and financier in Barrow, encouraging the growth of the new town and of its Methodist circuit but retiring later to the pleasanter Ulverston circuit. His wife was a Gibson from Arnside Tower, centre for Methodists in that area. It was Crossfield's influence and money which had most say in both Barrow and Ulverston Methodism, and he very much influenced circuit developments, including the matter of the central chapel.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1889 p.558 and the circuit records.

Dall Robert

Preacher in Dumfries three times, in Penrith, and twice at Whitehaven, Dall was a Scot and did long remembered work in the county; he was responsible for early chapels in Dumfries and elsewhere, which did not win approval from Wesley.

Dalton William

He died at Dufton in 1837 aged only 39. When his family failed to obtain a curacy for him he was allowed to do what he liked, which included hosting preachers and introducing Methodism into a number of villages when he found the Established Church wanting. He travelled in the U.S.A. and wrote a guide book to it, and found that the Methodist preachers offered the only chance of intellectual and learned conversation in the rural area not noted for its educated inhabitants. When he got bored he evangelised Teesdale and spent considerable amounts on encouraging Methodist work. He preached the funeral sermon for his closest friend John Crosby, the minister who died at Kendal in 1832.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1837 p.955.

Dernaley Abel

Minister faced with determined and entrenched opposition to his authority at Appleby - the Crosby, Dent and Craig families and a majority of leaders and local preachers. He had the worry of disputed chapel ownership, shared accommodation with the Association men and financial harrassment. Bunting was of no great help and the circuit was ruined, though Dernaley was able and reasonable enough, and served four times in Cumbria.

See his letter to Bunting and the reply. See section on Appleby and the Warrenites.

Dickinson Robert

Born at Seaton and managing partner of the iron works, Dickinson's family joined the Wesleyans in the 1760s and gave land and money to the first chapel. As local agent for the Auxiliary Bible Society, Missions Society, and the Seamen's Mission he was in close contact with ministers and was the great friend and biographer of John Braithwaite. He died in 1826 aged 51.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.714

Dixon Elizabeth

Born at Bowes and raised at Barnard Castle, she married and removed to Appleby and found the Methodist cause very weak and persecuted by local Anglicans. Penrith was much more to her liking and she praised the "wholesome and important influence" of the Wesleyans in that place.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1831 p.875.

Dunn Thomas

Minister in charge at Carlisle in 1835 when he was faced with a most damaging conflict and proved unable to cope. A majority of the circuit members and 80% of the officials abandoned Methodism for the Association and Dunn, seemingly highly strung and nervous (though this was not surprising considering the traumatic experiences he had in the fight) was unable to be calm and level headed, worsening matters by wholesale expulsion of classes if their leaders were in the Association. One wonders how he fared in Alston in 1827 amongst the leadminers and hillfarmers.

See section on Carlisle and the Warrenites.

Evens G. Branwell

The well known "Romany" of radio and books, famous for his evangelism, his "Vardo" and his appreciation of nature. He was a minister in Carlisle from 1913 to 1927 and enjoyed outstanding success amongst the city population and the thousands of wartime workers drafted into the munition factories. He was involved deeply with the building of the Central Hall, an imposing building still occupied by the Methodists, and his preaching was famous for the rapport he struck with the congregation. His books and radio series brought national fame; it was with reluctance that he took his leave of the Cumbrian countryside.

Fairer Christopher

If the Crones were the financiers of Cumbrian Methodism, Fairer was the solicitor for legal transactions of the Methodists and advised most of the circuits and societies from the 1860s to the 1900s. Born and raised locally, he was town clerk, had his own practice, was a member of most official bodies and governor of numerous schools, whilst being clerk to virtually every organisation in the area. He was chairman of the Penrith Conservative party until he joined the Liberals over Tarriff Reform and combined his involvement in politics with promoting Methodism on an impressive scale, particularly in the declining village causes. One of only two Methodists listed in the 1906 County Worthies volume. The circuit records are full of his work and statements, and he organised the great chapel building expansion of the Penrith circuit with the money from the Crones.

Finley John

Moving from Durham to Cumberland in search of mine work in 1790, Finley found no Methodists in Harrington and became a backslider like his friend William Gladders. When he worked at John Laybourne's mine he joined the Methodists at Parton and briefly a leader, though very shy because of his uncouth manners and very rough speech. Like a number of early Cumbrian Methodists, he was killed in a mining explosion in 1797.

Arm. Mag. 1797 p.553.

Gate Robert

Born and raised at Scales near Keswick, Gate(s) was apprenticed to a Penrith Sadler but terms for partnership could not be reached and he sought work in the north-east. There he met a Durham girl whom he later married, and was converted to Methodism by his fellow Cumbrian John Braithwaite, the two meeting each other because of their similar accents amongst all the strangers. He set up business

in Penrith in the 1800s and his shop was the main Methodist centre in the town. He lodged and fed preachers free of charge and paid most Methodist bills until the circuit was self-supporting in the 1820s. As well as this he reared a family, ran a successful business and walked all day Sunday for at least three sermons preached throughout the villages. His own parents disowned him for his work and for many years he had a hard time and no hospitality on his travels. Eventually the circuit flourished and by his death in 1866 there were nearly 1000 members and 20 chapels; he started the "Good Samaritans Society" to aid the poor, sick and old in his shop, and was co-founder of the first Sunday schools, tract societies and ragged school in the town. Gate was considered the father of Penrith circuit Methodism and was venerated by the 1860s when he was over 80, though like Irving he was concerned at the decline of open air and camp meetings and the vast number of chapels and debts on them. His son-in-law, John Pattinson, was a town solicitor and Methodist worker for many years. Gate was the man who had to sort out the trouble which threatened against several unpopular ministers in 1850 and was ever the peacemaker.

See his biography; Wes. Meth. Mag. 1866 p.1152; He held many posts in the circuit and mentions of him and his work are innumerable in circuit records.

Gill John

Though many ministers became mentally depressed or physically ill because of their work in Cumbria, and other factors, and occasionally had serious mental breakdowns, Gill is the only known one to commit suicide, by cutting his throat, in Ulverston. It was given some prominence in the press unfavourable to the Methodists in 1837 for this act.

Gladders William

Gladders was born near Newcastle in 1745 and moved at 17 to

West Cumberland, working in several mines until settling in Workington in 1766 to raise a family. By 1769 he was in Little Clifton and reconverted to the Methodists after some years of back-sliding. What turned him into a loyal member was hearing gross slanders against the preachers of the area whilst at a typical Cumberland drinking bout in Cockermouth, and thereafter he energetically took Methodist preaching, for the first time in some cases, to many mining villages. He formed the Maryport society in 1782 and Parton in 1789, which illustrates the lack of permanent success before that date despite the large mining population.

Meths. Mag. 1815 p.321.

Gregg Robert

Leading laymen of Kendal circuit throughout the mid 19th century and responsible for Kirkby Lonsdale, Hutton Roof and other chapel building schemes.

Gunson Family

From the earliest permanent beginnings of Methodism in Furness the Gunsons were members; James gave the site for Millom chapel, other relations supported Sparkbridge, Ulverston and other causes, and a number were local preachers including three brothers. Their sister, Mary, was first woman missionary to China in the early 1860s. They were yeoman farmers and gladly spent all their cash on Methodist objects.

Hall Thomas

A native of Melmerby and heard Wesley preach as a child. When he died in 1829 aged 73 he had been a Methodist local preacher for 38 years, a member of society for 50 and host to ministers for 30. It was considered of significance that he died whilst prayers were being said in the chapel.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1830 o.852.

Hargreaves J. E.

Home Missionary in Carlisle's Irish slum quarters, Caldewgate 1864/67, and enjoying great success there. The city Methodists were increasingly concerned at the lack of Methodist influence in that area and financed a mission which took over a weaving shed, made it into a chapel, and soon had 400 at services. A large Sunday school was commenced and a chapel built soon after Hargreaves left. Part of his work involved organising missions to notorious pubs in the city and countering the many and obvious attractions offered by the city's Race Week.

Wes. Meth Mag. 1865 p.277. p.468. p.1044.

Hodgson Jane

"The aged saint of Carlisle Methodism", she died in 1828 aged 92 after joining the Methodists amongst the first 6 members in the early 1770s. This took great courage and her husband was alleged to have repeatedly beaten her to make her give up the society, though he gave up before she did and later joined the society. She kept in repair the old barn used by the society and was unpaid caretaker for many years of the meeting house on West Walls. She hosted ministers and Wesley himself, and near the end of her life had a pension raised by local Methodists to keep her out of the workhouse. Communion was given in her home, and services held there when she became blind and crippled.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1828 p.428

Holmes Myles

Author of a work on Ambleside circuit Methodism, himself a local man but removing for work to Lancashire. His book was a tribute to his sister Fanny, Mrs. Barnett, a society member.

Huddleston William

Minister at Ulverston, Penrith, twice at Kendal and twice at Whitehaven between 1822 and 1848, and father of Amelia Barr, later the famous American novelist. How much time she spent in Cumbria is not known, nor how much it influenced her life and work.

Hudson Josiah

A preacher appointed to Kendal when young and inexperienced, a circuit which measured 40 by 18 miles and which weakened Hudson's health considerably since he was obliged to walk everywhere. As junior man he had the task of seeing to the needs of the farthest flung societies, and was much happier when moved to take charge of the larger societies of Penrith circuit in 1841.

Hyde James

Dumfries minister who in 1837 refused to discipline an official openly guilty of misconduct; this case led to Hyde being suspended and then leaving the ministry, and it was never in doubt that he had a serious mental breakdown.

Irving James

An eccentric local preacher, born in the Uldale Fells country and spending most of his youth as a farm labourer in Matterdale in the 1830s. By the 1840s he had met his first Methodist preachers and became a local preacher whose special talent was leading camp meetings. As a successful revivalist and open air worker he disagreed with the attempts by the circuit ministers at Penrith to decrease outdoor camps and almost left the Connexion when they banned an American mission worker from their chapels. He worked in the Shap quarries and wherever possible lectured his fellow workers, ending up a coal merchant in Penrith. A little book about his life was published after his death in 1886 and recalled his fiery and zealous mission work, and his longstanding quarrel with the ministers and quarterly

meeting as they built more and more chapels and decreased the amount of open air work. Irving, disgusted at this policy of not taking religion to the working people, broke with the circuit in 1882 and invited the Salvation Army band and workers from Carlisle; he financed their early work, provided free board, lodging and a meeting hall, and enjoyed their noise and colour as they worked the poorer quarters of the town.

See his biography, and Journal No.1 of the WHS Cumbria Branch.

Kershaw Jonathan

A Kendal tea seller with his wife, and local preacher; he was the first to hold regular services in Dentdale and Sedbergh area, around 1803 and settled in Dent where he organised several chapels amongst the knitters who attended services and paid for the buildings out of the funds raised by their knitting during services.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1835 p.138 and Centenary Brochures of that locality.

Mann John

He introduced Methodism preaching into Abbeytown at his home, in the 1820s, and exercised complete control of the society in firm paternalistic manner until his death in 1852.

Marriner Alfred

County raised and educated Marriner married a rich widow and settled into a comfortable existence at Penrith, being agent for the Stockton railway as a part-time job. A magistrate and chairman of the Penrith Liberal party, he was an active county councillor and like his friend Christopher Fairer a prominent politician locally and in county Methodist circles. He was born in 1855 and was over 20 years younger than Fairer, but he too was listed in the County Worthies of 1906.

Mercer John

Minister who served many years in the North-West and who carefully analysed and explained the problems and difficulties of both ministers and circuits in Cumbria in the early 19th century.

See Bunting Transcripts.

Mitchinson John

Using his home and joiners shop Mitchinson ran the Kirkbride society from the 1860s until the 1900s. He and his members were fierce rivals of the Primitive society, and the Wesleyans suffered serious losses when Mitchinson's monopoly of official posts - Sunday school superintendent, chapel steward and treasurer, leader, local preacher - was questioned. He denied trying to rule the society but there was a heated dispute and the seceders joined the Primitives. Into the 1930s neither society would have truck with the other and disagreements continued between the two. Mitchinson disliked a paid ministry, like many Cumbrians, but would ruin himself in the service of his local chapel and cause.

Moffit William

A locally famous (or notorious!) Wesleyan from Hethersgill who after working as a draper in Lancashire became an itinerant one in this county and ended with a very prosperous business in Carlisle. In the last quarter of the 19th century he deliberately stirred up the Carlisle circuit with provocative remarks at meetings and in services, including attacking the Stationing Committee for sending (in his words) the "dregs of the ministerial barrel" to country circuits rather than the most able men, who were needed to revitalise the locality, and attacking the Methodists for having too much truck with the Anglicans. It was said of him that he

"embarrassed the Bishop of Carlisle once a week", the circuit once a month, with his comments. There was some criticism of his words, though many had a sneaking regard for this passionate and verbose man who said what other members were afraid to say. Moffitt delighted in criticising the clergy, the landowners and Tories, his words being scathing about the Dean and Chapter in particular. Though some of what he said one must take with a pinch of salt, there was no doubt in people's minds that what he said had some truth in it; he detested the respectability of the denomination, its failure to get out of chapels and into the open air amidst the workers, its obsession with chapel building on a grand scale, and the inadequacies of the circuit system in coping with Cumbria. He thrived on argument and enjoyed discomfitting those in authority, which made him something of an outcast, if a popular one.

See his Autobiography and copious newspaper reports on his activities.

Moister Nancy

First hostess of the Methodist preachers in Ulverston around 1800, caretaker of the meeting room and one of the first members in Furness. Her husband was a cane and basket maker named Geoffrey, and the Wesleyans were nicknamed "Giffrites" after her.

Moore George

A famous county philanthropist who gave most of his large fortune to good causes throughout England. He was born at Mealsgate and apprenticed to a Wigton draper before seeking work in London in 1825. He made much money in the retail clothing business and retired to his huge new mansion, Whitehall, at Mealsgate. He was not a Methodist but gave much help to all the circuit projects of the third quarter of the century until run over by a cart in Carlisle.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1879 p.30/36.

Penrice Daniel

Lay evangelist stationed at Bothel in the 1890s and 1900s in order to promote the obviously declining village causes. A most successful man with great appeal to the country folk, due to his simple uncouth manners and speech and the way he was very much one of the locals.

Punshon William Morley

Outstanding minister in West Cumberland and Carlisle in the 1840s as a probationer, where he made a reputation for brilliant preaching. From then on he was appointed to the best circuit, rising eventually to be president of both Canadian and British conferences. His knowledge of the Carlisle circuit enabled him to write a scathing pamphlet about the Reform rebels in the city in 1850.

See Carlisle and the Reform Issue.

Randles Sir John Scurrah

Prominent West Cumberland industrialist and one of the few Conservative Members of Parliament in Methodist ranks in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He helped Workington and other circuits generously and held posts such as trustee; he spent much of his later life in Keswick where his generous gifts encouraged the circuit to be renamed with Keswick replacing Cockermouth as the head, though his promises of great support if it were made a separate circuit from Cockermouth were not taken up (about 1914).

Rigg John and Tyson

These two men, father and son, were molecatchers in the Lakes for most of the 19th century and local preachers on Keswick and Cockermouth plan (and on Whitehaven prior to the formation of the circuit). John was a native of Bowness-on-Windermere and his aggressive evangelism brought both praise, fame and notoriety. The Cumberland Pacquet of December 22nd 1835 criticised his behaviour:

"Friend John, when next thou lendest a trifle of money to a distressed schoolmaster, keep the secret to thyself and do not blazon it abroad, under pretence of honouring one who pays his debts. Thou knowest, or oughtest to know, who has said 'when thou doest thine alms, do not send a trumpet before thee, as the Hypocrites do in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto thee, they have their reward'". This was addressed by the editor to "John Rigg, molecatcher". It was John who steadfastly opposed the purchase of a circuit horse for the Keswick minister since he felt it to be wrong for local preachers to walk everywhere yet have to pay towards a minister's transport when he was doing the same work. Both men put their eccentric behaviour to good use and built several chapels and raised much money for circuit work, but never for the use of the ministers. Tyson, when being told Dearham chapel would not have its extension for some months because of the delay in form filling and red tape, simply got up early one day and built on two rooms in 24 hours; the circuit authorities condemned his action but had to accept it as "fait accompli". Tyson, like John, was a rough uncompromising character but found lavish praise at his death in the Carlisle Journal of May 5th 1885. Two of the real characters of the county.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1847 p.950 and the circuit records.

Rigg John

Rigg was born at Little Strickland, eldest son of John Rigg, "yeoman, builder and farmer", in 1786. The Riggs were "a simple, honest Godfearing family", though "that part of Westmorland was remarkable for the general sobriety and virtue of the inhabitants", unlike most of Cumbria in the late 18th century. Like many sons of well off yeomen it was planned to train him for the Anglican ministry and to that end he attended Thrimby grammar school for a classical education. However, it seemed that at 14 years old the lad was allowed to choose his own career and he trained as a stonemason for his fathers firm which at that time was working on Lowther Castle. After his training was finished John continued to work for

the firm, though a falling boulder crushed his right hand and thereafter it was only with pain and difficulty that he could write or use it. Around the 1800s John's mother was accustomed to listen with admiration to the few Wesleyan preachers who traversed the area, and John came under their influence too, being converted in 1803 and a local preacher under Brough in 1803. As foreman of his father's firm he had his own horses and carriage, and took great pleasure in helping the many poor preachers to their preaching places. Encouraged by the preachers and his family he became a minister in 1808 and travelled until retirement in 1855, when he came back to Salkeld and for two years enjoyed his considerable estate, dying in 1857.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1859 p.11.

Reynolds J. F.

Successor from 1867 to 1870 of Hargreaves in charge of the Caldeygate mission and particularly keen to attack the work of the Roman Catholic priests. He finally opened the new chapel in 1868 and continued the large new Sunday school attached to it in the old weaving shed.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1868 p.276. p.468. p.1045.

Smith George

Appointed to Appleby in 1803 Smith was the pioneer preacher throughout the area from Kirkoswald to Penrith and Brough. He had to beg for the rent of his house because the new circuit (Brough) had no income, and systematically tackled each village and town with a few supporters. A new building intended as a theatre was given to the society at Kirkoswald formed by Smith because of his entertaining and impressive sermons; Kirkby Stephen authorities tried to arrest him but failed; and he tackled Shap fair by preaching to a crowd of drunken workers. It was thanks to him that most of the little societies were established though his experiences were often hair-raising and he was often threatened with violence.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1833 p.73.

Spencer Edward

An early 19th century Methodist in Brough who left £650 to the circuit in 1850, to be used for the benefit of poor Wesleyans in the town and for the society, or for the circuit if a minister were stationed there. This gift was responsible for moving one of the two ministers out of Appleby and was in the hands of six of his Methodist friends.

Taylor Christopher

A learned and intellectual local preacher in and around Dent and Sedbergh, Taylor spent all his fortune on building chapels and helping the circuit to pay its way in the 1860s. Fortunately one of his converts, William Moister, took over the work in the 1870s of financing the circuit.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1875 p.187.

Taylor William

Home Missionary in Barrow in 1875; he advocated all young men wishing to do overseas mission work to come to Barrow in order to see that they were needed at home to attack the great problems facing the churches in that town rather than going abroad to seek challenges. Barrow continued to offer "all the aggressive work possible" for preachers.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1875 p.947.

Thompson George

A pioneer preacher in Carlisle around the time of John Braithwaite's residence in the new circuit. Thompson was born at Cockermouth in 1774, well educated and of a good family, apprenticed to a hatter, but went to London in 1799 after the death of his new

bride in childbirth. There he met a number of exiled Cumbrians who were Methodists, and his thoughts were turned to that denomination by them. In 1800, by then a member of society, he settled in business in Carlisle, was appointed a leader in the same year because of the shortage of educated officials, and became local preacher due to Braithwaite's influence. When trying to convert the crowds at Carlisle Races in 1801 he was beaten up and had to be carried home, but the display had some effect: a man who witnessed the incident told his family of the affair, and his aunt, a Mrs. Gale, considered locally as a peculiar woman about whom there had been scandalous tales for years, asked Thompson to visit her. An instant friendship was started and he acted as intermediary for her in the distribution of considerable sums of money to the poor of the town. When Braithwaite was absent (as he was periodically) on business in 1802 he asked Thompson to take his place. This he did so satisfactorily that he was called on to travel that year, but all of his posts until he died in 1839 were outside the county, except for brief spells in Carlisle and Whitehaven.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1843 p.444.

Todhunter William

Born at Brigham and converted in 1815 during a theatre performance in Whitehaven when aged 20. His sudden "awareness of his own sinfulness" encouraged him to join the Wesleyans and with the help of a sailor and his own employer he became a leader and Sunday school superintendent for 40 years in the town and later in Carlisle. Because of his work he was influential in Sunday school formation throughout the area and gave advice on the running of schools.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1866 p.1052.

Walker William

A member of the steel family of Whitehaven, like Randles generous benefactors to the Methodists there and in Keswick to where he had retired in the early 20th century. He gave £1,000 to the new Whitehaven chapel in 1877, and considerable gifts to the Keswick circuit for the Southey Street Chapel, and a new manse, total value over £3,000.

Walton Adam

Agent for the Quaker London Lead Company for some years on Alston Moor, and careful to see that Methodist interest were looked over there. The company were pleased to employ Methodists because of their sober and regular habits, thrift and hardwork.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1843 p.329.

Watmough Abraham

A most experienced minister who faced a mass secession of officials and a majority of circuit members at Whitehaven in 1835. He was a dogmatic and resolute man determined to maintain the circuit intact even if it meant expelling every member, and after taking stock of the situation he proved more than a match for the Warrenites, both in meetings and in print. Watmough met serious trouble too in the Reform issue in 1850 and was a "hard liner" when it came to connexional discipline, interpreting connexional rules as he thought they were meant to be interpreted and altering meanings to suit the contingencies of the situation. His was the most ruthless and calculated action effected by a minister or laymen in Methodism in the county and led to the vast losses of the circuit, which never recovered.

See Whitehaven and the Warrenites.

Watts Thomas

According to his obituarist, one of the few yeomen of the area not absorbed in drinking, hunting and the militia, and one of the few to be interested in religion and education. Watts was born near Carlisle in 1779 and after having two local preachers as travelling companions about 1804 decided to see what the Methodists had to offer; he enjoyed their services and became one of the few farmers of the country areas at that date to have preaching in his home. He later moved to Plumpton, between Carlisle and Penrith, and set up his kitchen as a small meeting place for the first Methodist Services in the village in 1825. His obituarist noted with satisfaction the part Watts played in opposing the "restless spirits" of 1835 who "tried to unsettle and to tempt" good members from their circuit loyalty.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1849 p.337.

Wilkinson Robert

First preacher stationed at Carlisle in 1768, his first post and a baptism of fire. Despite early help he and others were thrown in a dungheap, beaten up, and generally persecuted, and when complaining to magistrates had dogs set on them. He was stoned in Botchergate and met similar resistance elsewhere.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.96.

Wilson William

Born in 1816 in Hensingham of a Methodist family, and a local preacher first on plan when the Warrenite strife had reduced services by over half. He was the first Cumbrian to attend the new Theological Institute in 1837 and became a minister despite failing health which killed him within three years.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1841 p.545.

522.

Winn Thomas

This man, "notoriously addicted to the sin of drunkenness" and "unsurpassed by few in the path of iniquity", was converted in Garsdale by Kershaw and led three classes in the area. He was cited as a prime example of the "reformed man" as an example to others.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1827 p.788.

Brief Entries:

Allison Robert of Warcop

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1838 p.312.

Armstrong Joseph minister raised near Carlisle.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1833 p.986.

Ashburner Sarah of Dalton

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1831 p.143.

Atkinson Jane of Keswick

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1864 p.480.

Atkinson John of Oxenthwaite, Appleby

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1840 p.255.

Dargue J. B. of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1861 p.669.

Bentham Robert of Dent

Trained for the Anglican ministry but failed, and became a classics teacher; a minister later in life.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1844 p.769.

Bewsher Thomas of Penrith

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1846 p.1032.

Blackburn William of Workington

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1867 p.757.

Brereton Edward of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1845 p.405.

Brookbank John of Workington

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1825 p.647.

Brown Elizabeth of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1854 p.191.

Brumwell E. C. of Penrith

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1862 p.478.

Casson Anne of Whitehaven

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1845 p.572.

Casson Henry of Whitehaven

Meths. Mag. 1806 p.329.

Catterick Ann of Alston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1834 p.79.

Chisam Mary of Workington

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1854 p.1031

Christie Patrick of Distington

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1836 p.485.

Cooke Mary of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1864 p.287.

Cousin John of Hilton

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1837 p.958.

Crosby John senior and junior of Kirkby Thore

The son was a minister who died in his 2nd year of travelling,
at Kendal.

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1831 p.442 and 1832 p.158.

Cumings Samuel of Firbank, Sedbergh

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1858 p.765.

Dawson John of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1830 p.142.

Douglas James of Low Mill, Workington

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1845 p.406.

Eastham David of Whitehaven

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1836 p.485.

Eddy William of Penrith

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1844 p.863.

Eglin Ann of Serastrow, Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1838 p.840.

Furnace Eleanor of Workington

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1854 p.190.

Gash Mrs. of Hesket, Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1842 p.335.

Gibson Thomas of Arnside Tower

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1837 p.158.

Grisdale John of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1863 p.287.

Hargreaves John of Workington

Meths. Mag. 1804 p.319.

Haygarth Margaret of Garsdale

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1848 p.461.

Herd Thomas of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1841 p.1036.

Hindson Jane of Rosgill

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1855 p.762.

Holding Mary of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1837 p.389.

Inman Sarah of Garsdale Foot

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1835 p.157.

Jackson Elizabeth of Ulverston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1853 p.862.

Jackson Mary of Ulverston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1853 p.863.

James Edward of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1863 p.94.

Johnson Richard of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1831 p.

Kinley Robert of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1861 p.767.

Liddle Thomas of Alston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1822 p.684.

Little Joseph of Alston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1830 p.858.

Lonsdale Ann of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1828 p.496.

Lupton Ann of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1832 p.312.

Lytel Walter of Alston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1858 p.669.

McGraw William of Workington.

Meths. Mag. 1811 p.288.

Marshall Dorothy of Whitehaven

Meths. Mag. 1805 p.572.

Marsh Joseph minister in Ulverston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1848 p.708.

Muse Elizabeth of Penrith

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1864 p.286.

Newton Christopher minister in Appleby

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1862 p.673.

Olivers Thomas preacher visiting Whitehaven 1757

Arm. Mag. 1779 p.139.

Osborne William of Mawbray and Workington

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1860 p.670.

Palmer Thomas of Scaleby

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1834 p.398.

Pascall Joseph minister dying at Ulverston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1841 p.149.

Peart William of Garrigill

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1865 p.1149.

Peat Richard of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1841 p.150.

Philipson Robert of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1838 p.574.

Plummer Jane of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1853 p.574.

Porter John of Wigton

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1871 p.480.

Radcliffe William minister in Carlisle and Whitehaven

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1838 p.243.

Randerson Mary of Kendal

Meths. Mag. 1809 p.525.

Rawson John preacher at Ulverston

Meths. Mag. 1808 p.430.

Relph John minister born at Whitehaven

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1870 p.854.

Richardson Jane of Wigton

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1846 p.512.

Robinson Joseph preacher at Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1837 p.400.

Robinson William of Wigton

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1864 p.863.

Russell Joseph of Eskdale and Seaton

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1841 p.625.

Rutherford Thomas preacher at Whitehaven 1777

Meths. Mag. 1808 p.529.

Sanderson John of Penrith

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1864 p.286.

Simpson William of Alston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1844 p.427.

Smetham James minister at Workington

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1850

Smith Hannah of Melmerby

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1832 p.902.

Smithson Mrs. of Whitehaven

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1839 p.454.

Snowdon Margaret of Alston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1860 p.767.

Sparks John of Carlisle

Meth. Mag. 1805 p.46.

Spooner William of Kirkby Thore

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1823 p.491.

Squarebridge John minister born at Whitehaven 1783

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1845 p.915.

Stubbs Agnes of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1830 p.68.

Thompson Isaac of Renwick

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1832 p.606.

Thompson Isabella of Farlam Hall, Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1841 p.949.

Thompson William of Maryport

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1860 p.671.

Thompson Thomas of Farlam Hall, Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1839 p.416.

Thornburn William of Papcastle, Cockermouth

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1872 p.190.

Tiffin Mrs. of Dearham

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1877 p.638.

Topping Mary of Bowness-on-Solway

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1865 p.288.

Tranter Sarah wife of Whitehaven minister

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1843 p.1036.

Tweedy Elizabeth of Appleby

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1836 p.959.

Vipond John of Alston

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.357.

Watson Margaret of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.856.

Walker Elizabeth of Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1846 p.512.

Walton Adam of Garrigill

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1843 p.329.

Wedgewood Philip of Maryport

Meth. Mag. 1806 p.475.

Whaley Mary of Hawes and Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1837 p.478.

Whitefield Thomas of Garrigill

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1846 p.508.

Wilkinson James of Sparkbridge

Meth. Mag. 1811 p.875.

Wilkinson Jane of Workington

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1842 p.241.

Wilson Edward supernumary at Keswick

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1842 p.429.

Wilson Isaac of Kirkby Lonsdale

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1854 p.672.

Wilson Margaret of Kendal

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.69.

Wilson William of Whitehaven

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1848 p.461.

Wilson Mrs. widow of supernumary in Carlisle

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1860 p.576.

Wood Isaac of Whitehaven

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1828 p.784.

Wood Peter of Penrith

Wes. Meth. Mag. 1822 p.619.

Primitive Methodists.

PRIMITIVE METHODISTS

Main Entries:

Armstrong Chester

Author of "Pilgrimage from Nenthead", Armstrong was a Nenthead Primitive who moved when young to the coalfields of the Northeast to improve his father's health. His biography describes in detail the bizarre hold which Primitivism exercised in the Lead Dales and in Nenthead in particular, the way in which it dominated morals, behaviour, work attitudes, family life, and the life in later years of the thousands forced to migrate from the area for work. He noted how in the 1870s people could be expelled for having the wrong hair-cut, too fashionable clothes, or for holding hands in public when not married; and how in later years there was a softening of the old ways, though it remained one of the few places where no policemen were required. The Armstrongs were leadworkers and small farmers of independent political views who strenuously opposed Tory and Anglican influence, in common with most of the Primitives, and viewed the few Wesleyans in the village as traitors to Methodism in the way in which they "flirted" with the Establishment.

Ayres Robert

Stationed at Whitehaven and Millom and responsible for a number of chapel schemes and placing finances on a sound basis.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1894 p.243 and 1910 p.909.

Bardgett John

Born at Lazonby and moving to the North East, apprenticed as a turner and then coming to Hensingham for work. Later in Penrith and converted in a revival by Thomas Batty in 1824. Illustrating the great mobility of the workforce, Bardgett moved to Carlisle and later to Hexham where he married, continuing to travel all over the

North on business and dying in the home of the Workington minister.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1830 p.86.

Barnes William

Born at Caldbæck in 1790 and apprenticed in a paper mill at Hesket-New-Market. Only when 50 did he come under Primitive influence, in Maryport when there on business, which led him to convert his partner, family and workers.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1864 p.360.

Barrass Edward

The intrepid London traveller who explored Cumbria during 1851 and reported on his findings to the Primitive Methodist Magazine. He noted the poverty of the members but also their zeal, approving greatly of their temperance work and the way in which they tackled "sinners" in open air work from Carlisle to Whitehaven. He was surprised to find societies crippled by debts which he considered trifling but which seemed like mountains to the poor Cumbrian Primitives.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1852 p.546 and p.38.

Barwise John and Ann

A Bothel farm labourer converted by the Carlisle mission of 1824 and main supporter of the little society and its chapel. Steward, trustee, treasurer, Sunday school superintendent he and his wife were members for over 50 years and kept the small village shop by saving hard to buy it.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1876 p.694 and 1877. p.119.

Bateman Thomas S

Minister at Barrow in 1873/79 and reasonably competent according to the circuit opinion. During 1878 he loaned two lots of money amounting to £590 from the Forshaw Street trust funds to Haverigg trustees in order that they might build a chapel. This he did without proper permission and without obtaining any receipt from or written agreement with Haverigg. When some months later it was discovered, Bateman was in trouble and left that year without most of his expenses or salary paid because of the illfeeling. Haverigg repeatedly refused to repay the money, and the matter assumed the proportions of a public scandal, damaging Primitive prestige and weakening their efforts into the 1890s. Finally about 1900 the new Dalton and Millom circuit was forced by Conference to repay the money, and Haverigg had to repay the debt. Bateman did not escape and was held personally responsible for repaying £50 of it.

See Journal no.5 of the VHS Cumbria Branch and circuit records.

Batty Thomas

An outstanding preacher and main agent for Primitivism in the East of the county from Brough to Alston and Brampton. For 9 months he laboured in Weardale and Alston Moor with no success, becoming ill and mentally depressed, when suddenly for no apparent reason 60 members were recruited in one week and from then onwards the area proved immensely fertile ground for the Primitives. His sermons and prayers were beloved of the miners and hillfarmers, but his attracting large audiences of poor folk led to trouble in and around Brough where the authorities were determined to maintain law and order and tried to arrest him. They failed, and Batty's success against them remained part of Northern Methodist folklore to this day. He converted hundreds to the denomination though permanent society work was left to later, less able men.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1867 p.559; 1856 p.449 for his life and work; 1824 p.58 for his contemporary success.

Boothman John and Margaret

John came from a strict Anglican family, was born in Carlisle in 1770, and was converted to active religion in the 1800s by the evangelical Dean Milner. He soon joined the Wesleyans and did well in hat manufacturing. When the Primitives first missioned Kendal he sent his partner and son-in-law to investigate, and the resulting meeting led to these men and many others leaving Wesleyan ranks for the Primitives. Boothman sheltered the early society and paid most of its bills, and helped keep its accounts for the missions to Paisley and Glasgow, and down to Whitehaven and Maryport, in order. His careful management of finances was sorely missed when he died.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1832 p.345. 1833 p.302.

Brisco Robert

Born at Bassenthwaite in 1828, probably a charcoal burner or woodworker in Blindcrake area, and converted in the early 1860s. His son became a sea captain and local preacher in South America.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1886 p.311.

Brown Hannah

Born at Salkeld in 1802, an attender at Wesleyan services and one of the first to join the Lazonby Primitive society when her duties as housekeeper allowed her.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1827 p.308.

Carmichael J. E.

A Cumbrian who was made supernumary in 1873 aged only 31 because of ill health. He continued for at least the next 20 years to reside in Workington, leading a sort of "James Everett existence", stating he was very ill but managing to take many appointments as

Guest speaker, but not to preach for the circuit. He likewise carried on business as printer and stationer, and involved himself in circuit affairs on behalf of the Workington sector against the parent Whitehaven body. After 1875 Workington wished to become an independent circuit, and as part of this demanded a new chapel, even though it had an adequate one and other societies had been waiting years to have circuit aid for their first building. Circuit aid and permission was refused, but Carmichael and the society went ahead, by-passed the circuit, and obtained permission to build direct from Conference. This infuriated the circuit committee and meeting, led to endless rows, but Workington pushed on with the matter and built their chapel. Despite all sorts of problems in its construction, including lack of money, the chapel was eventually finished and plans for separation of the two circuits were drawn up. Determined to settle the score, the Whitehaven circuit accused Carmichael of deliberately faking illness and of missing any appointments which did not suit him, particularly those in the Whitehaven sector. There was an investigation and Carmichael was seriously reprimanded in the last joint circuit quarterly meeting. He ran into problems with Workington in 1892 when involved in supplying cheap stationery and printing needs to the minister, Hebblethwaite, and by-passing the circuit's agreed contractor.

See circuit records.

Carr Thomas

Born at Garrigill and a man of property in Alston. He was able to offer considerable financial aid to the various poor societies and was glad to help poor society members.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1899 p.231.

Crawdson Richard

Stationed at Maryport twice in the early 20th century and responsible for the remarkable West Cumberland revival of religion.

around 1905 when several hundred became society members and large amounts of money were raised to clear debts - the last fling before the slow and painful 20th century decline.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1906 p.833 and circuit records.

Dickinson John

The man responsible for turning Kirkby Stephen and Brough societies into strong ones as chapel caretaker, steward, treasurer, teacher and leader. For 40 years a local preacher who had 400 at the chapel for his funeral and a clergyman to give his funeral oration.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1906 p.494 and circuit records.

Dodds Adam

A preacher much loved in West Cumberland and throughout the county for his fine pastoral work in the mid 19th century. It was he who led the team of 5 **good** preachers in Maryport and Whitehaven and initiated the second great revival of the early 1860s when the Primitives established many new societies amongst the mining settlements, and he was responsible for the building of at least 12 chapels in 8 years. His organising of finances was only excelled by his preaching which won hundreds of new recruits. Despite his success he had to beg for his back salary from house to house when he left the area; tragically his son, James Wright Dodds, born at Penrith whilst his father was a young minister there, died in 1867 in his second year as a preacher. It was the quality of Dodds' leadership and preaching ability which made his Whitehaven successors look all the more feeble and contributed to unpleasant disputes between preachers and the circuit officials who assumed all ministers would be like Dodds, and slave away without concern for their own salary or expenses.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1883 p.689; 1868 p.353 etc., and circuit records.

Flesher John

Aged 24 he was placed in charge of Whitehaven where the society had been decimated by the disaffection of the previous preacher and some officials. Flesher spent from 1825 to 1827 making it into a successful circuit and healed the breach. Looking like a Biblical prophet his bulk, black dress and strong words impressed many Cumbrians, particularly in Alston. Flesher was the youngest of the talented group of Primitives who descended on Cumbria from the East in 1823/24, and as with Batty and the others, the tales about him were legion.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1875 p.106.

Fulton William

Appointed to Alston in 1846 and again in 1862. Fulton was involved in great personal sacrifice and suffering in Brough (1847/50) and Whitehaven where he served 1854/58. After 12 years as preacher he was permanently stationed first to take charge of the Brough branch of Barnard Castle circuit, and shortly the new circuit. The new quarterly meeting refused to pay Fulton's back salary and expenses because they had already paid more than that amount into the Barnard Castle funds over the previous year; the latter naturally replied that Brough had to foot the bill, the result despite appeals to the District Committee being impasse, and Fulton received less than half of one year's monies for his devoted work. He was described as an able man and good evangelist but for a time he refused to mission distant places because nobody would pay his expenses. When he left, he must have determined not to allow the same thing to happen again. At Whitehaven he was repeatedly ill, for instance during the whole of the 1854/55 winter, and again over the 1857/58 winter, with the result that a hired local preacher had to be employed by the circuit at considerable expense, and some societies, without pastoral control, became awkward and wayward. Fulton's 3 children all died in early 1858, at least partly because the circuit committee refused to grant him extra money for medical supplies.

Fulton did not forget this and parted on bad terms with the quarterly meeting. The week after he left it was discovered that he had taken 2 quarters' income with him, mainly from collections, love feasts and class monies collected much earlier than usual, and in spite of heated exchanges with the District the circuit was unable to regain the money. Fulton even advised his junior minister, Olivers, to write to the circuit to ask for his back salary, leaving the quarterly meeting beside itself with anger and blaming Fulton for all its problems.

See circuit records.

Gibson William

Leader and official of Silloth society in the 1870s, mainly responsible for that society defying Wigton circuit quarterly meeting and building their own chapel in 1877. The circuit's worst fears were realised, the society had to be rescued by the circuit which could not afford the debt, and during the particularly black year of 1879 Silloth almost folded up as a society. The circuit committee investigated and condemned Gibson and William Donald for their appalling neglect and incompetence, and soundly berated the whole society on the need to adhere to connexional rules, particularly with regard to collections, ticket and class monies, and class attendance.

See circuit records.

Harland William

Harland's plain unaffected speech too appealed to Cumbrians, particularly the seafarers of the west and he put his nautical terminology to good use in sermons and prayer. An educated and intelligent man, he became editor of the Primitive Methodist Magazine 1857/62 and gave Cumbria a good press. Secretary to Conference four times and President once, he was eager to promote both Temperance and his Radical politics from an early age.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1881 p.242.

Harrison Thomas

He became a Primitive in 1860 and entered the ministry after his hard work as local preacher in Alston circuit; because of ill health he was invalided out of the ministry the same year (1868) being distinguished as one of the few too ill to be ever stationed. Nonetheless back in Nenthead he persued an active life in the church and became a Poor Law Guardian, served on the School Board and as a councillor.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1904 p.495.

Hartley Thomas

Known as "Shear Tom" because of his trade as knife grinder and sharpener, Hartley travelled around the Lake District during the week, normally between Ambleside, Grasmere and Keswick, returning to Egremont each weekend for his preaching. Whenever he could he would of course give sermons in the Lakes to guests startled to see a rough unkempt knifegrinder holding forth. He was obsessed with the need to make all folk give up drink and tobacco and beset many holiday makers in the 1850s and 1860s with these ideas. He was too an expert angler and his tips, despite their biblical content, were much appreciated, as was his expert local knowledge of rivers and lakes.

See paper given to Kendal Literary and Scientific Institute, annual meeting, undated but probably about 1895, records the speaker meeting Hartley a number of times in 1857 and gaining his help in fishing. The speaker was G. Foster Braithwaite. Copy in Jackson Library, Tullie House, Carlisle.

Hogarth William

A farm labourer most of his life, born in 1787 at Castle Sowerby but spending most of his time in Bothel (a close neighbour of the Barwise family). His home was used by the first Primitive

preachers, and he became a local preacher, notorious for his uncouth vocabulary and bad language even in the pulpit. This behaviour caused some trouble and though told off continued to lash his congregation with Cumbrian invective.

Hilton John

The most generous benefactor of ~~Brough~~ circuit, a farmer at Mouthlock where he gave a cottage, schoolroom, stable and land to the society and paid for conversion to a chapel; Brough benefitted from his gifts and loans, and he was **wealthy** enough to buy a site at Kirkby Stephen for £240 and to demolish the building in order to rebuild on the site. He had to buy it privately since nobody would sell one to the Primitives. He was a most influential member of the circuit committee and a force in circuit matters between 1840 and 1880.

See circuit records.

Irving Robert

Born at Kirkcambeck and working throughout the villages of the Carlisle circuit, and one of the Wesleyans who peacefully withdrew in 1822. He was the main fundraiser for Brampton chapel and gave most of his money to the circuit so that he had to live with his daughter. Irving is the only recorded case of a Methodist in Cumbria being found murdered in the street, and no assailant was brought to trial.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1858 p.262.

Jackson George

Born in 1806 at Tebay and supposed to have joined the Primitives when they first missioned there after hearing of the bacchanalian parties in which he engaged. He was a business man and made sure all finances to do with Tebay new chapel were **strictly** correct and raised

most of the money for it. When the railway first came there he organised missions to the railway workers and builders.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1881 p.564.

Jackson James

Born at Houghton in 1799 and apprenticed to a tailor before he was able to start his own business in Carlisle. Due to his vile temper he was involved in considerable trouble when carrying out what he believed to be the only virtuous path - Temperance - and was in unseemly happenings in pubs when trying to show "sinners" the errors of their way. Violence was not unknown where he was concerned, and many stood in awe of him as a leader and local preacher. He became more unbalanced when his wife died and left him with 7 children to raise, all under 12 years old, and shortly split the Primitive society in the city when he advocated allying with the Association in 1836, which he joined along with a number of other Primitives. It was because of the bitterness engendered by this controversy, which so ruined the Wesleyan and Primitive circuits, that he decided to quit Carlisle and he settled in Douglas, Isle-of-Man. It was there that he ironically rejoined the Primitives, admitted the error of his ways, and died in 1869 in a shooting accident.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1871 p.105.

Jackson Jeremiah

Jeremiah's father was the Wesleyan who gave Thomas Batty his protection and the use of his barn for services in Brough, and donated land for the first chapel. He had a carpentry business, and Jeremiah took this over as well as holding most posts in circuit officialdom. Though he was like many independent businessmen and spoke out against the landowners and the Church of England, he had a number of clerical friends, helped out at their functions and supplied the Baptists' vacant pulpit. He was able to counter the great suspicion felt by many locals against ministers and according to southerner Robert Clemitson was the only person who was at all

friendly in the first three months of his posting there. Jackson enjoyed the relatively educated conversation of the ministers and advocated a higher standard of education and training for officials and local preachers, which did not please many in the circuit.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1881 p.376. Circuit records.

Jackson Margaret

One of the Jacksons of Tebay, mother to James, formerly housekeeper to her husband, and originally from a Dissenting family at Milburn. One of her sons was a leading member in Carlisle, and her grandchildren were the Bayliffe family of Appleby and Shap, still in the area today.

Jackson William

One of over 100 Primitives who joined the Salvation Army and the Plymouth Brethren from the Workington and Whitehaven circuit 1879/86, many of them being officials of long standing. This caused considerable rivalry between the denominations and much unpleasantness in Primitive ranks at the way their members were poached.

See circuit records.

Jersey Francis N

First Primitive preacher in Furness and following in the footsteps of Peter Ludlam in Kendal. Jersey intensely disliked the countryside and the travelling and found the rural areas most depressing. He was nonetheless a successful evangelist and crowds eagerly went to hear his sermons, mainly for their entertainment value. At Broughton bells were rung to drown his sermon, he was harrassed at Ulverston and threatened with arrest at Dalton. When he repeated the journey that same year, 1823, he did not take the hint to avoid Broughton and was beaten up by an angry mob, being saved by constables who arrested him and arraigned him before a magistrate. He was committed to Lancaster gaol for 4 months for

"riotous and tumultuous behaviour", and Hull circuit authorities only found him a fortnight later. His fines were paid and he was released after only 18 days, paying a visit back to Furness before heading east, and not coming back to the locality. In a later circuit (Nottingham) Jersey, a born evangelist but hopeless as a preacher expected to organise preaching plans, chair meetings coolly and calmly, and always in a dreadful mess over financial accounts, left the ministry after a nervous breakdown, and emigrated to the USA.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1823 pp.167, 187, 259, 283; 1824 p.32.

Jopling Joseph

Born at Frosterly in 1802 and a Primitive in 1824, Jopling was the most successful free ranging evangelist in West Cumberland. He came specifically to help Moses Lupton in the 1858 revival there but stayed 14 years working the area from Whitehaven and Workington to Silloth, Wigton and Keswick. Jopling could not accept that the Primitives had failed in Keswick and worked at the cause until it was soundly established, and did the same for most of the larger villages of the district, becoming famous for his rousing sermons and lively services. As an expert in meeting and working amongst the "travelling folk" or gypsies, he scored notable successes at Wigton's East End, recruiting both members and money enough for a new chapel amongst the people generally regarded as beyond the pale of organised religion. It says much for the denominations that only a man like Jopling could have effect amongst the "submerged element" in society at that time; he also spent several hundred pounds, inherited late in life, on promoting chapel building, but was himself poor and abstemious to the point that when old and frail, and having spent at least £500 on the circuits, he had to seek payment for medicines off the circuit committee.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1874 p.107 and throughout circuit records of West Cumberland.

Kennaugh John

Owner of the main sailmaking and chandlers in Workington, Kennaugh had been at sea and fortuitously invested in Workington property just when the place was greatly expanding in the 1870s. Promoter of the new town chapel, despite determined quarterly meeting opposition, he helped carry the project through and with his son was a major Primitive influence in the area.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1890 p.432.

Kilvington J. C.

Born at Northallerton in 1862 and a Primitive when 13, he shortly moved to Carlisle for work. By the age of 18 he was sunday school secretary, at 20 superintendent and a distinguished chapel worker. He was too about the only important layman to avoid involvement in the unpleasantness which regularly occurred in the circuit. He died in 1910 during a minor operation.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1910 p.993 and circuit records.

Lawson Isaac

Born near Carlisle in 1814 and, with his family, early Primitives, he worked as a calico printer and became a local preacher during the 1835 crisis when many officials refused to run the circuit, which seemed likely to collapse into chaos. The strain of these circumstances did not improve his already poor health.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1838 p.453.

Lea Hannah

Raised by Quaker relations in Whitehaven and amongst the early Quakers who readily helped the Primitives in the 1820s there. Preacher William Lea was ^{us}surprised to see so many Quakers in his

550.

congregation, quite distinctive in their simple clothes and different speech and habits, and afterwards he specifically asked to meet with them. He later married her and she died in Derby.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1865 p.695.

Longrigg Isaac

Born at Plumpton in 1808 and for 14 years a teacher in the area until he joined the Primitives and was sacked from his post, it being a Church school. He became a railway clerk and worked for 38 years, steadfastly refusing to take any post in the circuit because of his conviction that to be holy and good was not compatible with official posts which would only bring "grievance and strife in their wake".

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1885 p.54.

McKechnie Alexander

Born at Paisley in 1820, he served in Alston and Whitehaven in the 1880s, and was famous for his popular sermons, 100,000 of them being sold during his lifetime.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1902 p.621.

Maxwell J. C.

The only known Cumbrian expelled for playing dominoes for a prize of a bottle of whisky in a public house in Wigton, 1892. He was not re-admitted to membership.

See circuit records.

North John

Minister in charge of Carlisle during the Association dispute and because of illness and the death of his children unable to cope

with the desperate situation. He was not incompetent in other circuits but found the combination of problems too much to overcome, and the quarterly meeting and circuit committee dissolved into factions.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1873 p.613 and circuit records.

Olivers Thomas

An early preacher in Carlisle who reported favourably on the city society but he found the village folk impossible to impress with his fervent messages. Penrith and Wigton he found full of people "hardened to all idea of religion", though Longtown offered hope and Bothel, with an active membership, was praised.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.376.

Peill George

Peill was appointed to Whitehaven 1858/59 and disappeared in this, his third post, after serious charges were brought against him. He was the type of character who got ministers a very bad name in West Cumberland, where there existed into the 20th century much feeling against a hired ministry. The charges against him were that: he travelled on a railway on Sundays; neglected family prayers and services in his own home; acted in an unchristian way to the public in general and societies in particular; lied about going to various appointments and mission services; was engaged to three, probably four, women at the same time; neglected his classes and duties; made sneering remarks about the revivals in several places; slandered Lupton, the superintendent, in public; and had visited a brothel in Whitehaven, and locked himself in a room with a prostitute. It was believed the charges relating to the women were the most serious, and has the distinction of being the only example of a Cumbrian minister being in trouble for an offence of this nature. He fled the circuit refused to reply to the charges, and demanded his back salary. The case was passed to the District, and Peill was forwarded very little because of the debts he had amassed.

See Circuit Records.

Pennington Jacob

A working quarryman who used all his spare time in a mission to the poorest part of Kendal, rented a mission room and spent from the 1860s to 1890s catering for the many still ignored by even a church of the poor like the Primitives. He worked outside of circuit authority but had support and finance from embers, and after his passing, a special mission hall was opened and named after him to carry on his work to the poor. A most humble man dedicated to helping those less fortunate than himself.

Porteous Mary

Born at Newcastle 1783 and in domestic service when she became interested in religion and joined the Wesleyans. Feeling the call to preach she was not allowed to, and at that time the Primitives were first missioning the area. She was recruited and allowed to become a preacher and leader amongst them before commencing to travel in 1825 for 16 years. Appointed to Carlisle in 1830 for 3 years she was a success there, though feeling intimidated by the weakness of the cause throughout the countryside at that date and by the knowledge that Wesley had worked hard and achieved little. She placed Wigton on a permanent footing and worked down to the West coast. She retired to Durham on health grounds and died in 1861, one of the handful of women preachers in the county.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1861 p.520 and circuit records.

Prince John of Harrington

A sea captain and eager to preach aboard his various ships and in ports which he visited on business. For 33 years he was a popular guest out of doors because of his vast voice, strong enough, it was said, to drown a storm and to defeat any noise which men could make. His last 8 years were devoted fulltime to Primitive preaching in the West.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1881 p.178.

Pugmire William

In 1888 Pugmire was a leading circuit official in Penrith, famous for his rousing sermons and brilliant singing; that year he was relieved of all posts so that he could concentrate on reviving the choir and the Sunday school in Sandgate chapel, the central society. By 1891 he had done a good job but had turned to drink due to family and business problems, and he was forced to resign from society because of the harm he was doing to the circuit. A year later he was re-admitted, but turned once more to drink, was suspended, and banned from the choir because he kept singing bawdy songs to hymn tunes in services. Again re-admitted, he was finally expelled in 1895 amidst a considerable argument over the justice of this, since some felt he ought to be tolerated for his past services to the circuit.

See circuit records.

Ridley Mary

The only known female preacher raised in Cumbria, Mary was born near Whitehaven in 1814 and at 16 was on the circuit plan. At 20 she travelled in Alston circuit and bore the work well. Her great successes were on the Moor and across to Bishop Auckland and the North East where her husband was killed in an accident. Appointed the first evangelist to Maryport she retired to Crosby Villa and then Prospect (where her 2 sons were killed, like their father, down a pit) dying in 1892 after many years of missionary endeavour.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1894 p.944.

Ritson John

38 years a Temperance treasurer and worker, born at Dearham and killed trying to prevent a pitfall hurting fellow miners. He was the main agent for the charitable work of Sir Wilfred Lawson's daughter, advising on worthy causes and individuals and distributing money, food and goods.

Robinson Robert

Minister at Ulverston 1864/66 and appointed to take charge of the Barrow mission(his fourth circuit). He proved incapable of organising the finances or of preventing the inevitable petty jealousies and sources of discontent amongst members getting out of hand. With the circuit in an uproar, complaints being made to Ulverston circuit committee and ministers, finances chaotic and vast losses accruing, the final straw was the loss of a number of important officials; Robinson suffered a breakdown and left the ministry for good. This was the first of the disasters to beset Barrow.

See Journal No.5 of the WHS Cumbrian Branch and the circuit records.

Saul William

Stationed at Brough in 1856 when only 26 years old, Saul received a doubtful welcome from a set of officials accustomed to viewing ministers with jaundiced eyes - both their own fault, and that of the ministers. Towards the end of 1857 he wrote a most peculiar note to the circuit quarterly meeting which could have been interpreted as a resignation over the way officials had supposedly poisoned the minds of members against him and his work. When Saul fled to his Yorkshire home he complained to the District about being left off plan and not being paid, the circuit in turn accusing him of "dark insinuations" made against the Primitives and spreading lies about them. He had complained to Anglican ministers about the officials and had tried to join as a candidate for the Anglican ministry; this latter alarmed the circuit who abhorred the local vicars, and all charges were in the end admitted by Saul. It was a complex case of misunderstandings and wrong interpretations on both sides, but Saul's careless words to people outside of Primitive ranks brought about his downfall and forced him out of the ministry.

By 1859 Saul was re-admitted to the Primitive ministry, and served in Carlisle with his past record at Brough presumably unknown. Some years later he was invited back because of his ability to raise

extraordinary amounts of money for circuit work, and he stayed from 1876 to 1882, a very long appointment at that date. At Carlisle in the early 1870s there had been considerable unpleasantness between rival groups of officials in the city, with the preachers forced to referee and being the major calumniated. Saul, when he returned in 1876, inherited these problems and was in contention with several laymen: John Richardson, Henry Miller, William Thompson and Robert Dalton, all men of business and formidable opponents. Saul, in ensuing District investigations, was seen to be obsessed by the need to enforce strict discipline, but had overstepped the mark, made stupid and incorrect comments in public, done silly things like expelling people on flimsy grounds, and had misappropriated some cash. His antagonists came out no better, though they had not fiddled the accounts and had confined their attentions to disrupting services and meetings and circuit business involving Saul or his supporters. That the circuit should be split in this way at all appalled many and a settlement was enforced by the District by which Saul had to re-admit everyone involved to membership and appoint neutral officials, and the "wronged" officials had to agree not to agitate again. Thereafter, with the moving on of Saul, circuit business and meetings were tame by comparison.

See Circuit records.

Sharpe Joseph

Member of a large Primitive family, born at Distington in 1800 and 25 years a local preacher who never missed even one appointment, unlike most of his contemporaries. He was too the first Temperance worker and organiser in the circuit and his son John became a minister. Killed down a mine.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1853 p.450.

Sharpe John

Son of the above, born at Distington in 1820 and a minister in 1848. He was a missionary to Australia and later a successful preacher in a number of circuits, including Whitehaven and Alston, retiring to the former as a supernumary but forced to work fulltime until his death due to the shortage of good men and because of long sicknesses amongst the preachers there.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1895 p.785.

Simpson John

Simpson was "electrified" by the preaching of Clowes, Summerside and the other early preachers in Whitehaven, and used the profits from his business to aid the cause in its difficult days. He was about the third member of the first society and the last link between the Primitives of the 1820s and those of the 1860s; 2 of his sons became ministers.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1865 p.120.

Spoor Joseph

A tough uncompromising man from a keelman family on Tyneside, left to fend for himself and becoming an effective, hardened preacher in the North East and North West. He encountered much opposition in West Cumberland when starting new societies in the early 1850s, for instance at Parton. Land for building was usually denied to the Primitives but perseverance paid off and he counted notable successes here. He was preaching at the 1851 Watchnight service when a gang of inebriated Irishmen invaded the chapel and a mass fight broke out, requiring the police to come in some force to arrest the troublemakers. There were several hundred people in the chapel, and the press described it as a riot by Irish Catholics against good Protestants. Spoor managed to keep things relatively calm, and tried to persuade the magistrates to drop the charges.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1853 p.172; 1870 p.423.

Stansfield Sarah

Born in 1793 at Whitehaven, an Anglican Sunday school teacher in the 1800s, and by 1823 attending Wesleyan and Primitive services as well. By 1831 she had inherited the family business, her doctor brother, both parents and another brother all dying within a few years. George Stansfield, Primitive preacher, met here on a visit, wooed and married her, and took his new bride first to Penrith and then to Kendal missions to work. Being well off they were saved from much of the poverty of the time and noted how poverty stricken most of their members were. Later in the South-East of England, Stansfield was arrested and gaoled for preaching. Mrs. Stansfield (formerly Watson) commented on the great differences at that time between circuits in the North and those in the South and even between Whitehaven and poor Penrith.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1879 p.179.

Watson William

Watson was an amiable and kind hearted minister in Carlisle 1906/10, and left a valuable record of the history of the circuit made up of old records and especially the memories of the remaining Primitives of 60 and more years standing. His "Romance of the Circuit" chest was written with humour yet with insight into the way so much had changed in Carlisle over the previous 80 or 90 years - from poverty to relative affluence, from absolutely rigid and strict moral rules to much more liberal ones, from fervent emotionalism in prayer, sermon and hymn, to formalised worship on a set pattern and allowing for little of the colour of the 1820s.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1910 p.116. 1923 p.520 and circuit records.

White Ann

Wife of an excise officer in Wigton, a Wesleyan and the only person willing to risk giving hospitality to the strange new

Primitive preachers on their mission from Carlisle to West Cumberland. They used her home as a half-way point to reach Keswick.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1844 p.78.

White R. J.

Born into a Primitive family in Cockermouth in 1845, and raised at Glasson. During the 1860s he took a teaching post in Carlisle and became a local preacher until called upon to supply a sick preacher. He attended Elmfield College in 1866 and travelled only from 1868 until his sudden death in 1871.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1871 p.1731.

Brief Entries:Alderson Robert of BroughPrim. Meth. Mag. 1861 p.632.Bailiff John of Low Mill, WorkingtonPrim. Meth. Mag. 1856 p.329.Bainbridge Elizabeth of AlstonPrim. Meth. Mag. 1895 p.945.Bates Eleanor of ApplebyPrim. Meth. Mag. 1855 p.388.Bell John of BroughPrim. Meth. Mag. 1887 p.57.Brogden Mary of BroughPrim. Meth. Mag. 1849 p.61.Brown Margaret of Hayton, BramptonPrim. Meth. Mag. 1833 p.291.Carmichael Margaret of WorkingtonPrim. Meth. Mag. 1890 p.433Cheeseman George of CumberlandPrim. Meth. Mag. 1885 p.51.

Correy Ann of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1824 p.81.

Craig Robert of Murton

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1865 p.745.

Dawson Mark of Westmorland, a Canadian minister later.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1867 p.505.

Dobson Dorothy (nee Bland) of Westmorland, married to a minister.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1868 p.747.

Eastwood John supernumary of Keswick

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1898 p.385.

Evans Ruth of Kendal

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1906 p.908.

Fairweather John, minister to Carlisle mission

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.31.

Fearon Samuel of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1873 p.557.

Ferguson Mary of Wigton

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1885 p.183.

Fisher Ann of Kendal

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1843 p.318.

Forest Thomas of Carlisle

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1858 p.440.

Foster Andrew of Wigton

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1882 p.374.

Foy George of Harrington

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1852 p.377.

Froggart Elizabeth of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1857 p.315.

Fulton Ann of Longtown

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1874 p.53.

Gill John minister on Alston Moor

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1902 p.543.

Golightly Henry of Alston and Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1848 p.265.

Gowner William minister at Alston and Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1881 p.369.

Graham Margaret of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1850 p.701.

Graham Margaret of Nenthead

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1859 p.310.

Grisdale Janet of Staveley

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1858 p.507.

Hayton George of Brigsteer, Kendal

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1858 p.507.

Henderson Jane and James of Carlisle

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1860 p.440.

Henderson Nicholas of Garrigill

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1850 p.194.

Henderson Thomas of Garrigill

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1833 p.22.

Hetherington Deborah of Cumrew and Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1833 p.290.

Hirst John pioneer minister in county 1820s and friend of Clowes.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1899 p.306.

Hopkins Jeremiah minister in Wigton, Barrow etc.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1910 p.549.

Hutchinson John of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1852 p.264.

Illingworth Eli minister in Furness

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1884 p.561.

Johnson Bridget of Carlisle

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1842 p.136.

Johnson Henry of Maryport

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1849 p.198.

Johnson Margaret of Carlisle

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1843 p.159.

Johnson William of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1860 p.580

Johnson W. A. of Carlisle

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1881 p.757.

Kent David minister at Kendal

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1848 p.692.

Kitson William minister in county

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1900 p.243.

Lather Joseph of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1824 p.17.

Lawson Ann of Brampton and Canada

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1875 p.303.

Lawson Jane of Carlisle

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1848 p.699.

Lawson Mary of Cummersdale

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1848 p.636.

Litt Ann of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1853 p.190.

Lowdon George of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1875 p.237.

Lewis Joseph of Penrith

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1852 p.394.

McKeowin Ann of Carlisle

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1854 p.445.

Mandal Jane of Bothel and Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1847 p.381.

Markwell Thomas minister in West Cumberland

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1902 p.243.

Maughan Ann of Brampton

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1832 p.377.

Metcalf John of Brough

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1851 p.316.

Lilbourn Jane of Brampton

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1842 p.137.

Miller William of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1868 p.735.

Mitchell Lydia of Penrith

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1886 p.309.

Murray William of Harrington

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1862 p.463.

Nattrass Ann of Nenthead

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1824 p.72.

Nevison Jeffrey of Staveley

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1857 p.384.

Oliver James of Workington

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1856 p.195.

Quirck Elizabeth of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1863 p.572.

Paisley William of Longtown

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1833 p.260.

Palmer Mary of Blennerhasset

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1848 p.702.

Parker Joshua of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1845 p.413.

Patrickson Elizabeth of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1829 p.97.

Pattinson Jane of Nenthead

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1852 p.121.

Peacock Mrs. of Brough

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1857 p.382.

Pearson Thomas of Lazonby

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1877 p.750.

Pierson George on Nenthead work

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1824 p.69.

Place John of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1854 p.460.

Prest Frederick at Penrith Mission

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1884 p.254.

Price Mary of Harrington

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1860 p.248.

Raine Richard of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1876 p.442.

Readshaw Isabella of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1846 p.509.

Reed Frances of Brampton

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1844 p.464.

Ritson John of Hawkshead and Workington

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1862 p.657.

Robinson Henry of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1875 p.560.

Robson Margaret of Wyndham Row

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1861 p.380.

Routledge Elizabeth of Longtown

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.18.

Row John of Raughton Head

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1891 p.565.

Rushforth William of Staveley

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1872 p.753.

Salkeld Joseph of Abbeyholme

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1880 p.242.

Sayer Eleanor of Kendal

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1846 p.703.

Shipleigh John of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1857 p.385.

Snuggles Joseph of Coniston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1868 p.306.

Smith Margaret of Warwick Bridge

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1881 p.753.

Smith Robert minister in Cumbria

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1898 p.146.

Stephenson Joseph of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1832 p.23.

Stephenson John of Nenthead

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1859 p.646.

Story Joseph of Brough

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1858 p.463.

Stout George minister raised in Garrigill

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1894 p.228.

Sumpton William of Blindcrake

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1846 p.511.

Taylor John of Staveley and posted in Cumbria, and Mary his wife.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1906 p.901. 1871 p.686.

Temple John of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1844 p.367.

Thompson John of Maryport

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1880 p.115.

Thompson Mary of Penrith

Prim. Meth. Mag. 18

Trinkeld James of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1845 p.192.

Trinkeld Joseph of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1844 p.415.

Tuton Mrs. of Whitehaven

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1880 p.307.

Tyson Henry of Ulpha

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1851 p.323.

Udale Sarah of Kendal

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1861 p.254.

Wailes Joseph of Nenthead

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1843 p.359.

Wardle Ann of Carlisle

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1875 p.378.

Watson John of Garrigill

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1857 p.257.

Watson John of Carlisle

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1873 p.308.

Watson Mary of Garrigill

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1847 p.703.

Watson Thomas of Cumberland

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1853 p.197.

Waugh John of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1840 p.15.

Waugh John of Alston

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1843 p.440.

Widdowson William minister in Penrith etc.

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1910 p.985.

Wigham Thomas minister at Kendal

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1868 p.363.

Wilkinson Joseph of Renwick

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1827 p.34.

Wilshaw William of Burton in Kendal

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1872 p.117.

Wilson James of Warcop

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1876 p.487.

Wilson John minister in Cumbria

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1878 p.180.

Winter Edward of Wigton

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1891 p.630.

Yates Thomas minister in Cumbria

Prim. Meth. Mag. 1878 p.490.

Entries For Places:* indicates of especial interest or information.Alston Circuit

1826 p.104
 1836 p.311*
 1836 p.394
 1837 p.267 and p.339
 1842 p.339
 1842 p.339*
 1844 p.223
 1847 p.311*
 1849 p.53
 1849 p.564
 1903 p.20*

Barrow ci

1896 p.75

Bothel

1851 p.178
 1852 p.181
 1855 p.49
 1860 p.613*

Brough, Appleby and Kirkby Stephen Circuit

1865 p.689*
 1867 p.559*

Carlisle Circuit

1823 p.93*
 1824 p.34

1833 p.97
 1836 p.311*
 1837 p.267 and p.339*
 1845 p.569*
 1852 p.555*
 1858 p.111
 1859 p.51
 1863 p.241

Coniston

1859 p.626*

Cleator Moor

1866 p.182

Crosby

1863 p.558*

Dearham

1856 p.745*
 1859 p.688

Ellenborough

1861 p.305*

Flimby

1862 p.758*

Garrigill

1857 p.242*

Hexham and Haltwhistle

1853 p.118

Holborn Hill (Millom)

1871 p.315*

Kendal Circuit

1837 p.315

1848 p.692

1854 p.242

1856 p.686

1858 p.357

1858 p.357*

1860 p.43 and p.112

1899 p.77*

Lazonby

1850 p.313

Longtown

1824 p.237

Maryport Circuit

1852 p.183

1863 p.557*

1906 p.833*

Nenthead

1824 p.54*

Penrith Circuit

1836 p.311
1849 p.246
1857 p.429*
1861 p.741
1863 p.307
1875 p.106*

Prospect

1861. p.117

Scalegill.

1862 p.707

Parton

1853 p.172

Staveley

1846 p.570
1848 p.628

Sunny Brow

1861 p.565

Ulverston

1823 p.259 and p.283
1866 p.428*

Walton

1858 p.680*

Workington Circuit

1852 p.168*

1856 p.686

1910 p.583

United Methodist Church.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Main Entries:

Atkinson Robert

Born at Bleatarn, near Warcop 1789, 11th of 12 children and converted by Robert Gregson to Wesleyanism in 1822; married Gregson's widow in 1828 and took over considerable property; leader in 1829 of class but joined the Warrenites in 1835 because of friendship with the Crosby and Dent families.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1841 p.303

Atkinson Thomas

Born at Hesket New Market in 1835; able to buy his own farm due to his own efforts at Cotehill and joined the U.M.F.C. at Cumwhinton, becoming local preacher and mainstay of the society.

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1881 p.123.

Baisbrown William

With his wife, Irishwoman Catherine Seymour, one of the leading workers for charity in Whitehaven; he was the first to be expelled by Abraham Watmough in 1836 as a class leader who put forward Warrenite views; mainstay of the Association society for a time and a local businessman.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1845 p.465; see Whitehaven and the Warrenites.

Blenkinsop William

Born 1780 at Warwick Bridge, joining the Wesleyans there in 1797 but becoming a backslider; settled in Dalston and started a small business in 1820s, became a Wesleyan leader, and then, reluctantly, agreed to lead the secession of 1835 because he felt the power of

Dunn, the Carlisle minister, to be improperly used.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1852 p.291.

Bulman Henry

Came to Armathwaite circa 1870 in order to supply provisions to the men building the Settle railway, but decided to stay and took over a village shop which flourished under his ownership; a hard headed and shrewd man, able to persuade the Earl of Carlisle to part with a parcel of land just outside the village for a small chapel, known as "Bulman's" ever since; he became circuit representative to Conference, RDC councillor, and held most posts a layman could hold. His Clint house is now inhabited by retired ministers and his fortune passed via his children to ensure that Armathwaite chapel remains in existence for the future.

Un. Meth. Mag. 1916 p.207; Armathwaite Centenary Brochure.

Butterworth Jane

Originally from Ravenstonedale she settled at Bolton, near Appleby, and early joined the Association; she was never a leading member of the circuit but loyally supported it throughout its varied teething problems.

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1869 p.459.

Carrick John

Of a well known city family of calico printers and Quakers, he joined the Wesleyans in 1800 due to the influence of some of his workers; as a well known and successful businessman he was figurehead for the Association rebels but never the practical leader, finding the others too radical. He was buried in the Quaker burial ground after returning to their fold just prior to his death.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1853 p.389; Carlisle and the Warrenites.

Cartwright ? Rev.

Association preacher at Appleby 1838/39 who was faced with a secession back to the Wesleyans; because of the stance of the main Association families, he was able to keep the new circuit alive and was even able to recruit a few extra members. He saw his main role as minister, not troubleshooter, and found the whole situation alarming.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1839 p.156; Circuit Records.

Cleator John

Born at Ramsey, Barrow in Furness 1841, belonging to one of the earliest Wesleyan families there; losing his job in Barrow, he moved to Millom in 1866 as a building worker and eventually owned his own company. When he returned to Barrow by 1875 he was established as a builder of repute, having done much work in Millom, as he was to do in Barrow. He joined the MNC society in the town and was contractor for several Methodist churches; he left the Wesleyans for the New Connexion because the latter had at that time a more respectable name for not involving themselves with the poor of the town, whereas the Wesleyans had missions amongst all classes.

Un. Meth. Mag. 1917 p.352.

Corbett William

Born in Carlisle, early on an active Associationist and later moving to the North East, as worker for Parliamentary Reform and Temperance; kept close links with Cumbria and travelled in his work widely across the county.

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1881 p.702.

Cox Thomas J.

Later an architect in Carlisle, Cox was one of the most virulent of the Association leaders in the city in 1835 and led the assaults on Conference and the circuit ministers; he took the main part in the dispute which raged for some months and busily organised Association classes and preaching for the secessionists, though his radical attitudes in politics estranged some Wesleyans who would otherwise have joined Association ranks.

See Carlisle and the Warrenites.

Craig Joseph and Michael

These brothers were tireless workers in Appleby circuit; Michael, the shy one, financed chapel building and worked wherever he was not required to publicly speak, whilst Joseph, a great revivalist and preacher, stirred up support as he rode from village to village in his job as carrier and farmer. He was the main lieutenant of the Dents and Crosbys, organised the financing and start of the British School in Appleby, and eagerly criticised landowners and the Established Church. A leading Temperance worker and political radical. As representative to the 1846 Association Assembly he heard the Rochdale organ and, being duly impressed, returned to buy one for his own society. The work of the Craigs is obvious throughout the circuit records.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1855 p.83; 1842 p.77; 1853 p.592;
Circuit Records.

Crosby Family

This family ran Kirkby Thore both as class leaders and as owners of most of the village; John senior of Powis House sent John junior into the ministry, but he tragically died in 1832. His other sons Samuel and James continued to support the Association circuit, it being mainly financed through its many difficulties by the Crosby and Dent families. James' son and heir, William, promised to be an

outstanding preacher but was drowned in the Eden.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1849 p.83; Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1875 p.306;
The circuit records are full of their contributions.
Appleby and the Warrenites.

Dalton Richard M.

Born at Holme, Westmorland in 1855, of a Methodist family, he moved to seek his fortune in Oldham and returned, successful to Cumbria in 1908. He settled at Barrow and was able to take the major part in encouraging local MNC, BC and UMFC congregations to unite after the 1907 union had proved hard to effect locally. A well known businessman and councillor.

Un. Meth. Mag. 1926 p.401.

Dent Family

John Dent was the one leading layman of the Appleby circuit who stood out amongst the others throughout the period 1835/70; his family became Methodists in 1802 when preachers first reached Bolton, and John finally broke all ties with the Anglicans in 1817. As a Whig in politics he was unpopular with neighbouring landowners, his Dissenting habits likewise leading to social ostracism. He built the Wesleyan chapel in 1818, lost it for 4 years in the secession, won it back and rebuilt it beside contributing whenever possible to other circuit building for the Association. His wife, Agnes, sister to James, John and Samuel Crosby, took some time to agree to leave the Wesleyans and suffered a crisis of conscience. Their home was, with Powis House, the social centre for the circuit.

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1867 p.45; 1871 p.794; Circuit records,
Appleby and the Warrenites.

Dickinson Isabella

She was one of the first 6 rebels in Egremont in 1835 and with her husband, a leader, helped organise the rebels and promised finance for the new chapel. It was Isabella who bought up remaining shares in the chapel when only half had been sold, becoming the major holder without whom the venture would never have commenced. She gladly gave back her shares in 1871 (and died the same week), in order to free the chapel for the model deed.

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1871 p.665 and the society records.

Gordon Richard

Gordon was a local preacher, Sunday school superintendent and leading layman of Whitehaven circuit in the 1820s before turning into the main opponent of the Wesleyan authorities in 1835. He ran into trouble in the 1820s over his running of the Sunday school and later in the Crown Affair when he either stole something from the chapel which he did not like, or encouraged somebody else to do so. It was he who organised the Association preaching plan after Watmough held his famous meeting, and it was with Watmough that he clashed so violently at Egremont in the pulpit. Gordon was involved nationally in the Warrenite controversy and, being affluent, was able to travel to meetings in Lancashire and elsewhere in between his local forays against Watmough and the remaining loyal Wesleyans.

Whitchaven Wesleyan Circuit Records; Whitehaven and the Warrenites.

Hargreaves John Junior

The most outspoken of the Reform leaders in Carlisle in 1850, a manufacturer of clothing and son of a former whip maker; he was only 20 years old at the time of the dispute and immediately attacked Hugh Beech, the Carlisle superintendent, trying to make for himself a reputation as a "freedom fighter" and "enemy of tyranny". In this he failed and was target for several attacks by supporters of Beech,

including one by Punshon. He wrote to Bunting several times but was ignored, and though remaining loyal to the Reformers played only a small part in the circuit's subsequent history. His publishing of items relating to Reform led to a good deal of controversy and fortunately have been preserved.

See section on Carlisle in the Reform Issue and the pamphlets accrued.

Harrison Edward

A member and trustee for 25 years Harrison joined the Wesleyan Association because he believed their principles reflected those upheld by John Wesley. An active supporter of the Association he died during the city revival of 1849. His son George and wife Sarah were also loyal to the Association.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1850 p.346; 1861 p.308.

Hogg James

A Presbyterian, converted to the Wesleyans in 1800 and violently pro-Association after 1835, Hogg was typical of those Wesleyans of radical political views and Dissenting background who intensely disliked ministers. He died aged 85, a hardheaded and contentious Scot.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1850 p.296.

Ireland William

At Egremont, he, his son and wife were mainstays of the society and instrumental in overthrowing the clique which at first dominated the society in the 1830s and 1840s; he wrote a brief history of the cause and, as a former Congregationalist, disliked ministerial power. The Irelands greatly helped the finances of the circuit and were particularly concerned with promoting Sunday school work - there were

over 150 in the Egremont one due to their care and attention.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1856 p.446 and society records.

Lammonby John

Lammonby, of Netherhouse in the wild Border area North of Carlisle, was the oldest Wesleyan to join the Association in 1835, aged 70; he became a rebel because of his beliefs in Temperance and spent his remaining years actively taking Temperance through the region with his wife. Drink he saw as the downfall of many people, and did not approve of the way a good number of Wesleyan preachers imbibed.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1847 p.317.

Lane William

Preacher at Appleby in 1842/43 faced with a second secession back to the Wesleyans and widespread dissafection from the Association circuit. He was able to hold the societies together and recruited 50 new members, the first significant success of the new circuit.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1843 p.125,

Lowthian John

First chairman for the Association meetings of 1835 in Carlisle and always described as "Gentleman"; a man of property who led a leisured existence but who after seeing how rabid were some of the Association leaders, found their words about an ending to the ministry and Independent congregations just too much and rejoined the Wesleyans.

See Carlisle and the Warrenites.

McCutcheon H. L.

A city ironmonger and man of radical political views, described as the "horse fly of the Wesleyans" for 20 years and a "born trouble-maker" by Punshon; the man most likely to appeal to the rabble of the city, who liked to enjoy their ephemeral support and who was eager to heap abuse on those who disagreed with him.

See Carlisle and the Reform Issue.

Metcalfe Robert

Born at Bolton Low Houses, brought up by relations in Appleby and serving an apprenticeship as stonemason in Lancashire, Metcalfe settled in Egremont for a time but by 1830 had his own business in Dalston where he turned first Wesleyan and then Associationist. Haunted by the spectre of poverty despite his relative affluence, he did whatever he could for the poor of the circuit and financing chapels.

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1860 p.302.

Middleton John

A Wesleyan in 1787 at Brough, he was circuit steward and treasurer of various funds for many years until he could not agree to support Conference and Bunting in 1835. His secession was a serious matter because of his great popularity in the area, and financial matters lapsed into confusion for the Wesleyans for some time.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1847 p.274.

Moffat John

A Wesleyan by birth and Association member at 16, Moffat was 32 years city Sunday school superintendent and leader, later a town councillor and member of many official bodies including the Burial Board, and a Poor Law Guardian. He and several friends bailed out

the Tabernacle, built on a shareholding principle but never self-financing and few wanted the shares. A very active local politician for the Liberals, a businessman and property owner.

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1883 p.364.

Hossop Clement

The thorn in the flesh of the Egremont society from the 1830s to the 1880s, expelled and suspended for misdemeanours on a number of occasions, always in trouble but always re-admitted as member.

See society records.

Parker William

Carlisle manufacturer and criticised for being the most mean and stingy of the city Methodists and obsessed by ministerial extravagances; like some other Reformers, Parker was alarmed by calls to abolish the ministry in Methodism and to create circuits independent of all connexional control. He was a Tory in politics and not at home with the radical Reformers, later joining the Wesleyans.

See Carlisle and the Reform Issue.

Pearson Joseph

A stonemason at Egremont, Pearson was one of the special "missionaries" appointed in the late 1830s to revive the flagging fortunes of the circuit. Such missionaries were likewise appointed in Carlisle; Pearson was particularly successful and built up a wide circle of friends.

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1864 p.382.

Proctor William

Proctor was a city ironmonger eager to lead the Reformers of

1850; like many of the others a politically involved man and radical, he wished to end fulltime paid ministry and to destroy connexional control. Strangely he returned to Wesleyanism.

See Carlisle and the Reform Issue.

Randleson William

From Warwick Bridge and the only known Reformer to have spent some years in the navy; he became an Independent in Carlisle after missions by the talented preacher Whitridge, later joining the Wesleyans and then eagerly supporting the Association and savagely attacking Dunn, the circuit minister. This tendency to become over-aggressive and over-excited caused illness and he was wisely not allowed to become a city leader because of his excesses. However, he was allocated the special role of evangelist, at which he was excellent.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1854 p.533.

Rutherford David

Association minister in Carlisle 1848 to 1851, Rutherford was responsible for helping the Reformers in their campaign to disrupt the Wesleyan circuit, and figured prominently in their public meetings and private planning. He entered into considerable newspaper correspondence with loyal Wesleyans, relived the 1835 secession in detail and brought the whole matter to the attention of the public whenever possible, particularly over Dalston where the Wesleyans would not allow the Association to retain or even to buy a chapel the society had built for itself prior to their secession en masse. He seems too to have been active in political work in the city, and probably worked as preacher around Appleby and Kendal some years previously.

See Carlisle and the Warrenites.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1850 p.152 and p.248.

Thornborrow Henry

Of Peaselands, Appleby, a noted philanthropist enabled by his wealth and leisure to concentrate on good causes; a Wesleyan in the 1800s, he was :coaxed into Association ranks but permanent chronic health forced him to restrict his work to financial contributions and to helping poor Associationists.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1846 p.525.

Younghusband Jonathan and Mary

Mary came from Penruddock, and like her husband was an Independent until they moved to Kendal and came under Wesleyan influence; she unwillingly left the Wesleyans though her husband was the main Association organiser, in which activity he met little success. David Rutherford knew the family well whilst working in the area and noted Mary's confining of her attentions to the poor and sick of the circuit, rather than to Association activities.

See Kendal and the Warrenites.

Brief Entries:Batey John of CarlisleWes. Assoc. Mag. 1850 p.298.Cowen Joyce of EgremontUn. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1868 p.732.Davis E and the Appleby revivalWes. Assoc. Mag. 1851 p.102.Gibson Isabella of Caldewgate, CarlisleUn. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1868 p.734.Gunn Elizabeth of DalstonWes. Assoc. Mag. 1848 p.139.Harrison George of CarlisleWes. Assoc. Mag. 1847 p.275.Johnson Elizabeth of CarlisleUn. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1868 p.460.Johnson John of CarlisleWes. Assoc. Mag. 1852 p.294.Lennox Sarah of WhitehavenUn. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1868 p.733.

Morgan Joseph of Carlisle

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1848 p.139.

Nicholson Elizabeth of Appleby

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1842 p.215.

Pattinson Ann of Appleby

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1847 p.557.

Procter Elizabeth of Dalston

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1844 p.208.

Reid James of Whitehaven

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1871 p.184.

Robinson William of Cockermouth

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1841 p.355.

Rodney James of Dalston

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1876 p.696.

Scoon John of Carlisle

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1850 p.347.

Simpson Ann of Carlisle

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1852 p.289.

Slée Joseph of Whitehaven

Un. Meth. F. C. Mag. 1868 p.730.

Stephenson: William

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1843 p.209.

Thompson J. on the need for a circuit day school in Carlisle.

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1847 p.48.

Torrentine John of Whitehaven

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1847 p.277.

Whitham Charles of Carlisle

Wes. Assoc. Mag. 1853 p.391.

APPENDIX B

RELIGIOUS CENSUS:- 1848,

1851,

1902.

A Religious Census, in which all those people attending services on a particular Sunday across the country in every place of worship, was only once held, in March 1851. Later there were smaller, less carefully scrutinised and probably less accurate ones, notably in Cumbria in 1902 but limited to West Cumberland, plus one at Whitehaven in 1881 and one held earlier in order to prove the Established Church was badly supported, in Carlisle in 1848. Whatever their shortcomings these remained the only comprehensive data available on attendances at places of worship, and succeed only in showing how many actually went to a place of worship, and not their genuine religiosity or the impact of organised religion on the county. Reasons for going to services were mixed, motives often not of the best kind ranging from hypocrisy to a desire to keep in with one's employers. The shortcomings of such material are obvious: alleged falsification of returns in order to boost the attendances of a particular denomination, the impossibility of gauging yearly attendances from one Sunday only, vagaries of illness or the weather, many defective returns due to ignorance of returning officials or deliberate attempts to sabotage which forced the employment of national averages for individual churches or chapels which in turn were frequently misleading locally. What it did illustrate was that only about half of the population could be mustered in to places of worship which meant the other half were not under direct church influence, and that the Established Church was evenly balanced by the attendances of all the Dissenters combined. The arguments about the 1851 and other Censuses at the time were legion, as they have been ever since (1).

- E. G. Best: "Mid-Victorian Britain" 1851/1875, 1971. p.176;
 D. M. Thompson: "Victorian Studies" No. XI 1967, p.87;
 J. F. C. Harrison: "The Early Victorians" 1832/51, 1971 p.122;
Census of Religious Worship, England and Wales. Report and
 Tables. (London 1853).

The 1848 Carlisle Census:

In order to gather extra information against the Church of England the Carlisle Journal stationed its agents outside every place of worship in Carlisle on Sunday May 7th in order to count the number of folk who attended all services:

Carlisle: population 25,000.

Total attendances: 3,963 (or nearly 16% of the population).

Cathedral: 270, including 142 children and 26 soldiers:
at the 3 weekly Cathedral services attendances were 12, 11 and 6,
plus officials.

<u>Church of England</u>	<u>Attendders</u>
St. Cuthberts.	689
St. Marys.	200
Christ Church	301
Trinity	470

<u>Nonconformist</u>	<u>Attendders</u>
Scotch Church	237
Roman Catholic	450
Wesleyan	631
Association	165
Primitives	150
Congregational	215
Presbyterian	185

The only complaint was from Beswick, the Association minister who said that normally 400 attended his Tabernacle for services and that the census was "fixed" to give a false picture to the impressionable public. The Editor pointed out that he trusted his hand-picked counters and that that was the correct number at the services on that day, though he was "certain" that Beswick's figure of 400 per Sunday

was correct, but not on that particular Sunday. (Journal May 26th). It was likewise pointed out that the Dissenters were the mainstay of religion in the city and that the Church ought to be forthwith disestablished. It was not mentioned that a figure of 16% of the population at worship meant 84% were not, and that this indifference was the big problem,, not relations between Anglican and Dissenter. 16% for total attendances was felt to be a "good figure".

1851 Census:

The Church of England attracted around a quarter of Cumbrians to its services, or over half of the total number of hearers, but it has to be borne in mind that some of these returns included those who attended 2 or 3 times on the census day. Its 282 places of worship covered much of Cumberland and most of Westmorland effectively except for the growing industrial and mining areas, and in rural locations, particularly in Westmorland, this coverage was impressive, and placed that county high in the attendance figures for all counties, and in the amount of accommodation it provided. This provision of seats and buildings was likewise good in Sedbergh district, but not so good in Cumberland where population was expanding more quickly and not necessarily near existing church provision.

The Dissenters, apart from the Methodists, had no particularly high numbers in the county, with the Independents mustering less than one quarter of the Methodists' attendances in only 37 places of worship. The Presbyterians too were confined to towns but were outnumbered by the Roman Catholics, recently greatly augmented in numbers by continued Irish immigration to just a few towns and villages with only 10 places of worship, but absolutely packed to capacity on the Census day. The Quakers had 31 places of worship but less than 1,000 hearers, with the Baptists and other Dissenting sects very weak in numbers and confined to urban centres where traditionally Dissent had been very active - particularly Kendal and Whitehaven.

What seems to have happened between the 1851 census and the 1902 census, if the figures have any semblance of accuracy attached to them, was that the number of hearers at religious services drastically declined, with a noticeable drop after 1881 according to the brief Whitehaven census of that year.

1851 Census:

The Methodists:

The strongest Dissenting group were the Methodist Connexion, split between strong Wesleyans and smaller Primitive, Association and Reformers. Between them they mustered hearers numbering over 25,000 in the county, or 10% of Cumbrians, at over 200 places of worship, and if anything the Census does more injustice to this group than to others.

The Wesleyans:

With by far the largest network of chapels and meeting places, the Wesleyans aimed at covering as many places as possible in order to make itself second only to the Establishment. This blanket coverage paid off though in 1851 secession was at its height and Wesleyan congregations were in some areas reduced, and this must give a false figure. County wide the 1850 troubles hit attendances at church, though secession was confined to Carlisle, and had the census been taken in 1849 Wesleyan figures would have been up by a third at least. Wesleyans did best in the census in districts with little bother - Cockermouth, Penrith and Alston with high attendances; in Westmorland Wesleyanism had not recovered from the annihilation of societies in 1835 in an area of Wesleyan strength, whilst in Kendal other Dissenters held sway at that date. Though there were strong pockets of Wesleyanism in Whitehaven and Ulverston it was the development of Barrow, Millom and West Cumberland especially after 1860 which gave magnificent opportunities for expansion. Yet Whitehaven never recovered from the destruction of the 1835 secession when it lost two thirds of its membership and congregation permanently. Carlisle suffered the only organised secession around 1850 and this dramatically shows in the attendances, where membership and especially the number of hearers was drastically affected by a very bitter and damaging dispute which lasted from 1850 to 1852 Carlisle was the only place in the county to endure 2 secessions.

The Association:

The seemingly great strength of the Association was based on the Carlisle-Appleby-Whitehaven triangle. Their numbers were swelled about that time by the new causes of dissatisfaction in Wesleyan ranks, though had the census been recorded 2 years later the attendance would have been greatly reduced, as it would have been if taken 2 years previously. The Census was in respect to Wesleyan and Association very misleading, not at all a faithful record of the sort of support for each. The Association especially in Carlisle benefitted from the great secession there in 1850 when the seceders attached themselves to the Association rather than form a separate Reform congregation. With 10 Association places returning defective information, the national average would have been taken by the Census officials and the small village Association congregations in Carlisle and Appleby circuits would have benefitted from such an uplift. The average attendance nationally was far above that of the small village causes which made defective returns. The Association was also very keen to pay attention to the number of hearers at a chapel, and would not be eager to repeat the exposé of 1848 when a "mini-census" in Carlisle revealed they were only about a third as strong as they claimed. Eager to be in the public eye their leaders would ensure an excellent attendance at services of their large Sunday schools (their speciality at that date) hence the large figures returned. The Reformers of 1850 were all quickly absorbed by the Association and made the 1857 union which created the United Methodist Free Churches unnecessary in this county.

The Primitives:

Thus far with the Methodists the returns seem to be accurate for that year bearing in mind the Wesleyans' temporary losses and the temporary strengths of the Association. However, with the Primitives there is a serious inadequacy in the returns: many Primitive services held on the census Sunday were not issued with return sheets since they were not licensed places of worship. The reason for this was that unlike the other Methodists, the Primitives were still new on the scene, still expanding into new areas, or

lacking in financial resources were unable to build places of worship and held services in houses and cottages. These would escape the notice of officials and the Primitives, who had only 8 defective returns would not bother with the census and its intricacies. In most of the circuits, especially in the west and north the Primitives had not by 1851 built many chapels and relied on homes a great deal. The best example is Carlisle, where there were certainly not just 2 places holding worship on that Sunday, but more like 12, plus 6 more under Carlisle circuit but in the Brampton registration district. These contained small membership - about a third of the total circuit membership of towards 300, yet their numbers of hearers was triple the membership in these little rural places, increasing the returns of hearers by about half. There were similar discrepancies with most of Cumberland except Alston, home of immensely strong Primitive societies, and Longtown and Bootle; in East Westmorland the Primitives had made early gains and had more chapels for the Appleby circuit than in others, though returns for Kendal, Furness and Cartmel are again inaccurate. It would seem reasonable to add to the Primitive total of under 6,000 attendances another third to make it 8,000, and in at least 70 places of worship and not 41. The omitted places were all small cottages and rooms with small numbers of hearers, but their addition gives the Primitives a truer figure. Later in the 19th century Primitive membership and numbers of hearers was to greatly increase in the west and south of Cumbria with the growth of Barrow, Millom and Workington.

TABLE 151851 Religious Census:

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Attendances</u>	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>% of Cumbrians</u>
Roman Catholic	4,784	10	1.6
Independents	7,302	37	2.5
Baptists	1,508	18	0.5
Presbyterians	3,930	20	1.3
Quakers	998	31	0.3
Church of England	70,763	282	24.5

Methodists:

Wesleyan	16,637	134	5.8
Primitive	6,050	41	2.1
Association	8,668	30	3.0
Reformers	308	2	0.01
<u>All Methodists:</u>	31,628	206	11.0
<u>All Denominations:</u>	120,913	602	41.8

Note:

"Attendances" refer to the total number of hearers at all services on Census Sunday; there were a number of defective returns.

"Places of Worship" refers to the number of places of worship in the census survey but this excluded a number of small Dissenting places of worship and the above table does not cover the smallest denominations: Brethren, Sandemanians, Mormons, Undefined and Unitarian.

"% of Cumbrians" refers to the proportion of attenders at each denomination out of the total Cumbrian population of 289,009; this includes Sedbergh and Ulverston districts.

Number of hearers per place of worship is as follows:

TABLE 15

Roman Catholic	478	Independent	197
Baptist	83	Presbyterian	183
Quakers	32	Church of England	251
Wesleyan	124	Primitive	148
Association	289	Reformers	273
All Methodists	153		

For Cumbria: 200 hearers per church, covering all services.

1851 Religious Census - The Methodists

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Seats</u>			<u>Attendances</u>			<u>Total</u>	
		<u>Free</u>	<u>Let</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>		
<u>Bootle</u>									
	Wesleyans	4	294	203	497	62	243	130	435
<u>Whitehaven</u>									
	Wesleyans	6	782	1,108	1,890	881	26	908	1,815
	Primitives	4	433	602	1,035	270	306	390	966
	Association	4	390	648	1,038	479	0	429	908
<u>Wigton</u>									
	Wesleyans	8	586	376	962	200	130	186	516
	Primitives	2	280	0	280	0	12	16	28
<u>Cockermouth</u>									
	Wesleyans	20	1,856	1,623	3,479	923	399	1,201	2,523
	Primitives	5	574	464	1,038	112	256	433	801
<u>Brampton</u>									
	Wesleyans	12	950	300	1,250	123	175	199	497
<u>Carlisle</u>									
	Wesleyans	5	460	800	1,260	513	0	583	1,096
	Primitives	2	100	0	100	120	0	290	410
	Association	12	1,280	150	1,430	680	358	1,120	2,158
<u>Longtown</u>									
	Wesleyans	3	478	12	490	102	76	190	368
	Reformers	1	0	0	0	0	35	0	35

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Seats</u>			<u>Attendances</u>			<u>Total</u>
		<u>Free</u>	<u>Let</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	
<u>Alston</u>								
Wesleyans	8	1,080	751	1,831	285	541	663	1,489
Primitives	5	490	628	1,118	0	631	892	1,523
<u>Penrith</u>								
Wesleyans	30	2,183	932	3,115	490	897	1,046	2,433
Primitives	4	366	194	560	17	186	172	375
<u>Kendal</u>								
Wesleyans	7	810	680	1,490	795	237	758	1,790
Primitives	2	160	180	340	251	167	201	619
Reformers	1	160	0	160	0	171	102	273
<u>West Ward</u>								
Wesleyans	4	215	204	419	0	86	174	260
Association	1	140	0	140	0	53	35	88
<u>East Ward</u>								
Wesleyans	18	1,406	1,053	2,459	489	866	542	1,897
Primitives	14	523	269	792	30	357	431	818
Association	12	577	373	950	223	538	384	1,145
<u>Sedbergh</u>								
Wesleyans	4	476	410	886	130	263	142	535
Primitives	2	115	300	415	40	192	230	462
<u>Ulverston</u>								
Wesleyans	5	456	366	822	485	38	435	958

TABLE 16

Total Wesleyan: Attendances for Cumbria	15,144
Total Primitive Attendances for Cumbria	5,588
Total Association/Reform attendances for Cumbria	4,607

Note: Defective returns for 21 Wesleyans,
8 Primitives,
10 Association places.

1851 Religious Census - The Church of England

		<u>Attendances</u>			
<u>Places of Worship</u>		<u>Total Seats Available</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
Kendal	42	14,694	6,635	2,876	1,555
East Ward	21	5,825	2,479	1,396	242
West Ward	15	3,892	1,871	625	200
Wigton	21	6,753	2,457	498	370
Cockermouth	31	11,794	5,122	1,696	2,277
Whitehaven	24	11,458	6,209	1,372	3,379
Longtown	7	1,770	536	28	0
Carlisle	21	8,464	3,816	1,375	1,128
Alston	3	1,090	285	0	357
Penrith	29	9,278	3,164	819	668
Brampton	12	2,987	897	623	232
Bootle	13	3,179	1,284	515	57
Sedbergh	6	1,816	502	580	0
Ulverston	37	13,760	7,733	4,405	500

Note: Defective Returns 3 for Sedbergh and Ulverston

Church of England Attendances

	<u>Churches</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Attendance</u>			<u>Churches Open</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
Westmorland	78	24,411	10,985	4,897	1,997	77	47	10
Cumberland	161	56,803	23,770	6,926	8,468	139	72	32

Note: Defective Returns 2 in Westmorland,
8 in Cumberland.

1851 Religious Census - Independents

	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Total Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
<u>Westmorland</u>					
Kendal	5	1,010	327	122	276
East	4	790	78	242	98
<u>Cumberland</u>					
Bootle	1	200	12	0	0
Carlisle	3	1,370	439	0	402
Alston	2	520	113	23	147
Penrith	3	740	354	0	147
Brampton	1	250	127	0	117
Wigton	7	1,563	668	0	571
Cockermouth	6	1,576	557	144	759
Whitehaven	1	700	276	0	281
Sedbergh	2	700	163	185	110
Ulverston	2	660	273	0	211

Note: Defective Returns 1 for Cumberland

Independent Attendances

<u>Places of Worship</u>		<u>Seats</u>	<u>Attendance</u>			<u>Services</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
Westmorland	9	1,800	405	364	374	5	5	5
Cumberland	24	6,919	2,546	247	2,424	20	6	17

1851 Religious Census - Roman Catholics

<u>Churches</u>		<u>Total Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
<u>Westmorland</u>					
Kendal	2	700	400	0	275
<u>Cumberland</u>					
Wigton	1	0	350	0	130
Cockermouth	2	550	406	0	290
Whitehaven	2	750 (?)	750	0	200
Carlisle	2	1,130	1,128	207	456
Penrith	1	98	105	0	87

Note: No Defective Returns

<u>Roman Catholic Attendances</u>								
<u>Churches</u>		<u>Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>			<u>Churches Open</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
Cumberland	8	1,853	2,739	207	1,163	7	2	6
Westmorland	2	700	400	0	275	1	0	1

1851 Religious Census - Presbyterians

	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>			
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	
<u>Westmorland</u>						
	United Presbyterian Church	1	400	127	0	150
<u>Cumberland</u>						
<u>Whitehaven</u>						
	Presbyterian Church of					
	England	1	640	220	0	240
	United Presbyterian Church	1	700	70	0	80
<u>Wigton</u>						
	United Presbyterian Church	1	300	43	50	0
<u>Cockermouth</u>						
	Presbyterian Church of					
	England	2	840	202	0	250
	United Presbyterian Church	1	630	386	0	350
<u>Longtown</u>						
	Presbyterian Church of					
	England	1	300	90	0	0
	United Presbyterian Church	2	500	130	90	120
	Church of Scotland	1	250	72	0	53
<u>Carlisle</u>						
	Church of Scotland	1	750	160	0	116
	United Presbyterian Church	1	470	452	0	0

Presbyterian Continued

	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
<u>Penrith</u>					
United Presbyterian Church	4	490	70	64	65
<u>Brampton</u>					
Presbyterian Church of					
England	1	200	100	0	180

Note: No Defective Returns.

Presbyterian Attendances

	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>			<u>Churches Open</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
<u>Westmorland</u>								
United Presbyterian Church	1	400	127	0	150	1	0	1
<u>Cumberland</u>								
Church of Scotland	2	1,000	232	0	169	2	0	2
United Presbyterian Church	10	3,090	1,151	154	665	7	5	5
Presbyterian Church of								
England	5	1,980	612	0	670	5	1	3

1851 Religious Census - Quakers

<u>Places of Worship</u>		<u>Total Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
<u>Westmorland</u>					
Kendal	1	850	103	46	0
East Ward	1	46	11	0	0
West Ward	2	260	7	0	0
<u>Cumberland</u>					
Alston	1	200	6	0	0
Penrith	2	620	16	5	0
Longtown	2	370	24	0	0
Carlisle	3	710	106	72	0
Whitehaven	1	700	25	12	0
Wigton	6	910	72	12	0
Cockermouth	5	1,290	97	158	0
Ulverston	3	422	24	0	0
Sedbergh	4	540	59	0	0

Note: No Defective Returns.

			<u>Quaker Attendances</u>			<u>Churches Open</u>		
			<u>Attendances</u>					
<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Seats</u>		<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
Westmorland	4	1,156	121	46	0	4	1	0
Cumberland	20	5,160	419	329	0	20	10	1

1851 Religious Census - Baptists

	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Total Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
<u>Westmorland</u>					
Baptists all in East Ward	4	199	169	62	130
<u>Cumberland Baptists</u>					
Wigton	1	60	8	0	0
Cockermouth	4	565	156	22	110
Whitehaven	1	300	70	0	59
Carlisle	1	1,000	30	0	60
Bootle	2	100	70	35	18
Ulverston	5	822	300	124	85

TABLE 22

Note: Defective Returns Westmorland: 1 Particular Baptist, 1 Undefined Baptist. Cumberland: 1 Undefined Baptist.

<u>Baptist Attendance</u>								
<u>Places of Worship.</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>			<u>Churches Open</u>			
		<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	
<u>Westmorland</u>								
Particular Baptists	2	199	169	0	100	1	0	1
Undefined Baptists	2	0	0	62	30	0	1	1
<u>Cumberland</u>								
Particular Baptists	4	1,720	235	0	229	4	1	3
Scotch Baptists	1	45	10	10	0	1	1	0
Undefined Baptists	4	260	89	47	18	3	2	1

1851 Religious Census - Sandemanian, Brethren, Unitarians, Undefined, Mormons

	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Total Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
<u>Westmorland</u>					
<u>Sandemanian:</u>					
Kendal	2	170	88	67	61
<u>Brethren:</u>					
Kendal (?)	1	100	46	0	60
<u>Unitarians:</u>					
Kendal	1	312	120	0	125
<u>Undefined:</u>					
(All in Kendal)	4	1,100	526	91	525
<u>Cumberland</u>					
<u>Unitarians:</u>					
Whitehaven	1	0	28	25	0
<u>Brethren</u> (?)	2	400	50	0	180
<u>No Sandemanian</u>					
<u>Mormons:</u>					
Whitehaven	1	200	39	50	0
Cockermouth	1	60	14	17	0
Carlisle	2	141	48	40	61
<u>Undefined:</u>					
Cockermouth	3	400	50	0	180
Carlisle	1	100	15	0	20

TABLE 23

	<u>Places of Worship</u>	<u>Total Seats</u>	<u>Attendances</u>		
			<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>
<u>Undefined:</u>					
Penrith	2	174	0	0	95
Whitehaven	4	330	83	16	161
<u>Brethren:</u>					
Ulverston	1	0	0	32	0

Note: Defective Returns: for Westmorland 1 Sandemanian,

TABLE 24Population of Registration District and Poor Law Unions:—

Kendal	36,572
East	13,660
West	8,155
Sedbergh	4,574
Ulverston	30,556
Alston	6,816
Penrith	22,307
Brampton	11,323
Longtown	9,696
Carlisle	41,557
Wigton	23,661
Cockermouth	38,510
Whitehaven	35,614
Bootle	6,008

1902 West Cumberland Religious Census:

This census of attendance during December 1902 was carried out by the agents of the West Cumberland Times across the area from Keswick to Whitehaven, Silloth and Wigton - roughly West Cumberland - in order to ascertain the numbers attending since much had been written, but little actually found out, about the decline of religion at that time. There had been a similar survey in Whitehaven only, of church attendance in 1881, and the Editor placed these results by those 21 years later. Of course December was a bad time of year for attendance, with the weather, bad roads and dark nights, but though it was claimed that these factors could reduce attendance very significantly, little proof was offered. A few places stated that appalling floods and storms cut attendances by a third to one half, and several services were abandoned, but this was confined to small villages and little affected the overall figures.

By far the largest attendance was recorded for the Anglicans, though their number of places of worship open on the day was less than in 1851 and their attendances drastically cut from that date by over 60%. In Whitehaven a decline in attendance between 1881 and 1902 was especially serious and must suggest a rapid loss of hearers between those two dates as opposed to the years from 1851 to 1881. The only bright point for the Anglicans was the success of the new Workington missions; elsewhere it was a picture of gloom compared with 1851 or 1881.

The Dissenters likewise experienced great losses in their hearers. Nowhere was this more savage than amongst the Quakers, where their 1902 figures were less than 30% of those of 1851, and their meeting places cut from 10 to 5. The Brethren had increased over the period, occupying several Quaker meetings and seemingly supplanting the Quakers throughout the area. Their attendances had doubled between 1851 and 1902 and their places of worship increased from 1 to 7, a modest but surprising increase, in part accounted for by the decline of the Quakers (similarly in Kendal the Quakers founded the Brethren).

The Baptists had maintained their small number of hearers from 1851 to 1902, but despite the general rise in population they lost some of their few meeting places. They scored less than did the Brethren, a sad

decline for one of the earliest of the Nonconformist sects. The Presbyterians too had had their attendances halved over the 50 years though their chapels had increased by one. Their decline was most marked in the large Whitehaven society from 1881 to 1902, with hearers cut from 619 to 285 in 21 years. The Independents had suffered the same fate, with hearers reduced by half between 1851 and 1902 and especially savage losses, from nearly 700 to 401, between 1881 and 1902.

An exception to this decline proved to be the Roman Catholics who showed a dramatic increase in attendances over the half century from under 2,000 to over 5,000, with churches up from 5 to 11. Even so they too had had their hearers cut from 1,400 to a little over 1,000 in Whitehaven between 1881 and 1902; the successes were in the new inland mining villages and at Workington, with large concentrations of Irish people in just 10 or 12 places. The large scale development of mining and of Workington attracted many immigrants, many Irish Catholics amongst them.

Finally the Methodists, like the Catholics, enjoyed an improvement in their fortunes according to the census. The Primitives particularly had taken advantage of their opportunities and recruited amongst the thousands of workers, obviously with great success after 1851; between then and 1902 membership in the area of the census rose from around 400 to 1,200. However despite this considerable impact, and the establishment of 28 places of worship from the original 11, hearers had only risen from nearly 1,800 to 2,300 which did not even cover the increase in membership throughout the mining villages and towns. Hearers in Whitehaven according to the 1881 returns had not altered at all in the succeeding 20 years, so that hearers and members increased mainly inland. The conclusion must be that though the Primitives rapidly increased membership, hearers did not go up in proportion and the Primitives were failing to attract non-members to services.

The Wesleyans too recorded almost exactly the same number of hearers in 1851 as in 1902 although membership was up from less than 1,200 to over 1,700, so that this Connexion too was failing to

attract non-members to services. Of course many of the hearers had become members in the intervening years, but the failure to continue to attract non-members was marked. This tendency was exaggerated by the success of the new mission to the poorest part of Whitehaven, the Hogarth Mission, which accounted for over 500 attendances, mainly non-members. The Wesleyans too, though increasing in membership were no longer attracting large numbers of non-members to services except with their mission.

The United Methodists proved the exception to the Methodist Connexions and lost nearly half of their hearers between 1851 and the 1902 census, though their membership remained stable and they added an extra chapel (the Wesleyans added only 2). Their total attendances at 5 chapels in 1902 were scarcely more than those at the single Whitehaven chapel in 1881, again emphasising the change between 1881 and 1902 in their fortunes, as with those of other denominations.

To some extent 1902 provided a watershed for the Methodists for after that date there was no question of growth on any scale and the maintenance of their present position was to prove increasingly difficult as population migrated out of the district hitting numbers and finances. Other denominations were already visibly declining in the later 19th century and the Methodists were to follow suit in the early 20th century. Secular amusements, the rise of organised sports and organisations, reduced church or chapel going to first formality, then to an occasional attendance, then to important events only, rather a great change from the vibrant, exciting and demanding religion of the earlier part of the century. Times changed, people's aspirations, desires and interest with them, and made all the churches to a greater or lesser extent redundant - only the Roman Catholics could prove this to be incorrect in 1902, the seeds of future Methodist decay already having been sown. It says something for the way that the Methodists had fossilised in their religion when the place with highest attendance also had lowest members and least formal services in the area - the Hogarth Mission. The Methodists had lost what general appeal they once possessed and could simply not attract hearers. Today they cannot attract their own members at times.

TABLE 25West Cumberland Times 1902 Religious Census:Wesleyan Methodists

Cockermouth: 43/91	Broughton Moor: 8/56
Keswick: 103/91	Great Clifton: 5/33
Wigton: 42/37	Little Clifton (Bridgefoot): 25/62
Aspatria: 38/50	Seaton: 44/55
Mawbray: 28/57	Broughton: 31/80
Pelutho: 36	Frizington: 19/75
Abbey Town: 23/25	Maryport: 100/147
Silloth: 36/50	Egremont: 41/120
Brigham: 25/47	Moor Row: 20/50
Cleator Moor: 31/111	Cleator: 22/52
Distington: 12	Harrington: 53/81
Hensingham: 34/93	Lorton: No Services
Rowrah: 30/58	Workington: 88/232, missions: 41/152
Flimby: 61/113	and 74/110
Bassenthwaite: 6	
Dearham: 24/46	
Kirkbride: 22/22	
Whitehaven: 102/189. Hogarth Mission: 57/467	
(1881 Census: 309/359=668. Whitehaven Census: 1902 - 815)	

Total: 4,844.

1902 West Cumberland Times Religious Census:Primitive Methodists:

Broughton Moor: 56	Prospect: 16/34
Broughton: 30/50	Kirkbride: 10/11
Lamplugh: 12/30	Workington: John Street: 70/179
Croasdale: 12	Corporation Road: 20/51
Frizington: 34/93	Cockermouth: 33/84/14/35
Maryport: 41/71	Keswick: 26/18
Ellenbrough: 36/120	Wigton: 26/93
Egremont: 20/51	Aspatria: 80
Moor Row: 26/71	Beckfoot: 28
Harrington: 42/92	Silloth: 24/38
Whitehaven: 60/185 - Total 245	Cleator Moor: 20/80
(1881 Census: 84/161 - Total 245)	Distington: 13/55
Dearham: 21/56	Flimby: Abandoned due to weather
Crosby: 45	

Total: 2,311United Methodists:

Workington: 40/100
 Egremont: 50/93
 Bigrigg: 28/53
 Parton: 15
 Whitehaven: 22/108 (130 - 1902)
 (1881 Census: 172/295 (467 Total))

Total: 509

TABLE 251902 West Cumberland Times Religious Census:Independents:

Maryport: 14/37	Silloth: 24/40
Holme: 10/37	Wigton: 72/134
Workington: 62/151	Aspatria: 46/80
Cockermouth: 77/122	Parton: 24/53
Keswick: 48/80	Cleator Moor: 43/115
Whitehaven: 86/183: Mission: 38/94 (1902 = 401)	
(1881 Census there: 280/275 and 35/86: 1881 = 676)	

Total: 1,670Presbyterians:

Harrington: 38/65
 Workington: 90/135. 43 at Mission
 Cleator Moor: 20/68
 Distington: 27. 65 at mission service.
 Silloth: 43/43
 Whitehaven: 100/185 (1902 = 285)
 (1881 Census: 165/175: 102/177: 1881 = 619)

Total: 922Brethren:

Frizington: Plymouth: 11/23
 Harrington: Unspec: 22/27
 Workington: Christian: 40/92
 Parton: Church of Christ: 30/53
 Whitehaven: Unspec: 35/58 in Friends Meeting House
 Church of Christ: 15/29
 Christian: 11/18
 (1881 Census: Plymouth: 40/92: Exclusive: 73/84: 1881 = 289)
 (1902 = 166)

Total: 464

TABLE 251902 West Cumberland Times Religious Census:Roman Catholics:

Whitehaven: 2 chapels, 5 services: attendances: 152/280/227/222/166
= 1,047

(1881 Census in Whitehaven only, gave 3 services at one place:

520/484/412 = 1,416

Workington: 4 services: Total 1,392

Cockermouth: 2 services: 168/111

Wigton: 157/87

Frizington: 169/170

Maryport: 196/210/173

Egremont: 3 services: 335

Harrington: 102/86

Cleator Moor: 5 services at 1 chapel: 159/256/246/248/265

Total: 5,577

Quakers:

Whitehaven: Chapel taken over in Sandhills Lane by Brethren,
attendances of 35/58.

(1881 Census gave 24/3 at two Quaker services: Quakers appear to have
merged with one of the three groups of Brethren).

Broughton: 3

Cockermouth: 15/4

Wigton: 62/23

Total: 107

Baptists:

Broughton: 21/32

Maryport: 85/185

Aspatria: 21/63

Aspatria is Church of Christ, listed as Baptist: there are such named
churches at Whitehaven with attendances of 15/29, and Workington 18/27
but neither is designated Baptist by the reporters.

Total: 407

1902 West Cumberland Times Religious Census:Church of England:

Clifton: 11/661

Whitehaven: 69/220; 75/187; 52/147; 31/83 = 900

(1881 Census: 392/671; 245/412; 204/262 = 2,186

Workington: 106/319; 197/395:

Missions: 34; 38; 62; 99; 53/61; 25; 28/166

Loweswater: 24/14

Seaton: 52/77

Broughton: 41/41.

Lamplugh: 6/7; Missions: none

Frizington: 32/100

Maryport: 179/268

Egremont: 54/155; 2/36; 69/113; 31/104

Harrington: 39/107

Lorton: 17/27

Brigham: 21/28

Cleator Moor: 67/103

Distington: 47/76

Hensingham: 74/123

Arlecdon: 13/20

Parton: 59/81

Flimby: 26/71

Thornthwaite/Braithwaite: 23; 30/49

Bassenthwaite: 9; 38/43

Dearham: 37/74

Crosby: 32/44

Kirkbride: 6

Silloth: 56/118

Abbey Town: 47/61.

Holme St. Cuthberts: 24/21

Aspatria: 110/126

Wigton: 290/183

Keswick: 183/168

Crosthwaite: 49/43

Cockermouth: 168/127; 96/111

Total: 9,475

TABLE 251902 Census in West Cumberland Compared with the 1851 Census

<u>1851</u>			<u>1902</u>			
	<u>Attendances</u>	<u>Places</u>		<u>Attendances</u>	<u>Places</u>	
Church of						
England	23,380	76		9,475	53	
Roman						
Catholics	1,946	5		5,577	11	
Quakers	377	10		107	5	
Independents	3,256	14		1,670	12	
Presbyterian	1,891	6		922	7	
Brethren	230	1		464	7	
Baptists	425	6		407	3	
		<u>Membership</u>			<u>Membership</u>	
<u>Wesleyan</u>	4,844	34	1,120	4,854	36	1,750
<u>Primitives</u>	1,795	11	410	2,311	28	1,200
<u>United Meths</u>	908	4	240	509	5	220

"Attendances" is the total number of hearers at all services.

"Places" is the returned number of places of worship.

"Membership" is the number of Methodist members

Census Returns are for Registration Districts of Wigton, Whitehaven and Cocker-mouth for 1902 and 1851:

Total Population of area surveyed: 1851 - 98,000 1902 - 130,000
(estimated)

Number of attendances as percentage of total population: 1851 - 40%
1902 - 20.6%

A comparison between the 3 census returns, inaccurate as it is over such widely differing areas and scale, nonetheless contains points of note. The United Methodists (the Association of 1848 and 1851) exhibit the impact of the Reform secession on their fortunes - only a few non-members as hearers in 1848 but with the Reform dispute at its height a staggering number of hearers who were not members. By the turn of the century, the position was returning to normal with towards half of attendances being of members. This meant, of course, a majority of attendances by hearers who were members, plus a large number of children (not, of course, members), and few non-members.

The Wesleyans surprisingly increased their proportion of attenders who were not members between 1848 and 1851 despite the Reform troubles, because of most circuits not losing members and the compensation for losses in some off-set by gains in others. No doubt too Returning Officers for Wesleyan chapels counted attendant Association folk as members, or perhaps as non-members, and the situation, for instance in Carlisle, was anything but clear in March 1851. Their attenders included a majority who were not members even as late as 1902, partly due to the work of the Hogarth Mission.

The Primitives found problems in 1848 in attracting non-members though the 1851 census shows a strong balance towards large numbers of non-members attending services, swelled by children and by several attendances the same day by members. There is a marked distinction between their ability to reach non-members at services in 1902 compared to the Wesleyans who had less than half the proportion of members as a percentage of total attendance. Clearly the Primitives needed their own missions to the poorer areas one might think, though they catered primarily for the mining and working classes anyway. What they had done was to recruit amongst hearers, thus reducing the non-members attendance, and had strictly controlled Sunday Schools in order to recruit from amongst the older scholars. Finally, that religion directly attracted far less than half of the population is borne out by the figures, together with a great decline in religious allegiance in the late 19th century.

TABLE 261848 Religious Census: Carlisle

	<u>Attendances</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Membership as % of Attendances</u>
Wesleyan	631	235	37.2
Primitive	150	93	62.0
Association	165	150	91.0

1851 Religious Census:

	<u>Attendances</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Membership as % of Attendances</u>
Wesleyan	16,637	4,100	25.0
Primitive	6,050	1,700	28.0
Association	8,668	600	7.0

1902 West Cumberland Census:

	<u>Attendances</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Membership as % of Attendances</u>
Wesleyan	4,844	1,750	24.2
Primitive	2,311	1,200	52.0
Association	509	220	43.2

APPENDIX C

ALSTON

Alston

Alston was an exceptional circuit, both for Primitives and Wesleyans, and apart from the section on the short-lived Reform agitation there amongst the Wesleyans, does not occupy great space throughout the main body of this Thesis. Originally placed in Cumberland for the benefit of the crown, Alston Moor furnished a livelihood for several thousand leadminers and small hill farmers who presented the Methodism with a unique challenge. In an inhospitable environment, cut off at all times of year by miles of high fells, the inhabitants were a hardy independent race eking out their existence with little contact between themselves and other Cumbrians or indeed anybody else. With the increase in mining in the 18th century, the widespread investment and roadbuilding of the London Lead Company and other mineowners, and the increase in population, changes might have been expected; yet the Moor folk remained as aloof from outsiders as they had always been, even when, after the mid 19th century, the decline of mining led to thousands leaving for work abroad and in other counties. There were a few Quakers and Independents in the area but no denominations had success until the coming of the Methodists, and the Church of England received support only from some of the landowners and scarcely a handful of poor families. Into this peculiar atmosphere of rural isolation and deprivation Christopher Hopper and his helpers arrived in the 1740s. Hopper and other mid 18th century preachers found the going hard in the extreme, the miners and farmers tough and independent and though impressed, not a people to be easily converted to membership. Alston town had 60 members by 1760, and Jacob Rowell, a Hopper convert, carried on the work, but the miners had a reputation for independence which did not require the preachers to run their religion. The town chapel of 1760 must rank as about the first to be opened in Cumbria, being replaced in 1797 and again in 1826, with Garrigill and Nenthead mining communities likewise having early buildings (1). Linked to Hexham for sometime,

1. The Highest Market Town in England, by "HK"; Methodist Recorder 1900; Methodist Magazine 1811 p.313, 1828 p.340.

the circuit proved to be for ministers the most depressing in Cumbria and the complaints from ministers on the state of Methodism there are legion. There was serious trouble between preachers and membership in the 1790s, the 1800s and regularly thereafter, with the gap between minister and member ever widening over the 19th century - hence the success of the Primitives of the 1820s and 1830s who offered a more exciting, cheaper and less status-conscious religion, with preacher just as poor as his members and content to share the same poor living conditions as his flock. Later, with the onset of serious mining decline and depopulation, the Wesleyans were much closer to the Anglican Church than to the Primitives, a distinction of which everyone was aware (2). Unquestionably lively and attractive in the 18th century to the inhabitants of the Moor, Wesleyanism lost out to the growth of Primitivism, and though the circuit was loyal to a man to the Conference in 1835 it suffered tensions in 1851, with losses to the Quakers and the Primitives, with the Anglicans in between recruiting from amongst the higher classes of the circuit's membership. Economic depression killed the development of the circuit (3).

Alston was the most famous Cumbrian Primitive circuit, the Moor a hotbed of Primitivism from 1823 when preachers via Weardale came to Garrigill, Wenthead and then Alston (4). It was here that the first Alston Chapel in 1823 was completed by a builder who, due to disputes between the trustees, was allowed to get away with shoddy work which was in danger of collapse from its opening, but which was only replaced in 1845 at a cost of £300 - a low figure because the members themselves built it with their own labour and with materials

2. Wm. Kelk to Jabez Bunting, 4th April, 1821; M. Jewett to Jabez Bunting, 28th June, 1842 and Wm. Tranter to Jabez Bunting, 15th January, 1845 in the Bunting Transcripts, Journey from Wenthead by Chester Armstrong, 1938.

3. Manchester Times, June 27th, 1835; see piece on the Reform Issue in this thesis; for the economic problems see A. E. Smailes, Northern England, 1964.

4. William Patterson "Northern Primitive Methodism", p.171 onwards, Prim. Meth. Mag. 1824 p.54, O'er Hill and Dale p.66.

to hand in the moors and streams. This involvement of every member in the building and running of societies and chapels was a key factor in the immense success of the sect here, as was their offering an enjoyable and lively religion which had none of the stuffiness or stiltedness of other denominations (5). There were 337 members when William Harland was there in 1832 in 21 societies, 109 being at Nenthead alone, and he and Sister Timmins readily changed with the Hexham and Weardale preachers in those years (6). Christopher Hallam found 568 members in 1842, Garrigill, Nenthead and Alston having 55, 70 and 67 members respectively, and with a score of small societies attached as far away as Penrith (7). Alston and the Moor remained Primitive strongholds with huge periodic revivals which set the villages on fire - for instance in 1825, 1834, 1843, 1852, 1860 and 1870. Serious migration out of the area damaged the societies and could not be made good, but into the 20th century the circuit remained a place of pilgrimage for Primitive worthies.

At Garrigill the 1825 chapel was too small by the time it was opened and overflow services had to be organised in adjacent cottages (8). As elsewhere in the circuit, prayers were given during the winter before and after services that members and preachers might have safe trips across wild moors in appalling weather, but this disadvantage seemed to act as a positive incentive to attend church. Most members were miners, poor but thrifty and hardworking, with smallholdings or farming relations every bit as independent as themselves. However, Nenthead was the place for Primitivism.

Not only did Primitive Methodism dominate the village of Nenthead but when emigration was so serious hundreds of Primitives

5. Prim. Meth. Mag. 1826 p.104 and 1836 p.394.
6. Circuit Book of William Harland at Rylands.
7. Circuit Book of Christopher Hallam, Rylands.
8. Prim. Meth. Mag. 1857 p.242.

were sent from here to other places across the world. Its 1825 chapel was 1,800 feet up, the highest in England, and it attracted the leading preachers of the century - Bourne, Clowes, Flesher, Oxtoby, Ritson, Race, Batty and a host of others (9). After 9 months of singular unsucccess, the preachers led by Batty suddenly found hundreds converted to the new religion within weeks. The sect offered cheap enjoyment, amusement, a warm and friendly atmosphere where people might meet friends and the opposite sex, and the mine owners were delighted to be able to promote a religion which emphasised hard work and temperance. Their noise, merriment, groans, gesticulations and excesses aroused some concern at first but as their behaviour tempered their successes increased. The idea of a general orgy of drinking on six monthly or annual pay days ended with the work of the Primitives, and by the 1870s the village was famed for its total morality and "lack of sin". It was about that time too that Chester Armstrong was being raised in the village, and he wrote clearly of what life was like then (10).

Armstrong's father was a leadsmelter and Primitive, his wife from Methodist farming stock in the next dale, and like the majority of the population they attended the Primitive chapel. A few attended the Wesleyan one which was seen as very close to the Established Church, much disliked as representative of all that was wrong in society, the Primitives felt, and the Wesleyans and Anglicans were seen as intruders from the "upper class". The miners, despite employers' pressure, were deeply radical in politics and Mr. Armstrong senior was one formidable leader of the workers. Radical nonconformity dominated the village. Chester remembered the awesome discipline of the society; no door needed to be locked, no police were ever needed, no immorality even hinted at. On the other hand this power led to people being expelled from society on grounds regarded as ridiculous by Wesleyans of the 1870s - too modern hair-cuts or clothes, being seen holding hands with the opposite sex in public or private without chaperone, and the elders of society ruled

9. Prim. Meth. Mag. 1823/24 and onwards is full of Nenthead Primitive work.

10. Journey from Nenthead, Chester Armstrong, 1938.

the members with a rod of iron. To be expelled meant being unable to live with the majority of the folk who retained Primitive discipline. During the 1880s the Armstrongs witnessed what they regarded as a softening of the old ways as discipline declined, as colour was allowed into chapel interiors, flowers in the home, secular books on the shelves and more liberal social attitudes prevailed. Nonetheless the Primitive tradition retained its grip on the village into the 20th century despite the vast losses by emigration after the mining decline. When the Armstrongs moved to Ashington in order to find easier work for Mr. Armstrong (due to his bad health from smelting), the family was appalled at the relative "immorality" and "lack of religion" amongst the coal miners of the North-East compared to their own lead dales. This way of life seemed alien to them and the work inferior down coal pits, and the family looked back nostalgically on their past in Nenthead which haunted Chester his whole life. This was the power of the Primitives at its greatest and it made Alston outstanding (11).

11. See "Memorabilia of Church Life", Prim. Meth. Mag. 1903 p.20, when William Johnson looked back over his long life as an Alston Primitive and recalled the changing times.

APPENDIX D

THE BIBLE CHRISTIANS IN CUMBRIA

The Bible Christians in Cumbria:

This small Methodist denomination grew up in the early 19th century in the South-West of England, and remained largely confined to that locality and the South coast. Its fervent and independent membership was similar to the much larger Primitive connexion, and despite a mission to Northumberland in the 1820s, not until late 1859 did they enter Cumbria, led by Rev. John Graham. By 1861 he had several preaching places and 19 members in and around Askham in Furness, helped by his wife, mainly immigrant miners and quarry men from the South West (1). The cause died out and no more was heard of the Connexion for a time.

With the development of the mining areas of Furness and south-west Cumberland around Millom in the late 1860s, large numbers of Cornish workers were imported and they brought their religion with them. From that time dates the start of the Primitives and Wesleyans in many villages and towns, as well as the Bible Christians. Enoch Rogers celebrated the first service in this new venture at Christmas 1870 in Dalton in Furness, with Richard Kelley working the outlying villages down to Millom. Before long Charles Denning and other ministers came to the county and had some success. By late 1872 the Dalton society had left the old school and had built a chapel in Broughton Road, and within a further 10 years had 92 members. (2).

After 2 years of work Rogers and Kelley had 70 members in 7 preaching places under their care, with just 9 local preachers to aid them. Kelley was successful in Barrow and with several sites acquired for building there was a circuit based on that town in 1874 and another based on "Cumberland", in the west. The following

1. The Northern Bible Christians, O.A Beckerlegge; Procs. UHS Vol. 31 Part 1 pp.39/43; The Bible Christians, Thomas Shaw.
2. Methodist Ministers Who Served in Cumbria, John Burgess 1977, Directory of Furness and West Cumberland, 1882.

Year, with a new chapel at Haverigg completed, the "Barrow and Durham District" was created and the Barrow and Kirkland (West Cumberland) chapels completed. All the members were poor working men and connexional aid was imperative - £130 to Barrow in 1877 and £20 to Millom - but the Bible Christians depended on the Cornish and could not make an impact outside of this narrow confine.

In West Cumberland Kirkland society furnished a good example of the impossible task of the Bible Christians to survive 300 miles from their main strongholds in a county impervious to organised religion and where there were hard times for other denominations with far greater resources in the field. Families migrated to the West Cumberland mines when the work in Cornish mines died out in the 1860s; the Baird family opened up Knock Hurton in 1869 and encouraged a number of Cornish families to work there, helping the growth of several little Cornish settlements. Preachers from Furness missioned the villages in 1871 and after several years of cottage meetings a chapel was opened there in 1877 (3), 6 miners, a mine agent and 3 tenant farmers were the trustees, but despite having over 50 members at times during the 1880s there was little in the way of circuit strength, the nearest societies being Little Moor Row, Cleator and Ennerdale. The chapel seated 120 and could attract up to 100 hearers, but during the 1890s the whole area's societies declined with serious emigration, and in 1893 the debt-ridden and isolated society opted to merge with the Whitehaven Primitive circuit; it at once received financial relief, more preachers, and a far richer and wider social and religious life. Together with Moor Row, likewise merged with an existing Primitive one, Kirkland just survived as Primitive causes into the 20th century.

By 1880 Millom had 200 members and was a separate circuit, but Barrow and Dalton circuit with 190 members required substantial

3. Kirkland Chapel, a Short History. John Dent, 1977;
Cleator Moor, Past and Present. Caesar Caine, 1916.

connexional aid throughout its history. Cleator Moor, replaced by Ennerdale circuit, did not improve with a change in name and what members were left after migration mainly joined the Primitives. Small societies at Frizington and Pica in the late 1880s did not survive past 1892, and in the south Swarthmoor chapel and society was taken over by the Dalton Primitives. In spite of the 1905 revival in the remaining strongholds of Barrow and Millom which recruited over 100 new members, the Connexion could not survive in its environment, the Cornish migrated out of the area with the ending of work as quickly as they had come, and with the West Cumberland and some southern societies joining the Primitives, the Furness and Millom Bible Christians just managed to hold on until the 1907 union with the United Methodist Free Church and the New Connexion. (4).

Chapels:

Millom 1874	Swarthmoor 1874	Dalton 1877
Ravenglass 1874	Barrow 1876	Kirkland 1877
Haverigg 1874	Cleator Moor 1876	Frizington 1888

Preaching Places: Silecroft 1894 Pica 1888

A number of Bible Christian ministers served in Cumbria; the one entrant to the ministry from the county was Richard Jones, born in 1879 in Millom and dying at Arnside in retirement in 1954.

4. Norman Nicholson's books describe admirably the plight of the early 20th century Bible Christians in Millom and their sad decline. The Barrow circuit asked for close relations with the Primitives on a number of occasions in the 1890s and 1900s since they needed help in running their societies.

APPENDIX E

METHODISM IN DUMFRIES

Methodism in Dumfries

Methodism has always been weak in Scotland and circuits small and scattered (1). Dumfries was no exception, partly due to the way in which Methodism there was out on a limb, well away from the mainstream of Scotch Methodism in the Lowlands yet 35 miles from the nearest English circuit, Carlisle, and beyond aid and support (2). This and the strength of the Presbyterians prevented the growth of strong Methodist societies in the area, and allowed only the Wesleyans any measure of success.

John Wesley's visits are a good guide to the 18th century success or otherwise of a place, and though he passed through Dumfries nine times between 1753 and 1790 only on the last two did he bother to preach (3). There seems to have been little call for Methodism in Dumfries, though Robert Dall, the pioneer preacher of the district, was despatched to walk from Ayr to take charge of the work in the town in 1787.

With his family for company, Dall worked the area and the town, spending five months preaching out of doors until forced by bad weather to seek indoor sanctuary. Thereafter he rented a barn with tiny windows that necessitated candles at any time of day, and which Wesley found particularly strange in appearance. Wesley was nonetheless pleased to see the new meeting house being built under Dall's supervision during May 1788 and praised the economy of the project.

The completion of the meeting place in 1788 encouraged the work of the preachers since the folk were unwilling to come regularly to a desperately shabby and primitive barn for services when they could

1. Procs. of the WHS Vol.132 part 5 pp.109/113. In Search of Forgotten Methodism: O. A. Beckerlegge, deals with Scotland and the strange fact that Wesley and his preachers devoted much effort to that country with little success.

2. Centenary Brochure for Methodism in Dumfries 1868 to 1968.

3. See Wesley's "Journal" throughout.

attend grander buildings just down the road. Zachariah Yewdall reported 40 members there in 1790 with considerably larger congregations, but there was friction due to the opposition of the Presbyterians who resented the success of the Wesleyans, and probably their zeal and confidence in their rightness over religion.

Dall often visited the town and was posted there several times. Duncan McAllum, another Scot and a Highlander used to giving four Sunday sermons, two in Gaelic and two in English, did good work in Dumfries in the 1800s. However between 1810 and 1821 the society all but died out. The cause was kept alive by Joseph Bailieff, a well off shopkeeper and member of the society for 44 years when he died in 1838 (4). The situation at times depressed him but he did not give up hope, and was rewarded between 1821 and 1823 when Hodgson Casson was appointed to the circuit. Casson was a young Cumbrian minister who had already made a name in his home county by his eccentric but highly effective ways of raising societies and congregations (5). His first ministerial appointment had been in Ayr where he became so depressed and disheartened that he was moved for several years to his home county for confidence and where success followed success. Prior to Casson's arrival the Dumfries circuit numbered 30 members - a far cry from the days when it was considered the third Scotch circuit after Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Casson was not pleased to be sent to Dumfries, but he quickly settled down to the task in hand. Using Bailieff's shop as a mission centre he would spring out upon unsuspecting customers and try to persuade them to attend the Wesleyan chapel by blocking the door. He would also rush out into the street to take passers-by to task over their religion, and within a year the membership had risen by these

4. Wes. Meth. Mas. 1838 p.841.

5. A. Steele, Christianity in Earnest: the Life and Labours of the Rev. Hodgson Casson, 1855; See Appendix A.

unorthodox means to one hundred (6). Casson tackled the Races annually held in the town, notorious for their "immorality" and general enjoyment and offering Casson a ready made audience. Despite his achievements in this way, and his starting of a Sunday school which soon had one hundred scholars, Casson needed to get away from the place once in a while; and he changed with a Whitehaven minister once a month. One of Casson's devoted Carlisle friends, local preacher Mitford Atkinson, readily aided him in the town and joined in mission work. By 1823 membership was 125, but Casson was for a time distraught about the untimely death of his young Cumbrian bride in that year (7). Thereafter things were never quite the same in the town, and he left for Yorkshire in 1824.

By the time Casson departed it seemed that fortune was smiling in the town's Methodists. Despite the ravages of Cholera in 1832, the society was doing reasonably well, and was untroubled by the violent disruption of the Carlisle circuit in 1835 and 1836 over the "Warrenite" issue. The society was relatively poor - members were nailmakers, millwrights, molecatchers, loomworkers, dyers, mail-coachguards, tanners, hatdyers, sawyers, but finances were on an even keel. Suddenly in the spring of 1837 occurred the worst disaster to befall the little community: the so called "Hyde Affair".

James Hyde was appointed minister at Dumfries in 1836 and stayed one year, in which time he set the seal on the fate of the circuit. Back in Carlisle in May 1837 the superintendent Samuel Wilde, fresh from successfully resurrecting a seemingly lost city cause after the mass expulsions of his predecessor, was informed as District Chairman of impending trouble at Dumfries involving Hyde (8). At the May

6. Wes. Meth. Mag. 1822 p.733.

7. Wes. Meth. Mag. 1823 p.345.

8. Bunting Transcripts, S. Wilde to J. Bunting 30.5.1837 and 8.7.1837.

District meeting when things were looking brighter for the District, Wilde was told that all was not well in Dumfries, and that charges would shortly be brought against Hyde for not putting on trial one of his leading officials on a charge of "gross immorality". Insufficient evidence was forthcoming at that date to suggest what precisely was the problem, so Wilde and his colleague Heywood went to Dumfries for a few days. The situation there jolted both of them. The man guilty of immorality was Pearson, the county agent for "Morison's Pills", advertised as a cure for all aches and pains plus sundry diseases, which to the Methodists' horror included a "nameless disease" (Venereal Disease). By being an agent for such "quack pills" the man made a good living for his family. Now this of itself was not approved of, but the man, a leader, steward and Sunday school superintendent, had become friendly with a local schoolmaster, who in turn introduced the agent and leader to a "quack doctor" specialising in a range of fake medicines and pills. In a correspondence of nearly 50 letters between the three men, it was clear that the agent was asking the quack doctor for various preparations, and he would then claim that Morison's Pills were doing the work instead. These letters formed the basis for the charges of his immorality, for not only was he trying to dupe the public and to make large amounts of money, but he had stated that he himself had had "the nameless disease" and had been recently cured by Morison's Pills. The gory details of the whole business were described in letters to the fake doctor and the schoolmaster.

The whole sordid business came to light when Morison himself agreed to give the schoolmaster £25 and a share in the profits from a book he was to write describing the amazing cures resulting from Morison's Pills. When Morison had read the manuscript he refused to give the schoolmaster a penny, and the latter, furious, turned the matter over to a solicitor. The solicitor attempted to gain money from Morison and from the agent, but on failing to do so he advertised the letters between the three to be for sale, and arranged for viewing the day before the public auction of the letters. A number of people went to view the merchandise, informed Methodists of the matter, who in turn went to read the letters and in turn were horrified. They told Hyde of the contents, and pleaded with him to

go to see them. Hyde regarded the matter as one of backbiting and gossip and refused to have anything to do with it unless the letters were brought to his house - the solicitor not surprisingly refused to allow this. Hyde thus refused to suspend Mr. Pearson from his several posts, and this shocked the society and the town, and the Methodists became notorious. At this point, in early May, 50 members, officials and teachers wrote to Wilde requesting his immediate investigation of Hyde and Pearson, with whom he was friendly.

Wilde wrote back to the 50 to say he could not interfere unless Hyde invited him to do so, and wrote to Hyde asking him to see to the whole business and describing the letters he had received from the worried members. Wilde told Hyde that he himself would come over to aid him with any problems at all. Hyde made no reply. Soon a further letter from the leading members of the society complaining that Hyde refused to interfere in the issue, that he refused to allow Wilde to involve himself, and that Wilde was deliberately neglecting his own duty if he allowed things to go on as they were. They were alarmed for the future of Methodism and could find no redress for their grievances.

Wilde, sensing the danger, told the worried members that they must bring a charge of neglect of duty against Hyde at the next District meeting, and by the same post informed Hyde that unless he saw to the Morison agent business immediately, a charge of "neglect of duty" would be preferred against him. Hyde wrote back to say that he refused to do anything unless the letters concerned were brought to his house; this was not agreed to by the people involved, and he had therefore to decline to see to the matter, despite the fact that the society and Sunday school were broken up and the congregation sadly depleted. The society then charged Hyde with neglect and the matter was brought up at the May District Meeting.

It was agreed at the meeting that Wilde and Heywood investigate the Dumfries charge by going there themselves. The two men found things worse than they had even expected with only 20 of the 80 members still in society. The two best leaders had given up in

disgust and given in their class books, allowing their members to disperse. Hyde refused to allow the two leaders to reform their classes and refused to meet them under any circumstances, and despite hours of reasoning and discussing with Hyde the two Carlisle men could get nowhere. Hyde refused to listen to all reason, refused all advice, refused to put the man concerned in the beginning on trial. They finally tried to get him to resign "for the sake of religion and Methodism", but he refused to do so unless given a signed document from them saying that he was not guilty of anything. This Wilde refused to do.

Wilde and Heywood examined all the letters forming the basis of the charge, and concluded that the agent was entirely guilty of all the charges against him. Wilde had no choice but to call a special district meeting in order to suspend Hyde before more damage could be done, even though Conference was not far away, and the members of the Meeting would be sorely inconvenienced in time and expense. Wilde knew that the majority of the members and congregation would not hear Hyde preach again, and the true friends of the society in Dumfries were mortified by the whole matter. Against Methodism itself Wilde was surprised to find no disaffection - it was all directed at Hyde and his friend, the Pill agent.

Jabez Bunting advised Wilde to hold a Minor District Meeting, which would have avoided the expense and trouble of the Special one. The Dumfries society appointed two of their number to attend it, and Wilde asked Hyde to send the names of two preachers to defend him. Hyde refused, and a Special District Meeting had to be called. This met on July 4th and 5th, 1837.

At this meeting Pearson was excluded from society since his case was even more "sordid and disgusting" than was at first thought. Hyde was found guilty of "neglect of duty and of contumacy" after a patient investigation, and was suspended until Conference could deal with him. The meeting was forced to take this relatively drastic measure for several reasons. Hyde had made himself the most unpopular man in the

town of Dumfries, by his conduct he had all but destroyed the Methodists society there, and by gross mis-statements and remarks he had driven away the congregation so that few attended the services. He refused to acknowledge the legality of the Special Meeting or of its right to try or to suspend him. To allow him to go back to Dumfries and to occupy the pulpit would have worsened an already desperate situation. He was allowed to occupy the manse until Conference shortly decided what to do with him, but he had to promise not to interfere with any aspect of Methodism in Dumfries and to virtually hide from the public. Watmough, the formidable minister who had done battle so ably with the Whitehaven Methodist rebels of 1835, was sent to Dumfries in the interim, with Coghill of Wigton to replace him shortly. A young local preacher from Whitehaven would then be called on to travel and to replace Coghill. Bunting wrote back that this was a good idea and the cheapest in the circumstances. There was no doubt in the minds of anyone at the meeting that Hyde was "mentally deranged" and had been "ill in the head" since before his arrival at Dumfries. One assumes that he retired at the Conference and nothing more was heard of the affair, which was so painful that the history writers ignored it (9).

The Queen Street Wesleyan chapel remained the sole Methodist presence in Dumfries, with the societies at Lockerbie, Penpont and Collin soon dying out once no energetic ministers like Casson were available. All too often supernumeraries or sick men were stationed there. The cause remained small and scarcely recovered from the Hyde affair. Stalwarts of the society remained loyal, like Catherine Shore who died in 1839 aged 55 and Margaret Patterson in 1852 aged 89, the

9. The whole matter is based on Wilde's reports, but there is no reason to doubt any part of it; he was one of the most respected and upright Cumbrian ministers, a man of great integrity and justice.

last of the original 1787 members (10). However, in the autumn of 1863 difficulties once more presented themselves in the form of the "Riddick affair".

Thomas Ratcliffe was stationed in the town 1861 to 1864, and determined to expel one James Riddick, clothier, on charges arising from the latter's suspicious financial transactions in the course of his work (11). It seems that Ratcliffe viewed Riddick as a harmful element in the peaceful society, and charged him with being bankrupt and thus liable to lose his membership of the society. On being proved wrong, Ratcliffe looked for further proof of the misdeameanours of Riddick which were arousing the curiosity of the Dumfries townfolkt, and were reminiscent of the 1837 calamity. Riddick, in the meantime, started legal proceedings against the minister for slander. Ratcliffe arraigned him before a leaders meeting and charged him with removing the goods and furniture belonging to Riddick's creditors and taking them to Liverpool prior to his own departure there, with slandering a number of Methodists including the minister in public, and with having lied repeatedly about his business and church membership. On October 20th, at the meeting the charges were found not to be conclusive and a decision was not reached by the Leaders. Witnesses were not accurate in their stories, and the whole matter took on the appearance of incompetence on the part of the minister and cunning on the part of Riddick. On the 28th October, 4 leaders and Ratcliffe told Riddick that he was found guilty of "violation of Methodist laws" and was expelled. Riddick counter attacked by claiming that if the meeting wished to listen to busybodies, liars and rumours they could go ahead, but that they were not acting in a Christian way or in a way to promote the harmony and perfection of the society which they so

10. Wes. Meth. Mag. 1839 p.71.

11. See "Statement by James Riddick, clothier, of Dumfries, in regard to the charges made against him by the Rev. T. Ratcliffe, November 5th, 1863". In Rylands.

desired. Riddick wrote to Ratcliffe that bearing in mind the "Abominable nature" of the society and its minister he was pleased to be expelled, since it showed that he was not of a like evil nature. He was also delighted to say that having achieved his object after a long and tortuous campaign to get rid of Riddick on whatever charges were available or could be raised by rumour or gossip, their next meeting would be in the local court over Riddick's suit for damages against Ratcliffe - there at least fair play would rule supreme, he concluded in November 5th 1863. What in fact happened is nowhere recorded, but the whole matter was probably dropped when Riddick's rather unfortunate broadsheets giving the whole business in graphic detail were published and widely distributed around Dumfries. The matter cannot have helped the Methodist cause.

One might think that poor Dumfries had had its fair share of trials, but in 1869 one more was added. In the previous year the society had been able to buy for only £800 a pleasant and large chapel from the Episcopalian Scots church in Buccleuch Street which lifted their prestige in the town and improved their congregations. Then the new minister Joseph H. Skewes, did something rather silly^o, he had printed a private pamphlet in 1869 which criticised the conduct and work of every minister in the town save the Wesleyan man, and cast aspersions on the genuine Christianity of every congregation save the Wesleyan one where he asserted "true religion" had its sole home in Dumfries. The town was scandalised, and shortly Skewes, immediately under suspicion by his omission from the list of those at fault, was discovered to have penned and printed the pamphlet (12). This did not amuse the local people or the Methodist society, and Skewes left the ministry shortly afterwards. Decline once more set in and by 1887 there were only 32 members, and only one active trustee when the Rev. John Atkins called a meeting to consider how to counter

12. See the Church Centenary which treats this serious matter lightheartedly.

appalling debts in 1882. In 1885 the inevitable happened, and the place lost its independence and was put under the control of Carlisle District chairman. It was decided that an active supernumary or a lay pastor would look after Dumfries, where there were 57 members in 1891.

The situation deteriorated and in 1899 the difficulty of supervising Dumfries from Carlisle led to it becoming part of the Carlisle circuit, though being planned there did not appeal to preachers. Attempts by the pastors and ministers to take Methodism to the poorer areas of Dumfries had some success, and during the 1890s rooms were taken in Glasgow Street, College Street, in the Freemasons Hall, and at Noblehill. Cottage meetings were encouraged, and there were 70 members in 1899. By 1905 it was down to 30, and the Home Missions Committee, looking for ways to cut its expenses, decided to drop it from the plan and to sell the chapel. At that point the "Joyful News" Evangelist Thomas Cook agreed to see what he could do in one year. Due to his brilliant work there were 128 members by 1907, and Cliff College was sending regular batches of students to help him out. Services were held in outlying areas like Locharbriggs, Drumsleet, Holywood, Georgetown and elsewhere at that time. Success at Annan for the first time happened in the 1900s. Previous unsuccessful ventures were capped by a change in fortune in 1897 when a new engineering firm was opened there, and brought with it some Methodist families. The Dumfries society responded to their call for preachers and by 1908 there were 18 members. Despite major debts the Dumfries trust bought extra land near to the chapel in 1911 in case of future expansion. This proved wildly optimistic, and by 1931 there were only 82 members in the whole area.

Methodism in Dumfries remained small and struggling into the twentieth century.

Note: Dumfries under Ayr Circuit 1788/89; an independent circuit 1790/1899; 1899 to date, under Carlisle Circuit. Under Edinburgh District to 1798, then under Whitehaven to 1805, and under Carlisle thereafter.

APPENDIX F

PATTERNS OF MEMBERSHIP CHANGE IN

PENRITH AND KIRKOSWALD WESLEYAN

CIRCUITS 1840/1914, AND THE

INFLUENCE OF WESLEYANISM THERE

Penrith and Kirkoswald Wesleyan circuits gave almost faultlessly exact membership returns for each society from 1840 until 1914. These can be used to trace the increase or decrease in membership in each society and in the circuits in order to illustrate the "good" and the "bad" years for the Wesleyans with great accuracy. The result of comparing annual growth or decrease gives a complex web of changes not easily explained, but which can be broken down into areas of development.

One puzzle of nineteenth century Methodist history has been the growth or decline of circuits and local societies, the reasons for decreasing or increasing membership of the church. The following tables do not record the amount of change, but simply the fact of change (or not) registered by a "+" for an increase in a particular society's membership over the previous year, or a "-" for a decrease in membership over the previous year. For no change since the previous year there is a blank, as there is if no returns were made on rare occasions. There are two sections to the tables: the Methodist societies which remained within the Penrith circuit the whole time, and the group which in 1871 were taken off Penrith and formed into a separate circuit, which allows for comparison between the two parts. The figures used to assess increases or otherwise have been taken from the Circuit Schedules which gave vast details on all aspects of finance as well as returning quarterly membership numbers. Where possible the March quarterly figures have been used in order to achieve consistency. Many societies never registered any members - like Ruckcroft and Laithes, hence their non-appearance, and others appeared fleetingly. Due to confusion in the returns, the three societies under the name "Newbiggin" have been omitted. At the bottom of the tables are placed the total number of societies registering increases or decreases in any year, and whether the circuit recorded a "+" or a "-" over the previous years returns.

Penrith became an independent Wesleyan circuit in 1806, and remained the largest society until today, based on the town with over 200 members in some years. The town society suffered a little in the 1840s and 1850s from the national internal disputes which lost

thousands of members to Methodism, hence the mixed fortunes during these two decades. Three new ministers came to the circuit in 1856/7 and better times came with them, since the predecessors had not got on with many of the members. Economic depression too had caused many members to leave the area, or to give up church attendance; they were unable to afford seat rents, decent clothes, collections and the like, but these days were left behind in the new era of prosperity which lasted well into the 1870s. The mid 1860s were very good years and the town society made the most of them with revivals throughout the villages. After the 1880s some effects of the great Agricultural Depression were felt, the town suffering less than the surrounding villages. Population declined, and before long the membership of the town Wesleyans followed suit. A strong recovery in the early 1900s could not redress the balance, and many Wesleyans left the area. The revival of the 1900s, linked to the 20th Century Fund nationally, with ideas of "a great leap forward", was just a "flash in the pan", and membership declined rapidly thereafter.

The 19 or 20 societies which remained with Penrith town after the division of the circuit in 1871 were nearly all small and increasingly reliant upon the support of the town society. Blencowe was typical of the fortunes of these little Wesleyan societies, where particularly after 1880 many years showed no change in membership, and a population decline. Shap ought to have been the second society of the circuit, since the population was in four figures and it was well situated as regards communications. The fortunes of the Wesleyans were there tied in with the development and decline of the granite and other quarrying concerns, and with the coming of the railway development. One factor in the weakness of the society was the shape of the village, straggled out along the main road, with no community spirit of which the Wesleyans could take advantage when establishing a society. As population stabilised, so did Wesleyan numbers. Edenhall appeared but briefly on plans and returns, and was absorbed by a more prosperous nearby society. The presence of the influential Musgrave family was not conducive to Wesleyan development, which factor too prevailed down at Lowther. Stainton was a more enduring society, though it disappeared for some years, and on its reappearance seemed to stagnate for most of the time.

Martindale (or Howtown), Matterdale and Patterdale were remote places, relying on a scattered farming population. Patterdale, formed from the hamlets of Patterdale, Glenridding and Hartsop, was later distinguished by its large mining population, and the prosperity or otherwise of the Wesleyans depended on that of the mining concerns at Greenside. The work of the Wesleyans was important and the largest and most permanent of the societies established there. (The Primitive Methodists failed to attract support amongst the miners).

Most of the other Penrith group societies were less remote, but were never large, and the town had to continuously mission the villages in order to stir up enthusiasm amongst even the converted after 1880. Dacre, Pooley, Askham, Bampton, Plumpton, Plumpton Back Street, Penruddock, Clifton, Cliburn, Newby, Sparkett, Helton and Hutton End were situated in the dispersed populations to the north-west of Penrith in Inglewood Forest, to the south around Lowther and the Westmorland border, or to the west of the town around the Keswick road. Once more, much depended on the economic conditions of the locality, the various missions, revivals, ministers and local enthusiasm. Many villages had concentrated assaults on them in the late 1850s, the late 1860s, the 1870s and early 1900s, and membership increased. As soon as attention declined, so did membership, though perhaps surprisingly after 1880 the major losses in members was in Penrith itself. The village societies, in the face of depression and depopulation tended to maintain their small membership.

The Kirkoswald circuit was composed of the Fellside villages lying to the east and north-east of Penrith - like the parent circuit, one dependent upon a rural economy, but one in which strong villages played an important part. This type of closeknit community, with a strong central plan to its layout, was favoured by the Wesleyans, who established here the strongest village societies of the combined circuits. The absence of the Church of England from places like Gamblesby and Hunsonby for most of the period left the Wesleyans a clear field, and many villages centred both social and religious life around their chapel. Despite the falling population after the 1880s,

the villages maintained their Wesleyan societies, and the percentage of villagers attending chapel services remained very large. Kirkoswald was made head of the circuit due to its relatively large population, its strong society, and one of the Penrith ministers had been stationed there for sometime. Yet this village of 600 people was no larger than several others, and its Wesleyan society, after the heydays of the 1860s, was smaller than that of other places. Kirkoswald experienced particularly bad times after the mid 1870s, suffering more than fellow villages. There were Independent chapels and congregations at Gamblesby, Kirkoswald and Salkeld, which may have contributed to the mediocre size of the Wesleyan societies there, and the rivalry of the Primitives in Lazonby (but nowhere else) stunted the Wesleyans' growth too in this large village.

The Kirkoswald group experienced problems during the 1840s and 1850s, but then blossomed in the following 15 years before once more having great problems although membership was maintained after an initial decrease amidst the declining population. Penrith group did better in the early period, worse in the 1860s, but again advanced in Penrith town membership, which outweighed gains in most of the other societies, and the 1890s were particularly hard years for Penrith. The new century saw some stable numbers of members achieved in both groups though this was not to last.

For the Kirkoswald group the especially good years for membership proved to be 1843, 1853, 1868, 1871, 1879; and particularly bad ones, 1841, 1847, 1851, 1855, 1873, 1874, 1876, 1887, 1893, 1895, and 1910. For the Penrith group the good years for membership were 1843, 1853, 1859, 1860, 1879; the very bad years, 1847, 1851, 1855, 1858, 1861, 1869, 1877, 1892, 1893, 1899, 1907, 1908 and 1911. Clearly there is some similarity between the two before 1871, but not a great deal overall. It is also plain to see that the bad years increased after the 1870s, and the good years decreased. From the tables and from what is known of circuit Methodist history, most difficult to assess is the importance of individuals in the Methodist societies, the influence (bad or good) of the ministers and preachers, of the leading members like Robert Gate, John Crone, John Pattinson, the Wilsons, the Lowthians and many others in their particular villages.

Increase in a society is signified by +, and decrease by -, though no attempt is made to show the size of + or of -. Where there is no change a blank is left.

Kirkoswald was formed into a Wesleyan circuit in 1871; it was carved out of the old Penrith circuit and hence the need to show figures combined for pre-1871 years. After 1871 the 2 circuits are shown separately, though comparison continues to be made. "Circuit +" or "-" shows the membership of the whole circuit, and whether this increased over the years.

A number of societies were started after 1841 and thus appear later in the returns, and certain of them disappeared from the annual returns over the years.

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society</u>	<u>1840</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1842</u>	<u>1843</u>	<u>1844</u>	<u>1845</u>	<u>1846</u>	<u>1847</u>	<u>1848</u>	<u>1849</u>	<u>1850</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>1852</u>	<u>1853</u>	<u>1854</u>	<u>1855</u>	<u>1856</u>
Penrith	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-
Blencowe											+	+		-	+		+
Shap	-		-		+	+	+	+	-	-		+	+	-	+		
Edenhall								+	-								
Stainton						+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+		+	+
Beauthorn									+	+	+		+		+	-	+
Martindale										+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
Askham						+	+	-	-		+	+	-	+		+	-
Sparkett						+	+		+	-	-	-		-	-		
Pooley Bridge						+		-	-		-	-	-				
Dacre	+	+		+	-	+	-		+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Penruddock	+		-	+	+		-	-	+		+	-	+	-	+	+	-
Clifton	+	+		-	+	-	+	-	-		+	-		+	+	-	+
Hutton End	+		+	-	-	-	-	-		-	+	+	-	-	+	-	+

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society</u>	<u>1840</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1842</u>	<u>1843</u>	<u>1844</u>	<u>1845</u>	<u>1846</u>	<u>1847</u>	<u>1848</u>	<u>1849</u>	<u>1850</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>1852</u>	<u>1853</u>	<u>1854</u>	<u>1855</u>	<u>1856</u>
Newby	-	+		-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
Cliburn	+		-		-		+	-	+	-				+	+	+	+
Morland	+	-		-	+	+	-	-	-	+		-		-	+		+
Plumpton	+	-		-		+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	
Patterdale		+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-			-	+
Matterdale		+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	-		-	-	-
<u>Total +</u>	8	5	3	4	8	12	7	5	7	8	10	6	4	5	9	5	8
<u>Total -</u>	2	3	4	6	3	2	8	10	9	6	6	11	10	10	6	9	7
<u>From Kirkoswald</u>																	
<u>Circuit +</u>	6	4	7	10	4	2	8	2	6	7	6	3	5	11	7	4	5
<u> -</u>	7	8	5	2	8	6	7	9	8	6	6	9	6	3	7	10	5
<u>Circuit:</u>																	
<u>Total +</u>	14	9	10	14	12	14	15	7	13	15	16	9	9	16	16	9	13
<u>Total -</u>	9	11	9	8	11	8	15	19	16	12	12	20	16	13	13	19	12
Circuit + or -.	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-		+	-	+	-

Source: Annual Circuit Schedules of the Penrith Circuit 1840 to 1914, and Kirkoswald Circuit 1871 to 1914.

In 1871 the new Kirkoswald circuit was established, based on the larger village societies of the fells and Eden Valley East and North of Penrith. Penrith retained a majority of the societies, but these tended to be the smaller ones which relied on the market town a great deal. However this did prove to be an advantage in the last quarter of the century, when Kirkoswald proved unable to support socieites in villages for the most part no smaller than the head one.

Plumpton BS = Plumpton Back Street.

The three societies of Newbiggin: Newbiggin Croglin, Newbiggin Dacre and Newbiggin Westmorland have been left off these tables due to their being confused in the annual returns; all three were commonly confused by the stewards entering returns, and this makes planning their membership changes very tricky.

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

Society	1857	1858	1859	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	1866	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871
Penrith	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	+
Blencowe	+	-	+	+		+	+		-	-	-		+		
Shap		-	+	-	+	-	+		+	+	-		+	+	-
Stainton	-	-		-		-	+	-	-						
Beauthorn	+	-	-	+	-		+	-	-	+	+	-		-	+
Martindale	-			+	-					+	-				
Helton										+	-	-	-		
Gt Strickland					+	-	+	+	-	+		+		-	
Calthwaite		+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-		-		+		
Bampton														+	+
Askham	+	+	-	-	-										

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society</u>	1857	1858	1859	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	1866	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871
Dacre	-	+	+	+		-	-	+	-	+	+		-	-	-
Penruddock	+		+	+	-	-				-	-			-	
Clifton	+	-	+	+	+			-	+	-	-	+	-	+	-
Hutton End	+	-	+	+		+		+	+	+		-		-	
Newby	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		+	-	-	-
Cliburn	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	+
Morland	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	-		-
Plumpton			+		-	+	-		+		+	+	-		+
Plumpton BS				+	-	-	+	-	+	+	+		-	+	+
Patterdale	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	-		+	+	+	+
Matterdale	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-

<u>Total +</u>	9	5	11	12	3	7	7	6	9	10	6	7	4	7	7
<u>Total -</u>	6	10	5	6	13	9	8	8	8	7	9	5	10	7	6

From Kirkoswald

<u>Circuit +</u>	6	6	5	8	6	6	4	7	7	5	4	10	6	5	12
<u>-</u>	5	8	7	5	6	7	8	7	6	9	9	2	8	7	2

Circuit:

<u>Total +</u>	15	11	16	20	9	13	11	13	16	15	10	17	10	12	10

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society</u>	<u>1857</u>	<u>1858</u>	<u>1859</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1861</u>	<u>1862</u>	<u>1863</u>	<u>1864</u>	<u>1865</u>	<u>1866</u>	<u>1867</u>	<u>1868</u>	<u>1869</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>1871</u>
<u>Total -</u>	11	18	12	11	19	17	16	15	14	16	18	7	18	14	8
Circuit + or -: +	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+

TABLE 27

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

Society	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888
Penrith	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	-
Blencowe	+		+				+	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	+
Shap	-	-		+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+		-
Stainton								+		+	+	+	+	-	-		-
Beauthorn	-																
Martindale	+	+	+	-		+		+			-	+	-	-	+	+	+
Halton		+	+		+	+	+	+	-	-		-	+		+	+	-
Tirril									+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	
Gt Strickland	-	-	-	+	+	-		+	-	-	+	-	+		-	-	
Johnby													+			+	+
Calthwaite		-	+	-	-		+	-	-		+	+	+			+	+
Bampton			+		+		+		-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+
Watermillock		+	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-		+	-		-	-	+
Sparkett	+		+	+	+	-	+				-	-					
Pooley Bridge			+	+	+	-	-										
Dacre	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-		-		
Penruddock	+	+	+		-	-	-	-	+		+	+	-	+		-	
Clifton	-	+	-		-		+		-	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	+
Hutton End	+	+	-	-	-	-		-	+		+	-	+	+	-	-	+
Newby	-		-		-	-		-	+	+		+		-	-	-	-
Cliburn	-	+	-				+	+			-		+	-	-	+	-
Morland		-	+		+	+	-	-		-		+	+	+	-	-	-

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Benrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society</u>	<u>1872</u>	<u>1873</u>	<u>1874</u>	<u>1875</u>	<u>1876</u>	<u>1877</u>	<u>1878</u>	<u>1879</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1882</u>	<u>1883</u>	<u>1884</u>	<u>1885</u>	<u>1886</u>	<u>1887</u>	<u>1888</u>
Plumpton	-	-	+		+	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	-			+
Plumpton BS													+	-	+		+
Patterdale	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
Matterdale	-			-		-	-	+		+	+	-	+	+		-	-
<u>Total+</u>	6	9	11	6	7	5	10	12	7	8	10	12	12	8	7	9	10
<u>Total -</u>	10	6	7	6	10	11	7	6	9	8	8	9	10	9	11	9	9
Circuit + or -:		+	-	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
Kirkoswald																	
circuit + or -:	-	-	-		-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	+

TABLE 27

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society</u>	<u>1889</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1892</u>	<u>1893</u>	<u>1894</u>	<u>1895</u>	<u>1896</u>	<u>1897</u>	<u>1898</u>	<u>1899</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1902</u>	<u>1903</u>	<u>1904</u>	<u>1905</u>
Penrith	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+
Blencowe	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	-					-	-	+	+	+
Shap	+	-			+	+	-	+	-		+	+	+		+		-
Stainton	+	-	-	-			+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+		+	-
Martindale			+		+	-	-	+	+	-	-					+	
Helton	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	-		-	+	-	-	-		+	+
Tirril	+	+	-		+	-	-	+			-			+	-		+
Gt Strickland	-	-	-		+			+	-		-	+	+			-	+
Johnby	-	+	+	-	-		+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-		+	-
Calthwaite	+	+	-	-	-	-	-		+	+							
Bampton		-	+	-	-	+	-	-		-			+	-	-	+	
Watermillock	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-		-				+	-
Dacre	-	+	+		-	-	-				-	-					
Penruddock					-	+		+	+	-		-	+	-	+		+
Clifton	+		+	+		+	-		-	+		+	-			-	+
Hutton End		-		-	-		+		-	+		-	-		+		
Newby		-	-		-		+		-	+	+		+	+	-	+	+
Cliburn	+	+	-	-	+		-	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	

TABLE 27

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society¹</u>	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905
Morland	+	-	-	-	-		+		+		-	-	-	+	-	-	
Plumpton	+		-			+			-					-			+
Plumpton BS	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-				-		-
Patterdale	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	+		+	-	-	+
Matterdale	-	+		+	-		-	-	-			+	+		+	-	-
<u>Total +</u>	10	9	10	5	6	7	8	8	8	6	4	8	7	7	7	9	10
<u>Total -</u>	8	10	9	10	15	8	12	8	10	9	10	7	8	6	6	6	6
Circuit + or -: +	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	+
Kirkoswald																	
Circuit + or -: +	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	+

TABLE 27

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society.</u>	<u>1906</u>	<u>1907</u>	<u>1908</u>	<u>1909</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1912</u>	<u>1913</u>	<u>1914</u>
Penrith	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Blencowe	+	-	-	-	-	+	+		-
Shap	-	+	-	+				+	+
Stainton	+	+	-		-				+
Martindale			+					+	+
Helton	+	-	-		-	-	-	+	-
Tirril	-		-		-	-	-	+	-
Gt Strickland	+	-	-		+			-	-
Johnby	+	-	+		-		-		
Bampton				+	+		-		-
Watermillock		-	+			-			
Pooley Bridge	+	-		+					+
Dacre						-		+	+
Penruddock	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	
Clifton	+	+	-	-		-	-	-	+
Hutton End	-		-		+				
Newby	-	-	-			-	-	-	-
Cliburn	+		-		+		-	+	

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Penrith Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society</u>	<u>1906</u>	<u>1907</u>	<u>1908</u>	<u>1909</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1912</u>	<u>1913</u>	<u>1914</u>
Morland	+	-	-				-	+	
Plumpton	-			-	+	+	+		+
Plumpton BS	+	-	-				+		+
Patterdale	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-
Matterdale	+	-	-		+	-			+
<u>Total +</u>	11	4	4	4	6	2	6	8	9
<u>Total -</u>	8	12	15	5	7	10	9	4	7
<u>Circuit + or -:</u>	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+
<u>Kirkoswald</u>									
<u>Circuit + or -:</u>	-	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	+

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Kirkoswald Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society.</u>	1840	1841	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846	1847	1848	1849	1850	1851	1852	1853	1854	1855	1856
Kirkoswald	-	+		+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	-
Ainstable		-	+	+	-	-	+		-	+	+			+	-	-	
Ousby	-	-	+	+	-		+		+	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	
Crofton	+	-	+	+		-	-		-								
Gamblesby	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-		-	+	+	-	+
Renwick	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+
Salkeld	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-		-	+	-	+
Lazonby							+	+	+		+	-	+	+	-	+	-
Culgaith	-	+	+	+	-		-	-	-	+		-	-	-	-	+	-
Glassonby	-		+		-		+	-	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	
Hunsonby	+	+	-	+	-	-	+			-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+
Melmerby	+	+	+	-	+		-	-	-	+	+	-		+	-	-	-
Temple Sowerby	+						+	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	+
Longwathby	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	-		-	-	+	-	-	
Skerwith	-	-	-	+	+		-	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-
<u>Total +</u>	6	4	7	10	4	2	8	2	6	7	6	3	5	11	7	4	5
<u>Total -</u>	7	8	5	2	8	6	7	9	8	6	6	9	6	3	7	10	5
<u>Circuit:</u>	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-		+	-	+	-

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Kirkoswald Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society.</u>	<u>1857</u>	<u>1858</u>	<u>1859</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1861</u>	<u>1862</u>	<u>1863</u>	<u>1864</u>	<u>1865</u>	<u>1866</u>	<u>1867</u>	<u>1868</u>	<u>1869</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1872</u>	<u>1873</u>
Kirkoswald	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
Ainstable				+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+
Ousby	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	
Croglin		+	-	-	+	-	-			-			+	-	-	-	
Gamblesby	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-		+		+	+	
Renwick	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-
Salkeld	-	+		+				-	+		-	+		-	+	+	-
Lazonby	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-		+	-	+		-
Culgaith		-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	-		-	-
Glassonby	-	-	-	+	-			+	-	+		+	+	-	+	-	+
Hunsonby	-	-		+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-
Melmerby	+	-	+			+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	+
Temple Sowerby	-	+	+	-	+	-		-		-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-
Longwathby		+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	+		+	+	
Skerwith	+	-	+			+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-		-	+	-
<u>Total +</u>	6	6	5	8	6	6	4	7	7	5	4	10	6	5	12	9	3
<u>Total -</u>	5	8	7	5	6	7	8	7	6	9	9	2	8	7	2	6	8
<u>Circuit</u>	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Kirkoswald Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society.</u>	<u>1874</u>	<u>1875</u>	<u>1876</u>	<u>1877</u>	<u>1878</u>	<u>1879</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1882</u>	<u>1883</u>	<u>1884</u>	<u>1885</u>	<u>1886</u>	<u>1887</u>	<u>1888</u>	<u>1889</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>1891</u>
Kirkoswald	-	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
Ainstable	-	-	-	+	+	+	-		-	+		-		-	+	-	+	-
Ousby	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+		+	+	
Croglin				+	+		+	+	-	+	+	-	-	+			-	
Gamblesby	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-			-	+	+	-	-
Renwick	+	-		+	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-		-	+	+	+	-
Salkeld	-	+	-	-		+	+	+	+	-	+	-			+		-	
Lazonby		+	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	+
Culgaith		+	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-		+	-	-
Glassonby	-	-		+	-		+	-		+	+	-		-	+			-
Hunsonby		+	-	-	-	+	-	-			+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-
Melmerby	-	+	-	-	-	+	+		+	+	+		-	-	-	-		+
Temple Sowerby	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-		-	+	-	+	-	-	+
Longwathby	-	+	-			+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+
Skerwith	-		+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+		+	-		+
<u>Total +</u>	2	10	2	8	6	11	8	5	5	6	8	5	6	3	8	6	4	6
<u>Total -</u>	9	3	10	6	7	2	7	8	8	8	5	8	4	10	4	6	8	6
<u>Circuit</u>	-		-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Kirkoswald Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society.</u>	<u>1892</u>	<u>1893</u>	<u>1894</u>	<u>1895</u>	<u>1896</u>	<u>1897</u>	<u>1898</u>	<u>1899</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1902</u>	<u>1903</u>	<u>1904</u>	<u>1905</u>	<u>1906</u>	<u>1907</u>	<u>1908</u>	<u>1909</u>
Kirkoswald	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+			
Ainstable	+	-	+	-	-	-	-			-	+			-	+	+	+	
Ousby	-	-			+	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-
Croglin		-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-			+	+	+			+	+
Gamblesby		-	-		+	+	+	-	+		+	+		+		-	-	+
Renwick		+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-		-	+		-	+	-	+
Salkeld	+	+	-	-			+	+	-		+	-	-	-	-	-		+
Lazonby	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+		-	+	-	+	+		-	-	-
Culgaith	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-		-		+	-
Glassonby	+			-	+	+	+	+		-		+		-		+		+
Hunsonby	-	-	+	+	-		-	-	-		+	-	-				-	+
Melmerby	-	-	-		+	+			+	+		+	+	+	-	+	-	-
Temple Sowerby	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-		-	+	-	-
Langwathby	-	-	+	-					+	-		-	+	+	+	+		-
Skerwith	+	+	-	-	-		-			-	+	+	-		+	+	-	+
<u>Total +</u>	7	4	8	3	5	6	5	4	3	3	7	6	5	5	5	7	4	7
<u>Total -</u>	5	10	5	9	8	5	8	5	8	8	3	8	7	5	5	4	7	6
<u>Circuit</u>	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	+

Annual increase (+) or decrease (-) in the societies of the Kirkoswald Circuit (Wesleyan).

<u>Society.</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1912</u>	<u>1913</u>	<u>1914</u>
Kirkoswald	+	-	+	+	-
Ainstable	+	-	+	-	
Ousby	-	+		+	
Croglin	-	-	+	+	
Gamblesby	-	-		-	+
Renwick	-	+	+	-	
Salkeld	-	+	-		
Lazonby	+	-	+	+	
Culgaith	-	+	+	-	
Glassonby	-	+	-	+	-
Hunsonby	-	+			
Melmerby		+	-	-	
Temple Sowerby	-	-	+	+	
Langwathby		+	-	-	-
Skerwith	-			+	+
<u>Total +</u>	3	8	7	7	2
<u>Total -</u>	10	6	4	6	3
<u>Circuit</u>	+	-	+	-	+

All that can be stated with certainty is that such leaders were vital to the wellbeing of the circuit. Many of the colourful and important men had passed on by the 1880s - men like James Irving and Robert Gate and his wife and there was a lack of men to take their places. Population movement and changes and the cycles in the economy were important to Wesleyan numbers, the best case being at Patterdale. When there was a population decline or economic depression for some months or more, then many Wesleyan societies were affected. The influence of the existence of rival churches, particularly rival Nonconformists, could be fatal to the Wesleyan impact, and the layout of the community too was important when considering Wesleyan membership in total or as yearly changes. The implications of such studies for each circuit, involving a mountain of tedious work and research covering many years, might be of vital import when considering the reasons for the growth or decline of membership of the Methodist Connexions, and a District study ought to prove vital to a discussion of the national picture and the elusive and intangible causes of membership increases or decreases.

The percentage of population who were Methodist members in the area of the two circuits was small, though it could be locally considerable, and many non-members were influenced by Wesleyanism too. The following section traces the changes in the proportion of the population who were circuit members and links this to the changes in population.

Wesleyan membership had reached 590 out of a population of nearly 29,000 in 1841, which meant that 2.03% of the inhabitants belonged to Wesleyan societies. As population increased to 30,462 in 1851, Wesleyan members increased to 720, or 2.364% of the population, and to 2.418% of the inhabitants due to an increase in members and decrease in population, in 1861. In 1871 the Penrith circuit was divided and the ~~Eastern~~ and North-Eastern part became the new Kirkoswald circuit, the combined membership of the societies being 871, or 2.723% of the 31,985 inhabitants. Over the next 10 years population decreased to 31,476, whereas Wesleyan membership increased

to 1,006 or 3.196% of the inhabitants, which increased to the peak of 3.612% (1,094 members) out of 30,285 people by 1891. Population continued to decline to 29,916 in 1901 and 28,991 in 1911, matched by Wesleyan decreases to 984 and 929 members respectively, or 3.289% and 3.204% of the population.

Penrith was by far the largest of the societies, yet being the main centre of population the Wesleyans as a percentage of the inhabitants was small - never more than 3.2%. From 176 members in 1841, or 2.7% of the 6,429 population, membership declined to 147 in an increasing population to 1851, but rose to 192 members by 1861 as population too increased substantially. Membership continued to rise - to 210 in 1871, 276 in 1881 and to the peak of 290 in 1891 (respectively 2.5%, 3.0% and 3.2% of the population). Population reached its peak of 9,268 in 1881, declined to 1891, increased to 1901 and finally decreased in the town. Wesleyan membership dropped to 232 in 1901 and to 185 in 1911.

Kirkoswald village became head of the new circuit in 1871, despite its being no larger in population or Wesleyan membership than several other villages. The Wesleyans accounted for 3.5% of the population in 1841, with 24 members out of 691 people. This proportion increased to 4.4% in 1851, 5.2% in 1861 and to 9.1% in 1871, the peak year, both for membership at 64, and population, at 707. Membership decreased more rapidly than the population to 1881, and then to 1891, before some recovery from 1891 to 1911 despite a decreasing population. Though head of the circuit, it was not usually the strongest society.

In the tables the next 9 societies were in the Penrith circuit right through the century, the remainder being transferred to Kirkoswald in 1871.

The little society at Clifton registered small increase in numbers or percentage of population until after 1891, though only then did the Wesleyans manage 3% or 4% of the inhabitants. On paper Shap ought to have provided the second society of the circuit, with its considerable population and scope for evangelical work. However,

with a population in four figures, the village could only just record Wesleyan members in double figures into the 1860s, and there were only 7 members in 1891. Only 2% of the community were Wesleyan members in 1901, but over the next decade membership increased to 35 in spite of the decreasing population. The population of Newby declined over the period from 284 in 1861 to 189 in 1901. Wesleyan membership increased from 15 to 29 between 1841 and 1851 (over 10% of the inhabitants) but this figure fell to 7 in 1881, or 2.9% of the inhabitants, increasing thereafter as population decreased. The best year for Morland's Wesleyans was 1891, when there were 18 members, or 5.4% of the population. Like many of the villages, population decreased over the 19th century and the society was a small one, as it was at Plumpton where the Wesleyan's membership was boosted in 1891 by the joint returns of Plumpton and nearby Plumpton Back Street, a new society Patterdale proved to be unusual, based on the mining communities of Hartsop, Glenridding and Patterdale, all remote hamlets distant from most of the circuit. From only 4 members in 1841, its society grew with mining operations to 8 in 1861, but increased again to 40 in 1871 along with the increase in inhabitants. The declining population of 1881 returned 30 members, but out of 826 people in 1891, 6% were Wesleyans. The society remained substantial by village standards into the new century, though only about 7% of the population were members. Matterdale too was an isolated community where the population rose from 325 in 1841 to 426 in 1871, before decennial decreases to 249 in 1911. The Wesleyan society always registered double figures though 48 members in 1851 was the highpoint (13.2% of the population) and the society was later much reduced. Bampton and Watermillock societies infrequently appeared on returns until the 1860s, and both were more typical of the 18 or so small societies of the circuit which remained under Penrith after 1871. These were the scattered or small settlements of the Inglewood Forest district, of Westmorland to the South-East of Penrith, and of the area to the town's West, where Methodism was stunted in growth and kept alive only by generous aid from the Penrith society.

The Wesleyan societies which came to be in the new Kirkoswald circuit after 1871 tended to be more healthy and vigorous than those left with Penrith. Most of the villages were to the East and North-

east of Penrith, the Fellside villages of closely knit communities where Wesleyanism found fertile ground.

At Renwick the Wesleyans constituted a sizeable part of the population - 8.8% in 1841, 9.8% in 1851, before an increase in membership and decrease in population led to figures of 15.4% in 1861 and 19.8% in 1871. Population continued to decline, but Wesleyan membership increased, and recorded 18% of the inhabitants as members in 1881, a drop to 12% in 1891, but over 18% in 1901 and over 17% in 1911. Gamblesby Wesleyans formed less than 10% of the population only in 1861 and 1871, the usual figure being around 12% to 14% at each census. Croglin, a more scattered community than the previous two, had only three Wesleyans in 1841, none in 1851, 10 in 1861 but 2 in 1871. There were only 9 Wesleyans out of 203 people in 1901, but 19 in 1911, the high point for the society. Population dropped over the same period from 336 to 221. Ousby, Skerwith and Ainstable possessed stable and substantial Wesleyan societies. 1881 was the best year for membership at the latter two, 1891 at the first place, but population in 1911 was down on the 1841 figure at all three. Hunsonby proved to be an exception and in 1911 had 276 people as against 191 in 1841 - though the highest figure was 362 in 1871. The Wesleyans were a strong society there and had 43 members in 1871 and 55 in 1891, 11.9% and 19.5% of the inhabitants respectively. Over the decades Glassonby's population scarcely altered, and the Wesleyan society there had as members 26.3% of the inhabitants Wesleyans in 1871, and a society of 10% and more of the population thereafter. The peak year for population in Lazonby, Culgaith and Temple Sowerby proved to be 1871 (perhaps with the influx of railway workers in the district) yet this was not the year of highest Wesleyan membership. The Wesleyans were particularly strong at Culgaith in 1841 and 1851, with a respectable figure of 5% to 7% of the inhabitants as members into the 20th century. Lazonby was one of the larger villages and returned a higher population in 1911 than in 1841, with the years of highest Wesleyan membership being 1871 and 1901. The Wesleyans had between 3% and 5% of the inhabitants as members, small considering the scope for work which existed. Temple Sowerby, between Penrith and Appleby, proved to be a small society until 1891 when membership included 12% of the population, a figure

rising to 14% in 1901 but down to 11,4%, 40 members, in 1911. Here too the population in 1911 was below that of 1841.

The official membership figures do not tell the whole story, though more than Methodists at the time would have admitted. They claimed throughout the Victorian period that members were outnumbered by 2 or 3 nonmembers to one member, and there is a little evidence to support this. When using the evidence of the 1851 Ecclesiastical census, it has to be said that most of the people who attended Wesleyan chapels in Penrith and in the rest of Cumbria were members, their children or close friends and relations - not the host of non-members who are supposed to have flocked to swell congregations. Nor were the dozens of chapels in the Penrith and Kirkoswald circuits usually even a third full. On census day only one third of the Wesleyan seats available during the day were filled, and on a census day one must assume that more people than usual would attend. Official returners were asked to estimate if there was any reason for numbers being lower or higher at services than usual, but human nature would encourage them to slightly exaggerate.

In need of consideration is the upto 1,000 children at the circuit Sunday schools and 300 at the day school in the town. Many of these were the children of members, though the day school catered too for non-Methodists, and it was generally agreed that the Wesleyan children had far more fun and pleasure at their schools on Sundays than did most denominations. Many of these children like the adults attended on special occasions only, for example when there were free teas in the offing or a circuit treat. Nonetheless the Wesleyans had considerable influence amongst the area's youth - probably more so than any other Church. Despite this proof of the strength and influence of Methodism in and around Penrith, it is certain that a majority of people did not go to church regularly. The direct influence of the Wesleyans must have been limited to 5% or 6% of the adult population, and the same amongst the children, and even though early outdoor open air meetings reached a far wider audience than chapel preaching ever could, by the mid-Victorian period the Methodists of Penrith, as elsewhere, were like other Churches turning away from field preaching and open evangelism and becoming

"enchapelled". Men of the wealth and social standing of John Crone, Christopher Fairer and Robert Gates could not ignore the fact that as a mass movement the Penrith Methodists had failed by 1851. In the succeeding decades they retreated into chapels, gradually stagnated and then declined.

A final note on the attendances at chapels and the support given to Methodist causes. Applications for several societies to build chapels have survived for Penrith, and these had to list both membership and service attendances. In the 1830s there were only 20 members attached to Salkeld out of 500 people, yet the stewards stated that 80 attended services. 40 years later at Blencowe there were only 4 members out of 200 people, but 40 attended the services. At the same time Tirril had no members yet 30 attended services, and this excluded children (1). Stewards exaggerated almost certainly in order to obtain official approval of their schemes, and to get official backing and finance, believing that a high figure - perhaps that for the Harvest services or the anniversary ones - would impress. Indeed an earlier application form which was never sent gives the attendances at Blencowe as only 20. To build expensive chapels in a bid to promote Methodism was doomed to failure since it meant the neglect of direct mission work and evangelism. To build on the strength of a couple of members and unattached attenders was to court disaster.

The conclusion is that during the Victorian period the Wesleyans developed into a small, inbred sect, admittedly prosperous and influential, but not having mass appeal and only able to reach any significant number of folk at its special events when something worthwhile was offered to nonmembers - teas, gifts, a "good time" or entertainment. A parallel with the Quakers and Unitarians is unavoidable. The growth of a secular oriented society robbed the Wesleyans of even this final ability to attract crowds occasionally. The chapels remained empty, and the situation worsened after the Great War.

1. Penrith Wesleyan Methodist Circuit. CRO FCM/3/1/72 and 157.

<u>Society</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>1861</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1911</u>
<u>Penrith</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	176	147	192	210	276	290	232	185
Population of the area	6,429	7,387	7,948	8,317	9,268	8,981	9,182	8,973
% Population as members	2.7	2.0	2.4	2.5	3.0	3.2	2.5	2.1
<u>Kirkoswald</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	24	30	35	64	32	24	33	38
Population of the area	691	681	672	707	595	594	560	526
% Population as members	3.5	4.4	5.2	9.1	5.4	4.0	5.9	7.2
<u>Clifton</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	8	3	8	6	6	10	15	13
Population of the area	288	289	342	341	393	337	330	352
% Population as members	2.8	1.0	2.3	1.8	1.5	3.0	4.5	3.7
<u>Shap</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	5	11	11	19	19	7	35	30
Population of the area	996	1,009	991	1,270	1,416	1,260	1,226	1,006
% Population as members	0.5	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.3	0.5	2.9	3.0
<u>Newby</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	15	29	25	12	7	8	14	12
Population of the area	284	274	284	243	245	234	189	178
% Population as members	5.3	10.6	8.8	4.9	2.9	3.4	7.4	6.7

<u>Society</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>1861</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1911</u>
<u>Morland</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	14	11	13	11	7	18	14	10
Population of the area	426	394	367	304	371	335	312	273
% Population as members	3.3	2.8	3.5	3.6	1.9	5.4	4.5	3.7
<u>Plumpton</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	7	6	8	10	10	14	9	5
Population of the area	321	334	326	314	345	317	306	301
% Population as members	2.2	1.8	2.5	3.2	2.9	4.4	2.9	1.7
<u>Patterdale</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	4	29	8	40	30	52	55	63
Population of the area	573	686	693	805	710	826	778	871
% Population as members	0.7	4.2	1.2	5.0	4.2	6.3	7.1	7.2
<u>Matterdale</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	10	48	32	24	30	21	14	19
Population of the area	325	363	420	426	346	322	302	249
% Population as members	3.1	13.2	7.6	5.6	8.7	6.5	4.6	7.6
<u>Bampton</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	0	0	0	5	11	22	13	12
Population of the area	579	533	541	559	537	475	452	410
% Population as members	0	0	0	0.9	2.0	4.6	2.9	2.9

<u>Society</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>1861</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1911</u>
<u>Watermillock</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	0	0	0	0	9	22	3	4
Population of the area	524	598	576	520	463	446	442	418
% Population as members	0	0	0	0	1.9	4.9	0.7	1.0
<u>Renwick</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	28	31	41	52	47	29	37	35
Population of the area	319	316	266	262	258	242	201	205
% Population as members	8.8	9.8	15.4	19.8	18.2	12.0	18.4	17.1
<u>Gamblesby</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	26	31	21	27	38	29	30	24
Population of the area	259	244	262	273	269	223	206	193
% Population as members	10.0	12.7	8.0	9.9	14.1	13.0	14.6	12.4
<u>Croglin</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	3	0	10	2	16	17	9	19
Population of the area	336	304	254	275	251	244	203	221
% Population as members	0.9	0	3.9	0.73	6.4	7.0	4.4	8.6
<u>Ousby</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	12	15	26	21	30	37	20	14
Population of the area	271	295	294	329	243	271	236	232
% Population as members	4.4	5.1	8.8	6.4	12.3	13.7	8.5	6.5

<u>Society</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>1861</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1911</u>
<u>Ainstable</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	0	17	31	26	34	32	19	33
Population of the area	501	524	294	329	453	439	403	376
% Population as members	0	3.2	10.5	7.9	7.5	7.3	4.72	8.8
<u>Skerwith</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	29	20	21	21	33	22	17	31
Population of the area	293	288	314	290	276	286	241	252
% Population as members	9.9	6.9	6.7	7.2	12.0	7.7	7.1	12.3
<u>Hunsonby</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	27	26	27	43	25	55	33	30
Population of the area	191	200	208	362	284	282	265	276
% Population as members	14.1	13.0	13.0	11.9	8.8	19.5	12.5	10.9
<u>Glassonby</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	14	13	10	42	28	17	22	23
Population of the area	165	165	147	160	165	161	165	144
% Population as members	8.5	7.9	6.8	26.3	17.0	10.6	13.3	16.0
<u>Culgaith</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	38	34	23	22	26	19	13	18
Population of the area	361	355	323	467	347	334	310	313
% Population as members	10.5	9.6	7.1	4.7	7.5	5.7	4.2	5.8

<u>Society</u>	<u>1841</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>1861</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1911</u>
<u>Lazonby</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	20	17	19	30	25	26	37	27
Population of the area	570	595	570	1,123	650	719	728	715
% Population as members	3.5	2.9	3.3	2.7	3.8	3.6	5.1	3.8
<u>Temple Sowerby</u>								
Wesleyan Membership	20	28	22	27	22	46	51	40
Population of the area	381	372	374	476	420	372	344	352
% Population as members	5.2	7.5	5.9	5.7	5.2	12.4	14.8	11.4

TABLE 29

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