AN ISOLATED HOLY COMMUNITY:
METHODISM IN THE UPPER EDEN VALLEY, WESTMORLAND

David Frederick Clarke

Doctor of Philosophy

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Thesis

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AN ISOLATED HOLY COMMUNITY: METHODISM IN THE UPPER EDEN VALLEY, WESTMORLAND

BY DAVID F. CLARKE

Before the coming of the Methodists to the upper Eden valley in 1758, Celts, Romans, Anglians, Vikings, Normans and Scots had all left their mark on the area. Geographically, however, this part of Cumbria is somewhat mountainous and remote and their influences were not as significant as in other parts of England. A measure of consequent isolation was thus to affect the intensity of local religion, particularly that of later Methodism.

Apart from a small number of Catholics and the Church of England, the immediate forerunners of the Methodists were the Quakers (from the seventeenth century) and the Inghamites (between 1755 and 1760). Methodism took root slowly but, by the middle of the nineteenth century, it was established in many of the hamlets and villages. By the time of a union of its various branches in 1932, preaching, fellowship, teaching, singing, missionary interest and abstinence from alcohol were already its distinctive emphases. Its impact on local society and the wider Church was most marked in its strong opposition to the use of alcohol and in continuing missionary interest. Such Methodism (which we have occasionally compared with the isolated Waldensian and Jewish religions) has declined in numbers but still seeks to retain its emphases.

In an attempt to interpret the history and understand the nature and meaning of upper Eden Methodism, we apply twelve categories of the sacred. Thus sacred story, symbols of the sacred, sacred action, sacred time, sacred space, initiation, sacred persons, the deity, the sacred community, sacred word and writing, sacred silence and sacred world-view are all related to this particular community which experiences the predicament and potential of isolated religion. Such communities stagnate and decay unless they are activated by that love for the whole world which is supremely expressed in the life and death of the incarnate Deity.

Preface and acknowledgements.

This thesis is a study of Methodism in the upper Eden valley, formerly in Westmorland, but since 1974, part of Cumbria. It deals with the isolated nature of this holy community, noting how isolation has shaped its emphases, its impacts and its attitudes. It then observes the sacred categories of upper Eden Methodism, not only interpreting its history and appreciating its nature and purpose but also pointing to the predicament and potential of isolated religion.

Research has relied considerably on Minute Books, Circuit Plans, Registers, Reports and Letters, to which the Kendal Record Office has kindly provided most helpful access. Invaluable, too, has been the use of the Methodist Archives in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester. In addition, I am indebted to the Staff of the Cumberland and Westmorland Herald weekly newspaper (at the Herald Office, Penrith) who kindly provided me with the facility to read early editions. Local Methodists, including the Local Preachers and Ministers of the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit, have also furnished useful information.

In the preparation and presentation of the thesis, I gladly acknowledge the guidance of my supervisor (Dr. Peter R. McKenzie), the patience of my typist (Sheila Berry) and the care of the Central Photographic Unit of the University of Leicester.

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CHAPTER I

Culture, society and religion before the coming of the Methodists

The county of Westmorland which, in 1974, became part of Cumbria, is bounded to its west by the Lake District mountains, to its north by the lower Eden valley, to its east by the Pennine mountains and to its south-east by the mountains of north-west Yorkshire, with the Kent estuary and Morecambe Bay to the south and south-west. The river Eden[1] rises in the east of the county and flows through Kirkby Stephen and Appleby to Carlisle and the Solway Firth. Kirkby Stephen's population was 1,455 in 1971, while that of Appleby, said to be not less than 10,000 at the beginning of 1388,[2] (before being devastated by the Scots), was 1,855.[3] The rest of the thin population of the upper Eden valley is found in village, hamlet and farmhouse and is geographically isolated from the rest of Westmorland and from England as a whole.

The whole county of Westmorland (before turnpike roads and railways) was somewhat gloomily described by Daniel Defoe as "a County eminent only for being the wildest, most barren and frightful of any that I have passed over", but Wordsworth and modern communications have found sun-lit valleys and majestic beauty in the mountains. The climate of the Eden valley is less extreme than that of the Lake District but the Pennine fells can be inhospitable in the winter months. Cross Fell is the highest mountain [illegible]

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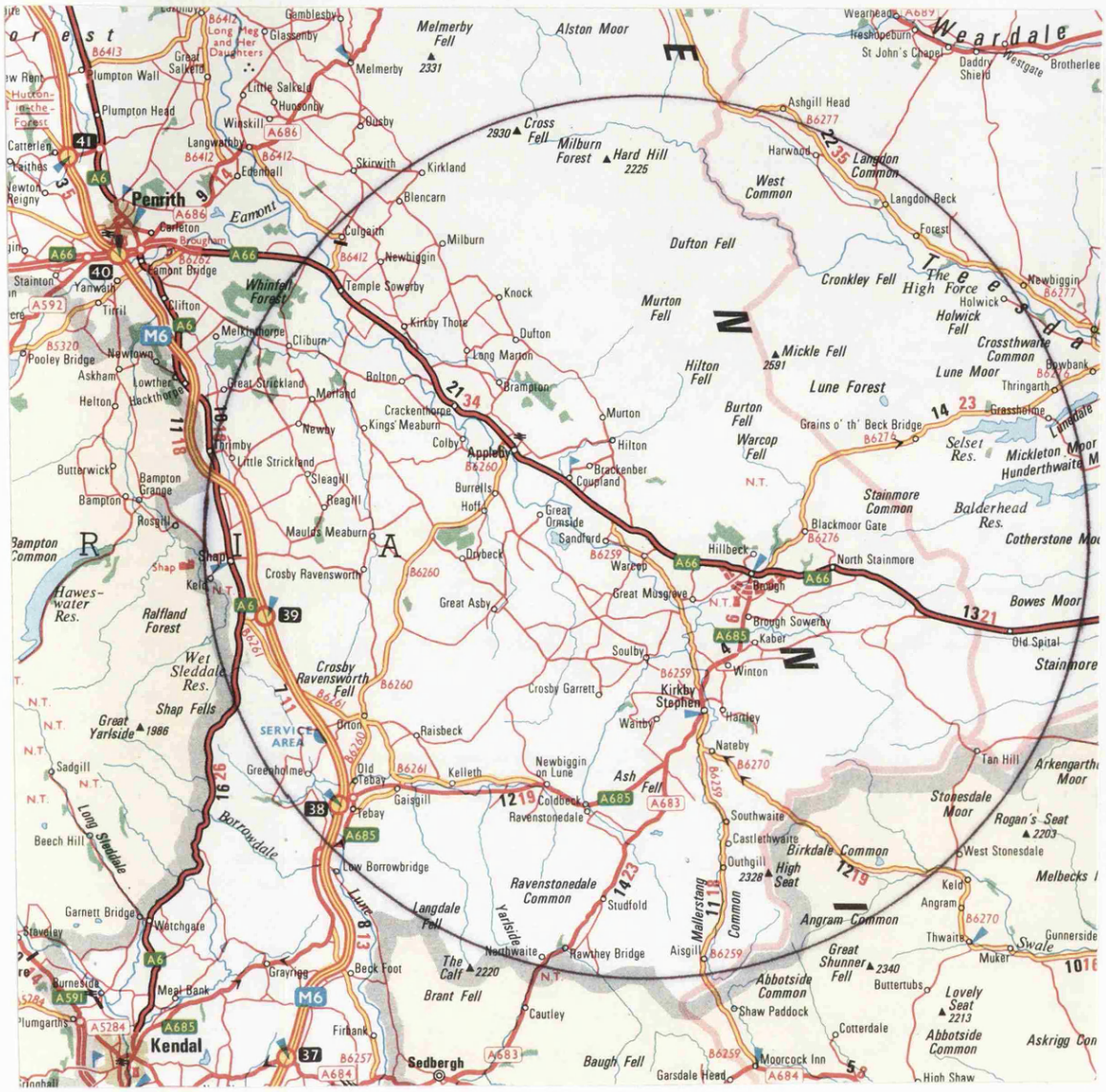
1. See the map on the following page A. Its black circle contains the names of towns, villages and hamlets in the present Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Methodist Circuit and defines the approximate area of our study.

2. Canon Matthews and James F. Whitehead, History of Appleby (Appleby, without date), p. 13.

3. Census Returns.

4. Daniel Defoe, A Tour Thro' The Whole Island of Great Britain (London, 1927), p. 679.



SCALE : 5 MILES TO THE INCH

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The RIVER EDEN rises about one mile south of High Seat, between Mallerstang Common and Angram Common. It flows north-westerly in general direction, through Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Carlisle to the Solway Firth.

in the Pennines,[1] being 2,930 feet above sea level, while high ground to the west, south-west and south of the upper Eden valley rises to 1,315 feet on Crosby Ravensworth Fell, 1,619 feet on Grayrigg Common and 2,097 feet on Ravenstonedale Common. The several tributaries of the Eden spring from Mallerstang Common, from the various Fells[2] of the Pennines and from Crosby Ravensworth Fell. These tributaries are often called "becks" or "streams".[3] Mountainous parts are almost devoid of trees but Mallerstang Forest was a hunting forest "which probably had a good deal of scrub and undergrowth but which also had enough woodland to give cover to beasts of the chase"[4] in the afforested upper parts of the valley. Lower-lying parts of the upper Eden valley (e.g. in the Appleby area) have occasional woods (e.g. Hoff Lunn)[5] but more often copses or plantations.

The upper Eden valley is reached best from the North Riding of Yorkshire through the depression in the Pennines on Stainmore, the route being that of the Roman road called High Street from Bowes to Brough and Appleby. A. H. Smith says that, together with difficult routes into the area, "its relief, its poor and often ill-drained soils . . . and its indifferent climate . . . offer little scope or inducement for extensive settlement."[6] And while it is true that small villages and hamlets and

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1. Heights are given in feet; one foot = 0.3048 metres.

2. Fjall, Old Norse, the local term for hill or mountain.

3. Bekkr, Old Norse (e.g. Drybeck, a stream which sometimes dries up), and Burna, Old English (e.g. Meaburn, a meadow stream).

4. A. H. Smith, The Place Names of Westmorland (London, 1967), Part One p. xxvi.

5. Lundr, Old Norse, meaning "small wood".

6. The Place Names of Westmorland, Part One, p. xxix.

isolated farms, together with Appleby, Kirkby Stephen, Tebay, Brough and Kirkby Thore, form a thinly-populated area, the scenery, especially in the valleys, in better weather, is less grey than green. The Eden itself (with a likely Indo-European derivative, meaning simply "water") has an attraction which inspired Wordsworth to address it as "fair Stream!" Even so, the Lake District now draws a larger tourism and when the first Methodists came, in the second half of the eighteenth century, to the upper Eden valley, it was to a geographically remote area. It was to a people who, over the centuries, had been subject to Roman, Anglian, Viking, Norman and Scottish invasion and who demonstrated a strong independence in the presence of newcomers, whatever message they had to bring. Geographically, we are dealing with an area of no more than twenty miles (from Cross Fell in the north to Mallerstang Common in the south) by twenty miles (from Crosby Ravensworth in the west to Bowes Moor in the east). Historically, it is, of course, more difficult to separate this area from that of the whole of the two counties of Cumberland and Westmorland; even so, the course of events varies in different local areas.

Before 5500 BC, Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age hunters came to the Lake District in pursuit of animals in the pine, birch and oak forests. Such people have been identified by their flint tools discovered mostly in West Cumberland, though no settlement sites have been found. Neolithic men of the New Stone Age culture were the first real settlers on land suitable for stock-rearing, where lighter, better-drained soils were easy to work and sow with grain in small, hand-cultivated plots. These 'skills' would reach this country from the Continent by boat, Britain having become an island by about 5500 BC. Cumberland and Westmorland "would have been entered either by coastal movement or over the limestone Pennine hills, above the various passes through which roads still lead today."[1] Following

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1. Clare Fell, Early Settlement in the Lake Counties (Clapham Yorkshire, 1972), p.13.

the Stone Age, copper and bronze became materials for domestic use as in the centuries following 2000 BC, people influenced by early metallurgy in Iberia and Central Europe came to Britain. The culture of these early metalworkers in Westmorland is best known from single-grave burials accompanied by 'drinking cups', now called 'beakers', after which their makers have come to be called the 'Beaker People'. Some of these 'Beaker People', as indicated by grave-finds, settled in the Eden valley after spreading from the east over the Pennines. This 'food-vessel' culture used both inhumation and cremation burial but gradually cremation was adopted, the ashes of the dead usually being deposited in various types of urns. The Bronze Age (1700-500 BC) was also characterized by small free-standing stone circles surrounding cairns; there is a double cairn circle at Gunnerkeld, near Shap. Sometimes a ring of boulders surrounded the base of a cairn. Large cairns sometimes contained stone structures of varying size which held inhumation burials, or cremated bones in urns. An inhumation burial at Butts Beck Quarry, Dalton-in Furness, was associated with a seventh-century bronze sword and spearhead and possibly, also, some bones of a horse. This could suggest contact with iron-using peoples who did <u>not</u> cremate their dead but buried them ready equipped for life in the next world. The discovery of three crouched skeletons near Crosby Garrett Station last century during railroad construction, one still wearing a bronze bracelet of a type best known from the second and third century BC cart-and-chariot burials of East Yorkshire, shows that iron-using Celtic peoples had come over the Pennines into the limestone hills on the west side of the Eden valley about that time.[1] Such finds, however, like those of stone cairns, tell us little about earlier cultures and we

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1. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 42.

must live with their secrets. What, surely, we must agree, is that Keats, writing in 1818, (in his Hyperion)

> "A dismal cirque
> Of Druid stones upon a forlorn moor"[1]

was probably saying the very least that could be said about stone cairns. John Wesley had written already, with less indifference (15.9.1782) of Stanton Drew stone circles, 6 miles south of Bristol, that "such stones have been used for divine worship nearly, if not quite, from the time of the flood."[2] Reverend W. Monkhouse at an Archeological Society meeting in July 1859, at Carlisle, said they were Courts of Justice.[3]

When the Romans came to our particular part of north-west England, some time after 71 AD, they found a Celtic culture and religion to which T. F. Bulmer makes reference[4] in his book History of Westmorland:

> "Caesar inquired the origin of those inhabiting the northern part of the country" and "was informed that they were the spontaneous growth of the soil. They were divided into tribes, the most important of which, both as to numbers and extent of territory, was the Brigantes, who inhabited the district now comprehending the counties of Yorkshire, Durham, Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire. They were the most powerful and warlike section of the Ancient Britons, and opposed the progress of the Roman legions with the most stubborn resistance. They were as wild as the hills amidst which they dwelt, and lived in hovels formed of the trunks of trees, rooted in the earth, and enclosed by interwoven branches . . . . Of the religion of these ancient Britons our knowledge is necessarily very imperfect . . . . Their religious rites were all performed amidst groves of oak, or in the deep recesses of the forest. The oak they deemed sacred, and from the monarch of the wood their religion has been called Druidism-Drui, an oak (Celtic)."

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1. Quoted by Roy Millward and Adrian Robinson, The Lake District (London, 1974), p. 266.

2. John Wesley, The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., Standard edition (1938), VI, 373.

3. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 2.8.1859.

4. T. F. Bulmer, History of Westmorland (Manchester, 1885), pp. 14-16.

Bulmer also says that manifestations of heaven's goodwill were accompanied by the sacrifice of two white heifers under an oak tree and with a religious feast. Living in the deep forest, the Druid also sacrificed, in an open space, fruits of the earth in peacetime and bodies of the enemy during war. The Druids kept all learning to themselves, their precepts being committed to memory by the disciple. They held a knowledge of heavenly bodies which, they believed, influenced the destinies of men. They taught the transmigration of souls and had numerous deities whom they worshipped. Bulmer writes (p. 16): "Every locality had its divinity, and each stream its presiding genius." It took twenty years to prepare for the Priesthood, secrecy "chaining the lips of the initiate." Druids also dispensed justice, helped govern the country and "at their mandate contending armies consented to sheath the sword." Their bards studied poetry and played the harp. Clearly, Bulmer's picture of these Druids is of a secret, separate group, whose isolated existence we can neither measure nor appreciate.

Between 71 and 84 AD, a series of Britain's Roman governors - Cerialis, Frontinus and Agricola - conquered most of North Britain. Under the Emperors Trojan (98-117 AD) and Hadrian (117-138 AD), Roman military control over this area increased. The Romans consolidated their hold and their well-constructed roads and forts and Hadrian's Wall (completed in 138 AD) gradually convinced the natives that they were there to stay. As well as the strongholds of West and North Cumberland, forts were built at Lancaster, Low Borrow Bridge, Ambleside, Hardknott, Greta Bridge, Bowes, Kirkby Thore, Brougham and Penrith. Unwalled civil settlements (vici, partly responsible for their own internal administration) grew up outside many of the forts, for instance at Old Carlisle, Maryport, Old Penrith, Brougham and Kirkby Thore. It was here that artisans, traders, retired soldiers and their families lived a Romanised way of life. It is from

the cemeteries, with their inscribed memorials, and altars found near forts and civilian centres, that most knowledge of actual people comes - names, ages, occupations and beliefs, even an occasional reference to the Christian religion (in the fourth century).[1] Druids had lived in secret forests and Romans, being soldiers, also had a life-style of their own. W. R. Mitchell, with the authority of an informed imagination writes:

> "The Celts, who had little living space under cover, would have been amazed if they could have been shown through the Roman bath-house, where a soldier, his duties over for the day, undressed in the frigidarium, warmed up in the tepidarium, sweated profusely in the caldarium, and then retraced his steps, taking a cold bath before dressing again. While Roman eagles were seen everywhere in the main valleys and around the mountain bloc, wild eagles circled in the air over the fells . . . . Some of the dalesfolk lived and died without seeing a Roman soldier."[2]

There is, indeed, little evidence to suggest that, in the Lake District hills west of the Eden and Lune valleys, the Celtic, pastoral way of life, changed very much during the Roman occupation. When all the Roman troops and their dependants finally withdrew to the Continent in the fifth century, the Celts reverted more easily to the leadership of their traditional chiefs in the north-west, whereas Romanised communities further south were slower in this respect. Celtic bards continued to pass on history by oral tradition and the events of the next few centuries are little known. Contemporary records cannot confirm that St. Patrick or St. Ninian actually undertook missions in Cumberland or Westmorland at the end of Roman times, but a few churches and wells are dedicated to them. One such church, St. Ninian's, is two miles east of Penrith, near Brougham.

By the time of the main Anglian settlement here (600-900 AD), Northumbria had been converted to Christianity in 627 and had received a

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1. Early Settlement in the Lake Counties, p. 51.

2. W. R. Mitchell, Men of Lakeland (London, 1966), p. 9.

second Christian mission in 635 from the Celtic Church in Iona.[1] The Anglians, however, had come from flat Jutland and north-west Germany and the mountainous Lakeland did not greatly attract them. Place-names show that their early settlement was concentrated in the lower Eden valley, in south Westmorland, in the Cumberland coastal strip and in the Solway plain. Anglian domination lasted 200 years before Scandinavian raiders and settlers arrived here.[2] It has been said that it was the Anglo-Saxons rather than the Vikings who were chiefly responsible for forging England into one nation and replacing Romano-British government with new laws and institutions. But if the Anglians found the mountains of the upper Eden inhospitable and their inhabitants threatening, it is not surprising that, as sparse British communities resisted their thrust from the east, they were unable to leave much of that legacy which the rest of England seems privileged to have received. (The suffix 'tun', as in Carleton, near Penrith, meaning a farmstead in Old English, is common in the lower Eden valley). Both Anglians and Vikings came from much the same part of Europe but the earlier Anglians, of the seventh century, do not seem to have impressed our particular area a great deal. A later invasion (in the early eighth century), however, meant settlements were established from Stainmore under the eastern fells, including Winton, Wharton, Hilton, Murton, Dufton and Long Marton.

The Vikings raided and settled in Britain in the ninth and tenth centuries. Their main settlement in the Lake Counties was of Norwegians,

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1. Early Settlement in the Lake Counties, p. 75.

2. A. H. Smith says that 'Westmorland' is a name that could have been created at any time during the Angle-Saxon period (The Place Names of Westmorland, part One, p. xxxvi). It is the district of those living west of the moors, i.e. the moorlands of the North Yorkshire Pennines.

speaking a language known as Old Norse.[1] These Norsemen sailed and raided southwards from the Outer Hebrides and eastward from Ireland and the Isle of Man. Their contact with Christianity is reflected in the fine wheel-headed stone crosses erected by Christian Vikings in this district. A hill, pastoral people, the Norse made their greatest impact on the central Lake District, their speeach used down to the twelfth century and surviving in modern dialect. Henry L. Widdup suggests that those Vikings who came from the Isle of Man came as peaceful settlers, "and it has even been suggested that they came . . . as refugees."[2] He shows (on a map on page 28 of his book) that there are three remains (crosses, etc., and church dedications of Nordic origin) at Appleby, Ormside and Kirkby Stephen. More distant from the Eden is the striking Viking Cross at Gosforth, four miles from the West Cumberland coast, fourteen-and-a-half feet high, in red sandstone. It combines Norse mythology with Christian symbols. The lower part is cylindrical, but above is a square, tapered shaft carved on all four sides with scenes from the poetic Edda, while one panel shows the Crucifixion. The Edda, a Scandinavian poem dating to about 1000 AD, told of the gods and their leader, Odin, and the struggle between them and the Fenris Wolf and the Great Serpent at a time known as the 'twilight of the gods'. On this Gosforth Cross the carvings show religion undergoing a change and Ridgway suggests that they point to the coming of a new and victorious religion, the Crucifixion being part of that victory.[3] Previously Woden, the Odin

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1. Early Settlement in the Lake Counties, p. 83.

2. Henry L. Widdup, Christianity in Cumbria (Kendal, 1981), p. 26.

3. David Ridgway, Gosforth Church and Cross: Short History and Guide (1972), p. 14.

of the Norseman (god of war) had been chief object of their worship. Thunor, the Thunder god, was also worshipped, he being the Danish Thor, "to whom a temple is said to have been erected at Kirkby Thore."[1] But, in the upper Eden valley the Norse influence could not necessarily completely destroy earlier culture and religion (whatever these actually were) and, as we may now say, it is possible that such an environment was still enduringly Celtic. The Norman Conquest, however, was to change the situation somewhat, taking us from about 1090 AD to the dawn of the Reformation.

This was, as Widdup says, "above all . . . a period of constant upheaval in the military sense, for this area was repeatedly ravaged by the incursion of the Scots raiders who looted, burned and pillaged indiscriminately. It is remarkable that any progress could be made in such circumstances when the Bishops had to be politicians, diplomats and soldiers in turn as well as prelates, in order to hold the diocese together. Yet they achieved this."[2] "The disputed border", writes Clare Fell, "between England and Scotland" (in the tenth and eleventh centuries) "continued down the centuries in the form of border raids until after the Union of the Crowns in 1603."[3] At the time of the Norman conquest, Cumberland and Westmorland were divided politically into two parts and Malcolm III of Scotland held the lower Eden while the area around Appleby was in England and part of Yorkshire. Domesday Book, therefore, contains entries only for the southern part of the Lake District, that is, south

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1. History of Westmorland, p. 31. The Danes, coming from Yorkshire, via Stainmore, Kirkby Stephen and Appleby - on their way to Carlisle, which they burned in 876 - suffixed some place names with BY or THORPE, e.g. Temple Sowerby, Kirkby Thore and Appleby.

2. Christianity in Cumbria, p. 32. The Carlisle Diocese had been founded in 1133 AD, with Carlisle as the Cathedral City, by decree of Pope Innocent II, Adelulf being the first Bishop. By "progress", Widdup is referring to the Christian religion.

3. Early Settlement in the Lake Counties, p. 86.

of the boundary then between England and Scotland. It was not until the twelfth century that county boundaries were established which were to remain until 1974. The Normans created Baronies which provided territorial stability, and introduced religious orders. The latter, however, belonged mostly to Cumberland; in Westmorland, Shap Abbey was the only monastic abbey of any importance (founded in 1119). It was built by Thomas, one of the sons of Cospatrick, earl of Northumberland. It was also in the twelfth century that "there was a great movement in building churches for parishes. Many of the Parish Churches throughout Cumberland and Westmorland are still entirely or partially Norman."[1] Even so, Westmorland, with Cumberland, was constantly burned, plundered and massacred by Scots throughout the fourteenth century, Appleby being almost altogether burned down in 1388. Cumberland and Westmorland also experienced the horrors of war during struggles between Charles I and the Roundheads, gentry and inhabitants being favourable to the interest of Royalty. There was then peace in Westmorland until 1715 when the ill-advised and ill-conducted attempt to place the son of James II on the throne of his ancestors became a failed Stuart cause. The people of Westmorland held aloof from participation in the 1745 Rebellion when "not a single person joined the rebel standard."[2] In fact, writes Bulmer, "since the suppression of this rebellion, the history of Westmorland has been unmarked by any event of a sensational character, and beyond a little excitement created by political partisanship at the contested elections, there has occurred nothing to disturb the quiet of its peaceful vales."[3] The Reformation, with all its

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1. William Whellan, History and Topography of Cumberland and Westmorland (Pontefract, 1860), p. 11.

2. History of Westmorland, p. 54.

3. Ibid., pp. 54-55

political and religious repercussions, had come to Eden yet it could not be said that every person was completely satisfied with the outcome; and even though the Parish Church, with educated Clergy, active Bishops and diocesan and parish work often faithfully done, was the structure in which religion need should have been met, dissatisfactions were expressed by seekers of personal, religious experience. In the last three or four hundred years, though there are now (1980) four single Parishes in the Rural Deanery of Appleby, nine united Benefices and three united Parishes, all belonging to the Archdeaconry of Carlisle,[1] other religious groups have also come into being - whose leaders have been concerned less with Church Livings (or Benefices) than with the living Church.

Before we come to these religious movements which were the forerunners of Methodism, we note certain items of folklore and ancient customs and, also, attempt to see how Eden people lived. In our approach to folklore, two novels by Nicholas Size (The Secret Valley and The Stone of Shame) help the imagination, while the Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser has also had a contribution to make. W. R. Mitchell's Men of Lakeland and Gerald Findler's Folk Lore of the Lake Counties are two recent books which also attempt to gather up the uncertain past. Size, writing of the Norman Conquest of Yorkshire and Lancashire, says that some of the people went north as refugees to the mountains of Lakeland - where they were warmly

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1. Christianity in Cumbria, p. 135:

   a) Single Parishes are Bolton, Crosby Ravensworth, Orton and Tebay.

   b) United Benefices are Asby and Ormside; Bampton and Mardale; Brough and Stainmore; Kirkby Thore, Temple Sowerby and Newbiggin; Long Marton, Dufton and Milburn; Marland, Great Strickland Thrimby; Lowther and Askham; Shap and Swindale; Warcop, Musgrave Soulby and Crosby Garrett.

   c) United Parishes are Appleby with Murton-cum-Hilton; Kirkby Stephen with Mallerstang; Ravenstonedale with Newbiggin-on-Lune.

welcomed by "the half-Norwegian inhabitants"[1] whose hospitality was traceable to the religion of Father Odin. The old pagan religion still may be responsible, Size feels, for the thought that at Yuletide the bearded visitor comes on a sledge from Norway. He imagines, speaking of Westmorland, that the "mysterious mountains . . . were said to be the homes of demons and giants and the superstitious soldiery from the flat plains of France were demoralized by the unfamiliar conditions. They feared the winds which buffetted them like a giant's arm and threw down horse and man. The mists which moved about . . . were sometimes full of enemies . . . it was an evil land of enchantment in which the real and the unreal were confused together, where death came silently and even the bodies vanished. Wolves they could understand and men they were not afraid of, but devils . . . with witches and warlocks howling at night and whole detachments of men suddenly disappearing without leaving a trace behind - was more than they were prepared to go on with."[2] One can see, of course, that military opposition to the Normans could benefit a great deal from mountainous terrain and that darkness, accompanied by awesome and unexpected sounds, increased fear of the unknown and the unseen.

The Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser incorporating the Penrith and Lake District Chronicle refers to Rush Bearing, Witches and Holly Night. Writing about Warcop Rush Bearing held at the Summer Solstice, it recalls opinions on its origins. Villagers, apparently, could recollect how their fathers recalled how an "old maid" used to dance to the Church with rushes on her head. The Rush Bearing was described as being in existence at Warcop from time immemorial. Druidical remains in the area suggest that the first Rush Bearings may have coincided "with some great

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1. Nicholas Size, The Secret Valley and The Stone of Shame (Beckermet, Cumbria, without date), pp. 4-5; it appears to have been published in the late 1970's, but was originally written in 1930.

2. Ibid., p. 8.

heathen gathering" and ancient Christians may then have kept the ceremony but linked it with St. Peter and a Christian festival - a lawful and expedient procedure, avoiding the problem of abolishing the pre-Christian festival. The rushes were spread on the Church floor to make it comfortable and more cheerful - once a heathen mid-summer feast, to which were brought fruit, flowers and even bloody sacrifices.[1] The use of rushes, or barsom branches, in ancient Indo-Iranian religion, may be noted: "Few doubt that we have in the barsom . . . the 'straw cushion' upon which the gods of the Veda were supposed to sit, as they descended in response to the sacrifice, and upon which also offerings to them were spread."[2] The ancient Christian practice of keeping non-Christian ceremonies but linking them to Christian festivals is seen historically, when Norsemen were confronted with Christian Baptism. W. B. Kristensen quoting the Edda in which Odin says,

> 'This magic act I know, if I sprinkle a young man with water, then he will not perish in war; he will not fall before any sword,'

goes on to say that among "the ancient Norsemen, baptism was indeed performed in order to preserve life when it would otherwise be lost. Baptism rescues from death. Boniface, the missionary among the ancient Germans, reports this in 732 to Pope Gregory III. In his answer the Pope instructs him to perform the same baptism that the heathen do, but to do it in the name of the triune God . . . . We can understand that Boniface was struck by the agreement between the pagan and the Christian practice."[3]

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1. 29.6.1861.

2. L. H. Mills and Louis H. Gray, "Barsom", in James Hastings, ed., Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (Edinburgh, 1909), II, 424.

3. W. Brede Kristensen, The Meaning of Religion (The Hague, 1960), p. 315.

Whether or not Warcop Rush Bearing has emerged from the same kind of Christian tolerance of earlier religion is difficult to say. Findler says that there is "nothing in local records to show when it first originated." It arose, as he says, from the annualchanging of rushes to keep the Church clean and warm. An item among a Church Warden's accounts of 1680 reads:

'Paid at the rush-bearing in drink. 3/-'

Grasmere, Great Musgrave and Ambleside are the only other places where the custom now remains. Rushes are woven into Celtic and Latin Crosses, David's Harp, crowns, staves, baskets and shepherds' crooks.[1] A Warcop Vicar in 1917 suggested that Rush Bearing had become thanksgiving to God for the harvest of the earth and Findler thinks that Rush Bearing was the forerunner of all local Harvest Festivals.[2] W. R. Mitchell has what may literally be called a 'down-to-earth' approach. He desribes Rush Bearing as the "revival of an old custom which began when the buildings had earthen floors and they were spread with sweet-smelling rushes once a year."[3] He also says (in quoting "the late William T. Palmer") that the "popularity of a dales clergyman may be reckoned by the number of dogs at church."[4] Such animals would help make new rushes more needful.

On the sixteenth of July, 1861, there was a letter in the Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser from an anonymous writer at Appleby who was commenting on witches and witchcraft some 60 or 70 years earlier. "The wise fwok"[5] were not numerous in Westmorland but every Parish had at least

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1. Gerald Findler, Folk Lore of the Lake Counties (The Dalesman Publishing Company Limited: Clapham, Lancaster, 1968), pp. 46-47.

2. Ibid., p. 47.

3. Men of Lakeland, pp. 86-87.

4. Ibid., p. 103.

5. The local dialect word for "folk" (or 'people').

one. These witches were malicious and revengeful, especially to any who scoffed at them. If this happened they would then read a bad prayer upon people or family or stock and consequent illness or affliction could never be removed, except by another witch. Vegetation and fruit trees could be destroyed. Some witches could change into animals - one had become a hare to attract and then confound puzzled huntsmen. Witch power was often strongest early in the morning, before breakfast. Children doing morning errands were told to avoid those houses where witches lived. As a schoolboy at Tebay, a correspondent in the Advertiser (18.11.1862) remembers there were many animated stories about 'Old Mary', the supposed witch. 'Old Mary' was Mary Baines and in further correspondence about her (on January 6th, 1863), a letter from "Castle-Howe-Hill" says she was eccentric, kept cats (though none were black), knitted and also worked for neighbouring farmers during haytime. Occasionally she would witch a churn or addle a nest of goose eggs (if she had not been given butter or eggs). Findler says an old man in Winton[1] was so sure that there were witches that he wore rowan bark or leaf in his hat for the purpose of keeping them away; the stick for stirring the cream in the churn was made of rowan to counteract the bewitching of the churn.[2] Mitchell says to "the dalesman of old there was nothing like a piece of rowan to ward off evil spirits. Farm folk hung it above doorways, and the stick that stirred the cream in the churn was fashioned from a rowanlimb. If this tree stood beside a stile a traveller by night felt safe, for it provided him with full protection from witchery."[3] Mitchell, referring to early eighteenth-century Lakeland, also says: "The dalesmen drove their cattle through

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1. No dates or other detail in his book.

2. Folk Lore of the Lake Counties, p. 33.

3. Men of Lakeland, p. 124.

great fires of wood and peat to rid them of evil spirits, and it was not unknown for a wife to be driven through as well to rid her of some ailment. Supernatural beings haunted the fells, from fairies to the witches which raced through the November skies on besoms and were likely to harm travellers or tamper with the milk of cows. A piece of rowan protected the travellers, and among the devices for foiling witches in the out-buildings were holed stones."[1]

Holly Night, an annual Brough custom, was related to thanksgiving more than to any fear of evil powers. Thus the Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, on the twenty-fourth of December, 1867, reported (in a news item, signed "W.H.H."):

> "The very ancient custom of carrying the holly tree through the town is observed. There are two or three inns in the town which provide for the ceremony alternately though the townspeople lend a hand to prepare the tree to every branch of which a torch composed of greasy rushes is affixed. About eight o'clock in the evening the tree is taken to a convenient part of the town where torches are lighted, the town band accompanying and playing till all is completed . . . . Many of the inhabitants carry lighted flabeaus . . . ."

The end of the event seems to have been the carrying of the tree to one of the three rival inns and we are grateful for the positive interpretation which goes on to say:

"Although the origin of this custom is lost and no tradition exists by which it can be traced, it may not be a strained surmise to derive it from the Church ceremonies of the day when branches of trees were carried in procession to decorate the altars in commemoration of the offerings of the Magi . . . . In Catholic countries lights and torches always abound in their ceremonies and persons residing in the streets through which they passed testified their zeal and piety by providing flambeaus at their own

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1. Ibid., p. 14.

expense and bringing them lighted to the . . . doors of their houses." No explanation is given why the destination of the tree has been changed from Church to Inn.

Other ancient customs belong to the Lake District and to our valley people. Findler says that December 25th was the appointed day for killing wrens, since Druids, having considered the wren an evil bird, had done this centuries before.[1] He also speaks of an ancient and cruel custom at Nateby on Shrove Tuesdays. Twelve men, blindfolded, were placed in a pit. A hen was thrown among them and the first man to strike it was proclaimed the victor. Bull-baiting took place at Appleby and Kirkby Stephen but not just for amusement. Beef from a baited bull was dearer and more tender. Penalties were given to those butchers who sold meat from unbaited bulls. The practice of baiting was prohibited by law in 1835, but unlawful baiting - without the permission of local town authorities - was punishable and two people were fined 5/- for baiting without the controlling authority's knowledge.[2] The laborious counting of sheep, using either Celtic or Norse words for the numerals, was less cruel than these other ancient customs, if only because it gave the sheep time to linger in the muttering company of their flockmasters. For while 'one' was simply "yan", 'three' was tethera", 'seven' was "lethera" and 'fifteen' was "bumfit".[3] Ninety and nine in the fold must have added up (if a shepherd had so many) to "dovera" times "yan-a-dick". Another old Westmorland custom is mentioned in the weekly newspaper of April 14th, 1868; the correspondent "W.H.H." recalls that dyed Paschal (pace) eggs were thrown on Easter Sunday to test the strongest shell.[4] This custom belonged to the earlier part of the

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1. Folk Lore of the Lake Counties, p. 15.

2. Ibid., p. 53.

3. Men of Lakeland, pp. 92-93.

4. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser.

nineteenth century, but, as Jean Harrowven writes, it "can be traced back far beyond the birth of Christ - as far back as 900 BC to ancient China where it is known that eggs were decorated and used in festivals celebrating the return of Spring and the continuance of life."[1] It is possible that folklore and these ancient customs played some significant part in the lives of ordinary people; it is certain, as we have already hinted and shall demonstrate later, that the kind of hope which Methodism would bring to this remote part of the country was timely and, during another two centuries, would begin to replace the more brutal and gloomy aspects of social behaviour.

The population of the whole county of Westmorland in 1801 was 40,805 and even the largest centres in the upper Eden valley were of no more than 1461 (in 1821) at Appleby and 1141 (in 1801) at Kirkby Stephen.[2] Brough had a population of 694 in 1801 and at Kirkby Thore the total was 783. Warcop's figure was 707, Orton's 1230 and Ravenstonedale's 1138. The figures for the parishes in our area were as below, giving two other counts (1851 and 1971) for comparison.

Name of Parish	1801	1851	1971
Asby	357	412	250
Bolton	324	384	285
Brough	694	773	550
Brough Sowerby	139	117	75
Colby	141 (1821)	147	80
Crackenthorpe	134 (1821)	121	75
Crosby Garrett	177	214	105
Crosby Ravensworth	789	971	475
Dufton	392	488	200
Drybeck	100 (1821)	81	-
Hoff	93 (1821)	93	195
Kaber	135	207	100
Kings Meaburn	178	216	120
Kirkby Thore	783	1104	800
Long Marton	432	762	665

1. Jean Harrowven, Origins of Festivals and Feasts (London, 1980), p. 41.

2. Census Returns.

Name of Parish	1801	1851	1971
Mallerstang	314	204	70
Milburn	237	320	155
Murton	204 (1821)	212	290
Musgrave	159	175	145
Nateby	108	103	95
Newbiggin	126	114	120
Ormside	171	198	90
Orton	1230	1456	540
Ravenstonedale	1138	939	505
Soulby	237	309	180
Stainmore	530	549	215
Waitby	60	54	50
Warcop	707	740	445
Wharton	80	67	35
Winton	262	257	165

What, then, may we add to our general geographical and historical observations of these people before the coming of the Methodists? What did this population experience of education, transportation, occupation and diversion? A "Literary Antiquarian" introduces us to the sociological aspect:

> "The manners of an insular people change more slowly than those of Continental nations, and the inhabitants of a mountainous district retain ancient usages longer than the natives of an open country. The latter fact, taken in conjunction with the distance of the north from the centre of politeness,[1] explains the tardy advances of our ancestors in improvement; and the former, relating to the genius of islanders in general, applies with equal propriety to the British nation. In fact, the people of England formerly bore the same inferior relation to Italy, France and the Netherlands, which the natives of Westmorland bore in later times to the inhabitants of the southern counties."[2]

Less seems to be recorded concerning birth than marriage or death and we may say that the presence of infant mortality is related to this

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1. Appleby is 270 miles from London.

2. A Literary Antiquarian, The Manners and Customs of Westmorland, and the adjoining parts of Cumberland, Lancashire and Yorkshire, in the former part of the Eighteenth Century (Kendal, 1827), pp. 36-37. This, a series of letters, was originally printed in the Kendal Chronicle of 1812.

omission. Even so, "the mistresses of families . . . met to celebrate the birth of every child; and the expenses of the treat given on the occasion were defrayed by the voluntary contributions of the visitors."[1] Marriage was set within confines and the Parish system apparently narrowed the choice of bride. "The young man who left his village or town to seek a bride was considered to be nothing more than an outlaw against the rules of decency. In 1776 owing to the increasing tendency on the part of the Ravenstonedale men to choose their wives from other places than this beautiful dale, the womenfolk called a special meeting and issued the following proclamation:

> 'Whereas we ladies of Ravenstonedale have for many years past been much injured and abused by the illegal practice of our neighbouring parishioners, are no longer able to contain or bear the sufferings of this insupportable damage, notice is hereby given to all gentleman bachelors of the said Parish of Ravenstonedale who attempt to contract the banns of marriage or by any other experiment instrumental to the same and not with a lady of their own parish shall immediately pay the sum of £20. to be distributed to the poor of the said Parish and if any offenders shall refuse to pay the said sum justly liable to their offence shall be imprisoned during the first 10 months after marriage. Given under our hands, the fifth day of September 1776, majority of females.'"[2]

Here we have a remarkable example of female influence in fixing what would have been a dreaded penalty; one could suspect that the Parson was behind the petition, Parsons also sometimes being local magistrates. The ceremony of marriage itself, thankfully, was a festive occasion. The county was divided into LATINGS, so called, apparently, from the North country verb 'to late', meaning to seek or invite, and, attended by the whole lating, each family was summoned to meet on the appointed day by the bridegroom in person. The young of both sexes then accompanied the couple to church on horseback. After the ceremony, a race took place from church

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1. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

2. Folk Lore of the Lake Counties, p. 11.

to "festive house" and the rest of the day was spent in eating and drinking and with various athletic games and wrestling. These bidden weddings were paid for by neighbourhood guests since the immediate families would have been unable to meet the cost of such festivities. In the early nineteenth century, bidden weddings went out of fashion because people became too proud to be beholden to one another. Even so the custom had been a truly social occasion. "After dinner was over folk came in from all parts of the dale, and the bride sat in a chair in the porch with a wooden dish on her knees, and everybody gave her summat,[1] presenting it cheerfully, and she wasn't ashamed to take it."[2]

Dying also brought people together. Although Mitchell says that "the days are long forgotten when bodies were wrapped in cloth, strapped to fell ponies, and transported from many miles to the parish church",[3] the custom of interring the dead without coffins was not infrequent in the neighbourhood of Kendal, even at the beginning of the eighteenth century. This practice, however, was finally suppressed by the Reverend William Crosby, Vicar of Kendal. (The law of 1666, which required that every corpse should be buried in a shroud composed entirely of wool, must not have enacted that a coffin should also be used). As most Westmorland people seem to have had fairly similar plot-sizes to care for, this, apparently, encouraged terms of intimacy among many families - since, of course, disparity of property can easily lead to social distinctions. So "when a death happened . . . the heads of houses . . . met to condole with the friends of the deceased; and the younger members of the community

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1. i.e. something; in 1983, the shepherd LATES (dialect) his sheep to give them fodder.

2. Men of Lakeland, pp. 85-86.

3. Ibid., p. 86.

watched the corpse during the night to the day of interment;" and when a poor person died, funeral charges were alleviated by the private donations of the neighbours. The "Literary Antiquarian" continues speaking[1] of a further custom associated with the dying:

"One custom has survived the wreck of many provincial singularities, that shows the high estimation in which wheaten bread was held by our ancestors. It is still considered in many parts of the country in the light of a parting gift or a token of remembrance from the dead to the living; for every person who is invited to a funeral receives a small loaf at the door of the deceased, which he is expected to carry home with him. The antiquity of this present is fully established by the monastic name which it bears; for the people call it by the Latin appellation of Arval Bread, probably from the practice of distributing the loaves in the open air." This token from the dead to the living is in contrast to earlier Ages in more distant worlds when the loaf might have been buried with the deceased. The small loaf would be an even more appropriate token if the deceased had been a kind person. Writing of funeral customs at Crosby Garrett, J. W. Nicholson says: " . . . the distribution of 'Arval Bread' had been out of use for some years, but was revived when Anthony Brunskill, senr. died in May, 1866. He had expressed a wish that such might take place. The custom of sitting up all night with the dead went into disuse between 1830 and 1840. The nearest relatives sat the last night before the funeral. The bidding to funerals is still kept up at Crosby, but funeral dinners at the inn, are a thing of the past. It is related that four such were provided in 1831, a rather large number for such a small village. Of course, poor people could not bear the cost of these repasts. The first coffin at Crosby to have a name plate upon it was Mr. Wm. Close's,

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1. The Manners and Customs of Westmorland, pp. 22-26.

who died June 6th, 1836."[1] In more general comment about death, epidemic and custom, he says: "In the reign of Henry VIII (1538), the compulsory provision of keeping of church registers was ordered. At Crosby, the register for Marriages and Deaths commences 1539, and Baptisms in 1572. In the reign of Charles II, burials were ordered to be made in woollen, with a view to encourage the home industries, and some such interments are noted in the register. The plague visited Cumberland and Westmorland severely at different times. In 1623 there was a great mortality in many parishes in these counties, as recorded in the registers, the death-rate being from three to five times the usual average. Crosby Garrett was one of the places which suffered from this terrible epidemic."[2]

Education had come through village school, Church and Grammar School. Nicholson and Burn write: "The inhabitants of this county are generally a sober, social, humane, civilized people; owing in some measure to the institution of small schools in almost every village. And in the larger towns, as Appleby, Heversham, Kendal, Bampton, Kirkby Lonsdale and Kirkby Stephen, there are free schools handsomely endowed. Insomuch that it is a rare thing in this county, to find any person who cannot both read and write tolerably well."[3] Lines from Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Sonnets (Translation of the Bible) bear this out:

> "And he who guides the plough, or wields the crook,
> With understanding spirit now may look
> Upon her records, listen to her song,
> And sift her laws."[4]

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1. J. W. Nicholson, History of Crosby Garrett, Westmorland (Kirkby Stephen, 1914), p. 97.

2. Ibid., p. 44.

3. Joseph Nicholson and Richard Burn, The History and Antiquities of the Counties of Westmorland and Cumberland (London, 1777), I, 9.

4. William Wordsworth, The Poetical Works of Wordsworth, Thomas Hutchinson ed., (O.U.P., 1904), p. 435; this sonnet was composed in 1821.

Appleby Grammar School had been in existence before 1453 (as a Chantry School) and among eminent men who received their early training in this school were: William Bell, Bishop of Kilmore and Ardagh; Thomas Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln; Thomas Smith and John Waugh, Bishop of Carlisle; the brothers Langhorne, joint translators of Plutarch; John Robinson, esq., under-secretary during Lord North's administration (1770-1782); and T. W. Lidderdale, assistant Librarian and Icelandic scholar at the British Museum. The Grammar School was actually founded by Queen Elizabeth I on March 22nd, 1574. A Grammar School at Kirkby Stephen was founded in 1565 by Thomas, Lord Wharton. We must remember, however, that Grammar Schools could be expensive. Speaking of Appleby Grammar School, Hinchcliffe said "that establishment depended not on the borough for its success but on a steady flow of boarders from outside the area. Six fortunate 'sons of the inhabitants' received a free education - the parents of only a handful of others could afford the fees."[1] As early as 1341, the opportunity of attending Oxford University was opened to the poor of Cumberland and Westmorland. Robert Eglesfield, rector of Brough-under-Stainmore, with Queen Philippa (to whom he had been appointed confessor) founded the Queen's College in Oxford 'for the distinguished in character, poor in means, and apt for the study of theology' who were, preferably, natives of Cumberland and Westmorland 'on account of the waste, desolate, and illiterate condition of the counties.'[2]

It was, however, the village school which had provided the basic education and its state had been nurtured long before those self-congratulatory words, anonymously describing the 'peasantry'in Westmorland in 1867: "No one who has seen these men on a market day or at a sheep-shearing could hesitate to say that they are stronger, more active, more handsome

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1. Edgar Hinchcliffe, Appleby Grammar School (Appleby, 1974), p.14.
2. Ibid., p. 16.

than in most parts of England. Intellectually, too, their rank would be equally high and the standard of education is good. In no country are so small a number proportunately unable to write their names."[1] It was, of course, because of the widespread weekday schools that this claim could be made; indirectly it was reiterated in an article published at the end of 1867, when it was reported that "Returns from this County in answer to the National Societies' Enquiry into the provisions for Church education have been received from all the parishes and ecclesiastical divisions except one. Five parishes only in the whole county are unprovided with church, national or parochial weekday schools."[2] The Church, as an Orton Parish Church Tombstone indicates, was the source of much enlightenment. Richard Dixon, who died in 1811, was "a just and upright man" who "seven times seven years taught at school and canvassed many a tedius rule. Five times seven years as you may mark He served here as Parish Clerk."[3] Some local churches themselves were used the whole week through, being day schools at which generations of dale children could master "the three R'". School was taught in the Church at Stonethwaite (6 miles south of Keswick) as late as 1875. Parson Sewell of Troutbeck kept sheep and taught children. Robert Walker of Seathwaite taught children, but filled other leisure moments with furniture and ale making.[4] The Vikings had loved sport, including wrestling, and there is a reference to wrestling in a book on physical education "which a Cumbrian published in 1581."[5] But if, for Cumbrians, wrestling was part of physical education, the Methodists later

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 23.4.1867.
2. Ibid., 31.12.1867.
3. Men of Lakeland, p. 81.
4. Ibid., pp. 81-82.
5. Ibid., p. 115.

took a different view of it: "in many of the villages it had long been an annual custom to hold what are popularly termed 'feasts', leading to the introduction of wrestling, dancing, dog trials, races and a variety of similar scenes of a demoralising tendency."[1]

Inclination and finance were, as always, factors governing travel. Though gangs of pack-horses were once-, twice-, and sometimes four-times weekly journeys to London with merchandise from Wigan, Whitehaven, Cockermouth, Barnard Castle, Penrith, Settle, York, Ulverston, Hawkshead, Appleby, Cartmel, Milnthorpe, Sedbergh, Kirkby Lonsdale, Orton and Dent BEFORE the opening of the turnpike roads, Westmorland had always been remote. Manufacturers made their wills and settled their worldly affairs before making long journeys.[2] But post-chaises were introduced in 1754, carriers' waggons in 1757, and the first Stage-Coach was seen in Westmorland in 1763. Drawn by six horses, it was called 'The Flying Machine'. Its "ponderous strength . . . rested bodily on the axle."[3] This Stage Coach took two nights and three days to make the journey between Kendal and London; an "inside seat" for a youngster cost £3.2.0d. for the journey. Kendal was the centre from which "trade and provincial fashion, the sentiments, the taste and elegancies of the metropolis spread gradually to the more remote corners of the county."[4] For most people who had to travel, however, journeys were either slowly on foot, or more quickly on pony or horse; it was not till 1862, with the opening of the Eden Valley Railway Line and 1876, with the opening of a new passenger service on the Settle-Carlisle Railway, that the upper Eden began to be less remote.

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1. A. Steele, Life and Labours of Hodgson Casson (London, 1854), p. 92.
2. The Manners and Customs of Westmorland, pp. 5-6.
3. History of Westmorland, p. 72.
4. The Manners and Customs of Westmorland, p. 6.

However, most Eden people remained within a few miles of their place of birth throughout their lives. Exceptions to this rule were the men of families who could be required to do military service, leaving wives and children at home on the farm. Following the distribution of land in Westmorland by William the Conqueror, to various Barons, most of the people of this County came to hold small portions of land. This was because the Barons parcelled out their bigger plots to their inferiors who, in turn, granted portions to several individuals. This sub-division of land made for equality in the social structure and it also meant that, when necessary, the man of the household could leave his family to till while he went to fight - a convenient arrangement in barbaric times. So "every man lives upon his own small tenement, and the practice of accumulating farms hath not yet here made any considerable progress . . . each man having a portion of land assigned to him for the Sustentation of the military character."[1]

At the beginning of the eighteenth century in Westmorland, ostentation was almost regarded as a vice and frugality was never thought of as meanness. Richer yeomen wore shoes, at least on Sundays and holidays, but labourers and smaller landholders appeared in church in clogs. The average dwelling was low, small and smoky. The somewhat over-polished style of the "Kendal Chronicle" letters of 1812 turns, albeit in imagination, to the possible way in which winter evenings were spent in these houses. Knitting, spinning of flax and carding of wool were necessary tasks and talk "was often disposed to perpetuate the credulity of the times: the favourite topics consisting of apparitions, omens, the mischiefs of witchcraft, and fairy tales . . . related by the aged to the young . . . . In all probability these superstitions came into the island with our

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1. The History and Antiquities of the Counties of Westmorland and Cumberland, I, 9-10.

Saxon ancestors . . . but the freedom of the press encouraged a spirit of enquiry which dispelled the gloom of monkish ignorance and the extension of commerce gave birth to a taste for elegance . . . ."[1]

There was, in Kirkby Stephen, an eighteenth-century shopkeeper called Abraham Dent who was the rare example of an ambitious and energetic man and who found scope for his energies, not by moving to a big town or city, but "diversifying his interests within the confines of his native place."[2] So much so, that Willan, his biographer, draws attention to a host of local opportunities for occupation. "If more were known", he says, "about more Abraham Dents, eighteenth-century England might appear less bucolic and less provincial."[3] While, as we said, the population of the Township of Kirkby Stephen was 1,141 in 1801, another 1,374 lived in surrounding hamlets and villages, including Mallerstang. Kirkby Stephen Parish Registers show (between 1772 and 1781) a considerable array of profession and skill: yeomen, husbandmen (or farmers), carpenters, masons, plasterers, slaters, tailors, shoemakers, cloggers, saddlers, tanners, curriers, millers, maltsters, tallow chandlers, blacksmiths and plumbers. Winton, too, had its own clogger, shoemaker, tailor and carpenter. Wharton, Hartley and Soulby all had carpenters. But Hartley also had a miller and Soulby had a rope maker and a basket maker, while Kaber had a stone cutter. In 1772 there were miners (lead) and colliers from Kirkby Stephen. Between 1770 and 1780 there were weavers at Kirkby Stephen and the most important manufactured product of the whole region was knitted stockings. In 1784, Kirkby Stephen had two attornies at law, two surgeons, apothecaries and men midwives, two brewers and a wine and brandy merchant; there were also three comb makers, three curriers, two skinners, two

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1. The Manners and Customs of Westmorland, p. 15.
2. T. S. Willan, An Eighteenth-Century Shopkeeper (M.U.P., 1970) p. 147.
3. Ibid., p. 147.

tanners, two tallow chandlers, two clock makers, a saddler and ten shopkeepers. Two of these last were milliners, one a hardwareman, one a grocer and hardwareman, and the rest were grocers or linen and woollen drapers and grocers. William Barnett and John Shaw were butchers (1783-1784) and John Bird a barber. Kirkby Stephen also had its parson and schoolmaster and in 1770 its dancing master, Thomas Inman, and its itinerant musician, John Lamb. There was also a tobacconist and a bookbinder. In 1784, Kendal had at least 29 shops and Appleby had at least 8. Butchers included, Kirkby Stephen had at least 12 shops. "Kirkby Stephen lay in the great Pennine knitting belt which stretched through Wensleydale, Swaledale, Dentdale and Ravenstonedale, and then went north to Stainmore and beyond. In this area, hand knitting was probably, after agriculture, the main occupation."[1] Perhaps one would not be surprised to know that the Reverend Thomas Clarke, vicar of Ormside, felt able to say, in 1860, that some thousand years earlier "habitations were scarcely as comfortable as modern pigsties, when the inhabitants were coarsely fed and thinly clad, where in place of our food-producing farms lay sterile and unreclaimed moors, vast forests and extensive woodlands."[2] Given that Kirkby Stephen and surrounding villages seemed so fully occupied in the latter half of the eighteenth century, one may wonder how long the social conditions which Clarke describes actually prevailed after 860 AD.

Farming, whatever the precise answer to this query, was the most widespread occupation. It meant employment for various age-groups, the half-yearly "Hirings" providing the labour force. Martinmas hirings at Appleby, for example, in 1864, provided first class men-servants from £10.00, second-class men-servants from £8.00, boys from £4.00, according

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1. Ibid., p. 60.

2. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 7.2.1860.

to age and strength; women-servants from £5.00; and second-class females from £3.10.0; girls from £2.00 to £3.00. (These would be rates for six months).[1] It was at these old, Statute Fairs that long rows of youths standing on the footpath, to be inspected and employed, would wear a wisp of straw in their hats or mouths or on their dress - to signify employment availability.[2] Farming also meant the gathering together of farmers, on special occasions, to help each other. These were social occasions which were often followed by a meal and drink together. Boon ploughing was a common example, 'boon' being a Scandinavian word meaning a favour, or blessing, or acquisition. Mr. G. Nelson, aided by neighbours on eight or nine fallow acres of Drybeck Moor, had his boon ploughing in 1862. He had put on at least 100 cartfuls of good lime and fourteen neighbours turned out to help.[3] That would be at least one representative from each house in Drybeck. The farmer's cart also came in useful in the Ormside parish. Nearly all Reverend Thomas Clarke's parishioners turned out to lead tile from the tile kilns of Messrs. Hill, Bleatarn, to the rectory land at Ormside "where the reverend gentleman (was) making extensive improvements."[4] There was boon ploughing at Great Musgrave three weeks earlier. Mrs. Taylor supplied coffee and cake;[5] interestingly, this occasion saw the guests return home sober. Sheep Clipping was also a social occasion. At Mr. R. Nicholson's farm, "Gilts", Crosby Ravensworth, a united sheep clip, dealing with over 700 sheep, was followed by a good dinner.[6] How far back these gatherings had gone into the nineteenth or

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1. Ibid., 15.11.1864.
2. Ibid., 30.12.1879.
3. Ibid., 16.9.1862.
4. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 15.5.1866.
5. Ibid., 24.4.1866.
6. Ibid., 9.7.1889.

late eighteenth century, the local newspaper does not say.

The coming Methodism was, however, to become more concerned with Eden's diversions than its occupations: with what is thought to be of greatest importance, namely its salvation. We have already mentioned some ancient customs and the local Advertiser was something of a guide, if not always precise, with the detail of history. Among the diversions, some were more useful than others. "After a Service in the dale church," wrote Mitchell, "a warden would mount a tombstone and give the announcements - of sales and auctions and of forthcoming fox-hunts. In those days the district teemed with wild life. A party of fox-hunters who were active during Whit week in 1759 combed the area around Ullswater and accounted for fifteen foxes, seven badgers, twelve wild cats, nine pine martens, besides 'a prodigious number of foumarts, eagles, ravens, kites and other vermin.'[1] Even the Parson himself had leisure time, though he might have to use it to supplement his meagre wage. Paid sometimes as little as £2 or £3 a year "a priest in the dales in the eighteenth century managed to keep the cause of Christianity in good heart while applying his leisure time to a variety of jobs."[2] A Newlands Vale curate made clogs and clothes; a Langdale curate opened a tavern and brewed his own ale and Richard Birkett of Martindale and Mr. Mattinson of Patterdale also did work "not strictly pastoral." Matthew Lowes was a Methodist Itinerant Preacher appointed by the Conference of 1769 to be stationed in the Dales Circuit, that is, in an area which then included the upper Eden and a great deal more. "Obliged like many of his brethren, by the meagre allowances of those days, to devise some expedient by which to augment his

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1. Men of Lakeland, p. 29.

2. Ibid., pp. 81-82.

scanty income, he prepared an excellent Balsam, which obtained great celebrity, and is still sold by the name of Lowe's Balsam. Several of the first preachers as well as himself disposed of a considerable quantity of it, and he no doubt found the profits arising from this source to afford a seasonable relief for the wants of a dependant family. But at the Conference in 1770, a stop was put to this trade by the following rule, then passed, 'that no preacher who will not relinquish his trades of buying and selling cloth, hardware, etc., or making and vending pills, drops, balsams, or medicines of any kind, shall be considered as a travelling preacher any longer.'"[1]

Diversions from everyday work took various forms and some created social problems. It took the Reverend J. Percival, Principal of Clifton College, Bristol, to open the otherwise undiscussed (yet serious) problem of illegitimacy in the Times (24.4.1865) and his long letter was quoted in the Advertiser on 2.5.1865, where it could be related to problems which arose from the half-yearly hirings: "Young women should never be allowed to attend evening gatherings of any kind, whether religious or social, except in the company of some elders of the family." Young men, he observed, would enjoy reading but they had nothing to read and there were too few reading rooms with too little advertisement of too few facilities in them. Indeed, it was Percival's concern that holidays, fairs, hirings, etc., were occasions of mischief and he wrote: "I should propose therefore, that all statute hirings be abolished and register offices opened in all towns and that farmers and other employers of servants should be induced, if possible, to put an end to the Whitsuntide and Martinmas holidays and never to allow female servants to attend fairs or merry-makings except on condition of returning home before dark."[2] A Justice

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1. Anthony Steele, History of Methodism in Barnard Castle and The Principal Places in the Dales Circuit (London, 1857), p. 101.

2. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 2.5.1865.

of the Peace was to follow these opinions with further revelations a month later. He wrote to confirm that Cumberland and Westmorland have a larger incidence of illegitimacy than any other Counties in England, (proved by the last returns of the Registrar General). He urged that magistrates revise their mode of hearing bastardy cases as young people are often able to be present at the hearing, as members of the public, and enjoy the proceedings with laughter and great interest. He suggested that farmers should require "characters" with the servants whom they will be employing - and that the clergy ought to keep the matter before their people. A Doctor Close preached in Carlisle Cathedral in May 1861[1] on matters relating to these public hirings. He disapproved of the dancing, drinking, revelry and orgies of heathendom which accompanied the festivals. He noted that Magistrates were more tolerant towards drunkards at Christmas and thought that penalties should rather be double for such occasions. Public hirings encouraged immorality and vice and drink, especially among girls. Paths of purity and peace should be encouraged rather than the dances of vice. But as if to say that society was not quite so depraved as some would suggest, an editorial the following week was to say that Whit Monday, once upon a time a great day for bull-baiting, cock-fighting and badger baiting, was now a day on which amusements for the working man were less degrading. National tastes had improved. Museums and art exhibitions were being patronized far more. These were, of course, general comments about the whole country and did not deal with the problems associated with the local Statute Fairs.

Dancing had also become a problem for the Church of England. A correspondent expressed disgust that clergymen had been attending Balls in Penrith. "The pomps and vanities of a wicked world were no place for

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1. Ibid., 21.5.1861.

a holy man of God, and all members of the Church, including her Clergymen, ought to renounce Balls and keep far from them."[1] This view was re-iterated two weeks later when a further comment on the issue said: "The gaity it inspires, the company into which it leads and various evils connected with it render it everywhere unbecoming the Christian who has the utmost need to cultivate seriousness and gravity and to live and act as a pilgrim . . . . There is scarcely anything not absolutely and notoriously wicked in which conformity to the world consists more than the amusement of the ballroom."[2] R. H. Harmon comes near to some of these social problems (or pastimes?) which were in existence throughout England in the eighteenth century (especially wakes and fairs) when she says, of 'the peasantry', "their's was a life of drudgery, with wakes and fairs almost their sole diversion . . . each village was a separate entity, and its inhabitants were satisfied to build their lives entirely around it, and their mental and spiritual horizons were correspondingly narrow."[3] The problem of drink, however, was to occupy the Methodist mind and pulpit more than most, and to this we will refer at length in Chapter III when we deal with the emphases of the Eden Methodists.

In concluding this chapter, however, we turn back, from these ways in which the people lived, to the state of the Christian religion during preceding centuries. We have already hinted that the impact of a Reformation far away was not necessarily deeply impressed on every part of the upper Eden. Yet when we said, on page eleven, "there was then peace in Westmorland until 1715," this was, locally, more a political than

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1. Ibid., 25.1.1859.

2. Ibid., 8.2.1859.

3. R. L. Harmon, Susanna, Mother of the Wesleys (London, 1968) pp. 34-35.

a religious statement. For during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, existing religious beliefs and practices did not always appeal to everybody. Bishop Butler was to reflect this in a sermon 'Upon The Love of God': "There is a capacity in the nature of man, which neither riches nor honours, nor sensual gratifications, nor anything in this world can perfectly fill up or satisfy; there is a deeper and more essential want, than any of these things can be the supply of . . . ."[1] To what extent, we now ask, were Catholics, Anglicans and the various forms of Protestant Dissent (born out of Puritanism) involved in this 'deep and essential' human want?

During the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), there were about 400 or 500 practising Catholics in the whole of Cumbria, their leader being John Boste, son of Nicholas Boste, a landowner at Dufton.[2] John was born about 1543, probably attending Appleby Grammar School before matriculating from Queen's College, Oxford, in 1564/5. In fact, John Boste of Dufton was first headmaster of the Elizabethan foundation at Appleby.[3] Evidence for his appointment as schoolmaster is the record of the first Bishop's Visitation within the Diocese of Carlisle, conducted by Richard Barnes at Appleby on January 20th, 1573/4. Between the entries for Appleby, St. Lawrence and Appleby St. Michael is the insertion: 'Mr. Johanes Boste Ludimagister ibidem.'[4] Not long afterwards he was converted to Catholicism and ordained at Douai in France in 1580. He returned to England in 1582 but was so energetic in propagating 'the True Faith' in Westmorland that, in 1593 he was arrested near Hilton. Tortured and tried, he was

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1. Joseph Butler, Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel (London, 1736), Sermon 14, p. 288.

2. Christianity in Cumbria, p. 71.

3. Appleby Grammar School, p. 127.

4. Ibid., p. 27.

executed in 1594. At a ceremony conducted by Pope Paul VI in St. Peter's, Rome, on October 25th, 1970, he was canonised.[1] By 1593 there were 21 priests with the Cumbrian Catholics. Even so, Catholicism was practiced secretly and foreign-bred emissaries mainly from Douai in France set up secret missions led by John Boste as early as 1580.[2] For another two centuries, even into the nineteenth, the Catholics continued their work - sometimes tolerated and sometimes persecuted. In 1861, the Catholic Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle visited St. Catherine's Church in Penrith, when 66 persons were confirmed, of whom as many as 19 were converts to the Catholic faith.[3]

Parallel Anglican work was far from furtive, if it would be called 'work' at all. Critical historians have drawn on the Diary of a Country Parson (the Reverend James Woodforde) and found that what we have already noticed concerning the leisure-time of some of our local Parsons, could be repeated in wider contexts: "The majority of parsons subscribed to the 'Thirty Nine Articles' and then took their gentle way through life like winding rivers that had never a thought of getting to the sea: burying their dead - an all too frequent occupation; performing their pastoral duties; making beer; playing cards with modest betting; fishing with nets for tench; coursing hares; watching public hangings - and all with decorum, gentle pleasure, and prevailing good nature."[4] What should also be remembered, however, is that "at many points the church of the eighteenth century was in intimate touch with contemporary life."[5] Carlisle

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1. Ibid., pp. 27-28.

2. Christianity in Cumbria, p. 76.

3. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 30.7.1861.

4. Ronald Fletcher, The Parkers at Saltram 1769-1789 (London, 1970), pp. 27-28.

5. G. R. Cragg, The Church and The Age of Reason 1648-1789 (Pengiun Books, 1960), IV, 128.

Diocesan Registry records and the Archives Department of the Cumbria County Council show that between 1777 and 1850, eight new parishes were created.[1] None of these, however, belonged to the upper Eden which remained undisturbed. The strength of the Church of England was less as a result of mission than because it was largely supported by the landed gentry, though it was their dependants who provided the biggest part of the Congregation. Widdup sees that a natural outcome of trends in agriculture between 1688 and 1851 in Westmorland was that the rich became richer and the poor became poorer: "Cumbria was essentially a rural area and . . . changes in agriculture resulted in an increasing number of enclosures and a reduction in the number of farm units giving a surplus of labour."[2] We thus see a Church which, numerically, is open for a large number of very poorly paid farmworkers and for a small number of rich employers. But Christianity does not, generally, seem to be a religion in which poor and rich meet together and find answer to that "essential want" of which Joseph Butler preached. To add to this imbalance, there were other inconsistencies, though we might say that the common bond of poverty between some parsons and the farmworkers could have been mutually encouraging. Carlisle remained one of the poorest dioceses in the country. Some curates, having no homes of their own, lived entirely under the roofs of their parishioners. Buttermere's Priest (a term surviving the Reformation in some parishes) received one pound a year, together with a pair of clogs, a linen suit and the right to pasture a goose on the common.[3] Different livings and different liturgies were all part of the parish scene and a Congregation might sometimes see less

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1. Christianity in Cumbria, pp. 85-86.

2. Ibid., p. 91.

3. Men of Lakeland, pp. 14-15.

attention given to Holy Scripture than to centuries of tradition. The Established Church undoubtedly met the needs of some, but by no means all. What was lacking is reflected in the opening words of the conversion account of Stephen Brunskill, a farmer's son: "I was born at Gaisgill-Row in the parish of Orton, Westmorland, November 5th, 1748. My parents at that time were members of the Established Church but strangers to experimental religion." Brunskill was 26 before he could believe that God loved him and could work in his life. Before that, in the atmosphere of the Church of England, he writes: "I received no benefit. I still remained unconcerned about my soul and a slave to sin."[1]

Whatever the Church of England was in the upper Eden valley, in its varying parishes it was not threatened by the Catholics so much as by other non-conformists. Such non-conformity began in the south of Cumbria, the earliest reference being to a chapel at Tottlebank in 1669, of the Congregational persuasion. Its first minister was the ejected vicar of Staveley-in-Cartmel. It became a Baptist chapel in 1773. There were evidences of Baptists at Cartmel in 1669. In the Carlisle Diocese there were meetings of Independents at Lazonby, Penrith and, in our area, at Ravenstonedale. "These were", writes Widdup, "small scattered communities, with a distribution reflecting personal reactions in the church on the part of individuals rather than any environmental influences."[2] The High Chapel at Ravenstonedale was built two years after the Restoration of Charles II in 1662. The Baptists had not, nor ever would, settle in any great number, in, or near the upper Eden. Even so, there are two

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1. Stephen Brunskill, The Life of Stephen Brunskill of Orton, 60 years a Wesleyan Methodist Local Preacher, written by himself (London and Kendal, 1837), p. 5.

2. Christianity in Cumbria, p. 80. Little Asby Congregational Chapel, built in 1889 from the Will (£2500 for a new Chapel) of Joseph Jackson - born at Little Asby and making vast fortune in London - could also have been built for similar or other personal reasons.

interesting newspaper references to Baptisms, though neither refer to a particular Church. The first, under 'miscellaneous news', is headed "an icy baptism" and took place on the eighteenth of December, 1859: "The ordinance of Baptism was administered to a young lady of Bampton. The spot chosen for the celebration of this rite was a millstream when a large number of people were attracted to the stream to witness the performance of the ceremony."[1] The second rare newspaper reference to Baptists is at Brough, when six ladies received adult Baptism and "was witnessed by many who came to be lookers on."[2]

An amazing number of minor sects, with equally amazing names, began to spring into existence in the seventeenth century, particularly at the time the Church of England was disestablished and silenced, that is, from the temporary ending of episcopacy by 1643, until 1660. There were the Fifth-Monarchy Men (millenarians awaiting the return of Christ), Sabbatarians who, in worship, observed the Jewish Sabbath rather than the Christian Sunday; there were the Adamites who wished to return to the conditions of man's innocency, and worshipped in the nude (a different Eden); there were Ranters, Muggletonians, Socinians, Philadelphians, Sweet Singers of Israel and many others. J. R. H. Moorman says "the soil was certainly favourable to the multiplication of sects which sprang up on all sides."[3] None of these, however, seem to have disturbed the Carlisle diocese. For "when the episcopacy was restored in 1660 at the Restoration there is no evidence of parish disintegration in spite of the fact that the diocese was in a desperate situation. In fact by 1662, with the Act of Uniformity (1659) and revision of the prayer book, there

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 3.1.1860.

2. Ibid., 10.4.1866.

3. J. R. H. Moorman, A History of the Church of England (London, 1958), p. 248.

was much evidence that rehabilitation was already begun."[1] Even so the seventeenth century was the time when individuals were making their own direct approaches to God, depending, moment by moment, upon the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Small groups of these met together calling themselves 'Seekers' who might have remained detached and largely unknown to one another had it not been that, through the vitality, courage and inspiration of one man, they were rallied together.

The Seekers were "men of competent Bible knowledge and religious training" and "moreover, of a singularly advanced religious experience . . . they were for the most part young men in the prime of their ardour and strength, who would follow the movings of life rather than the counsels of prudence in shaping the new religious movement to which they had vowed their service."[2] The Seekers were "the product of the religious travail of the age rather than of any one religious sect, and were recruited also from Independents and Anabaptists, and from the Presbyterian and Anglican churches."[3] They "felt the insufficiency of the current doctrinal and external religion," but "were not yet brought into a deeper soul-satisfying experience."[4] "Such persons always appear in epochs of religious unsettlement . . . . As soon as faith in the authority of the Church grows faint, and the sufficiency of established forms and rituals is seriously questioned, the primary right of the soul to find God Himself is sure to be asserted."[5] He who rallied these Seekers together was George Fox. "Tired of an autocratic church, dissatisfied with a

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1. Christianity in Cumbria, p. 75.
2. W. C. Braithwaite, The Beginnings of Quakerism (London, 1912), p. 94.
3. Ibid., p. 25.
4. Ibid., p. 26.
5. Rufus M. Jones, Studies in Mystical Religion, (London, 1923), p. 452.

Presbyterian autocracy, sick of the bibliolatry of the Independent, and of the general formalism and hypocrisy of contemporary religion, Fox found the inner authority and illumination of the Holy Spirit."[1]

George Fox (1624-1690), a shoemaker from Fenny Drayton (some fifteen miles WSW of Leicester) believed, at the age of nineteen, that he must withdraw from the world. He made himself a leather suit and travelled in a north-westerly direction to Pendle Hill, on the borders of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Here, on its summit, he saw a vision "of a great people to be gathered, a vision which proved to be prophetic, for when he followed in the direction indicated he found the Westmorland Seekers, groups of people scattered over a wide area in a loose form of organisation, who were eagerly awaiting fresh light in their search for Truth."[2] The high moment of his prophetic ministry was in 1652. He had travelled north from Pendle Hill and reached Firbank Fell, some ten miles east of Kendal in Westmorland. Here, now is a great rock known as 'Fox's Pulpit', where he delivered a memorable sermon. The rock bears a tablet with the following record:

> "Let your lives speak.
> Here or near this rock George Fox preached to about 1000 Seekers for three hours on Sunday, June 13, 1652. Great power inspired his message and the meeting proved of great importance in gathering the Society of Friends known as Quakers. Many men and women convinced of the truth on this fell and in other parts of the Northern Counties went through the land and over the seas with the living Word of the Lord enduring great hardships and winning multitudes to Christ."

Fox's influence, as an open-air preacher, was alarming, disturbing, forthright, authoritative, prophetic and, above all, genuine. Roland H.

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1. Horton Davies, The English Free Churches (O.U.P., 1963), p. 73.
2. E. V. Foulds, The Birthplace of Quakerism (London, 1968), p. 7.

Bainton's The History of Christianity quotes Oliver Cromwell saying to Fox: "If thou and I were but an hour of a day together we should be nearer one to the other."[1] The fact that a large single-volume history of the Christian religion should make reference to this Leicestershire leather-worker and that Cromwell and Fox should ever talk together, reflects Fox's fearless faith and his lasting impression on the latter course of Christianity. For Fox, who at first began "as a 'voice' crying in the rural districts",[2] soon became a leader, with prophetic insights. "The turning-point in his life came when he discovered that God is not above the sky, or at the end of a logical syllogism, but is a living spiritual presence revealed within the soul."[3] Only a converted leather-worker could say "All things were new; and all the creation gave another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter."[4]

Had he not preached and written so energetically and with so much conviction, he might have been spared the cruelties of imprisonment. But that would have been a denial of his conversion. For, when he said, "when God doth work, who shall let it? and this I knew experimentally",[5] he was saying that nothing could prevent God's love working in and through him. The total conviction that God was on his side, come what may, is contained in his Journal:

> "Then the Lord gently led me along, and let me see His love, which was endless and eternal, surpassing all the knowledge that men have in the natural state, or can get by history or books; and that

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1. Roland H. Bainton, The History of Christianity (London, 1964), pp. 324-325.

2. George Fox, The Journal of George Fox, Norman Penney, ed., (London, 1924), p. x. (From the introduction by Rufus M. Jones).

3. Ibid., p. xi.

4. Ibid., p. 17.

5. Ibid., p. 9.

love let me see myself, as I was without Him."[1]

Before the Methodists came, no one had ever made public, personal declaration of that kind in Westmorland. But his outspoken honesty was not tactful; his interruptions of church services were provocative; and it was not long before clergy dreaded his arrival.[2] His Journal expresses most emphatically where his feelings lay. He intended "to bring people off from Jewish ceremonies, and from heathenish fables, and from men's inventions and windy doctrines, by which they blew the people about this way and the other way, from sect to sect . . . from all their images and crosses, and sprinkling of infants, with all their holy days (so called) and all their vain traditions."[3] This criticism of 'priests' and their practices continued unabated: "Oh! the vast sums of money that are gotten by the trade they make of selling the Scriptures, and by their preaching, from the highest bishop to the lowest priest!"[4] Fox also saw danger in music's entertainment: "I was moved also to cry against all sorts of music",[5] and (also) "I was exercised about the star-gazers, who drew people's minds from Christ, the bright and morning Star; and from the Sun of righteousness, by whom the sun, and moon, and stars, and all things else were made."[6] As for the Fairs which Anglicans would come to deplore, Fox was therein to see opportunity. "There was a great fair at Sedbergh, at which servants used to be hired; and I declared the day

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1. Ibid., p. 9.

2. Harold Loukes, The Quaker Contribution (London, 1965), pp. 21-22.

3. The Journal of George Fox, pp. 21-22.

4. Ibid., p. 23. (In early Quaker literature the name 'priest' is a person who received payment for preaching.

5. Ibid., p. 22.

6. Ibid., p. 23.

of the Lord through the fair."[1] At home and abroad, Fox, whose new Society was happily called 'The Society of Friends', declared both to fellow-Quakers and to the world that the Kingdom of God must change society. At a Friends' meeting on the Island of Barbados, in 1671, Fox "desired them also that they would cause their overseers to deal mildly and gently with their negroes, and not use cruelty towards them, as the manner of some hath been and is; and that after certain years of servitude they would make them free."[2]

Nine times imprisoned for disturbing the ecclesiastical peace, his boldness spread quickly to his followers. In 19 years, from the accession of Charles II to the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689, 12,000 Friends went to prison and over 300 died there. Reasons for imprisonment were that they would not stop preaching in the open-air; they would not abandon public worship; they would not take oaths; they would not remove their hats in the presence of the magistrates and they were suspected of treason. Some of them had been Westmorland Seekers and, as Braithwaite says, "it is not too much to say that over the part of England where Quakerism planted itself most readily the community of Seekers had already prepared the way."[3] Persecution of one kind or another was the certain reward for these who had been "weary with their travelling through the sects and athirst for the gospel of a living Christ."[4]

The Quakers were strongest in the SOUTH of Westmorland, chiefly at

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1. Ibid., p. 61.
2. Ibid., p. 277.
3. The Beginnings of Quakerism, p. 27.
4. Ibid., p. 27.

Preston Patrick, a few miles south of Kendal and not far from Firbank, that place of far-stretching views high up the steep fell on the Westmorland side of the Lune.[1] In fact, "this crowded fortnight was the creative moment in the history of Quakerism."[2] Of the south Westmorland Quakers, the two local leaders were Francis Howgill, born in 1618, and who lived at Todthorne, near Grayrigg, and John Audland, born about 1630, who lived at Crosslands, near Preston Patrick. There was also at Grayrigg, (6 miles south-west of Tebay), an Ambrose Rigge, schoolmaster, who became a Quaker. Penrith and Shap were the two most northerly meeting-places between 1654 and 1657. Small meetings were held at Great Strickland, Grayrigg, Ravenstonedale and at Sedbergh, which, if not in the open-air, were in private houses. Appleby, in the upper Eden, had a meeting-place of a different kind: courthouse and gaol combined; a "Justice" could also 'hear' individual Quakers at Kirkby Stephen.

R. S. Ferguson says that the most famous of all the early missionaries of Quakerism was George Whitehead (1635-1723) of Orton. "He is, after George Fox, the chief founder of the Society; and, both from the great age he attained and the lead he took in the Society's business, may be deemed, to a great extent, its father."[3] Born in 1635 (at Sunrigg in Orton Parish), "at the early age of fourteen, Whitehead conceived objections, on religious grounds, to the promiscuous singing of David's Psalms in Church."[3] Opposition to another custom was made by another Quaker, Christopher Storey, who had been born in the Carlisle area, and who became a Quaker in 1672. The practice (of making doles at

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1. Ibid., p. 84.

2. Ibid., p. 86, (i.e. the second half of June, 1652).

3. R. S. Ferguson, Early Cumberland and Westmorland Friends (London, 1871), p. 41.

4. Ibid., pp. 41-42.

burials), he wrote, "'was grown so common, and to such an Extravagancy, that great Numbers of People came to burials, both Rich and Poor, without Invitation . . . and we could see no real Service in making such Doles, when People were met together on such a Weighty Occasion, but, on the contrary, great Disorders often happened.'"[1] Storey attended his own funeral in 1720.

Other Quakers were John and Alice Alderson, of Ravenstonedale. Alice preached in America, Scotland and Ireland, and died, aged eighty-eight, in 1766, at Ravenstonedale . . . Edward Gay, of Appleby . . . Thomas Drewery and George Rooke, of Bolton.[2] The list is further increased as names of those fined between 1650 and 1689 come to light: Edward Winter, of Moreland . . . John Shearman, of Sleasgill . . . Thomas and Anne Robinson, of Cliburne . . . William and John Barwick, of Shapp . . . Matthew Dawson, of Hilton, and James Scaife, of Nateby.[3] Land and goods were seized from Quakers, in 1677, in Ravenstonedale, Orton, Shapp, Beethom, Milthorp, Heversham, Kendal, Crook and Underbarrow.[4] Goods were seized (1677/1678) from Quakers at Orton, Brough, Warcopp, Appleby and Bondgate.[5] Such goods included cattle, horses, working tools, pewter, corn, hides, six spoons, a bag of potatoes, flax and candles, brass and various beasts, household goods, wool and an iron pot. Some of the inspiration during the sufferings of these Quakers came, in human terms, from their itinerant brethren who, "at the moving of the Spirit, exchanged the winding fell paths of their native counties, bordered with bracken,

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1. Ibid., p. 95.
2. Ibid., pp. 159-160.
3. Ibid., p. 199.
4. Ibid., p. 200.
5. Ibid., p. 201.

and the fair homesteads which had been in the hands of their families for generations, for the dirty, narrow streets of the great cities of the Kingdom, for uncertainty as to lodging and food, and often for crowded, disease-breeding prisons. In Bristol, Plymouth, Exeter, in Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle and York, and especially in London, these publishers proclaimed the Truth which had been revealed to them at Firbank, Preston Patrick, Kendal and Underbarrow."[1]

By 1703 there were only twelve Quaker families at Penrith, four at Kirkby Stephen, one at Orton and three at Shap.[2] By 1789 there were 26 Quaker families at Preston Patrick (with a meeting house) and "several" families at Grayrigg (also with a meeting house).[3] "The Quaker message appealed with greatly reduced force to the Laodicaean spirit of a later age, but, allowing for this, the failure to secure a succession of men with the fire and gifts and first-hand experience of these early pioneers was a chief reason for the gradual declension of power."[4] After what Braithwaite describes as the earlier, prophetic period of the movement, came "the development of a corporate consciousness on the part of the whole Quaker community" with the inevitable "shifting in some degree of the responsibility for witness-bearing in . . . pronounced ways from the individual to the group, and this no doubt tended to control and to limit . . . manifestations of an eager spiritual activity."[5] Numerical reduction, however, need not indicate a spent force and the influence

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1. E. E. Taylor, Friends Ancient and Modern Series (London, without date), No. 22, pp. 8-9.

2. John Burgess, Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society (Kendal, 1980) LXXX, 107.

3. Ibid., p. 107.

4. The Beginnings of Quakerism, p. 95.

5. Ibid., p. 525.

of the Quakers upon later Preachers cannot go unnoticed as we come to examine the arrival of Methodism in our next chapter.

Intervening in the apparent gap left by the Quaker movement and the coming of the Methodists, the upper Eden valley was to meet yet another forerunner. He was Benjamin Ingham (1712-1772), a close friend of John Wesley in the Holy Club at Oxford and on their missionary visit to North America. His early and significant connection - apart from the fact that he was an ordained Priest of the Church of England - was with the Moravians, whose headquarters he was instrumental in establishing at Fulneck, Pudsey, near Leeds. Becoming an itinerant preacher, he moved away from the Moravians, being then more in sympathy with the evangelical, Calvinist wing of the Church of England and the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. He inspired the building of Inghamite chapels in Yorkshire, Lancashire and Westmorland - the last being at Birks (in 1757), which, though now closed (as are almost all the rest), is in the Warcop area, some five miles south-east of Appleby. His 'cause' began to disintegrate in 1761, when his authority lapsed, and Birks is now a place for storing animal fodder and agricultural machinery. Obviously, there was here no Wesleyan Methodist (Wesley and Ingham grew far apart), yet the enthusiasm of his preaching, the care of numerous converts and his regard for the Sacraments were antecedents of the more enduring Methodism which was to follow.[1]

John Wesley (1703-1791) was to visit Westmorland but rarely. His first stay was for one night (3-4 October, 1749) at Old Hutton, about

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1. David F. Clarke, Benjamin Ingham (1712-1772), M. Phil. Thesis, (Leeds University, 1971). Places Ingham is known to have visited, in the upper Eden valley, for preaching, were: Appleby, Asby, Burtree, Brackenber, Drybeck, Kirkby Stephen, Ravenstonedale and Roundthwaite, near Tebay.

five miles south-east of Kendal, on a journey from Whitehaven to Leeds. (Ingham had visited Westmorland the previous year).[1] He passed through Ambleside in 1751 and in 1752 he was at Clifton, Penrith, and he visited Kendal in 1753, 1764, 1765, 1767 and 1788. He would have stopped to preach at Appleby on June 30th, 1766, but it was too wet so he went on to Arthur Johnson's, near Brough. He visited Appleby again in 1786 (on May 11th, a summer month), the place which, twenty years earlier, he had described as "a county-town worthy of Ireland, containing at least five-and-twenty houses."[2] He visited Brough again for a cup of tea and a prayer during his second journey through Appleby on May 11th, 1786. It was on his way from Barnard Castle to Richmond that he had preached at a farmer's house, near Brough on June 2nd, 1768,[3] and again on May 10th, 1779, on a journey between Barnard Castle and Newcastle.[4] Little is said in his Journal about these visits to our area, probably because there was no marked response. The great eighteenth-century preacher could only say that, at Brough, on the second of June, 1768, a little bird sang "without intermission, from the beginning of the service unto the end."[5]

In this chapter, we have attempted to show that the upper Eden, before the coming of the Methodists, had something of a separate identity

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1. David F. Clarke, "Another 'Son To Susanna(h)'" in Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society (Chester, December 1972), XXXVIII, p. 176.

2. John Wesley, The Journal, standard Edition (1938), V, 173; Arthur Johnson lived in "a lone house, and there was not time to gather a congregation."

3. Ibid., V, 276.

4. Ibid., VI, 234.

5. Ibid., V, 276.

from the rest of Westmorland, Cumberland and England, In no sense, of course, could it be completely separate from the culture and religion of the whole country, but various influences - as we have seen - have shaped this remote rural area in particular ways. This general element of isolation was also to have its effect on the coming Methodism whose preachers were determined that there should be Methodists in every village and hamlet. These Methodists, themselves, now form an isolated holy community though their missionary interest has made them aware of isolated holy communities elsewhere. They are now at a stage where isolation may have become their unhealthy predicament or their opportunity of unlimited potential.

Stimulus to further study, before we end the chapter, is suggested in two documents which were in the hands of the late Miss M. K. Thompson (in 1979), a Member of the long-standing Long Marton Methodist Church, near Appleby. One document says, simply:

> "This is to certify that we the undersigned being Protestant Dissenters do intend to make use of a House in Long Marton in theCounty of Westmorland and Diocese of Carlisle (the property of Edmund Thompson) for the religious Worship of Almighty God and desire the same to be registered in the Registry of the Consistory Court of Carlisle agreeable to the Act of Parliament in such case directed. John Elliott, Edmund Thompson, James Dalton, Thomas Thompson and Joseph Kearson.
> "The above certificate has been registered in the consistory court of the Diocese of Carlisle the twenty eighth day of December in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirteen.
> Signed R. and G. G. Mounsey
> Deputy Registrars."

The other, a Centenary Book with resolutions and a list of subscribers, dated 1841, also contains sentiments expressing a heartfelt debt to Wesleyan Methodism. Here are thirteen of these testimonies to a new 'experimental' religion, some subscriptions given in memory of deceased relatives and friends:

"Mr. Jonathan Thompson, in memory of a pious grandmother who was one of the first Methodists in Long Marton. £10.10s.

Mr. E. Thompson, junior. £10.10s.

Ann Metcalf, a servant at Brough. 10/6.

A lover of Methodism and a token of gratitude. £1.1s.

A servant. 1/-.

Friend to Wesleyan Methodism. 7/-.

In respect to the person who was instrumental in my conversion. 4/-.

In respect to a Wesleyan Minister, James Bland of Orton. 6d.

For himself, his wife, and eight children. £10.

Blacksmith who loves Methodism and would give more if he could spare it. 4/-.

E. Hindson, Rosgill Hall . . . in memory of a dear departed mother who was a Methodist of the right stamp. £1.1s.

A restored backslider. 6d.

Donation from a sister in behalf of a beloved brother who died a short time ago praising God that he ever heard the Methodists. £1."

God was now real, living and dying were new hopes and ordinary people were beginning to possess cherished religious beliefs.

CHAPTER II

The coming of the Methodists: the history of their growth and development as an isolated community.

The Long Marton Methodists were expressing what many Methodists had already experienced through the preaching of John Wesley. Son of a poor country parson, he was, with his brother Charles, a man who was at ease in "glittering mansions" yet "coldly unresponsive" to anything that rank or wealth might claim.[1] With Oxford University education and Anglican ordination he was well-trained and prepared for his historic calling. "The Puritan's high sense of duty and uprightness of life, the Anglican reverence and esteem for social and institutional religion, the scholar's passion for knowledge, were joined to the fine feelings of a true gentleman who was in the best sense a citizen of the world."[2] His one aim was to spread, beginning with himself, holiness to all the world and he defines this holiness in his Journal in a letter to Lawrence Coughlan:

> "I constantly told you . . . it was love; the love of God and our neighbour; the image of God stamped on the heart; the life of God in the soul of man; the mind that was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ also walked . . . . It is true, farther, that if you love God with 'all your heart', you may 'rejoice evermore'. Nay, it is true still farther, that many serious, humble, sober-minded believers, who do feel the love of God sometimes, and do then rejoice in God their Saviour, cannot be content with this; but pray continually, that He would enable them to love, and 'rejoice in the Lord always.'"[3]

For more than half a century he declared this emphasis (1738-1791) and it was to become the experience of a great number of his converts. This experience of the love of God through the individual's act of faith in

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1. A. W. Harrison, B. A. Barber, G. G. Hornby and E. T. Davies The Methodist Church. Its Origin, Divisions and Reunion (London, 1932), p. 12.

2. Ibid., p. 13.

3. John Wesley, The Journal, V, 283-284.

Jesus became the discovery which was to revive Christianity in England. Social barriers were crossed and remote places were reached by this 'new' religion. Long Marton Wesleyan Methodists, as we have seen, expressed their gratitude - the more immense when we remember that John Wesley had said of countrymen: "In general, their life is supremely dull; and it is usually unhappy too. For, of all people in the kingdom, they are most discontented; seldom satisfied either with God or man."[1] Cyril J. Davey points out that John Wesley spoke even more strongly about farm labourers: "Grossly stupid, not understanding this life or the next, they were on the same level as a heathen or a Turk. He was not sorry to see the small peasant-farmer denuded of his land, and the countryman trekking to the town. The enclosure of three million acres in fifty years went unnoticed in his writing. He turned with relief to the squalid townships now growing in importance because of new markets opened by overseas conquest. There, at least, men listened and repented."[2] But eighteenth century Methodism shows that Wesley's calling was to preach to all, and strong as his language might be, he could not be selective. Unflatteringly, he had said that Calvinists had "defended their dear decrees with arguments worthy of Bedlam and with language worthy of Billingsgate,"[3] but he still hoped they would hear his preaching.

We cannot help but notice, however, that Wesley worked, strategically, from large centres of population and that often it was his converts who took the message to remoter parts.[4] Thus from London to Long Marton

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1. Ibid., V, 192.

2. Cyril J. Davey, The Methodist Story (London, 1955), pp. 13-14.

3. L. Tyerman, The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A. (London, 1878), III, 281.

4. They had an inner compulsion to do this.

(and beyond) the movement grew, and with it, a set of rules forming a basis of beliefs and behaviour. The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church[1] lists these largely unchanged rules, and, however isolated, every Methodist is bound by them. In them, we note, in particular, the reasons for the growth of Methodist Societies, remembering that the rules were for every Member and that they were regardless of social standing or previous religious encounter; they bound the people of Methodism together, in the remote upper Eden valley and the crowded lower Thames. In introducing them, John Wesley writes:

> "1. In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That we might have more time for this great work, I appointed a day when they might all come together; which, from thenceforth they did every week, viz. on Thursday, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join them (for their number increased daily), I gave those advices from time to time which I judged most needful for them; and we always concluded our meeting with prayer suited for their several necessities.
>
> "2. This was the rise of the UNITED SOCIETY, first in London and then in other places. Such a Society is no other than 'a company of men, having the form, and seeking the power, of godliness; united, in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.'"

John and Charles Wesley sign the rules which follow, that is, "Rules of the Society of the People called Methodists" (dated 1743) and we quote the main sections:

> "3. That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each Society is divided into smaller companies, called Classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in every Class, one of whom is

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1. Methodist Publishing House (London, 1981).

styled the Leader. It is his business -

(1) To see each person in his Class once a week at least, in order
To inquire how their souls prosper;
To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require;
To receive what they are willing to give towards the support of the Gospel.

(2) To meet the Ministers and the Stewards of the Society once a week, in order
To inform the Minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved;
To pay the Stewards what they have received of their several Classes in the week preceding; and
To show their account of what each person has contributed.

"4. There is only one condition required in those who desire admission into these Societies; viz. 'a desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins.' But wherever this is really fixed in the soil it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,
FIRST, By doing no harm . . . .

"5. SECONDLY, By going good . . . .

"6. THIRDLY, By attending upon all the Ordinances of God; such are:
The public workship of God;
The ministry of the Word, either read or expounded;
The Supper of the Lord;
Family and private prayer;
Searching the Scriptures; and
Fasting or abstinence.

"7. . . . . If there be any among us who observe them not . . . we will admonish him of the error of his ways: we will bear with him for a season. But then if he repent not, he hath no more place among us."[1]

In a serious attempt to bind Methodists, everywhere, together, to make future plans, and to discuss fundamental doctrine, John Wesley also conducted annual Conferences. His first was in 1744 in London, with "many of our brethren (come from several parts) who desire nothing but to save their own souls, and those that hear them."[2] There were four lay

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1. The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church, pp. 523-525.

2. John Wesley, The Journal, III, 143-144.

members and four clergymen of the Church of England, together with the two Wesleys.[1] The second Conference was at Bristol in 1745 when, including the Wesleys, there were three clergymen, six lay assistants and two others.[2] Without a break, until July 1932, the Wesleyan Conference met annually. In the earlier Conferences, at which John Wesley was present, his leadership, enforcing strict discipline, was almost an extension of his Holy Club days at Oxford when the nickname 'Methodist' had been given to his group "by a Fellow of Merton College, in an allusion to an ancient College of Physicians at Rome, who were remarkable for putting their patients under regimen, and were therefore called Methodistoe."[3]

In the course of Wesley's preaching, Circuits were established, that is, groups of Societies. Itinerant or Travelling Preachers, sent by Wesley, visited these various Circuits, some of which contained large numbers of Societies and spread across a wide area. It was an organized, planned Revival. After Wesley's death, the Circuits were grouped into 17 Districts, with three to seven Circuits in each. Each District was allowed to elect one Preacher to the 'Stationing Committee', though, by then, every Preacher knew that he was likely to be moved year by year and that no Preacher, unless there was a remarkable revival, would be permitted to stay in the same Circuit for more than two years.[4] This movement of Travelling Preachers from one part of the country to another

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1. Ibid., III, 143-144, note 2.

2. Ibid., III, 196, note 3.

3. Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, The Life of the Reverend John Wesley, A.M. (London, 1792), pp. 58-59.

4. The Methodist Story, p. 23.

could be an inspiration to remote areas, where new messengers could provide an enchanting link with other areas of advance. The Districts kept Minutes of their meetings (in the early 1800's they seem to have been annual) and the Whitehaven District Minutes (which begin on July 8th, 1801), list Brough as "a Missionary Circuit", together with Whitehaven, Carlisle, Douglas and Peel Circuits.[1] The inter-relationship between Conference, District and Circuit is seen in the same north-westerly District meeting at Douglas in 1805. The question is asked: "Can any improvement be made in this District or any of the Circuits in it?" The answer is given: "We think that an additional Preacher in the Brough Circuit as a Missionary will be of very great use as there are thousands of precious souls who have not the Gospel preached unto them nor likely to have it preached unless this be done. A person of respectability and affluence has offered to support Brother Hutchinson for one year and he is willing to undertake it if the Brethren in Conference approve of it."[2]

John Wesley's preachers were told that their text book was the New Testament, though he himself published four volumes of Sermons, appearing in 1746, 1748, 1750 and 1760. These avoided all speculative and difficult doctrine and were concerned only with the experience of Salvation and with Christian ethics. They contained an emphasis on experimental and practical religion.[3] As for the later problem of the Sacraments,[4] local chapel trustees, stewards and leaders could allow the Lord's Supper to take place, but Conference also had to give its consent.

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1. Minutes of Whitehaven Wesleyan District Meeting, 29.5.1804.
2. Ibid., 17.7.1805.
3. The Methodist Church, p. 43.
4. By the Conference Plan of Pacification in 1795.

Wesleyan Travelling Preachers who then administered the Sacraments came to be ordained for that purpose - by the imposition of hands - in 1836.

Though, as we noticed, Brough was in the north-westerly, Whitehaven District in 1804, this was largely a matter of geographical convenience. It had, in fact, been missioned from the east, as was the whole of the upper Eden valley. An enormous Wesleyan Circuit was created in 1757, with Barnard Castle as its centre, called the Dales Circuit. Its task was to organize evangelistic work and establish Methodist Societies in the northern dales. By 1772 it consisted of 32 Societies with a total membership of 1,002, including parts of five northern counties, extending from beyond Hexham in the north to Swaledale in the south and from near Penrith in the west to Darlington in the east. That Wesleyan Circuit was, geographically, half as big again as the present Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit of the upper Eden. Prior to this large Circuit being formed, work had already begun at Barnard Castle. John Bond tells us of the earlier influence of Joseph Cheesebrough, a cobbler from that town. Converted in 1747 at Leeds, he had returned to Barnard Castle about the same time. "His divine instincts taught him to seek the salvation of his fellowmen. A simple tongue touched with the fire of the Holy Ghost was the only instrument he had, but talk, plain unvarnished talk . . . with neighbours and fellow-workmen, soon made converts for the Cross. Then, Katherine Graves was fetched from Darlington to help them and she formed a class and established a prayer meeting. No bold evangelist had, as yet, visited the neighbourhood nor public proclamation of the Truth had been made. But the leaven had been cast into the lump and the leavening process was proceeding. It was reported amongst the godless neighbours that a moral wolf had entered their fair valley and it was determined that it should be hunted down. First came mockery and contempt, afterwards came violence. For their greater

security an upper room was occupied by the infant Church and God met them there but as they went to and from their Master's garret, troops of human fiends and furies swarmed upon their path. Katherine Graves was pronounced a witch and was pricked with pins in her arms that her mysterious power might exude along with her blood as it is still fancied in 1871 in some parts it will do."[1] A Wesleyan Local Preacher, Anthony Steele, also tells of some of the work at Barnard Castle, before the Dales Circuit was formed. Before 1757, the town was reached by Travelling Preachers and converts from Leeds Methodism and "taken into the Leeds Circuit." As early as 1751 Matthew Lowes, the Travelling Preacher, recalls a "remarkable watchnight we held at Barnard Castle."[2] John Wesley had visited there on February 25th, 1752,[3] but before 1757 "there does not appear to have been any regularly formed Circuit between Leeds and Newcastle." Jacob Rowell was therefore entrusted with the formation of the Dales Circuit which, in 1757, also included Swaledale, Arkengarthdale, Wensleydale, Teesdale, Weardale, Allendale, Alston and Hexhamshire.[4]

A year later, the first Wesleyan Society was begun in the upper Eden valley. "About the year 1758 a society was formed in a small village called Winton, across Stainmore's wintry waste. Richard and Mary Brunskill were among the first members in that dreary part of the Circuit. They were the children of pious Dissenters, and had themselves been brought to an experimental knowledge of God under the ministry of Mr. Ingham and his preachers, during an extensive revival of religion in that part of the country . . . . Peace and spiritual prosperity did not long

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1. John Bond, Golden Candlestick, or sketches of the rise of some early Methodist Churches (London, 1873), p. 85.

2. History of Methodism in Barnard Castle, p. 27.

3. Ibid., p. 30.

4. Ibid., p. 56.

continue in Mr. Ingham's society . . . . Mr. & Mrs. Brunskill amidst this terrible storm stood firm in the faith by which they were saved" . . . and . . . "gladly opened their doors to entertain" Wesley's Preachers and for "upwards of 40 years, gratiutously and hospitably received them under their roof. Agreeable to this arrangement they were visited by the travelling preachers in the Dales Circuit, one a fortnight. Mr. Rowell's Note Book states that in 1759 and 1760, the number of members in Stainmore was ten, and the quarterly contribution four shillings, to four shillings and sixpence."[1] We may note from this extract that the Winton Society was not formed as a result of the Inghamite collapse (which took place in 1761) and that Stainmore Methodists were also in existence before Ingham lost control of his movement.

Stephen Brunskill, who was about ten when Winton Society was formed, reflected in his autobiography on what he thought actually happened among the Inghamites. He believed that they became more strongly Calvinistic but that the two older Brunskills "could not, as many had done, call all that . . . they . . . had heard and experienced . . . (of) . . . the loving kindness of the Lord a delusion but continued to believe and steadfastly to maintain that Christ tasted death for every man. For these reasons the . . . (Inghamite) . . . preachers refused to come to" the Brunskill house. The Brunskills, therefore, made "application to the Preachers in connexion with the Reverend John Wesley but the former professors of religion had rendered themselves so odious to the ungodly by their contentions and loose morals that scarcely any would come to hear. Attempts were made at different times both by travelling and local preachers for about ten years before they saw any fruit of their labour. It was indeed with difficulty that we got preaching at all as the nearest

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1. Ibid., pp. 58-59.

Society Mr. Wesley had was twelve or fourteen miles distant.[1] The Winton Society (in the first place Inghamite?) may only have had Richard and Mary at the beginning as its Members; the ten Members in Stainmore are not listed as a Society in the Dales Circuit in 1760 but in the Circuit Book of 1768, both Winton and Stainmore appear as Societies. But for persistent visiting by Dales' Preachers, this precarious foothold to the west of the Pennines in Winton might have come to nothing. Here was one isolated family which a wider Methodism had rescued, in line with other Eden villages in the path of conquest.

In the Barnard Castle area (only 10 miles east of the Westmorland border), preaching continued fervently in the 1760's. Joseph Benson, from Melmerby in Cumberland, for example, had become a Wesleyan Travelling Preacher in about 1765 and Steele recalls his style of preaching (on the text Daniel 5, verse 27: "Thou art weighed in the balances . . . ."): "As he proceeded in the course of his sermon to weigh different characters, as they presented themselves to his glowing imagination, when he came to the covetous man, with all the energy of his soul, and at the top of his preculiarly shrill voice, he cried aloud 'Help! men and brethren help! He is so fast glued to the world, I cannot get him into the scale.' The effect was electrical, and those who heard never forgot it."[2] Was it this new eccentricity of delivery, (echoing the earlier Quakers), or the sheer weight of theological content which caused open-air preaching to be interrupted and eggs to be thrown? Whichever it was, the Dales Circuit Book of 1768 shows that, in addition to Winton and Stainmoor, the names of Alston, "Melerby"[3], Richmond, Reeth, Darlington and

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1. The Life of Stephen Brunskill of Orton, p. 6. Richard Brunskill, married, of Winton, had been received into membership of the Birks Inghamite Society, at a Lovefeast, on October 28th, 1759 (according to the Minutes of the Inghamites, 1755-1760).

2. History of Methodism in Barnard Castle, pp. 78-79.

3. Local pronunciation of 'Melmerby'.

Bishop Auckland were also included.[1] Steele quotes a Mr. Hunter, also appointed to the Dales Circuit (in 1771), who described the spread of the Wesleyan work: "'We had such a work of God in several parts of this circuit as I never saw. Hardly anything of the kind hath exceeded it in England, both with regard to its swiftness and depth; the power of God bore down all before it, and it seemed as if God was about to convert all the world.'"[2] Wesley himself said of it that "we may affirm such a work of God as this has not been seen before in the three kingdoms."[3] By 1772, Stainmore had 15 members, Soulby had 19, and Long Martin had been added, with 7.[4] The Revival was spreading westwards, though not yet with the same remarkable success as in the area of Barnard Castle and Weardale. Of the 46 visits which John Wesley made to the North East of England, his impression left at Barnard Castle was profound. "No wonder that the society in Barnard Castle deeply participated in the general mourning which was manifested at the loss of such a father in Israel, especially when it is taken into account, that for nearly 40 years, he had periodically visited the place, and entertained a cordial attachment to the people."[5]

The conquest of the upper Eden appears less spectacular, but when Barnard Castle became a separate Circuit from the Dales Circuit in 1791, its Membership statistics[6] show that the advance had begun and that, for example, Long Martin's membership had increased to 13, a society at

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1. History of Methodism in Barnard Castle, pp. 87-88: to the north and east of our area.

2. Ibid., pp. 111-112.

3. John Wesley, The Journal, V, 472.

4. History of Methodism in Barnard Castle, p. 118.

5. Ibid., p. 178.

6. Ibid., p. 189 (see p. B, following p. 63).

B

BARNARD CASTLE
WESLEYAN CIRCUIT
MEMBERSHIP FIGURES

	YEARS.										
	1791	1792	1793	1794	1795	1796	1797	1798	1799	1800	1801
	Nos.										
Barnard Castle - -	105	116	108	153	143	102	103	102	99	85	77
Newbiggin - -	30	27	28	39	36	33	33	35	27	27	33
Middleton -	20	18	19	28	21	16	14	13	12	10	9
Egglestone - -	12	11	11	20	15	14	14	13	13	12	..
Cotherstone - -	9	6	4	5	7	10	11	11	12	12	..
Newsham - -	10	9	8	7	7	7	8	8	6	6	6
Barningham - -	6	6	6	7	6	5	6	6	8	5	10
Scargill - -	8	9	9	9	8	7	6	5	7	7	8
Staindrop - -	13	14	10	14	11	12	12	8	9	..	..
Baldersdale - -	8	11	9	6	6	11	12	13	12	9	7
Cockfield and Evenwood	..	14	12	27	22	21	14	15	9	4	..
Lunedale - -	..	..	..	10	10	9	8	..	..	..	—
Bowes	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	7
Bishop Auckland -	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	28	30	35
Goodley Hill - -	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	12
Dummy Hill & Temple Sowerby	15	22	..	..	..	7	9	11	12	10	11
Gamblesby - -	41	36	38	36	39	43	40	38	35	40	33
Kirkoswald and Penrith-	7	5	7	6	9	16	10	8	8	8	12
Kirkby Thore - -	..	5	5	13	17	19	20	22	22	19	19
Long Martin - -	13	..	11	13	19	19	16	16	12	14	16
Gaskel Row - -	14	14	12	6	7	..	..	..	..	..	..
Appleby - -	15	10	9	14	14	19	18	18	18	18	20
Winton - -	9	11	10	10	13	10	11	..	..	..	..
Brough - -	10	9	7	13	18	16	15	10	12	10	7
Stainmore - -	..	..	12	20	16	17	14	11	15	13	18
Berryholme - -	..	..	20	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Beathwaite Green -	..	..	..	30	31	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ashby Grange - -	..	..	3	12	7	6	6	7	6	..	..
Cliburn and Morland -	..	..	..	..	40	36	27	24	24	12	11
Longwathby - -	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	..	..	..	..
Renwick - -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14
Dufton and Knock -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25
Hilton, Bleathorn &c, -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13
Kendal - -	20	16	28	45	31	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ravenstonedale -	18	12	14	11	7	—	—	6	—	—	—
Total Numbers.....	383	381	400	554	560	455	437	400	406	361	403

Appleby had 15 members, Winton had 9, Brough had been added with 10 and Ravenstonedale with 18. The next 10 years saw Kirkby Thore, Ashby Grange[1] and Goodley Hill,[2] Dufton and Knock, and Hilton and Bleatarn added to the extensive Circuit. In 1803, Long Martin's name was heard in Conference. "At the Conference of this year Mr. Thomas Graham, a young man from the west side of the circuit, was called out into the ministry. He was a member of the Society at Long Martin, near Appleby, and had been employed in his own neighbourhood as a local preacher for about six years."[3] In the same year, at Conference, Brough was constituted the head of a circuit, "including Penrith, Gamblesby and its neighbourhood, together with all the societies in Westmorland which had previously belonged to Barnard Castle circuit. By this division, two hundred and thirteen members were transferred to Brough leaving two hundred and ten to Barnard Castle. The step was no doubt judicious, the round previously being too extensive, not only requiring the maintenance of a horse, but involving a heavy tax on the physical powers of the preachers, some of whom were advanced in years, and unable to cope with lengthened journies, over wild barren moors."[4] George Smith was the Travelling Preacher from 1803 to 1804.[5] His salary was £44 a quarter, which included £8 for a "servant" and £24 for "Preacher's board".[6] By 1812, Brough Circuit Membership had increased to 273[7] and in 1818, Long Martin, Bolton and

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1 and 2. Farmhouses in the Great Asby area.

3. Ibid., p. 192.

4. Ibid., p. 193.

5. John Burgess, Methodist Ministers in Cumbria, (Wesley Historical Society, Cumbrian Branch, 1977), Occasional Paper No. 2, vol. 1.

6. Minutes of Whitehaven Wesleyan District Meeting, 29.5.1804.

7. Ibid., 1.7.1812; the District is then known as the CARLISLE District.

Murton were to have chapels.[1] Chapels were also to be built at Dufton and Kirkby Stephen in 1820[2] and at Warcop in 1821.[3] At the 1823 District meeting, Appleby was to have a chapel and had "promised to raise two third of the expense before they commence."[4] In 1824, the District recommended that Brough and Penrith Circuit be divided;[5] this was strongly urged the following year, "Appleby to be the head of the old one."[6] Appleby became a separate Circuit in 1825 and, three years later, John Crosby, aged 23, offered himself, from it, as a Travelling Preacher. The District Meeting confirmed, in the necessary Connexional procedure, that "His character is unblemished. He is truly devoted to God. His health is good. He has no matrimonial engagement. He has good preaching talents. He passed the Quarterly Meeting[7] unanimously and his examination was creditable to himself and very satisfactory to the brethren at the District Meeting."[8] John Crosby died of the Typhoid Fever in the Kendal Circuit, aged 27.[9] By 1830, as the Plan on page C shows,[10] Orton, Crosby, Peaslands (Kings Meaburn area), Oxenthwaite (4 miles ENE of Winton), Blenkarn, Milburn, Craikenthorpe and Mallerstang were all new Societies; Orton had a chapel built in 1833. The

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1. Ibid., 8.7.1818.
2. Ibid., 31.5.1820.
3. Ibid., 30.5.1821.
4. Ibid., 13.5.1823.
5. Ibid., 26/27.5.1824.
6. Ibid., 24/25.5.1825.
7. That is, the Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting.
8. Minutes of Carlisle Wesleyan District Meeting, 28/29.5.1828.
9. Ibid., 30.5.1832.
10. Page C follows p. 65. J. Thompson and E. Thompson, in the list of Preachers, are also in the list of subscribers at Long Marton in 1841: see p. 52 of this thesis.

Plan of the Wesleyan-Methodist Preachers for the Appleby Circuit.

1830.

"Hold fast the form of sound words." ST. PAUL.

Places.	Time of Service.			A.	MAY.					JUNE.				JULY.				AUGUST.					SEP.				OCT.		
"Meditate on these things."	M.	A.	E.	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	3	10	17
Appleby		2		8	11	6	7	9	3	14	12	8q	3	19	11J	6	9	14	12	1L	3	7	11	14	9q	14	12	8	7
Ditto			6½	1	11	2	1	1	2s	2	1	1q	3	2	1J	12	2	2	1	1	3	2	1s	1	2Q	2	1	1	7
Dufton		2		9	2	7	1L	8	2	19	1q	6	2s	14	1J	9	2	8	1	3	2	19	1	7	2Q	9	1	14	2s
Brough		2		1	8	3	17	1	*	12	13q	1	9	7	8J	1L	5	11	*	12	14	3	9	1	*Q	7	5	1	18
Ditto			7	13	1	3	2	5	1	12	2q	5	1s	7	2J	1	1	11	2	18	1	3	2	17	1Q	7	2s	13	1
Kirkby-Stephen ..	9½	2		15	1	12	2	13	1	8	2q	14	1L	9	2J	11	1	3	2	15	1	12	2	3	1Q	13	2s	11	1
Murton	10			1	6	2	11	1	9	2s	8	1q	16	2J	*	1	9	2	19	1	7	2	8	1Q	3	2s	11L	1	19
Warcop		2		18	17	2	6	11	9	2qs	19	5	7	2J	17	3	*	2L	10	6	7	2	12	8	3Q	2s	14	7	19
Kirkby-Thore ...		2		2	12	1	3	2s	8	1L	7	2q	19	11	12J	2	14	1	3	2	6	1	19	2Q	12	1s	7	12	3
Longmarton			7	6	2	11	3	2s	8	1q	7	19	2	11J	12	2	14	1L	3	7	2	11	19	2q	12	1s	7	3	2
Bolton			7	2	12	1	7	11	19	14	16	2q	6	12	3J	7	11	14	9	2	19	1	6	7q	8	3	9	12	14
Orton	9½	2	7	7	9	4	14	18	11	4	6	3q	12	1s	4	14	8	7	4	17	11	9	4	6q	18Q	12	4	2s	11
Crosby		2			14		18		17		15q		13		10J		7		14		10		13		17Q		3		10
Peaslands		2		11		8		7		3q		16		6J		7		12		11		14		19q		3		6	
Knock		2		19		11		6		16q		12		3J		8		19		16		6		11q		9		3	
Borrowdale		2		*		5		17		10		10q		18		13J		5		*		18		13q		5		*	
Oxenthwaite		2			15		13		5		10q		10		18J		13		5		*		17		13Q		18		*
Blenkarn		2			19		12		7		17q		8		6J		3		11		16		14		7Q		19		9
Milburn			7		19		12		7		17q		8		6J		3		11		16		14		7Q		19		9
Craikenthorpe ...		2			16		19		6		11q		7		3J		11		9		19		7		8Q		9		14
Soulby		2		3		13		19		7q		17		13J		10		16		10		15		9q		8		10	
Mallerstang		2		17		18		15		13q		18		17		5		15		13		17		18q		15		13	

Preachers.

"Preach Christ."

1 *L. Heywood*
2 *W. Jones*
3 *E. Broster*
4 *S. Brunskill*
5 *E. Spencer*
6 *B. Salkeld*
7 *J. Dent*
8 *J. Craig*
9 *J. Jaques*
10 *R. Gibson*
11 *J. Thompson*
12 *E. Thompson*
13 *C. Waud*
14 *J. Stubbs*
15 *W. Kidd*

Exhorters.

16 *J. Smith*
17 *J. Close*
18 *J. Gowling*
19 *T. Forest*
20 *

The Stewards and Local Preachers are requested to publish the Collections on the preceding Sabbath and make them at the time appointed.
The Quarterly Meetings will be held at Kirkby-thore on Wednesday, June the 23rd, and at Appleby on Wednesday, September the 22nd. The Quarterly Fasts are on Friday, June the 25th, and September the 24th.
S Sacrament, L Lovefeast, Q Quarterly Collection, J July Collection.

J. ATKINSON, PRINTER AND BOOKBINDER, APPLEBY.

word "Plan" suggests a missionary strategy, the "Preachers" being local and the "Exhorters" being, as Wesley intended, "helpful when there was no preacher in their own or the neighbouring societies, provided they would take no step without the advice of those who had more experience than themselves."[1] His letter to James Barry (on June 24th, 1776), a Travelling Preacher at Barnard Castle, says: "Fix a regular plan for the local preachers, and see that they keep it. You cannot be too exact in this and every other part of discipline."[2]

The District Meeting at Penrith, on June 4th, 1839, approved the building of chapels at Kirkby Stephen and Ravenstonedale. In 1840, Blencarn was to have a Chapel and Knock to have a building purchased and converted into a Chapel, subject to the June Quarterly Meeting's approval and other Connexional requirements being satisfied,[3] and Gaisgill was recommended to have a Chapel at the District Meeting of May 18th, 1841. In 1842, the Appleby Circuit Membership was 404 and there were 12 Sunday Schools, two libraries, 83 teachers and 537 scholars throughout the Circuit.[4] In 1844, of the 3,525 Members in the whole District (the Circuits being Carlisle, Brampton, Whitehaven, Workington, Penrith and Penruddock, Wigton and Keswick, Kendal, Ulverstone and Dumfries), Appleby's Circuit total had increased to 427, only Kendal, Penrith and Workington having higher membership.[5] Work among young people continued in Sunday Schools but when, in May 1853, the usual District Meeting question was asked "Has the religious oversight of the

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1. John Wesley, The Journal, III, 307.

2. John Wesley, The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M. (London, 1931), VI, 224.

3. Minutes of the Carlisle Wesleyan District Meeting, 19.5.1840.

4. Ibid., May 1842.

5. Ibid., May 1844.

young especially by the formation of catechumen classes been duly attended to?" the answer given was: "An oversight has been taken of the young but there are many difficulties in this District to the formation of catachumen classes." Whatever these difficulties were, the Sunday Schools, though not the only hope, were a likely environment from which members could be received. In 1864, District membership was 3,857 of whom 462 were in the Appleby Circuit. In 1867 a chapel was built at Espland Hill (between Appleby and Long Marton) and, as at other District meetings, it was notified that the Circuits were giving to the Worn Out Ministers Fund, the Theological Institution (the first being at Didsbury, opened in 1842), Kingswood School and Chapel and Education Funds. This was in keeping with the spirit of Wesleyan Methodism and an indication that each society did not exist in complete isolation. The significance of these funds, however, could not have been easily regarded as locally relevant, even though Wesley had written to James Barry, in 1776, "If they now collect only for themselves, how does this help me to carry on the general work?"[1] In theory, a District Meeting should have made the various Funds relevant, but how could a couple of dozen representatives dispel the view that a Wesleyan school or college, a chapel at the other end of the country, or a weary Minister, were not necessarily part of on-going local work? It was more likely that the connexional bond of obedience to the 1743 Rules of Society was stronger than that to post-Wesleyan connexional organization, even though an Eden farmer might be largely unaware of what his more distant, fellow-Wesleyan was like. We shall see in Chapter III, however, that the emphasis on mission necessitated some awareness of distant "worlds" where God was not personally known.

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1. John Wesley, The Letters, VI, 215.

District permission was given to build a Chapel at Knock in 1873 and in 1874 the District Minutes showed that Appleby Circuit's Membership of 553 was, apart from Ulverstone's (with 652), the highest in the District total of 4,993; also, Warcop had a chapel in 1874 andin 1875 a William Denny of the Appleby Circuit offered for the Ministry. He had been, at the age of 22½ years, a hired local preacher in several Circuits and a report on his trial Service was full of hope:

> "The reading of the Scriptures was solemn and impressive but spoilt by a perpetual forgetfulness of the existence of the letter 'h'. His voice is good, his action excessive, his earnestness unmistakeable as vehement exhortation formed the bulk of the Sermon. Still with all these defects there appeared to be plenty of good raw material which by the discipline of the Institution would develop into a useful preacher of the Gospel. If he can have that discipline we recommend him as a candidate for our Ministry."[1]

In the usual great variety of business, the District Meeting of 1875 also recommended Crosby Ravensworth to build a Chapel (at a cost of £446). In 1878, Mallerstang was to have a new Chapel at a cost of £155. In 1879 (at a September District Finance Committee) agreement was given for the erection of Catherine Holme Chapel (between Ormside and Great Asby). The Chapel was opened 15 days later! The 1880 District Meeting heard that Catherine Holme's case "could not be delayed without the loss of valuable and important help in the erection. The Superintendent (was) in communication with the Chapel Committee." The Appleby Circuit was re-named the Kirkby Stephen Circuit in the 1879 District Minutes and its membership was listed as 620. In 1883, Crosby Garrett chapel had been "begun without consent". In 1885, Thomas S. Braithwaite, a clerk with good health, offered for the Ministry. Joseph Birkbeck and Peter Thompson offered in 1886. By 1891, the District was to make a contemporary comment

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1. Minutes of the Carlisle Wesleyan District Meeting, 1875 (Question 19).

on what Wesleyan Methodism had become. The movement had begun when Wesley had stressed the supreme important of holiness, yet when, in a letter from the President, (in April, 1891), the possibility of recommending Social Purity Societies was suggested, the Whitehaven District Meeting (of May 12th, 1891) could only withold its support, saying: "Our organizations are already so numerous and complex."

Soulby Chapel was erected in 1892 for £512. In 1893, the District Meeting was called a District Synod for the first time in the District Minutes. At this gathering, there was an awareness of more than belonging only to "complex organizations". In a report on District Evangelistic Work, "Mr. Weston, the District Lay Agent, conducted a fortnight's mission at Kirkby Stephen which was remarkably successful. Over 30 persons of varying ages professed to have obtained a change of heart while a considerable quickening of the Church has resulted in improved attendance at the Class Meetings and other Services." From the 1898 Synod we learn, also encouragingly, that in most of the Circuits, Theological Classes or Libraries existed to assist the Local Preachers. At the turn of the century, the 1900 District Synod was presented with an array of figures to convince - if there should be any doubt - that the 1758 Society of Winton ("across Stainmore's wintry waste") had now become part of a vast, administrative unit in which the implications of 'experimental' religion were clearly seen:

Membership	6,749
Members in Bible Classes	385
Wesley Guilds	17
Mutual Improvement Societies	5
Class Leaders	411
Sunday Schools	196
Scholars	15,589
Day Schools	2
Bands of Hope	123
Members of Bands of Hope	9,888
Temperance Societies	31

Members of Temperance Societies	1,355
Fully Accredited Local Preachers	490
Local Preachers 'On Trial'	49

A year later Robert Hutchinson from the Kirkby Stephen Circuit, a 24½ year-old farmer, was approved entirely by both Quarterly Meeting and Synod as a candidate for the Ministry. At the same meeting Local Preachers were to be requested to join the Connexional Union for Biblical and Homiletical Study and all Local Preachers On Trial were to be urged to take the Classes specially arranged for their benefit. In 1909 a successful mission at Knock was reported; under the preaching of a Circuit Missionary "more than 20 were brought to decision for Christ." In 1910, Milburn applied to have a new Chapel. In 1913, Mr. Norwell's February mission at Appleby attracted several young people and the formation of two new Society Classes. This Lay Evangelist had conducted 4 Missions; but stormy weather, a severe epidemic of measles, and other adversities prevented him from seeing the full fruit of his labours. In 1914, the District Membership was 7,372, of whom 919 were in the Kirkby Stephen Circuit and, after six eventful years, in 1920, while the District Membership was reduced to 7,033, that of the upper Eden Circuit was down, tragically, to 621.

Some Circuit Plans in the County Archives at Kendal add further details to the history of the growth of local Wesleyan Methodism. The Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Plans, in the early 1880's, for example, include Bleatarn, Waitby, Helm, Ormside, Musgrave, Copeland Beck and Nateby, making a total of 29 Preaching Places. A note (No. 8) on the January-April 1882 Plan shows visiting 'special' preachers from Newcastle, Liverpool, Headingley, Sunderland and London. A year later preachers are Planned to come from Chester, Birmingham and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Such visiting preachers come rarely but help overcome local isolation from more distant Methodism. The 1901-02 Plan is called the

Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Sedbergh Circuit and has 40 Preaching Places on it, including a footnote to say that "the Conference directs that public collections be made . . . in all our chapels . . . for the Twentieth Century Fund." The purpose of this was to raise enough money to ensure that there would be a Wesleyan Chapel in every village and hamlet in the land. The Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Plan of 1920 has 31 Preaching Places, including Bretherdale, Waitby and Drybeck. These are omitted from the 1929 Plan which thus has 28 Places. A series of accompanying letters and signs signify special events or collections and, on various Plans, samples of these are as follows:

1901 (April-July)

" T = Renewal of Tickets
W = Worn-out Ministers' and Widows' Collection
E = Education Fund Collection
K = Schools Fund Collection
CM = Camp Meeting "

1901-02

" H = Horse Hire Fund Collection
† = Circuit Conveyance and Driver
* = Go with conveyance
B = Circuit Bicycle
CS = Covenant Service
I = Theological Institute Fund "

1902-03

"FL = Fire and Light Collection
T = Trust and Quarter Board Deficiency
Supply = Preacher to be obtained "

1929 (January-March)

"FS = Flower Service
CH = Choir Services
TS = Trial Sermon "

1929 (April-June)

"YP = Young People's Service
OA = Open Air Service "

Whatever the strength of Wesleyan Methodism in 1932,[1] we can be

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1. When it united with other branches of the Methodist movement.

certain that the intention was the same as it ever had been and that Preachers, Class Leaders, Trustees, Congregations, Ministers and Superintendent were all part of a movement determined to succeed. Worship was repeated, Sunday by Sunday. Beliefs were stressed and re-stressed in Preaching and at the issue of the quarterly Membership Ticket, and the identity, though about to receive a new dimension in 1932, was beyond question. In all this, it became apparent, as we shall see in the next chapter, that people who lived in faraway countries were sometimes dearer to the hearts of our local Methodists than were those who lived in the cities of their own country. A plaque, such as there is in Trinity Methodist Church, Barnard Castle, to the memory of Reverend George Brown (born in that town in 1835) speaks of him as having been "A Renowned Missionary, an ardent explorer, a learned scientist. Most of his life was spent in the South Sea Islands, where he was instrumental in God's hands in the conversion of multitudes of native savages from cannibalism to Christianity." Given he was a native of Barnard Castle, and thus, probably, with honour in his own country, we nevertheless wonder if the same praiseworthy tribute would have been erected had his work been confined to the "multitudes of natives" in cities of his own country.

In 1932, there were 2,510 Wesleyan Methodist Ministers in Great Britain, 18,785 Local Preachers, 517,551 Church Members, 6,952 Sunday Schools, 115,624 Officers and Teachers, 770,716 Scholars and 8,152 Churches with seating accommodation for 2,339,771. But also, in 1932, among the Primitive Methodists, there were 1,131 Ministers, 12,896 Local Preachers, 222,021 Church Members, 4,006 Sunday Schools, 52,457 Officers and Teachers, 377,792 Scholars and 4,356 Churches.[1] Indeed, in the Primitive

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1. The Methodist Church, p. 229.

Methodist Circuit, overlapping the Wesleyans in the upper Eden, there was in 1932 a Membership of 417[1] in 14 Societies, the Wesleyan Membership, at that time, being 727 in 26 Societies.[2] We must now examine, therefore, how it was that a parallel movement had come into being and to what extent, locally, the nature of its principles and aims were the same or different from those which belonged to the Wesleyans - whom it ultimately joined.

Two early nineteenth-century Wesleyan Methodists, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, became unwelcome in their Staffordshire (Burslem) Circuit because of their enchantment with a new form of evangelism. They had been converted in 1800 and 1805 (respectively) and soon afterwards came in contact with Lorenzo Dow, an American Revivalist who had established his headquarters in Warrington. His straggling hair, romany manners and disdain for Methodist ways,[3] especially his commendation of Camp Meetings, antagonized official Methodism. John Kent has Dow's description of what form these Camp Meetings took (in America):

> "Having tent equipage of blankets, sheets or coverlets, sewed together, and etc., and the night before the meeting, several companies will arrive and pitch their tents, and spend most of the night in devotion, for a blessing on the meeting. Early the next morning, the people will be flocking in by hundreds. At twelve o' clock the trumpet sounds, all hands repair to the stage, except one person to a tent. The meeting is opened by singing, prayer and an introductory discourse; an exhortation or two subjoined; and then the meeting dismissed until evening . . . . The trumpet sounds for meeting; at the close of which, an invitation is given for mourners to come forward to be prayed for: perhaps a distressed soul, who has walked many miles with a burdened conscience, comes forward with

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1. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 1.12.1932.

2. Circuit Schedule Book of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit (June, 1932).

3. The Methodist Story, p. 105.

> streaming eyes; and others follow the example: and whilst the preachers are joining with them in prayer, the meeting is generally crowned with the cry of a new-born soul . . . ."[1]

The Wesleyan response to this kind of activity was reflected in its Minutes which Davey quotes:

> "'What is the judgement of the Conference concerning what are called Camp Meetings?' 'It is our judgement that even supposing such meetings to be allowable in America they are highly improper in England and likely to be productive of considerable mischief, and we disclaim all connexion with them.'"[2]

Since both Bourne and Clowes became sympathetic to less spectacular adaptations of this kind of open-air evangelism, their Wesleyan Circuit had no option but to expel them. Thus, in 1811, Primitive Methodism began when eight groups, or Societies, of like-minded approach to evangelism, elected James Steel their first circuit steward and set apart Crawfoot and Clowes as Preachers among about 200 members. Bourne, who was to shape the movement, was "moulded amid the silence and seclusion of the uplands. Bleak, desolate, lonely, and no road, public or private, not even a footroad to it or anywhere near it, Fordhays Farm, in the Parish of Stoke-upon-Trent, Staffordshire,"[3] was his place of origin. The description might be that of Firbank Fell and we note that in the early part of 1799 Bourne had read the books of the first Quakers which, with a printed sermon by John Wesley and "Letters on the Spiritual Manifestation of the Son of God" by John Fletcher, were instrumental in his conversion. James Crawfoot, the first Primitive Methodist Travelling Preacher, had considerable stature as an orator and lived in retire-

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1. John Kent, Holding the Fort (London, 1978), p. 53.

2. The Methodist Story, p. 106.

3. Joseph Ritson, The Romance of Primitive Methodism (London, 1909), p. 12.

ment in Delamere Forest, Cheshire. "The singular effects produced by this man's preaching were by some ascribed to the possession of miraculous powers; by others, to the exercise of the black arts . . . . His vivid realization of the spiritual world, invested his prayers with an intimacy with the Almighty which gave the impression to those listening to his wonderful voice as he prayed that he actually saw the Lord with bodily eyes."[1] The succession of these travelling Preachers, however, had not intended to be schismatics nor constitutional reformers, but evangelists who wanted to return to the Primitive spirit of Wesley's early conversion days. Even so, they built chapels and their greatest opportunity was often among industrial and agricultural works; later on, Trade Unionists emerged from their ranks, Joseph Arch being a Local Preacher who, on February 14th, 1872, lent his personality, leadership and eloquence to the cause of a Farm Worker's Union at Wellesbourne, in south Warwickshire.

The first Primitive Methodist Annual Conference was held in 1820 when it was decided that Circuit representatives should be two laymen for every Travelling Preacher, a distinguishing feature of the movement. Procedures of evangelism were laid down by agreeing that either a town would apply for a Preacher who would then gather together a Society, or a town or Circuit would decide to send preachers to 'mission' hitherto untouched areas. The Hull Primitive Methodist Circuit became a vast collection of Societies formed by the latter method. Clowes went on a Preaching tour in the 1820's through North-east Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland. "Scarborough, Whitby, Sunderland, North Shields and Newcastle listened to the majestic swell of his voice and

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1. Ibid., pp. 52-53.

quailed before the flame in his eyes. Wherever he went he left men in a different frame of mind. From Northumberland he crossed England to Cumberland and Westmorland . . . . Round Hull itself there grew a Circuit of 3,772 members. From its missions came seventeen new Circuits, with a membership of 7,666." In 1819 there were four Circuits in Primitive Methodism; in 1824 there were 72 (in four Districts). The membership of the Connexion had risen in five years from 7,842 to 33,507. By 1842, when Bourne and Clowes had handed the work over to others, the total was 85,000. Even so, where "religion was suspect as the property of the wealthy and the cloak of hypocrisy, the village pond, the tar-brush or the fire-engine were frequently the lot of the missioner."[1] The Primitives had thus to be a well-disciplined army and ready to build on their early success: chapels for worship, principles to be governed by, and a continuing readiness to win converts. A measure of its progress, nationwide, was reflected in its membership total of 132,000 in 1860.

Its Conferences were numerically small and made up of senior men; Districts were more important than the Connexion as a whole. Stationing of preachers was by and within Districts and in this there was a distinct difference from the Wesleyans who, appointed by Conference, would travel more widely and bring the experience of work in places far separated from each other. By the 1870's, however, Primitive Methodist Districts were made smaller and the Conference was enlarged; Ministers then came to be appointed over much wider areas. A Theological Institute was opened in Sunderland in 1868 and in 1901 the words 'Primitive Methodist Church' took the place of 'Primitive Methodist Connexion'. Before then (and since) "Rules and Regulations for the Societies of the Primitive Methodist Connection", from the Conference Minutes (1838) show

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1. The Methodist Story, pp. 116-118.

many similarities with John Wesley's Rules of 1743. For example,

> "1. Q. Who compose the Primitive Methodist Connexion, and what are its arrangements?
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> A. The Primitive Methodist Connexion is composed of Protestant Christians, united for mutual assistance, in working out their own salvation, and extending the kingdom of Christ. And it is arranged in societies, circuits and districts; and the societies are formed in small companies, called classes; one member of each is styled "The Leader", and usually another, the assistant leader. The CLASSES meet weekly. The members of each have their names on a class-paper, and each member holds a society ticket. The tickets are renewed quarterly at which time a visitation of the classes takes place."[1]

In the early autumn of 1821, Samuel Laister and William Evans went to Barnard Castle as Primitive Methodist Preachers and a Society of 9 people was formed. When William Clowes went there the following February, he found 120 members. Barnard Castle then became a base for extensive missionary effort. William Summerside was sent to Superintend the Circuit in 1828 when a chapel was built. The Branch then included Middleton-in-Teesdale, Kendal, Brough and Penrith. "There were four preachers in the Station in 1836 and in order to go their rounds it took each six weeks away from headquarters. They seldom saw each other, except at the Quarterly Meeting, to reach which a journey of 20 to 40 miles had to be taken on foot."[2] Hugh Bourne visited Brough in 1831 and afterwards went to Mouthlock, 4 miles away, to preach in the new chapel. At that time Camp Meetings were being held outside town and village, one on Dufton Pike.[3] "The entrance of Thomas Batty into Brough in the autumn

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1. Rules and Regulations for the Societies of the Primitive Methodist Connexion (M. R. Publishing, Leigh-on-Sea, 1975) Methodist Reprints, No. 2, p. 1.

2. W. M. Patterson, Northern Primitive Methodism (London, 1909), pp. 103-104.

3. Ibid., p. 104.

of 1823 made a commotion. He commenced his campaign in the open-air of course. A horse-block, in front of a public house, was his pulpit, permission for the use of which had been granted to him by the landlady. There was a considerable assembly, the bell-man had been about, and at the close of his sermon he informed his hearers that he was a PRIMITIVE Methodist Missionary and announced his object in visiting the place. A friendly woman at Brough Sowerby, a village about a mile away, entertained him for the night. His kind hostess was soon afterwards brought to God and a Society was established at her place of residence. A chapel stands in the village now."[1] As with the Wesleyans, there were times of remarkable revival. In the spring of 1850 "there was a great spiritual upheaval throughout the whole county and it is estimated that 400 souls were added to the various sections of the church of Christ in Westmorland at that time."[2] There was another such revival in 1863-1864 when James Warnes was there. Before 1886, Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit was part of the Sunderland District. In 1886 it was formed into the Carlisle and Whitehaven District which, as with Wesleyan Methodists, meant that its connection with the pioneer evangelists from the east was broken in favour of a more suitable geographical unit. This was, in fact, to intensify the isolation which already belonged to the upper Eden which, in distance, was far from Carlisle and Whitehaven, which, by altitude, was separate from the eastern side of the Pennines, and which, in fellowship, was less bound to those in the north-west who had had little to do with the new religious movement of our area.

It would be difficult to prove that Primitive Methodism became rooted in the upper Eden because of any widespread dissatisfaction with Wesleyan Methodism. On the contrary, there were numerous instances of sympathetic

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1. Ibid., p. 113.

2. Ibid., p. 116.

understanding between these two branches of Methodism who were in the work of evangelism together: in which they were separated from, and undoubtedly more determined than, the local Anglican Parishes. When Batty came to Brough in the 1820's and experienced crowd harassment, it was Mr. Langmire, a Wesleyan draper, who stood firmly by him, promising finance if necessary - and he was as good as his word. "Local Wesleyans fed, sheltered and entertained Batty in grand style and gave him protection from persecution at the hands of the mob and the authorities."[1] (In this context we remember that part of the success of the Primitives was their cheapness and economy and that their thrifty Preachers suffered privation in the name of Circuit service).[2] In the obituary of the Primitive Methodist, Emma Laverack of Brough, we note the Wesleyan influence: "She remained for many years a stranger to the saving influence of divine grace and was first brought under conviction for sin by the labours of the Wesleyan Methodists from whose efforts she also derived some spiritual comfort."[3] In a Memoir of John Bland, a native of Brough, we find he moved with his parents to Burley in Yorkshire and "was brought under the Wesleyan Ministry and became a new creature in Christ. His removal to Leeds brought him into connection with our people and their style of preaching and their incessant labours won his affections and he united with them in Church fellowship."[4] Isaac Johnson, a Primitive Methodist who died at School House, in the Brough Circuit, on September 2nd, 1860, had joined "the Wesleyans and continued with them for about 20 years", some 30 years before his death.[5] Henry Allinson,

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1. John Burgess, A History of Cumbrian Methodism (Kendal, 1980), p. 76.
2. Ibid., p. 81.
3. The Primitive Methodist Magazine (London, 1842), p. 32.
4. Ibid., 1855, p. 327.
5. Ibid., 1861, p. 381.

born on March 15th, 1800, at Couldron Snout in Birkdale, Westmorland, had listened, with profit to Wesleyan Local Preachers when he moved to Lunedale in Yorkshire in 1818.[1] Ann Jackson who died on March 26th, 1848, at Tebay, was a Wesleyan from her conversion to the age of 32 when she was married to a Primitive Methodist and "he being a member of our denomination and having preaching services and Class meetings in his house, she seemed providentially called to unite with him in the support and spread of our sectional interests. Still she loved the people with whom she was united in Church fellowship and left them not from offence, but conviction of duty. She deemed her denominational change as a removal from one branch of the same Methodistic family to that of another and both branches shared largely of her love and prayers."[2] Her funeral was in the Wesleyan Chapel at Gaysgill, "kindly lent us for the Service." In the upper Eden the two branches continued their work side by side, for mistrust or hatred between the two would only have damaged it. A hundred years earlier, by contrast, Inghamites and Wesleyans working in the Winton area were opposed to each other in doctrine, and had the Inghamite movement not collapsed after its short and glorious beginning, continuing strife would have been disasterous.

The Hull Primitive Methodist Circuit operated north of an imaginary line stretching across the country from the Humber to the mouth of the Ribble and it was formed in 1819.[3] In its Barnard Castle Branch, by early 1831, Societies included Brough Sowerby (14 members), Brough (30),

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1. Ibid., 1855, p. 328.

2. Ibid., 1848, p. 571.

3. H. B. Kendall, "Primitive Methodist Church" in W. J. Townsend, H. B. Workman and G. Eayrs, ed., A New History of Methodism (London, 1909) I, 580.

Ravenstonedale (8), Dufton (12), Long Marton (1), Mouthlock (11), Bleatarn (4), Ormside Mission (2) and Sandford (6).[1] Eight years later (in 1839), the whole Hull Circuit had a membership of 1,556. Barnard Castle became a separate Circuit in 1840 and, to continue the control of a wide expansion, Brough became a separate Circuit in 1849 - with William Fulton as its first Superintendent. There was a Sunday School at the Brough Society in 1841[2] and Mouthlock had one in 1843. In 1844, along with the usual statistics, there was an unexpected documentation of Primitive humanity, at the Barnard Castle Circuit Meeting. A "popular Local Preacher and Leader got basely and publicly drunk. Another Leader, an aged man, then seriously injured the cause by a courting affair. Also a Travelling Preacher who had stood high in this Circuit came from his Station, married one of our Members as privately as possible, sat down upon us, entered into business and was presented by his wife with a son five months after their wedding day."[3] Both Primitive and Wesleyan Travelling Preachers were required to have high standards and these Circuit Reports show such discipline as well as mere statistics. Miles Moss (a Travelling Preacher in the Kendal Mission - also part of the Barnard Castle Circuit) was described as "attentive to discipline. Does not smoke. Is not in debt. Is a family visitor. A peaceable man. Not addicted to long preaching. Preaches a full, free and present salvation. Is successful in the conversion of sinners to God. His conduct is good . . . . He reads and studies the rules."[4] Purity

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1. Statistics from The Account Book of the Reverend William Harland, Primitive Methodist Travelling Preacher (1831-1842).

2. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting (Report to District), 1841.

3. Ibid., 1844.

4. Ibid., 1841.

was as difficult to attain and keep in isolated (but not monastic) communities as it was in the cities, and since holiness was at the root of the Methodist aim, every Travelling Preacher had to be assessed and able to preach a message which would answer the problem of man's sinful nature. This latter discipline applied, equally, to Local Preachers and Wesley's appeal to this standard is seen, in spirit, on a Primitive Methodist Plan of the Barnard Castle Branch of Hull Circuit in 1830: "Each Preacher who does not either Personally, or by Proxy, get his Appointments supplied, shall be reduced one Figure on the Plan for every neglected Appointment. No Preacher shall be allowed to officiate for another, unless he either has his name on the Plan or has a note from the Quarterly Meeting past, authorising him to speak in Public."[1]

In 1842, the Kendal Primitive Methodist Mission had 13 Societies, two of which were at Roundthwaite and Tibbygill (Teaby or Tebay). Lingering again with a statistic, we remember that the tiny hamlet of Roundthwaite had an earlier association with Benjamin Ingham. He visited it in August, 1748, from Dent (in north-west Yorkshire), and it became the opening of the door ofhis movement into Westmorland. Roundthwaite is only ten miles from Fox's Firbank Fell and four miles from Orton, birthplace, in 1748, of the Wesleyan Local Preacher, Stephen Brunskill; this small, lonely area thus came to be travelled by a succession of notable preachers who, within just over a century, represented a variety of ritual and doctrinal difference. After the dying embers of each fire were rekindled, Methodism has remained predominant. Tebay and Roundthwaite were not listed in the Kendal Mission in 1849, though Grayrigg Society (half-way between Tebay and Kendal) had 4 Members. Earlier figures, reflecting Primitive missionary interest, show that in the whole

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1. Joseph Hawkins, O'er Hill and Dale and by the Solway Shore (Watton, Norfolk, 1907), p. 72.

of 1841, when the Travelling Preacher's Salary was £44.4.0., Barnard Castle, Middleton, Mouthlock, Brough and Kendal Mission collected £26.17.8.[1] Camp Meetings, another distinctive feature of the Primitives, were continually planned in various parts of our area, including one for Brough Hill at Whitsuntide in 1840 and one for Asby Mask "if the Plan-maker find it practible."[2] In June, 1867, there was to "be preaching at the low Cross in Appleby at 9 o'clock on Sunday Morning, by the two travelling preachers, And . . . . A Camp Meeting on the Fair hill in the afternoon."[3] Travel expense was an obvious problem even though there were several Societies expected to help, financially. Of these, in 1840, Brough had 32 Members, Mouthlock 26, Bleatarn 3, Newbiggin 30, Kaber 5, Dufton 7, Espland Hill 8, Blackmoorgate 9 and Heights 2 (between Great Ormside and Great Asby). Some indication of the Travelling Preacher's expenses are given in the Brough Minutes:[4]

"William Robinson, Horse and Mule, 3 days each and himself.	19s. 0d.
Tolls for the horses and cart through the various bars.	3s. 6d.
Corn . . . for the horses on the road.	2s. 2d.
Keep for three horses one night at Brough.	3s. 0d.
Mr. Saunders for horse and tolls to and from Newbiggin.	4s. 4½d.
Mr. Jersey Supper and bed at Sedburge.	1s. 6d.
Coach fare . . . Sedburge to Barnard Castle.	10s. 6d.
Expenses to Staveley, holding meeting.	5s. 0d.
Bills printing at Barnard Castle.	7s. 0d.
Postage for letters to and from.	0s. 8d.
20 Missionary boxes at 6d. each.	10s. 0d."

Had journeys been shorter, mule accommodation and bed would have been less necessary.

The Primitives built their Chapels and the Brough Circuit reported

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1. Quarter Day Account and Minute Book of Brough Primitive Methodist Branch of the Hull Circuit (12.12.1841).

2. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 3.3.1840.

3. Ibid., 15.6.1867, Resolution 24.

4. Ibid., 8.12.1840.

the following details to the Carlisle and Whitehaven District Meeting in 1886. Pew rents, particularly in the case of Brough, Mouthlock and North Stainmore, were a considerable source of yearly income.[1]

Name of Chapel	Built	Cost (£)	Members	Average Attendance	Area Population	Lettable Sittings	Free Sittings
Brough	1878	807	No figure	100	600	104	126
Mouthlock	1831	150	31	140	300	94	60
Dufton	1839	Not known	37	90	400	70	40
North Stainmore	1868	260	31	70	300	140	60
Kaber	1859	110	37	60	200	106	70
Newbiggin	1837	100	38	110	300	100	36
Tebay	1885	630	83	140	2000	200	30
Kirkby Stephen	1865	613	50	160	4700	200	60
Spital	1865	143	24	45	120	50	50
Appleby	1874	468	58	70	2000	100	50

In these chapels and in various houses, the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Membership increased from 172 in 1851, to 458 in 1892 and to 355 in 1914, with a peak of 517 in June, 1893.[2] The total in 1932, as we said, was 417. Places on the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Plan, at the time of Union with the Wesleyan Methodists, were Brough, Mouthlock, Blackmoorgate, Dufton, North Stainmore, Kaber, Newbiggin, Tebay, Kirkby

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1. Ibid., 1886.

2. These figures are from the Brough Primitive Methodist Quarter-day Account Books for the years mentioned.

Stephen, Spital, Appleby, Brough Sowerby, Crackenthorpe and Greenholme. The number of Societies had decreased from 21 (in 1872), to 16 (in 1893) and to 13 (in 1923). At the time of Union, the Plan contained 54 Preachers (including Rev. J. E. Ruston, Pastor C. B. Simpson, two On Trial, three Exhorters and 25 Helpers). Some abbreviations on that Plan were CM (Camp Meeting), E (Evangelistic Services), T (Temperance Day) and * (Week of Prayer meetings). The text, at the top of the Plan (from Hebrews 10, verse 9), might have been heralding Methodist unity: "He taketh away the first that He may establish the second."

Some explanation of the reduced Membership by 1932 may be placed on the fact that some Primitives lost their lives in the First World War. In March, 1917, it was agreed "that a letter of condolence be sent to the bereaved mother of Gunner John Davidson, formerly a scholar in our schools at Kirkby Stephen and Appleby, who died from wounds (in) February 1917." It was also reported that Brother J. G. Collinson of the Spital Church had "died in hospital in France from inflammation doubtless due to exposure in the trenches."[1] Emigration, too, took its toll and though the railways brought mobility, some people, finally, bought only a 'Single' ticket. The local newspaper which reported in 1868 that "the Railway wherever it goes carries advancement and civilization with it and thus Stainmore . . . has been brought under the ameliorating influence of the age",[2] also said, 21 years later (with the drama that was supposed to accompany adventure), "the express train steams into Appleby to take 17 to Liverpool and thence to Canada for a new life; these include 2 Appleby young men; an Appleby young woman with 4 children (whose husband had already gone) and 4 young men from Crosby Ravensworth."[3] It is

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1. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 1.3.1917.

2. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 1.12.1868.

3. Ibid., 25.6.1889.

difficult to say, however, how significant Methodist emigration was, locally, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Among the Wesleyans, 18 emigrated in 1904 (from the entire Carlisle District), 26 in 1905 and 23 in 1906.[1] At the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Meeting on 16.9.1859, it was agreed "that Zaccheus Young come off the Plan, He having emigrated to Australia."[2] However, even occasional emigrations obviously reduced membership and hopes in very small Societies, especially if the emigrant held office.

We must now note that, included in the Methodist Union of 1932, with the Wesleyans and Primitives (who had agreed that their particular emphases could be combined), was one other branch of Methodist outreach. This was the United Methodist Church. At the time of Union, in Great Britain, there were 729 United Methodist Ministers, 5,232 Local Preachers, 179,527 Members, 2,152 Sunday Schools, 36,474 Officers and Teachers, 223,395 Scholars and 2,900 Churches.[3] On June 9th, 1932, the Membership of the Appleby United Methodist Circuit was 106 in 7 Societies,[4] numerically the smallest part of the new Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit which was then formed. As with the Wesleyans and Primitives, we must trace the origins of this third part of the Union and see how, beyond and within our area, the 1932 Union combined different emphases into one Church, which, half a century later, had a total Membership of 487,972, with 3,506 Ministers, 16,351 Local Preachers, and 263,311 children and

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1. Minutes of the Carlisle Wesleyan District Meeting, 1906.

2. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 1859.

3. The Methodist Church, p. 229.

4. Minutes of the Appleby United Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 9.6.1932.

young people,[1] with 643 of these Members in our area.[2] The United Methodists were born out of controversy yet, as with the Primitives, the spirit of earliest Wesleyan Methodism was not lost in ensuing schism. Lamentable but not profitless, these schisms enabled nineteenth-century Methodism to grow, still bringing religion to isolated places.

For six years after Wesley's death, the problem of the separation from the Church of England became natural Conference business and the part of the Layman in Methodism increasingly occupied the Methodist mind. Alexander Kilham, one of the Travelling Preachers who had spent some time working in Scotland, believed emphatically that the Laity ought to have a prominent share in the government of local Societies. His pamphlet entitled "The Progress of Liberty amongst the People called Methodists" and his forthright manner, caused the 1796 Conference to expel him from the Ministry and ensuing indignation led to the formation of the Methodist New Connexion in the following year. Membership of this new branch of Methodism reached 37,000 in the middle of the nineteenth century, but never more. (William Booth resigned from its Ministry in 1861 to form the Salvation Army). Ninety-five per cent of Wesleyan Methodism remained loyal to John Wesley's mainstream movement. Contemporary with the New Connexion were the Bible Christians, though these came into being less from schism than from what they would call the prompting of the Divine Spirit to preach in open-air and house. Their first Conference was at Baddash, near Launceston, in Cornwall, in 1819, and William O'Bryan, a Cornish boy blessed by John Wesley, was their Leader. They conducted pioneer work where little was being done by Anglicans or other Nonconformists and the Channel and Scilly Isles and the Isle of Wight

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1. Annual Report of the Free Church Federal Council (London, 1982), p. 28.

2. Plan and Directory of the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit: October-December, 1982.

were evanglised by them, as well as vast areas of Devon. They entered into West Cumberland in 1859, mainly immigrant miners and quarry men from Cornwall. They did not occupy the upper Eden as it had already been missioned by others.

Though the early years of nineteenth century England were decades in which democracy was much talked, three Methodist secessions during that time were little to do with political upheaval. The most audible exponent of Methodism's political attitudes was a Doctor Bunting who said that Methodism was as much opposed to democracy as to sin. Yet a democratic leaven that was beginning to work in the State was also bound to work a little in the Church,[1] especially when the Wesleyan Conference consisted entirely of Ministers. Surprisingly, it was an organ which kindled the first of these secessions after the formation of the New Connexion. Trustees at a Leeds Wesleyan Chapel wanted such an instrument for their Worship and Conference supported them over the heads of other local Methodists who did not like the musical idea. This controversy led to the formation of Protestant Methodism, in 1827, which survived until 1836. Conference power then proposed that Wesleyan Methodism should have a training college for its Ministers. With some, this was not a popular idea and was a further indication of Conference dictatorship; it led to the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Association in 1836. This absorbed the Protestant Methodists and by 1839 it had a membership of 28,000. The European 'year of revolutions' (1848) was followed by a minor Methodist revolution in 1849. James Everett, a Wesleyan Travelling Preacher, was strongly suspected of being the inspiration of "Fly Sheets", a series of criticisms of dictatorial Wesleyan Methodist

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1. The Methodist Church, p. 146.

government, and was expelled - along with William Griffith and Samuel Dunn. These men, the Wesleyan Reformers, then drew support from all over the country and, together with the Wesleyan Methodist Association, formed the United Methodist Free Churches in 1857. Their combined membership was about 40,000, forming a Church which gave Ministers little authority and made sure they did not wear any distinctive clerical dress. In 1907, the United Methodist Free Churches brought 80,000 members to a union of Bible Christians and the Methodist New Connexion. That union, the United Methodist Church, entered into the work of evangelism and both at home and overseas it had considerable success. It was this United Methodist Church which also brought a numerical strength to the later union, in 1932, with Primitives and Wesleyans.

In one or two small villages in the upper Eden, one or two Wesleyan families became enchanted with the Association movement of the 1830's. John Dent, for example, became leader of a Bolton Associationist Society and used his own home for Sunday Services. The Crosby family at Kirkby Thore took Wesleyans into the Association in the same way. Joseph and Michael Craig, farming near Appleby, paid for Murton Association Chapel (built in 1841 at a cost of £100), Joseph having once been a Wesleyan Local Preacher who had "turned into a scorpion-like opponent of the ministers."[1] The first Quarterly Meeting of the Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Association was on December 21st, 1836, with a representation from 10 Places, totalling 111 Members. Appleby had 17, Bolton 17, Brampton 4, Brough 9, Dufton some, Kirkby Thore 25, Murton 10, Peaselands 6, Warcop 7 and Penrith 16. By 1852, there were 13 Places, though during 16 years of its short history, various places had begun and ceased.

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1. A History of Cumbrian Methodism, p. 42.

Netherhoff was added in 1838, Newbiggin (near Temple Sowerby), Soulby, Asby, Drybeck and Ormside were added in 1839, Maulds Meaburn in 1840, Sandford in 1845, Lowgill in 1846 and Hilton and Musgrave in 1847.[1] The Wesleyan Methodist Association Preachers Plan (Appleby Circuit, 1846) shows Appleby, Bolton, Brampton, Brough, Kirkby Thore, Murton, Netherhoff, Peaselands, Warcop, Asby, Sandford, Drybeck, Temple Sowerby, Maulds Meaburn, Musgrave and Hilton as "Places". It advertises Collections, Sacraments, Ticket distribution, Lovefeasts and the Quarterly Meeting, with special reference to a Camp Meeting at which Mr. Bailiff of Kirkby Thore and Mr. Nicholson and Mr. Williamson of Appleby are "to attend". Clearly the formation of this Circuit, with fifteen accredited preachers and five On Trial, in 1846, must have been a drain on Wesleyan resources. We note, in passing, the practice of the Primitive Methodist Camp Meeting. That the Circuit was formed at all showed a strong, if temporary, phase of anti-Wesleyanism. That it took almost another century before it could be re-absorbed into a wider Methodism was something of a local, even national tragedy. The building programme and other indications of local commitment in 9 Societies is set out in the following table:[2]

Chapel	Year Built	Cost (£)	Seats	Afternoon Attendance	Evening Attendance	Sittings Let
Appleby	1870	800	200	142 (morning)	81	66
Colby	1874	200	72	25	25	None
Maulds Meaburn	1878	245	100	54	39	24
Murton	1841	100	82	34	18	34

1. Minutes of the Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Association Circuit Quarterly Meetings.

2. Special Schedule for 1881: United Methodist Free Church Societies. By 1929 there were only seven of these Societies: Appleby, Colby, Maulds Meaburn, Sandford, Bolton, Kirkby Thore and Great Asby.

Chapel	Year Built	Cost (£)	Seats	Afternoon Attendance	Evening Attendance	Sittings Let
Warcop	1844	120	80	42	30	28
Sandford	1848	90	70	41	None	6
Bolton	1818	-	130	30	60	None
Kirkby Thore	1851	150	120	88	35	None
Asby	1859	140	120	40	None	None

In the Register of the names of the Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Association in the Appleby Circuit, commencing in 1840 December 21st, there are various illuminating remarks concerning the Members of the places where there were Societies; some of them add further insights on emigration while others help to paint a picture of this Eden valley movement which was strongest around the County Town of Appleby:

"1844. Full Members returned to Assembly, 150

1850. William Slee Joined Ranters. (i.e. Primitives).
Thomas Dobinson Gone to America some time ago.

1852. 137 Full Members.

1853. Susan Hoskin Left Connexion.
Bridget Dent Gone to Heaven. 130 Full Members.

1854. 152 Full Members. 2 Deaths, 7 Backsliders and 10 Removals.

1860. William, Elizabeth and Joseph Steele at Shepherd's Cottage, near Murton emigrated to Australia.

1861. John Horn dropt. (sic).
William Sewell Backslidden through drink."

In 1867 there was Revival at Appleby, with 171 Members in the Circuit; there was one Itinerant Preacher, 20 Local Preachers, 11 Leaders, 7 Chapels, 3 Preaching Rooms, 6 Sunday Schools, 281 Scholars and 63 Teachers. In further United Methodist Free Church Registers, we note:

"1870. William Atkinson Removed to America.

1872. Elizabeth Davyes Gone to America.

1893. Jane Fairer Joined Wesleyans.
Alfred Davidson Removed to America.

1897. Martha Best Gone to America.

1909. W. and I. Slinger and H. and A. Stephenson to Canada.

1918. John Lambert Killed in Action."

Emigrants do not add up to any large number but we wonder what happens to the religion of a small Society when someone leaves it, forever. Does the leader of that Society lose some of his authority because he may think that the emigrant's religious need drove him away? Even if (and more likely) reason for emigration was economic, did the Methodists left behind feel a loss of identity? Do small isolated groups, therefore, seek for larger unions as they see their numbers dwindle or do they become more eager to evangelize to make up the losses? Was there a link between loss through emigration and interest in missionary activity overseas, attempting to win back whatever had been lost?

A Baptismal Register for Appleby Tabernacle United Methodist Free Church (1850-1932) shows the occupations of parents in the Circuit to be so varied as to make one wonder if their religious affiliation was as strong as the variety was widespread. Butter dealer, waller, miller, mason, coachman, clothier, miner, day-school teacher, Royal Mail Driver, wheelwright, nailer, groom, chemist, carter, butcher, builder, tailor, dressmaker, plate layer and draper (between 1866 and 1880) all suggest a remarkable connection between this branch of Methodism and society as a whole. In the same Register, which contains Marriage entries from 1850 to 1877, partners come from as far away as Berwick-on-Tweed, Sunderland and Darlington. Visitors, for Baptisms, come from Manchester (1886 and 1887), Carlisle (1890), Aberdeenshire (1893), Fort William (1905), Morecambe (1909), Castleford (1916) and Doncaster (1929). It would seem that Infant Baptism was probably offered to any who requested it, and

parents, who may not have been committed Christians, thus made a nominal entrance into an isolated holy community. On the other hand, Baptism may have been sought for children of a parent, or parents, who once belonged to local Methodism but had been then forced by circumstance to go and live far from the upper Eden valley.

The Quarterly Meeting Minutes of the Wesleyan Methodist Association shed light on their ways and reflected that whatever their attitudes to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, their aims were those of John Wesley. On December 27th, 1848, they agreed, at Appleby, that "a series of revival Services be held in several of our Chapels and other places to commence on New Year's Eve." They also wanted to belong to a wider Association. "We think it advisable to adopt District Meetings and we hope the Annual Assembly will take it into consideration."[1] But their own Circuit affairs were naturally paramount: "this meeting approves of the Methodistic mode of giving out the Hymns and it would kindly recommend the various Societies to adopt that method. With special reference to Appleby, they be requested to adopt singing as a substitute for their usual manner of chanting."[2] The Circuit resolved "to remit no more monies to the Connexion Funds, until our own demand be attended to. And that the surplus be remitted."[3] There was no reference to the new union, in 1857, forming the United Methodist Free Church, but earlier minutes suggested happy approval of the proposed union between themselves and the Reformers. Vision extended beyond the local area in 1862 when the Quarterly Meeting resolved "that collections be made towards the relief of the Members of

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1. Minutes of the Wesleyan Methodist Association Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 26.7.1851.

2. Ibid., 29.9.1852.

3. Ibid., 29.9.1852.

our own churches in the manufacturing districts suffering on account of the Cotton famine in all our chapels and meeting houses in the Circuit."[1] By 1926, the United Methodist Church had, in spite of the union of 1907, its own financial difficulties. The Quarterly Meeting "resolved that a special quarterly meeting be held when the question of finance be fully discussed. Our isolated situation was stressed, and the steward suggested that we should have a debt of £180 by June next."[2] In 1930, finance still troubled the United Methodist Circuit and it was decided after much discussion, "to Carry on and do the best possible until organic union of the 3 Churches is fully accomplished."[3] Even so, there were other advantages to a united Church which Reverend C. E. Ward, a Wesleyan Minister, stressed when he was invited to the United Methodist Church Quarterly Meeting at Colby: "Though of a Different outlook Temprement (sic) the 3 Societies Could be so blended into one that the spirit of the Master would be better revealed to the world."[4] At the last United Methodist Quarterly Meeting, the visionary Minute read that they hoped it would "be the commencement of a larger Methodism."[5]

The last phase of Methodist occupation of the upper Eden, beginning in 1932, was to be half a century of work unhindered by the background divisions of earlier years. Even so, the combined Circuit Membership, in 1932, of 1,250 was, by 1982, reduced to 643. We recall that 106 United Methodists (in 7 Societies) had united with 417 Primitive Methodists (in 14 Societies) and with 727 Wesleyan Methodists (in 26 Societies).

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1. Ibid., 24.9.1862.
2. Ibid., 3.6.1926.
3. Ibid., 27.2.1930.
4. Ibid., 11.12.1930.
5. Ibid., 24.8.1933.

There were (in October, 1982) a total of thirty four Societies. The membership had been reduced by 50% but the Societies, all with Chapels, were reduced by only 28%, the area covered being as wide as ever. Anglican Places of Worship in the same area were 17, that is half the number of Chapels. There were three Methodist Ministers in the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit, but 7 Anglican clergymen covering approximately the same area. The two largest Methodist Societies were Appleby (with 100 Members) and Kirkby Stephen (with 80); 15 of the Societies had memberships of less than 10. The remaining 17 Societies had an average membership of 22. There were 22 Sunday Schools in the Circuit. Spital, furthest east (see the photograph on page E)[1] had 7 Members, keeping its association with the "West Country", a title it still ascribes to the Circuit which sends Preachers on to this Pennine summit. All its members, however, live east of Spital - mostly in Barnard Castle.

Official business at local Society level is infrequent and sparsely minuted. Sometimes, therefore, Trustees' Minutes begin before Methodist Union and continue long afterwards. A Gaisgill Wesleyan Trust Minute Book contains business as early as 1900 and as late as 1953.[2] Similarly, Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Third Baptismal Register begins as the Primitive Register for Appleby, Dufton, Crackenthorpe, Grassgill and Brough district and dates from 1900 to 1960.[3] Individual Chapel Trust Minutes, however, probably say less about the growth of Methodism in the upper Eden than do Baptismal Registers and, as with the United Methodists, it is noticeable that parents came from several corners of society for

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1. Following p.119.

2. Minutes of the Gaisgill Wesleyan Trustees Meetings.

3. Baptismal Registers: Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, 1900-1960 (No. 3).

their child's Baptism into Primitive Methodist Congregations. After 1932, there is a poultry farmer and a meal traveller (1936), confectioner (1937), quarry worker, council roadman, electric worker (1939), journalist, school teacher, night watchman, H.M. Forces, forestry worker, navy (1942), electrical engineer (1944), bank clerk, taxi proprietor (1946), taxi-driver (1948), fish salesman, maintenance engineer (1949), architect (1950), van driver, regular army (1956) and lorry driver (1957). These are among the greater number of farmers but lead us to wonder whether, at the very point of initiation, Methodist doctrine allowed a measure of 'de-isolation' if and when it permitted non-Methodist parents to take part in the Baptismal rite. The Registers do not, of course, confirm whether particular parents were committed Methodists or not, any more than the Registers of St. Lawrence's Church, Appleby, can confirm that the parents of five Romany babies, "christened" during the Horse Fair in June, 1972, were committed Members of the Church of England.[1]

Although by 1952 the local weekly newspaper's continued interest in Methodism for nearly 100 years seemed to be waning (when sport, politics, agriculture and the Women's Institute were becoming more newsworthy), the journalism of 20 years earlier drew considerable attention to Methodist Union. On September 17th, 1932, it said that thousands of Methodists would be gathering in their Churches on Tuesday (September 20th) to listen to the historic broadcast of the inauguration of Church Union from the Royal Albert Hall, which would be attended by the Duke and Duchess of York. Indeed 10,000 acclaimed the Union and the King sent a message noticing this "Step towards unity of all Christian people." On the platform were the Bishop of London and three ex-Presidents, the Duke and Duchess of York, the Mayor of Westminster, Sir Robert Perks (the new Conference Vice President) and Dr. Scott Lidgett

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Herald, 17.6.1972.

(the new President).[1] One turns into October's Herald to find 'Union' correspondence but the letters are headed "Penrith Butchers and their Prices", "Catching Rabbits by Humane Methods" and "Tombstones and Beauty",[2] their common theme being death rather than life.

The Herald also reported local Methodism's continued interest in Missionary work. The District Synod at Penrith heard how the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit had shown the largest increase in Missionary giving,[3] while at Dufton Methodist Chapel the meaningfulness of local interest was reflected in the Address of Miss Sowbhagium Kondiah, Principal of the Wesley Girls' High School at Secunderabad, in South India,[4] who visited the Society in person. At an annual Guild Rally at the Sands Methodist Chapel, Appleby, in 1962, the speaker was a Mr. F. Webb who was on furlough from Peru; Kirkby Stephen, Crosby, Ravensworth, Tebay and Kirkby Thore were all represented.[5] Another Methodist feature was reported when an open-air meeting was held in Brough, with the help of Bailie's' Loudspeaker System.[6] A week-by-week glance at the Herald through the whole of 1981, reminds the reader of a Methodism which is still a prominent feature of Eden society and the following are four significant extracts and references:

1. "Mr. Ebenezer Robert Harris, who died recently, aged 89 years, was well known in the area, having preached in many local chapels in the last 60 years. He was

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1. Ibid., 17/24.9.1932.
2. Ibid., 15.10.1932.
3. Ibid., 16.5.1942.
4. Ibid., 7.6.1952.
5. Ibid., 19.5.1962.
6. Ibid., 16.6.1962.

the last of the family of Stephen Brunskill Harris, who was grandson of Stephen Brunskill, of Orton, who became a Christian through the preaching of John Wesley." (p. 5, col. 4, 18.4.1981).

2. In a letter regarding Church Unity from the Reverend E. D. Hodgkiss, one of the three Circuit Ministers, she stated: "We believe that God - who loves and creates variety - raised the various denominations up to fulfil His specific purpose. We are not persuaded that those purposes are now ended." (p. 7, col 2, 20.6.1981).

3. In contrast with first Wesleyan, Primitive and United Methodist Harvest Festivals (which were held to increase local Circuit funds), new signs of Missionary interest were reported. Bolton Methodists sent £112 from their Harvest Festival to help needy people in the Third World, (p. 2, col. 5, 26.9.1981), as did Winton, a week later, by contributing £176 to the same fund, (p. 2, col. 4, 3.10.1981).

4. On the death of Mr. L. S. Chapman, whose loyalty to the Circuit had been outstanding, he was described as "a staunch Methodist". He had combined his work as a Circuit Steward with that of a Headmaster in Appleby for 34 years and with that of Mayor, Alderman and Magistrate. (p. 12, cols. 1-3, 12.12.1981).

The Herald also gives us some idea of the relationship between Methodists and Anglicans over the years, two branches of the Christian Church which now exist, side by side, in organic isolation. John Wesley would not have wanted this, but even in his lifetime it became apparent that Methodists were being separated from the Church of England. Some Anglicans encouraged persecution of Methodists in Wesley's lifetime and Conferences after 1791 could do nothing to prevent a final break. Even though, as Wearmouth points out, "the Methodists had found secure foothold in the life of Britain and were destined to grow in civic regard and national esteem"[1] (by the end of the 18th century), the Church of England did not always view their existence positively. Attitudes varied from Parish to Parish, though encouraging news came from Penrith in 1867:

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1. Robert F. Wearmouth, Methodism and The Common People of The Eighteenth Century (London, 1945), p. 164.

"A United Prayer Meeting was held in the Working Men's Reading Room. The Rev. G. C. Hodgson, Vicar of Barton, opened the meeting with suitable portions of Scripture. Then the Rev. T. T. Dilks, Wesleyan, and the Rev. W. Brewis, Independent, and the Rev. J. Dodds, Primitive, Mr. Bell, and Mr. James Irving engaged in prayer. The large number who attended the meeting must have afforded great encouragement to these Ministers and gentlemen who have taken an effect part in its establishment."[1] A fanciful notion was, however, destroyed in the same town in the following year, when, in a lecture entitled "The People called Methodists" given by a Reverend H. Newbson from Appleby, (as the local newspaper reported), "he referred to the opinion of some churchmen who seemed to think that Methodists could be brought into communion with the Church by making their places of Worship chapels of ease. The Reverend lecturer concluded by expressing an opinion that there was not the remotest possibility of the Wesleyan Methodists being absorbed in the Church of England."[2] Such a conviction appears to have been widespread, for we find that Dr. Rigg, an ex-President of the Wesleyan Conference, lamented that Church of England Clergymen had left the platforms of meetings and committees connected with the Bible Society. They were beginning to look at Nonconformists as people to be avoided; they were hoping to see an end of Churches like the Methodist Church whom they regarded as schismatics.[3] Yet, at Tebay, ten years later, we find a different situation. At the annual Railway Servants Camp Meeting, Services began with public prayer in the Primitive Methodist Schoolroom on a Saturday evening, continued on Sunday morning at 7 a.m., after which there was Holy Communion in the

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 15.1.1867.

2. Ibid., 25.2.1868.

3. Ibid., 11.11.1879; in an address at Truro.

Parish Church at 8 a.m. Then a procession was formed at Old Tebay and another at the Railway Station at 9 a.m., both uniting near the Church at 10.15 a.m. after which they dispersed, some going to the Church and others to the Chapel where special services were held. Collections were made in Church, Chapel and Market Hall in aid of the Camp Meeting Fund, the surplus to be divided amongst the widows of deceased railway servants.[1] James Graham, however, of Kirkby Stephen, wrote to the editor of the Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald in 1899 to say that "Where the clergy is not intolerant there is little fault to find but in very many cases our children are treated with the greatest injustice. They are taught that ours is not a Church, that our Ministers are only laymen, that our Sacraments are an imposture, that Dissent is sin and in the most subtle form they are influenced to look down upon Nonconformity."[2] As ever, attitudes varied unexpectedly. At Askham, near Penrith, the Anglican and Wesleyan Sunday Schools decided to meet together because of a shortage of Wesleyan Sunday School teachers. Both Churches also agreed unanimously to the revolutionary idea of monthly united Worship.[3] The First World War had just come to an end and it was sensible for the Reverend H. O. Briggs, Superintendent of the Penrith Wesleyan Circuit to say in a Sermon: "To deal with all the world's problems, the world's social relationships, the great Colour question, and the world's evangelization, the Church needed unity of counsel and unity of command."[4] The Reverend J. E. Rattenbury, a Methodist speaking at Alston, asked the pertinent question: "If the Church, which

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1. Ibid., 23.7.1889.
2. Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald, 18.2.1899.
3. Ibid., 8.3.1919.
4. Ibid., 22.3.1919.

professed friendship, could not unite how could the world unite?"[1] By 1942, another war had superseded such a vision and news from Ravenstonedale was as significant as Askham's ventures of earlier days: the Anglicans, Congregationalists and Methodists agreed to hold monthly weeknight Services.[2]

The Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Minute Book confirms that there were also disturbing situations: "It having come to our knowledge that the Reverend A. Warren (Bondgate, Appleby), in his capacity as clergyman of the parish, has been endeavouring to get some of our Sunday School scholars to be confirmed or to attend Church Sunday School, we hereby authorize our Minister to write him on behalf of this official meeting, pointing out to him that this kind of thing is most objectionable to us, and we ask him kindly to refrain from doing so in the future."[3] Twelve years later such problems arose again: "Having heard on reliable authority, it is the practice of certain clergymen to get children attending our Sunday Schools to be confirmed and become adherents of the Established Church, and that veiled attacks are sometimes made upon our Church in the course of such proselytising, we enter our protest against this practice, and consider it desirable, in the interests of our schools, that the fullest publicity be given to cases coming under our notice in future."[4] But a better note was sounded in United Methodist Minutes at the Appleby Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting and Quarterly Meeting on June 21st, 1906: "A letter was read from W. J. E. Thompson

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1. Ibid., 21.6.1919.

2. Cumberland and Westmorland Herald, 24.10.1942.

3. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Preachers' Meeting, 4.3.1897.

4. Ibid., 4.3.1909.

of Maulds Meaburn regarding the vicar of Crosby Ravensworth's willingness to conduct a Service in the Maulds Meaburn Church and that his name appear on the Plan as a Helper. Resolved that the arrangement between the Vicar of Crosby Ravensworth and W. J. E. Thompson be respected as an exchange of Preachers."[1] We are reminded, in this observation of a side-by-side existence of two religious groups, not by any means always kindly disposed towards each other, of differing degrees of Jewish isolation. Stephen Sharot draws attention to the significance of the strength of a dominant group wanting to demand allegiance to its religion within its defined territory: "The greater the tendency of the dominant group to coerce the Jews into accepting the majority religion, the more the Jews emphasized their religio-cultural distinctiveness. The greater the tendency of the dominant group to accept the existence of Judaism, the more likely the Jews would acculturate to the majority or core culture."[2] Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) had argued, says Sharot, "that Jewish ritual should be retained in total since it was this and not Jewish doctrine which distinguished Judaism from other religions."[3] We shall see in our next chapter what the local Methodist ritual, doctrinal or other emphases were. Sufficient to say here is that, as Rahner declared, "to win one new man of tomorrow for the faith is more important for the Church than to keep in the faith two men of yesterday."[4] In other words, we will discover that its paramount concern for proselytism was that which gave upper Eden Methodism its identity.

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1. Minutes of the Appleby United Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 21.6.1906.

2. Stephen Sharot, Judaism (Newton Abbot, 1976), p. 35.

3. Ibid., p. 45.

4. Karl Rahner, The Shape Of The Church To Come (SPCK, London, 1974), p. 50.

CHAPTER III

The emphases of the Methodists: new life for all

There is no reason to doubt that what Methodists thought and believed elsewhere, they also believed in the upper Eden valley. "To the convert, the life of chapel and class-meeting was a world of its own. In many ways it was a narrow world, but it vibrated with life and compassed or touched every human activity. It offered to the lonely and insecure a whole network of intimate social relationships, and a communal fraternity and security."[1] S. Baring-Gould (1834-1924), student of folklore, may just have offered a compliment when he said "that under the name of Methodism we have the old Druidic religion still alive, energetic and possibly more vigorous than it was when it exercised a spiritual supremacy over the whole of Britain."[2] This new phenomenon of living religion, born out of individual conversions, was the expression of community beliefs, and though Wesley had advised on essential private acts of devotion, Methodism was clearly about meeting with fellow-believers. "Nature and the devil will always oppose private prayer" he wrote,[3] and an individual convert has to ensure that "in retirement or company, in leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord."[4] But, writing to Frances Godfrey, on August 2nd, 1789, he also said "I hope you find satisfaction . . . in some of

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1. John Walsh, "Methodism at the end of the eighteenth century", in Rupert Davies and Gordon Rupp, ed., A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain (London, 1965), I, 311.

2. Quoted in Lewis Spence, The History and Origins of Druidism (London, 1949), p. 78.

3. John Wesley, The Letters (London, 1931), III, 229.

4. John Wesley, The Works (London, 1830), VIII, 343.

your Christian companions. It is a blessed thing to have fellow travellers to the New Jerusalem. If you cannot find any, you must make them; for none can travel that road alone. Then labour to help each other so that you may be altogether Christians."[1] In houses, in chapels and in the open-air Methodists therefore met together. It was the only way in which the essential community impression could be made and the only atmosphere in which new Methodists could grow towards holiness. "Let us join" was a repeated theme in Charles Wesley's hymns, urging Methodists to "travel on together."[2] When, in 1837, Hodgson Casson (1788-1851), a Wesleyan Travelling Preacher from Workington, said "Methodism wants no mending; it only wants keeping and practising,"[3] he meant that it should be kept and practised together, otherwise it was a solitary religion and of such there was nothing in Holy Scripture.[4] In this chapter we are to examine, therefore, ways in which Eden Methodists came together and we shall note aspects of isolation in attitudes and behaviour which are observable within and outside the meetings. We make particular reference to preaching, fellowship, teaching, singing, missionary and Guild meetings, and the Band of Hope. In all, the overriding purposes are evangelism and holiness, the divine calling of the Methodist people.

In reply to Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London, in 1747, Wesley declared the supreme importance of preaching. "Here are in and near Moorfields ten thousand poor souls, for whom Christ died, rushing headlong into

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1. John Wesley, The Letters, VII, 158.

2. Charles Wesley, in The Methodist Hymn Book (London, 1933); hymn 713 (verse 1) and 716 (verse 3).

3. A. Steele, Life and Labours of Hodgson Casson (London, 1854), p. 179.

4. John Wesley, The Letters, VIII, 158, footnote 2.

hell. Is Dr. Bulkeley, the parochial minister, both willing and able to stop them? If so, let it be done, and I have no place in these parts: I go and call other sinners to repentance. But if, after all he has done and all he can do, they are still in the broad way to destruction, let me see if God will put a word even in my mouth."[1] "Wherever I see one or a thousand men running into hell, be it in England, Ireland or France, yea, in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America, I will stop them if I can . . . . Were I to do otherwise, were I to let any soul drop into the pit whom I might have saved from everlasting burnings, I am not satisfied God would accept my plea, 'Lord, he was not of my parish.'"[2] Wesley was as sure about the necessity of peaching as he was about the state of hell, the power of which was continually "engaged against" humanity, not least against Philothea Briggs, his sorely-tempted correspondent who lived among the infidels of Moorfields.[3] To Charles Perronet, the foremost consideration was thus expressed: "If we could once bring all our preachers, itinerant and local, uniformly and steadily to insist on those two points, 'Christ dying for us' and 'Christ reigning in us', we should shake the trembling gates of hell."[4] Fear of hell and Satan were realities to both the Wesleys, and Charles gave the only answer:

"Jesus! the name that charms our fears."[5]

The manipulative power of Satan had a dangerous charm of its own, which,

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1. Ibid., II, 289.
2. Ibid., II, 137.
3. Ibid., V, 240.
4. Ibid., VI, 134.
5. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 1, verse 3.

like the sorcery of African traditional religion, might devour human souls.[1] Charles Wesley's fervent prayer thus became:

"Thy love, let it my heart o'erpower
And all my simple soul devour"[2]

In the Poetical Works of the Wesleys, we read:

"Satan must tremble and give place
Before the Spirit's might,
The strength of efficacious grace
Puts all his hosts to flight;
His kingdom falls, his charms and spells
And works are all o'erthrown,
When Jesus in the faithful dwells
And rules their hearts alone."[3]

The besom (or barsom?) would finally destroy Satan's most treasured possession, for, as the Methodist poets also wrote:

"Satan his kingdom's fall shall see,
Its final period sin shall feel,
Destruction shall the besom be,
And sweep its last remains to hell."[4]

We are reminded, too, that John said: "While I live I will bear the most public testimony I can to the reality of witchcraft."[5]

Thus it was that this compulsion to preach spread to the upper Eden, through Wesley's Travelling Preachers and their converts. When Hodgson Casson, who had been a Travelling Preacher in the Brough Wesleyn Circuit between 1819 and 1821, went to Gateshead in 1827, it seemed that there, in the town, Satan would bemore active. "Leaving the inhabitants of the dales in their scattered dwellings, where they were comparatively

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1. Geoffrey Parrinder, Religion in Africa (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 65.

2. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 390, verse 1.

3. John and Charles Wesley, The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley, G. Osborn, ed. (London, 1872), XII, 223.

4. Ibid., III, 149.

5. John Wesley, The Letters, VII, 300.

shut out from much of that contaminating influence, which, like a moral pestilence, stalks along in places more densely populated, poisoning the life-blood of society, he had now, in the order of Providence, to plant his battering-rams in a place 'where Satan's seat' was."[1] But Wesleyan Conferences knew that preaching was as necessary in rural areas as in cities and indication of this is found in the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Local Preachers' Minutes (1908-1924) into which the printed rules and regulations of various Conferences, relating to Local Preachers, have been bound. The 1796 Conference had said (p. 5 of these Rules and Regulations) that all Local Preachers must meet in Class. In the spirit of the 1820 Conference (p. 8), we read that "in order to revive and increase small and decaying congregations, especially in villages", we should "have recourse to the practice of preaching out of doors; going to those who need us most; and seeking, by all means, to gather into the House of God them that are lost." The 1869 Conference (p. 5) had directed that "no Preacher be permitted to preach in any Circuit than his own without consent of the Superintendent of that Circuit" and (on p. 6) Conference Minutes of 1876 and 1895, in an attempt to train Local Preachers, had said that "No Candidate shall be fully admitted as a Local Preacher until he has read the Fifty-three Standard Sermons of Mr. Wesley, and his Notes on the New Testament, and until he has passed a satisfactory examination in the definitions and Scripture proofs of the leading doctrines of Christianity as there explained."

Stephen Brunskill of Orton shows how he became a preacher, the connection between preaching and forming Societies then being particularly important since, as John Wesley had said, "no regular societies,

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1. A. Steele, Life and Labours of Hodgson Casson (London, 1854) pp. 105-106.

no discipline, no order or connexion; and the consequence is that nine in ten of the once-awakened are now faster asleep than ever."[1]

> "On Christmas Day (1774)", writes Brunskill in his autobiography, "after receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, I met the Class in the evening. After I had done, I gave a word of exhortation in which I found considerable freedom. After speaking a few times in this way my father invited his neighbours and I began to exhort more publicly. The first time I took a text was in my own house. The People were deeply affected, many tears being shed. My beginning to preach was soon made known among the little societies at a distance and I was invited to visit them and preach to them the word of life. The Word of God was precious in those days and preachers very scarce. So little did the people know about a Sermon that if a preacher could only get on and be lively, he was sure to be well received. This was much in my favour and my feeble efforts were owned of God. Several were awakened to a sense of their danger and a few I believe were converted to God. They were formed into little Societies and soon afterwards visited by the Travelling Preachers."[2]

This was the way local preaching began and Brunskill speaks of the way it spread:

> "We rented a room in Orton as a place of religious Worship and several persons were brought to God. Among the rest was Mr. Barnes well-known among the Methodists in Manchester. Also his father, mother and three brothers. In Ravenstonedale also the work of God prospered and sinners were saved. It was here that Mr. Thomas Shaw was brought to a saving knowledge of the Truth who afterwards became a Travelling Preacher. During the four years he laboured in that capacity he was the honoured instrument of bringing many souls to God."[3]

He also refers to holiness, Wesley's second preaching theme- "Christ reigning in us":

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1. John Wesley, The Journal (London, 1938), V, 26.

2. Stephen Brunskill, The Life of Stephen Brunskill of Orton, 60 Years a Wesleyan Methodist Local Preacher (London and Kendal, 1837), p. 19.

3. Ibid., p. 30 (in 1783-1784).

> "Some of the Preachers strongly enforced the doctrine of Christian Perfection but I did not understand nor could I comprehend it, but felt my mind prejudiced against it until I read the life of Martha Thompson, when my prejudice was removed and I saw its amiableness and that it was my privilege to enjoy it. I therefore began to seek it with all my heart and it was not long till the Lord heard and answered prayer by bringing my soul under the purifying influence of divine grace and enabling me to rejoice in the perfect love of God. But I did not retain this great blessing long for being in a great measure ignorant of Satan's devices he soon robbed me of it. Yet I never again felt that opposition to the will of God which I had sometimes formerly done but on the contrary a general submission thereto although I had in a measure lost my evidence of sanctification."[1]

Stephen Brunskill,[2] untypical of Eden valley Local Preachers in that he had opportunity to write an informative autobiography, was one faithful messenger among the many who, for two centuries, continued to preach where Travelling Preachers could not often come. "Methodist work in the villages," it was said (a century after Brunskill) "would be impossible but for the immense numbers of local preachers who for Christ's sake voluntarily and at their own cost serve the pulpits of the Connexion. A large proportion of them come from the country, and are strong men who can drive a straight furrow and describe the ways of God, but who have never had the chance of acquiring much secular knowledge."[3] This was why the Wesleyan Conference made its rules for Local Preachers and why, too, the Primitives expected their preachers to read and study other books apart from, but related to, the Holy Scriptures. "No

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1. Ibid., p. 21; Martha Thompson had helped to introduce Methodism into York (John Wesley, The Journal, IV, 66, footnote 2).

2. His name appears on the 1830 Wesleyan Plan, page C of this thesis, Preacher numbered "4".

3. R. W. Moss, "Wesleyan Methodism - the last fifty years" in W. J. Townsend, H. B. Workman, and George Eayrs, ed., A New History of Methodism (London, 1909), I, 463.

person's name shall appear on the Plan until he has been examined . . . . The examination shall be based on the following books: (1) Holy Scriptures; (2) Gregory's Theological Student; (3) Gill's Grammar; (4) Consolidated Minutes; (5) Kendall's History of the Connexion . . . ."[1] The present Methodist Conference continues this careful tradition of ensuring that preachers who occupy its pulpits - anywhere in the Connexion - have reached a standard of Biblical and theological understanding and have an awareness of what is best in pulpit manner and conduct of Worship. Once a preacher becomes "fully accredited", he must attend all the quarterly Circuit Preachers' meetings. (Preachers "On Trial" must only be present in these meetings when the business does not relate to them in particular). Preachers must accept the disciplines of the Conference and continue to learn how to share in the proclamation of the Gospel. They must still be Members of the Methodist Church and walk worthily of their calling. They are still under the direction of their Superintendent Minister for their preaching appointments. Their message is still to be that of John Wesley: new life for all, a message which, as John Walsh points out, springs from Wesley's view that religion begins "not so much in a sense of past misconduct as in consciousness of present want: his theology dwelt on grace far more as a remedy for corruption and unhappiness, than as a relief from guilt."[2]

Once a "man in the pew" listens to a compelling preacher and makes a positive response, he can never be the same again. He has associated with a group of people who have convictions about life and death. These

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1. Plan of the Primitive Methodist Church, Appleby Branch of the Brough Circuit (January-March, 1922).

2. John Walsh, "Methodism at the end of the eighteenth century", in A History of the Methodist Church In Great Britain, I, 314.

are different from those of his non-committed neighbour, if, that is, his neighbour has any views at all. If he belongs to a small such group, in a rural hamlet or village, he is therefore particularly isolated, not from his fellow-Methodist, but from his society who will watch critically for strong evidence of his change of heart. Joseph Grieves, "profane, drunkard and poacher" was just such a man. He attended a prayer-meeting in Teesdale (a valley running parallel with the upper Eden, some 13 miles to the North-East) in 1823 and this is what happened: "In the course of the prayer-meeting the Holy Ghost went through my heart like a burning flame. I . . . attempted to stop the praying. The preacher, John Hewson, came out of the pulpit and cried 'Believe! Believe!' I shouted 'I do believe' and from that hour I never doubted my acceptance with God.'"[1] Grieves, with three fellow-converts, at once began preaching and "their old companions in sin went to hear these unlettered men pray and talk about religion and the rough Teesdale lead miners were the means of promoting a gracious work in the place."[2] Such conversions had considerable impact on a society which, even so, was not always persuaded by preaching. Speaking from a Methodist background, Norman Nicholson (the Lakeland poet) recalls, from 1922, the significance of the change of heart in a convert brought about by evangelistic preaching. More than half a century later, (in 1975), he writes: ". . . men and woman (are) walking about Millom today whose upbringing would have been quite different, if their father or grandfather had not suddenly given up drinking, or gambling, or knocking his wife about, and turned on the snap of a response into a sober, hard-working,

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1. W. M. Patterson, Northern Primitive Methodism (London, 1909), p. 109.

2. Ibid., p. 109; that is, Middleton-in-Teesdale.

hard-saving, hard-praying chapel man."[1] And the smaller the community the easier it is to identify the Methodist pedigree of the "men and women walking about."

Christopher Kearton who died at Brough, in 1866, when he was 74, was one such "chapel man". For more than 40 years of his early life he was a swearing man, a Sabbath profaner and kept "worldly-minded" company. At the age of 42 he was persuaded to go to Mouthlock Primitive Methodist Chapel. He there "felt and owned his guilt and shortly afterwards while wrestling alone with God in earnest, believing prayer, deliverance came. He obtained peace with God . . . . In those days and in this neighbourhood the labourers in the Gospel field were few in number. Accordingly, brother Kearton was soon called by the Church to fill the important office of Local Preacher which he did for upwards of 30 years with credit to himself and profit to his hearers."[2] Not that every Local Preacher had his pre-conversion sins listed. John Dickinson, for example, who died in 1905, was described as a prosperous business man who always attended his weeknight prayer meeting and Preaching Service. "For over 40 years he tramped with unwearying zeal the dales and the moors of the Brough Circuit (one of the widest in the Connexion touching on three counties) with the message of the Cross and often delivered that message to a very small Congregation after travelling many miles . . . . He was one of the makers of rural Primitive Methodism in the County of Westmorland and no one had an intenser regard for the small village Society than he . . . ."[3] George Jackson, a Primitive Methodist from

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1. Norman Nicholson, Wednesday Early Closing (London, 1975), pp. 84ff.

2. Primitive Methodist Magazine (London, 1866), pp. 620-621; the short biography is signed "J.F.B."

3. William Shipley, in Aldersgate Primitive Methodist Magazine (London, 1906), p. 494.

Tebay (1806-1879), experienced "the birth from above" but he, too, had been drinker and dancer, living where "foolish games such as wrestling, racing, and playing at football on the Sabbath-day" used to take place. Converted in 1832, he eventually became a Local Preacher; "his life was good all round and transparent as crystal . . . . It is believed by those who best knew him that he never said an unkind word about nor ever had any difference with any Minister during his long religious life, nor did he love less his lay brethren."[1] Wesleyan Local Preachers find mention in Circuit Quarterly Meeting Minutes. E. Thompson, of Hartley Castle, was a Local Preacher for more than 50 years (29.3.1882), as were Toppin Hall (8.12.1927) and R. J. Todd (18.12.1930). This 1930 Quarterly Meeting also recognized Mr. W. P. Robertson who had "been preaching the gospel for over 60 years." On the copy of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Circuit Plan (1881-1882), on page D,[2] the Plan reference number for E. Thompson is No. 3, that for Toppin Hall is No. 37, that for R. J. Todd is 50, and that for W. P. Robertson is 27.
E. Thompson had represented a long-continuing preaching tradition from at least as early as 1830, as the Wesleyan Plan of that year on page C makes clear, his reference number being No. 12. Other Local Preachers are mentioned in the local weekly newspaper, with some indication of their impact on local society. Robert Gate, of Penrith, died in 1866 at the age of 87. "Sixty years ago he had alligned himself with the then persecuted Methodists and soon commenced to Preach the gospel to the poor of the towns and villages nearby and further afield."[3] Mr. Crosby, of Kirkby Thore, died aged 45 in 1889. He was a highly respected Local

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1. Primitive Methodist Magazine (London, 1881), pp. 564-566; writer not named.

2. Following p. 113.

3. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 14.8.1866.

D

Kirkby Stephen and Appleby

WESLEYAN METHODIST CIRCUIT PLAN,

1881-2.

"The Lord loveth the gates of Zion" Psalm xxxvii, 2

PLACES AND TIME.		Oct. 30	November 6	13	20	27	December 4	11	18	25	January 1	8	15	22
KIRKBY STEPHEN ...	Sunday 10½	27C	1	23	2	1	31Q	2	1	33	2	15	21I	2
	6½	45C	1	37	2	W	40Q	2S	1	38	2L	19	21I	44
	Tuesday 7		*		1		1		1		1		1	
APPLEBY	Sunday 10½	2	~~7C~~	1	40	31	1Q	27	2	45	1	46	9I	32
	6½	13	~~7C~~	1	58	31	2Q	49	2S	50	1	33	2I	47
	Wednesday 7	2		2		2				2		2		2
BROUGH	Sunday 2	*	55C	38	2	42	44Q	22	60	46	2S	28I	20	18
	6½	*	55C	38	7	42	44Q	30	61	46	52	28I	20	18
	Friday 7						1				1			
ORTON	Sunday 10½	34	9C	53	1	2	55Q	38	47	19	44	23I	1	36
	6½	34	40C	49	31	2	55Q	38	32	27	25	41I	1S	49
	Monday 7					2							1	
GAISGILL	Sunday 2	1	40C	49	19	2S	34Q	25	32	42	25	56I	1	60
	6½	1	9C	53	36	15	34Q	25	47	42	44	56I	10	61
	Tuesday 6½			1				1				1		
HILTON AND MURTON	Sunday 2	46	2S	34C	20	25	47Q	†	52	13	9	45I	22	33
	6½	57	2	34C	20	25	47Q	†	52	13	9	45I	22	33
	Monday 7			2							2			
DUFTON	Sunday 10½						2Q							
	2	58	54	1C	50	49	2SQ	48	33	†	59	13I	55	47
	6½	58	54	6C	50	49		48	39	†	2I	13I	55	32
	Tuesday 7			2					2					
LONGMARTON	Sunday 6½	49	26	27C	5I	13	21Q	6	33	1S	35	54	4I	39
	Thursday 7			2				2						
KIRKBYTHORE	Sunday 10½									1				
	2	48	47C	5I	22	38	59Q	2I	55	1S	35	29	2I	13
	6½	6	47C	54	22	38	57Q	2I	55		59	29	2I	13
	Wednesday 7				2						2			
MILBURN	Sunday 10½							1		2				
	2	49	50	45C	47	54	57Q		2I		26	48	38I	4
	6	3I	50	45C	47	54	51Q	1	29	2S	†	58	37I	4
	Wednesday 7						2						2	
BLENCAIRN	Sunday 2	3I		13C	6	57	51	4Q	29	2S	†	58I	37	54
	6½	39	26	13C		57		4Q		39		48I		54
	Tuesday 7						2						2	
WARCOP	Sunday 2	53	1S	2TC	37	48	*	13Q	3I	22	40	27	52I	1
	6½	46	29	2C	37	48	1S	13Q	3I	45	40	34	44I	1
	Tuesday 7					1		2		1				2
SOULBY	Sunday 2	27	1	14C	30	4I	28	28Q	49	5S	36	25	19	44I
	6½	4Z	56	7C	34	4I	28	53Q	49	5S	36	3S	16	37I
	Wednesday 7					1							1	
BLEATARN	Sunday 1½	1S		4I		6O		45Q		56		1		34
	6½	53		4I		61		45Q		56		2S		34
CROSBY GARRETT ...	Sunday 2		29		44		32Q		1S		55		2S	
WAITBY	Sunday 2	4I		23		36		7Q		53		42		31
	6½	z4I	19	z40	30	z36	32	z16Q	45	z*	55	z42	48	z31
	Wednesday 7						1							1
KNOCK	Sunday 2	2S		25C		53		1SQ		54		57		58I
	6½	2S	21	25C	29	53	59	39I	13	54	26	57	5I	58I
	Thursday 7				2									2
ESPLAND HILL	Sunday 2	14	~~21~~	4C	40	†	33	54I	2S	50	1	46	9I	57
	6½	4S	39	4C	27	†	33	54I	5I	58	29	46	38I	57
	Thursday 7					2						2		
RAVENSTONEDALE ..	Sunday 2	33	30	48C	56	1	37Q	23	15	10	32	53	*	49I
	6½	33	30	48C	55	1S	37Q	30	19	4I	32	53	*	2I
	Wednesday 7			1								1		
MALLERSTANG	Sunday 2	3S	52	28C	32	33	19Q	62	44	48	47	18	30I	7
	6½	3S	52	60C	32	33	56Q	42	44	48	47	18	30I	62
	Wednesday 7				1						1			
HELM	Sunday 2		30		9		50Q		37		49		40	
ORMSIDE	Sunday 2	2		3I		46		4I		34		33		29
CATHEKINE HOLME ...	Sunday 6½	2	36	31C	9	46	50Q	4I	37	34	49	1S	40I	29
	Wednesday 7							2						
KING'S MEABURN... ...	Sunday 2	25	57	35C	21	4	26Q	6	50	29	51	2S	31I	35
	6½		57		21		26Q		50		51		31I	
	Tuesday 7				2									
BRETHERDALE	Sunday 2	A15		D10		L23		A31		D25		L49		D50
CROSBYRAVENSWORTH	Sunday 10½											2		
	2	37	44	42C	1	45	58	29Q	35	31	50		27	48I
	6½	37	44	42C	1S	45	58	29Q	35	31	50	2	27	48I
	Monday 7						2					2		
MUSGRAVE	Sunday 6½	20	1 7	46	44	10	*Q	22	34	28	18	32	52	45
COPELAND BECK	Sunday 2		1	32				37Q				34		
NATEBY	Sunday 2	32	60	37	52	18	40Q	42	30	38	16	15	47	2S
	6½	32	61	28	52	18	31Q	55	30	7	56	44	47	53
	Tuesday													

"He that winneth souls is wise." Prov. xi., 30.

PREACHERS

1 T. A. SEED, Kirkby Stephen
2 J. MONAHAN, Appleby
3 E. Thompson, Hartley Castle
4 T. Westmorland, Kirkby Thore
5 T. Fawcett, Kirkby Stephen
6 W. Robinson, Longmarton
7 R. Simpson, Kirkby Stephen
8 W. Fleming, Dufton
9 J. Close, Smardale Hall
10 T. Bousfield, Gaisgill
11 R. Farrer, Orton
12 J. Dinsdale, Bretherdale
13 R. Simpson, Milburn
14 G. Hall, Catherine Holme
15 E. Beck, Gaisgill
16 W. Benson, Crosby Garrett
17 R. Fawcett, Warcop
18 S. Taylor, Soulby
19 G. Handley, Ravenstonedale
20 J. Rudd, Ormside
21 T. Nixon, Milburn
22 J. Pighills, Soulby
23 J. J. Baker, Gaisgill
24 J. Barker, Winton
25 T. Thompson, Maulds Meaburn
26 R. Hall, Milburn
27 W. P. Robertson, Heights, Ormside
28 W. Hall, Warcop
29 E. Williamson, Appleby
30 W. Harrison, Winton
31 T. Moffatt, Orton
32 J. Gowling, Musgrave
33 J. E. Thompson, Hartley Castle
34 T. Whitehead, Kirkby Stephen
35 H. Hodgson, Crosby Ravensworth
36 J. Handley, Gaisgill
37 T. Hall, Soulby
38 R. Sawer, Kirkby Stephen
39 J. Furnass, Knock
40 J. Cooper, Smardale
41 T. Carter, Holme Bottom, Orton
42 T. Capstick, Ravenstonedale
43 R. Braithwaite, Kirkby Stephen
44 R. Balmer, Soulby
45 J. Lamb, Kirkby Stephen
46 S. Close, Crosby Garrett
47 A. W. Taylor, Hallegarth
48 J. Birkbeck, Crosby Garrett
49 T. Taylor, Crosby Ravensworth
50 R. J. Todd, Crosby Ravensworth

On Trial

51 J. Richardson, Kirkby Thore
52 C. Bousfield, Brough
53 J. Cherry, Soulby
54 T. E. Etchells, Kirkby Thore
55 T. Braithwaite, Kirkby Stephen
56 W. Nicholson, Kirkby Stephen

Exhorters, &c.

57 W. Nevison, Espland Hill
58 T. Dawson, Espland Hill
59 R. Sinclair, Newbiggin
60 G. Sutherland, Mallerstang
61 G. Brown, Mallerstang
62 Supply
* Kirkby Stephen
† Milburn
W

Circuit Officers.

CIRCUIT STEWARDS :—Mr. J. Close, Smardale Hall, Mr. T. Westmorland, Kirkby Thore.

CIRCUIT TREASURER OF THE WORN-OUT MINISTERS' FUND :—Mr. R. Taylor, Crosby Lodge, Shap; to whom the Contributions from the Classes should be forwarded before Christmas.

NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS

References.

Q—Quarterly Collection
C—Chapel Fund do.
I—Institution do.
T—Tickets
L—Lovefeast
S—Sacrament
SS.—Sunday School Sermons
CA.—Chapel Anniversary

Z—before the figure—Service at Smardale Hall
L— „ „ —Service at Brother Layfield's
D— „ „ —Service at Brother Dinsdale s
A— „ „ —Service at Brother Atkinson's

Notices.

1.—The Quarterly Meeting will be held at Kirkby Stephen, on Thursday, December 22nd; Local Preachers at 10.30 a.m.; Stewards at 1 p.m.

2.—Every Preacher is expected to fulfil his own appointments, or to provide an accredited substitute.

3.—The Society Stewards are requested to give due notice of all the Services, Collections &c., and to forward the connexional Collections to the Superintendent without delay.

4.—The publications of the Wesleyan Book Room may be obtained through the Ministers. Orders should be sent not later than the 17th of each month.

5.—The Wesleyan Chapels at Kirkby Stephen, Appleby, Warcop, and Crosby Ravensworth, are duly Licensed for the Solemnization of Marriages.

6.—The Brethren appointed to King's Meaburn are requested to meet a class after the afternoon Service.

7.—The Copeland Beck Service is now held at Mr. Bellas's, Bank End.

8.—The Conference recommends that, on Sunday December 11th, special reference be made in all our Chapels throughout the Connexion to the subject of Temperance.

PRICE 1½d.

J. WHITEHEAD, PRINTER, APPLEBY.

KIRKBY STEPHEN AND APPLEBY WESLEYAN CIRCUIT PLAN : 1881-1882

Preacher in the United Methodist Free Church, as well as being local leader of the Band of Hope, honorary clerk to the School Board and treasurer for the village library.[1] Joseph Richardson died in 1929 after more than 30 years' connection with the Wesleyan Chapel at Mallerstang. When nearly 80 years of age he had been received on to the Wesleyan Plan as a Local Preacher; he, too, had been an ardent member of the Band of Hope and a Sunday School teacher for over 30 years.[2] Mr. T. E. Etchell's death was reported in the Herald of August 20th, 1932. He had been a Local Preacher, in local government, and Kirkby Thore Headmaster for 42 years. He had helped Kirkby Thore people to make up their wills and fill in income tax returns. At Kirkby Thore, he held every Chapel office, including that of Steward and Sunday School Superintendent. John Parkin was a Local Preacher from Appleby. In the front of his diary, or book of Texts,[3] he writes of his visit to North Stainmore, a Sabbath-day's work, on 7.8.1887:

> "Got breakfast at nine. Walked to Kirkby Stephen. arrived 1.30. Camp Meeting commenced at 2. Got no dinner. Preached . . . . Walked a mile to tea. Got my tea at 4.30. Fasted from 9 till 4.30. Then . . . walked home to Appleby, arriving 11.50 p.m. Rather tired, having walked about 24 miles."

He had preached his first Sermon at Appleby on October 4th, 1879. A week later he preached at the Knock Wesleyan Chapel, then, in 1880, he preached at Long Marton, at Brough, Murton Free Church, Blencarn Wesleyan Chapel, Maulds Meaburn Free Church, Dufton Wesleyan Chapel, Knock Wesleyan Chapel, Kirkby Thore Free Church, Murton Free Church, Appleby and Brough. He preached 43 times in the first two years of his

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1. Ibid., 26.3.1889.

2. Cumberland and Westmorland Herald, 21.9.1929.

3. In the possession of his grand-daughter, Mrs. D. Braithwaite, Glen-Eden, Riverside, Kirkby Stephen.

preaching, 36 times in the third year and 48 in the fourth year. In 1885 he preached at Crosby Garrett, Winton and Asby Baptist Chapels. His Sermons were generally Biblical and devotional. He gave a lecture on William Clowes at Appleby in May, 1885, which lasted one hour and fifty minutes. He estimated that between 1879 and 1896 he travelled 5103 miles in the course of his preaching, most of which was in the upper Eden valley.

Minutes of a Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting show one outstanding weakness among Local Preachers, common to both Primitives and Wesleyans. This was thought to be a lack of dedication in their calling and, in the second half of the nineteenth century, it was a considerable local and national problem. When the Wesleyan Local Preachers met at Appleby in 1875, they resolved to attend to the matter: "That this meeting having heard with sorrow that many of the brethren have failed to attend to their preaching appointments on the plan and being of that opinion that the interests of God's cause, in this Circuit, cannot be advanced if this neglect continues in the future resolves first, that we as Local Preachers will seek for ourselves a renewed consecration of Spirit body and Soul to the Services of our God second, that in the future we will endeavour to discharge our work on the Plan as in the fear of God. And will not wilfully neglect our appointments."[1] In the Primitive Methodist Magazine (1866) the same concern (at national level) is expressed:

> "The cause in many places is being stabbed to the very heart, yea barborously murdered through it. Many societies that were once in a flourishing state are now in the last stages of decline . . . and to the neglect of preaching appointments their decay is directly traceable . . . . These

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1. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting, 23.9.1875.

> things wring the heart of many a Minister with bitter anguish; they tie his hands, cripple his efforts and paralyse his energies."

Reasons were suggested for this neglect. The Local Preachers, employed in daily hard work, were too tired to prepare for Preaching; or they wanted to be with their families on the Sabbath; or they were exposed to mental depression, bodily afflictions or "Satanic temptations".[1] It could certainly be said that, in the case of farmer-preachers in our area, unforeseen difficulties could arise when awkward cows, milked by hand, or straying sheep could wreck the Sabbath timetable. How long this undoubted problem dogged the real work of the Kingdom it is difficult to say, though obviously its continuation would seem to be a convincing sign that some of those who were supposed to carry the message were not entirely convinced of its importance. Preachers' meetings, therefore, had to exercise great watchfulness over this problem: a blacker blot when it was experienced in small, isolated places where no other person was able to lead a waiting and disappointed Congregation in proclamation or prayer.

There are few hints in the business of Local Preachers' Meetings to suggest what Sermon content really was or if it changed over the years. Brother James Rennison, a Local Preacher from Kirkby Stephen, was described as "a disciple of the Lord Jesus who lived the religion he professed and preached, and a character of such unselfishness, nobility of purpose, and transparent purity as to stamp him, in his daily work among the people, as a man after God's own heart."[2] The Preachers were

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1. Primitive Methodist Magazine (London, 1866), pp. 721-725; in an article entitled "Neglect of Preaching Appointments" by "J.M."

2. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Sedbergh Wesleyan Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting, 23.6.1910.

certainly urged, by their Superintendent Minister, "to sustain the evangelical appeal in our pulpits",[1] though one would think that 'sustain' would hardly have been the word which Wesley would have used in proclamation of Hell's alternative. Had the zeal of earlier years quietened? This may have been behind the occasional practice, among upper Eden Methodists, of inviting visiting Evangelists to conduct Revival Meetings for limited periods.[2] In an area where death, emigration or military service could seriously reduce the ranks of Local Preachers, the whole population being so small, the need to be seen to be going forward became even more pressing. Twentieth-century Eden Methodist identity still depends on continually experiencing that power of religion generated in earlier days. An unbeliever might analyse the situation thus:

> "A creed which is used as a source of power inspires, for a time, great efforts, but these efforts, especially if they are not very successful, produce weariness, and weariness produces scepticism . . . . The more the methods of propaganda have been used to produce excitement, the greater will be the reaction until in the end a quiet life comes to seem the only thing worth having. When, after a period of repose, the population again becomes capable of excitement, it will need a new stimulus, since all the old stimuli have become boring. Hence creeds which are used too intensively are transitory in their effects."[3]

But a believer, who has a dynamic creed, and who has been convinced of the transforming power of effective preaching, would see this most notable Methodist emphasis quite differently:

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1. Ibid., 13.9.1913.

2. Kirkby Stephen Wesleyan Quarterly Meeting, on 26.6.1890, agreed to invite one of Thomas Champness's Evangelists to reside at Brough for one year. Champness had opened a home for the training of evangelists in 1886 in Rochdale, forerunner of Cliff College in Derbyshire.

3. Bertrand Russell, Power A New Social Analysis (London, 1938), p. 153.

> "We have too readily assumed that the first vitality attending a new spiritual movement is essentially fugitive and transitory. The wonder and the glow of the fresh revelation cannot, indeed, be repeated, but the light itself may come with perennial power to successive generations of disciples, if only their hearts are open to receive it. To bring this about we need to maintain as the controlling forces of the Church the vital relations by which men live - worship, discipleship, fellowship; we have to lay emphasis not on organization but on brotherly love, not on dogma but on illumination and education."[1]

Proclamation and practice go hand in hand and though we may not be able to be precise about the genuine intensity of a person's religious experience, we may be sure about the consequences of a positive response to preaching. Thus, in isolated underpopulated areas, the consequences and the social implications of religious experience still invite, though possibly less so, the unbeliever's closest scrutiny.

Our references to the conversions of the preachers themselves show that the Methodist emphasis was against Sabbath profanation and the defilement of "the world": "Depart, depart, go out thence, touch no unclean thing . . . purify yourselves."[2] Though St. Paul made the same emphasis in 2 Corinthians 6, verse 17, ("Come out from them"), his reference-point was also the Old Testament. The thirty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah, speaking of the virtues of the Rechabites, offered some reason why wine should not be drunk and, as with observance of the Sabbath law and avoiding the unclean, these Judaistic requirements could easily be tested among local Methodists in a small isolated community. For Methodism in the upper Eden valley sought, as Quakers had done before, to meet the obligation of distinct separation from all the

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1. W. C. Braithwaite, The Beginnings of Quakerism (London, 1912), p. 529.

2. Isaiah 52, verse 11; all Biblical quotations in this thesis are from the Revised Standard Version of The Holy Bible (1957).

impuritiesof society. Alan Wilkinson recalls being evacuated from Walney Island, Barrow-in-Furness, in 1941, to the safety of Little Strickland, between Shap and Penrith. Speaking of the isolation be encountered he wrote "in itself, (it) was not a bad thing. Being tied to that village gave us a certain stability which we had been denied over the previous two or three years, slowing down the pace, bringing security . . . ."[1] In the religious sense, Methodists, like Jews, could find a parallel security in being part of an isolated holy community: a confidence in particular, traditional, religious ways and standards. Interestingly, the Anglicans of Grimshaw's Haworth Parish, in Yorkshire, in the mid-eighteenth century, were disturbed to find that their Parson began crossing Parish boundaries. Glyn Hughes' novel shows that the ecclesiastical isolation of Anglican parishes was sometimes threatened by evangelical enthusiasms. "Many disliked this bursting out of the parish. It sent a shudder through old-fashioned people, as if whatever held their tribe intact was being violated."[2]

The Gospel was preached, in the upper Eden, by local preachers from the immediate area in chapels made out of stone from the same locality. Many of these chapels are small rectangular buildings with little exterior or interior ornamentation. Spital Chapel, (page E of this thesis)[3] is characteristic, though it has an interior which can be partitioned for a Sunday School. When it was opened in 1865, the religious teaching of children was a Methodist emphasis and the build- is called "Primitive School" on the outside. The architectural

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1. Alan Wilkinson, A Sheltered Life (published by himself at No. 1, Rufford Grove, Bingham, Nottingham, 1980), p. 47.

2. Glyn Hughes, Where I Used to Play on the Green (London, 1982), p. 68.

3. Following p. 119.

Photographs by Julia Petty, Darlington

SPITAL CHAPEL
(exterior and interior)

simplicity is repeated, though with a plain wall cross above the Communion Table, in the new chapel at Brough Sowerby, opened in 1972 to replace a temporary building. (See page F).[1] Pulpits are usually central (though not at Brough Sowerby) and much more prominent than the Communion Table. The usual musical instrument is the harmonium, still well-suited to the accompaniment of congregational singing in small chapels. In one or two bigger chapels (as at Appleby) there is the luxury of a pipe organ. Like building materials and preachers, the organist also has often had to be 'home-produced'. A fairly common visual aid in Worship is the Pulpit Fall on which is usually embroidered the initials I.H.S. meaning "Jesus Saviour of Men" to some and beyond any standard interpretation to the rest. As with the Quakers, the use of religious symbolism is uncommon, and an obvious Cross, which may remind one Congregation of the love and power of Jesus, may remind another of the Church of England - which could be a distraction in Methodist Worship. Plain simplicity is the chapel characteristic, not because the builders "hadn't the heart to compete with the magnificence of the countryside"[2] but because there was no point in imitating an architecture which represented a different ritual and doctrine.[3] To have copied the Anglican style in the early days of chapel-building would have been to have lacked Parish sensitivity. In any case, Church of England building programmes were beset with problems with which Methodism did not need to associate. For Anglican "difficulties involved in raising a new church in an old parish were often insuperable."

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1. Following p. 120.

2. W. R. Mitchell, Men of Lakeland, p. 79.

3. John Wesley described his new Chapel in City Road, London, as "perfectly neat, but not fine." (The Journal, VI, 215).

Photographs by John Hall, Appleby

BROUGH SOWERBY CHAPEL
(exterior and interior)

Permission had to be "granted by the existing incumbent, by patron, and diocesan, and then one had to resort to an expensive Act of Parliament. But Methodists . . . needed no more than a cheap licence, a plot of land and a few pounds to build a little chapel in some . . . area unserved by the Church. While the parson stood helpless a small band of determined laymen could advance the cause of the Gospel and of the Connexion. A single Methodist plasterer, William Beatson, could build a chapel in Cambridge with his own hands and his own money."[1] There was neither need nor money for anything but the plainest structure. So Stephen Brunskill who left Orton to live at Beathwaite Green, near Kendal, describes how he and neighbouring farmers built "a place of our own." He writes "we therefore set about it in earnest and although the people were generally poor, they subscribed what they could cheerfully and the farmers in the neighbourhood assisted in carting the materials to the place so that we presently erected a convenient little chapel and settled it upon the conference plan."[2] Not much time appears to have been taken to design a Methodist building which would somehow show both the immanence and transendence of God. If, in Worship, eyes were to be opened, it would only be to see the Preacher or the Hymn Book. If they were to be closed, it would only be to pray. If there was to be movement, it would only be a few short paces from and to the outside world, temporarily shut out, during Worship,by a brief porch. In a report of the Property Division of the Methodist Church, produced in 1980, one section was entitled "What is the Worship-Room to say?"[3] In contrast,

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1. John Walsh in A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain, I, 313.

2. Stephen Brunskill's autobiography, p. 50.

3. "So you need a new church do you?" and Report of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (Manchester, 1980), pp. 25-29.

early Methodists believed that revelation by-passed furnishings and architecture and that conversation should be directly and simply between man and God.

It was in house or open-air, however, that preaching was first heard and from which a nucleus of believers grew together through meeting each other as the Wesleys had required in the 1743 Rules of Society. Since, as John Wesley had also said, "they that do not believe the Bible will believe anything",[1] the importance of Holy Scripture has always been stressed in Eden chapels and Methodist homes. Proclamation and study of the Word became, for this valley population, as important as it was in 1561 for the Waldensians in the remote valleys of Northern Italy. Those isolated Christians then declared:

> "We promise to maintain the Bible, entire and without admixture, according to the usage of the true Apostolic Church, steadfastly continuing in this holy religion, although it should be at peril of our lives, in order that we may be able to leave it to our children intact and pure, as we have received it from our fathers."[2]

In Eden, Sunday School Scholars could learn certain passages of the Psalms, by memory, and be presented with a Bible. This opportunity, however, also belonged to the Church of England and these 'Lord Wharton' Bibles were distributed, for instance, in the two Anglican Parishes at Appleby (Bondgate and St. Lawrence) in 1861;[3] children under 14 also had to learn the Church of England catechisms as well as the required Psalms. Methodism still benefits from the same legacy (willed in 1696), as did the Appleby United Methodist Free Church Circuit, in 1899, when

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1. John Wesley, The Works, XIII, 370.

2. Alexis Muston, The Israel of the Alps. History of the Waldenses (London, 1866), I, 263.

3. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 15.1.1861.

it resolved "that application be made for a Number of Lord Wharton Bibles to be distributed amongst the Sunday Schools of the Circuit."[1] 34 were obtained. The ministry of the Word, read or expounded, was an Ordinance of God which John Wesley's Societies were expected to "attend upon." Unlike the Class Meetings which, even in Wesley's lifetime were not altogether manageable or successful, public and private reading of the Scriptures was a necessary part of Methodist devotion. So itwas a rare and surprising Minute which, in 1842, from Barnard Castle Primitive Methodists, said "that a portion of the sacred Scriptures be read once every Sabbath in all our Chapels and Preaching Rooms."[2]

Leadership problems and the mixing of social classes within the Methodist Class Meeting caused some general decline in its importance during the nineteenth century. From the records we have it is not possible to say that this was the case in the upper Eden valley, since there are so few references of any kind to local Class Meetings. It would be tempting to say that the Wesley Guild, at the end of the century, replaced them, but the aims of the two were quite different. In any case the Guilds, to which we return later, were established when the Methodists had become recognized as the Methodist Church rather than that saintly Society within the Church of England in which John Wesley believed the Class Meeting would have a sanctifying influence. Of the nineteenth-century Class meeting, Henry Rack says: "Groups of this kind flourish best if their members share an intensity of - and continuing interest in - a common pattern of religious experience. Unless the "experience" is maintained, unless indeed it is progressive and becoming

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1. Minutes of the Appleby United Methodist Free Church Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 15.6.1899.

2. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 22.12.1842.

more sophisticated, boredom and loss of interest is always liable to set in."[1] Wesley frequently asserted - when the Class Meeting was an essential Methodist feature - that attendance was necessary for the members of Societies. Whether what Rack says happened in wider Methodism also took place in our local area, is difficult to establish, for in a Connexional system, the influence of the Travelling Preacher could be either to bring a new impetus to existing Class Meetings or other ideas for an alternative form of local fellowship. Rack accepts the decline of the Class Meeting as having happened by the end of the nineteenth century, and sees the original doctrine of Scriptural holiness diluted: "The decline of effective participation in the class as the criterion of Methodist membership, despite the long persistence of it as the formal basis, is an indication of the fact that the original Methodist purpose of a holiness society had been absorbed into a wider, less intense, more conventional view of what Christianity and a Christian church ought to be."[2] As far as "boredom and loss of interest" were concerned, farmers and farmworkers in our area, needing to be at work in the open-air during the longer days between Easter and the gathering of the Harvest, would return to the chapel in the autumn evenings to a new series of fellowship meetings, when the simple passage of time had created new interest. Sunday Worship, the only thing that did not profane the Sabbath, naturally continued through the summer months.

There are few references to Class Meetings or Class Leaders in local Wesleyan Minutes. One could assume that, in 1885, Class financial

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1. Henry D. Rack, "The Decline of the Class-Meeting and the Problem of Church-Membership in Nineteenth-century Wesleyanism", in Rev. Dr. John C. Bowmer, ed., Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society (Chester, February, 1973), p. 13.

2. Ibid., pp. 17-18.

contributions were not as forthcoming as they ought to have been. The Quarterly Meeting agreed "that the Secretary communicate with each leader throughout the Circuit, recommending that they make it an invariable rule to regularly collect the Weekly pence in their classes according to Conference rule."[1] Later in the same year, indeed, it became obvious that finance and fellowship were directly related. In December, 1885, the Ministers presented their analysis of the Membership in the following way:

"There are 569 members who meet in Class, and pay.
There are 65 members who do not meet in Class, but pay.
There are 40 members who meet in Class, but don't pay.
There are 9 members who neither meet in Class, nor pay.
Total 683"[2]

We note that almost ninety per cent of the Wesleyan Circuit Membership was meeting in Class as late as 1885. The decline was by no means complete. To the Register of the names of the United Methodist Free Church Members in the Appleby Circuit, in 1861, S. Beavan, the Appleby Circuit Minister, added the following.

"I have reported the number of members to the Annual Assembly 1861 as 144 - Because I would make an allowance for some whose names are on Class Books, but whose attendance at Class Meetings of late has been so slight (without any solid reason for absence) as to render them somewhat doubtful."[3] In the Register (1867), there is reference to a Primitive

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1. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 25.6.1885.

2. Ibid., 24.12.1885.

3. The Register of the names of the Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Association in the Appleby Circuit, commencing in 1840. December 21st.

Methodist. Isaac Bayliffe[1] of Appleby is noted as a Primitive Methodist Local Preacher who meets in the United Methodist Free Church Monday Class, does not pay, is a Helper on the United Methodist Free Church Plan but pays to the Primitives. These Minutes also suggest that, in the United Methodist Free Church, Classes were being held regularly. A Quarterly Meeting at Appleby (21.6.1865) agreed "that Wesley's Rules be read once a quarter in our classes." Barnard Castle Primitive Methodists refer to a possible Class Meeting when they agree "that the fellowship meeting usually held in the Chapel at Barnard Castle on a Saturday evening be held on a Sabbath morning in the stead so as to allow time for cleaning the Chapel etc."[2] Their practical approach is also seen in a further, rare reference to the Class, in 1844. They agree "that an address be printed containing a plain statement of the present position of the Circuit temporally affectionately requesting all the Members to enter into the regular weekly payment of Class money in order so far to improve the funds of the Circuit so as to employ another Preacher which is so greatly needed."[3] Local Preachers' Meetings Minutes give occasional insight to Class Meetings: "Bro Mason have a note requesting him to meet in Class in accordance with our Rule."[4] In 1924 "a discussion took place on forming a Class for the young Local Preachers, and Mr. Rhodes kindly promised to try and arrange a Class at Gaisgill, for the young

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1. A railway-worker, then farmer and butcher, he was a strict Sabbath observer. He preached some 2,860 times in 54 years; his son, John, born at Appleby in 1868 became a Primitive Methodist Preacher in 1888 and died in 1950; see Ella K. Crossley, John B. Bayliffe (London, 1952).

2. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meetings, 23.3.1843.

3. Ibid., 21.3.1844.

4. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Local Preachers' Meetings, 28.6.1872.

preachers from Orton, Gaisgill and Ravenstonedale."[1] In 1928, it was agreed that "all preachers be requested to hold a prayer meeting after the night service."[2] This could not have been quite like the old Class Meeting but it kept Methodists together, led by the Preacher and offering prayers to God which may well have expressed the sentiments of those who, in the early Classes, talked to each other. As early as 1850, the Primitive Methodist Quarterly Meeting at Brough had agreed "that George Jackson of Carlingil andGeo Jackson of Tebay go on plan as Prayer Leaders."[3] There is no reason to suppose that such prayer-times were much different from the prayer-meetings of earlier days, though did the Jacksons have Mow Cop voices? Ritson writes: "The noise was often heard at a great distance. The most fearful blasphemer of the whole countryside heard the noise of a prayer meeting right up to her own house at Mow Cop, a mile and a half distant, and was thereby awakened and soundly converted."[4] In our area, prayer meetings may have replaced the Class Meetings as the nineteenth century progressed, but were probably not as financially useful as the Class Meetings.

More important was the work of teaching, especially among the young. Benjamin Ingham's interest in the education of children had been noticeable as early as 1734, when he taught 42 children to read in Ossett; he also taught 12 children on the boat on his way to America, and when he arrived there in 1736, he spent the first three months teaching children in a school five miles from Savannah where, with the help of two

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1. Ibid., 13.3.1924.

2. Ibid., 1.3.1928.

3. Minutes of the Brough Branch of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit, 13.9.1850.

4. Joseph Ritson, The Romance of Primitive Methodism (London, 1909), p. 24.

Moravians, he was entirely in charge.[1] In the Minutes of the Inghamites for Sunday, April 2nd, 1758 (at Salterforth Chapel, some ten miles north of Burnley in Lancashire), we read:

> "At two in the Afternoon the GO" (General Overseer) "kept a Children's Meeting in the Chapel whereat many were present, young and old. And afterwards noticed that there would be one every Sunday after preaching this Summer (rainy days excepted) and that all parents, whether they belonged to us or not, might send their children, if they please."

Eleven years later, John Wesley's friend, Hannah Ball, began her Sunday School in 1769[2] and Wesley's keen interest in her work was expressed in a letter on March 10th, 1782:

> "I wanted to know what was become of those little maidens, and trust some of them will bring forth fruit to perfection. As you have a peculiar love for children and a talent for assisting them, see that you stir up the gift of God which is in you. If you gain but one of them in ten, you have a good reward for your labour."[3]

In 1785 he wrote to John Fletcher: "I really hope the Sunday Schools will be productive of great good to the nation. They spread wider and wider, and are likely to reach every part of the kingdom."[4] In 1787 he wrote to Richard Rodda: "It seems to me that these will be one great means of reviving religion throughout the nation. I wonder Satan has not yet sent out some able champion against them."[5] In the same year he wrote to Alexander Suter: "Our Sunday schools at Bolton contain upward of

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1. D. F. Clarke, Benjamin Ingham (1712-1772), M.Phil. thesis, (Leeds University, 1971), p. 182.

2. John Wesley, The Letters, VII, 114, footnote 4.

3. Ibid., VII, 114.

4. Ibid., VII, 265.

5. Ibid., VII, 364.

eight hundred children, and are all taught by our own brethren WITHOUT PAY. I love Sunday schools much. They have done abundance of good."[1] In 1783 Wesley had expressed his thought on "The Manner of Educating Children" in which were guidelines for teaching: "Does it follow", he asked, "that we ought not to instil true religion into the minds of children as early as possible? Or, rather, that we should do it with all diligence from the very time that reason dawns, laying line upon line, precept upon precept, as soon and as fast as they are able to bear it? By all means. Scripture, reason, and experience jointly testify, that, inasmuch as the corruption of nature is earlier than our instructions can be, we should take all pains and care to counteract this corruption as early as possible. The bias of nature is set the wrong way: Education is designed to set it right."[2]

Over half a century later the Primitive Methodists, it seemed, had taken this guidance seriously. Set into the Quarter Day Account and Minute Book of Brough Branch of the Hull Circuit (in 1841) we have Sabbath School Regulations. Systematic thoroughness is reflected in the detailed timetable:

> "By order of the School Committee August 9th, 1844.
> Regulations for Sabbath School.
>
> "Morning. Door to be opened 10 minutes before 9 o'clock. Open School precisely at 9 o'clock. Sing and Pray 10 minutes till 9.10. Read 20 minutes till 9.30. Mark Class Papers 5 minutes till 9.35. Read 20 minutes till 9.55. Spell 5 minutes till 10. Sing, pray and conclude 10 minutes till 10.10. Relieve the children 10 minutes. Have them all seated properly by 10.25.
>
> "Afternoon. Door to be opened twenty minutes past one o'clock. Open school precisely at 1.30. Sing and pray 10 minutes till 1.40.

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1. Ibid., VIII, 23-24; this Bolton is in Lancashire.

2. John Wesley, The Works, XIII, 436.

> Read 20 minutes till 2. Mark Class Books 5 minutes till 2.5. Spell 10 minutes till 2.15. Read 20 minutes till 2.35. Catechise 10 minutes till 2.45. Lecture 15 minutes till 3. Sing and pray 10 or 15 minutes till 3.10 or 3.15. The children must be kept on their seats till the Congregation has withdrawn. Then the girls must go out first by seniority, the boys in the meantime to be furnished with their hats and caps by their teachers and must not be allowed to seek them themselves. This will prevent much confusion.
>
> "P.S. Each teacher must leave the School at the head of his or her class while the children follow."

This was the setting for Wesley's further instructions to teachers, who should be endeavouring "to cure their (own) self-will, pride, and every other wrong temper":

> "Let (the children) be delivered to instructers (if such can be found) that will . . . watch over them as immortal spirits, who are shortly to appear before God, and who have nothing to do in this world but to prepare to meet Him . . . ."[1]

Obviously every word, written or spoken, by the founder of Methodism did not reach every follower, but wherever and whenever the theme of Love was central, preachers and converts shared it everywhere. "His visits to all parts of the kingdom kindled the fire in others, and his letters kept it burning by wise and loving counsel and encouragement."[2]

The Brough Primitive Methodist Sunday School work of 1844 was thus only a small part of work on a rapidly-growing wider front. A Wesleyan Conference report in 1837 showed that there were 3,339 Sunday schools and 60,000 teachers for 341,442 scholars. Only a quarter of the preaching places were without a school.[3] A Wesleyan Sunday School had, in fact,

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1. John Wesley, The Works, XIII, 437.
2. John Telford, 'A Final Note' in John Wesley's Letters, VIII, 266.
3. Cyril J. Davey, The Methodist Story, pp. 50-51.

opened in Barnard Castle in 1810, "in consequence of great numbers of children being sent at a very early age to the factory, and being thus deprived of the opportunity of obtaining even a secular education . . . the doors of the sanctuary were thrown open . . . Scholars came pouring in abundantly, and soon upwards of four hundred names were entered in the books . . . . Great moral and spiritual good as well as secular benefits resulted from this institution . . . . The number of scholars it is true, is not so great as formerly, schools of a similar character having since been commenced in connection with the National church, and by dissenting denominations."[1] In 1843 we have reference to Appleby Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Association's children's work. At their Quarterly Meeting in March, at Powis House, near Long Marton, they agreed "that the Revd. Mr. Middleton of Whitehaven be sent for to preach the Appleby Sunday School Anniversary Sermons on Easter Sunday."[2] All the branches of Methodism in our area had Sunday Schools almost as soon as Societies were established. We look, therefore, at various District and Circuit Minutes to observe numbers of scholars and teachers and to attempt some understanding of the relationship between being a scholar and being a Member of the Society. We shall then turn briefly to local newspaper reports of Sunday School work, aware that it is easier to surmise than to prove that being a Sunday School scholar may well have isolated that child from young, non-Methodist, social contemporaries - especially if the scholar later became a Member of the Society and remained loyal to it.

The District Wesleyan Meeting at Whitehaven in May, 1842, says

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1. Anthony Steele, History of Methodism in Barnard Castle and the Principal Places in the Dales Circuit, pp. 199-201.

2. Minutes of the Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Association Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 21.3.1843.

there were 12 Sunday Schools in the Appleby Circuit, with two libraries, 83 teachers and 537 scholars. In 1853, there were 10 Sunday Schools, 425 enrolled scholars and 94 teachers. When the customary business question was asked: "Has the religious oversight of the young especially by the formation of catechumen classes been duly attended to?" the answer was almost as customary: "An oversight has been taken of the young but there are many difficulties in this District to the formation of catechumen classes." There was some reported improvement in the 1856 District meeting: very few catechumen classes but oversight of the young, especially through frequent Sunday School visits by the Brethren (that is, the Travelling Preachers) had "continued thoroughly". In 1865, though Appleby Circuit had 11 Sabbath Schools, 121 teachers and 662 scholars, it did not have any catechumens. Carlisle Circuit then had 30, Penrith 30 and Kendal 42, in a District where there were 6,654 Sunday School scholars. In 1869, regrettably, there were 13 Sunday Schools in the District which were not taken to regular Chapel Services; not surprisingly, Ministers were encouraged to ensure their presence in Worship. By 1875, the total number of scholars in the District was 10,628, an increase of almost 4,000 in one decade. In 1879 there were 15 Sunday Schools (in what had become the Kirkby Stephen Circuit), 152 teachers and 791 scholars. Encouragingly there were then a number of "scholars who (were) members of Society." By 1880 the District heard that some scholars were playing truant - because their teachers were doing the same. In 1881, encouragingly, there were 89 Sunday Schools in which the Wesleyan Catechism was taught. The 1878 Wesleyan Conference, however, had already adopted a plan of Junior Society Classes, "designed to prepare young persons, by Christian instruction and the nurturing of spiritual sensibility, for admission to full Church-membership."[1] The

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1. Henry W. Williams, The Constitution and Policy of Wesleyan Methodism, 2nd edition (London, 1882), p. 12.

essence of an 1820 Liverpool Conference Minute nevertheless still stood: "We earnestly recommend the uniform and regular practice of catechetical instruction in the families and schools of our Connexion, as being especially important in the present state of our Body, and of the country at large; and we press upon our people the propriety of using our own Catechisms, in preference to all others."[1] In 1838, when the era of undenominational-type Sunday Schools (though frequently taught by Methodists and held on Methodist premises) had begun to pass, Samuel and Robert Jackson (instructed by Conference) prepared a scheme of instruction which would help to implement the 1820 Conference resolution and thus re-iterate what Wesley had written in 1756. In Dublin he had "met about a hundred children catechized publicly twice a week. Thomas Walsh began this some months ago, and the fruit of it appears already. What a pity that all our preachers in every place have not the zeal and wisdom to follow his example!"[2]

By May 1889 there were 15,030 scholars in the Carlisle District, meeting on Wesleyan Methodist premises - a figure which had almost trebled in a quarter of a century. In 1894 the importance of the systematic teaching of the Catechism was again stressed and Circuits were required to consider it at their June Quarterly Meetings. By 1900, there were 15,589 scholars in the District but a year later the number had fallen to 15,258, followed by 16,004 in 1905 and down to 11,259 in 1920, when the Kirkby Stephen Circuit had 666 scholars. Six years earlier the local figure had been 985. Interestingly, membership of the Vale of Eden Band of Hope, which included a considerable number of children and

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1. Ibid., p. 327.

2. John Wesley, The Journal, IV, 157.

young people, was 1,148 in 1905, 967 in 1914 and 570 in 1920.[1] Had the claims of the local Band of Hope (founded in 1873) been as appealing as those of Society Membership? And had Sunday Schools continued as they began at the beginning of the century, "regarded as private enterprises, to be encouraged and assisted, but not to be recognized as part of the machinery of the Church?"[2] The Band of Hope, as we shall see, taught people the wisdom of abstinence from alcohol, while committed Sunday School teaching was about life in all its aspects. Interestingly, the Preston Temperance Society had been founded on March 22nd, 1832, and, on September 1st, in the same year, John King was the first person to sign a pledge of total abstinence.[3] One indirect result of this was that, in 1855, at Appleby, the two Wesleyan Methodist Ministers, Christopher Newton and Peter Prescott, complained to the local Methodists that in Warcop Chapel "a Tee-total Sabbath School was taught some time, instead of a Christian Sabbath School."[4]

Local Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting Minutes, making reference to Sunday Schools and Society Membership give the impression that, at the end of the nineteenth century, the Sunday School has not, generally speaking, been the gateway into Membership: "Sunday School work not . . . quite satisfactory at every place, indeed not happening at all in some places", (19.3.1885). There "were Ten Schools in the Circuit not making use of the Catechism . . . those schools be Communicated with,

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1. Minutes of the District Wesleyan Meetings (8.7.1801 - May, 1920).

2. J. R. and A. E. Gregory, "Wesleyan Methodism - The Middle Period", in A New History of Methodism, I, 415.

3. Robert Taylor, "The Seven Men of Preston", in the Methodist Recorder 4.3.1982, p. 10.

4. In a Pastoral Address to the Wesleyan Methodist Societies in the Appleby Circuit, By the Ministers (Appleby, 1855).

urging its adoption", (25.6.1891). "Surprise was expressed that only 20% of our Scholars were found to be Members of the Church, and it was recommended that more careful attention should be given to this phase of our work, and, regarding the Sunday School as a Nursery to the Church, every legitimate effort should be made to bring our elder Scholars into closer fellowship", (23.6.1900). Every "Sunday School in the Circuit be recommended to use the Conference Catechism where this is not already done", (18.6.1904). "While deploring a decrease in the number of Sunday scholars, this meeting is of opinion that in a wide country circuit such as this,[1] the scheme of engaging a paid Sunday School Organiser does not commend itself; and, further, that the money required as the Circuit's quota towards the Organiser's salary could not be raised", (13.6.1918). Numbers of scholars in the Wesleyan Circuit did not vary much between 1920 (666), 1921 (631), 1925 (661), and 1930 (622); these last were in 22 Sunday Schools, with 111 Teachers.[2]

From the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit Meeting we find that there were, in 1841, Sunday Schools in Barnard Castle, Brough, Kendal, Staveley and Newbiggin, with 65 teachers and 265 scholars. Here, too, there appears to be the early evident separation between Sunday School and Society: the "Sunday School at Kendal pay 10/-. a year to the Chapel for fire, cleaning and rent", (31.8.1837); the Chapel, nevertheless, oversees Sunday School funds, "£1.7.0. to be taken out of the Sunday School fund at Barnard Castle to purchase hymn books for the children of the said Sunday School", (31.8.1837); the "committee of Barnard Castle Sunday School be allowed to expend their surplus of the

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1. Sedbergh had also been part of the Circuit since 1900, but would be taken from it again in 1919.

2. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meetings.

School's money to establish a library after supplying the want of the School", (27.8.1839); this "Quarter Day Board strongly recommends books to be given to our Sabbath school children as rewards instead of caps and other wearing apparel at the Anniversaries as heretofore", (19.9.1844); "Barnard Castle Sunday School sermons to be preached Sunday July 19th", (27.3.1846).[1] The Brough Primitive Methodist Branch Minutes say that the Sabbath Schools "be visited once every quarter by the Travelling Preachers", (19.9.1851), and that "there be a Tea meeting for the benefit of Brough Sunday School", (10.12.1852). In the 1887 Primitive Methodist Circuit Report to the District, there were 539 scholars in 1886, 106 teachers and 36 "Catechumen Members"; 323 of the 539 scholars belonged to the Band of Hope.[2] In 1896 some effort to relate Sunday School with Society Membership was probably being made when it was decided "that Mr. Sutton write the Sunday Schools of the Circuit enquiring into the practicability of having a Circuit Examination on 'History of the Connexion'".[3] In 1907, the importance of children knowing about other continents lay in a Circuit endeavour "to hold Juvenile Missionary Meetings in aid of the African Mission fund . . . ."[4] In 1908, either as a result of Bible Study or Connexional History, Miss E. Brunskill of Tebay and Mr. Bird of Brough "and the scholars" were to be congratulated "upon the success of the examination. Of the 9 District prizes 5 come to Tebay and one to Brough."[5] In 1912 there

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1. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

2. Report of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit to the Carlisle and Whitehaven District, 1887.

3. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit, 3.12.1896.

4. Ibid., 9.9.1907.

5. Ibid., 3.12.1908.

was agreement "that Young People's Day be observed, preachers and teachers to direct their effort and appeal towards bringing our young people to decision for Christ on this day."[1] Society Membership could then, but did not always, follow.

As for the smaller Methodist branches, the Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Association Quarterly Meeting agreed, in 1847, that it accept "the offer of . . . Bro. Saml. Crosby . . . to visit those places in the Circuit where we have a Sabbath School, to address the Scholars and Parents."[2] In 1865, the United Methodist Free Church Quarterly Meeting agreed "that the children of our schools be asked to assist in raising money for the Mission funds."[3] The United Methodist Church Quarterly Meetings say very little about the numbers of their scholars or about any relationship between teaching and Membership. At their 1930 meeting, however, there are 97 scholars who have 24 teachers - an enviable teacher-pupil ratio.[4]

Norman Nicholson's Methodist background in south Lakeland has enabled him to recall occasional evangelistic campaigns during the earlier part of this century, especially among children and young people. He writes: "We all signed a little ticket, saying that we accepted Jesus as our Saviour, rather as if we were applying for membership at a public library. Once or twice I would have liked to have gone forward with the others in answer to the appeal, but I knew that, if I did so, my mother would accuse me of showing her up in public. 'It only makes people start wondering what you've been up to', she would say,

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1. Ibid., 5.9.1912.

2. Minutes of the Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Association Circuit Meeting, 27.12.1847.

3. Ibid., 21.6.1865.

4. Ibid., 6.3.1930.

if you go traipsing out there.'"[1] He recalls that at the Sunday School Anniversary he "recited some moral verses"[2] from the Pulpit and one wonders if this growing practice had become the local alternative to a public catechetical examination. Or had it developed out of an event like that reported in the local newspaper in 1861, when Soulby Wesleyan Sunday School had had a prize distribution the previous Christmas Day, following an oral examination at which parents "witnessed their ability?"[3] In 1866, at Knock Wesleyan Sabbath School's annual meeting, however, children did recite their catechism, together with "scripture pieces and dialogues selected for the occasion."[4] Later in 1866, at Kirkby Stephen Wesleyan Sunday School, children were "publicly examined, reciting Scripture and answering questions on their Catechism; they also recited dialogues and pieces with great credit to themselves and their teachers."[5] In 1868, children at Espland Hill Sunday School Anniversary were examined in Scripture, History and Doctrine by their Teachers; scholars also recited prose and verse.[6] In 1909 certain Sunday School Festivals were held on Good Friday at the Tebay Primitive Chapel, the Appleby United Methodist Chapel, the Appleby Primitive Methodist Chapel, the Murton United Methodist Chapel and the Kirkby Stephen Primitive Methodist Chapel. These were public meetings with visiting speakers. The Appleby Primitive Methodist Good Friday Service was called the

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1. Norman Nicholson, Wednesday Early Closing, pp. 84ff.
2. Ibid., p. 106.
3. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 1.1.1861.
4. Ibid., 26.6.1866.
5. Ibid., 8.1.1867.
6. Ibid., 21.7.1868.

"Fruit Banquet".[1] One wonders how much the children were made aware of the real, Christian significance of Good Friday, especially when one reads Nicholson's recollections: "Lent brought out the boolies and whip and top to commemorate, as we are now told, the scourging of Christ, though I certainly knew nothing of this at the time. I doubt if I even knew it was Lent."[2] He would probably agree, however, that the story of the Crucifixion was told on many other Sundays in the chapel Sunday Schools while local Anglicans were having their Rogation Sunday or their All Saints and other Festivals. By 1972 the Herald is saying less about Methodism, though Ravenstonedale Methodist Sunday School Anniversary Services are reported, with children still taking part with song and recitation and receiving gifts of books; they also read Lessons.[3] In newspaper report, as in Circuit Minutes, there may not be an evident encouragement for children to enter into Church Membership nor may there be, especially in later years, sign of acquaintance with Methodist Catechisms, but it cannot be denied that, as for the children of Jewish families in the Old Testament, the Sunday School teachers were being parents to many who knew nothing of God's "words": "You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."[4] As with the Jews, the purpose of such teaching was that children should be holy, for God had said "You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."[5] Children were being taught that "this is a

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1. Ibid., 17.4.1909.
2. Norman Nicholson, Wednesday Early Closing, p. 64.
3. Cumberland and Westmorland Herald, 8.7.1972.
4. Deuteronomy 11, verse 19.
5. Leviticus 12, verse 45.

universe in which men prosper by conforming to holiness and perish when they deviate from it."[1]

Yet with all the emphasis on preaching and teaching, within and through the Societies, the results may have seemed to be less than spectacular, in terms of growing Membership. Hodgson Casson, who had worked in Kendal and Brough between 1817 and 1821 had expressed a discouragement during his North and South Chields Ministry between 1833 and 1835:

> "One of the most important questions that is awakening the attention of the faithful Minister is the present day is this, How is the out-door population of our country to be reached? The erection of churches and chapels, - the increase of the number of those who are employed in the ministry, - its improved character, - the multiplication of Sabbath and day schools, - the extensive scattering abroad of religious tracts, - as well as various other agencies, have been brought into active operation; yet, after all, the sad state of demoralization, - the general neglect of attendance on Divine ordinances, - the prevalence of Sabbath-breaking, - and the comparative apathy of Christian congregations (if we may not say their awful lethargy,) - present a fearful picture, calculated to appal the heart of the devoted servant of Christ, and excite the most gloomy forebodings."[2]

As the nineteenth century progressed, there were signs that this gloom was fading. A new importance began to be attached to singing as a means of evangelism, missionary interest was increasing and the Band of Hope was flourishing. Nor is this to say that other, general Methodist practices were not also taking place. The Sacraments of the Lord's Supper and of Infant Baptism were administered, though the few visits of Travelling Preachers meant that these were less frequent than in town and city. Lovefeasts, popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, did not continue, however, even though John Wesley has numerous accounts

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1. Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger (London, 1966), p. 50.

2. Quoted by A. Steele, Life and Labours of Hodgson Casson, p. 163.

of them in his Journal, and Benjamin Ingham (influenced by the Moravians) also conducted such Services. On June 10th, 1759, for instance, at the Lovefeast at Birks Inghamite Chapel, Richard Brunskill was proposed as a candidate for Membership.[1] Hugh Bourne's Preface to his 1835 hymn book indicated some early importance of the feast in Primitive Methodism:

> "Lovefeasts usually open with singing and prayer. A piece is then sung by way of asking a blessing; after which the bread and water are served out, the lovefeast collection is made, a piece sung by way of returning thanks. The preacher makes a few remarks; the people rise in succession, and speak their own experience; and distant comers sometimes say a little about the work of God in other places. But none are allowed to run into useless exhortations, drag out to tedious lengths, or to speak unprofitably to others; and above all not to reflect upon or find fault, either with individuals or societies. And it is the preacher's painful duty to stop all who attempt to trespass. He has to preserve the lovefeast in its clear and pure course, in order that the people may grow into the faith and that the Holy Ghost may descend. Singing and prayer are occasionally introduced; and the lovefeast finally closes with prayer. It has been a custom to have preaching before a lovefeast; but this is very generally laid aside on account of its very great inconvenience."[2]

The Barnard Castle Branch of the Hull Primitive Methodist Circuit arranged Lovefeasts at Brough, Mouthlock, and Dufton in 1837, when Collections were 5/10, 5/9, and 1/8, respectively, during the quarter ending August, 1837.[3] Ormside was to have a lovefeast in 1840,[4] a Travelling Preacher not being required. In 1843 the Lovefeasts and Sacraments were to be left with the Planmakers who should not fail "to Plan a Sacrament at Mouthlock . . ." The Lovefeast took place in all the branches of local

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1. Minutes of The Inghamites.
2. Quoted by J. Atkinson in the Methodist Recorder, 9.6.1977.
3. Barnard Castle Branch and Kendal Mission Account.
4. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit, 2.6.1840.
5. Ibid., 23.3.1843.

Methodism but never frequently and never, apparently, as a substitute for the Lord's Supper, even though this Sacrament was not held so frequently as in more-populated places outside the Eden valley. During Lovefeast Services a small piece of cake and water, the elements of a simple meal, were given to all present and taken by them as members of one family united by the love of Christ. The Moravians had believed it to be an imitation of the AGAPE held in the early Christian Church. There is a hint (but it may only be a metaphor from Cana in Galilee) that the Inghamites used wine at their Lovefeasts. "We had our Lovefeast at Thinoaks which began at 8 in the morning . . . . In the conclusion (that is, of the day) we had the Lord's Supper, and the last wine was as sweet and refreshing as the first."[1]

Singing continued as a local Methodist emphasis. It was the most obvious congregational response in Methodist Worship, complementing preaching, teaching and fellowship and also part of Lovefeast and Sacrament. Wesley had given his directions as to how to sing: "Sing ALL, sing LUSTILY, sing MODESTLY, sing IN TIME, and above all, sing SPIRITUALLY."[2] This last he amplified by saying: "Aim at pleasing Him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this, attend strictly to the sense of what you sing; and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually: So shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve of here."[3] Singing was, however, only a means to an end, for "that which is of infinitely more moment than the Spirit of Poetry is", said Wesley, "the spirit of piety."[4] Charles

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1. Minutes of The Inghamites, 30.6.1760.

2. John Wesley, The Works, XIV, 358-359.

3. Ibid., p. 359.

4. John Wesley, in the Methodist Hymn Book with tunes (London, 1933), p. vi.

Wesley had written the first hymns of the Evangelical Revival during Whitsuntide, 1738, "when his brother and he were 'filled with the Spirit', and from that time onwards the Methodists have never ceased to sing."[1] The present Methodist Hymn Book (published in 1933) has an evangelical emphasis: "It contains a large number of hymns which have proved their power both to deepen the spiritual life of believers and to inspire saving faith in Christ."[2] Charles Wesley has written 243 of its 984 hymns, though Preachers have sometimes tended to choose more hymns by other authors for Congregational singing. This may be for two reasons: that the music set to Charles Wesley's hymns sometimes tends to be ponderous rather than profound and that the words of other hymn-writers (in simpler musical style) deal with the feelings of man's religious experience rather than with the attributes and activity of God. Yet Charles Wesley's more popular hymns do speak of the Christian experience and are always Scriptural. At Orton Methodist Church, in fact, in twenty-one Services between November 21st, 1982, and January 30th, 1983, Mrs.H. Alderson (a Member) found a more considerable proportion of Wesleyan hymns (twenty eight altogether) had been chosen; the sixty one other hymns were by a variety of writers.

Ritson expresses the importance of singing to the Primitive Methodists: "Just as in the Reformation hymns we hear the stern note of conflict, merging into the triumphant strains of an all-conquering faith; or as in Charles Wesley's hymns may be heard the ever-recurring note of a personal religious experience: so in the hymns and tunes with which our fathers carried the evangel through the villages of England, the dominant note of battle and conquest was to be heard. Every hamlet

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1. Preface to the Methodist Hymn Book with tunes, p. iii.

2. Ibid., p. iv.

they missioned rang with such martial sentiments as:

"'I His soldier sure shall be
Happy in Eternity'

and

'Hark, listen to the trumpeters
They sound for volunteers.'"[1]

Primitive Methodists parodied the battle-cry of the Chartists who were themselves beginning to see the importance of open-air work. They chanted:

"'The Lion of Freedom is come from his den.
We'll rally around him, again and again.'

The Primitives followed this, also in procession, singing:

'For the Lion of Judah shall break every chain
And give us the victory again and again.'"[2]

Mindful of instrumental problems, the Primitive Methodists at Middleton-in-Teesdale, some 12 miles north-east of Brough, could not easily connect fiddle with faith. The Quarterly Meeting, in 1842, agreed that "the singers by introducing the fiddle into the public worship at Middleton without the saction of the Leaders' Meeting did wrong, tho' they did it innocently; that . . . the Fiddle to be taken from the Chapel . . . and that the Leaders' Meeting appoint a leading singer at Middleton."[3] Six months later the Quarterly Meeting said "that a letter be wrote . . . to the singers at Middleton in the most friendly way possible requesting them to take out the fiddle in the most prudent way."[4] The following May the Quarterly Meeting had to agree "that Brother Sowerby call the Leaders of Mickleton" (near

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1. Joseph Ritson, The Romance of Primitive Methodism (London, 1909), pp.263-264.

2. Ibid., p. 271.

3. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 23.6.1842.

4. Ibid., 21.12.1842.

Middleton) "together and state that they must Decide about the Fiddle themselves providing they keep within the limits of rule and a note be wrote to them . . . ." Music and Methodists, ironically, have not always been compatible and it has occasionally been necessary to exercise particular sensitivity in this matter. Sometimes, therefore, it has had to be that the Circuit, rather than the local Church, has advised on procedure, as with the Wesleyan Methodist Associationists in their Quarterly Meeting in 1848, when it was agreed that "a majority is of opinion that an Organ introduced into the tabernacle Appleby, would be advisable and is recommended."[1] In 1852, the same Quarterly Meeting agreed that it approved "of the Methodistic mode of giving out the Hymns and it would kindly recommend the various societies to adopt that method, that with special reference to Appleby that they be requested to adopt singing as a substitute for their usual manner of chanting."[2] In 1870, the Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting gave Brough Society the "liberty to purchase a harmonium not to exceed £10."[3] This instrument seemed to be culturally suitable here, unlike those which were used in India about the same time. "In the nineteenth century misguided missionaries . . . took a fatal step for Indian music. They popularized the harmonium." Never was a fatal step so practical, even though "European music finds little response in the Indian heart."[4]

Denis Capstick, a Methodist farmer at Newbiggin-on-Lune, has some information on particular Methodist singing in the Kirkby Stephen,

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1. Minutes of the Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Association Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 28.6.1848.

2. Ibid., 29.9.1852.

3. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 13.6.1870.

4. Peter Crossley-Holland, "Non-Western Music", in A. Robertson and D. Stevens, ed., The Pelican History of Music (Harmondsworth, 1960), I, 39.

Appleby and Tebay Circuit. He says a Male-Voice Choir has been in existence for over 25 years, having Sydney Bowman (an Orton Methodist now emigrated to Australia) as its leader in the early days. It has consistently sung in Chapels and in the open-air. "It may well be", writes Capstick (scholar of Appleby Grammar School and graduate of Queen's College, Oxford) "that this open-air witness of the Choir is its most distinctive contribution to the religious life of the area. We hold open-air services each summer in the various villages and they are marvellously supported - three weeks ago more than a hundred cars were parked on or around the village green in Maulds Meaburn. It is a source of continual surprise to us that the folk in our own locality still want to hear us. Not very long ago we had a twelve month period during which we had invitations from every one of the nine Societies in the Tebay section to share in some special event at each place . . . . Several (choir) members (at least 25%) are from areas outside the Circuit and we are not all Methodists, we have one Baptist and three Brethren. I think we have sung to audiences of every denomination (except the R.C.) and to those of none . . . . We have engagements as far away as Pickering (North Yorkshire), Manchester and Glasgow . . . . We have our own organist . . . our organ which we take with us wherever we go . . . has been transported thousands of miles. We have approximately 20 in the Choir . . . I think all of us would do things for the Choir we would not think of doing for any other organization."[1] This is not to suggest any unhealthy introversion but rather that here is an expression of missionary interest 'at home'. As we have said, the overseas missionary emphasis had already been considerable for more than a century: stronger, sometimes, than 'home' mission, but not in opposition

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1. In a letter to me, dated 25.7.1978, from "Brownber", Newbiggin-on-Lune, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria.

to it. So A. M. Allchin's comment is here relevant:

> ". . . the Church . . . can never be confined to a single people, a single culture or a single civilization. It must always be crossing frontiers and breaking down barriers in the name of the Son of Man. But this universality does not mean that the Church can be indifferent or hostile to the local, the particular, the rooted."[1]

Thus John Wesley wrote to Duncan McAllum in 1778, telling him he had "nothing at present to do in Africa. Convert the heathen in Scotland."[2] He was not, of course, deaf to the cry of distant lands and in his last letter, in 1791, to William Wilberforce he urged his friend never to give up: "Go on, in the name of God and in the power of his might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it."[3] The Wesleyan Missionary Society founded in 1818, however, was not born out of concern for slaves or even out of some kind of collective guilt for wrongs in the furthest corners of the Empire, but because of a central text of John's Gospel: "God so loved the WORLD."[4] As the nineteenth century progressed, it was as if Methodists had read a letter from General Beckwith (an Anglican Evangelical) to the isolated Waldensians in 1848:

> "Henceforward either you are missionaries, or you are nothing . . . Either you must remain hidden in your obscurity, or you must draw the eyes of men upon you . . . Either act efficiently, struggle, persist, arrive at the goal, or be altogether set aside."[5]

The helpless cry of missionaries already overseas in the nineteenth

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1. A. M. Allchin, The Dynamic of Tradition (London, 1981), p. 22.

2. John Wesley, The Letters, VI, 316.

3. Ibid., VIII, 265.

4. John 3, verse 16.

5. J. P. Meille, General Beckwith, His Life and Labour amongst the Waldensians of Piedmont (London, 1873), pp. 198-200.

century was heard in England. Missionaries who visited the upper Eden, for example, spoke of alarming need, and though our area may not have responded with manpower, it gathered money and said its prayers. The Reverend J. Kilner, returned from Ceylon in 1865 revealed his bias at Penrith: "I have got a Hindu god in my pocket which three months ago was in the temple and people hazarded their salvation upon it."[1] More agonising was the cry of Thomas B. Freeman in a letter published in 1844, to the Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, regarding the Ashanti:

> "When an Ashanti of any distinction dies, several of the deceased's slaves are sacrificed. This horrible custom originates in some shadowy ideas of a future state of existence in which they imagine that those who have departed hence stand in need of food, clothing, etc., as in the present world and that as a vast number of concubines, slaves, etc., are the chief marks of superiority among them here, so it must also be in a future state. Accordingly as I walked out early in the morning I saw the mangled corpse of a poor female slave who had been beheaded during the night lying in the public street. O, Thou God of Missions, who willest not that any should perish but that all should come to the knowledge of the Truth, have mercy upon these benighted people. May Thine everlasting Gospel speedily spread itself through the length and breadth of this land and chase the demon from these his dark abodes of cruelty."[2]

Of West Africa, as a whole, he wrote:

> "True, it is a beautiful country. Its fertile soil produces an hundredfold but what avails its beauty or fertility when it is converted into one immense slaughterhouse. O ye who enjoy the high blessings of Christianity allow us to entreat you to direct your energies towards this scene of moral desolation. Brooding in melancholy over the bloodstained wilds, fancy caries me to my native land where entering a

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 2.5.1865.

2. Thomas B. Freeman, Journal of Various Visits to the Kingdoms of Ashanti, Aku, and Dahomey in Western Africa by the Reverend Thomas B. Freeman to promote the objects of the Wesleyan Missionary Society (London, 1844), pp. 24-25.

> well-known place in the Metropolis I hear the cause of Christian Missions advocated, in the presence of thousands whose hearts burn with love towards their perishing fellow-creatures. I hear them speaking of unhappy, degraded Africa, of the pressing wants of its millions, and of the vital importance of increased exertions on the part of British Christians for the extension of the blessings of Christianity among this mass of immortal men. I hear a resolution moved and supported that much more shall be immediately done for Africa."[1]

The local newspaper, in an array of statistics, takes us in and out of the Eden valley in the nineteenth century. Connexionally, the Primitive Methodist Church had spread, since 1810, to Canada, Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand.[2] In 1861, Milburn Chapel collected £5.13.10 for the Wesleyan Methodists overseas at their annual meeting and £11.12.2 from Overseas Missions collecting boxes and subscriptions.[2] In 1814, Wesleyans had 4 Missionary Stations: West Indies, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Ireland. In 1864 there were 605 Stations and 4,618 chapels. In 1814, there were 51 Wesleyan Missionaries; in 1864, 889. In 1814, there were 16,742 Members overseas; in 1864, 142,789.[4] In 1865, the Reverend Frederick Greeves of Bradford proudly pointed out at Penrith that not one Wesleyan Missionary had yet been converted by a Negro or a Zulu. "Fegee" had seen a glorious conversion, firstly, of King and Queen; 20,000 were meeting in Class and 24,000 children in Sunday School and 64,000 regular worshippers. "Missionaries had given these people a code of laws and all this for half the cost of a man-of-war and less than the people of England paid on taxes on dogs."[5] The 'Press' kept the

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1. Ibid., pp. 49-50; part of a letter written in July, 1839.
2. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 6.11.1860.
3. Ibid., 17.12.1861.
4. Ibid., 5.1.1864.
5. Ibid., 14.2.1865.

missionary interest alive by reporting, again from Penrith (in 1866) that few Missionaries were in India but "the midnight of that Empire is passed and better days are beginning to dawn." Missionaries were in two Chinese Districts and, in Canton, thousands heard the Gospel every week.[1] At Dufton's annual Missionary meeting it was reported that after 100 years of American Wesleyan Methodism (begun by Philip Embury in 1766), there were some 2 million Members, with 14,000 Travelling Preachers, 15,000 Local Preachers, and 1½ million scholars.[2] As far as smaller missionary 'outposts' were concerned, isolated in so many ways, the holy isolated community of upper Eden Methodism could, perhaps, better understand their particular problems than other Methodists could.

Missionary interest was maintained until well into the twentieth century in our area. Circuit Collections on behalf of Wesleyan Foreign Missions were £105.4.8 in 1894 and £110.12.3 in 1895.[3] In 1897, they were £112.6.0 and in 1898, they were £123.6.8.[4] Then, in 1915, the Wesleyan Superintendent was encouraged by the Quarterly Meeting to assist at Missionary meetings in a neighbouring Circuit.[5] Later that year, the Reverend Harry Haig of Ceylon was to visit the Circuit as a Missionary deputation.[6] In 1919 "the Rev. Arthur W. Turner, who had just returned from missionary work in India, had accepted an invitation to succeed the Rev. E. Ogden as superintendent minister."[7] In 1920, the "Rev. C. W.

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1. Ibid., 1.5.1866.
2. Ibid., 27.11.1866.
3. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 23.3.1895.
4. Ibid., 19.3.1898.
5. Ibid., 10.6.1915.
6. Ibid., 18.9.1915.
7. Ibid., 5.6.1919.

Garratt read a letter from the Mission House advocating a Self Denial Week for Foreign Missions. It was decided that the suggestion be noted in the Circuit Magazine, and that each society should decide for itself whether to act upon the same."[1] In 1923, the Wesleyan Circuit raised £273.6.4 for foreign missions and £279.0.3. in 1924.[2] In 1927 the total was £270.7.7.[3] At that time there were two Ministers in the Circuit; the Missionary contribution would almost have financed another.

Local Primitive Methodist missionary interest was also apparent and contributions were substantially bigger, in proportion, from the west side of the Pennines. In six months, Dufton Society gave £6.0.0, Milburn gave £8.1.0 and Mouthlock gave £7.14.1½, whereas Barnard Castle Society gave only £5.11.8.[4] The 1844 Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting had concurred "in the missionary regulations issued by the last Conference" and planned to issue as many boxes, books and cards as possible,, (21.3.1844). In 1915, the Brough Primitive Circuit warmly commended the idea of raising funds for building a Training Institute in Central Africa, (3.6.1915). The Wesleyan Methodist Associationists also shared in the missionary interest. "It was ordered that Mr. David Rowland of Liverpool be written to and requested to visit this circuit for the purpose (of) Preaching and holding Missionary Meetings."[5] In 1901 the United Methodist Free Church resolved that two "Baptist Ministers of Kirkby Stephen be asked to serve the Circuit as

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1. Ibid., 16.12.1920.

2. Ibid., 12.3.1925.

3. Ibid., 1.3.1928.

4. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 25.3.1847.

5. Minutes of the Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Association Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 30.12.1839.

Missionary Deputations."[1] The United Methodist Church Quarterly Meeting at Bolton in 1930, making arrangements for annual missionary meetings, agreed "that the autumn was really the best time for our Circuit being almost entirely engaged in Farming Pursuits", (11.9.1930). In the wide-spread and isolated 'mission field' of the Eden valley itself, the interest in overseas work was remarkable, especially when we remember that the financial resources of local Methodism were almost always strained.

It was through the formation of the Wesley Guild in 1896 that some missionary education was able to be given. The Guild, clearly linked to individual Societies, held regular meetings for devotional, literary and social purposes, and it was aimed, especially, at the interests of young people. Mrs. Metcalfe, a Kirkby Thore Methodist, holds a complete series of programme sessions from 1933 until 1968, when the Guild meetings of the Kirkby Thore Society came to an end. The syllabuses contain statements about the purposes of the Guild: "This Card is a token that you belong to a great fellowship. You are invited to help us to make the Guild of real value to our Church and Country and to the world-wide Kingdom of God." On the back of the 1933-1934 session, it says the Guild stands for "comradeship of young Methodists in all lands." Reverend J. E. Ruston conducted a Foreign Missionary Evening during the session. Missionary themes were repeated annually. On November 21st, 1939, the subject was "Burma and Its People"; on November 9th, 1943, it was "In the Steps of Livingstone"; on October 25th, 1944, the Guild meeting concentrated on missionary work in China. From the 1950's, talks tended to become geographical or accounts of holidays in Europe. On January 24th, 1961, an International Youth Conference was the theme. The Quarterly

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1. Minutes of the Appleby United Methodist Free Church Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 2.12.1901.

Meeting of the Kirkby Stephen Wesleyan Circuit, in 1914, reported a Guild Membership of 95 at Appleby, 53 at Sedbergh, 25 at Ravenstonedale and 16 at Orton.[1] In 1916, there were three Wesley Guilds in the Circuit, with a total Membership of 184.[2]

The importance of Total Abstinence from alcohol, though not a requirement of Membership of the Methodist Church, was continually stressed in the Eden valley from the middle of the nineteenth century. F. W. Parrott, of Kirkby Stephen, says: "Without doubt the Temperance Movement, with its membership based on pledged Total Abstinence from alcoholic beverages, was powerfully established in the Eden valley in the middle of the last century. Temperance Halls were built, for instance, at Kirkby Stephen (1856), Orton (1858) and Warcop (1865). Their primary purpose was to enable Abstinence ideals to be propagated and they were sub-let for other worthwhile purposes."[3] Membership of a Temperance Society, like Dufton Senior Band of Hope Youth Temperance Society, required a pledge to promise to abstain from all intoxicating Drinks as Beverages. A Minute Book beginning January 10th, 1914, contains a list of Bands of Hope and dates of their formation.[4] At that time there were 58 Bands of Hope, 34 being in the immediate area of our study. On March 22nd, 1873, "a few of the principal workers of the Appleby Band of Hope, together with delegates from Bolton and Dufton . . . met to consider the formation of a Band of Hope Union in the Eden Valley . . . ." At the first Demonstration on August 21st, 1873, there

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1. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen Appleby and Sedbergh Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 12.3.1914.

2. Ibid., 16.3.1916.

3. F. W. Parrott, Vale of Eden Band of Hope Union 1873 to 1973 (Centenary Year Souvenir Brochure), published by Teesdale Mercury Ltd., Barnard Castle; not paginated.

4. Ibid.

was a combined membership of 500 demonstrating against the evils of alcohol. The following year the membership was 982. Nine bands (four brass, and the rest fife and drums) accompanied a procession of 2,000 people in 1876. At the Demonstration of 1919, 3,000 people paid for admission. Brass Bands provided music each year, and singing and sports competitions were part of memorable entertainments. Temperance speakers concentrated on the vital social issue. In 1973, the President of the Vale of Eden Band of Hope Union was a Baptist Minister from Kirkby Stephen. The three Methodist Circuit Travelling Preachers were all Vice-Presidents and Anglicans, too, have also been loyal in their support. The Methodists still give the strongest support to this movement, in a society where it is being proved that this aspect of holiness and health are related. "The culture of the Israelites", writes Mary Douglas, "was brought to the pitch of greatest intensity when they prayed and when they fought."[1] When the fight has been against the drink trade, many Methodists have likewise been brought to the same pitch. Their children have also thus been isolated from other young people in a society inclined to regard the <u>only</u> local Methodist emphasis as being total abstinence from alcohol.

"By holiness", wrote John Wesley to his father in 1734, "I mean not fasting . . . or bodily austerity, or any other external means of improvement, but the inward temper, to which all these are subservient, a renewal of the soul in the image of God. I mean a complex habit of lowliness, meekness, purity, faith, hope, and the love of God and man."[2] In observing this last of the Eden Methodist emphases, we also remember

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1. Mary Douglas, <u>Purity and Danger</u>, p. 51.

2. John Wesley, <u>The Letters</u>, I, 168.

Wesley's letter to a Mrs. Chapman, in 1737; "There is one thing needful - to do the will of God; and His will is our sanctification: our renewal in the image of God, in faith and love, in all holiness and happiness . . . 'Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God.'"[1]

The intention of this Chapter has been to identify, in the overall emphasis of 'new life for all', the particular beliefs and practices of our local Methodists, and, as with previous chapters, it has been found necessary to refer back to John Wesley's own aims and beliefs. The intention of the next Chapter will be to examine what impacts these phenomena have had on the local society and on the wider Church.

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1. Ibid., I, 219-220.

CHAPTER IV

The impact of the isolated holy community

We shall see, in this chapter, that the hopes of John Wesley were, as in other parts of the country during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, only partially fulfilled and that though there was a determined effort on the part of our Methodists to share their new religious experience, present statistics suggest that the holy community is very small and, generally speaking, not expanding. John Burgess suggests that this disappointing trend is partly to do with "the impervious nature of the Cumbrian to all religion", and also because of the "conflicts within the Connexions which broke out periodically across the nineteenth and into the twentieth 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."[1] Bearing in mind that his research tended to concentrate on financial problems, of which there were quite a number within and beyond the Eden valley, his assessment is a reminder that the future of particular religious movements cannot be guaranteed. This disturbing conclusion points to a need to examine the impact already made by upper Eden Methodism to see what particular phenomena may be fading away or disappearing entirely. To read the Methodist Recorder, however, is to be hopeful. Paul Harrington observes Crosby Ravensworth Methodists, and their Minister, the Reverend Elizabeth Hodgkiss, tells him that some years ago when there were only two members and the chapel was about to be closed, a Methodist family moved into the area and the

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1. John Burgess, A History of Cumbrian Methodism (Kendal, 1980), p. 152.

future changed completely. "Now", says Elizabeth Hodgkiss, "years later, we can get up to twenty-five young people to a Sunday afternoon Service, all of them committed Christians."[1] But the present Circuit is a surprising mixture of growth and decay, where some Methodist Societies are just as likely to cease forever. Mrs. Doris Wooff, a Methodist, wrote of Maulds Meaburn, "We've never had a funeral and only two baptisms since we came into the area about 20 years ago."[2] Such religion, only two miles from Crosby Ravensworth, becomes increasingly precarious.

In assessing the impact of our isolated holy community, we have to remember that because of isolation (on various fronts), our particular area has not come under the direct influence of what may be called "formidable" preaching. It has been said that the "virility of Victorian Free Churchmanship can best be seen in its representative figures, herculean preachers with the voices of a Stentor and the stamina of marathon runners."[3] Preachers, for example, like Hugh Price Hughes (1847-1902) of West London did not "Travel" to or thunder in Eden, where the impetus of preaching was sustained by lesser-known men. Slums and "the working-classes" belonged, with Hughes, to cities. Nor have Eden Methodists been much involved in the stimulation which local Free Church Federal Councils sometimes provide. These Methodists easily outnumber their Free Church brethren and joint-protest to a Government, for example, in a time of industrial, social or international crisis, does not as naturally arise as it does in some other parts of the country. Nor is it likely that local Methodism ever found itself directly

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1. 2.3.1978, p. 6.

2. In a letter to me from "The Sycamores", Maulds Meaburn, in 1979.

3. Horton Davies, The English Free Churches, 2nd Edition (London, 1963), p. 161.

confronted with issues raised by geology, astronomy or biology. Lyell's PRINCIPLES OF GEOLOGY (1830) had strongly suggested that the world was not the product of six day's divine activity, but the result of an evolution through millions of years. Chambers' THE VESTIGES OF CREATION (1844) had rendered God a needless hypothesis and Darwin's ORIGIN OF SPECIES (1859) had added strength to these earlier ideas. But, now, Methodist parents of the mid-twentieth century, whose Sunday School teachers may well have encouraged them in a literal understanding of the origins of Creation (from Genesis, chapters 1 and 2), know that their children are given a scientific rather than a religious education at the Day School, and soon discover that such children naturally begin to query the faith of their parents and the relevance of a Methodism which modern education is tempted to belittle.

In addition to these weakening factors, there was, during the second half of the nineteenth century, the odd (hopefully limited) influence of John Close. Born in 1816 in Swaledale, he later settled in Kirkby Stephen. He called himself Poet Close and wrote critical lines about all kinds of local people, not least the Methodists. If we remember, as Michael Ffinch says, that "He bore grudges, and those who failed to appreciate him, or declined his many requests for recognition, might easily find themselves viciously attacked, or lampooned, in his pages",[1] then we may read his views on local Wesleyans with guarded appreciation. Apparently, however, he published many "works" and they appear to have had a wide, local interest. Typical of his more scathing attacks, though we cannot be sure how seriously he was taken, were some in The Wise Man

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1. Michael Ffinch, Portrait of the Howgills and The Upper Eden Valley (London, 1982), p. 43.

of Stainmore:[1]

> "From the Wesleyans, with their SANCTIFIED AIRS, as if butter would not melt in their mouths, or sugar dissolve in their tea, you DO expect great things, and are deceived. We rarely ever found ONE Wesleyan that KEPT HIS WORD Sacred . . . . We once employed two Wesleyans to print for us, and both CHEATED us! God's Truth! More of these kind of TRICKS we could unfold . . . . So much for the CONSCIENCE of these Wesleyans: we are almost sick of the NAME! . . . At our Chapel, we are sorry to say that we HAVE SEEN almost every soul of them SOUND ASLEEP during the Sermon; all, excepting the giddy Choir . . . at the conclusion of the Sermon, behold! all the 'Holy Brotherhood' woke up quite lively and chirpy, each heaving a deep sigh and a gentle groan, and look round to see if any SINNERS are affected or converted while they were sleeping . . . . So much for Methodism in 1863."

Wesley who did, indeed, agree that too much sleep "dulls all the nobler affections"[2] would have found equal pen for such adverse comment and we wonder if the Travelling Preacher at Kirkby Stephen stood by his flock, publicly.

What has been the impact of the emphases which we listed in our last Chapter, during two centuries of Methodist work? Statistics, only part of the answer, revealed the following, in 1977,[3] in the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit:

Number of Churches at November 1977	35
Total Circuit Membership at November 1977	[724]
Total Community Roll[4]	2112
Total Baptisms	13

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1. John Close, The Wise Man of Stainmore (Kirkby Stephen, 1864), pp. 111-116.

2. John Wesley, The Letters, VII, 75.

3. The last available Connexional Membership Returns (1976-1977), being a summary of the Circuit Schedule.

4. This total includes baptized children, children in family Church or Sunday School and adolescent or adult adherents as well as full members.

Total Young People[1]	162
Total Local Preachers at November 1977	40
Total Local Preachers on Trial	7
Deaths	15
New Members	14
New Members from other Circuits	6

The Membership of the thirty-five separate Societies (totalling 724) were as follows:

Appleby	101	North Stainmore	14
Kirkby Stephen	79	Long Marton	13
Crosby Ravensworth	41	Espland Hill	12
Soulby	35	Milburn	11
Brough Sowerby	34	Bolton	10
Newbiggin-on-Lune	33	Dufton	9
Ravenstonedale	33	Catherine Holme	9
Tebay	32	Bleatarn	8
Brough	31	Spital	8
Kirkby Thore	29	Kings Meaburn	7
Orton	25	Mouthlock	7
Kaber	20	Greenholme	7
Warcop	20	Great Asby	7
Nateby	19	Mallerstang	6
Gaisgill	17	Sandford	5
Winton	16	Maulds Meaburn	4
Crosby Garrett	16	Blencarn	3
		Knock	3

Sunday School Scholars (totalling 307), at 22 of the Societies, were as follows:

Brough	30
Appleby	27
Crosby Ravensworth	23
Kirkby Stephen	19
Blencarn	18
Gaisgill	17
Dufton	16
Newbiggin-on-Lune	16
Kirkby Thore	15
Knock	15
Greenholme	13
Tebay	12
Brough Sowerby	11
Kings Meaburn	11
Warcop	10
Orton	10

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1. This total includes the 13-26 age group under Methodist auspices, for example, Methodist Youth Fellowships or young people at regular coffee bars, discotheques or youth centres.

Soulby	9
Kaber	9
Milburn	8
Ravenstonedale	6
Mouthlock	6
Nateby	6

These statistics are the measurable results of 200 years' Methodist influence, not forgetting the hundreds from each of the three Uniting Conferences in 1932 and hundreds more whose lives left immeasurable impact on their local community during the nineteenth century.

Pamela Luke, in her Vice-Presidential Address to the Methodist Conference (June, 1982), listed five present-day difficulties which face, generally, the Rural Church and which, we may agree, are occasionally (sometimes more frequently) experienced in the particular area of our study:

> "It is difficult for people to experience real, enriching Worship.
>
> "It is difficult to maintain buildings . . . often a strain on resources.
>
> "It is difficult not to develop a siege mentality born out of loyalty, devotion and dogged determination not to close . . .
>
> "It is difficult to attract new members to a small number where any particular age group may be represented by only one or two people and where the majority are likely to be among the elderly. Any sense of mission and outreach is extinct or lies dormant, waiting for an injection of hope to bring it to life again with the conviction that renewal is possible.
>
> "It is difficult for anyone who has neither been a member of a small church, nor known one intimately, to understand the feelings of those who do belong, who are loyal, who have a deep commitment to Christ, a sense of mission and, who over many years, have received little encouragement either by increase in numbers or by the recognition of their position by the Church as a whole."[1]

The population of the upper Eden is now less than it was in 1801 and a description of Brough Primitive Methodism in 1867 would fairly

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1. Methodist Recorder, 1.7.1982, p. 18.

adequately apply to the whole of the present Circuit: "The population of this part of Westmorland is sparse and thinly scattered, consequently overflowing congregations and large accessions to the roll of membership are not in the nature of things to be expected."[1] This assessment had improved a little by 1881 when a Primitive Methodist Minister wrote, of the Brough area, "the dread of change (and) the exclusiveness and suspicion incident to country life existed in no small degree but there were exceptions."[2] A century earlier, the impact of Methodism at Bishop Auckland, in Weardale, (a valley running parallel with the Eden and the Tees), was apparently common to many areas:

> "Here, as in most other places, the Methodists were looked upon with suspicion and mistrust. So much so that the people who attended the Services were in the habit of going unobserved whenever it was possible. Happily there was no open persecution but much petty annoyance was inflicted on the congregations when gathered together for worship, such as the letting loose of birds and putting cats and dogs into the room together. Though we are not to do evil that good may come yet in many cases the evil-doers were considerably the gainers as in perpetrating their follies they were brought under the sound of the gospel. Their consciences in not a few instances were smitten by the truths they heard and their scoffing was turned into prayer and praise."[3]

John Colwell, a Wesleyan Minister, compared the roles of Travelling and Local Preachers by describing the itinerant messengers as "comets that moved in high spheres and did not often pass through the orbits of . . . simple villages, but when they did they were treated like comets . . . with great wonder and admiration. Upon the Local Preachers,

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1. The Primitive Methodist Magazine (London, 1867), p. 559 (in an article by "J.F.B.").

2. Ibid., 1881, pp. 376-377 (in an article by Mr. Clemitson).

3. Matthew Braithwaite, History of Wesleyan Methodism in the Bishop Auckland Circuit (Bishop Auckland, 1885), pp. 20-21.

however, fell the burden of the work and nobly, well and faithfully they did it."[1] Travelling Preachers certainly never stayed long in any Circuit, rarely went back to work in the Circuits from which they began their Preaching, and sometimes, therefore, knew too little about the lives of the people among whom they were sent. Methodist Conferences have tended to think this to be good, though one occasionally wonders how different the impact of their ministries might have been had they more often "travelled" in the type of Circuit from which they had come in the first place. Since 1950, five farmers' sons have entered the Methodist Ministry from the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit but they presently live and work in Houghton-le-Spring and Bishop Auckland (in the more industrial north-east of England), Coventry (in the industrial Midlands), Chorley (near Manchester), and Stoke-on-Trent (in the Potteries). At least they bring new ideas into new situations, just as isolated communities are enabled to share the fruits of the experience of Ministers who have worked in town and city.

Local Preachers' Meetings reflect some of the impact of the preaching. "The death of bro. E. Thompson of Kirkby Stephen, the oldest local preacher on the plan was reported to the meeting. Many testimonies were borne of his long connection with the Circuit, the effects of his preaching upon the youth, and the powerful influence of his holy life upon all who knew him."[2] Even John Close wrote of Edmund Thompson, of Hartley Castle, with the highest respect: He "shews an Example worthy of all imitation, so devout and so inwardly engaged in the Holy Worship, becoming all true Christians; but how few are like the THOMPSONS!"[3] The

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1. John Colwell, Sketches of Village Methodism (London, 1877), pp. 12-13.

2. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Local Preachers Meeting, 29.3.1882.

3. John Close, The Wise Man of Stainmore, p. 116.

names of both Jonathan and Edmund are printed on the 1830 Wesleyan Plan (Page C),[1] men from the local community whom Methodism enabled to become leaders for more than half a century. Such preachers were essential to the progress of the movement and in isolated areas, where Travelling Preachers could not often come, these Local Preachers were accepted by Congregations as messengers of God. All they needed was an evident conviction that God wanted them to preach, a readiness to understand and proclaim the Scriptural gospel and a willingness to be appointed to preach wherever and whenever the chief Travelling Preacher should direct. Farmers among them understood better than most the New Testament parables about weeds and poor soil, about lost sheep and fruitless vines, and, above all, about new birth. They observed the miracle of growth after winter and they had to commend a growth of holiness after faith in the risen Christ. They also had the habit, and probably always will, of living on the same farm as long as possible - even when they have reached the age of retirement. So they could well preach, locally, for half a century, during which time at least ten (if not fifteen) Travelling Preachers would come and go. Non-farming Local Preachers, also, tend to stay a lifetime in the upper Eden valley and, on the Preaching Plan (October-December, 1982), there are six Local Preachers who have been preaching for more than 50 years; the farmer among them, George Watson from Raisbeck, Orton (whose son is a Travelling Preacher) became a fully accredited preacher in 1926, when the Local Preachers' Meeting "expressed its pleasure at the excellent way Bro. Watson went through his examination, and particularly at his knowledge of Scripture Texts."[2] Son, wag Close might have said, is paid to be good - father is good, for nothing.

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1. Following p. 65.

2. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Local Preachers Meeting, 10.6.1926.

Local Preaching is unpaid.

In order for preaching to continue, the Chapels had to be built and maintained. Trustees of these various properties had to furnish and warm the buildings and these places of Worship have been kept clean and tidy for many years. The impact upon society is hardly architectural, so plain and simple are the buildings, but they are a reminder that, for nearly two centuries, there have been those who did not wish to worship as the Anglicans did and who welcomed others to share in the same kind of Service. A group of Trustees, like Local Preachers, would be formed or renewed from the immediate neighbourhood of believers and would include, as, for example, occupations like those at Gaisgill in 1900: farmer, joiner, shoemaker, grocer, butcher, platelayer and signalman.[1] Part of wider Methodism, this local Trust had to attend to matters sublime and mundane:

> "H. Capstick was thanked for past services as Chapel Steward and re-elected. It was proposed by T. S. Sanderson and sec (sic) by J. Beck that Ten Shillings 6 (sic) per year be sent to Headingly College all was agreed. It was also passed that the stove pipe be repaired at the top and also a piece of Sheet Iron be put up behind the stove."[2]

It would also be the business of local Trustees to recommend that their particular Chapel might be used as a place for weddings. Thus the Nateby Trustees agreed "that Nateby Wesleyan Chapel be Liciensed (sic) for Marriage."[3] Not all chapels were so licensed but those which were demonstrated the Methodist conviction that marriage should be holy and should be seen to be so. Kirkby Stephen Wesleyan Trustees agreed "that the Chapel shall be thoroughly beautiful and that Mr. J. Troughton be

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1. Minutes of Gaisgill Wesleyan Methodist Trustees Meetings, 22.3.1900.
2. Ibid., 21.1.1930.
3. Minutes of Nateby Wesleyan Methodist Trustees Meetings, 24.11.1920.

appointed to see the thing done properly . . . that the Chapel be Licenced (sic) for the celebration of Marriages . . . (and) that the Burial Ground be properly laid out and that the Steward see it done."[1] In the register of Interments in the Wesleyan Methodist's Cemetery KIRKBY STEPHEN, the first entry is on 24.5.1843 and the last is on 5.2.1900. Another duty of the Trustees was to ensure that the Congregation could sing as well as they wanted to and this was partly achieved by appointing organists: "Miss Potter is considered efficient to undertake the permanent playing of the Organ and to train and practice (sic) the Choir and if found efficient the Trustees agreed to offer her Six Pounds per Annum . . . ."[2] The Trustees also had to ensure that Methodist doctrine was preached in their buildings though this would have been a difficult duty. There was less than a glimmer of their noble calling in a resolution of 1875, when Kirkby Stephen Trustees agreed that the Minister's Anniversary lecture could be entitled "Crotchety Grumbles in the Church and out of it."[3] Perhaps the Superintendent Minister, who was always the Chairman of Trustees Meetings, proposed the resolution. The Circuit Quarterly Meeting could encourage or discourage local Trustees decisions and sometimes requested the advice of Conference itself. At other times the Circuit Quarterly Meeting addressed its opinions to Conference concerning the use of local Trust premises. In 1921, for example, the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit desired "to place on record its strong objection to the recommendation . . . which proposes to permit the use of Wesleyan Methodist Trust Premises for the ordinary business of Trade Unions. It

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1. Minutes of Kirkby Stephen Wesleyan Methodist Trustees Meetings, 20.7.1863.

2. Ibid., 3.10.1871.

3. Ibid., 1.3.1875.

considers that such use of these premises is outside the purpose for which they were erected, and would be fruitful of grave dissension among the Methodist people."[1] Local Trustees knew that their chapels had been built for preaching and this they had to enable at all times.

The impact of Methodist fellowship, in Class Meeting, Prayer Meeting and Guild, as well as in weekly Worship, was also a new phenomenon in local society. Methodists knew and understood each other in their daily work and non-Methodists expected Methodists not only to be meeting together but also to be setting a holy example. Society also knew, as we have already seen, that Methodists would bring their beliefs and standards into local government and would want to make pronouncements about what they thought was wrong in society. Methodists spoke and acted from a fellowship which gave them its support. Each member of that fellowship knew that loyalty to each other could be costly in a society which sometimes more readily admonished its critics than tended to its wrongs. Apart from the impact of being seen at regular Worship, local society was to notice, in 1932, the way in which the different branches of Methodism came closer together. This union was only possible because, separately, the branches had learned the value of fellowship, of belonging to one another, of sharing faith and practice. Charles Wesley's hymn (an answer to the idea that God loves only some) is sung with great joy in a small Methodist Chapel because the sincere believers mean 'us' when they sing 'me'; the immense and unconfined grace of God was thus penned:

> "Throughout the world its breadth is known,
> Wide as infinity;
> So wide it never passed by one,
> Or it had passed by me."[2]

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1. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 9.6.1921; 25 were present and voting was unanimous.

2. Charles Wesley, in the Methodist Hymn Book, No. 77, verse 3.

The strength of the fellowship among the Methodists of the different branches, in the Eden valley, was tested in the years that led up to Methodist Union. Natural caution finally gave way to moving words and memorable scenes at the representative uniting Service in the Royal Albert Hall in London one autumn afternoon in 1932. The Connexional time-tables which led to this moment began in 1912 when the Wesleyan Conference believed that time had come for a serious approach to the matter of Union. In 1917 a number of leading Wesleyan, Primitive and United Methodists gathered to discuss further steps. In 1920 an outline scheme was presented to the three Methodist Conferences and this was sent for Circuit discussion in 1922. At that time Methodists were inclined to think that a movement to union was unnecessary but as the years went by the proportion favouring the idea grew in numbers. In 1925 the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Quarterly Meeting heard how the Superintendent Minister "had received a letter in favour of all possible steps being taken to foster a spirit of unity and brotherhood among the members of the Methodist Churches involved in the Union scheme. He expressed the opinion that already a fine spirit of unity existed locally, and . . . he did not know what more could be done in that direction. He hoped they would all continue to foster that spirit."[1] In 1929 the possibility of Wesleyan and United Methodists sharing Worship in each other's Chapels at Kirkby Thore was raised in the Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting,[2] though the United Methodists had considered the idea in 1927. In December, 1929, visiting representatives from the other Methodist Churches . . . received a very hearty welcome." In June, 1930, "Mr. Geo. Watson brought up the question of

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1. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 10.12.1925.

2. Ibid., 19.9.1929.

again having Services at Bretherdale." After discussion it was agreed "that the Secretary write a letter to the Primitive Methodist Quarterly Meeting, and ask if they would have any objection if we held an afternoon Service once a fortnight."[1] Bretherdale, four miles west of Tebay, had had a succession of farmhouse services since about 1862 when John Dinsdale began a Wesleyan Methodist Service in his home. This alternated, on Sunday afternoons, with Greenholme Primitive Worship (three miles to the north-east) which had its own chapel in 1897. John Dinsdale always went four miles beyond Greenholme to Orton Chapel (Wesleyan) for Sunday morning Service on horse-back, if he himself was not preaching. Bretherdale farmhouse Services continued until at least 1923,[2] but the Methodists of the locality were, in spite of the above Quarterly Meeting enquiry, "not in favour of again having Services."[3] Such small, isolated Societies had benefited, long before the proposed Union, from this kind of alternating arrangement.

In March, 1931, it was reported at the Wesleyan Quarterly Meeting that "we were co-operating with the Primitive and United Methodists in taking preachers to their appointments and that Whit Sunday would be a special day for exchange of preachers."[4] In June, 1931, the Wesleyan and the United Methodist Quarterly Meetings expressed their mutual desire for organic union of the three local branches of Methodism.[5] At the previous December's United Methodist Quarterly Meeting, the invited Wesleyan Minister said "that though of Different outlook

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1. Ibid., 5.6.1930.

2. In a letter to me from Mrs. H. Alderson, Ellerholme, Orton (18.11.1982), great grand-daughter of John Dinsdale.

3. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 18.9.1930.

4. Ibid., 19.3.1931.

5. Ibid., 17.6.1931.

Temprement (sic) etc. the 3 Societies Could be so blended into one that the spirit of the Master would be better revealed to the world."[1] As early as 1923, the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting had agreed to "see if an arrangement (could) be made to exchange pulpits or hold united services during the next Quarter."[2] In June, 1924, the Primitive Methodists agreed to "plan alternate Sundays at Dufton in connection with the Wesleyan Church."[3] In December, 1924, "a vote was taken on the acceptance or rejection of the suggested basis of union of the three Methodist Churches. There were twenty seven members present, nineteen voted in favour of accepting the scheme and three voted against it."[4] In March, 1931, the Primitives expressed a desire to unite with Wesleyan and United Methodists "in regard to Wesley Day Celebrations on Whit Sunday."[5] This host of resolutions, born out of love for fellow-Methodists in the locality, thus became a fellowship-basis for the 1932 Union.

In the 1930's, however, the impact of united Methodism on society seemed no more significant than that of the other Christian denominations. Preaching continued, as did the means for fellowship, but churchgoing was not generally popular. A realistic, if not gloomy, assessment of the situation was made by Cyril J. Davey:

> "New communications between even isolated villages and the towns, the popularity of wireless, the secularizing of Sunday, the breakdown of community life in the villages and small towns which had already been seen in the big cities helped to widen the gulf between

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1. Minutes of the Appleby United Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 11.12.1930.

2. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 6.9.1923.

3. Ibid., 5.6.1924.

4. Ibid., 4.12.1924.

5. Ibid., 5.3.1931.

> Church and people. In addition, Hitler had marched into the Rhineland about the time of Methodist Union and tension was moving toward breaking-point throughout Europe. Industrial disputes put men out of temper with society, in which the Church was still popularly identified with the privileged classes. The ordinary churchgoer appears to have had little sense of the urgency of the situation, and had grown so used to his neighbours not going to church that he accepted the defection of ninety per cent of the population from organized religion as inevitable. When at last war did break out, and continued in bestial, inhuman violence, the sins of the individual seemed trivial compared with the total sum of human misery and evil."[1]

When Warcop Methodists celebrated their Centenary in 1972, Miss Agnes Brown, one of the oldest Members, attending the Chapel since 1900, remarked that the biggest change during that time had been the falling off of Congregations.[2] Yet we must also note, from the Methodist Recorder article quoted at the beginning of this Chapter, the significance of fellowship in 1978 and the vision of Crosby Ravensworth Methodists:

> "A particular feature of . . . life in this farming community is the regular monthly farmhouse fellowships. These take place throughout the winter, finish when lambing starts in March or April, and then begin again in the autumn. It is a family occasion, when all age groups cram into the room of one of the large old farmhouses in the area for what used to be called a prayer and praise evening. I attended the last farmhouse fellowship for this year at Crosby, where some forty people arranged themselves round the fire against the sub-zero temperature of a hard Cumbrian winter outside . . . . Without any sense of smugness or complacency, the Crosby Ravensworth members recognise the strength of their situation and the great heritage of faith and service that has led to it. As one of them remarked to me: 'We long for people all over the country to have what we have here.'"[3]

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1. Cyril J. Davey, The Methodist Story, p. 174.

2. Cumberland and Westmorland Herald, 13.5.1972.

3. Paul Harrington in the Methodist Recorder, 2.3.1978, p. 6.

This seems like the original Eden and contrasts sharply with chapel attendance, in autumn 1982, in the 'fellside' villages. Eight people attend Dufton, two attend Long Marton, two attend Milburn and one attends Blencarn. Knock has no Service at all.

None of the 22 Sunday Schools are attended by large numbers of scholars. They do not exist, of course, to "sweep the children off the lanes and streets"[1] as in the nineteenth century, nor are they "voluntary movements largely financed by the middle classes, designed to save the souls of the poor and to fit them for their proper station in life."[2] These Sunday Schools are not, as Turner thinks Sunday Schools probably were in the first half of the nineteenth century, primarily a "means of religious and educational philanthropy for 'poor children' . . . outside the immediate family of society members rather than as a means of instructing the children of members"[3] but, in theory at least, they are the nursery of the twentieth century Methodist Church. The 1827 Wesleyan Conference almost expressed this same hope in one of its statements on the religious education of children:

> "Schools designed for the religious education of poor children ought to be conducted in distinct and avowed connexion with some particular branch of the visible church of Christ."[4]

Yet "ought to be" suggests a general moral obligation rather than a particular Wesleyan Methodist imperative and one wonders if Methodist Conferences were not strict enough about conditions attached to being on the Sunday School Roll: that, for example, scholars should have had

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1. M. G. Jones, The Charity School Movement (London, 1938), p. 146.

2. J. M. Turner "Methodist Religion 1791-1849", in Rupert Davies, A. Raymond George and Gordon Rupp, ed., A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain (London, 1978), II, 101.

3. Ibid., p. 103.

4. Ibid., p. 102.

Christian parents who themselves would promise to assist with religious education in the home. Without such background support, Sunday Schools would never achieve the 1827 Conference aim. An American Jew once wrote "the imparting of a culture like Judaism in an hour or two a week is not possible",[1] and, similarly, what Methodist teachers have to say cannot all be said on Sundays; parents must somehow complement the Sunday School instruction. Scholars need to know both why their teachers are zealous and sincere members of the Methodist Church and that their parents believe wholeheartedly in what they are being taught. The aim was right, in 1977, if the teachers were intent that the 307 scholars in the whole Circuit should some day join the Circuit Membership of 724, thus increasing the size of loyal Methodism by almost 50% within a few years.

The Reverend Canon Gervase W. Markham, vicar of three parishes just beyond the western edge of the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit, came to his parishes seventeen years ago. There was then a Methodist Chapel in five of the six villages where he worked. "The Chapels all had one service a week and ran a Sunday School . . . . There was usually a Christmas party, and an Anniversary in the summer, with songs and recitations by the children. These depended on the zeal and patience and loving care of one or two Methodist families in each community. They were enjoyed by the children and supported by their parents . . . ."[2] Mr. Markham thinks that the value of such Sunday School work lay, as far as he could see, in the fact that many of the scholars ultimately came to him for Confirmation Classes. If what has happened in his area had been multiplied in the parishes of the upper Eden valley,

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1. Herman Wouk, This is My God (London, 1960), p. 332.

2. In a letter to me, from The Garden Flat, Morland House, Penrith, on 9.12.1982.

such an impact would have been noteworthy but if Eden Methodist children had rather become fully committed, as young adults, to the Church to which they already belonged, how much better! This has not been the general rule, however, and most Methodist scholars appear to leave Sunday School in their early teens and then absent themselves from any Church of any kind. In 1893, there were 849 scholars in the Wesleyan Circuit but only 596 Members in the twenty eight Wesleyan Societies.[1] Such Sunday School strength was almost 50% more than the Circuit Membership yet there was no evidence that the number of scholars becoming Members was, even proportionately, more than it is at present when, as we have seen, the Sunday School strength is now but half of the Circuit Membership. Membership, it seems, grows more from a response to preaching than it does from response to teaching. In 1897, the Wesleyan Circuit had appointed a Mr. Leafe, of Darlington, to be an Evangelist in the Circuit for the month of November and a Mr. Parker of Gateshead for January and February, 1898,[2] and in the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Church Record[3] (November, 1898) we find there were 669 Members in the Circuit (72 more than in 1893). Evangelism could also, of course, take place indirectly through the presence of children in Sunday Schools, and in 1914 the Wesleyan Circuit saw this opportunity, expressed in a Conference resulution that "in each Society a Visiting Band should be formed: that the town village or neighbourhood should be divided into sections and two visitors should be appointed to each section: that the visitors should occasionally visit the houses of non-

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1. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 23.3.1893.

2. Ibid., 18.9.1897.

3. Published at Kirkby Stephen.

churchgoers in their section to invite them to our Services, to ask them to send their children to our Sunday Schools and generally to show them that we are interested in their spiritual welfare."[1] There was, however, no further reference to this proposal in subsequent Quarterly Meeting Minutes and, in any case, the numbers of scholars decreased to 661 in 1925[2] and to 622 in 1930.[3]

Local newspaper reports reflected the importance of Sunday Schools. Writing of the Bolton United Methodist Free Church Sunday School Anniversary which had taken place on June 24th, 1860, it said that their Sunday School had a good library which circulated among the children, during the year, upwards of 500 volumes. "Such institutions are a great blessing and speak hopefully for the youth of our land and deserve the warmest sympathies of all parents and the hearty co-operation of every individual interested in the social and the religious progress of the rising generation."[4] On Christmas Day, 1860, Sunday School children "appeared healthy, well-dressed and well-behaved"[5] at Kirkby Thore Bethel Chapel and on Easter Day, 1861, scholars were "well-dressed, neat and clean" at the Tabernacle, Appleby.[6] It was not that Chapel children were children of the wealthy but that Chapel parents were anxious that their children appear at their best in the House of God, even better than someone else's best. The fact that some of these events took place

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1. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 12.9.1914.

2. Ibid., 12.3.1925.

3. Ibid., 13.3.1930.

4. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 10.7.1860.

5. Ibid., 1.1.1861.

6. Ibid., 9.4.1861.

on great Christian Feast Days might suggest the importance attached to religious education among the Methodists. Clearly, a well-run Sunday School was almost an essential part of village life. At the Ravenstonedale Wesleyan annual tea-party on New Year's Eve, 1866, 90 scholars ate free and more than 50 adults attended a tea party later that same day, in the Chapel. The Committee, which had arranged the Festival, unwisely charged three pence more for tickets than did the Primitives or Independents and few attended. "Last year's more successful Committee will need to be re-appointed - they know better the thinking and customs of Ravenstonedale."[1] The Knock annual Wesleyan tea party took place on New Year's Day, 1867, and the newspaper, as if to acquaint the reader with the true importance of Sabbath teaching, said that 48 scholars were enrolled with an average attendance of 43 and that every child's name in the whole village was on their Sunday School list.[2] A serious approach to education was noted in December, 1899, when in a report on annual prize-giving at Catherine Holme Wesleyan Sunday School, it was said that nearly £100 had "been spent in literature for the perusal of the scholars", since the establishment of a well-attended Sunday School.[3] The newspaper gladly continues to associate Methodist Sunday Schools with what is good in the surrounding society. Reporting on Catherine Holme's 1909 Sunday School Anniversary, it said that many from far and near make an annual pilgrimage to this out-of-the-way, neat and well-kept little chapel, "the inhabitants of the surrounding neighbourhood being

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1. Ibid., 8.1.1867.
2. Ibid., 8.1.1867.
3. Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald, 30.12.1899.

proverbial for their hospitality."[1] For some, alas, it was an annual visit only, though there is no report of any preacher wishing his Congregation a happy Christmas in June simply because he would not be seeing them again until the following year.[2]

Doingno injustice to the upper Eden, we draw a comparison with eighteenth-century Waldensians in mountainous and isolated northern Italy, particularly with their interest in a wide education. It "was this small, silent, peasant ghetto, half-hidden in the narrow-minded and drowsy Piedmont of the time, which represented in Italy the contemporary message of the Protestant Reformation. They may have been only a dozen pastors, four business men and a sprinkling of simple peasants but they kept alive a spirit of free enquiry with their critical reading, intellectual curiosity, books, debates, newspapers and discussions. Only a few may have read Voltaire . . . but all in some way breathed the air of modern Europe and none would be taken by surprise at the breaking out of the French Revolution."[3] As we have observed the teaching emphasis of our local Methodists we remember that during the last three decades of the nineteenth century the Waldensians also believed that "Italy's primary need was schools, not cathedrals, books, not sacred images, clear thinking, not processions."[4] There is here a Quaker element, too, and we shall return to this holy isolated, Waldensian community which, after 800 years of existence, united with the Methodist Church in Italy in 1979.

Herman Wouk tells of how a lukewarm fellow-Jew (belong to an isolated holy community, in which education in Old Testament Law is as

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1. Ibid., 19.6.1909
2. Kenneth Young, Chapel (London, 1972), p. 47.
3. Giorgio Tourn, The Waldensians (Turin, 1980), p. 165.
4. Ibid., p. 202.

important as additional New Testament truth is important to the Methodist) once said to him: "The best thing we can do is intermarry and disappear." Wouk went on to say: "Assimilation, like frostbite, begins at the extremities of Jewry. Settlements far from centres of the community almost always fade away fast."[1] Aware of this problem for Methodists in isolation, the Sunday Schools became, if not gateways into the Church, spiritually secure environments for the young. We do no injustice either to Jew or to Gentile to relate their problems of identity, for, as Wouk says, "for children born Jews, the faith taught authentically is without question a master resource of mental health and personal force."[2] Methodists have believed the same of what they themselves have taught and they have thought it foolish to say 'We do not want to warp them. When they grow up they can make their own choice.' For they know that, again, as Wouk says - relating this dangerous tolerance to infant vulnerability - "this view dictates the most total warping they can condemn a child to . . . . It is sheer mountain-climbing to regain ground lost in childhood."[3] Thus, for a child to have had believing parents and to have belonged to the fellowship of the faithful was to have been surrounded by a holy environment which would help to ensure its safety. It meant, for example, that when the obituary of the Primitive Methodist John Bell was written, part of the account, by John B. Rayner, read as follows:

> "John Bell was born at Brough, Westmorland, Dec. 14th, 1834. From a child he was surrounded by influences favourable to godliness and at the age of 13 years

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1. Herman Wouk, <u>This is My God</u>, p. 252.

2. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 274.

3. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 274.

> experienced a change of heart and at once united with our people."[1]

Experiences like these, of course, could take place, in some cases, before Sunday Schools had become a feature of Methodism.

A fourth emphasis in the Eden Methodist tradition had been its congregational singing. Elie Halévy thinks that England is a Puritanical nation and that "Puritans can, in good part, be seen as the Muslims of the north - solemn, silent, proud, fearless, much like the Muslims of Africa."[2] Could he have been embedded in the Eden Methodist tradition, he would have found that - Puritans or not - Methodists do not wish to be silent: apart from small Parish Church choirs and unwilling schoolchildren, they are probably the only people in the area who sing. We have hinted, however, that congregational singing has been limited to certain types of hymn and since most of the rural Societies are small in number, choirs, like pipe organs, are a luxury that by-passes most Chapels. Of few references to Methodist singing in the local newspaper, we read that, on Christmas Day, 1899, at Catherine Holme, "a well-balanced choir was led on the organ by Mr. George Horn",[3] and on July 5th, 1919, an annual Choir Festival was held at Brough Wesleyan Chapel. In most of the Chapels it is the well-played harmonium which leads singing meaningfully, especially when the organist is familiar with its limited register and the glories of sacred verse. The new Methodist Chapel at Brough Sowerby has a harmonium, in spite of the fact that Connexional advice is against such an instrument. On October 24th, 1982,

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1. John B. Rayner in the Primitive Methodist Magazine (London, 1887), pp. 57-58.

2. Elie Halévy, The Birth of Methodism in England, Bernard Semmel ed. and transl. (Chicago, 1971), p. 34.

3. Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald, 30.12.1899.

the appointed Local Preacher, Mr. W. Robinson from Crosby Garrett, chose four hymns different in musical style but the twenty adults (if not the ten children) sang them with apparent sincere and unlaboured adoration. None of the hymns was by Charles Wesley, the last being by John G. Whittier, a Quaker Massachusetts poet, born in 1807.[1] At Orton, on November 14th, 1982, none of the hymns[2] was by Charles Wesley though, again, Whittier wrote one of those chosen, (Number 103). The plain tunes set to the eight Whittier hymns in the Methodist Hymn Book deny the type of author he apparently was:

> "There was ne'er a man born who had more of the swing
> Of the true lyric bard and all that kind of thing."[3]

His occasional phrases (for example, suggesting that Christian service is not in "ritual word" and "O Sabbath rest by Galilee! O calm of hills above") point to the Quaker heritage and his local Methodist popularity is born out of the religion of Firbank and Fox, rather than Aldersgate and Wesley.

About a third of the time spent in Sunday worship is devoted to congregational hymn-singing but that, generally speaking, is where the musical expression begins and ends. Organists probably do not have harmoniums at home or, if they do, they do not have time to play them, otherwise the treasures of old, instrumental music (composed by Bach and his predecessors for harpsichord and clavichord) might more often be heard - in spite of the fact that harmoniums, like every other

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1. 662, 679, 680 and 669 in the Methodist Hymn Book; Whittier's hymn begins "Dear Lord and Father of mankind."

2. 676, 302, 103 and 667 in the Methodist Hymn Book; Whittier's hymn begins "O Lord and Master of us all."

3. John Telford, The Methodist Hymn-Book Illustrated (London, 1906), p.121, quoting Lowell.

musical instrument, have "a tendency to encourage mannerisms that have no real musical sense."[1] When we recall that the Wesley Guild, among other things, stood for "Culture of the mind", it it a little surprising that in local syllabuses it is extremely difficult to trace any interest in the use of instrumental music in Sunday worship. On the other hand, a Quaker silence may be more important for those moments of private prayer which precede public worship. In any case, Methodists meet to sing together and listening is nearly always confined to the Word of God and its message. Generally, too, the Congregation (as in other parts of England) comes to Worship 'on time' rather than 'before time', thereby losing the opportunity of contemplation - aided by music or not. We must also remember, as we have seen in the case of the Middleton fiddle, that instruments could be a distraction - especially if they were associated with "the world". Sadly, sometimes conversion itself may be self-denying to such an extent that talent may be hidden. Peter Eskholme, born at Whitehaven in 1823, became one of Nidderdale's Wesleyan preachers but, at his conversion, denying himself "of all things likely to impede progress", he decided that his "beloved violin, companion in many a frolicsome hour, (be) resolutely put away, to the disappointment of many in the neighbourhood who had been charmed with its sweet tones."[2] The "frolicsome hours" were probably in a public-house, as an extract concerning the Reverend Hodgson Casson may suggest:

> "He often used eccentric means to excite attention. Passing a public-house one day and seeing a number of youths half-intoxicated within, he entered, a pause ensued, whereon he approached the fiddler and said, 'Can you play the bleeding Lamb?' The startled performer admitted he could not. 'Then

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1. Donald F. Tovey, in the Preface to J. S. Bach's 48 Preludes and Fugues, (The Associated Board of the Royal School of Music, 1951), I, 12.

2. George Eskholme, Sketch of the Life of Peter Eskholme of Summerbridge (Bramley, 1885), p. 24.

> I can, I'll sing it', said Casson, and with high rich-toned voice, he sang:
>
> 'Christ hath died upon the tree,
> Glory to the bleeding Lamb.'"[1]

Norman Nicholson recalls that Moody and Sankey hymns were likely to be sung by visiting Evangelists during occasional Missions at Millom, south Lakeland, in the 1920's. These Revivalist hymns, imported in 1873, personally, by these two American preachers, helped people "to prove to themselves that God existed (and) that he did things here and now which could be seen and heard."[2] Nicholson calls their tunes "thumping, hand-clapping, heart-prodding"[3] but Kent, more reverently, says that they enabled audiences "to accept uncritically in a sentimental musical form what they would have hesitated to accept in the clearer form of the sermon."[4] Some of these hymns again became nationally and locally popular in the middle of the twentieth century when the American evangelist, Billy Graham, visited England. Methodist hymn-singing, says Nicholson, made "the congregation one. The hymns were our liturgy, our initiation ceremony, our war chant."[5] Father Dumitru Staniloae, referring to the power of the Eastern Orthodox liturgy, reflects what Eden Methodists have discovered:

> "Song unites men's minds, making them commune with one another . . . and unifying them in endless and life-giving joy . . . . The melody makes the meaning of the words shared and loved, the words themselves being the dynamic basis of the infinite richness of meanings which are expressed through the melody."[6]

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1. Joseph Hawkins, O'er Hill and Dale and By the Solway Shore (Norfolk, 1907), p. 46.
2. John Kent, Holding The Fort (London, 1978), p. 34.
3. Norman Nicholson, Wednesday Early Closing (London, 1975), p. 84.
4. John Kent, Holding The Fort, p. 34.
5. Norman Nicholson, Wednesday Early Closing, p. 95.
6. Fr. Dumitru Staniloae, Mystagogia (Athens, 1973), pp. 182-183.

John Wesley was much at one with Staniloae in the importance he attached to melody, which may help to explain why he frowned on harmonies. In his Thoughts on the Power of Music he wrote: ". . . it is counterpoint, it is harmony, (so called), which destroys the power of music."[1] This may also help to explain why the choral settings of the "modern", German Protestant, J. S. Bach, did not much accompany those Wesleyan hymns which were, nevertheless, inspired by the faith of Luther. Even in the present Methodist Hymn Book, only three Wesleyan hymns are set to tunes by J. S. Bach.[2] On the other hand, Bach's music had made no great impression, even on eighteenth-century Germany, let alone on England. Even so, by the late nineteenth century, Eden Methodists had missed the profound and glorious German harmonies and settled for popular American tunes. According to one's taste, Wesley is either acquitted or condemned, if, that is, he should be brought to trial.

Before we examine the impact of local Bands of Hope and, in the next chapter, of missionary attitudes, we note particular occasions when Eden Methodists have deliberately left their mark on local society. Some of them took bold stands to show what conversion meant to them and though we do not have any account quite like that of Peter Eskholme, in rural Nidderdale (a Yorkshire Dale), other Methodist preachers identified themselves with social righteousness, including, of course, the cause of Temperance. Nevertheless, Eskholme's views were typical in that local people were in no doubt whatsoever about his sincerity. He "declined to retail Tobacco. The sign over his shop once bore the inscription 'Licensed to sell Tea, Coffee, and Tobacco'; but with his own hand he blocked out the word 'Tobacco'; and at the present time

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1. John Wesley, The Works, XIII, 434.

2. The Methodist Hymn Book, Nos. 363, 635 and 761.

many of his books have written in the first page 'Tobacco', indicating that they were bought with tobacco-money, after he gave up smoking."[1]

Though the Eden valley was more rural than the wider England of which Joseph Ritson wrote, we should remember that our area Methodism had direct links with the more distant scene. Travelling and other visiting preachers had found that converts all over the country had ways of leaving their mark: sometimes as groups, and sometimes, like Eskholme, as individuals. "It was in rural England that the great work of Primitive Methodism was done. When machine-breaking, incendiarism and violence were rampant, when secret drilling and open riot were prevalent, it came as a healing and regenerative force creating innumerable centres of sweetness and light. If it inculcated principles of freedom and independence, it laid equal emphasis on obedience to the Law, everywhere discouraging violent remedies for the removal of grievances. While in no sense a political Church, it prepared men for the intelligent discussion of political questions and gave them the instincts which must constitute the foundation of a wise and stable democracy."[2] There were other ways, too, in which Methodist conviction was expressed. Mr. Westmorland, a Wesleyan Methodist in the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Circuit, was appointed a Magistrate "for the welfare of the Community in the County of Westmorland."[3] A Petition on behalf of the Sunday Closing Bill (for Ireland) was brought to the Wesleyan Quarterly Meeting at Kirkby Stephen in 1898, and "the Chairman was

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1. George Eskholme, Sketch of the Life of Peter Eskholme of Summer Bridge (Bramley, 1885), p. 87.

2. Joseph Ritson, The Romance of Primitive Methodism (London, 1909), p. 283.

3. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 23.12.1891.

directed to sign the same on behalf of the Meeting."[1] In 1902 the Wesleyan Quarterly Meeting condemned "the Education Bill now before Parliament, as being retrograde in the interests of Education and unjust to Nonconformity by providing out of Public Funds for Sectarian teaching without representation."[2] The following year it urged upon the Prime Minister and the local Member of Parliament the need for the more effective control of the Liquor traffic and encouraged "all friends of Temperance to exert themselves to prevent the passing" of the wrong kind of legislation.[3] In 1908 the Circuit gave strong approval to the Government for the introduction of a Licensing Bill.[4] In 1912, Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit urged the Government to make its 1908 promise legal.[5] The Wesleyan Quarterly Meeting at Warcop, in June 1923, unanimously urged the Government to "grant facilities for the speedy passing into law of Lady Astor's Bill, and, further . . . not to give official sanction to the evil of betting."[6] In further consideration of the purity of the life of the nation, local Methodists from the Quarterly Meeting sent the following resolution to the Prime Minister and to the Member of Parliament for Westmorland:

> ". . . this meeting representing 27 Churches and 22 Sunday Schools hereby calls the attention of His Majesty's Government to the great encouragement to the evil of gambling by the development of greyhound racing, and asks for legislation to protect the moral

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1. Ibid., 19.3.1898.
2. Ibid., 14.6.1902.
3. Ibid., 20.6.1903.
4. Ibid., 19.3.1908.
5. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 5.9.1912.
6. Minutes of Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 7.6.1923.

life of young people, and the National well-being of the Country."[1]

Two years later the Quarterly Meeting "desired to express their disapproval of any proposed attempt by hospital authorities or charitable institutions to raise necessary finance by means of sweepstakes or lotteries of any description."[2] Carried unanimously was a resolution in 1931 which opposed the repeal of the Act of 1781 "unless satisfactory proposals protecting Sunday from commercialisation and secularization are put in its place. We believe that the maintenance of the Christian Sunday as pre-eminently the people's rest day is essential to the highest good of the people and that the legalization of Sunday Entertainments is against the best interests of the Nation."[3] The United Methodist Free Church was also involved in protest by petition and in 1904, at their Appleby Circuit Quarterly Meeting, they "resolved that (a) petition be sent to Mr. R. Rigg, M.P., for presentation to Parliament against the proposed legislation for the restriction of Magisterial discretion in regard to the renewing of licences to public Houses and against the importation of Chinese labour into South Africa."[4] Some of these resolutions may have been suggested by Connexional Committees or their wording may have been the handiwork of local Superintendent Ministers, but the fact that local Methodists obviously gave the various matters serious consideration points to a holy community which was not satisfied with the social purity of the Nation.

Apart from alcohol abuse, which we will look at later, there were

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1. Ibid., 1.3.1928.

2. Ibid., 18.12.1930.

3. Ibid., 19.3.1931.

4. Minutes of the Appleby United Methodist Free Church Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 17.3.1904.

other issues on which Methodists spoke and acted. After sermons preached by the Reverend Spettigue on behalf of the Lancashire cotton operatives in the United Methodist Free Church at Appleby, Collections were taken to meet their distress. At Kirkby Thore Bethel Chapel a liberal Collection was also taken.[1] The Vicar of Appleby (the Reverend Mr. Milner) made a further appeal and the Appleby Wesleyans and United Methodist Free Church sent considerable sums within a few days.[2] In 1866, the Nation's cattle were attacked by Rinderpest and the President of the Wesleyan Conference wrote to Superintendent Ministers requesting them to arrange public meetings for prayer and to preach with special reference to the Plague. The local newspaper noted this request on 27.2.1866 and a week later a correspondent noted, with appreciation, this Wesleyan Day of Prayer and he invited brother-Christians to pray that "this terrible calamity" might be turned away from the land.[3] By the end of the year most of the cattle plague had disappeared and the County was declared disease-free in April, 1867.[4] Westmorland was spared the bovine ravage, either because the Methodists prayed or because her borders with Yorkshire, on Stainmore, were carefully watched. Gypsies and tinkers were disinfected on their way into the County and cartwheels were scraped and sponged. The newspaper reported that the very earthly Duke of Hamilton's Ayrshires were "said to be enjoying a clean bill of health down his coal shafts."[5]

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 25.11.1862.
2. Ibid., 9.12.1862.
3. Ibid., 6.3.1866.
4. Ibid., 9.4.1867.
5. Ibid., 3.4.1866.

We note, finally, two other references to Methodist social emphasis or 'witness'. The Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit Quarterly Meeting in 1942, representing 1,176 Circuit Members, protested to its own Conference that it should have recently permitted (under certain conditions) dancing and card-playing on Methodist premises.[1] As with so many of its protests, we cannot be sure how useful they were, but local society was not allowed to forget that Eden Methodists existed and should be given a hearing. The second reference, however, tends to undo the positive impact which Methodism believed it was making. The Appleby Wesleyans held their Bazaar in the King's Head Assembly Room on three days in August 1867 and was the scene of what many fellow-Methodists might have described as a minor gamble: "While the ladies were busily engaged in disposing of their tasteful wares, others were also helping forward the work in hand. Some in promoting "raffles" for the more valuable articles; others in inducing you to try your luck at the bran tub 'Every draw a prize.'"[2] The fact that such an event was not on Wesleyan premises made it no less a bizarre bazaar. Half a century later, as we have seen, the entire Circuit was openly against gambling - as was Wesley, a century earlier. This, as many a Methodist would have said, was, like the first 'drop' towards alcoholism, the first 'draw' towards a lottery-centred life. The Inghamites, like the Moravians, drew lots but only to discover what was the will of God.

Office-holders and Preachers in the Circuits had, of course, to evidence holiness in their own lives. Miles Moss, for example, began as a Primitive Methodist Travelling Preacher in 1833. He was not in debt, did not smoke, and was a "peaceable man".[3] On the other hand,

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Herald, 5.9.1942.
2. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 27.8.1867.
3. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, March, 1841.

F. N. Jersey was a Travelling Preacher turned Baptist. "When he came into the Circuit he proposed himself Missionary Treasurer and when we came to balance accounts the Circuit wanted £7/0/11¾. He positively declared that he was insolvent and had nothing to pay us with although on the Quarter Day he asserted he was out of debt. We have succeeded after much trouble to get him to give us a promisary (sic) note upon stamp for £7.0.0 to be paid within 6 months by 2 instalments . . . ."[1] James Stolbert, of the Kendal Mission, ceased to be a Primitive Methodist Member in 1843. He was guilty of immoral conduct and went away suddenly, leaving debts to the amount of several pounds unpaid and made no arrangement for their repayment.[2] At the preacher's Meeting at Barnard Castle in 1847, William Collinson was "requested to attend a special committee meeting for the examination of certain charges preferred against him . . . . If W. Collinson should . . . decline attending a committee meeting or find it impracticable so to do, then should he still consider it his duty to obey his Master's commands in deference to horse-racing, foot coursing and various other vanities lately carried on at his house, he be respectively desired to yield up his office as Class Leader in Lunedale."[3] Circumstances later showed that he was not entirely at fault, though horse-racing was still wrong: "Brother W. Collinson was in fault when he attended the races at the command of his employer, (but) considering the extenuating circumstances he relates and his promise to be careful for the future he (is) exonerated from blame and . . . it (is) the opinion of this meeting

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1. Ibid.,

2. Ibid., March 1843.

3. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Local Preachers Meeting, 23.9.1847.

that to attend horse-racing is sinful in the sight of God."[1]

Apart from the missionary emphasis, Methodist concern for scriptural holiness and human need in the immediate locality also reached overseas. Local Circuit Wesleyan Minutes from 1871 onwards show this extended care. In 1871, the whole Circuit agreed, at Warcop, to make a Collection "in behalf of Methodism in France, in order to relieve its sufferings in connection with the recent war",[2] as it did to aid Indian famine victims in 1877.[3] Its further concern for India was seen in 1889 when it urged Government to enforce its 1888 Act "forbidding the Continuance of licensed prostitution, in Connection with the Military establishments of India."[4] In 1896, Eden valley Methodists turned their attention to the Turks:

> ". . . this meeting expressing its horror and indignation at the terrible and Continual Massacres of Armenians Under Turkish rule, calls upon Her Majesty's Government to take immediate and effective measures for bringing to an end the reign of terror which has so long disgraced the Civilized World, and for Securing to the Christian, and all other subjects of the Turkish Empire, freedom from persecution, and safety of life and property, and that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Prime Minister, and to the Member of Parliament for the Northern Division of Westmorland."[5]

In 1900 Indian famine was again to be relieved from special Circuit Collections.[6] In 1904 a protest was made against the 'Chinese Labour

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1. Ibid., 23.12.1847.

2. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 27.9.1871.

3. Ibid., 27.9.1877.

4. Ibid., 19.12.1889.

5 Ibid., 19.9.1896.

6. Ibid., 23.6.1900.

Ordinance', declaring that "inasmuch as whatever are the Economic reasons adduced in favour of such an Ordinance, indentured labour as therein set forth is subversive of moral principle and opposed to the best traditions of the British Nation."[1] In all these resolutions, local Methodism was becoming a little more aware of a world of politics and need beyond the surrounding fells, and with this consciousness was, as we have seen, a missionary interest - also common to wider Methodism and to other Christian Churches. This considerable holy concern for people far away was matched, if not surpassed, by an evident desire that people, especially children and young people here in the Eden valley, should abstain from alcohol.

Seventeenth-century Waldensians, who lived in the isolated mountains of Angrogna in the Italian Alps, were faced with this same social problem. The frequenting of taverns - fountains of sin and schools of the devil - they prohibited.[2] Children, especially, had to be instructed in this discipline since "he who instructs his son confounds the enemy, and when the father dies he may almost be said not to be deceased, for he leaves behind him a living likeness."[3] A better life for children was the cry of English nineteenth-century social reformers who shared, in this, the aspirations of the Jewish as well as the Christian religion. Samuel S. Cohon says that "what binds man to the Divine, is the yearning for a fuller and more satisfying life." Religious feeling lies within the desire "to escape obstacles, hardships, and frustrations, and to secure the advantages, satisfactions, and joys, that enrich life."[4]

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1. Ibid., 17.3.1904.

2. Antoine Monastier, A History of the Vaudois Church (London, 1848) p. 94.

3. Ibid., p. 94.

4. Samuel S. Cohon, What We Jews Believe and A Guide to Jewish Practice (Assen, The Netherlands, 1971), p. 14.

Nineteenth-century English society needed the power of this kind of religion, especially its children, and because this power "lifts burdens . . . emancipates from crushing fears, and . . . replaces moral and mental chaos with light and with order",[1] Methodism sought to bring it to its converts. "The Christian life to which the Methodist convert was called was one of unending advance through a better life to a better world."[2]

Why, then, should children, particularly, be so much in need of a better life? Writing of the middle of the nineteenth century, Robert Taylor spotlights childhood deprivations:

> "This need of two-fold liberation was particularly apparent in the case of the children, whose bodies were being bruised and broken in factory and colliery, and whose characters were being irreparably corrupted in the beer shops. Environment and working conditions had to be changed, but at the same time alcohol had to be prevented from claiming both body and soul. This could be done only in childhood. The method had to be educational, since it was clear that a remedy through legislation would be long delayed, and would be opposed by vested interests at every turn. A new race of citizens had to be created, who were fully aware of the evils of drinking, and could eventually create the public opinion without which Temperance reform could never be achieved."[3]

Joseph Livesey pioneered Temperance education among the young. Born at Walton, near Preston, in 1794, he lived his boyhood days in a miserable cottage at the unprofitable occupation of weaving. All around him was excessive drinking. On March 22nd, 1832, therefore, he founded the Preston Temperance Society, the Pledge required of its

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1. Ibid., p. 16.

2. John Walsh, "Methodism at the end of the eighteenth century", in A History of The Methodist Church in Great Britain, I, 314.

3. Robert Taylor, The Hope Of The Race (London, 1946), pp. 14-15.

members being a promise not to drink spirits. When he died in 1881 he recalled that it was fifty years since he took his last glass; it was the best drink he ever drank because it was the last.[1] Joined by six other men later in 1832, Livesey signed the total abstinence pledge. Their example was followed in many towns and villages all over England, including Birmingham and London. Another worker in this new movement was Mrs. Ann Jane Carlile, born Ann Jane Hammil in 1775 in a little village in County Monaghan, Ireland. In 1847, Mrs. Carlile, a Presbyterian Minister's widow, became, at the age of 72, "the greatest leader of juvenile Temperance education that the world has yet seen." Her social background, apart from coming from a country where alcohol is not unknown, is described in The Hope Of The Race: "Early evidence of her energy and enterprise was first seen in her assumption of the responsibility of augmenting the family income when her husband was a village minister. His meagre stipend was quite inadequate to support a family. So she opened a draper's shop, and made it a paying concern. After her husband's death she sold the business and retired - to commence a mighty crusade with all the fire and vigour of youth."[2] She came over to Scotland and England to proclaim Temperance, having first formed a Temperance Society in Dublin, among sailors. On her third visit to England, she met the Reverend Jabez Tunnicliff, a young Baptist Minister, born in 1809, one of 22 children. In 1842 he became Pastor at South Parade Baptist Church in Leeds and he persuaded the Leeds Temperance Society to invite Mrs. Carlile for her third visit. At one of the many children's meetings she addressed she happened to say 'I

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1. Ibid., p. 16.

2. Ibid., p. 19.

think we ought to call the present meeting a Band of Hope', thus bequeathing to posterity "a name that was to be honoured by successive generations of Christian people for its association with preventive Temperance work among the young."[1] On November 9th, 1847, the first Band of Hope Festival was held in South Parade Chapel Schoolroom.

In 1851, when Bands of Hope were being formed all over the country, a Union of six such Bands took place in Bradford. From then on, in face of prolonged opposition to their aims, single Bands began to form Unions. "Isolated units can achieve little beyond their own confined boundaries", writes Taylor. "Lone workers tend to become discouraged."[2] The new Union at Bradford was the first to build a Temperance Hall. In 1855, Sheffield had its Union, commencing with five societies. "Each Union is free to develop its own personality and explore the possibilities open to it in its own area. Yet these autonomous associations are bound to the United Kingdom Union and thus to one another by the strongest of all ties - that of a common and holy purpose in combating the evil thing that even today gravely menaces the child life of the nation."[3] The Pledge, which boys and girls were invited to sign, was a logical result of Temperance teaching by the Band of Hope and earlier in this century (1946) a Congregational Church Minister at Morecambe used to invite his children to process to the Communion Table and there, "at the most hallowed spot in the sanctuary, they record(ed) their names."[4] All over the country, though the Band of Hope is by no means as strong

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1. Ibid., p. 24.
2. Ibid., p. 31.
3. Ibid., p. 37.
4. Ibid., p. 40.

now,[1] local groups have their May Queens, thus further exalting this established English institution.

The impact of this emphasis was publicly recognized by the beginning of this century. Already, 3,000 children and 1,000 adults had attended the first National Band of Hope Union Festival in the Crystal Palace in 1856. In 1865 a children's choir of 2,000 voices at that same annual Festival prompted the "cautious London Times" to declare that it was "the best performance of its kind they had ever heard."[2] This non-denominational movement was beginning to influence the welfare of the Nation's children towards the end of the Victorian era. ~~During this government,~~ At the turn of the century, Liberals were able (supported by Nonconformists against the brewing industry) to introduce drink legislation which, as we have seen, was encouraged by local Methodists in the Eden valley. In 1886, however, though Parliament had forbidden the sale of liquor to children under 13 years of age for consumption on the premises, there was still much to be accomplished by Temperance work and it was in this context that Methodists in the Vale of Eden saw the need to continue their programme against alcohol abuse.

By 1933, Sir Edgar Sanders, Director of the Brewers' Society, was alarmed that the chief customers of public-houses were elderly and middle-aged men. In his eagerness to see the brewing industry steady on its feet, he urged fellow-brewers to instigate campaigns which would bring back young people into the public-houses, especially those who, as yet,

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1. The Vale of Eden Band of Hope Union is, in the opinion of the present General Secretary of the United Kingdom Band of Hope Union (Mr. A. C. Page), as active as all the other Unions put together. It has 13 Bands of Hope and, according to a letter to me, dated 30.12.1982, from their local secretary (Miss Mary E. Harper, Bampton, Victoria Square, Kirkby Stephen) its programme is mainly educational, many of its children preparing for Temperance Knowledge Examinations.

2. Robert Taylor, The Hope of The Race, p. 45.

did not know the taste of beer.[1] He encouraged Press advertising, though, with appeal to a certain section of the community, this had been fashionable as early as 1866. In that year of the cattle plague, the fairly prominent front-page advertisement in the Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser read, in part, thus:

> "European and Colonial Wine Company . . . for the purpose of supplying the nobility, gentry and private families with pure wines of the highest character at a saving of at least 30%."[2]

In that year, Mr. J. Sarjent, A Temperance agent, had spoken at Bampton (near Shap), comparing Rinderpest and the drink pest. Both would be got rid of by legislative measures.[3] In the case of the latter, these measures tarried, but by 1933 had been to some extent effective - hence Edgar Sanders' concern that England should be a land fit for brewers to live in. His campaign was successful and the Second World War did nothing to encourage Temperance. By 1946, the Band of Hope, therefore, had a considerable task, not least that of educating schools and Churches as to the continuing dangers of alcohol. Taylor makes a last general comment on drink and its hindrance in man's movement towards holiness, and health of body and mind: "The Christian religion teaches us that we are temples of the Holy Spirit. Evil habits desecrate these temples. Alcohol plays a foremost part in this corrupting work. You cannot cleanse a man's soul by changing his address any more than you can purify a nation's soul by erecting garden cities."[4]

We have seen how the Vale of Eden Band of Hope Union was formed

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1. Ibid., p. 59.
2. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 10.1.1866.
3. Ibid., 13.3.1866.
4. Robert Taylor, The Hope of The Race, p. 77.

and that its inception was to encourage local children and young people to keep themselves "unstained from the world."[1] So, also, with observance of the Sabbath, a distinctive standard was required. Thomas Bowman had written in his diary (in 1816): "Sunday 11th February: This day's engagement marred by the visit of a relative and would have been a good Sabbath had I not been plagued with visitors. May the Lord convert every relative I have then they will find sufficient employment at home."[2] The distinctive social emphases of the Methodists were bound to isolate them from fellow-workers and sometimes from relatives, especially if the relatives did not understand how much these new forms of social behaviour were important to those who practised them. But unless the Methodists were to be completely separated and lead monastic lives, it was essential, they believed, that they should "keep up the standards of the faithful by a strong community life and rules of behaviour dictating what must be done and what must be avoided."[3] John Kent says that in nineteenth-century England, as on the Continent, Churches were losing their social and political power, being pushed to the margins of society and "the hostility of a secular world was tightening its grip on them." One religious response to this growing isolation of religious institutions and ideas, was "to accept and intensify the isolation, to glory in the eccentricity of irrational opinion and divergent organization."[4] There may be something of this

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1. James 1, verse 27.

2. Matthew Braithwaite, History of Wesleyan Methodism in the Bishop Auckland Circuit (Bishop Auckland, 1885), p. 36.

3. Henry D. Rack, Wesleyanism and "The World" in the Later Nineteenth Century (Wesley Historical Society Lecture No. 43; Chester, June 1977), p. 3.

4. John Kent, Holding The Fort (London, 1978), p. 10.

in the abstinence-from-alcohol movement, though the social consequences of its protests clearly justified the vigour with which they were made. The kind of religious group which thus emerged in nineteenth-century English society, says Kent, was similar to Pietist movements of the late seventeenth-century in German Lutheranism: "All these groups had the same tendency to withdraw as far as possible from secular society, to organize on the basis of small, local ecclesiola, to ignore denominational control if possible, to use prohibitions in order to concentrate the life of the member entirely on the concerns of the tiny religious community."[1] Eden valley Methodism has not, however, ignored "denominational control" and business meetings have sought to channel Christian citizenship into every part of society. This is the required aim of all Methodist Churches at the present time, as it was Wesley's for all the Societies founded during his lifetime: to spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land. Even before his conversion, he knew the need if he did not know the means of meeting it. So he wrote to his father, in 1734:

> "There is scarce any way of doing good to our fellow creatures for which here is not daily occasion . . . here are poor families to be relieved; here are children to be educated; here are workhouses wherein both young and old want, and gladly receive, the word of exhortation; here are prisons to be visited, wherein alone is a complication of all human wants; and, lastly, here are the schools of the prophets - here are tender minds to be formed and strengthened, and babes in Christ to be instructed and perfected in all useful learning."[2]

As for buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, only extreme necessity, the two brothers said in 1743, should prompt such

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1. Ibid., p. 10, footnote 2.

2. John Wesley, The Letters, I, 173.

behaviour.[1] In all this, John Wesley had to point out that he was not commending a new type of Christianity but only "the plain, old Christianity that I teach, renouncing and detesting all other marks of distinction."[2] In describing the character of a Methodist, he writes: "Whether he sit in his house or walk by the way, whether he lie down or rise up, he is promoting, in all he speaks or does, the one business of his life; whether he put on his apparel, or labour, or eat and drink, or divert himself from too wasting labour, it all tends to advance the glory of God, by peace and good-will among men."[3]

We read the local newspaper on the subject of abstinence from alcohol, aware that it took considerable notice of the Band of Hope and the other related movements. Beginning in 1860, we trace,in its columns, the cause of Temperance as it makes its impact on local society, remembering that the abstinence movement, though considerably supported in the Eden valley, was also a national campaign against a national evil. It would have been inappropriate, even if desirable, for local Methodists to have opted out of a fight against an evil whose most damaging effects, numerically, nevertheless, were more probably in Bermondsey than in Brough.

In the Special Schedule for 1881, a United Methodist Free Church document, we find that Asby Chapel was "settled on Deed for Preaching the Gospel without specifying Denomination." Built in 1859, it was to this new Chapel and village that the Kirkby Stephen Temperance Band came in March, 1860. Here a Temperance plea was heard regarding the

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1. The Consitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church, p. 524.

2. John Wesley, The Works, VIII, 346.

3. Ibid., p. 345.

"Nation's curse."[1] Murton Chapel, also managed by the United Methodist Free Church, held its annual Temperance Festival on Good Friday, 1860. The Reverend Beavan, their Travelling Preacher, lectured in the afternoon and a Doctor Blades from Kirkby Stephen spoke about the evils of drink in the evening.[2] In May 1860, the annual Temperance demonstration was held at Kirkby Stephen. The whole town, all 1,339 of it, seemed to be involved. Flags and banners had been placed on prominent windows in the town and on the lofty Temperance Hall, built so soon (1856) after the first such building at Bradford in 1851. There was a holiday spirit, with many visitors in the town, including the Bainbridge Brass Band from Wensleydale. The procession from the Temperance Hall, headed by the "splendid silk flag", showed David slaying Goliath. At the Tea party some thousand people drank "the cheering but unintoxicating cup." Doctor Blades chaired the Public Meeting at which F. R. Lees, another doctor, gave a Temperance Address. This "great North of England Temperance Demonstration" also witnessed the ascent of a baloon - in honour of the Band of Hope - "materials for which were given and the workmanship executed by working men."[3] As month followed month, the "cause" dominated the social scene. In June 1860, Anglicans joined Methodists to hear Doctor Close, Dean of Carlisle, speak on Temperance at Appleby in the British School; present were the Rural Dean, the Reverend E. Heelis (from Long Marton), the Referend J. Milner (from Appleby), the Reverend T. Clarke (from Ormside), and the Reverend John Heelis (also from Long Marton). In addition there were the Reverends Brown and Beavan, Wesleyan and United Methodist Free Church Ministers

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 20.3.1860.
2. Ibid., 10.4.1860.
3. Ibid., 29.5.1860.

respectively. Doctor Close's concluding argument, much heard since, was that "the moderate drinker did more to promote drunkenness than the real drunkard because they made drinking look respectable and they did not know how many they had unconsciously been the means of leading astray."[1]

In February, 1862, a public Temperance meeting was held in the National Schoolroom at Long Marton, addressed by Mr. Thomas Worsnop from Bradford. The audience included "a large company of the working classes", several of whom signed the Pledge.[2] The Northern Temperance League had 123 affiliated Societies in Cumberland, Northumberland, North Yorkshire and Durham and Mr. T. J. Dryden was the local correspondent, living at Renwick.[3] The League provided speakers and, as a 'leagued' association, it allowed bigger groups in towns and cities to share the costs of reaching the small rural communities. It could enter into negotiations with Parliament and help isolated causes to present, together, with one voice and at one time, their particular views on Law reform. Every League official did his work free and, by 1862, one of its representatives had been to Milburn.[4] The Kirkby Stephen annual Temperance Festival was much assisted, in 1862, by the new Eden Valley railway line. Nearly 500 souls left the Station "when their carriages had discharged their human freight."[5] In the same year a Mr. Lapsley spoke in the Brough Temperance Hall and Brough joined the Temperance League. Lapsley also lectured, "about that time", at Appleby, Asby, Warcop and Milburn, places where 'Leagued' societies were also formed.[6] In June 1862,

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1. Ibid., 19.6.1860.
2. Ibid., 25.2.1862.
3. Ibid., 13.5.1862.
4. Ibid., 3.6.1862.
5. Ibid., 10.6.1862.
6. Ibid., 10.6.1862.

Lapsley visited Bolton Wesleyans who became affiliated to the Temperance League, bringing to 16 the number of Temperance Societies in the area.[1] Later in 1862, Doctor Close commended the Temperance Movement to ladies. As for poverty in Lancashire, he thought much of that could have been put right if drink had been left alone. Clergy and gentry, too, if they could give the amount of their annual drinking bills to starving people, would do much for this necessary relief of the working classes.[2] A practical step was suggested by Mr. G. McCree, secretary of the Band of Hope Union in London, who appealed for happy well-fed children belonging to the Union to give some coin for the poor, hungry weeping children of the cotton counties.[3] In May 1863, George Dodds from Newcastle spoke at Kirkby Stephen Temperance Festival, saying that abstainers never substituted their views for the Gospel but sometimes abstinence was the first step to believing in the Gospel.[4] In 1864, the newspaper reported that a total abstinence association had just been formed among the young men of the University of Oxford, purely from a wish to mark their recognition of, and to identify themselves with, this great national movement.[5] In 1865 the Kirkby Thore open-air Temperance Festival was held "in celebration of the closing of one of the four public houses in the village, the Oddfellows Arms, through the purchase of the property by Mr. Thomas Westmorland of Penrith, an ardent friend of the Temperance and Prohibition Movements."[6] In February 1867, Appleby Band of Hope

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1. Ibid., 1.7.1862.
2. Ibid., 4.11.1862.
3. Ibid., 11.11.1862.
4. Ibid., 2.6.1863.
5. Ibid., 15.3.1864.
6. Ibid., 13.6.1865.

members gave entertainment in aid of their funds in the British School-room. Over seventy youngsters took part and one adult gave a special donation of a Sovereign.[1] A year later "in the House of Commons . . . petitions were presented by Mr. W. Lowther from Ambleside, Dufton, Knock and Great Asby in favour of the Bill for prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sundays."[2] In June 1868, the ancient Ravenstonedale Pot Fair took place on the same day as the Temperance Festival, both thus being well attended. Brough Brass Band accompanied flags and banners and"between two and three hundred partook of an excellent tea" in the Independent Chapel.[3] Winton Baptists took up the Temperance cause in November, 1868.[4] Eleven years later, the Vale of Eden Band of Hope Union reported, at Appleby, that it had 27 Bands of Hope, with 2,507 members.[5]

Temperance work continued through both the Northern Temperance League and the Band of Hope, the early Temperance Movement being independent of Methodism in that it built its own Temperance Halls. Anglicans continued their interest and in January 1889, the Reverend John Heelis chaired the annual Temperance meeting in the Kirkby Thore Board School.[6] Nateby's Band of Hope appeared to be thriving in February, 1889,[7] as did Crosby Garrett's, which had a monthly meeting in the

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1. Ibid., 26.2.1867.
2. Ibid., 25.2.1868.
3. Ibid., 16.6.1868.
4. Ibid., 24.11.1868.
5. Ibid., 28.1.1879.
6. Ibid., 15.1.1889.
7. Ibid., 12.2.1889.

Baptist Schoolroom.[1] Bolton's Band of Hope was held in the Free Methodist Chapel in March, 1889;[2] Orton's Band of Hope met in its Temperance Hall during the same period.[3] Later that year the seventeenth annual Demonstration of the Vale of Eden Band of Hope Union took place at Kirkby Stephen, when it was reported that almost every village in the Dale possessed its Band of Hope. In less than two decades 39 Bands of Hope had been started and their total membership was 3,678; 411 meetings had been held during the year 1888/1889 and 232 had signed the Pledge. The Railway Companies provided special Demonstration trains in 1889, with cheap fares. There were four Brass Bands and a procession of more than 3,000 children, wearing their membership badges. Kirkby Stephen Wesleyans and Primitives were represented, as were the villages of Crosby Garrett, Winton, Orton, Musgrave, Kirkby Thore, Nateby, Tebay, Milburn, Soulby, Warcop, Colby, Asby, Bolton, Ravenstonedale, Blencarn, Appleby, Brough, Mallerstang, Dufton, Hilton and Murton, Espland Hill and Knock. They all petitioned Parliament in favour of Sunday closing.[4] By 1899, Kings Meaburn, Hoff and Long Marton had been added to the list of villages represented at the Demonstration.[5]

The weekly Herald quoted a Doctor Saleeby in 1909, who, it was said, would deny the rights of parentage to people given to excessive drinking. This eminent sociologist had told the Eugenics Society that alcoholism was responsible for producing a defective race and science could prove

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1. Ibid., 12.3.1889.
2. Ibid., 12.3.1889.
3. Ibid., 26.3.1889.
4. Ibid., 25.6.1889.
5. Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald, 10.6.1899.

it. Future legislation would have to be radical and ban parentage to either sex and of any social status who were drunkards.[1] Such legislation would increase the numbers of bachelors and spinsters in Kirkby Thore's population of 427 where were those surely and quickly qualifying in a village which had at least 12 licensed houses in its area. The area of Hilton was even more "under the influence": its population was 120 and it had 7 licensed houses.[2] On one side of the opposing armies were 44 Bands of Hope and on the other was this thick spread of taverns. In the middle were people like Mr. Moordaff, an Appleby Solicitor who had been found guilty of fraud. Counsel at the Assizes spoke of this 'most lamentable case' being the painful story of a drink-ruined family.[3] The Band of Hope and the Temperance Movement had come into existence to prevent such stories and we can only fearfully guess what society might have become had not their influences been brought to bear on this social evil.

The yearly Demonstrations lapsed during the War years but they were to be resumed in June, 1919.[4] When, in 1929, a "tablet" was unveiled in Leeds in memory of the founder of the Band of Hope, the national membership was over two millions in 15,000 societies. The Herald reported the event, quoting the inscription on the building on Leeds Bridge which said that the Band of Hope was a title suggested by the Reverend Jabez Tunnicliff, a prominent Leeds Temperance worker.[5] A significant account of an early Pledge-signing occurs in the newspaper in May, 1932; though

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1. Ibid., 29.5.1909.
2. Ibid., 12.6.1909.
3. Ibid., 26.6.1909.
4. Ibid., 25.1.1919.
5. Ibid., 7.12.1929.

without date, it appears to refer to a time soon after the Preston men signed their Pledges on the first of September, 1832. At Blackburn, Thomas Whitakker and his brother William signed the Pledge at a large meeting in the Theatre Royal. Thomas then asked his employer if his wages could be paid at the mill instead of at the public house. His employer agreed but his workmates, who thought he was slighting them, objected. Thomas Whitakker could not abandon total abstinence and so he left his employment. He became a Temperance Missionary, a Justice of the Peace and Mayor of Scarborough. His son, Sir T. H. Whitakker, M.P., was known to all social reformers. Through a visit to Aspatria, Thomas Whitakker "converted" Sir Wilfred Lawson and his entire household. They all signed the Pledge. One son, another Sir Wilfred Lawson, became the popular and long-serving President of the Temperance Alliance.[1]

During the Second World War, when the Vale of Eden Band of Hope was planning winter activities for its session 1942-1943, it sent a message of good cheer to all former members then serving in the Forces.[2] In July 1952, the Reverend B. L. Simpson, Methodist Minister at Appleby, and J. C. Salkeld (also a Methodist) disapproved strongly of the application for a licence to sell drink in the Appleby Public Hall. At the Court hearing, the Police also disapproved and the application was not granted.[3] At the 83rd (1962) annual Demonstration, Anne Hastwell of Kaber, successfully examined in the Vale of Eden Temperance examination, was presented with a cup for the highest marks. Thirty-two

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Herald, 7.5.1932.

2. Ibid., 5.9.1942.

3. Ibid., 5.7.1952.

Bands of Hope were present and the work of the Union seemed to be remaining strong.[1] But in 1972 there were only 17 Banners and, apparently, there should have been 38. In the previous five years, numbers of people attending had declined considerably.[2] Thomas Hodgson, editor of the local newspaper from 1860 to 1913, together with the succession of Tom Sarginson (1913-1951), Robert Irving (1951-1952), George Hobley (1952-1963) and Frank Shaw (1963 onwards)[3] had all done their best to report the rise and fall of the Band of Hope, but, in an age of continuing advertisement by brewers, this movement for social reform has slowed down considerably. Yet in this same age of breakfast breathalisers when hospital beds are used for the nursing of avoidable motoring injuries, and the young, especially, are tragically killed, the message of Temperance education is still clearly needed.

Having traced the history of the local Temperance movement in the upper Eden valley, however, one wonders how much it was a distraction in Methodism's main concern to persuade the people of their need to know and serve Jesus Christ with the whole of their lives. Were there those who gave their allegiance to a social movement rather than to a religious movement? Did some of those who signed the Pledge think that there could be a purity in society without any inward transformation of individual lives? We forget that many who signed were children, led to see danger in an alternative course. If, in succeeding generations, the danger appeared to be reduced, children then became more difficult to persuade and their teachers had to begin with the message of purity within individuals before they could proceed to dangers within a society.

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1. Ibid., 23.6.1962.

2. Ibid., 24.6.1972.

3. Ibid., Supplement, 19.9.1981.

In an isolated community, where few families have been broken or separated, the last generation of children become this generation's teachers and, unless the doctrine of personal holiness precedes that of social holiness, Temperance Movements will lose their dynamic. One limitation of such movements is that they concentrate only on health of the body and mind rather than on the whole person. Speaking of the healthiness of circumcision, Herman Wouk says "the medical endorsement is not, however, the glory of Judaism. It is a footnote."[1] For "the Jews", he says, "have followed the Mosaic law with a confidence which modern medicine progressively ratifies."[2] In other words, the children of present Eden Methodist families must first be taught to follow the Jesus law and then lurking dangers in society will be less likely to endanger their health. There is still time for parents and Sunday School teachers within the fellowship of the Methodist Societies to persuade children that Jesus must be their Lord.

The aims of the Band of Hope have been so much linked with local Methodism, however, that the existence of one may seem to be directly dependent on the existence of the other. When we note present statistics, therefore, revealing a gradual but certain decline in Methodism as well as a similar state in the Band of Hope, we fear for the continuing Methodist identity. We wonder if holy isolates have only survived because they demonstrated unique social emphases. If one of these emphases weakens (especially if it has been the most distinctive), it may be that the rest are also doomed. Having examined some of the impact of these Eden Methodist emphases, we now turn, in the next chapter, to examine other religious attitudes within this isolated holy

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1. Herman Wouk, This Is My God, p. 141.

2. Ibid., p. 141.

community, noting, especially, points where these are at one with the attitudes and behaviour of Waldensians and Jews, who, to some extent, have also been holy isolates.

Since there are, of course, many religions, or religious groups, throughout the world which may be regarded as, in some degree, existing in isolation, it is not difficult to find examples of holy isolates for comparison with our Methodists. Obviously, there are small island tribes in the tropics, for example, which are far more isolated than the Methodist group we have been studying. On the other hand there are groups of Methodists here in England which could be described as isolated and with which comparisons could be made - for example, Lincolnshire or Cornish Methodists. But we are drawn beyond these local Methodist parallels to Waldensian and Jew, whose cherished beliefs and emphases have given them a particular religious identity. As with our Eden Methodists, these two groups have found that the demands of their religion have been neither burdensome nor futile and that, therefore, they should seek to keep their religious identity as long as possible. Having also lived in some degree of isolation from either different religions or different religious traditions, they (like the Methodists) have found hope in the sacred story and the prophetic message of the Old Testament.

CHAPTER V

Preserving the boundaries of the isolated holy community

The religion of Abraham, first Jew, and of Waldo, first Waldensian, and of Wesley, first Methodist, spread over so many centuries that comparisons are almost artificial and must be limited. There are, however, factors of isolation in the growth of these three religions and in this chapter we note points at which it seems reasonable to draw parallels. We shall look at Eden Methodist attitudes to other Christian denominations in the area, noting also Waldensian relationships with Catholics and Protestants in Europe. Secondly, we shall recall Eden's missionary interest, noting its attitudes to non-Christians in the immediate locality and in other countries; in this, we shall also note Waldensian and Jewish missionary interest. Thirdly, we shall attempt to see Eden Methodism's attitude to other nations, particularly as seen in its approach to armed aggression, noting also how isolated Waldensian and struggling Jew have faced this problem over the centuries.

Peter Waldo, a twelfth-century merchant at Lyons, in southern France, became compelled by the idea of renunciation to share his possessions with the poor. This was not seen in any way as objectionable by the Catholic Church but when his love for others also inspired him to have portions of the Gospels translated into the vernacular and passed on to others, his archbishop intervened and forbade such behaviour. Pope Alexander III tried tolerance but not so the local bishop who excommunicated Waldo and his friends. Even so, these Waldensians became established as a group in southern France in the last quarter of the twelfth century and also found support in Alpine Italy. They found no help in the use of the crucifix in Worship and, like the Quakers five

centuries later, they would not take part in war. Under persecution, of which they received much, they were to survive by retreating into the safety of the Italian Alps where they were largely confined until the nineteenth century. This small, lively and attractive minority, surviving for eight centuries, was free of political ties with either France or Italy. Yet the Catholic Church could not ignore Waldensian faith and practice which seemed to herald a coming Reformation and which would later qualify it to take part in active Protestantism.

Thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Catholic Inquisitions sentenced Waldensians to death in places as far apart as Vienna, Prague, Brandenberg, Poland, Bohemia, Hungary and Switzerland. This was because the followers of Waldo scorned "the doctrines of purgatory, intercessions of the saints and madonnas or countless masses said for those undergoing torment."[1] By the year 1400, after more than two centuries of witness and martyrdom, the movement appeared to be in decline. In spite of the Hussite movement in Bohemia which, in the fifteenth century, sought freedom to preach and had, to some extent, the same basic interests at heart as the Waldensians, the Alpine community was fast becoming numerically small. "Relentless inquisition, crusade and pillage had done their efficient work, so that by the end of the fifteenth century a veil of silence hung over much of the Waldensian world."[2] Yet in 1517 - the very year of Luther's protest - the Archbishop of Turin was to make reference to pastoral visiting among the Waldensians in the Alpine valleys. These people were then silent but not extinct and not too isolated to join forces, at their Synod in 1532, with the principles of the new Reformation. "To give up pursuit of

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1. Giorgio Tourn, The Waldensians (Turin, 1980), p. 51.

2. Ibid., p. 65.

their independent course, opting for new life in the framework of a wider Protestant movement, was for that generation a difficult but very dear choice."[1] "Now", says Tourn, "gone were the days when they were merely a tiny corner of religious dissent, for now they had become the Protestant 'outpost' looking down on Catholic territory. They were to remain in this strategic and exposed position for the next century and a half."[2] In 1560, Duke Emmanuel Philibert, under Spanish encouragement, declared his intention to build up an army to wipe out Waldensians in the Luserna valley. The Valley people thought at first that this would only be minor police action but it became a full scale military campaign. The operation marked a turning-point in Waldensian direction and unlike later Quakers, but more like Eden Methodists, they declared their readiness to put "aside their long tradition of non-violence . . . and were setting about to raise an army for their defence."[3] They said they were defending the truth and that "now was the time to fight rather than to flee."[4] As far as the Waldensians were concerned it was to be a conflict "between Christians of Reformed conviction and the Pope."[5] In 1561, this new determination was again demonstrated in their Covenant of Puy, when the Alpine Waldensians all gave notice that from then on they were not to be "Geneva's commandos nor the objects of peripheral interest on the part of the French Protestants. They were to be themselves, independent churches finding their own way. In so declaring

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1. Ibid., p. 76.
2. Ibid., pp. 82-83.
3. Ibid., p. 96.
4. Ibid., p. 97.
5. Ibid., p. 97.

they were Europe's first essentially rural group . . . ."[1] But in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, plague and counter-Reformation both took considerable toll of the Waldensian Protestants and some went into exile, in the early eighteenth century, into southern Germany. Economic, rural misery in the second half of nineteenth-century Italy prompted emigration to Uruguay (in 1856), where missionary work ensued, to Missouri (in 1875) and to North Carolina (in 1893). The remnant in northern Italy also remained faithful and Benito Mussolini, whatever else he had in mind, could have had no place in his heart for this small Protestant minority when he said in Rome, in 1934, of the whole of Italy: "Her religious unity is a great strength of her people. To compromise it or even to allow the slightest fissure in it is to commit a crime against her national greatness."[2]

When we realize that the Jews have been directly influenced by many different cultures in a way that Waldensians and Eden Methodists could never be, we wonder to what extent any part of this ancient religion can now or ever be said to be isolated. For over the centuries they have come into contact with Greek thought, Christianity and Islam, all the time seeing their religion as a direct development from the time and life of Moses, giver of the Torah over 3,000 years ago. Between 586 BC and 333 BC, Babylon, Egypt and Jerusalem were, in turn, home for the Jews. From 333 BC to 63 BC, they were influenced by Greek language and ideas, though those remaining in Babylon kept Aramaic as a language. Jewish communities inevitable developed differently in different countries, but "they were still united through having a common Bible, and also through

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1. Ibid., p. 98.

2. Ibid., p. 219.

their emphasis on Jerusalem, and the Temple in particular. The priests were still undisputed leaders. The high priest was the glory of the city, powerful both politically and economically."[1] Jewish communities were founded, during this period, in Rome, in Antioch (in Syria) and in Asia Minor. Then between 63 BC and AD 200, under the Romans (who conquered the hated Antiochus III), Jews saw their temple destroyed in AD 70 and continuing persectuion. The conversion of Constantine to Christianity in AD 313 made it more difficult to be a Jew. "Many, perhapst most, Christian leaders, writers, monks and bishops hated the Jews."[2] Muslim conquests in the seventh and eighth centuries generally improved the lot of the Jew. Sephardic Judaism, with its own synagogue rituals and its own Spanish-Jewish dialect (Ladino), developed in tenth- and eleventh-century Spain. Ashkenazi Jews settled in Germany, Yiddish being the German-Jewish dialect, and later settlements were in France, Poland and Russia. Jews entered England in the eleventh century, were expelled in 1290 but returned after 1650. They were persecuted and massacred by the Catholic Church in Italy, France, Spain and Poland in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The Protestant Reformation on the whole favoured Jews but Luther's attitude changed over the years from tolerance to censure. From 1700 to the present day Jews have still been a convenient target for those who opposed religion of any kind. In the nineteenth century, commerce attracted large numbers of Jews to America from Europe. Those remaining behind in the twentieth century almost ceased to exist, particularly because"six million breathing human beings merely because they were Jewish"[3] were eliminated during the Second World

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1. Geoffrey Cowling, "Story of a Nation", in The World's Religions (A Lion Handbook, Tring, Herts., 1982), p. 281.

2. Ibid., p. 284.

3. Ibid., p. 291.

War.

Of the various branches of recent Judaism, it seems that the Hasidim live most in isolation. They are the ultra-orthodox wing of Judaism and live in isolation from the Gentile world, maintaining a strict commitment to the Law in every phase of life. The movement arose in Poland, founded by Israel Baal Shem Tov (1700-1760). Cowling says "Hasidism was a movement with emphasis on emotion and devotion. It may be paralleled with many similar movements of the time, such as the rise of Methodism in England." The parallel cannot be overdone, especially when we realise that in addition to a passionate devotion to God, expressed in ecstatic prayer, there was also dancing. "From the outside, Hasidic life may seem a miserable, deprived, narrow existence, but within, it is sustained by the Hasidic 'joy'".[1] Rabbi Israel of Medzhibozh (as Baal Shem Tov - meaning the "Good Master of the Name" - was also known) "contemplated no separatist movement in Judaism, nor did he introduce any changes in religious law or practice." Samuel Cohon continues, almost as if describing the beginnings of Methodism: "(He) strove to reform the individual Jew, to regenerate his spiritual life, and to arouse his heart to the Divine . . . (He) stressed enthusiasm in religious devotion, and regard for the inner spirit of the practices connected with religion . . . (He) emphasized that true piety . . . entails . . . the turning of the heart unto God in gladness."[2] But a bitter struggle between Hasidim and Mitnagdim (their opponents) arose among eastern European Jews, continuing long into the nineteenth century, so much so that, to this day, those who were isolated theologically from

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1. Ibid., p. 300.

2. Samuel S. Cohon, What We Jews Believe and A Guide To Jewish Practice (Assen, The Netherlands, 1971), pp. 31-32.

Orthodox Jews are proud of their religious heritage. When Anglicans and Methodists forget the former significance of their denominational titles, they will have become like many present Hasidim and Mitnagdim: "To this day, Jews from Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania, and from a great part of Hungary - wherever they have settled - still class themselves as either Hasidim or Mitnagdim, though, for large numbers of them, the names have been emptied of real meaning."[1] Denominational names are not yet emptied of real meaning in Eden and though it would be misleading to speak of our Methodist valley people as, in any sense, a ghetto within a ghetto, the boundaries are still there and the development of the Christian religion seems slower than that among the various branches of Judaism.

Having introduced the Waldensians and Jews, we note some parallel attitudes among Eden Methodists, turning firstly to attitudes shown both by and to the Eden Methodists among other local Christian denominations. Not that persecution of the Methodists ever bore real resemblance to the sufferings of Waldensian or Jew. In fact, Richard Burn, Vicar of Orton from 1736 to 1785, seems to have lost little sleep on account of the Wesleyan Methodists. A Justice of the Peace, and Chancellor to the Bishop of Carlisle from 1765,[2] he dismissed these Nonconformists with brief, unruffled comments: "We have had a run of Methodism in this parish and throughout the County. By the blessed spirit of toleration and leaving them entirely to themselves, they have dwindled almost to nothing. Not having us to quarrel with, they naturally fell out amongst

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1. Ibid., p. 33.

2. John Burgess, "Chancellor Burn, Stephen Brunskill and The Orton Methodists", in Wesley Historical Society Journal (Cumbria Branch), W. A. Ridley, ed. (July 1977, No. 2), p. 11.

themselves, and are already almost all come to church again."[1] Bishop Auckland Methodists were almost in the same class. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the "then Vicar of the Parish Church informed the Bishop in answer to his Lordship's question as to whether there were any Methodists or reputed Methodists in Bishop Auckland, 'that they were of the lowest rank and few in number.' The same description might have been given of the Apostles but by these a mighty work of good was effected."[2] However fair or accurate, such comments would scarcely be made in the twentieth century as there now seems to be more brotherliness between these two branches of the Christian Church.

Baptists in the upper Eden expanded from the east, as did the Methodists. The Reverend David West, Baptist Minister at Kirkby Stephen, shows how their beginnings appear to have followed the Methodist pattern. "The Baptist work in Westmorland began in 1834 when a church was formed and a chapel built at Brough. In the years leading up to 1834, visiting preachers and evangelists had preached at Brough and made a number of converts. The leading man among these visitors was Reverend Charles Roe of Middleton-in-Teesdale . . . . Mr. Roe often came across the rough Pennine road on foot or horse to preach both at Brough and possibly other nearby villages. In 1835 the church at Brough called its first minister with financial help from Baptists in London. The work grew through the use of farmhouse preaching stations . . . at one point in the 1840's there were preaching stations at the following:- Great Asby (started in 1839), Kirkby Thore, Crosby Garrett, Whygill Head, Little Asby, Sunbiggin,

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1. From a letter of Richard Burn to Charles Lyttleton, Bishop of Carlisle, of 2.8.1763, contained in the Stowe Manuscript 754, folio 112. (In the British Library).

2. Matthew Braithwaite, History of Wesleyan Methodism in the Bishop Auckland Circuit (Bishop Auckland, 1885), p. 31.

Kelleth, Kirkby Stephen, Winton. The farms at Sunbiggin and Kelleth were still being used to hold services at the turn of this century . . . . The chapel at Crosby Garrett has been a Free Church place of worship since 1813 . . . . It was used by the Congregationalists at first and then shared with the Baptists and in 1856 became the sole property of the Baptists. The chapel at Great Asby was built in 1862 and the Winton chapel in 1863 . . . . The chapel building at Kirkby Stephen was opened in 1885." David West's happy conclusion is that "the relationship between Baptists and Methodists has grown over the years. We have alternate service times with the Methodists at Crosby Garrett and Great Asby. At Winton, Crosby Garrett and Great Asby, joint Bible Studies are held under the leadership of the Baptist Minister. These arrangements work well and overall the relationship between the two denominations is very good."[1] Methodist Local Preachers have preached in Baptist Pulpits at Great Asby, Crosby Garrett, Winton and Kirkby Stephen over the years, having first given necessary priority to the considerable preaching demands of their own scattered Circuits. On October 10th, 1982, Great Asby Baptists closed their chapel to allow the Congregation to go to Catherine Holme Methodist Harvest Festival and on November 1st, 1982, Orton Male Voice Choir (largely Methodist) sang at a Crosby Garrett Baptist Chapel Anniversary Service.[2] At the Crosby Garrett Baptist Sunday School Anniversary in June, 1892, 200 people were crammed into the Methodist Chapel.[3] The Reverend Kenneth Bounds,

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1. In a letter to me, from 70 South Road, Kirkby Stephen, on 23.11.1982.

2. Duplicated Plan (October 3rd, 1982 to January 2nd, 1983) of the Westmorland Group of Baptist Churches.

3. The Reverend Bernard E. Umpleby, Crosby Garrett Methodist Chapel 1882-1982 (Centenary Celebrations Leaflet, 1982). Bernard E. Umpleby is a Minister in the Kirkby Stephen section of the Circuit.

Superintendent of the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Methodist Circuit in 1980, spoke of local relationships with the Baptists. Regarding Appleby, he wrote: "Recently, the Methodist Churches, the Baptist Churches, and the Band of Hope were able to bring pressure to bear on the Town Council, and were able to change completely some of the features of a Celebration of 800 years of the granting of the Town's Borough Charter, held in the summer of 1979."[1] Baptist support must have been numerically small since their upper Eden Membership is thinly scattered. Organizationally they are probably more remote from other Baptist churches throughout the country than are the Connexional Methodists. We remember, too, that Inghamites and Methodists came to the area some 75 years before the Baptists and Methodism was fairly well established in the 1830's when Charles Roe visited Brough.

The annual Methodist Home Mission Report shows that, in the upper Eden, relationships among the Christian Churches are mainly confined to certain kinds of evangelism and occasional social witness. "There is", writes Kenneth Bounds, "a very good ecumenical spirit in the area; and we have constant fellowship with our Baptist, Anglican and Roman friends on many occasions during the year. The North Westmorland Convention which meets in Appleby in May is organized by an inter-church committee. This Convention draws about 200 or 250 people night by night for a week."[2] This state of "constant fellowship" is nevertheless confined to "occasions during the year" and does not, in any sense, belong to public Worship. The Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meetings which had to decide about organized union with the Anglicans were both solidly against the idea.

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1. The Reverend Kenneth Bounds, "From Lakes To Pennine Way" in Down To Earth (The Methodist Home Mission Report, Westminster, 1980), p. 43.

2. Ibid., p. 43.

There was slightly more interest in the proposed scheme in 1982 but that could be attributed to a small percentage of Methodists who had come to live in the Circuit since the earlier vote of 1972. It would now seem unlikely that Methodist and Anglican will belong to one united Church and early disappointment, shown by a few, immediately after the respective denominational votes, may well just as quickly fade away. This is the age when Methodist Ministers do not usually wear preaching gowns in the upper Eden valley and when the Local Preachers' Order of Service is, liturgically, very different from that of Anglican Worship, however much the latter may contain so-called 'modern' versions of ancient prayers or may not contain "Thou" and "Thee". In any case, there is still a measure of personal affection in the upper Eden valley when dialect speaks these ancient pronouns. Did not the Quakers do the same? Methodist Local Preachers continue to address their God, in public, in this loving and intimate manner, even though the older Church of England may now use newer forms. This is an age when, locally, particularly in small villages, the idea of a Free Church Federal Council (let alone a local Council of Churches) is quite unusual and Methodists who live in towns and cities sometimes forget how much religious isolation there can be in remote, rural areas. It may be too easy to say that such isolation is self-inflicted and that something could be done about it, but the rural scene is, for better or worse, slow to change.

The Reverend William S. Gilly, Rector of North Fambridge, Essex, wrote about his excursion to the mountains of Piemont in 1823. He visited the Waldensians and recalls the pride of one of their Pastors, M. Peyrani. "I cannot forget", he says, "nor must I omit to notice, the evident satisfaction M. Peyrani felt in explaining, how closely the doctrines of the Vaudois Church assimilate to those of the Church of England . . . . 'But remember', said the old man, with conscious and

becoming pride, 'remember that you are indebted to us for your emancipation from papal thraldom. We led the way. We stood in the front rank, and against us the first thunderbolts of Rome were fulminated. The baying of the blood-hounds of the inquisition was heard in our valleys, before you knew its name. They hunted down some of our ancestors, and pursued others from glen to glen, and over rock and mountain, till they obliged them to take refuge in foreign countries.'"[1] Eden Methodists are well aware of John Wesley's attachment to the Church of England and its profound influence upon his life but they believe that it is more important that they should keep free "from papal thraldom." Thus, where Anglican Parishes have a Liturgy approaching that of the Catholic tradition, Methodists tend to suspect that the whole Anglican Church is either of the same mould or is likely to become so. Suspicion leads to fear and mistrust, and, beneath the mutual rejection of recent union schemes, it would appear, lies barely a hope of denominational names ever being emptied of real meaning. Methodists, through John Wesley, do, indeed, have a historic connection with the Church of England, but they are anxious when their Anglican friends become openly enthralled with the pre-Reformation traditions and ways of the Catholic Church. Arkholme Methodist Society, as far to the south of Tebay as Spital is to the east (in the Lancaster Methodist Circuit) was an extreme example of such Methodist attitudes to other Christian denominations, especially the Catholics. During the period 1965 to 1971, the Congregation became disturbed by what they saw as dangerous trends in this ecumenical age. They refused to contribute to their Circuit Fund (part of which provides the Ministerial stipend) and spoke loud and long of

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1. W. S. Gilly, Mountains of Piemont and Researches Among The Vaudois, or Waldenses, 3rd edition (London, 1826), p. 78.

the way in which Methodism was moving in the wrong direction. Among the lesser sensational paragraphs of the Lancaster Guardian at the time, two sentences summarised an attitude which though less vocally expressed, was to become inherently evident in the union-scheme voting of the nearby Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit: "The Arkholme Methodists . . . felt that the ecumenical movement did not represent the true gospel and true inheritance of Methodism. They were also against any relationship with the Roman Catholic Church and disapproved of Roman Catholic observers attending meetings of the Lancaster Council of Churches and being involved in council committees."[1] During this period of unrest, five young people from the Arkholme Congregation travelled to Vernoux, a small mountain village in southern France, to visit two fellow-Members of the Arkholme Society who were in charge of a Protestant Independent Church there. These five young people belonged to Methodist farming families, near the south-Westmorland border, whose evangelical thinking had always been against the ways of the Church of England and doubly opposed to the larger Church from which the Anglicans came.

In December 1866 the Bishop of Carlisle's Pastoral Letter appeared in the local newspaper, reflecting Anglican trends in Worship. He expressed his fear of a new spread of Roman Catholic tendencies and the organized planning of pre-Reformation ideas becoming evident throughout the land. The Bishop believed that "vestments superseded by the practice of 300 years must surely not intrude into a Church of the Reformation" and he appealed, earnestly and sincerely, that the Church of England would not turn back three centuries of history by leaning

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1. Lancaster Guardian, 7.5.1971.

towards Rome.[1] In January 1867 it was reported that about 400 London clergy had protested, in a letter, about Romanizing tendencies now spreading through the realm, especially through the Protestant and Reformed Churches.[2] In the Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald of March 11th, 1899, the editorial noticed the growth of a High Anglican movement (the English Church Union) within the Church of England. It thought that a section of the Anglican Church was running to a destiny of destruction and said "Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementa." ('Those whom God wishes to destroy He first drives mad'). In 1910, however, an opposite swing was noticeable. John Percival who was born almost next door to the Primitive Methodist chapel in Brough Sowerby, had become Bishop of Hereford and on the occasion of the Coronation of George V, he invited Nonconformists to share in Holy Communion in the Cathedral.[3] This was, of course, fiercely condemned by some High Churchmen as was Dr. Henson, a Canon of Westminster, who accepted an invitation to preach in a Congregational chapel in Birmingham in the previous year.[4] From the middle of the nineteenth century, the Church of England had seemed to be in some turmoil as to its attitude to the Church of Rome (a state encouraged by the Oxford Movement) and the local newspaper brought some of that restlessness to the eyes of Methodists. John R. H. Moorman summarized the situation: "There was thus considerable difference of opinion, the Evangelicals anxious for all kinds of co-operation, while the Anglo-Catholics fought hard for the maintenance of a clear distinction

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 31.12.1866.

2. Ibid., 15.1.1867.

3. E. R. Burnett, "Methodists at Brough", in Cumbria (a monthly magazine published by The Dalesman Publishing Company Limited, Clapham, Lancaster, June 1972), p. 496.

4. J. R. H. Moorman, A History of The Church in England (London, 1953), p. 407.

between what was 'catholic' and what was not."[1] It all suggested that, because such was the breadth of Anglican churchmanship, it would be difficult to have a vision of unity, let alone any practice of it. (The failure of the recent Covenant for Unity (1982) appears to have arisen from the same "considerable difference of opinion").

In any case, the Methodist preaching emphasis was not always popular in Anglican Parishes and in 1904 the Vicar of St. Michael's Church, Shap, expressed his cynicism regarding the preaching tradition of the Georgian period: "Our fore-elders put up galleries because they regarded the House of Prayer not as a place of sacrifice and devotion so much as an auditorium, a preaching saloon, into which you crammed as many as possible to 'get good' from a sermon: the preaching was everything and the sacrament of the Holy Communion of minor importance; the pulpit, not the altar, was the focus of the church. An unworthy and unedifying erection this gallery."[2] As for Methodist chapels, how could they reflect the standards of antiquity which Ruskin suggested and which Whiteside felt compelled to quote, applying them to his galleried Church, built in 1120 AD?

> "A building cannot be considered as in its prime until four or five centuries have passed over it. Its glory is not in its stones, nor in its gold, but in its age, and in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity."[3]

A new Parish Church, let alone a new Parson, was enough to reduce the Holme Primitive Methodist Society to nothing in 1839. The Barnard Castle Quarterly Meeting agreed that this Society in south Westmorland

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1. Ibid., p. 407.

2. Joseph Whiteside, Shappe in Bygone Days (Kendal, 1904), pp. 7-8.

3. Ibid., p. 1.

should "come off the Plan it being a complete wreck." One of the reasons given for this was that "they have got both a new Church and a new Parson hence they tell us they can do without us."[1] By the twentieth century, however, Methodist business meetings seem milder in the expression of feelings about parallel Anglican work. A Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Local Preachers Meeting minute in 1919 says: "Some discussion took place as to the advisability of either removing the name of Waitby off the plan or recommencing services there. It was reported that the Established Church was holding meetings there and therefore the matter was deferred, as it was thought best not to interfere with the work going on there."[2] Where Anglicans have endeavoured to come closer to their local Methodist friends, however, the Methodist abstinence-from-alcohol emphasis has, in the experience of the Reverend Canon Gervase W. Markham, been a barrier. "We have tried", he says, "over the years to foster good relationships . . . but this one tenet always seemsto prove a stumbling-block."[3]

Upper Eden Methodists and Anglicans are thus separate not only in their liturgies but also in the ways their religion shows itself in social behaviour. The Anglican episcopal form of government finds no parallel among the Methodists who, like the Waldensians, believe themselves to represent the true, Apostolic faith. As with these mountain people of northern Italy, they have always feared the power of the Catholic Church. In the case of the Waldensians, however, persecution

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1. Minutes of the Barnard Castle Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 3.12.1839.

2. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Local Preachers Meeting, 11.12.1919.

3. In his letter to me, from The Garden Flat, Morland House, Penrith, on 9.12.1982.

by the Catholics has been prolonged and intense whereas any opposition from any other religious quarter to local Methodism never inflicted extreme torture, let alone death. Even so, there are parallels with the Waldensians, not least in their common missionary zeal.

The preaching tours of Ingham and his helpers in the late 1750's, in our area, were remarkably successful. The Inghamite Conference Minutes speak of preaching planned for Brough Sowerby, Winton, Kirkby Stephen, Crosby Garrett, Burtree, Asby, Birks, Drybeck, Brackenber, Colby, Kings Meaburn, Reagill Grange, Orton and Roundthwaite.[1] The missionary spirit was evident in remote farmhouse and hamlet and the Minutes continue:

> "On the first of June (1758) the General Overseer went to Drybeck and on that and the three following Days he visited Birks Society. He spoke with all the Members and Candidates separately and several new people. Many attended every night at the publick preaching; and on Sunday more came than Birks Chapel could contain. On Sunday morning Mr. Batty buried the first Corpse before preaching. The General Overseer catechised the Children and baptised a Child brought from over Stainmore. On Monday 5 June at the Lovefeast the General Overseer spoke of our Plan and Regulations, and received into Birks Society the following Persons, who were all present and declared their purpose to submit to Gospel Rule and Order and had Tickets given to them . . . . There is a work of Grace about Birks, which seems to be on the Increase; and it appears as if the Lord would have a Gospel Church here . . . . Several young men are effectually called, and the Souls are solid and simple. The General Overseer never received at any one time into any one Society such a number of single men so much to his satisfaction. To Thee, Lord Jesus, belongs the Glory."[2]

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1. Minutes of the Inghamites, 1755-1760. The Plan was fixed at Wheatley, near Burnley. The time was Easter, 1758, and the arrangements were for the quarter April-June, 1758.

2. Ibid., recording the impact of Ingham's preaching; Ingham is known as the 'General Overseer'.

At a Lovefeast at Birks on June 10th, 1759, fifteen people were received as Members of the Society and twenty-eight were proposed as Candidates - all from the surrounding area. Ingham's missionary concern was shown when, on June 11th (1759), he formed or "settled a little Society at Butterwick near Bampton of Benjamin Dawson, Edward and Fanny Simpson, Edward and Agnes Dawson, who belonged to Roundthwaite because they are at such a distance from any other place . . . . Benjamin Dawson entertains the Preachers and has also fitted up a Room for a preaching place. So that there is hopes of an increase."[1] This care for small isolated communities was characteristic of a movement which was, nevertheless, soon to lose its early dynamic. Ingham, like Wesley, had seen little preaching success among the Indians on their Georgian missionary tour of 1736/7, but he had been influenced by the Moravians who sailed with the four Methodists to America.[2] He later came under the influence of Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), leader of the Moravians in Germany, but by the time of Ingham's Westmorland missionary work, he had lost almost all his connections with the European Pietist movement. Nevertheless he came to the upper Eden area with an awareness of countries far away and a knowledge of the wider world which would have some influence on his preaching, and though he came to preach to the "lost" condition of local, isolated communities, he had already been in fellowship with John Wesley whose continual emphasis was the universality of the Gospel. The Inghamites, last of the forerunners before the Wesleyan Revival, linking their local converts to other 'new' Inghamites in Lancashire and Yorkshire, came from that evangelical background which envisaged a world for Christ - even if God would not

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1. Ibid.

2. John andCharles Wesley, Charles Delamotte and Benjamin Ingham.

necessarily convert every single person who heard the message.

The London Missionary Society was founded in 1795 by a group of Calvinistic Methodists, Independents and Scottish Presbyterians "who envisioned a society that would systematically harness the resources of all British evangelicals - Baptists, Anglicans and Wesleyans included - to convert the heathen to Christianity on a grand scale."[1] Wesleyan Methodism, however, was neither happy with its theology nor its methods of money-raising and therefore founded its own Missionary Society in 1818. This organization had the power to appoint and station missionaries,[2] and it was through this Conference commission that the Reverend J.Kilner was appointed as a missionary to India and Ceylon in 1848. Like other returning missionaries, he offered the challenge of his work to English Wesleyans and, recalling his visit to Penrith in April, 1865, we find his pleas for more missionaries were reported in the local Press:

> "If you feel any sympathy for 200 millions of people, your fellow-subjects, subject to the same queen under British rule, given to this nation by Providence, not for scientific purpose, not for political purposes, not for commercial purposes merely, but that they may be brought to a knowledge of the truth as we possess it. Help us to bring the whole force of our national, our christianized character to bear upon them. Oh, what a noble commission! What a magnificent enterprise!"[3]

This same John Kilner was later to write to Mr. Love, in Watford: "After 17 years residence and hard work in India, I confess to feeling somewhat strange in this England of yours! I am estranged a good deal in my habits and tastes though as loyal and patriotic as ever."[4] Nineteenth-

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1. Roger H. Martin, "Missionary Competition Between Evangelical Dissenters and Wesleyan Methodists in the Early Nineteenth Century", in Proceedings of The Wesley Historical Society, John C. Bowmer, ed. (Chester, December 1979), XLII, 82.

2. Ibid., p. 86.

3. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser, 2.5.1865.

4. In a letter dated 19.5.1865, addressed to 9 Carey Place, Watford.

century missionaries went into new cultures and among new religions and local Methodists supported them by prayers and gifts. In the twentieth century, missionary work is more likely to be done entirely by those who were born and who live in the country being missioned. So the Methodist Missionary Magazine NOW declares that grants sent to overseas churches enable them "to work out and implement their own priorities in mission."[1] To William Carey (1761-1834), Baptist missionary to India, our modern missionary approach would seem a long way from his 1792 Nottingham sermon which contained the memorable phrases 'Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God', yet this is still the basic missionary philosophy nurturing lively Methodist Societies all over the world.

The interest in missionary work shown by upper Eden Methodists (noted in chapter three) arose out of their belief that though there were people who should hear the Gospel in English towns and cities, there was a greater necessity among West Indian slaves and for the adherents of African and Asian religions. As Wesley himself believed, two kingdoms were in conflict in this world and Satan's territory, wherever it existed, had to be conquered by the armies of God. Thus wherever terror or confusion existed, whether through human agency or "preternatural influence", Wesley saw the immediate necessity of proclaiming Gospel liberation. On Thursday, March 6th, 1788, he therefore preached at Bristol "upon (what is now the general topic) Slavery . . . . About the middle of the discourse, while there was on every side attention still as night, a vehement noise arose, none could tell why, and shot like lightning through the whole congregation. The terror

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1. Financial statement, NOW (The Methodist Church Overseas Division, London, July-August, 1980), p. 25.

and confusion were inexpressible. You might have imagined it was a city taken by storm. The people rushed upon each other with the utmost violence; the benches were broken in pieces, and nine-tenths of the congregation appeared to be struck with the same panic. In about six minutes the storm ceased, almost as suddenly as it rose, and, all being calm, I went on without the least interruption. It was the strangest incident of the kind I ever remember; and I believe none can account for it without supposing some preternatural influence. Satan fought, lest his kingdom should be delivered up."[1] Though John was to write to Charles two weeks later, that "(Satan) now chooses to assault us by subtlety more than by strength",[2] here was an amazing case of sudden intervention of uncontrollable power, presumably encouraged by John Wesley's manner of preaching. The issue of slavery was probably disturbing the consciences of the "high and low, rich and poor" who were present, and, no doubt, the most disturbed became the most physically restless - aware, or unaware, of "the agency of those spirits who still excel in strength, and, as far as they have leave from God, will not fail to torment whom they cannot destroy."[3] This strange Bristol occurrence bore the marks of Dionysus, Greek god of frenzied, unexpected outbursts of power, but it also revealed an aspect of the presence of the Holy Spirit who, as in the day of the early Church, caused buildings to shake and inspired the preacher's courage.[4]

Thomas Coke (1748-1814), an Anglican curate, shared John Wesley's determination to conquer "Satan's kingdom", and, after 1784, when Wesley

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1. John Wesley, The Journal, VII, 360.
2. John Wesley, The Letters, VIII, 48.
3. John Wesley, The Works, VIII, 131.
4. Acts 4, verse 31.

laid his hand upon him and set him apart as a superintendent of rapidly growing Methodist work in America, he made eighteen missionary voyages across the Atlantic. The Wesleyan Conference of 1811 authorized him to prepare for a mission to Ceylon, a task which, with characteristic zeal, he readily undertook. But his health did not allow him to reach the land for which he had set sail, and he was buried in the Indian Ocean in 1814. John A. Vickers, among many Methodists, declares that "his proper memorial is in the work which he began and in the vision of a World Methodism which since his day has become a reality."[1] In all his missionary travels he saw only a whole world for Christ and when he returned to England his infectious zeal reached even the remoter parts. Anthony Steele refers to it in the Barnard Castle area, pointing out that the whole neighbourhood was stirred into missionary concern. "Great numbers of strangers from nearly forty miles round, were attracted by the far-famed Missionary Meetings at Barnard Castle", doubtless germinating from the interest and zeal shown by the two visits of Doctor Coke. The first meeting was in 1816 but "the introduction of similar meetings into the neighbourhood gradually diminished their novelty, and lessened their attraction . . . ."[2]

There was a certain missionary novelty in the Appleby Wesleyan Circuit in 1847 which also reflected, as it happened, a growing Wesleyan concern regarding who should be allowed to preach in Wesleyan pulpits. The Reverend John Felvus, the Circuit Travelling Preacher, wrote the following letter from the Circuit, to the anonymous "my dear brother"

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1. John A. Vickers, Thomas Coke and World Methodism (World Methodist History Society: British Section, Bognor Regis, 1976), p. 19.

2. Anthony Steele, History of Methodism in Barnard Castle and the Principal Places in the Dales Circuit, p. 209.

on June 12th, which, while it introduced the remarkable phenomenon of a visiting, coloured, female preacher, it also alerted its reader to the problems of the boundaries of authority as well as to those of the frontiers of mission. Whatever else, John Felvus was later to become a Wesleyan Methodist missionary to the West Indies:

> "First, concerning the coloured Female. I can only say that I objected to her coming at first but finding our people very anxious I gave way. And she came and preached for the poor . . . and good collections were obtained and I believe some spiritual good was done.
> "Second, I do not know that she require anything except what the people are disposed Personally to give her. I do not know that she ever made any charge anywhere in this Circuit.
> "Thirdly, I believe she is a Wesleyan Methodist, at least she brought a ticket from the Lancaster Preacher here and I gave her another at her request when she left.
> "Fourth, what I dislike is she preaches for any sect or party that invite her when the Wesleyans refuse to admit her in their Pulpits.
> "Fifthly, I was requested by our District Meeting not to allow her to preach in our chapels any more. As far as I can see, of her piety I believe she is a Christian or I would have opposed her with all my might but I have now consented to the wish of my brethren not to invite her again."[1]

One wonders, however, whether these sentiments reflected an uneasiness about the presence of a "COLOURED Female" in Appleby rather than the writer's concern for pulpit authority; his Wesleyan Methodist anxiety more likely arose out of a suspicion of overseas intrusion.

The importance of mission (local and worldwide) was continually kept alive and, when it was otherwise, Circuit Meetings and Itinerant Preachers brought it before the various branches of local Methodism. The Wesleyan Methodist Association Quarterly Meeting at Bolton (in 1838) agreed that ". . . a Missionary field meeting should be held on the 21 of July next to take place at half past 1 o'clock on Brakebur Hill near

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1. Letter from the Reverend John Felvus, 12.6.1847.

Bolton tool Bar in this circuit."[1] In 1851 the Associationists urged the importance of Revival, stating that they deeply deplored "the low state of piety in the Circuit and would earnestly recommend its officers and members to unite earnestly with our Minister in strenuous efforts and fervent prayer to promote a revival of the work of God. Let us consecrate ourselves afresh to the Lord, seek the entire sanctification of our hearts and by private and family prayer, attending the means of grace, inviting others to hear the gospel, and using all other consistent means labour to improve our state."[2] In a Pastoral Address to the Wesleyan Methodist Societies in the Appleby Circuit, in 1855, Christopher Newton and Peter Prescott, had to encourage mission by saying: "One thing is clear, it is high time for this Circuit to get out of its old jog-trot course: the affairs of the world move on with vigour; science is making rapid advances; and it will not do that Christians should be the only people in the world, either asleep or half-asleep . . . ."[3] The Primitive Methodist Circuit (in 1896), in thanks for mission success, recorded "with gratitude to the Great Head of the Church (its) appreciation of the self-denying and successful labours of Mr. Buck at Newbiggin during the quarter, which resulted in the conversion of over 40 souls."[4] When the Reverend John Gawthrop and the Reverend H. Waterworth came to the Kirkby Stephen Wesleyan Circuit in 1899, Joseph Lamb, the Circuit Steward, said: "The old state of grumbling and discontent had disappeared since the old financial difficulties had gone.

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1. Minutes of the Appleby Wesleyan Methodist Association Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 27.6.1838.

2. Ibid., 22.9.1851.

3. Delivered to a meeting of a special Circuit Committee held at Appleby on 17.2.1855. This Pastoral Address was presented by the two Travelling Preachers here named.

4. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 5.3.1896.

On the Quarterly Meeting days all was now pleasant and cheerful . . . souls had also been added to the Redeemer's Kingdom amidst the general exodus of young people to the towns which so seriously depleted their Churches."[1] Membership had increased, the second largest increase in the District. Mr. R. Iveson, Society Steward at Kirkby Stephen, said that they were to be congratulated on the fact that the Conference had not overridden their selection of Ministers. Geographically they were a large Circuit but with two young Ministers and the Horse Hire Fund there should be no difficulty in reaching the most distant parts of the Circuit. This positive missionary outlook came in a year when local Methodism had also contributed considerable sums to the Wesleyan Century Fund. The purpose of this fund was that there should be a Methodist Chapel in every village and hamlet in the land. This Connexional idea was conceived by a layman, Mr. Perks, who believed that evangelical truths should be proclaimed everywhere.[2] By February, 1899, Crosby Garrett (with twenty poor members) had promised 27 guineas and Winton had promised or raised 43 guineas, Soulby 50 guineas, Warcop 50 guineas, Musgrave 20 guineas, and Nateby 33 guineas. Other Wesleyan Societies had yet to declare their targets but 1000 guineas looked like being the Circuit total. Locally and nationally, Wesleyan Methodism was showing new missionary concern, and, within our area, new territorial boundaries would need fixing and keeping as constant 'missioning' and 're-missioning' took place.

Each Society, as we have already seen, maintained an overseas missionary interest. The Leaders' Meeting appointed its local Missionary Collector and, for example, Mrs. E. A. Clarke, of Kirkby

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1. Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald, 9.9.1899.

2. Ibid., 14.1.1899.

Thore, kept in regular touch with most of the membership of the Society between 1962 and 1966. Annually, she collected sums ranging from £2.2.6 to £2.8.0, such subscriptions coming from some twenty people. Other accredited Collectors in the other Societies also carried their Adult Collector's Book, on the back of which was printed "The Methodist Missionary Society . . . has Missions in Ceylon, India, Burma, South-East Asia, Rhodesia, West Africa, Kenya, West Indies, Central and South America. As auxiliaries of incessant Evangelisation it has Colleges, Day Schools, Sunday Schools, Hospitals, Dispensaries, Leper Asylums, Orphanages, Industrial Schools, Refuges, etc., etc." Added to these annual sums was the Offertory from one Sunday's Collection and from that taken at the annual Missionary evening. In 1927, the Wesleyan Circuit total thus amounted to £270.7.7.[1] The Circuit Missionary total for 1980 was approximately £772.57,[2] though in addition, some £300 was collected by children and young people for Junior Missionary Association funds. While the 1927 Wesleyan total would, as we have said, have almost paid for another Minister in the local Circuit, the 1980 total would be somewhat short of approximately £4,200 required as the allowance for a 1980 Methodist Minister. The worldwide expansion of Methodism in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, inspired and encouraged by the Methodist Missionary Society in London and financed so much by local Methodist Societies, is now, however, by no means arrested but is achieved in many countries by the efforts of their own Methodist Churches. One wonders, therefore, whether earlier fascination

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1. See page 151 of this thesis for other Circuit totals during the 1920's.

2. In four of the 36 Societies no figures were available, but in consultation with Mrs. M. M. Ewin, Hallow Green, Raisbeck, the Circuit Overseas Treasurer, we included their 1979 contributions for the purposes of reaching a total.

with overseas work has now sometimes been transferred to smaller, non-Methodist overseas 'causes' which may still be thought to need the direct and personal support of English Christians to enable their work to continue. Orton Methodist Society (with 24 members), for example, assists three couples who belong to its own fellowship and who have been, and still are, involved in missionary work in Nepal, Peru and Portugal. While upper Eden Methodists preserve their own boundaries, there are also some who want to help small isolated groups in faraway lands who need, they believe, their direct help in fixing and keeping the boundaries of the Gospel in none-Christian environments.[1]

The Waldensians of Catholic Italy have, for eight hundred years, had to be missionary-minded. In their Synod Document of 1960 they declared what had, in effect, been the ground of their existence through the centuries. "The world", they said, "does not need the private piety of those who are concerned above all for their personal salvation."[2] With this outward-looking attitude, the Waldensians have always "shown deep faithfulness to the Gospel under every sort of pressure, including that of Mussolini's Fascists . . . . At the 1974 Torre Pellice Conference the Waldensian Assembly invited members of the Methodist Conference to 'an hour's singing of anti-Fascist songs', and the response was vigorous and more lengthy than was planned."[3] The Waldensians and Italian Methodists formed a union in 1979, continuing

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1. The three Orton couples are: Peter and Agnes Storey (with the United Mission to Nepal), Fred and Ruth Webb (with the Regions Beyond Missionary Union, in Peru) and Alan and Celeste Pallister (with the Fellowship of Evangelical Students, in Portugal).

2. Giorgio Tourn, The Waldensians The First 800 Years (1174-1974), pp. 230-231.

3. An article entitled "Europe's first Protestant Church", without author, in Now (December 1976-January 1977), p. 33.

their missionary emphasis together.

A British Wesleyan Mission had come to Italy in 1860 when already the Waldensians had begun a new campaign of concentrated evangelism. In 1853 a Waldensian Church was built on one of Turin's main thoroughfares. "Fanning out from Turin, Waldensian activity radiated in several directions - up the Aosta Valley, in the area around Alessandrino and at Genoa."[1] In 1859, Waldensian work extended to Lombardy and Tuscany; in 1860, to Sicily and Naples and, in 1866, to Venice. Towards the end of the century, this work included a hospital-building programme. In 1915 a Waldensian Church was built, and opened with great acclaim, in Piazza Cavour in Rome. "Here, only a few hundred yards from the Vatican, and in the same city in which Waldo's first disciples had sought in vain for a hearing, Waldensians had a fine new house of worship."[2] This milestone in Waldensian history, over 700 years after its beginning, was the fruit of faithful missionary labours. The boundaries between Catholicism and the "ancient simplicity" of the Waldensians had been fixed and kept, over the centuries, because, as Alexis Muston said in The Israel of The Alps, "Catholicism having gradually attired itself in new forms of worship unknown to the apostles, made the contrast daily more striking between its pompous innovations, and the ancient simplicity of the Vaudois"[3] (Waldensians).

The Barbas, or Waldensian pastors, had always received a thorough missionary training from the beginning of the movement. "It was in the almost inaccessible solitude of a deep mountain-pass that they had their school, where the whole influences of external nature were opposed to

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1. The Waldensians The First 800 Years, pp. 190-191.

2. Ibid., pp. 213-214.

3. Alexis Muston, The Israel of The Alps (London, 1866), I, 18.

anything soft and yielding in the soul. They were required to commit to memory the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, the general epistles, and a part of those of St. Paul. They were instructed, moreover, during two or three successive winters, and trained to speak in Latin, in the Romance language, and in Italian. After this they spent some years in retirement, and then were set apart to the holy ministry by the administration of the Lord's Supper, and by imposition of hands. They were supported by the voluntary contributions of the people. These were divided annually in a general synod: one part was given to the ministers, one to the poor, and the third was reserved for the missionaries of the church."[1] As we recall their missionary emphasis, we also remember the way in which a young, aspiring Methodist Local Preacher, in the Eden valley, centuries later, accompanied an older, experienced Local Preacher, as he first began his public utterances. "Each pastor" wrote Muston, "was required to become missionary in his turn. The younger ones were thus initiated into the delicate duties of evangelization - each of them being under the experienced guidance of a man of years, who, according to the discipline of his church, was his superior, and whom he was bound to obey in everything, as a matter of duty, and not merely out of deference. The old man, on his part, thus made his preparation for repose, by training for the church successors worthy of it and of himself. His task being accomplished, he could die in peace, with the consolatory assurance of having transmitted the sacred trust of the gospel into prudent and zealous hands."[2]

Turning, now, to another isolated holy community, that of Judaism, we note, in passing, that Muston chose the title The Israel of the Alps

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1. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

2. Ibid., pp. 19-20.

for his two-volume work on Waldensian history because he believed that, like the Jews, the Waldensians had experienced, together with divine providence, much suffering. Their fellow-sufferers, the Jews - as we have seen - had not been totally isolated from other religious influences, but the more they believed they were God's own chosenpeople, the more they knew they must keep their own religion pure. This did not necessarily mean that they would not be involved in missionary work, but it has not been one of their emphases. Rabbi Brasch says: "Jews do not try to convert other people to their faith, though Judaism is open to anyone who, from inner conviction, desires to embrace it. It is the Jewish teaching that the righteous of all nations and faiths will inherit eternal life. Man is not judged by his creed, but by his life. Loyalty to one's own religion hastens the day of God's Kingdom on earth."[1] On the other hand Cohon writes: "The post-Exilic Prophets had voiced the belief that the religious truths revealed to Israel were not to remain the exclusive possession of Israel, but that ultimately they would be shared by all mankind . . . . This confidence in the future universality of their religion made the Jews a missionary people."[2] But, as Cohon also says, "only the final triumph of Christianity as the state-religion of Rome, paralyzed active proselytism by the Jewish people."[3] Any Jewish mission is not now, therefore, achieved by Methodist-style proclamation, requiring a positive response, but rather "upholds the glorious ideal for the Jewish people themselves so to live as to make their spiritual and moral convictions universally esteemed

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1. R. Brasch, The Unknown Sanctuary (Sydney, Australia, 1969), p. 7.

2. S. S. Cohon, What We Jews Believe and A Guide To Jewish Practice, p. 57.

3. Ibid., p. 58.

and emulated."[1] Eden Methodists seek to uphold their ideals while still issuing the preaching challenge and those who cross over to join them then belong to a fellowship which is as equally concerned with inner purity as with outward declaration.

Boundaries of religious beliefs and practice have not infrequently been defended by the State. The 'State' religion, if at risk, it is said, must be protected by strength of arms. In the twentieth century, Methodists have also been required to take up arms in such a cause and we now note, in the last part of this chapter, whether our isolated community had any distinctive attitude to war, that is, to taking up arms against those who could destroy their families if not their faith. Methodists were not forbidden by their church to go to war, however, and almost all who were eligible seem to have fought alongside their Anglican friends. The earlier Quaker influence had not been passed down to Methodists of later generations, and because exemptions from military service were granted to those required for agricultural work in the 1939-1945 War, the principles of individual Conscientious Objectors were not often brought to the test. Thus a Methodist Conscientious Objector living near Appleby, in 1940, was one of a very few (perhaps the only one) from our holy community. He had to meet a Tribunal of four people at Carlisle and state his convictions about taking up arms against an enemy. The Methodist Minister at Appleby, the Reverend Clifford Brown, had been a Pacifist in the 1914-1918 War and had suffered imprisonment at Dartmoor for his views. He was, therefore, a strong support for the young farmworker who, with the added advocacy of Joseph C. Salkeld (a teacher and Methodist Preacher who had served in the First World War), was granted exemption from military service - provided he stayed in

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1. Ibid., p. 63.

agricultural employment.

War itself was not directly encouraged by Eden Methodists, nor was it necessarily seen as a means of protecting the Methodist faith. Yet when it came to taking part in war, Methodists, who often registered disapproval of things belonging to "the world", were rather like the members of sects in modern Russia: "Outwardly they merge into the contemporary world, yet they are profoundly alien to it."[1] Methodist preachers like John B. Bayliffe (1868-1950), born at Appleby, lived through times of devastating war yet his biographer, Ella K. Crossley, directs her readers' attentions to his uppermost concern: reconciliation between man and God rather than between man and man. Nor, of course, was John Bayliffe alone in his emphasis as "A Twentieth Century Messenger of God." Methodists, generally, said little about a right attitude to war, and individuals like our farming friend near Appleby had to reach their difficult decision on their own.

Benjamin Ingham, like Bayliffe, had the same order of priorities. Although we find that a Winewall Conference conclusion (at the end of 1756) said "We hear that the Eleventh of February next will be appointed for a National Fast. If so we would have all our people to observe it religiously; and to pray for the King and Nation",[2] this was an untypical minute. It is preceded by thoughts on the importance of the gift of preaching and of high moral standards in family life; it is followed by the usual Conference business of examining candidates for membership and planning further expansion of Inghamite work. Even though the Moravians, with whom Ingham had been closely associated, "displayed a

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1. Nikita Struve, Christians in Contemporary Russia (London, 1967), p. 218.

2. Minutes of the Inghamites, Christmas 1756 - January 1st, 1757.

deep distaste for violence of any kind",[1] there is no evidence to suggest that the Quaker tradition was to be continued among the Inghamites. In any case, Ingham did not regard the Quakers as Christians and was more or less somewhat quaintly saying so when he asked John Wesley (in a letter of November 30th, 1734) "whether it be convenient or lawful for a Christian to dwell with a Quaker when under no necessity?"[2] The Oxford Methodists, Tyerman concluded, "regarded the Quakers as not Christians; yea, as people, in whose houses, it was doubtful whether Christians, except in cases of necessity, ought to dwell. This was not surprising. Sacraments, fasts and feast days were essentials among the Oxford Methodists; among the Quakers they were utterly neglected. The religion of the Methodists, to a great extent, consisted in the observance of outward forms; the religion of the Quakers, to an equal extent, in the neglect of them."[3] In later Methodism, Halévy observed a peace-loving community with a respect for ritual: "The Methodists not only declined to identify Protestantism with the doctrine of the right of resistance, but even declined to share the Quaker aversion for every kind of traditional ritual and ecclesiastical discipline."[4]

For John Wesley, the problem of war was not easily solved and in his amazing dissertation entitled The Doctrine of Original Sin he sees armed aggression in all its horror. He cannot imagine that even "a Heathen" would allow any place in society for wars. Soldiers (particularly in the more sinful parts of Europe) were lacking in honour: ". . . Catholic soldiers . . . who broke into the house of a poor

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1. Elie Halévy, The Birth of Methodism in England, p. 74.

2. Letter from Benjamin Ingham, 30.11.1734, quoted by Luke Tyerman, The Oxford Methodists (London, 1873), pp. 59-60.

3. Ibid., p. 60.

4. The Birth of Methodism in England, p. 76.

countryman in Flanders, butchered him and his wife, with five or six children; and after they had finished their work, sat down to enjoy the fruit of their labour. But in the midst of their meal conscience awaked. One of them started up in great emotion, and cried out, 'O Lord! what have I done? As I hope for salvation, I have eaten flesh in Lent!'"[1] He followed these scathing remarks with further blasts: "It was conscience, no question, which induced so many of the Dukes of Savoy, notwithstanding the public faith engaged over and over, to shed the blood of their loyal subjects, the Vaudois, like water, to ravage their fields, and destroy their cities. What but conscience could move the good Catholics of a neighbouring kingdom, in the last century, to murder (according to their own account) two hundred and fifteen thousand Protestants in six months?"[2] For surely, he says, "all our declamations on the strength of human reason, and the eminence of our virtues, are no more than the cant and jargon of pride and ignorance, so long as there is such a thing as war in the world. Men in general can never be allowed to be reasonable creatures, till they know not war any more. So long as this monster stalks uncontrolled, where is reason, virtue, humanity?"[3] Yet earlier in the year in which he made these attacks (1756), he was himself ready to gather an army of at least 200 volunteers to be placed at the King's pleasure![4] By 1779 he seemed to be seeing preparations for war in an entirely new light: "The alarm has been general in England as well as Ireland, particularly in the maritime parts. But it has done abundantly more good than harm to the work of

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1. John Wesley, The Works, IX, 218.

2. Ibid., p. 218.

3. Ibid., p. 223.

4. John Wesley, The Letters, III, 165.

God. The children of God have been greatly stirred up and have been more (instant) in prayer. And many men of the world have been greatly awakened, and continue so to this day. Most of those who have the fullest intercourse with God believe our enemies will never be permitted to land in England. And, indeed, God has already given abundant proof of His hearing prayer: first, in their not landing at Plymouth, where they stayed gaping and staring for eight-and-forty hours while they might with all ease have destroyed both the dock and the town; secondly, in the malignant fever which has broken out in their fleet, and already destroyed several thousands of men."[1]

Cyril J. Davey says that in the first half of the nineteenth century "soldiering was a profession largely looked down upon in Wesleyan circles. Florence Nightingale's distinguished services to the Army in the Crimea, however, made humanitarian people aware of spiritual as well as physical needs."[2] In 1859, therefore, the Wesleyan Conference considered work in garrison towns and in 1862 the War Office was asked to give official status to a chaplaincy service. Chaplains were sent to the neighbourhood of Bombay in 1860 and by 1887, in large areas north of the city, "a number of military chaplains assist(ed) the work of foreign missions by raising the standard of Christian example and rousing evangelistic enthusiasm in soldiers who have often been pioneers in missionary expansion."[3] In 1865, William Moister, born at Sedbergh in 1808, the Wesleyan Travelling Preacher who had served on the Gambia, in West Africa, was appointed to Parkhurst

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1. Ibid., VI, 358.

2. Cyril J. Davey, The Methodist Story (London, 1955), p. 138.

3. W. T. A. Barber, "The Work of British Societies", in W. J. Townsend, H. B. Workman and G. Eayrs, ed., A New History of Methodism (London, 1909), II, 322.

Garrison where he did good work among soldiers for ten years.[1] At an annual Wesleyan Home Missions meeting in Penrith in 1867, the Reverend J. C. Stuart spoke of soldiers being converted in the Army and the further influence upon them of local Class Meetings. "It is uncommon for the same men (that is, converted soldiers) to avail themselves of the opportunity of attending Class 2 or 3 times in a week . . . . The men who are removed from home stations to foreign service often express in their letters great sorrow because of their appointment to places in which we have no missionary, no chaplain, no Leader, no Class . . . . Methodism was introduced into places where now we have flourishing Circuits by soldiers of an earlier generation . . . . Methodism was introduced into China and into the Cape of Good Hope by godly soldiers."[2] The Carlisle Wesleyan District Meeting (1870) reported that 5 Privates attended Chapel and one met in Class. In 1871, the same District Meeting heard that 24 of the Militia had met in Chapel at Whitehaven.

Wars, however, brought lasting problems to Methodist Circuits and though Primitive Methodism also began to supply Chaplains in 1909, and later, in the 1914-1918 War, the United Methodist Church also considered the matter, the three different branches of Methodism were not able to advise strongly against taking up arms. By 1914, instead, "Institutional religion and familiar clichés of the pulpit were suspect in face of the horrors of modern warfare. Many of those who left the churches never came back when the war was over."[3] As for Chaplains, Methodism would supply them if the Circuits were adequately staffed and there was no shortage of volunteers: "The Rev. E. Ogden announced that he had

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1. Minutes of the Carlisle Wesleyan District Meeting, 1892.
2. Cumberland andWestmorland Advertiser, 12.2.1867.
3. The Methodist Story, p. 161.

offered himself for service in the war, and wished to know if the circuit would release him for such duties."[1] The Circuit, however, did not think it could manage without him. In May 1982, the Reverend John K. Watson, R.N., went as Methodist Chaplain with the South Atlantic Task Force and later wrote, in the annual Home Mission Report (1983): "I would have preferred diplomacy and reason to have succeeded but it did not and grim though the lesson may be, aggression can often only be countered by the disciplined application of force."[2]

The 1914-1918 War was a disaster for Methodism. The Wesleyan Connexion produced a report in 1918 which spoke of large numbers of deaths of soldier-Local Preachers and regretted that they included a high proportion of the most vigorous and effective preachers. Those returning would need a hearty welcome back. "Give them an opportunity to tell you their experience; encourage them, and make it easy for them to carry their message of the sustaining grace of God in presence of hardship, danger and death, to the congregations in your Circuit."[3] The Second Brough Primitive Methodist Baptismal Register (17.9.1885-30.4.1933) contains the names of young fathers who were serving in the Kings Royal Rifles (1915), the 22nd Regiment Durham Light Infantry (1916), the 3rd Border Regiment Light Infantry (1916), the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (1917) and the 4th West Yorkshire Light Infantry (1917). Brough Primitive Methodist Local Preachers were informed in December, 1915, that "Bro. Herbert S. Lawson (had) left

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1. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Sedbergh Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 13.6.1918.

2. Reverend John K. Watson, "5 Days in May", in Body and Soul (Report of the Methodist Church Home Mission Division, London, 1983), p. 12.

3. Report of the Wesleyan Connexional Local Preachers Committee to the Manchester Conference, 1918.

College to serve in the R.A.M.C." and that "Brother James Brown, assistant Society Steward, Kirkby Stephen, and local preacher, (had) left to serve in the A.S.C."[1] In January 1919, the local Herald reported that Reverend Ernest Ogden, the Kirkby Stephen Wesleyan Minister, had conducted a memorial Service for those from the Circuit who had fallen in the War. The young Methodist population of this remote area had been sadly reduced.

We should remember, however, that the three branches of Methodism in the upper Eden valley did, occasionally, express their views about war and peace. In March 1911, the Wesleyan "Revd. R. E. Little submitted a memorial for the Treaty of Peace which was received with much approval and passed and it was decided that Copies be sent to the Prime Minister, The Speaker and the various Members of Parliament who represent the Circuit."[2] The Brough Primitives agreed (in March, 1921) "to bring before our people the claims of the League of Nations, and urge our people to join the local branch at Kirkby Stephen."[3] The Wesleyan Circuit unanimously agreed (in September, 1922) to urge "the Government to use every endeavour to settle the dispute with Turkey without recourse to war; and that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Prime Minister and the Member for the County."[4] In December 1927, Wesleyans sent greetings to the League of Nations, saying they desired "to express . . . high appreciation of every effort calculated

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1. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit and Local Preachers Meeting, 2.12.1915.

2. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 23.3.1911.

3. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 4.3.1921.

4. Minutes of the Kirkby Stephen and Appleby Wesleyan Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 21.9.1922.

to promote peace on earth and goodwill to men. (They) also pledged . . . to continue to pray that the League may ever be guided by the Spirit of the Most High, believing . . . that it is righteousness alone that exalteth a nation, and that the supreme end of life is to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."[1] In June 1928, they expressed great joy that the Government was seriously discussing "the most important question of the Outlawry of War."[2] In December 1931, the Brough Primitive Circuit agreed that "January 3rd be a day of Prayer for the World Disarmament."[3] In June 1932, at the United Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, a "letter was read on the Armament Question and we were resolved to do all in our power for the total abolition of war."[4]

The Waldensians, at first opposed to armed resistance, here come briefly into our study because they were an isolated holy community whose convictions, alas, cost them many lives in the first centuries of their existence. Their early isolation was not simply that of the remote mountains and valleys of southern France and northern Italy. Speaking of the Catholic context of their fourteenth-century existence, H. A. L. Fisher explains their religious philosophy: ". . . outside the Church, and in spite of the pitiless working of the Inquisition, the heresies of the puritan and mystical temperament flourished abundantly, taking different forms and colours (Catharists in Corsica . . .

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1. Ibid., 8.12.1927.

2. Ibid., 14.6.1928.

3. Minutes of the Brough Primitive Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 3.12.1931.

4. Minutes of the Appleby United Methodist Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 9.6.1932.

the Vaudois in the Alpine valleys . . .) but united in their challenge to the pomp and ambition of the papal see, to its sacraments and ceremonies, and to the claim of the priesthood to a special measure of divine authority."[1] For almost the first four centuries of their existence (though some claim that they had long preceded the age of Waldo in the twelfth century) they had managed to survive without force of arms. But on the twenty first of January, 1561, in face of increasing persecution, "an enthusiastic resolution was adopted that they should defend themselves unto death", and, as Muston continues, "from that moment dates the commencement of the most glorious campaign which the heroic persecuted ever maintained against fanatical persecutors."[2] The decision to arm themselves, however, did not necessarily ensure survival and in 1650, in the massacre of the "Piedmontese Easter", Catholic political power, represented locally by the Marquis of Pianezza, dealt cruelly with the Waldensians in Piedmont valleys. They then saw, in what seemed like a destiny of persecution, that now "the Counter Reformation was not merely a restatement of certain religious dogmas, but an ideology based on violence and death."[3] In 1655, further unimaginable torture, cruelty and murder were committed against the Waldensians, so that Pastor Léger, a Waldensian eye-witness of the horrors, saw how appropriately,[4] even literally, the fugitives could then address God in the words of the 79 th Psalm:

> "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance;
> Thy holy temple have they defiled;

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1. H. A. L. Fisher, A History of Europe (London, 1936), p. 349.

2. The Israel of The Alps, I, 263.

3. The Waldensians, The First Eight Hundred Years, p. 123.

4. Antoine Monastier, A History of the Vaudois Church (London, 1848), pp. 270-272.

They have laid Jerusalem on heaps.
The dead bodies of thy servants have they given
To be meat unto the fowls of the heaven,
The flesh of thy saints
Unto the beasts of the earth.
Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem;
And there was none to bury them."

News of this massacre, and of later loathsome events in the same decade, reached England and "Cromwell's indignation, on discovering the deceit, was expressed in decided terms, not only to the court of Turin, but to the kings of France, Sweden, and Denmark, and especially to the protestant cantons. He warned the latter to be watchful lest the anti-protestant spirit displayed against the Vaudois should extend its violence to themselves."[1] As Tourn points out, "Puritan England . . . expressed its solidarity with the far away brethren."[2] Cromwell sent Sir Samuel Morland, with ambassadorial rank to Turin to make bitter complaint and John Milton was stirred to write:

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold."[3]

In 1689, led by Henri Arnaud (their religious and military leader), a small group of some 300 Waldensians, returning to Piedmont from exile, were delivered in battle, though their taking up of arms was always done with reluctance. Perhaps it may be said that their resistance to armed aggression did, at least, enable the rest of Europe to know of their intense struggle. The history of Eden Methodism is short and peaceable compared with that of these persecuted Europeans and we wonder if its early association with John Wesley - whom, as we have seen, was not

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1. Hugh Dyke Acland, The Glorious Recovery By The Vaudois of Their Valleys (London, 1827), p. lxix.

2. The Waldensians The First 800 Years, pp. 124-125.

3. Ibid., p. 125 (Quoted by Tourn).

entirely against preparation for military activity against a State enemy - was just enough to prevent it from being completely pacifist. Unlike the Waldensians, the Eden Methodists enlisted for a war which was as much to do with politics as with religion. We are tempted to claim (but unlikely to prove) that for isolated religion to survive, it must dissociate itself from war and politics in the early centuries of its existence.

Turning again, briefly, to the isolated holy community of the Jews, we remember that long is the history of Jewish persecution and strong is the sacred obligation of a Jew to serve his country in war. R. Brasch illustrates this latter point with examples from recent American history: "More than forty Jews fought under Washington. Among the patriots who played an eminent part in the early struggle of the American Republic were Lieutenant-Colonels Isaac Franks and his cousin, David S. Franks. Haym Salomon of Philadelphia was the 'Broker to the Office of Finance', and not only raised vast sums for the Government but lent money which was never repaid. His devotion to the cause of American independence was deservedly acknowledged by a Congressional committee . . . ."[1] To this list is added the name of Uriah P. Levy, Commodore of the United States Navy, who died soon after the outbreak of the Civil War.

Whether, as with our Methodists or the Waldensians, this readiness to take up arms has done anything to preserve the identity of an isolated holy community, it is difficult to say. Those who see such readiness as a blemish on religion have to see it in relation to the whole religious and social contribution. As we conclude this chapter on Eden Methodist attitudes to other Christians, to other religions and to other nations, we need to see rose and thorns together. For Cohon's analogy

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1. R. Brasch, The Unknown Sanctuary, p. 281.

for Judaism may also be applied to our holy community in the upper Eden:

> "The grace and beauty of the rose do not unfold through the plucking of petal by petal until its heart is reached. For the appreciation and enjoyment of the flower, it must be seen whole. Thus does it yield its fragrance and reveal its exquisiteness. So should Judaism be viewed as a unity, as a spiritual force that has quickened the heart of the Jewish people for thousands of years, as a power that has made for pure homes and sound minds, for healthy communities, for a strong people, and for a better humanity."[1]

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1. What We Jews Believe and A Guide To Jewish Practice, p. 29.

CHAPTER VI

Belonging to an isolated holy community

In this last chapter we shall show, from our observations so far, why Methodism in the upper Eden valley may be described as an isolated holy community, remembering that isolation is a comparative category. We shall then apply those classifications of the sacred (which are at the heart of all religion) to these Methodists, noting sacred stories, symbols of the sacred, sacred action, sacred time, sacred space, initiation, the sacred person, the deity, the sacred community, sacred word and writing, sacred silence and sacred world view. Such classifying of religious phenomena (based on the University of Leicester's Three-Year Study of Religion course, during the period 1966-1982, in which it is applied to African, Amerindian, Iranian and Indian religion, as well as to Judaism, Christianity and Islam) will assist our understanding of the history, nature and meaning of our particular religious group. Following these observations, we shall, finally, attempt to see what hope such holy communities have in worlds where religious identity may not always survive easily.

We turn, firstly, to factors of isolation before the coming of the Methodists to Winton in about 1758, the year in which our local religious movement began. Geographically, our area is largely separated from the rest of what was known as Westmorland (before 1974) by fells, and both Pennines and Lake District mountains provide a rural seclusion. The area has a limited tourist attraction, the Lake District having been more thoroughly discovered. The climate is indifferent but in previous, non-motorized ages, it has sometimes made the preacher's journey a foul and dangerous expedition. Following the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages, waves of Celts, Romans, Anglians, Vikings, Normans and Scots have left their

various marks. No one wave seems to have greatly impressed our region, but the Celtic presence seemed least affected by succeeding culture and religion. The Romans may have been little known, except in the immediate areas of their encampments. First Anglians were not drawn to the mountainous areas though the second invasion, from over Stainmore, reached the fellside villages of Winton, Hilton and Murton. History does not suggest that Vikings, Normans or Scots (though bringing various upheavals) entirely destroyed the Celtic culture; Shap Abbey, for example, endowed at the end of the twelfth century, is the only monastery anywhere near our area. Turmoil and confusion belonged to the times of Charles the First and the Roundheads but one wonders, with Henry L. Widdup, to what extent those events made local impressions. "It is difficult to assess", he writes, "the effect of the political and religious upheaval on the ordinary inhabitants and one suspects that it was less than is generally supposed."[1]

From a secretive Celtic background comes little folklore. The Rush-Bearing ceremony was but the faintest glimpse of a far-distant past. Katherine Graves, from Darlington, was pronounced a witch but witchcraft does not seem to have been a significant social phenomenon. Holly night at Brough seems to have been born out of thanksgiving to God rather than out of fear of evil. The population of our area has been small and thinly scattered, a people, it is generally contended, who, since living in mountainous areas, retain ancient usages and customs longer than those who live further down the valleys. Marriages were preferable if the partners came from the same Parish and the latings (boundaries) for marriage invitations must also have kept largely to the Parish area. Travel by the farming majority was never far, though

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1. Henry L. Widdup, Christianity in Cumbria (Kendal, 1981), p. 75.

fathers of families conveniently farming small plots were sometimes required for military service before the eighteenth century. Abraham Dent, the eighteenth-century shopkeeper, had an interesting life without going far from his native Kirkby Stephen.

Catholics were persistent in their persecuted and secret work. The Church of England did not fully meet religious need and the small sects of Disestablishment times did not exist in our area. The Quakers had their undoubted influence in south Westmorland but they did not leave the same mark in the upper Eden valley. Ingham came as an enchanting visiting preacher a year before Wesley and his Birks work, though brief, was more spectacular than any of Wesley's few preaching tours in the area. Indeed, in a number of ways, the religious forerunners of John Wesley had brought no apparent strong or lasting influence. We may not, however, go quite so far as Hultkrantz has done, regarding areas of rural, eastern, North America: "In large areas of agricultural America the Neolithic period continued until the arrival of Columbus, and even beyond this date."[1] Speaking of the New Stone Age (dating from about 10,000 BC) he also says: "This was the time when many hunters turned into primitive farmers . . . . The world of the farmers and herdsmen is still with us. There is every reason to expect that their religious practices resemble those of their prehistoric predecessors."[2]

In the rest of England, Methodism had been making considerable progress. Already John Wesley had become better-known in other parts of the country when the Winton Society was struggling into existence. Rural Lincolnshire had been the county of his birth and distant Cornwall

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1. Åke Hultkrantz, "Religion Before History" in The World's Religions (Tring, 1982), p. 28.

2. Ibid., p. 23.

was becoming much more accustomed to hearing him preach.[1] It may thus be argued that, in these various ways, the upper Eden had a certain degree of isolation, even before Methodism came: an area in which religions had done little more than add thin layers of new Christianity to old and secret Celtic beliefs. Based, however, on a paucity of documentary evidence, this is obviously only a general comment and needs to take into further account a host of undocumented events, at all levels, which become locally significant. As Alan Macfarlane says: "Until we step back from a community study for a moment, we may forget that civil wars, scientific revolutions, the collapse of the established Church, and even such locally important phenomena as the weather or localized disease may leave no obvious and direct trace in the records we have been considering."[2] We have, nevertheless, been dealing with farmers (in the main) and we remember, with R. H. Tawney, that though they may have said little, they did have ideas and aspirations: "What manner of men these were in that personal life of which economics is but the squalid scaffolding . . . we cannot say. Of the hopes and fears and aspirations of the men who tilled the fields which still give us in due season their kindly fruit, we know hardly more than of the Roman plebs, far less than of the democracy of Athens. Yet these men too had their visions. Their silence is the taciturnity of men, not the speechlessness of dumb beasts."[3]

John Wesley covered much of England with his preaching tours but, since his message was urgent, he went more often to those places where

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1. He had first set out for Cornwall on August 26th, 1743.

2. Alan Macfarlane, Reconstructing Historical Communities (C.U.P., 1977), p. 205.

3. R. H. Tawney, The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century (London, 1912), p. 121.

many people would gather: the towns and cities. His instructions, however, applied to every Methodist Society in every area. His annual Conferences reflected his authority and leadership qualities but he, himself, remained far from the upper Eden. Furthermore, the Methodism of this remote valley and its surrounding hills and fells, though joined by Connexional links to a wider Methodism (through District adminstration and Travelling Preachers), was to be weaned from its lively association with new converts on the east side of the Pennines in the very early nineteenth century and fostered into the District fellowship of Whitehaven and Carlisle. This was probably geographically suitable but tended to isolate upper Eden Methodism from its religious forbears. Since birth at Winton had been slow - because of the neighbouring Inghamite presence - there was an even greater artificiality in being linked with north-western towns not only more distant, but, sociologically, more unlike the life of the Dales of the large mid-eighteenth century Wesleyan Circuit to the east and south of our area. The same unfortunate process was repeated with the Primitives in 1886 when their early attachment to the Sunderland District had to become an allegiance to the Carlisle and Whitehaven District.

Whether the Travelling Preachers came from east or west, they were only visitors and whether they had an enchanting presence or not, they never stayed long enough to understand a local society completely. When they came 'College-trained', they were bringing the results of greater educational opportunity to a people who were satisfied that their own education was quite adequate and who believed, especially in the early days of the Colleges, that their Travelling Preachers had already been well equipped before they went to the Institute. The Wesleyan Rules of Society (1743) were of greater religious importance than the Connexional

administrative machinery which somehow came with the Travelling Preachers. Personal Faith and Connexional Order were in contrast. Though Chapels could only be built with District and Conference approval, at least two of them appeared at a speed which denied some loyalty to the faraway slow-moving procedures. Catherine Holme's erection was proposed at the September District Finance Committee in 1879 and it was opened almost before the Superintendent returned from the authorizing meeting.[1] More remarkably, Crosby Garrett Chapel was begun in 1882, before the Superintendent set out to the appropriate committee. Such eagerness meant that, in the case of Catherine Holme, an 1880 Synod minute explained by saying that the building "could not be delayed without the loss of valuable and important help in the erection. The Superintendent (was) in communication with the Chapel Committee."[2] In the case of Crosby Garrett, the 1883 Synod minute said, simply, "begun without consent."[3] Both Chapels have survived these Connexional restrictions and have recently celebrated Centenary Services.

With the arrival of Primitive Methodism at Brough, in the early nineteenth century, another 'wave' of religion thus appeared. Different, but not distinctly so, it had to rely on an even smaller supply of Travelling Preachers from faraway. Bourne and Clowes were not even 'copies' of John Wesley, though Thomas Batty, their disciple and colleague, came in spectacular fashion in 1823. Generally, Primitives and Wesleyans worked harmoniously side-by-side, so much so that, to non-Methodists, Primitive Methodism represented no new religion any longer. As the nineteenth century ended, the religious fire kindled by Fox,

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1. Minutes of the Carlisle Wesleyan District Synod, 1879.
2. Ibid., 1880.
3. Ibid., 1883.

Ingham, Brunskill and Batty was still burning, but quietly. The succession was meeting the same demanding rigours of travel and weather, and into the twentieth century, Wesleyans, Primitives and United Methodists fought in the same war, travelled on the same trains, and shared in the same hopes of emigration. Emigration dispersals reduced their memberships, leaving small holy groups bereft of valuable members, if not of leadership itself. All the branches of Methodism conducted the sacrament of Infant Baptism, though it seems to have been extended to the children of believers and non-believers alike, possibly impairing the religious intensity of this holy isolated community. Though Methodists have often married Methodists, there have been occasional alliances with local Anglicans and Baptists. But even in 1983, young Methodists who meet, devotionally, in considerable numbers at Newbiggin Chapel every Sunday night, may some day find themselves (as others have done already) not only committed to their Lord but also to each other as parents of Methodist families. This, as ever, will help to distinguish the holy community of local Methodism from those 'brought up' in the Church of England.

The continuing identity of the holy isolated community has depended on its meeting together. In under-populated areas, this has been particularly essential to the inward growth and outward expansion of the religion. The 'gathering together' is more likely to be described as Fellowship than Worship, and, most likely, as "going to Chapel." It is chiefly to hear the Preacher's message of new life for all: a vital religious act for the small, holy community which, individually, wrestles with the powers of evil. It is to hear the same message again and again, since evil forces do not disappear and man may still come under their influence. John Wesley urged his preachers, with all the

strength they had, to build up their gathered converts in that holiness without which they would not be able to see their Lord. At the same time, in small rural communities, Christians would come under the scrutiny of neighbours whose opportunity to observe the attitudes and behaviour of the new religion would not be lost. In a society where there was little movement of population, a Methodist preacher might be under this close scrutiny for more than half a century and if he failed to keep a preaching appointment, for example, even unbelievers would hear of it. The Methodist community would suffer from such an omission and if he also failed to 're-evangelise' his congregations, their religion would become static, if not decadent. Where, as often, the exterior architecture and interior furnishing of Chapels was plain and simple, the preacher had to be engaging, both in manner and content. His only textbook was the Bible, a tradition from which isolated Waldensians, similarly, never turned aside. With proper use of this preaching tool, he could help to ensure that local Methodism became dynamic rather than static, fluent rather than sluggish. During the week, especially in winter, Biblical truths could be revealed at prayer-meetings where the believers, whose working days in field and home were often spent without human company, might be able to speak more easily with their God than with fellow-believers in the ideal Class meeting. Lovefeasts may also have been substitutes for combinations of Class meetings which never met. Even so, Methodist religion could be almost at a standstill, as Casson found out between 1833 and 1835. Congregational singing, of course, could put heart into an uninspired situation, provided that its accompaniment was without worldly association: the harmonium rather than the fiddle. Needless to say, electronic versions of the former have now appeared in the 'worldly' environment of the

latter, though possibly not in the Inns of Eden.

Various editions of the Methodist Hymnbook have been the source of sacred tune and word since the time of the Wesleys and our local Methodists have found them helpful in worship. As Gerardus Van Der Leeuw points out, speaking generally, "music is the last thing . . . which remains. In the heavenly city which the Revelation of John describes, there is no more image and no temple",[1] butsong still has its place. While the Circuit Male Voice Choir travels beyond the boundaries of upper Eden Methodism, the local congregations are never silent. This expression of belief is further accompanied by missionary concern. As among the mountain-dwelling Waldensians, there has been the conviction that unless the message is shared with far-distant, remote communities, it will die at home. As with the Jews, local Methodists have been strongest when praying and fighting. But their fight has been against the evil of drink and their children have also enlisted. In this last emphasis, we remember that the Koran says nothing directly against alcohol and nor do present Methodist rules require abstinence as a condition of Membership. Yet so often it has been thought that the chief emphasis of both Islam and Methodism is total abstinence.

It could be hoped that Methodists who come to live in the upper Eden valley would rejuvenate the isolated religious community but recent history has not confirmed any encouraging trends. The Circuit Junior Missionary Association contributions and missionary interest among children and young people, however, do appear to have increased with the arrival of a new member to the Appleby Society. Yet a quarter of a century ago, Methodists came to live in Maulds Meaburn and the Society there has not been able to make significant strides. There is a strong

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1. Gerardus Van Der Leeuw, Sacred and Profane Beauty (London, 1963), p. 261.

argument for more Methodists coming to live in our area, but they will need to stay longer than the Travelling Preachers who, generally, too soon leave their Eden flocks behind them.

Not all the Chapels are licensed for marriage but, difficult as legal arrangements might have been to make, this could have added strength to local Methodism in each village; the Union of 1932 would have done well to have encouraged such steps in small religious communities. Local Methodism would then have been more able to provide its growing children (taught the authentic faith in the Sunday Schools) with a place where their Methodist family life could truly begin. Methodist couples have, of course, been joined together in holy matrimony in the Methodist chapels but, in 14 cases, they have to go beyond their own immediate place of Worship for this important beginning to a life-long union.

In this introductory survey which begins this last chapter, we make a further reference to the alcohol issue. On page G,[1] we have another reminder of the way in which it occupied the minds of teachers and children at the beginning of the century. Elizabeth A. Kearton was then a thirteen-year old and she had listened attentively to the important lecture on an important issue. She had already been introduced to Methodism but the undenominational Temperance League was also fighting the issue on a wide front in the north of England, Day Schools included. In fact the first Temperance and Abstinence leaders were not Methodists at all. Joseph Livesey is not so described in The Hope of the Race, Mrs. Carlile was associated with Presbyterianism and the Reverend Jabez Tunnicliffe mostly kept company with the Baptists. For some, no doubt, the annual Demonstrations of the Eden Valley Band of

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1. Following p. 262; its ornate edging, as on some Circuit Plans, embellishes a cherished hope; it was presented at Brough Day School.

TEMPERANCE LEAGUE CERTIFICATE : MAY, 1902

Hope Union were no more than expressions of a serious social concern but for others, among whom were many Methodists, they also reflected a stand against the forces of evil and, as such, they were religious rather than sociological phenomena. But if one of a religion's social concerns weakens (as the Band of Hope now does), and if it has been the chief concern (social or otherwise) of that religion, the religion itself may then rapidly lose its hold on its adherents. Intense as the fight against alcohol has been, we are bound to notice that in another type of warfare (in the using of weapons to kill), Methodists who had fought the drink issue by not drinking, did not express their distaste for war by being pacifists. Had it been otherwise, a Methodist culture of peace might have grown alongside its other social concerns, as with the Quakers. But even though international conflicts have proved the sense of the words of the European historian, H. A. L. Fisher, Eden Methodists did what they thought was right and could not remain (isolated) behind when their Anglican brethren went to war: How "feeble are the affinities of religion, of race, and of culture, when weighed in the balance against the cupidity and warlust of mankind."[1] On the other hand, had they refused to fight, the sacred places of their cherished beliefs would presumably have been more at risk from the enemy, as would the sacred persons who had there heard the sacred word and had become a sacred community.

We now look at these classifications of the sacred which are part of this holy community. Though the term "myth" would not be used with reference to the Creation story of Genesis (since to those who have read the Bible literally - and Eden Methodists have - the word is unfortunately

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1. H. A. L. Fisher, A History of Europe (London, 1936), p. 478.

not associated with truth), the beginning of the Old Testament contains a sacred story exemplifying what Harold Turner describes as an emerging myth: "Distance in time separates people from the divine creative acts of the past. In many religions this is overcome by regular recital of sacred myths, retelling what the gods did in creating the world, giving the land, and showing how to make fire, to hunt, farm, build and live together. The recital brings these foundation events to life again."[1] Seen in this light, the concept of myth is not disturbing and if we add Kristensen's simple definition to Turner's explanation, "myth", or sacred story, will become appropriate in interpreting the Creation story, for, as he says: "By myths we understand . . . not empty or false inventions, but expressions of religious belief in the form of visible images."[2] The myths of religion need an interpretation because, as Grimal writes, they are "always destined to have never-ending consequences."[3] Bronislaw Malinowski reinforces this by saying: "Myth . . . is a living reality, believed to have once happened in primeval times, and continuing ever since to influence the world and human destinies."[4] Grimal also says, by way of recommendation: "Trying to know (myths) better, even if only from the outside, is not only surrender to the (very legitimate) pleasure of reading and rereading a collection of fine stories, it is a way of probing deeper into men's thoughts."[5]

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1. Harold Turner, "Holy Places, Sacred Calenders" in The World's Religions, p. 20.

2. W. Brede Kristensen, The Meaning of Religion (The Hague, 1960), p. 62.

3. P. Grimal, "Man and Myth" in Pierre Grimal, ed., World Mythology (Paris, 1973), p. 12.

4. Bronislaw Malinowski, Myth in Primitive Psychology (London, 1926), p. 21.

5. "Man and Myth", p. 15.

It may be said with certainty that every Sunday School scholar and every Congregation in the valley of the Eden, who wanted to know about beginnings, was referred to the Garden of Eden. Not that the story gives answers, particularly to the question of the existence of evil. Evil exists along with good, one of the trees in the Garden symbolizing the wisdom or knowledge of good and evil.[1] The wisdom itself, like the evil, has been there from the beginning: "Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth."[2] The other tree, the tree of life, is not to be touched - otherwise its fruit will enable man to live forever. The serpent, created by God, beguiles Eve and thus also influences Adam, but it does not create evil; and, in Genesis Chapter 3, God would appear to create man and then, after his disobedience, rearrange his life so that life-giving fruit would be forever denied him. The chaos of nocturnal darkness which preceded the creation of light was, it seemed, to return, not only night by night, but day by day in the darkness of the human soul.

This Old Testament myth, then, raises a problem. It does not say how evil came to be, leaving its reader with an impression that things went very wrong with a well-ordered Creation. The pictorial detail of the rapid creation-process has clouded the consequent issue, namely that of how to deal with the existing evil, a particular power generally described by the name of Satan and in a number of the hymns of the Wesleys, accounting for misery and wickedness on earth. Satan's work is repeated daily but, thankfully, so is the divine work of Creation, for, as Kristensen says: "What happens every morning is just as

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1. Genesis 2, verse 9.

2. Proverbs 8, verse 23.

miraculous, it is the same miracle, as the creation of the world in the beginning."[1] In the beginning, it would seem, was both evil and good, darkness and light, but the New Testament contains a heartening message: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."[2] Indeed, the light is personified in the divine and human Christ and Charles Wesley's morning hymn expresses this further, possible daily miracle:

> "Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
> Christ, the true, the only Light,
> Sun of Righteousness arise,
> Triumph o'er the shades of night;
> Day-spring from on high, be near;
> Day-star, in my heart appear."

The first verse of John's Gospel - "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" - clearly expresses the eternally-existing Jesus, and Charles Wesley amazingly condenses, into mere words, that historic, incarnational event which is, so often, beyond adequate description:

> "Being's source begins to be,
> And God Himself is born!"[4]

The Book of Revelation, containing the eschatalogical myth, deals with the end of time, when sickness, sorrow and death will be no more. The miracle of the rising sun is repeated as it sets, and evil will be forever destroyed, however it began. At least, "the devil . . . will be tormented day and night for ever and ever."[5]

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1. The Meaning of Religion, p. 69.
2. John 1, verse 5.
3. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 924, verse 1.
4. Ibid., No. 134, verse 2, lines 7 and 8.
5. Revelation 20, verse 10.

In the upper Eden valley, the wonder and beauty of creation is not fully appreciated by its people unless they have also lived alongside the dull grey architecture of the modern industrial city, with its noisy, rushing, restless humanity. Our rural Methodists, indeed, may have become more occupied with the evil of the Old Testament myth, and how to deal with it, than with everything in the Garden which is lovely. The farming parables from the New Testament, a natural source for sermons, hint at the tension which exists between good and evil, between following Jesus and serving the Devil: good and fruitless vines, safe and lost sheep, rich and poor soil, good crops and weedy fields, sheep and goats, or, as John Wesley would put it: saved and unsaved. Good and evil exist side by side: goodness in the loving, incarnate Jesus and evil in sinful humanity. Charles Wesley does not allow the situation to be entirely dualistic, however, because he believes God can now rescue us from the conflict:

> "Though the sons of night blaspheme,
> More there are with us than them;
> God with us, we cannot fear;
> Fear, ye fiends, for Christ is here!
>
> "Lo! to faith's enlightened sight,
> All the mountain flames with light;
> Hell is nigh, but God is nigher,
> Circling us with hosts of fire."[1]

Robert Hutchinson who went as a missionary to China from Winton, at the beginning of this century, recalled something of the spirit of this conflict in a letter from the Wesleyan Mission, Canton, to Mr. Barker: "It is good of (sic) an evening to have a little walk out in the grounds by oneself, with the stars shining so peacefully overhead, and to think of the old times at Winton, to hum the hymns we used to sing, to call to mind the experiences given in the class meetings, and to fight over again

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1. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 246, verses 4 and 5.

the battles of winter prayer meetings, when souls had to be grappled for and pulled into the Kingdom."[1] Such events arose out of that interpretation of the Creation myth which makes it plain that man needs a Saviour who would, incidentally, bear "our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness."[2]

In considering sacred symbols, we are dealing as much with a reaction to these as with the symbols themselves. For it is true, as Mary Douglas points out, that "the long history of protestantism witnesses to the need for continual watch on the tendency of ritual form to harden and replace religious feeling . . . . With every new century we become heirs to a longer and more vigorous anti-ritualist tradition."[3] Yet she also says that "it is a mistake to suppose that there can be religion which is all interior, with no rules, no liturgy, no external signs of inward states. As with society, so with religion, external form is the condition of its existence . . . . Without the letters of condolence, telegrams of congratulations and even occasional postcards, the friendship of a separated friend is not a social reality."[4] As far as religious symbolism is concerned, therefore, Douglas would appreciate our Methodist symbols: "The more personal and intimate the source of ritual symbolism, the more telling its message. The more the symbol is drawn from the common fund of human experience, the more wide and certain

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1. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby, and Sedbergh Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (December 1906), p. 3.

2. 1 Peter 2, verse 24.

3. Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger (London, 1966), p. 61.

4. Ibid., p. 62.

its reception."[1] Yet if the source is drawn too much "from the common fund of human experience" it becomes commonplace. The Chapel door, or the porch, for example, could represent the boundary between sacred space and the world, but it could be just as easy to take for granted the ritual step into the House of God as it is for a householder when he enters his home for warmth and shelter from rain and cold. Similarly, decorative flowers, symbolizing the transformation which takes place when a corner of barren soil is turned into cultivation, can become simply the object of occasional observation rather than a symbol for the corporate contemplation of divine activity. So, as Eliade points out, "symbolism effects a permanent solidarity between man and the sacred (though this is somewhat indistinct in that man only becomes conscious of it from time to time)."[2] In this "permanent solidarity", says Stark (with particular reference to the sacraments), "there meet men's inner longing for salvation . . . . They are (for faith) nodal points between soul and grace."[3]

The Chapel of the upper Eden is much the same size as the home from which its people come and it is furnished with the same functional simplicity. Members of the small Congregation, like the family at home, need a minimum of symbolism to bind them together and such symbols as are used are not so intensely meaningful as those which are used by large Congregations who belong to a much larger fellowship. If a Cross is to be seen (though generally it is not), one feels that it will be a <u>small</u> Cross. The Bread and Wine of the Lord's Supper (taking place

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1. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 114.

2. Mircea Eliade, <u>Patterns in Comparative Religion</u> (London and New York, 1958), p. 447.

3. Werner Stark, <u>The Sociology of Religion</u> (London, 1972), V, 115.

about once every three months) symbolize the Body and Blood of Jesus but not with Catholic intensity. They are the substantial symbols of the continuing and sacrificial love of Our Lord but they do not transubstantiate. The Baptismal font is often very small and unobtrusively placed; were it bigger, it might be safely placed near the door, a symbol, indeed, of early entry into the Congregation of Christ's flock. The Chapels themselves are sometimes referred to as "Houses of Prayer" and, in this sense, visual aids are superfluous. A Congregation 'at prayer' relies on faith rather than sight. It is the Pulpit which is usually central and obvious, signifying the importance of Preaching from the Holy Scriptures. The Chapel windows are usually without much colour, large enough to bring in the light of day and indicate to the world outside, in its darkness, that the holy community is at Worship. Altogether these Chapels are almost isolated from that world of symbolism and of colour which belongs to hundred of millions of people who believe themselves to be worshipping the same God. The Eden Congregations are a living denial of the words of Douglas Davies: "Symbols serve as triggers of commitment in religions. They enshrine the teachings and express them in a tangible way. So the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper in Christianity bring the believer into a practical relationship with the otherwise abstract ideas of repentance and forgiveness. Man can hardly live without symbols because he always needs something to motivate his life; it is as though abstract ideas need to be set within a symbol before men can be impelled to act upon them."[1] Motivation, in the religious life of our holy, isolated community has come, rather, from following the ways of earlier religious movements

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1. Douglas Davies, "Myths and Symbols" in The World's Religions, p. 36.

like the Quakers who did not find much need of symbols. Indeed a description of Quaker religion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries might well be applied to upper Eden Methodism of the twentieth century: "And they maintained at the centre of their life and activity a place of worship in which there was no longer richness and movement, but in which there never failed to be awe and a stern and challenging, but genuine, love. Without these things they must have disappeared. With them, they survived into a time when new winds would shake them and set them astir again."[1] Methodists in the Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Circuit appear to have "borrowed" from the Quakers, though, as Kristensen says: "That which is borrowed is always, in its new context, something new and original."[2]

Since, then, symbols appear to have a secondary importance in the worship of our holy people, what sacred actions take place which both bind the Congregations together and say something about the God who is worshipped? We must remember that the atmosphere of worship is one of quietness. The created world outside is also quiet, though this is more true of the weekday working environment than of the Sunday 'worldly' noises which increasingly disturb the Sabbath Rest. The Sabbath, as with the Jews, is not for action; action takes place the day before. As Moses had said: "Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord";[3] and it would seem that sacred acts, or action, in the Chapel are as few and as quiet as possible, except those involved in

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1. Harold Loukes, The Quaker Contribution (SCM Press, London, 1965), p. 71.

2. The Meaning of Religion, p. 476.

3. Exodus 16, verse 23.

singing and preaching. No bell calls the Congregation to worship and no bell will ring when the Bread is consecrated. Few responsive "Amens" will be heard and even the Lord's Prayer may be uttered by the Preacher alone. The atmosphere is repeating the creativity of God. Nature's creative power is rarely noisy, seeds waiting quietly in the soil in the winter and ripening under a silent, summer sun. Nothing should be done in worship, least it suggests that God has not done enough. In His good time, He has created and He has redeemed and man may not hurry Him. Rufus Jones might almost have called our Methodists "mystical",[1] like the Seekers, for they have demonstrated "a genuine spiritual quest for something deeper than the empty show of religion, a search for what some of them happily call 'an upper room Christianity' . . . . They knew little of the history of the spiritual travail of the race, and they evidently undervalued external helps . . . . But they preferred to wait for God Himself to show his face rather than to bow down before the images which men had set up for them to worship."

Observation of the sacred acts of our Methodists, therefore, might lead us to think of them as religiously inactive and those who have observed, for example, the sacred acts of isolated Pentecostals (also known as Tremblers) in modern Russia, might wonder if Eden Methodism is, indeed, declining:

> "Being prohibited by law, they have no fixed places of worship, but meet, with the utmost secrecy, in little groups, in the homes of their members. In the province of Gomel, they meet three times a week . . . . Among their rites, the breaking of bread and the mutual washing of feet, would appear to be reserved to the initiated. One of their peculiar features is the adoption of the tunes from popular or revolutionary songs for their hymns. In the summer, they hold their meetings out of doors, in the woods. The most zealous

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1. Rufus M. Jones, Studies in Mystical Religion (London, 1923), p. 459.

> . . . graduate by degrees to the title of 'prophet', with one, two or three 'crowns'. The sect forbids its members to take any part in the social and cultural life of the nation . . . . It is a dynamic body and every member is an active propagandist."[1]

Like these Pentecostalists, the Methodists used to meet during the week but fewer and fewer do so now. Whenever they meet, however, Sunday or weekday, their singing is a vital part of worship. "Music", says Van der Leeuw, "cannot preach, but it shares in the proclamation . . . . We cannot forget that when God created the world the morning stars sang happily and the angels greeted his creation with their song."[2] He also says: "Harmony beauty and holiness we find most often in words which are spoken to God and before his face, in hymns. For ages the hymn has been a song, not about God, but to him . . ."[3] It may also be observed that there is an element of music, even in the preaching, though as Van der Leeuw suggests, it may not be wholly attractive: "Anyone who has ever heard a representative of the old school read from the Bible knows that even a Calvinist is not content with the bare word, but seeks to constrain holiness through cadence and pitch. Whoever listens to the melody of many sermons can hear the same thing in less pleasant form . . . . Sermon intonation is only differentiated from Gregorian chant by the imperfection of its structure. It does not differ at all from the magical formulas of primitive tribes."[4] With regard to religious music generally, Van der Leeuw may well be right, except, perhaps, at a little Eden chapel, at two o'clock on a quiet Sunday afternoon: "Wild,

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1. Nikita Struve, Christians in Contemporary Russia (Harvill Press, London, 1967), p. 237.

2. Sacred and Profane Beauty, p. 302.

3. Ibid., pp. 142-143.

4. Ibid., p. 215.

stimulating music", he says, "grips the spirits of men everywhere in the world."[1] Rudolf Otto, on the other hand, thinks entirely differently: "Not even music, which else can give such manifold expression to all the feelings of the mind, has any positive way to express 'the holy.'"[2]

As far, then, as sacred acts are concerned, the Preacher is the busiest sacred person, and so it is thus an extreme disappointment when he does not keep his Pulpit engagement. For it is the Preacher who says the public, informal prayers and who reads and interprets the Bible to his Congregation. It is the Preacher who invites the Congregation to make an offering; this is always monetary, though occasionally he also asks for the offering or dedicated commitment of the whole of the worshippers' lives. A worshipper who then makes a positive response is most likely to be experiencing Otto's dual aspect of the Holy: a God who attracts but who also arouses fear and awe. His feelings are expressed when he can sing a hymn by John Henry Sammis:

> "But we never can prove
> The delights of His love
> Until all on the altar we lay."[3]

In Chapels where the Methodist altar is barely discernible, this is, perhaps, an even more compelling metaphor. In fact, the Chapels have almost become altars themselves. In this, Kristensen cites the Great Round Altar in China, near Peking, where the "difference between temple and altar have . . . practically disappeared."[4] In the Eden Chapels, perhaps for this reason, a person who is unaccustomed to bringing the Offering to the "altar" doesn't always appear to know where, exactly,

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1. Ibid., p. 216.
2. Rudolf Otto, The Idea of The Holy (O.U.P., 1936), p. 72.
3. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 516, verse 4.
4. The Meaning of Religion, p. 471.

it should be placed. The Holy Communion Table is sacred but no more so than the rest of the Chapel.

Holy Communion may be seen as a sacrificial meal in Kristensen's terms: it actualizes abiding divine life among the communicants. "By means of the sacred meal, people come to share in divine life."[1] But, on the other hand, the human condition is sinful and is in need of an atonement. Charles Wesley's Communion hymn expresses this other aspect of a Sacrament not often held in Chapels infrequently visited by ordained Ministers:

> "Our needy souls sustain
> With fresh supplies of love,
> Till all Thy life we gain,
> And all Thy fullness prove,
> And, strengthened by Thy perfect grace
> Behold without a veil Thy face."[2]

Holy Baptism is a sacred act rarer than the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Generally administered to infants, it may also be conducted for older people. The use of water in this religious act, as in so many religions, relates to rebirth. The Methodist prayer is that the child will experience a new life in Christ and then formally and publicly join His Church. Those parents not fully committed to the life and worship of the local Methodist community, knowing, nevertheless, that such baptism is "in the name of Jesus", may be bringing their child in the hope of protecting it from illness or danger, but this is less than the full meaning of the Sacrament. One of the Wesley poems, entitled "a prayer for one that is lunatic and sore vexed" may well have been part of a Baptismal prayer, though not necessarily so:

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1. Ibid., p. 484.

2. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 764, verse 2.

"SATAN, hear the name of JESUS,
Hear and quake; Give her back
To the Name that frees us."[1]

How, then, does this apparent lack of sacred acts relate to sacred time among our Methodists? Are there special times when acts have particular importance? Unlike the Jews whose "holy days" are linked with the destinies and ideals of the Jewish people (for example, Shabuot in memory of their dedication to the Torah), Christians have prepared their sacred calendars around the life of Jesus. Eden Methodists, unlike some Christians, have excluded the Saints Days though they have other annual celebrations which recall what God has done and is doing for His world. And just as space, as we shall see, is set aside for the possibility of a person or persons being where a god may appear again, so it is with sacred time. Persons will return to a place, at a particular time, perhaps at a Sunday School Anniversary, hoping, at best, that their god will do for them what he did the previous year, or, at least, will somehow act again for them.

To what extent sacred times are helpful to individual Methodists it is difficult to say. Eliade, in saying what may happen in sacred time, may make us ask to what extent 'periodic recurrence' actually does what he says it does: "Christ's passion, death and resurrection are not simply remembered during the services of Holy Week; they really happen then before the eyes of the faithful. And a convinced Christian must feel that he is contemporary with these transhistoric events . . . ."[2] Yet for other "convinced Christians" it is just as true that they can sing a

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1. John and Charles Wesley, The Poetical Works, G. Osborn, ed. (London, 1872), II, 31.

2. Mircea Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion (London and New York, 1958), pp. 392-393.

hymn chorus, outside of Holy Week, with equal apparent certainty:

"Jesus saves me now."[1]

If nothing else, for our Eden Methodists, the Christian Festivals re-present a Creating God who has Himself been born on earth to re-create His people personally - "The Lord of earth and skies, humbled to the dust."[2] In addition to their weekly Services (commemorating creation and redemption), there are particular Services when God's goodness is recalled and related, as in the annual Covenant Service early in the New Year. There is also the Harvest Festival when, again, God's providence is re-presented, and there are two other Anniversaries which are sacred times, though these may well seem to reflect what man has often done for God rather than what God has once done for man; they are the Sunday School and Chapel Anniversaries.

The Covenant Service became increasingly dear to John Wesley and it is still shared in the upper Eden valley, year by year. On Christmas Day, 1747, he wrote in his Journal: "Both this and the following days I strongly urged the wholly giving up ourselves to God, and renewing in every point our covenant that the Lord shouldbe our God."[3] On August 6th, 1755, he wrote again of the blessing of joining in a covenant to serve God, and at Spitalfields, on August 11th, 1755, "all the people stood up, in testimony of assent, to the number of about eighteen hundred persons. Such a night I scarce ever saw before. Surely the fruit of it shall remain forever."[4] By 1770, his Covenant Services were beginning to take place at the very beginning of the year and on

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1. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 374.
2. Ibid., No. 134, verse 3.
3. John Wesley, The Journal, III, 328.
4. Ibid., IV, 126.

December 31st, 1771, he conducted a Watch-night Service to usher in the New Year with singing and prayer before his usual Covenant Service the following day at Spitalfields.[1] By 1775, again in London, on January 1st, an excessive congregation shared in this annual service and "Afterwards many desired to return thanks, either for a sense of pardon, for full salvation, or for a fresh manifestation of His grace, healing all their backslidings."[2] At his Covenant Service on January 1st, 1777, "many found His power present to heal, and were enabled to urge their way with strength renewed."[3] On January 1st, 1782, at covenant renewal, "the dread of God, in an eminent degree, fell upon the whole congregation."[4] Each succeeding Covenant Service seemed better than the last. At that rate, they should surely now be the highlight of the Methodist year, but this is not, alas, obviously so. Fine as the Order of Service had been for many years, numbers attending are rarely excessive; it contains, of course, already-prepared prayers. Even so, it continues, and there seems something wrong with a year which does not begin with it. Its purpose is still that of renewal of dedication to an unfailing God and its timing is tied to the turn of the year when, as Charles Wesley says:

> "Our life is a dream
> Our time as a stream
> Glides swiftly away,
> And the fugitive moment refuses to stay."[5]

The Harvest Festival also celebrates the goodness of God but the note of dedicated renewal is by no means so strong. The symbols of

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1. Ibid., V, 442.
2. Ibid., VI, 54.
3. Ibid., VI, 136.
4. Ibid., VI, 342.
5. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 956, verse 3.

God's goodness and creation are displayed on every available ledge in the Chapel, yet the Covenant Service, held at a time when there may not even be a symbolic vase of flowers, has far more personal challenge in its prayers and vows. Though the Harvest Festival may be described as a "sacred time", the Services (as we have already seen) were sources of income rather than times of renewed dedication in response to God's continuing bounty. As for the annual Sunday School Anniversary, as we have also seen, it tends to reflect past efforts of teachers and scholars rather than encourage re-dedication of parents. As with the Chapel Anniversary, the Congregation is probably seeing what Methodism has done, in the past year, with what God has given; it is the year that has gone, rather than what the re-creating God can do in the year that is to come, which seems more important. Periodic recollection has a renewing efficacy of its own.

It is, of course, in the Chapel that the awareness of the presence of God is best experienced. This sacred space, as Eliade says, "becomes an inexhaustible source of power and sacredness and enables man, simply by entering it, to have a share in the power, to hold communion with the sacredness."[1] Centuries have passed since the enclosure, wall, or circle of stones surrounding a sacred place were first used as man-made sanctuaries and it is now easy for the tourist to walk among such stones without the slightest religious concern. But, in the first place, "the sacred is always dangerous to anyone who comes into contact with it unprepared, without having gone through the 'gestures of approach' that every religious act demands",[2] and when the sincere Eden Methodists

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1. Mircea Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion (London and New York, 1958), p. 368.

2. Ibid., pp. 370-371.

enter the sacred space they remember this religious principle, expressed, particularly to Moses: "Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."[1] They remember that in the Chapel, the consecrated place, "there exists the possibility of breaking through from the level of earth to the level of heaven."[2] That being the case, they are at the very centre of the world - where God above meets man beneath; in this real sense, the Chapel is so important to them that it may be called the 'centre of their lives.' Yet they have not had to endure the hardships of the early Quakers who were so insistent on meeting in sacred space that their meeting houses, in times of persecution, were nailed up, sometimes with Friends inside them. Harold Loukes says, of the Quakers: "The right to sit in silence was the costliest of their testimonies. But it was the dearest of them. They could not live without it."[3] For more than a century, the Methodists have similarly cherished sacred space and some are now holding Centenary celebrations. Neighbouring congregations join in the Services of Thanksgiving, knowing not only that small holy communities need each other if they are to survive, but also (and of even greater importance) that the Chapel still represents the 'House of God' and the 'House of Prayer'. It is still true that a people's need is "to find some spot on earth where He whose heavenly abode is inaccessible may be approached and found."[4]

Among the Canaanites, divine theophanies were at high places such

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1. Exodus 3, verse 5.

2. Patterns in Comparative Religion, p. 373.

3. Harold Loukes, The Quaker Contribution (SCM Press, London, 1965), p. 41.

4. H. Wheeler Robinson, The Religious Ideas Of The Old Testament, 9th impression (London, 1952), pp. 134-135.

as Horeb and Sinai but the Deuteronomic Reformation of the seventh century (BC) centralised all worship in Jerusalem. So in Deuteronomy 12, verse 2, we read: "You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, upon the high mountains and upon the hills and under every green tree." To Zion, the holy hill of Jerusalem, the Jews would be drawn to celebrate their deliverance. To Zion, Jesus and his parents "went up according to custom" (Luke 2, verse 42), and to Zion, Methodists also climb. In spite of the fact that Winton Chapel is on level ground, Robert Hutchinson's missionary letter from China (in 1906) begins by saying: "I make mention of you all at the Father's Throne, and also the little hill of Zion established at Winton."[1] The hymn book, from which Winton and other Methodists sing, has a small section of 26 hymns entitled Worship in the Sanctuary in which the Chapel is seen as a place where inner conflicts and sins may be exposed to God: the concept of height (God above) being complemented by that of depth (man below). Henry M. Butler, for example, writes thus:

> "Lift every gift that Thou Thyself has given;
> Low lies the best till lifted up to heaven:
> Low lie the bounding heart, the teeming brain,
> Till, sent from God, they mount to God again."[2]

Uniting the two is man's readiness to offer the whole of life as a sacrifice, described by Charles Wesley in a hymn of dedication:

> "O Thou who camest from above
> The pure celestial fire to impart,
> Kindle a flame of sacred love
> On the mean altar of my heart!"[3]

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1. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby, and Sedbergh Wesleyan Methodist Church Record, (December, 1906), p. 3.

2. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 686, verse 4.

3. Ibid., No. 386, verse 1.

But it is the God above who ignites the spark and only death which makes "the sacrifice complete."[1] Isaac Watts, in showing how the sacred space is both God's house and house of prayer (reflecting the feelings of the Psalmist),[2] suggests that the way in which man finally discovers how to share God's heavenly happiness is by keeping unceasing company with Him on earth:

"Lord of the worlds above,
How pleasant and how fair
The dwellings of Thy love,
Thine earthly temples, are!
To Thine abode
My heart aspires,
With warm desires
To see my God.

"O happy souls that pray
Where God delights to hear!
O happy men that pay
Their constant service there!
They praise Thee still,
And happy they
Who love the way
To Zion's hill!"[3]

When first Methodist Preachers came to the upper Eden valley, it was to preach in the open-air or in a house. As time went by, the house became too small and alternative sacred space was required. Who, then, could enter it? Only those who had been fully persuaded by the message of the Preachers? Those who wanted to hear the message again before making a response? Or those who might hear it for the very first time? We must now consider how initiation into this isolated holy community took place, especially what now constitutes fitness for membership. For Methodists of the upper Eden were never so much in that unique Quaker

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1. Ibid., No. 386, verse 4.

2. As in Psalm 84., verses 1-2 and 4-5.

3. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 678, verses 1 and 2.

situation which Loukes describes: "As long as persecution was a reality, there was little need to be exact about membership: suffering was its own badge."[1] Nor were they in the situation which Hutchinson somewhat mechanically described in his missionary letter concerning Methodists in China in 1906: "In Methodism at home one hears next to nothing of knowledge, knowledge of our doctrines and of the way of salvation, but out here everything seems to turn on it. If a man wants to become a Christian he goes to our Catechist, who straightway teaches him the doctrine for six months or so, during which time the man ceases to worship idols, throws overboard his extra wives and conforms to our rules, then he is baptised and becomes a Member of the Church."[2]

Generally speaking, initiation into the upper Eden Methodist community has been both informal and formal, but always in public. The first has been by conversion, the second by 'Reception into Membership.' Sometimes there may have been one without the other. Sometimes the second has followed the first, sometimes it has preceded it. Conversion has been the public response to preaching: an admission by the convert that he has found deliverance from his sins. But sometimes this experience has followed the Service in which Membership has been officially recognized and that has not been inappropriate, since he who became a Member was actually desiring to be saved from his sins. Some who were converted never joined the Methodist Society, although they were always welcomed at the Chapel. Such adherents, however, were not able to hold important office in the local Methodist Society. As in wider Methodism,

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1. The Quaker Contribution, p. 59.

2. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Sedbergh Wesleyan Methodist Church Record, (December, 1906), p. 3.

those who became Members received a quarterly (now yearly) Membership ticket, a valued token: "Some members treasured their tickets as signs of unbroken precious fellowship until the close of life: and dying, asked that they might be interred with them."[1] This was not so much a way of arranging "provisions" to accompany them in their new life but an expression of their entire confidence that Jesus had been their personal Saviour and Friend: One who had always loved them and who would continue to do so, in and after death - their eternal sustenance. The privilege of becoming a Member of the Methodist Church in a particular, local Society is now no less glorious, as the recognized basic requirements show: "All those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and accept the obligation to serve Him in the life of the Church and the world are welcome as full members of the Methodist Church."[2] Conversion is implied, the new life requiring dedicated service. The Sacrament of Infant Baptism has introduced the child into the sacred community and the intended outcome is discipleship in the Membership of the Church. As we have seen, attendance at the Sunday School has not always led to Membership of the Church, though it is still seen as one way of giving that Christian instruction which is a vital part of preparation. The requirement of the Methodist Church says (and here there is no reference to the traditional Sunday School) that ". . . classes shall be generally established which shall directly provide for the religious instruction of young people. The object of these classes shall be to secure the decision of children for Christ their instruction and training in Christian Doctrine and ethics and the development in Christian experience

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1. George Eayrs,"Developments, Institutions, Helpers, Opposition" in W. J. Townsend, H. B. Workman and G. Eayrs, A New History of Methodism (London, 1909), I, 288.

2. The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church (London, 1981), p. 63.

and character. The Holy Scripture shall be the basis of instruction and these classes shall be met wherever possible weekly."[1] The moment of decision concerning actual Membership comes after a short course of teaching and challenge, in which privileges and duties are outlined: "It is", says the Methodist requirement, "the privilege and duty of Members of The Methodist Church to avail themselves of the two sacraments namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper. As membership of The Methodist Church also involves fellowship it is the duty of all Members of the Methodist Church to seek to cultivate this in every possible way."[2] Such fellowship will be with those who believe that "as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."[3] Death itself - His, as well as that of the believer - will become the highest and ultimate initiation; as Charles Wesley's Resurrection and Ascension hymn says:

> "Soar we now where Christ hath led,
> Following our exalted Head:
> Made like Him, like Him we rise;
> Ours the cross, the grave, the skies."[4]

All, then, who wish to enter sacred space may do so. They thus become sacred persons, for there they hear the way in which they should live and die - the way in which they will receive divine approval or disapproval. They are in the presence of the sacred, or the holy, and whatever response they make, it must take account of the fact that they have been in the environment of the deity, in sacred space, in sacred time and among His holy people. Thenceforth they must be consecrated

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1. Ibid., p. 64.
2. Ibid., p. 63.
3. 1 Corinthians 15, verse 22.
4. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 204, verse 4.

to one god or another. To this extent they have become sacred, like Uzzah. Oxen, carrying the Ark of the Lord on a new cart, stumbled and Uzzah steadied the Ark. But the Lord was angry because he touched the Ark and Uzzah dropped down dead.[1] He had involved himself with a sacred object and therefore he had to behave accordingly.

Sacred persons are persons in need. They are, as Joseph Hart says, "bruised and broken by the fall",[2] though "All the fitness He requireth is to feel (their) need of Him."[3] They are unconverted persons, though they have already been introduced to Holy Scripture in the Sunday School, have, perhaps, heard the Gospel preached many times or even, have come into contact with believers at daily work outside the Chapel. Such sacred persons are represented in the lives of the Seekers whom Rufus M. Jones described as:

> ". . . a sincere, earnest, spiritually-minded people, who have turned away from outward things and are endeavouring to discover the will of God and His divine leading by waiting in silence for the light to break forth. They are described as 'a seeking and religiously inclined people.' They appear to have had large meetings in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in Westmorland, and also in Bristol. Their meetings seem to have been held with long periods of silence and with opportunity for free, spontaneous, and unprepared messages, though there were evidently leaders in the local groups who often, probably usually, preached to them and interpreted to them the spiritual nature of Christianity as they conceived it."[4]

Kristensen, however, suggests that the sacred person must be aware of his sin and have a sense of guilt about it. Thus, he says, "the fact that a

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1. 2 Samuel 6, verses 6 and 7.

2. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 324, verse 3.

3. Ibid., No. 324, verse 4.

4. Rufus M. Jones, "Seekers", in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, James Hastings, ed. (Edinburgh, 1920) XI, 350.

consciousness of guilt exists presumes potential righteousness."[1] The guilt is towards God, not towards men and needs the intervention of divine activity. Martin Luther confirms this possibility:

> "Though great our sins and sore our wounds,
> And deep and dark our fall,
> His helping mercy hath no bounds,
> His love surpasseth all."[2]

Charles Wesley therefore urges a response from within this human conflict:

> "His love is mighty to compel:
> His conquering love consent to feel,
> Yield to His love's resistless power,
> And fight against your God no more."[3]

With his brother John, their constant message was:

> "Come, O my guilty brethren, come,
> Groaning beneath your load of sin!"[4]

Those who heard nineteenth-century Methodist preaching did, indeed, become sacred in the way in which we have described. Joseph Lamb was converted at Kirkby Stephen "when 14 or 15 years of age. The text that night was 'Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.' We think the awful lesson of those solemn words was never forgotten, and through all the days to come, Joseph Lamb feared man so little because he feared God so much."[5] The guilty person had

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1. The Meaning of Religion, p. 297.

2. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 359, verse 5.

3. Ibid., No. 323, verse 4.

4. Ibid., No. 361, verse 5. (The Wesleys' Conversion Hymn: Whitsuntide, 1738).

5. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Sedbergh Circuit Magazine (December, 1905), p. 1.

to realize that the divine requirements were obligatory rather than optional. Thus, words of Jesus, for example, would require a positive response; until this happened, the sacred word would continue to condemn the sacred person who had heard it read in the Congregation:

> "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."[1]

Such a person would leave the sacred space behind him and the eyes of the world (his world) would be upon him to observe the consequences of his confrontation with religion. Stephen Brunskill of Orton, for example, would therefore be more accurately referred to, by people living in neighbouring villages, as Stephen Brunskill of the Orton Methodist community.

The Methodist Deity is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, three Persons in one God, to whom the most-often repeated prayer is "Our Father who art in heaven", as Jesus required.[2] Though simply "contemplating the vault of heaven produces a religious experience in the primitive mind,"[3] the 'heaven' of the New Testament is not confined to a space, not even distant space. Nor is it confined to Nature's celestial majesty and any who suppose that living in the picturesque upper Eden valley may be an aid to communion with God should remember the words of George Congreve, who spent some time in a religious community on the beautiful island of Iona at the beginning of this century: "Separated from God, the beauty of nature shuts us in silently. We have no means of communication through it with that which is

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1. Matthew 5, verse 48.
2. Matthew 6, verse 9.
3. Patterns in Comparative Religion, p. 38.

beyond."[1] Though, as Eliade says, the "transcendence of God is directly revealed in the inaccessibility, infinity, eternity and creative power . . . of the sky" and the "whole nature of the sky is an inexhaustible hierophany",[2] the Deity of the Eden Methodists (who live under a gloriously unpolluted sky) is altogether revealed in Jesus, Son of the Father "who art in heaven." This Deity is revealed, therefore, quite differently from that which Moses encountered at the mountain of Horeb, "a sole god on the verge of becoming a universal one."[3] Charles Wesley describes Him as being more than just universal; He is a God who also suffers alongside suffering humanity:

> "God the invisible appears:
> God, the blest, the great I AM,
> Sojourns in this vale of tears,
> And Jesus is His name."[4]

God the Holy Spirit is the God who reassures the convert that he is in a new and intimate relationship with God the Father[5] and who enables him to practise love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control:[6] those virtues which combined in the life of God the Son.

One senses, therefore, the frustration (if not sheer amazement) as Robert Hutchinson begins his missionary labours in China, where ancient religion had worshipped sky, earth, clouds, winds, mountains, rivers and seas. Better acquainted with the words of Winton than with the

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1. George Congreve, Christian Progress with Other Papers and Addresses (London, 1913), p. 279.

2. Patterns in Comparative Religion, p. 40.

3. Paul Johnson, Civilizations of the Holy Land (London, 1979), p. 43.

4. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 134, verse 1.

5. Romans 8, verse 16.

6. Galations 5, verses 22-23.

colloquialisms of Canton, his early observations solemnly reflected the size of the task before him:

> "As we come up and down the rivers there are scores of temples on the banks . . . . There is the earth demon who would get out and ruin everything if they made holes in the earth, so that they are extremely loathe to do any mining, though there is enough mineral wealth to make them a rich nation . . . . There is a river dragon, so that it is very difficult to get a Chinaman to get into the water . . . ."[1]

Added to which, he suggests, there are many hierophanies. Yet, as Harold Turner says: "Surprisingly, primal religion - the religion that seems furthest from Christianity and has been most despised - is in fact closer than the rest."[2] China, of course, has been cross-fertilized by more than Eden Methodism since 1906. It has, in fact, in common with some other Asian and African countries, decided that the age of Christian missions is over and done with, though hopefully, not also the age of religious dialogue. Progress in this last, however, was not especially evident in two of three local newspaper letters, published in Penrith in 1981. On August 29th, an H. C. Little wrote:

> "You report that a Persian lady is in the Penrith district to spread the Bahai faith . . . . Although the tenets of this faith might appear to be promising, they are no better than some of the other fringe religions that seem to have taken seed in Britain."

On September 5th, Miss F. Kamtarin wrote:

> "I would say that it is neither a fringe religion nor a sect. It is an independent world-wide religion which has its own profound and beautiful scriptures. If the followers of Jesus had remained in the Holy Land, Christianity would not have spread to Europe. It did not matter then and it does not matter now, which race or nationality spread the message of God . . . .

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1. Kirkby Stephen, Appleby, and Sedbergh Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (December, 1906), p. 3.

2. Harold Turner, "Christianity and the Primal Religions" in The World's Religions, p. 164.

> Baha'is believe in the oneness of mankind, the fundamental oneness of religion . . . . As one comes to appreciate the significance of this revelation it obviously becomes an honour to share this gift with all people."

On September 12th, an Adrian Little, of Lazonby, near Penrith, wrote:

> "As a Christian who has read little of the Baha'is writings and spoken to no-one who practises its teachings . . . ."[1]

and proceeded, paragraph by paragraph, to close the door on much further discussion. Little by Little, one might say, the dialogue came to an end. In this century, generally, however, attitudes about deities and all things sacred are happily changing. P. R. McKenzie, writing in the Ghana Bulletin of Theology (June, 1970) showed that the tide was beginning to turn, even in the last century, when the Reverend Thomas B. Freeman (1809-1890), Wesleyan Minister in West Africa, "did consciously participate in significant inter-faith experiences."[2] Earlier in that century, however, when Wesleyan missionaries in India were frustrated with the British Government for encouraging Hinduism, the right atmosphere for dialogue between the religions was hardly being created. In an environment of political pressure and patronage, inter-faith discussion (which must arise out of mutual trust and love) must be delayed if it is not to be artificial or confused. Alfred Bourne, a Wesleyan Methodist Minister visiting Trivallore, some 200 miles south of Madras, in 1830, observed a Hindu festival where, for example, such political interference was obvious: "Among other things, he mentions that fifteen thousand persons, not excepting Christians, were forced from their own villages under British authority, and made to drag the

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Herald (August-September, 1981).

2. P. R. McKenzie, "Thomas Freeman's Attitude To Other Faiths", in Ghana Bulletin of Theology (Legon, June 1970).

cars in the idol-procession; and that at the same time, a Government professing Christianity expended £850 sterling annually in the maintenance of this single festival."[1]

Even within the Christian community there will always be room for dialogue and the fact that Pius IX reiterated in 1854 that those who do not in some way belong to the Catholic church cannot be saved,[2] reminds us of the great gulfs which have separated Christians. A defiant spirit counters such papal utterances and it was found in Methodism (and other denominations) for the simple reason that, as Wach says: "Weakness and strength, the desire for authority and for freedom, the wish to conform and the urge to dissent, a will to believe and an inclination to doubt, are found in each of us."[3] It is within the proclivity of Catholic and non-Catholic alike to see "all truth and all goodness and beauty in one community, usually his own, treating the rest unqualifiedly with contempt or neglect."[4]

Our sacred community, like any other, has (as we saw in our last chapter) fixed its boundaries. In Greek and Roman religion it was an accursed thing to move a boundary stone since boundaries marked territories which belonged to various gods.[5] Nor should the boundaries of our isolated community (marked, not on maps but in attitudes of mind)

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1. Elijah Hoole, "Memoir of the Rev. Alfred Bourne" in Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, 3rd Series (London, May 1838) XVII, 168

2. Joachim Wach, Types of Religious Experience Christian and Non-Christian (London, 1951), p. 190.

3. Ibid., p. 207.

4. Ibid., p. 207.

5. The Meaning of Religion, p. 436.

be changed. For our Methodism came into existence in response to what it believed was the activity of a holy, unchanging God. His requirements remain the same and, as with the Jews, the world of our holy people is "a universe in which men prosper by conforming to holiness and perish when they deviate from it."[1] As Moses said: "The Lord will send upon you curses, confusion, and frustration in all that you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly, on account of the evil of your doings, because you have forsaken me."[2] From time to time we have drawn comparisons with the isolated, sacred communities of the Waldensians and the Jews, yet there is an extent to which, while upper Eden Methodism is no more than religion, Waldensians and Jews belong more to a culture than simply to a religion. If we regard religion as the foundation of culture and not a by-product of it, it becomes possible to see how, in the case of the Jews and of the Waldensians, their religion permeated into every aspect of their community lives for many centuries, thus giving them a unique culture. Their emphases, impacts and boundaries reveal that they have become holy communities in which every area of life's activity testifies to the working of the impulse of their religion. Such development takes time, many centuries of faith and practice - which our Methodists have not yet experienced. The comparison is, perhaps, unfair. Centuries of persecution have shaped the lives of Jew and Waldensian, whereas the life of Eden Methodism is but 225 years, with far less persecution and far more tilted to one particular social concern. Overseas, generally, one speaks of the Methodist 'religion' but of the Jewish or Waldensian 'culture', Methodism beginning through missionary work but Jewish and

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1. Purity and Danger, p. 50.

2. Deuteronomy 28, verse 20.

Waldensian culture through emigration. In Uruguay, for example, to which a few Italian Waldensian families emigrated in 1856, there is now a city called Valdense. There, one is born rather than becomes a Waldensian. The comparison, however, of these Christians of European origin (once living in comparative isolation in the remote mountain valleys of northern Italy) with our Eden Methodists, begins to weaken, to say the least, when we learn that Uruguayan Waldensians are the largest Protestant Church, have membership-preparation through catechetical classes, are Calvinists rather than Arminians, are not evangelical, do not keep strict observance of the Sabbath and enjoy drinking their own homemade wine.[1]

James Obelkevich, with rural south Lincolnshire in mind, says: "The Wesleyans brought the temperance cause to more people than any other denomination, but did so less wholeheartedly and compellingly than the Primitive Methodists or the separate temperance organizations."[2] We wonder, therefore, if their zeal had been more fully committed to the Temperance movement, it might have become the foundation of a distinctive Methodist culture. We must remember, however, that the Temperance Societies were not strictly religious and they may not always have warmed to the Wesleyan presence. "Theoros", though sympathizing with the cause, made some pointed observations in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine in 1838:

> "Yet still these Societies, as at present constituted, are liable to very serious objections. They are associations composed of all shades of morality, and all varieties of religious opinion, from the pious and orthodox Christian down to the Sceptic, the Deist, and the Atheist, - a strange and unnatural combination

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1. This information was given to me, on 21.1.83, by the Reverend Diego Frisch, a Uruguayan Methodist Minister, now living with his wife (formerly Ruth Watson of Orton) in a Birmingham Circuit.

2. James Obelkevich, Religion and Rural Society: South Lindsey 1825-1875 (Oxford, 1976), p. 209.

> of persons, which it would be difficult to find recognised or sanctioned in the sacred Scriptures. Their public Meetings also are generally begun and concluded without prayer; and in the pledge which the members of the Society have signed for abstaining from the entire use of all intoxicating liquors, there is no recognition of God or of his grace to enable them to overcome their besetting sin. It is a thing proposed to be done without prayer, without God, without his word and ordinances, so far as the constitution of this Society extends."[1]

Yet the three branches of Methodism were all involved in fighting the drink problem to some degree and Methodist children, coming under the influence of the Temperance Societies in the day schools, were thus twice encouraged to refrain from alcohol.[2]

Our two photo-copies of Circuit Plans[3] point to the importance of sacred word and writing to the sacred community of the upper Eden. The frequent public interepretation of the Holy Bible by the Preacher, however, was not based upon what he himself thought about its message, but upon what God was compelling him to say through its sacred verses. The Scriptures, themselves, thus have a unique authority and even the printed edges of the old Plans have a decorative emphasis because they are the precious documents which announce the coming of God's chosen messengers. A Scripture text was often printed on the Plan, an aid to the devotional preparation necessary before Sunday Worship. On current, functional Plans, both decoration and texts are missing, lost in the modern age.

Isaac Bayliffe, Primitive Methodist Local Preacher born at Crosby

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1. Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, 3rd Series, (London, July 1838), p. 272.
2. See the Certificate of Merit, page G (following page 262).
3. Pages C and D (following pages 65 and 113 respectively).

Garrett in 1840, was converted in a revival at Warcop when he was 18. He died at Shap in 1913, after preaching some 2,860 times in 54 years.[1] At the age of 44, he thus felt a certain competency to put pertinent questions to John Parkin of Appleby who was to preach a Trial Sermon in his candidature for the Ministry in March, 1884. His letter to John contains significant references to the sacred word, how to declare it, and what is required in a Minister of that sacred word:

> "The general qualifications for the Ministry may I think be classed under the old-fashioned three heads. As the most important I will place first Grace, that is, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit the endowment of power from on High . . . . Then I will name, second, Natural Gifts. There are born Statesmen, Poets, Philosphers, yea Ploughmen and Mechanics and a true Minister is a born one, not a manufactured one . . . Then, thirdly, there are acquired attainments of which I will not speak for if you have the others you will have pluck and perseverance to gain the rest.
> "I would like to ask you how you choose your texts. Does fancy decide your choice? Or expediency? Because you think you can manage it. Or is it that you may have a message from God unto the people? You search the sacred pages with the feeling 'speak Lord for thy servant heareth' . . . ."[2]

One recalls, from sermons between 1944 and 1952, at Catherine Holme Methodist Chapel, that there was an emphasis on Old Testament preaching, especially from the eschatological content of the prophets Amos, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel. Like the Old Testament characters who inspired the Eden preaching, it seemed that the mid-twentieth-century preachers were, as Eliade describes their forerunners, "sincerely and passionately convinced of the genuineness of their vocation and the urgency of their message."[3] Again, as with the Old Testament prophets,

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1. Ella K Crossley, John B. Bayliffe (London, 1952), pp. 1-3.

2. Isaac Bayliffe's letter to John Parkin, dated 14.3.1884, in the possession of Mrs. D. Braithwaite, Kirkby Stephen, granddaughter of John Parkin.

3. Mircea Eliade, A History of Religious Ideas (London, 1979), I, 343.

the future they announced was in fact imminent: "The prophets never ceased to predict it, in order to change the present by bringing about an inner transformation of the faithful." But one is doubtful whether our Methodist preachers could ever have shared the Old Testament prophet's "passionate interest in contemporary politics."[1] Doubtful, too, whether adolescent recollections are sufficiently objective to be historically accurate, three Circuit Methodistswere invited to monitor sermon themes during ten weeks from December, 1982, to February, 1983. Hettie Alderson (at Orton), Trevor Capstick (at Kirkby Stephen) and Stephen Dent (at Bolton) were all able to report that preaching was no longer largely confined to the Old Testament, nor was it especially eschatalogical - even though some of their observations had taken place during Advent.

Local Preachers of the 1980's were also invited to comment on their preaching experience: their sharing of the sacred word. John Thornborrow, a Local Preacher from Tebay, who has been preaching for 55 years, said how members of the Congregations had sometimes said to him that "because they had heard the Word of God preached simply but sincerely, God had become more real to them." He recalled how he once "felt led to make an appeal in a few simple words, in the old-fashioned way. A young man came forward from the back of the Chapel and kneeling at the Communion rail, made a decision to give his life to Christ." He spoke, too, of someone who had been enabled to rise above her despairing condition with a "new hope and a new experience of God."[2] Harold Alderson, a Local Preacher from Orton, who became an accredited Preacher in 1946 (while farming at Catherine Holme), said that he had preached "Jesus and Him

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1. Ibid., I, 355.

2. In a letter to me, dated 1.2.1983.

crucified, raised from the dead and alive in our midst in this present day. It is then", he continued, "that people become aware of God's power and His presence and have a desire to seek His presence for themselves." Hearers make a response to this awareness by discovering "their own personal need of a Saviour . . . their need to repent of their sins and be forgiven." He recalled how a particular hearer, guided by the Holy Spirit, experienced forgiveness and was miraculously made whole.[1]

Both John Thornborrow and Harold Alderson have proclaimed the sacred word among their own people and the two hearers who made visible response to their preaching both became actively involved in their local Methodist community. The two Preachers believed themselves to be called, years ago, by God to deliver the sacred word and their lifelong compulsion rests on the authority of that sacred word. God, therefore, speaks through the Holy Scriptures, having already spoken through the Word made flesh in Christ. Through that Word, God has already created and through that Word made flesh, sinful man is re-created. John Thornborrow and Harold Alderson would, perhaps, not say so (nor would the rest of the Circuit Local Preachers), but, as Kristensen writes, "the word is not only a sound made in order to say something; it is animated by the personality of the speaker and weighted with his power."[2] He goes further and says: "A strong soul makes the spoken word strong"[3] but this can become a misleading idea if it is taken as far as the Danish bishop Grundtvig took it in the middle of the nineteenth century. For he contended that when God reveals Himself, He does it exclusively by means

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1. In a letter to me, dated 8.2.1983.

2. The Meaning of Religion, p. 202.

3. Ibid., p. 206.

of the spoken word:[1] by the oral tradition rather than by the Scriptures. Well may Scandinavian countries have benefited from Grundtvig's ideas, indeed, as Kristensen says: "A high spirited life with fresh impulses prevailed, and there was a sphere of animation by song, poetry and religious enthusiasm", with particular influence "among the farm population (which) led to a new zeal in many areas."[2] But if the authority and power of the Holy Scriptures had been more dominant, then "there was" would have been "there is still". Eden Methodism does not flourish when it seeks nourishment in nothing else but the manipulative outpouring of the preacher's own words. As Trevor Capstick, a young Local Preacher at Kirkby Stephen, said: "I try to ensure my preaching is BIBLE-BASED, trying to allow the Bible to speak for itself, for it is God's Word to men."[3] But this is, of course, in contrast with early Quaker thinking and much sectarian theology, which, in quest of freedom rather than authority, contended that the Bible is but the dead word and the Christ-Voice within is the living word.[4]

The Bible will, then, speak for itself while the preacher delivers its message or during sacred silence. "A humble reverence" says Warren and Taylor, "that never desires to manipulate or possess or use the other is always a feature of the face-to-face encounter of true presence, and therefore it flourishes in silence."[5] It was not always necessary

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1. Ibid., p. 226.
2. Ibid., pp. 226-227.
3. In a letter to me, dated 22.2.1983.
4. Werner Stark, The Sociology of Religion (London, 1967), II, 109.
5. M. A. C. Warren and John Taylor, "Presence", in Owen C. Thomas, ed., Attitudes Toward Other Religions (London, 1969), p. 231.

for the preacher to speak continuously, anymore than it was necessary for a Methodist to engage in unending conversation with those whose daily work brought them more closely together. What mattered was that the Congregation should have personal recognition. For "not to be seen, not to be recognized, to become invisible and anonymous, is the burden that subverts the integrity of all those whom the city swallows"[1] and the countryside camouflages. John Greenleaf Whittier must have been fearing for the vulnerable, anonymous Congregation when he asked:

> "Who fathoms the eternal thought?
> Who talks of scheme and plan?
> The Lord is God! He needeth not
> The poor device of man."[2]

Hugo Rahner, speaking of Greek Mystery religions, points out, indeed, that to tell the message to all and sundry, without due regard for the holiness of the message (let alone, for the hearers concerned) may be to treat it unworthily. A late Pythagorean writer was to say: "It is not fitting to expose that which has been achieved with so much pains to the first comer, nor to reveal the mysteries of the Eleusinian goddesses to the profane." Rahner comments: "True, the Christian message was public, 'preached from the rooftops', addressed to all men; yet . . . Christianity had to defend itself against the incursion of the masses . . . ."[3] We remember, however, that whatever the class of person with whom Charles Wesley came into contact, rather than be silent he wanted "a thousand tongues"[4] to proclaim his Redeemer. For

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1. Ibid., p. 230.

2. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 513, verse 1.

3. Hugo Rahner, "The Christian Mystery and the Pagan Mysteries", Joseph Campbell, ed., The Mysteries (Bollingen Series XXX, Pantheon Books, New York, 1955), p. 365.

4. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 1, verse 1.

very many or for very few, there came a time in the eighteenth century when sacred silence had to be broken, when "utterance had to be given."[1] Thus Benjamin Ingham was prompted to ride into the silence of a place like Butterwick to arrange preaching services. There, Edward and Agnes Dawson, in 1759, were hosts to an Ingham who had, at last, found that to keep silent too long could be a stumbling block.

'Being still' was perhaps the better description of that Moravian philosophy with which Ingham had been connected. It meant, for them, an abandonment of the use of the means of grace, particularly in the early stages of conversion experience. By 1740, the Moravian, Philip Henry Molther, had "recommended penitent inquirers to 'be still'; that is, not to search the Scriptures, not to pray, not to communicate, not to do good; for it was impossible to use means, without trusting in them. Wesley, on the other hand, recommended and enforced just the opposite. The contention among their partisans was fierce and furious."[2] Ingham ultimately severed connection with the Moravians and, presumably, with this strange doctrine, for there is no evidence in the Minutes of the Inghamites that this particular non-Methodist approach bedevilled his later work. Though this 'waiting on the Lord' may have had more than one outcome (silent meditation or extreme Antinomianism), its Quaker element may have appealed to Ingham's first hearers. The more profound sacred silence, however, was not so much that which could be arranged by man in his worship or devotion as that which already existed by God's creative power in both sky above and earth beneath.

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1. Ibid., No. 791, verse 5.

2. Luke Tyerman, The Oxford Methodists (London, 1873), p. 95.

Earlier in this chapter, when we began to look more closely at what religion means to upper Eden Methodists, we examined the sacred story in the Book of Genesis. Our understanding of this Creation story is, basically, a statement of the sacred world-view of the holy community we have been considering, namely, that man needs a Saviour who has borne "our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness."[1] Since sin is universal ("All have sinned",[2] says Paul) and almost primordial, the whole world is an area to which the message of salvation must be taken. A worldwide missionary impulse has thus become an essential feature of, and response to such a sacred world-view. Our life must be re-created by God's life: our love must be transformed by the love of Jesus. The content of this religious conviction was found in the beliefs of George Fox, before either Inghamites or Wesleyan Methodists reached the upper Eden, and what our Methodists came themselves to believe was a louder echo of what Fox had already proclaimed. R. Newton Flew summarized it thus: "The chief distinction of the Quaker doctrine of perfection was that its centre was in the Cross of Christ. There George Fox found the power for that unwearying love which is the perfect life. For him and for his friends the Atonement was no transaction, carried on outside a man, no paying of a debt, no enduring of a punishment which left his heart unchanged. The favourite sentence of Fox was: 'The Cross is the power of God.'"[3] The dying to sin and the living to righteousness thus entirely depend on

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1. 1 Peter 2, verse 24.

2. Romans 3, verse 23.

3. R. Newton Flew, The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology (O.U.P., London 1934), p. 291.

the extent to which the power of the unwearying love of Christ is allowed to transform the human condition. The process by which a grain of wheat dies and then lives again is altogether dependent on the extent to which re-creating power is allowed to penetrate the hard outer shell and revive that which cannot revive itself.

This process means that life on earth is transformed in practical ways: proclamation of the message itself is more dedicated, concerns for social righteousness are more zealous, and, above all, in the fellowship of believers, obedience to the will of God is paramount. Thus does the afterlife become a complete re-creation, paradise is regained, and God ensures that no serpent, no tree and no evil can ever contrive a second fall for man. Such afterlife is qualitatively different from life on earth (rather than a continuation) and, therefore, needs none of the "mugs and jugs" of earthenware domesticity. Readiness for such a life does not lie in material things, but, as local Methodist obituaries point out, in faith and hope. William Brogden, for example, Primitive Methodist in the Brough Branch of the Barnard Castle Circuit, died on March 27th, 1847 (at the age of 75). "During his last illness his confidence in God was unshaken and his peace and joy were unspeakable. He would often say 'I am going home'".[1] William Moister, Travelling Preacher, born at Sedbergh in 1808, died in 1891. His obituary says, interestingly, that on Sunday, August the ninth, 1891, "He peacefully entered into life."[2] Obelkevitch noticed three major themes in south Lincolnshire obituaries and these appear to be common to many parts and branches of Methodism, including the upper Eden: "triumph over

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1. S. Nettleton, in Primitive Methodist Magazine (London, 1847), Obituary No. 23, p. 575.

2. Minutes of the Carlisle Wesleyan District Meeting, 1892.

affliction and temptation, joyous entry into heaven, and sheer exaltation",[1] the outcome of individual response to the preaching of the message of new life. Charles Wesley's hymn,[2] summarizing their religious conviction, declares that any (or all) who have been "followers of the dying God" will return to the source of their being and partake of His nature. The sacrificed and ascended Christ will then provide that eternally-adequate nourishment which comes from sacred tree and living water:

"More than conquerors at last,
Here they find their trials o'er:
They have all their sufferings past,
Hunger now and thirst no more . . . .

"He that on the throne doth reign,
Them the Lamb shall always feed.
With the tree of life sustain,
To the living fountains lead.
He shall all their sorrows chase,
All their wants at once remove,
Wipe the tears from every face,
Fill up every soul with love."

Having considered the nature and meaning of the particular religion we have been studying, we come, now, to our conclusion. Based on the observations we have made, we attempt to assess what significant effects isolation may have on religious identity. To do this, we qualify the phenomenon of isolation, we quantify its problems, we query its predicament, but we hope in its two-fold potential.

Eden Methodism has sought to isolate itself from 'the world' because, as the New Testament shows, it is the arena of temptation, and friendship with it is "enmity with God."[3] It is full of the immoral, the greedy,

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1. Religion and Rural Society, p. 236.

2. The Methodist Hymn Book, No. 833, verses 3 and 4.

3. James 4, verse 4.

robbers and idolaters, though, as Paul points out, to avoid such altogether, one would have to leave the world completely.[1] James says that what really matters is that a follower of Jesus should keep himself unstained from the world,[2] a world which, as John says, though it was made through Him,[3] hates Jesus because He testifies of it that "its works are evil."[4] Our local Methodist emphases have shown that society is regarded as much a power for evil as for good and that its worldly pleasures can spoil lives and separate men from God. The Baptismal Prayer, offered towards the end of the Sacrament, said: "Grant that (he) may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph over the world, the flesh and the devil."[5] Methodist children, as well as their parents, therefore, had to 'take a stand' against 'the world' and this involved being aloof without being unconcerned, isolated but not oblivious.

Eden Methodism has also been isolated from the Church of England, not because it saw it as an obstacle to belief but simply because English Church history, during the last two or three centuries, has placed the two denominations in moulds from which it is difficult to escape. Now a denomination, once a sect, our holy community still reflects some sectarian elements, almost enabling it to be described as a sect within a denomination. Stark defines a sect as "a grouping in deviance from established religiosity",[6] rejecting the social

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1. 1 Corinthians 5, verse 10.
2. James 1, verse 27.
3. John 1, verse 10.
4. John 7, verse 7.
5. The Book of Offices (London, 1936), p. 102.
6. Werner Stark, The Sociology of Religion (London, 1967), II, 174.

environment in which it exists. A church (or denomination), on the other hand, accepts the social environment. Eden Methodism combines both, it would seem. In the early days, on the one hand, it rejected "the conception of salvation and/or the means of attaining it advanced by orthodox religion."[1] Doctrines were not elaborate, rituals were minimal[2] and, a little like the early Quakers, it "learned to withdraw from society in preparation for a more glorious future."[3] On the other hand (again, as with later Quakers), upper Eden Methodists have "increasingly recruited from those who were inborn"[4] Methodists. Now, as Stark suggests, the signs are more of a settling down "into abiding forms." By 'abiding form' he means "a contrast to dynamic life", with "routinization as a contrast to spontaneity. More specifically, there appear set hierarchies or at least bureaucracies which replace the original equality of the members and the purely charismatic quality of the original leaders; set creeds which replace the purely experiential nature of the early religiousness, so hostile to rational formulation; and set rites which replace the formlessness of the true sect by a formality such as was once rejected and abhorred."[5] But this process is by no means complete, even though our holy community belongs, connexionally, to a wider Methodism. Once a wholly conversionist sectarian movement, upper Eden Methodism has, like introversionist sects (for example, the Quakers in their early days) preserved its values by

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1. Bryan Wilson, Religious Sects, (World University Library, London 1970), p. 21.

2. Ibid., p. 64.

3. Ibid., p. 178.

4. Ibid., p. 178.

5. The Sociology of Religion, II, 306.

the fullest possible insulation from the surrounding society.[1] A part of this society is the Church of England, which, by its unwillingness to form a union with wider Methodism, has allowed our local Methodists to continue their separate, isolated existence. Bryan Wilson, along with many others who have seen the value of sectarian movements, writes: "Sects represent, in many ways, a community of love - whatever they may manifest to the world outside, and whatever hostility they may feel to be warranted in their relations with the wider society."[2] It is too easy to say, simply, that they are "enclosed and private gardens within which the holy few may be separate, preserving their sanctity inviolate from the world's contamination."[3]

Eden isolation also extends to the sphere of other religions, though, here, only in lack of informed understanding. Although, as we have seen, one or two missionaries (for example, Robert Hutchinson of Winton) have tried, sympathetically, to interpret primal religion, others have supposed that isolated, primitive man (for example, the Abaluyia of North Kavirondo in Kenya) is still but a child in the experience and expression of his beliefs. Jan de Vries notices the inconsistency of missionaries who "have often asserted that primitive man cannot think in a well-organized and discursive way" but who "can be amazed by the sagacity of the primitives in debate. They are never at a loss for words when it comes to a lawsuit or the palaver of a public meeting."[4] The Abaluyia of Kavirondo, indeed, have their own Creation story, their own

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1. Religious Sects, p. 240.

2. Ibid., p. 242.

3. Horton Davies, The English Free Churches (O.U.P., London 1963), p. 198.

4. Jan de Vries, The Study of Religion (New York, 1967), p. 171.

beliefs about the afterlife, their own interpretations of misfortune, their rituals and their notion of God as the supreme guiding and controlling principle in the world. They tend to feel that God is far-distant and they therefore turn "to lesser and more familiar spirits to help (them) with (their) daily concerns and worries",[1] yet they have a religious experience which requires examination. How much more, for example, do they attach importance to death and burial than we do! Though, on these occasions, there are expressions of religious belief with which the Christian would not easily find common ground, the Abaluyia[2] have a much closer relationship with the deceased than some mourners seem to have during bereavement here in England. We are not, however, questioning the missionary zeal of upper Eden Methodism but seek a proportionate desire to understand the religious ideas of those we may be seeking to persuade.

There are, within this phenomenon of isolation, problems of conflict. How strictly has the isolation to be maintained in order that the religious identity be preserved? For 'mixing' with 'the world' is always a sensitive area of choice and decision. Choosing a leader to replace one whose interest has lapsed or who has died, or who has emigrated, becomes an unenviable task if there are few to choose from. In the search for one who has comparable gifts and ability, moral and religious standards (above those of 'the world') have to be upheld. Yet, miraculously, over two and a quarter centuries, lay leadership, which has always been of significant importance for Methodism, has been

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1. Ninian Smart, The Religious Experience of Mankind (London and Glasgow, 1971), p. 61.

2. Gunter Wagner, The Bantu of North Kavirondo (O.U.P., London 1949), I, 447ff.

faithfully maintained and men and women have been appointed to office without any compromise in standards. So also have preachers been found to ensure that at least one Service took place each Sunday at every Methodist Society throughout the Circuit. Nor, in this, has there been compromise in preaching standards. On Wesley's basis for Class Leadership, especially if it avoided appointing a preacher to the office, there could hardly have been any problem at all: ". . . put the most insignificant person in each class to be the leader of it . . ."[1] The Society Steward, that is, the recognized Society leader, had, of course, ideally, to be "the leader (who) must, almost by definition, have more intensity than the led."[2] Even the society of the surrounding village seemed to want a man of integrity at the Chapel, someone who was "above the ordinary", a saint among weaker varieties.

In a small, isolated sect or Society, additional conflict could lie in the sometimes-unsteady process of moving from sect to denomination. Stark helps us to identify such a problem when he says that, in this development, "part of the group shows itself prepared to accept the cooling-down process as inevitable, if not indeed as desirable, but another part is appalled by it and resists it as much as it possibly can."[3] Here there is a tension and conflict which requires the strongest of leaders, especially since the Minister is not always there to lend his authority. In such conflict, what will ultimately become evident is that it is not possible to have an organization without organizers, even though organization can be a heavy burden on religious energy.

A further problem within an isolated holy community is at the point

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1. John Wesley, The Letters, VII, 166
2. The Sociology of Religion, II, 46.
3. Ibid., II, 287.

of initiation. Some parents request Baptism for their children but do not evidence true adherence themselves. This can mean that, slowly, the Methodist 'strain' within a Society can become weakened as also happens when Methodists marry outside the sacred community. Furthermore, between Baptism and marriage, adolescents find themselves in the company of non-Methodist society and they - more than most - sense the fact that their Methodist parents are meanwhile anxiously awaiting the day when they will make a conscious and abiding return to the fold, forever safe from the ways of 'the world'. Jews and Waldensians, let alone adherents of primal religion, do not have this anxiety since the boundaries of their sacred communities are those of the whole culture.

A further problem within an isolated holy community is how that community will remain isolated, with a distinct, though not necessarily superior religiosity. As we have seen, our Methodists have been like the Jews - whose religion, they believed, had always to be kept pure. This upset the Graeco-Roman world which noticed that the Jews rejected their images with implacable hostility, showing no respect for another man's gods. "The Israelites", writes Paul Johnson, "were guilty of the cardinal sin of shunning intercourse and, as Tacitus put it, of insulting what others held sacred: Profana illis omnia quae apud nos sacra (Theyhold profane everything that is sacred to us.)"[1] Upper Eden Methodists have to wrestle with the temptation which inclines to look upon those outside their community as inferior or impure. Strong beliefs have to be compassionate.

We have seen how our holy community could not dissociate itself from armed conflict in the two wars of this century, thereby denying

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1. Paul Johnson, Civilizations of the Holy Land (London, 1979), pp. 62-63.

Stark's contention that "sect movements are often at first violent and embrace non-violence only later, in a second phase",[1] an ideal which the Waldensians had also destroyed since they were non-violent in the first four centuries of their existence but occasionally chose violence in their second four centuries. As far as our holy Eden community was concerned, we had perhaps thought that they would have followed the example of the Quakers, but that was not to be so. At this point, Methodists broke out of their isolation and went right into 'the world.' It was an involvement which blurred their religious identity, though not, presumably, without heart-searching questions; almost all the eligible in the sacred community gave the same answers.

However religious isolation is imposed, it does not need to be the end of a developing self-expression. It is interesting to note, for example, how Ethiopian Christian art developed in an isolation of which painters seemed entirely unaware. In an introduction to a book of Ethiopian illuminated manuscripts, by Jules Leroy, we read: "This graphic style might be considered unique in the history of religious painting, but that VIIIth century Ireland, albeit more skilfully, evinced a similar feeling for ornamental design, accompanied by a similar tendency to reduce the human figure to mere decoration. Some of the Ethiopian miniatures, in the boldness with which they represent the human form, inevitably bring to mind the graphic fantasies of the Book of Kells or the Lindisfarne Gospels. It is a strange coincidence indeed that artists in countries at the opposite extremes of the Christian world without, to our knowledge, ever coming into contact should, at several centuries' interval, have solved their artistic problems in the

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1. The Sociology of Religion, II, 213.

same way, and chosen the same strokes for giving expression to their religious faith."[1] Since it was from this Ethiopian Christian isolation, imposed by Islam, that such treasures were produced, we wonder if self-imposed isolation, in terms of the religious, may bring about a stronger spirituality. If so, it would be argument and reward for keeping the boundaries of faith well fixed, providing that this did not prevent that necessary exposure to the world which mission always requires and of which first Eden Methodism was never afraid. Gerhard Rogner, a Methodist in the German Democratic Republic, reiterated this challenge, when he said: "By the Gospel the Church of Jesus Christ is challenged to an engagement in the world. His church has the promise to remain alive, only if it does not retire into a self-chosen 'ghetto'".[2]

In view, then, of these problems confronting an isolated holy community, what is the present predicament of such religion? We attempt to foresee steady development, certain decay, or, simply, a stagnation, in which, even though links with the wider organization may have been inspirational in the past, hope of growth is beyond the immediate horizon. If the latter is the case, such religion may be reaching that stage which old traditional African religion may be reaching, that is, declining in outward manifestations, "old clay temples vanishing into dust?"[3]

Links with the wider Methodist Church, as we have seen, have been strengthened through the Travelling Preachers and the missionary

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1. Jules Leroy, Ethiopia: Illuminated Manuscripts (New York Graphic Society, by arrangement with UNESCO, Paris 1961), p. 13.

2. The United Methodist Church in the German Democratic Republic, Gerhard Rogner, ed., (Published in the German Democratic Republic, without date, but since 1970), p. 9.

3. Geoffrey Parrinder, Religion in Africa (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 236.

movement. The fact that, in recent years, five sons of farmers have entered the Ministry has likewise helped to maintain the link between local Circuit and wider organization. This year Trevor Capstick, from Kirkby Stephen, is yet another who has offered himself as a candidate for the Ministry. These members of the isolated holy community have thus declared what the 1960 Waldensian Synod proclaimed and what Westmorland preaching has always confessed:

> "The Church cannot live for herself, for her longevity or her prosperity . . . . Her criterion is not that of success. The Church's calling, rather, is to serve as Christ Himself served, and to give her life that the world may live. She is the body by which today the Lord of the Church gives Himself to the world."[1]

Here there is a determination that isolation shall neither deteriorate into mere defence against an alien world nor be the forerunner of a stagnation which the world will barely notice. Yet if not five but five hundred Ministers came into being from the isolated community, this could not guarantee the life of the local holy group; or if the Methodist Conference could spare and pay five hundred Ministers to enter the local Methodist area, this would not necessarily stimulate lasting revival, for though sacred personnel may be imported or exported, the local religious community has, itself, to be receptive to the direct influence of the Deity. In Christian terms, this requires an unshakeable confidence that God can still create a new humanity, a missionary-mindedness which keeps the isolated community alive. If this last is missing, stagnation will sooner or later turn to decay. As Joachim Wach said: "Today, under the violent onslaught of powers hostile to religion everywhere, the recognition begins to spread that in no

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1. Giorgio Tourn, The Waldensians (Turin, 1980), p. 230.

religious community can there be room for the lukewarm."[1]

If, however, there is to be no continuing religious identity, it is best to ask pertinent questions before decease takes place. Those pointed questions which Loukes asks of the Quakers could also be put to other isolated holy communities before the final predicament is tasted:

> "What, after all, are you up to? Why and how did you come to move outside the established structure at the time when you split away? What were you saying then? And are you still saying the same thing? What have you learnt on the way, as you have tried to live by yourselves? Have you any warnings from other Christians on the problems of your special kind of isolation? And what have you found, by the way, that you are sure must be kept alive when the day finally comes that sees you march back into the Catholic Church, will all flags flying?"[2]

At the end of his most helpful little book, Loukes adds further questions, presumably confident that, after the long march, there will still be a Catholic Church to receive them: "What is it your concern to defend? Is it something that a united church must inevitably lose? And if so, is the 'something' of such deep importance that, to preserve it, you must continue in your isolation?"[3] The Quakers themselves continue as a separate group, with 21,289 members in Great Britain in 1964 and a world-total of 198,078, 31,555 being in East Africa and 123,276 in the United States of America.[4] With other isolated groups, of course, they may also consider the alternative question of renewal. For example, as Bede Griffiths says, ". . . the organization is necessary, but it has to be continually changed and adapted to changing circumstances in order to

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1. Joachim Wach, Types of Religious Experience Christian and Non-Christian (London, 1951), p. 227.

2. The Quaker Contribution, pp. 7-8.

3. Ibid., p. 117.

4. Ibid., p. 125.

serve its original purpose. This is what is required of every religion. It has continually to renew itself . . . . It has to find new ways of expressing its doctrine to make it meaningful, new forms of ritual which will embody the inner experience of the Spirit, new structures of organization which will respond to the need of humanity . . . . It has to discover again its original message, to define it in the light of the present day, to manifest its power to transform men's lives."[1] Griffiths, formerly Prior of Farnborough Abbey and now living in a Tamil Nadu ashram in south India, may have been able to conduct such an exercise of self-examination-for-renewal in an atmosphere where time is not important, but in the Western Churches, such discoveries take so long that often they are out-of-date before the appropriate committee publishes its findings.

If, then, isolated religion can be rescued from its predicament (and its most loyal supporters see this as a priority), what, we ask, finally, may we then hope from its consequent potential? We observe two possibilities, Rudolf Otto introducing us to the first. "The criterion of the value of a religion as religion", he says, "cannot ultimately be found in what it has done for culture . . . nor in any of its external features. It can only be found in what is the innermost essence of religion, the idea of holiness as such, and in the degree of perfection with which any given religion realizes this."[2] Our isolated, rural Methodists have, perhaps, reacted more profoundly to that which destroys the moral fibre of society than have those who live in large cities and who become more familiar with social degradation. Farmyard

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1. Bede Griffiths, Return To The Centre (Collins, Fount Paperbacks, 1978), pp. 117-118.

2. Rudolf Otto, The Idea Of The Holy (O.U.P., 1936), p. 177

manure has no smell to the farmer but he is much revolted by the worst aspects of crime and violence in large centres of population. He is concerned that cities seem careless about their religious need and his idea of holiness is, perhaps, more acute than that of the urban citizen. "We townsmen", says Otto, "feel disgust at much that is harmless to the countryman, but where the latter does feel it he is affected by the emotion more radically than we are; it is a profounder reaction in him."[1] This being so, the countryman sees redemption as a transforming religious experience and therefore believes that he, himself, must never return to that state from which he was rescued at such great cost. In marked contrast, says Otto, "there are serious-minded men of sincere moral endeavour who cannot understand what such a 'deliverance' or 'redemption' may be, and dismiss it with a shrug of the shoulders."[2] These relate righteousness to their neighbour rather than to the holy God and belong, of course, to both town and country. This possible potential, within an isolated holy community, to be more acutely aware of what holiness is, may also stem from the fact that rural environment (on which livelihood depends) has an order and permanence which, while revealing God's creative activity, is much in contrast with the disorder and uncertainties of city life.

Secondly, we ask if isolation has a potential for renewal. How do succeeding generations of Methodists, for example, sustain the religion of those who brought the first message more than two hundred years ago? What, exactly, would be involved in remote, rural renewal which Griffiths urges upon present religion? Would that it were as straightforward as Ninian Smart believed it could be for statistically less important faiths. "Because", he says, "these . . . are formed on

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1. Ibid., p. 127.

2. Ibid., p. 55.

the basis of fairly tight-knit communities . . . it is unlikely that they will disappear or diminish. It is difficult for men to forget their heritage. They will continue to provide an on-going variegation in the pattern of man's religious life."[1] Perhaps we need to look again at the spirit of Jewish religion to see a way in which its life and devotion have been renewed. Those Jews who have returned to Israel have found a welcome in that isolated holy community (bordered by Arab nations), a ready love which can only have had a renewing effect upon the religion of Israel. When Ben Gurion spoke before the top command of the Israeli army in 1950, his welcoming words were not spoken with reference to those who might have been backsliders from the Jewish faith, nor were they addressed to any particular class of Jews, but to all those who had become separated from their brethren and their rightful heritage:

> ". . . many of these immigrants come to us without elementary knowledge, with no trace of Jewish or human education. There are two reasons for this. First, they are the outgrowth of a period of destruction, a period of world wars, a period of material and spiritual deterioration caused by a shake-up in all human institutions. Second they come from dark, oppressed, and exploited countries . . . . The spiritual absorption of this immigration, moulding them, turning this human dust into a cultured nation, creative, independent, and with a vision - is not an easy job; it is as difficult as the economic absorption. A tremendous effort - moral and educational - is required, an effort accompanied by deep and pure love for these forlorn brethren, in order to endow them with the riches and values of the nation, in order to absorb them into our society, culture, language and accomplishments - not as do-gooders, but as brothers of fate."[2]

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1. Ninian Smart, The Religious Experience of Mankind (Fontana Library, 1971), p. 692.

2. D. Ben Gurion, Eternal Israel (Tel Aviv, 1964), p. 34.

In the Methodist context, of course, we are not thinking of a massive immigration but we are referring to those, living locally, who already have a bond with local Methodism and who, with their children, should be won back into the fold. These are those whom John Wesley would unashamedly call "human dust", those for whom Christ died. They do not belong to any particular elite, indeed they may be "outcasts of men" (Charles Wesley), but when they are welcomed back and lovingly received into the Methodist fellowship, they become a vital part of a renewed religion. In small, isolated societies, where Methodists and non-Methodists know each other well and where the practice of the Methodist religion might be as outgoing and warm as that of Israeli to Israeli, the expression of a "deep and pure love" would enable the holy community to keep that identity which John Wesley hoped for among his followers, in which holiness would be seen as "the life of God in the soul of man."[1]

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1. John Wesley, The Journal, V, 284.

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