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A reappraisal of Wesleyan Methodist mission in the first half of the nineteenth century, as viewed through the ministry of the Rev John Smithies (1802-1872)

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**A REAPPRAISAL OF WESLEYAN METHODIST MISSION IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY, AS VIEWED THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF
THE REV JOHN SMITHIES (1802–1872)**

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**This thesis is presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (History)**

October 2006

USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

The dissertation reappraises Wesleyan Methodist (WM) mission in the first half of the nineteenth century on the basis of its mission statement ('to reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land') and a primary WM characteristic, religious experience. The mission statement shapes the outline for the first main section of the dissertation (§3.0) utilising the three divisions of the statement only in reverse order, specifically, (1) the spread of scriptural holiness, (2) reform of the church and (3) reform of the land (nation). The second main section (§4.0) examines religious experience in the core areas, (1) personal spirituality, (2) conversion and sanctification, and (3) revival.

The prism through which WM is viewed within this two-fold interpretive framework is the ministry of Wesleyan missionary, Rev John Smithies (1802–1872). Although utilising an atypical methodology, that is, to review WM mission through the life of one missionary, the method has sound precedent. Looking at the movement through one of its relatively obscure missionaries as one might use a microscope, informs us of more than otherwise visible from gazing at a metanarrative. The microhistorical methodology used here has aimed to achieve the maxim, 'less is more', as proposed by Ginzburg and others. However, the dissertation takes a middle ground approach rather than an extreme microhistorical technique by comparing the small narratives of Smithies' writings with other WM sources so that a sharpened picture of its mission might be achieved.

The dissertation answers the primary question, what motivated WM missionaries? This answer is embraced within a new understanding that the pursuit of holiness influenced every missionary practice and endeavour and consequently supplies a more satisfactory insight into WM mission of this period. Although missionary work is often reviewed as one of conversion, to Methodists it was in reality the spread of holiness. Additional to the nature and pursuit of holiness were the religious experiences which fundamentally contributed to adherents' and missionaries' lives and ministries. The dissertation also shows that the usually underrated place attributed to religious experience in WM missionary endeavours formed the character of its spirituality. In that it was constitutive of its spirituality, religious experience contributed greatly to the WM holiness objective and was therefore inseparable from it. The pursuit of holiness, therefore, meant participation in religious experience. Conversely, participation in religious experience resulted in growth in holiness. Thus this thesis presents an important new understanding of WM in the nineteenth century, one which may be achieved through examining the nature, practice and outcome of its mission statement and associated religious experiences, as well as their complementarity.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution or higher education;
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or
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I also grant permission for the Library of Edith Cowan University to make duplicate copies of my thesis as required.

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There are many helpful and generous people to whom thanks is due. I will name just a few of these. The first is my grandmother Edith Allen (nee Smithies) who first told me stories of John and Hannah Smithies. My mother, whose grandfather Wesley Witt Smithies was born in the Swan River colony on 8 January 1842, related other anecdotes. She also typed many of Smithies' letters and provided some research data. To my grandmother and mother I express my gratitude and acknowledge their part in my abiding interest in history and mission.

Special thanks are also due to those who encouraged, made helpful suggestions, gave valuable time and guidance. My supervisors, Professors Peter Bedford and Ed Jaggard, are at the top of this list and it goes without saying, although I will say it, that their assistance has been invaluable and deeply appreciated. Also, the kindness of Pastors Burton Janes and David Newman from the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland and the generous assistance of Rev Sandra Beardsall are acknowledged with gratitude.

Finally, I would like to thank my daughter, Karen, for her proofreading efforts (so valued in such a large undertaking) as well as the support, encouragement and endless patience of my wife, Joyce, over the years of this research. To these named as well as many others who have extended a word of encouragement or advice, I say a sincere and heartfelt thank you.

TITLE: A REAPPRAISAL OF WESLEYAN METHODIST MISSION IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, AS VIEWED THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF THE REV JOHN SMITHIES (1802–1872).

Table of contents

ABBREVIATIONS.....3

BIBLIOGRAPHIC AND CITATION STYLE.....3

§1.0. INTRODUCTION4

 §1.1 PREAMBLE4

 §1.2 PLAN AND METHODOLOGY.....7

 §1.2.1 *Interpretive template and plan*7

 §1.2.2 *Toward ‘thick description’ and beyond metanarrative*9

 §1.3 REASONS FOR REAPPRAISAL.....15

 §1.4 DEFINITIONS22

§2.0 METHODIST MACROHISTORY29

 §2.1 INTRODUCTION.....29

 §2.2 RISE OF METHODISM.....29

 §2.2.1 *Preparation for Methodism*.....29

 §2.2.2 *The rise and spread of Methodism:*35

 §2.3 NINETEENTH CENTURY: THE MISSION AGE41

 §2.3.1 *Conditions ripe for mission*41

 §2.3.2 *Smithies’ early life and ministry overview*50

 §2.4 CONCLUSION70

§3.0 HOLINESS: THE PURPOSE OF WESLEYAN MISSION.....72

 §3.1 INTRODUCTION.....72

 §3.2 THE SPREAD OF SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS79

 §3.2.1 *Preamble*.....79

 §3.2.2 *Soul-saving*.....79

 §3.2.2.1 Comparisons88

 §3.2.3 *Sanctification*.....92

 §3.2.3.1 Comparisons97

 §3.2.4 *Care of souls*.....100

 §3.2.4.1 Comparisons110

 §3.2.5 *Summary*112

 §3.3 REFORM OF THE CHURCH114

 §3.3.1 *Preamble*.....114

 §3.3.2 *The Established Church*.....121

 §3.3.2.1 Comparisons133

 §3.3.3 *The Catholic Church*.....136

 §3.3.3.1 Comparisons141

 §3.3.4 *The Dissenters*143

 §3.3.4.1 Comparisons147

 §3.3.5 *Summary*149

 §3.4 REFORM OF THE LAND.....153

 §3.4.1 *Preamble*.....153

 §3.4.2 *Moral influence*155

 §3.4.2.1 Comparisons157

 §3.4.3 *Indigenous mission*158

 §3.4.3.1 Comparisons164

 §3.4.4 *Sabbath and day schools*.....167

 §3.4.4.1 Comparisons171

 §3.4.5 *Summary*172

 §3.5 CONCLUSION173

§4.0. RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE: THE SUPREME PASSION.....	179
§4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	179
§4.2 RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY.....	190
§4.2.1 <i>Comparisons</i>	196
§4.3 RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN CONVERSION AND INSTANT SANCTIFICATION.....	198
§4.3.1 <i>Comparisons</i>	206
§4.4 RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN REVIVALS.....	209
§4.4.1 <i>Comparisons</i>	220
§4.5 CONCLUSION:	225
§5.0. CONCLUSION.....	229
§5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	229
§5.2 FINDINGS.....	230
§5.2.1 <i>The spread of holiness</i>	232
§5.2.2 <i>Religious experience</i>	241
§5.3 FINALE.....	247
BIBLIOGRAPHY:	249
PRIMARY SOURCES:	249
SECONDARY SOURCES: BOOKS	250
SECONDARY SOURCES: JOURNAL ARTICLES.....	260
DISSERTATIONS	262
DICTIONARIES AND DICTIONARY ARTICLES.....	263
DVDs, HYMNS, INTERVIEWS, NOTES, PAPERS, PERIODICALS, TV PROGRAMS, AND	
WEB ARTICLES	263

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Abbreviations

CC	Catholic Church
LMS	London Missionary Society
WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society
WMM	Wesleyan Methodist Magazine
WM	Wesleyan Methodist or Wesleyan Methodism
MEC	Methodist Episcopal Church of North America
MM	Wesleyan Methodist Magazine of the MEC
EC	Established Church (Church of England or Anglican Church)
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

Bibliographic and citation style

The citation style used in the dissertation derives from *A Style Manual for the Presentation of Papers and Theses in Religion and Theology*, compiled by Lawrence D. McIntosh, published by the Centre for Information Studies in association with ANZTLA and the Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools, 1994. This manual is based on *The Chicago Manual of Style* (14th Edition), Chicago University Press, 1993.

§1.0. Introduction

§1.1 Preamble

On Tuesday 17 November 1829, a young Wesleyan Methodist missionary, Rev John Smithies (1802–1872), traipsed through the snow along the wooded Trinity Bay coastline in Newfoundland between the towns of New Perlican and Heart’s Delight (about 20 kilometres apart), unaware that he would soon face a near–death incident.¹ Leaving New Perlican at seven in the morning, he walked to Heart’s Content, after which he set out for Heart’s Desire, foolishly with no guide.² Following tracks in the snow, he reached his destination by midday where he was invited into a local home. After resting a few minutes, he suggested that he might pray with the family. The husband consented but requested first the presence of his neighbours. After their arrival, the missionary preached to an attentive little congregation from the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31). Smithies then set out for Heart’s Delight, about five kilometres distant. He continued still with no guide, an unwise practice given the undeveloped terrain and harsh climate. The pathway he determined to take was now obscured by snowfalls. Turning back to retrace his tracks, he found even these were covered. Smithies wandered about totally lost. It was close to sundown and he had no provisions or means by which to make a fire. Driven by the dreadful possibility of perishing in full health and strength (not an uncommon occurrence in early nineteenth century Newfoundland), he fell to his knees and prayed. On doing this, Smithies heard faintly the sound of waves on the nearby coast. Heading in the direction of the sound, though travelling was arduous, he reached the shoreline and safety. He arrived finally at Heart’s Delight at 7.00 p.m., in time to conduct the service.

This episode from Smithies’ earliest missionary work raises the principal question of this dissertation, namely, what was the motivation of Wesleyan Methodist (WM) mission in the first half of the nineteenth century?³ This question may appear at first to have a simple solution, viz. the quest to make Methodist converts or to christianise

¹ SOAS, University of London, WMMS North American Correspondence, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 7 December 1829; extract from letter also quoted in *The Wesleyan–Methodist Magazine for 1830* (London: Mason, 1830), 281–282.

² New Perlican, Heart’s Content, Heart’s Desire and Heart’s Delight are outports (small fishing villages), on the coastline of Trinity Bay, Newfoundland.

³ The expression ‘first half’ of the nineteenth century in this dissertation refers to the period predominantly from 1813 to 1855, but occasionally includes years prior to and after these dates.

indigenous inhabitants of newly conquered territories of the empire.⁴ However, this dissertation will reappraise Methodist mission to provide new perspective to these more common and simplistic interpretations.

Wesleyan missions flourished at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries under the leadership of Dr Thomas Coke (1747–1814) especially with the launching of his plan in March 1786 for ‘*the support of Missionaries in the Highlands and adjacent Islands of Scotland, the isles of Jersey, Guernsey and Newfoundland, the West Indies, and the provinces of Nova Scotia and Quebec*’.⁵ However, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS) officially evolved nearly thirty years later from a district meeting at Leeds in 1813. The work of Wesleyan missions prior to 1813 included Newfoundland, which received its first (though unofficial) missionary, Rev Laurence Coughlan (d. c.1784), in 1765, North America, whose first bishop, Rev Francis Asbury (1745–1816), was sent there in 1771, and the West Indies mission, which was well established by 1786.⁶ Missionaries prior to the establishment of the WMMS, therefore, were under the direction of Thomas Coke rather than an official missionary society. The focus of this study, however, is on the next generation of missionaries, most of whom were sent after 1813 under the auspices of the WMMS.

These zealous second-generation missionaries made an impact on Christianity and society generally.⁷ Wesleyan missionaries of this period may properly be called pioneer missionaries due to their inaugural appointments by the fledgling WMMS, but just as accurately second-generation Methodists because of their distance from Wesley. There were leaders at the time who had been his contemporaries, such as Adam Clarke

⁴ See Sheila Barley, ‘Out of Step: The Failure of the Early Protestant Missions’, in *European–Aboriginal Relations in Western Australian History*, eds. Bob Reece and Charles Thomas Stannage, Studies in Western Australian History 8 (Nedlands, WA: University of Western Australia Press, 1984), 26–32; Hilary M. Carey, *Believing in Australia* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1996), 53ff; William McNair and Hilary Rumley, *Pioneer Aboriginal Mission: The Work of Wesleyan Missionary John Smithies in the Swan River Colony 1840–1855* (Nedlands, WA: University of Western Australia Press, 1981), 146.

⁵ N. Allen Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, eds. Rupert E. Davies, et al., (London: Epworth, 1983), iii: 1–116; From this list of places, it is obvious that Wesleyan missions did not focus on indigenous ‘heathen’ peoples, but on ‘heathen’ of all ethnicities.

⁶ Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; Keith J. Hardman, *Seasons of Refreshing: Evangelism and Revivals in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994), 118–123; Henry W. Williams, *The Constitution and Polity of Wesleyan Methodism: being a Digest of its Laws and Institutions brought down to the Conference of 1880* (London: Wesleyan Conference Centre, 1880), 117; W. J. Townsend, et al. (eds.), *A New History of Methodism* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), ii: 37, 289–290.

⁷ See Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 27–46.

(c.1762–1832), and George Morley (1772–1843) who is credited with founding the WMMS. Morley also figured in Smithies' first appointment.⁸ However, most missionaries after 1813 were young men and like Smithies were protégés of first generation Methodists. Due to their missionary efforts, Wesleyan numbers grew more after the death of Wesley in 1791 than during his lifetime; adherents in North America, for example, far exceeded Britain's numerical growth in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁹ Even more, Wesleyans left a legacy in Christianity that spawned the holiness movements of the late nineteenth century out of which emerged one of the largest twentieth century blocs in Christendom, Pentecostalism.¹⁰ There was also a significant social heritage that David Martin addresses in his *Tongues of Fire*, but this lies beyond the scope of the dissertation.¹¹

The nature of the WM legacy included two crucial features, the first of which was an emphasis on holiness, and the second was the prominence of religious experience. These features are the focus of the dissertation. Accordingly, our thesis is that an important new understanding of WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century may be achieved through examining the nature and outcome of its mission statement, 'to spread scriptural holiness over the land', associated religious experiences, and their relationship to each other. It was the missionary enterprise in the first part of the nineteenth century in particular that laid the foundation of Methodism's holiness, religious experience and social heritage. The spread and impact of Wesleyan mission, therefore, signifies a movement of considerable social and religious significance that warrants renewed attention and reappraisal, not the least of which concerns the reason behind its success which, it will be asserted, lay within the WM objective of holiness and associated religious experiences.

⁸ SOAS, Minutes of the WMMS, Home and general, 1798–1837, Box 1, 4 June 1828.

⁹ Martin Marty, 'North America', in *The Oxford History of Christianity*, ed. John McManners (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 396–436; Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 27–46; Henry D. Rack, 'Wesleyan Methodism 1849–1902', in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, eds. Rupert E. Davies, et al. (London: Epworth, 1983), iii: 119–181; Nathan Bangs, *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church on CD ROM* (Albany, OR: Ages, 1997), iv: 330.

¹⁰ See David W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody* (Leicester, UK: IVP, 2005), 188–200; Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995); Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 27–46; Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 120–122, 144–152.

¹¹ Martin, *Tongues of Fire*.

§1.2 Plan and methodology

§1.2.1 Interpretive template and plan

The first part of the interpretive framework within which we will investigate Methodist mission is the WM mission statement, principally its focus on holiness (§3.0). The mission statement, derived from founder John Wesley (1703–1791) and reaffirmed at the British WM conferences of 1820 and 1835, was ‘to spread scriptural holiness through the land’.¹² Wesley’s original statement was, ‘to reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land’.¹³ The statement as reaffirmed at the conferences just noted, mentioned only the ‘spread of scriptural holiness through the land’. It can be safely accepted, however, that the latter expression included the former since reform of the land was part of spreading scriptural holiness. Reform of the land included ‘moral influence’ such as promoting Sabbath observance; the spread of holiness referred more particularly to conversion and sanctification, in both of which Methodists were engaged in the nineteenth century. Reform of the church, though, took on a different nature since Methodism was part of the Established Church (EC) when Wesley made his statement. It was the EC in particular that he sought to reform. Methodism separated from the Church in the nineteenth century making this option less likely.¹⁴ Nevertheless, since it unabashedly saw itself as a contemporary renewal of New Testament (NT) Christianity, WM expectation of church reform across all denominations was palpable.¹⁵ We can accept, then, that the reaffirmation of the original Wesleyan mission statement by the 1820 and 1835 WM conferences included the entire sentiments of Wesley, albeit with some modification relating to church reform. This minor alteration will be further explored at the appropriate point in the dissertation through Smithies’ ministry and suitable comparisons (§3.3.2).

The WM mission statement raises subsidiary questions to the primary question of missionary motivation, such as how did its more usually featured goal of soul saving,

¹² See Norman P. Goldhawk, ‘The Methodist People in the Early Victorian Age: Spirituality and Worship’, in *History of the Methodist Church*, I: 113–142; For the ‘original purpose of Methodism’, see Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 117, 313 and Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 28.

¹³ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd edn. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998), viii: 299.

¹⁴ It can be argued that WM separated from the EC when Wesley registered his Deed of Declaration and ordained preachers in 1784. The Plan of Pacification passed at conference in 1795 might be considered a more legitimate point to fix separation, but in reality there was no fixed point; separation was gradual so that well into the first half of the nineteenth century, WM members still attended EC services and received sacraments there. See John Walsh, ‘Methodism at the End of the Eighteenth Century’, in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, eds. Rupert E. Davies, et al. (London: Epworth, 1965): i: 277–315.

¹⁵ E.g., *WMM for 1835*, 515.

among other objectives, fit into the construct of spreading holiness? In addition, if the mission statement held such primacy in WM, and if Methodism established a significant holiness legacy during the first half of the nineteenth century, what were the features of its missionary activity that precipitated such a legacy? These and similar questions are crucial, because any study that attempts to gain a satisfactory understanding of WM missionary activity and its motivation for this period must take fully into account its own strongly reaffirmed mission statement.

The second part of our interpretive framework concerns the nature and place of religious experience, especially its relationship to Wesleyan mission (§4.0).¹⁶ It is readily acknowledged, at times with embarrassment, that compared with other Protestant denominations Methodism was an ‘emotional’ movement; that is, it expected and participated in religious experiences of a mystical nature.¹⁷ However, the proposition that religious experience provided an underlying motivation for Methodist mission needs to be seriously re-examined. Accordingly, answers to two further questions are essential. The first question is what function did religious experience have in missionaries’ life and work? The second asks what connection was there between religious experience and WM missionaries’ motivation and objectives? It is true that Methodist experientialism is often reported, and at times in connection with success among people such as the Amerindians.¹⁸ However, just as Beardsall states that studies on Newfoundland Methodism have ‘remained largely at the level of factual historical accounts’ and descriptions of the work, so religious experience as a primary feature and impetus of Wesleyan mission awaits investigation.¹⁹ Consequently, it is proposed here that if in Smithies’ and his contemporaries’ writings, religious experience is found to be a crucial factor in WM mission, then it may be taken that such experiences were indispensable to their *modus operandi* and therefore a major impetus in their mission.²⁰

¹⁶ See Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 27–30.

¹⁷ See Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Watts and Wesley to Martineau, 1690–1900*, rev. edn. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1961, 1962, 1996), iv: 216, 244–264; Maldwyn Edwards, ‘John Wesley’, in *History of the Methodist Church*, i: 37–79, where religious experience is passed over in a paragraph on pp. 53–54; Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 513–548.

¹⁸ E.g., Neil Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism* (Montreal: McGill–Queen’s University Press, 1996), 148.

¹⁹ Sandra Beardsall, ‘Fastened to the Rock: Practicing Methodism in Outport Newfoundland’ (unpublished paper adapted from D.Th. dissertation, St Andrews College, Saskatoon, 2002), intro.

²⁰ E.g., Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 127ff, 148ff; and Abel Stevens, *The History of the Religious Movement of the Eighteenth Century Called Methodism, Considered in its Different Denominational Forms and its Relations to British and American Protestantism*, (New York: Methodist Book Concern, c.1840), iii: 499.

The importance of this twofold interpretive template is obvious. Since WM had an unambiguous mission statement that originated from its founder and was reaffirmed from time to time, and since religious experiences were prevalent and notable in its activities, it is reasonable, even compelling that WM mission should be viewed through this framework. To re-evaluate WM missionary practices, therefore, an assessment is essential that takes full account of its mission statement and associated religious experiences.

To accomplish our reappraisal, the plan of the dissertation is first to provide historical background for eighteenth and nineteenth century Methodism (§2.0), then to reassess its mission in the first half of the nineteenth century (§3.0 – §4.0). This assessment will be undertaken first through examining the WM mission statement in its three major aspects, namely, the spread of holiness (§3.2), reform of the church (§3.3), and reform of the land (§3.4), and second, through analysing religious experience in Methodists' personal spirituality (§4.2), conversion and sanctification (§4.3), and revivals (§4.4). A conclusion will discuss the findings of the dissertation (§5.0). As mentioned earlier, the thesis of the dissertation is that a significant new understanding of WM mission in the period studied, including that which answers questions regarding missionary objectives and motivation, may be achieved by examining the nature, practice and outcome of its mission statement and associated religious experiences as well as their complementarity.

§1.2.2 Toward 'thick description' and beyond metanarrative

Part of our methodology used to re-evaluate WM mission includes treating WM as a culture. Geertz defines a culture as 'a web of significance', spun by leaders and constituents in which adherents convey and find meaning.²¹ Methodism, therefore, was a culture even though the movement existed within many different cultures. Where it found itself in other cultural settings of the empire, Methodism was identifiable and had significance to its adherents as a holistic way of living, but it also added meaning to a host culture such as outport Newfoundlanders.²² Our task therefore is to interpret the culture's practices and their meanings, mainly as they relate to Methodist missionary activity in the first half of the 1800s. To do this, the dissertation will include but not accentuate interpretation that Geertz describes as 'thin description'. 'Thin description', he says (citing Gilbert Ryle), is among other things a documentation of activities and

²¹ Clifford Geertz, 'Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture', in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 3–30.

²² So Beardsall, 'Fastened to the Rock', intro.

behaviours from which may be produced a codified system by which a particular culture may be identified and compared; whereas ‘thick description’ provides an interpretation, a meaning behind the habits, practices and activities. To discover meaning is ‘thick description’, it is ‘an elaborate venture in’, according to Geertz. It is not the detailed description, he says, of a young boy in a given locality and time winking his eye in a certain manner, but what is meant by his winking, and what other meanings can be extrapolated when the same activity occurs at other times. Geertz also says that to get at a meaningful interpretation, one that is not thinly described, practitioners require, among other tools, a microscope. Broad ‘interpretations and more abstract analyses’, he says, come ‘from the direction of exceedingly extended acquaintances with extremely small matters’. Carlo Ginzburg concurs with Geertz saying that ‘by narrowing the scope of our inquiry, we hope to understand more’.²³ He says that ‘this cognitive approach has been compared to the dilation and constriction of a camera lens’, a method that might be called ‘microhistory, but labels are ultimately irrelevant’.

In light of Geertz’s and Ginzburg’s comments, therefore, Smithies’ ministry provides a suitable sample by which to identify and discover the meaning of Wesleyan practices, for three reasons. The first is the extent of his travels, the second is his Newfoundland ministry, and the third is the reason for his motivation. To enlarge on the first reason, the extent of Smithies’ travels in both hemispheres presents a cross section of Wesleyan missions during the period of his ministry, due to the differences in the fields of mission and the sheer distance of his travels, both so typical of the far-reaching impact of the mission. For example, Smithies travelled vast distances to isolated places; the most isolated being the Swan River colony, Western Australia. Initially, he journeyed to Newfoundland where he spent nearly 10 years (1828–1837), then after two years and four months at home in Bakewell, Derbyshire (1837–1840), he set out for the Swan River (1840) where he spent nearly fifteen years before relocating to Van Diemen’s Land (1855), his ministry and life ending there in 1872.

A second reason that Smithies is an ideal example for investigating WM mission is that his Newfoundland ministry placed him in a primitive Methodist setting providing a view of the church closest to its eighteenth century origins. This setting, incidentally, affords a fair comparison between first and second generation Methodism and its missionary endeavours. Our source for this segment of his ministry will be largely from

²³ Carlo Ginzburg, ‘Latitude, Slaves, and the Bible: An Experiment in Microhistory’, in *Critical Inquiry* 31, 3 (Spring 2005): 665–683.

Smithies' letters to the WMMS, which are almost unused to date.²⁴ Other Newfoundland Methodist histories²⁵ have not drawn substantially from these letters and only briefly refer to Smithies at all so that the material in this dissertation will provide additional insight into Newfoundland Methodism, and to an extent, Methodist mission as a whole in this period. Therefore, Smithies' multi-faceted ministry, including the generational overlap from first to second generation Methodism in Newfoundland, provides important understanding useful to our study.

Smithies' motivation is the third reason for investigating his missionary work. He was not a leading light in Methodism, although a district secretary in Newfoundland, and apart from Western Australia where he was the first WM missionary, he was not well known or particularly successful. These are good reasons to study his ministry because motivations such as success, charisma, position, or popularity, would have provided little inspiration for him. Also, the longevity of his ministry, coupled with his reported piety in contrast to his modest achievements, supply additional reasons for examining Smithies' motivation.²⁶ In other words, what was the sustaining power of Smithies' ministry, if not success? An answer to this question is important because it contributes to the answer of our primary question regarding WM missionary motivation. This third reason in addition to the other two, therefore, provides legitimate grounds to use Smithies' ministry as a lens into WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In view of our intention to study one person in pursuit of a reappraisal of Wesleyan mission, a legitimate question to ask is whether or not such a narrow examination can or will provide the desired outcome as Geertz and Ginzburg suggest, and are there precedents for this methodology? Conversely, questions have been asked about the legitimacy of traditional studies conducted on a large scale and whether or not these

²⁴ See scant references in McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 32, 162; William Wilson, *Newfoundland and its Missionaries* (Cambridge, MA: Dakin and Metcalf, 1866), 331–332; Naboth Winsor, *Building on a Firm Foundation: A History of Methodism in Newfoundland 1825–1855*. (NL: n.p., n.d.), ii: 78–79; David, G. Pitt, *Windows of Agates: The Life and Times of Gower Street Church, St John's, Newfoundland 1815–1990*, rev. edn. (St. John's, NL: Jespersen, 1990), 64, 66, 73; The only substantial reference to one of Smithies' letters was cited earlier in the report of him being lost in the snow (*WMM for 1830*, 281–282).

²⁵ E.g., T. Watson Smith, *History of the Methodist Church within the Territories Embraced in the Late Conference of Eastern British America, including, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and Bermuda*. (Halifax, NS: Huestis, 1890), ii: 179, 420; and D. W. Johnson, *History of Methodism in Eastern British America* (Sackville, NB: Tribune, c.1925), 258.

²⁶ E.g., Smith, *Methodist Church*, ii: 179; SOAS, Box 99, John Pickavant to WMMS, 1 September 1837.

provide the depth and detail required for an adequate interpretation.²⁷ Do we examine macrohistories and metanarratives alone or do we examine local histories and individual lives more exclusively, and how should the micro relate to the macro, if at all?

Magnússon challenges us to question whether or not a microscopic study should even try to support a macrohistory such as WM mission.²⁸ In the interests of *Alltagsgeschichte*, or ‘every day life history’, the ministry of Smithies could or should stand by itself as a significant insight into the life of a Wesleyan missionary, according to Magnússon’s proposition. Similarly, Jean-François Lyotard maintains that there are no metanarratives, only small, ‘local narratives’.²⁹ Magnússon also provides a compelling argument for the need ‘to make ordinary people the subject of history on their own terms’, and that if historians desire to ‘attain a new understanding of the past, then the one way open is to look beyond the metanarratives, since they impose such strong limitations on all possibilities to understand the past as a forum for knowledge’. Magnússon laments the fact that in his book, *Education, Love and Grief*, where he researched the ‘personal sources ... of two brothers’, and ‘became increasingly aware of very powerful links between death and the desire for education’, he ‘passed over the opportunity to use the material’ adequately due to being ‘straitjacketed and distorted by frames of reference’ so that he ‘let the metanarrative ... dictate the outcome’.³⁰ This, he said was due to being shaped by ‘former frames of reference’ that ‘he had learned long before’. A case, then, can be made for an interpretive model that precludes overarching narratives, thus justifying the study of one person’s life and work. The ministry of John Smithies, therefore, can stand alone as the subject of historical research. However compelling and attractive that proposition may be, it is not the line taken in this dissertation.

The method chosen here is more congruent with Robert D. Brown who acknowledges with self-confessed ‘evangelical’ zeal that microhistory has sought to recover ‘the

²⁷ E.g., Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, ‘The Singularisation of History: Social History and Microhistory within the Postmodern State of Knowledge’, *Journal of Social History* 36, 3 (Spring 2003): 701–735; Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), xxiii–xxiv; Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 44–46. Richard D. Brown, ‘Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge’, in *Journal of the Early Republic* 23, 1 (Spring 2003): 1–20.

²⁸ Magnússon, ‘The Singularisation of History’, 701–735.

²⁹ Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, xxiii–xxiv; Grenz, *Postmodernism*, 44–46.

³⁰ Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, *Menntun, dst og sorg: Einsogurannsökn ' islensku sveitasamfelagi 19. og 20. aldar*, Sagnfrwdirannsöknir 13 (Reykjavík, 1997). This was the first purposive work of microhistorical research conducted in Iceland and became the forerunner of much other subsequent research.

experiences of a hitherto obscure people and to give them voice'.³¹ However, he disagrees that metanarratives and macrohistories should be severed from microhistory, in spite of his 'conversion' to the method. Nevertheless, he does agree that 'the broad generalisations of grand narratives and syntheses cannot make powerful truth claims' when their foundations are incongruent. Brown argues, therefore, for the connection of 'the micro to the macro scale of historical events without overreaching'. Referring to one microhistorical study, he says that this 'peephole reveals a wide expanse of culture and society, not a tiny chamber'. In the same tenor, Jill Lepore says that although a people or person studied may have made little historical impact, they may be used as an interpretive tool for clarifying a significant 'historical question'.³² In her 'propositions' for microhistory, she states that 'however singular a person's life may be, the value of it lies in how it serves as an allegory for the culture as a whole'. Consequently, for this dissertation, a study of Smithies' ministry provides just such an 'allegory' for the Methodist missionary culture as a whole (macrohistory) for the period under review. For example, a major part of Wesleyan culture was its frequent revivals. Smithies provides a suitable and detailed sample of this in his Swan River ministry. In interpreting this aspect of his work, valuable light will be provided regarding Wesleyan revivals generally, especially when compared with revivals in its other mission stations. In addition, Lepore says that microhistory, in addressing itself to 'solving small mysteries about a person's life' is utilising 'a means to exploring the culture'. In this regard, as we will show, a mystery placed under the 'microscope' in Smithies' ministry was an alteration in his ministry practice regarding the distinctive Wesleyan doctrine of instant sanctification, a crucial aspect of the mission statement to spread scriptural holiness through the land. What appeared at first glance to be a personal mystery, turned out to be an aberration in the movement.

It is expected, therefore, that in this dissertation a sharper focus on Smithies' ministry in the manner that Brown and Lepore suggest will present a perspective not previously viewed. This new understanding will make available a fresh interpretation and therefore an additional contribution to our wider knowledge of Wesleyan mission in the first half of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, with a desire to avoid the same omissions as Magnússon, but also to ensure congruence with WM macrohistory, a methodology within a microhistorical construct will be utilised to study WM mission in the first half

³¹ Brown, 'Microhistory': 1–20.

³² Jill Lepore, 'Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography', *The Journal of American History*, 88, 1 (June 2001): 129–144.

of the nineteenth century, specifically through Smithies' ministry. Our study, therefore, will bring to light aspects of Wesleyan mission that an overview of the 'culture' alone might obscure. Religious experience is one such facet that has been clouded. To illustrate, a broad brush view of Wesleyan mission will turn up its experiential nature, and in regard to revivals has attracted concentrated attention in a number of studies.³³ However, the multifaceted nature and fruit of religious experiences as well as the manner in which these experiences permeated every aspect of WM spirituality and mission remains obscure. Consequently, it is only when placing religious experience under the 'microscope' of individual missionary practice such as Smithies' that we will be able to detect the manner in which day to day religious experiences occupied and influenced WM missionary life. Through a microhistorical methodology, therefore, we will have a sharpened image of a hitherto blurry and under-interpreted, 'thinly described' aspect.

The microscopic subject, however, must not be interpreted as the whole but demonstrate depth and detail of the whole, which could not otherwise be known. As Brown says, there is no guarantee that 'the microcosm is a miniature version of the macrocosm'.³⁴ 'The methodological problem', says Geertz, 'which the microscopic' device 'presents is both real and critical'. 'It is to be resolved – or, anyway, decently kept at bay –', he continues, 'by realising that social actions are comments on more than themselves'. This will avoid the 'Jonesville-is-America ... fallacy', he says. With this in view, as key points emerge, comparisons will be made with other missionaries and fields of WM as well as contemporary Methodist literature. A case in point is Smithies' extensive interaction with the Established Church (EC) in the Swan River colony. For example, when compared with other WM literature, was his reform objective in relation to that church reflective of WM globally? Conversely, statements in WM literature about reforming the church require interpretation through individual missionaries like Smithies to obtain a more detailed understanding. Such comparisons will not only reveal the macrohistory, but also enhance it. Consequently, for the above reasons, a microhistorical study of Smithies' ministry is expected to provide new understanding regarding the WM mission statement and religious experience.

³³ E.g., Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 513–548; Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: from the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 394–445.

³⁴ Brown, 'Microhistory': 1–20.

§1.3 Reasons for reappraisal

There are at least three reasons that when taken together provide a persuasive case for undertaking a reappraisal of WM mission. The first is the interest in contemporary Pentecostalism.³⁵ What may be viewed as a rebirth of nineteenth century WM, Pentecostalism has revived enquiry into holiness and religious experience that is relevant to the study of Wesleyan mission. Second, important studies on WM mission in the nineteenth century rarely situate it within the construct of holiness and religious experience nor deal sufficiently with these primary features. Even more importantly (and surprisingly), there is negligible discussion on the relation between holiness and religious experience in WM mission. In addition, most texts on WM mission are old, or if recent, are localised studies.³⁶ Third, it is only when the practices of a movement like WM are interpreted from the perspective of its own understanding, in this case within the framework of the WM mission statement and religious experience, that the true nature of a given movement is uncovered (see §1.2.1). This third reason, together with the other two just noted, will now be expanded.

Pentecostalism of the twentieth century not only parallels the rapid growth of WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century, but also was established on the same two features, namely, holiness and religious experience.³⁷ To illustrate the vigorous nature of its expansion, Methodism had spread to the far corners of the earth by the second half of the nineteenth century in the same manner as had Pentecostalism by the last half of the twentieth. According to Townsend et al., Methodism could claim 800,000 adherents (including 136,000 members) in both Britain and America at the time of Wesley's death in 1791.³⁸ One hundred and twenty years later in its 'four great divisions', made up of many districts including the islands of the Pacific, there were '30,000,000 hearers in its pews', with 'every ninth person in Australia' being Methodist. In a similar example of rapid growth there were 217,000,000 Pentecostals in 1995 (commenced in 1906) with many in other denominations claiming a Pentecostal experience (called Charismatics), according to David Barrett.³⁹

³⁵ E.g., Cox, *Fire from Heaven*; Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*; Martin, *Tongues of Fire*; Vinson Synan, *The Holiness–Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*, 2nd edn. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997); Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal* (Nashville, TN: Nelson, 2001).

³⁶ E.g., Old: G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, 5 vols. (London: Epworth, 1921); Recent: Semple, *Canadian Methodism*.

³⁷ Synan, *Holiness–Pentecostal Tradition*, 1–43, 87–106, 129–142.

³⁸ Townsend, et al. *New History*, i: 280–281, 368–369.

³⁹ Synan, *Holiness–Pentecostal Tradition*, 286–287.

Regarding the affinity between the two movements, Martin says,

There is no great difficulty in establishing the genetic connection of Methodism and Pentecostalism. However embarrassing it may be to some Methodists, for whom the ‘enthusiastic’ past of Methodism is emotionally and historically remote, the early stages of Methodism in England and America closely resemble the present condition of Pentecostalism.⁴⁰

Martin’s comment here refers to the religious experience quotient in WM. Pentecostal religious experiences are intrinsic to so called Spirit–baptism including *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues) and personal spirituality in the same way as they were integral to instant sanctification and personal spirituality in WM.⁴¹ Martin also notes the holiness connection. ‘The strongest of all the links’, he says, ‘between Pentecostalism and Methodism is the search after holiness’.⁴² The link is not only evidenced by the theological connection as traced by Dayton, but in the fact that the holiness movement of the nineteenth century, from which twentieth century Pentecostalism derived, was spawned by Methodism.⁴³ Consequently, the movement has been identified as Methodism continued or revived.⁴⁴

In view of the fact that Pentecostalism is a direct descendent of WM and stands on the same two primary pillars, and since writers on Pentecostalism have sourced the movement’s WM roots for its teaching on holiness and religious experience, a new door of understanding has been opened into the nature of nineteenth century WM that for some time has been obscured.⁴⁵ For example, as noted below in our second reason for reappraisal, substantial studies on WM relating to its prime mission period (1800–1850), tend to either overlook or minimize the likely motivating force of holiness and religious experience. A modernist rationalist viewpoint is a probable reason why books written on WM from the early twentieth century tended to avoid religious experience, consequently masking the true character of Methodism. However, the contemporary interest in Pentecostalism, as well as the sway of postmodernism (a subversive influence in relation to modernist rationalism), has produced fresh enquiry into spiritual experiences.⁴⁶ The new openness is evidenced by a raft of scholarly material now

⁴⁰ Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 28.

⁴¹ See Synan, *Holiness–Pentecostal Tradition*, 1–67; 87–106.

⁴² Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 28.

⁴³ Regarding WM roots of Pentecostalism, see Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), 35–60; Synan, *Holiness–Pentecostal Tradition*, 1–43; Synan, *Century of the Holy Spirit*, 15–37.

⁴⁴ So Synan, *Holiness–Pentecostal Tradition*, 1ff; see also Beardsall, ‘Fastened to the Rock’.

⁴⁵ E.g., Dayton, *Pentecostalism*, 35–60; Synan, *Holiness–Pentecostal Tradition*, 1–43.

⁴⁶ E.g., Grenz, *Postmodernism*, 169–171; Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *20th Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1992), 258–264, 314.

available on experiences and theologies of the Spirit from within the academy which had been largely silent on these subjects. To illustrate, Harvey Cox, Yves Congar, Kilian McDonnell, George T. Montague, James D. G. Dunn, Gordon D. Fee, and Jürgen Moltmann, as well as other scholars, write irenically regarding experiences of the Spirit and Pentecostalism.⁴⁷ This was unthinkable fifty years ago. Consequently, due to a new spirit of enquiry coupled with extensive sourcing of nineteenth century Methodism, that which had been unclear about WM from this period can now be brought to light without embarrassment. This new enthusiasm provides impetus for our reappraisal of WM through examining Smithies' ministry and comparing his experiences with WM contemporaries.

An example of how one early twentieth century writer handled holiness and religious experience is found in a history of Welsh WM during the period 1800–1858, the same period reviewed in this dissertation. This author correctly identified the two primary features of WM saying that ‘the aim of Methodism in both countries [England and Wales] was the same: to re–awaken the Church, and stimulate it to a keener sense of its duty and a greater awareness of its responsibility, “to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land”’.⁴⁸ Author A. H. Williams also said that ‘the essence of Methodism was the same everywhere: an appeal to experience as against the intellect, a rousing of the emotions, and an emphasis on the supreme value of a changed heart rather than a sound head.’ Williams, therefore, is an example of an author who in his excellent work identified the two primary features of WM, but seldom notes these again other than several examples inevitable in reporting Welsh WM history.⁴⁹

The point made here is that former assessments of WM mission, at least those from approximately the First World War until about 1960 have been reluctant to address religious experience and to some extent the subject of holiness, deeming these subjects as WM of that period dealt with them to be outside the bounds of reasonableness and respectability. However, by way of contrast, and to reinforce the point just made, an

⁴⁷ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*; Yves M. J. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit: The Experience of the Spirit* (New York: Seabury, 1983); James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (London: SCM, 1970); Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994); Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries*, 2nd rev. edn. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1994); Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (London: SCM, 1992).

⁴⁸ A. H. Williams, *Welsh Wesleyan Methodism 1800–1858: Its Origins, Growth and Successions* (Bangor, Gwynedd: Lyfrfa'r Methodistiaid, 1935), 37.

⁴⁹ Other examples of texts from that era are James Colwell, (ed.), *A Century in the Pacific* (Sydney: Beale, 1914); Johnson, *Methodism*.

earlier history of WM by Townsend et al. (1909) contains a comprehensive discussion on religious experience, mysticism and holiness.⁵⁰ The discussion on mysticism and religious experience was aided in part by the earlier release (1902) of William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* which is cited several times by the authors.⁵¹ However, just twelve years later when the extensive history of the WMMS was published (1921), apart from regular (though usually restrained) reports on revivals, the pages are largely silent on religious experience. In fact, there is a warning about movements based on emotion, which says among other things that religion 'which is based on sentiment is unstable'.⁵² The comment is true, of course, but unfortunately no discussion ensues about the value of religious experience (which includes sentiment) when religion is based soundly on biblical and traditional foundations. Consequently, in light of current interest in Pentecostalism and its direct links to Methodism as well as new enquiry into its holiness–religious experience features, evoked by Pentecostalism, a fresh assessment of WM mission of the first half of the nineteenth century is both possible and essential.

Our second reason for reappraisal builds on the first in that major works on Methodism and WM mission generally do not assess the missionary movement through its mission statement and related religious experience, even though they may note or give some space to both topics. To illustrate, what is termed the 'four volume official authoritative history of British Methodism' and is regarded as the standard text on WM, includes among other relevant studies three that are pertinent to the subject matter of this dissertation.⁵³ The first is a major and lengthy article on 'Methodist Missions' by N. Allen Birtwhistle, a second, 'Methodist Religion 1791–1849', by J. M. Turner, and a third by Norman P. Goldhawk, called 'The Methodist People in the Early Victorian Age: Spirituality and Worship'.⁵⁴ In the first, Birtwhistle scarcely mentions the two features of holiness and religious experience and is vague about religious experience when he does mention it.⁵⁵ For example, he says that the great missionary movement of the nineteenth century 'owed much to the warmth ... of the Wesleys and their followers'. In a possible, but blurry reference to the spread of holiness, he says that the

⁵⁰ Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 53–62.

⁵¹ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: a Study in Human Nature* (London: Penguin, 1985).

⁵² Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iv: 146.

⁵³ Davies, *Methodist Church*.

⁵⁴ Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116; Goldhawk, 'Methodist People', ii: 113–142; J. M. Turner, 'Methodist Religion 1791–1849', in *History of the Methodist Church*, ii: 97–112.

⁵⁵ Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116 (p. 2).

‘missionary impulse sprung from the belief that the conversion of the world was an important part of the purpose of God’.⁵⁶ One earlier statement is clear, but stands alone in his whole article. Here, Birtwhistle says, ‘The primary concern [of nineteenth century Methodism] was still salvation and holiness attained by the grace of God’. Notwithstanding the value of his comments, Birtwhistle does not go beyond these remarks. In the second study, Goldhawk provides the best coverage of holiness and religious experience but separates holiness from ‘the missionary impulse’ and ‘church order and discipline’ rather than integrate them as did WM mission in this period and in the manner shown in this dissertation through Smithies’ writings. In addition, although he highlights religious experience as a key feature of Methodism, Goldhawk is muted in his explanation of it and does not integrate it with piety (holiness) or mission work. Turner, in the third article, mentions revivals but tends to regard them as aberrations, although important, and reviews alternative reasons for them such as those put forward by Hobsbawm and Thompson.⁵⁷ He also cites holiness as an important feature of Methodism at the time but does not give it nearly the same pre-eminence as WM period writings. Consequently, in what may be termed three substantial and representative articles covering the period and subject of this dissertation, there is not found a satisfying coverage or interpretation of WM mission in the reviewed period in respect to its mission statement and religious experience. A reappraisal, therefore, is warranted.

Other articles from the same volumes not as pertinent to WM mission do refer to both holiness and religious experience explicitly, but still fall short of the anticipated attention due to these topics given their primacy.⁵⁸ As another example, the five volume major history on the WMMS pays meagre attention to holiness and religious experience even though it places high value on holiness in its introduction.⁵⁹ To illustrate, Findlay and Holdsworth say, ‘Along with the doctrine of Universal Redemption, that of Entire Sanctification formed the vital tenet of the Wesleyan teaching’.⁶⁰ They say that ‘from the year 1760 onwards, this aspect of evangelical faith became prominent, and the pursuit of holiness engrossed the minds of Preachers, and people’ and then connecting

⁵⁶ Ibid., (p. 43).

⁵⁷ Turner, ‘Methodist Religion’, ii: 97–112 (p.107), referring to Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964) and E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, rev. edn. (London: Penguin, 1968), 385ff.

⁵⁸ E.g., Edwards, ‘John Wesley’, i: 37–79; John Lawson, ‘The People called Methodists: “Our Discipline”’, in *History of the Methodist Church*, i: 183–209. Rupert E. Davies, ‘The People called Methodists: “Our Doctrines”’, in *History of the Methodist Church*, i: 147–179.

⁵⁹ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*.

⁶⁰ Ibid., i: 32–34.

this to mission they say that the ‘passion for holiness ... was the prelude to the outburst of missionary enthusiasm in the next generation’. These comments resonate with those presented in this dissertation as viewed through Smithies’ ministry, but holiness is not further addressed in the Findlay and Holdsworth text with the significance indicated by their quote. For example, if holiness was engrossing people’s minds and if the ‘passion for holiness’ was the groundwork for WM missionary enterprise in the first half of the nineteenth century, then one would expect the holiness motif to recur frequently showing the relationship to missionary practice. However, this does not take place and together with religious experience, other than occurrences in revivals, the text is silent. The Findlay and Holdsworth history is mentioned here because, although not recent, it has not been superseded due to its breadth in that that it gives detailed and ‘official’ coverage of worldwide WM mission.

Another more recent work is *The Victorian Church*. In his section on Methodism, Owen Chadwick does not treat the issues of holiness or religious experience at all, except a paragraph or two on revivals that have only cursory use for discerning Methodist character and consequently for this dissertation.⁶¹ Since Chadwick does not deem it necessary to highlight holiness–religious experience features in defining WM in this period, a satisfactory interpretation of WM cannot be gleaned from this work. Another example is the important study of Hilary Rumley and William McNair which concerns Smithies’ work in the Swan River colony.⁶² This admirable text does not highlight the WM mission statement and though it reports extensively on the revival of 1844, does not otherwise highlight religious experience, nor does it attempt to interpret the experiences of indigenous people when reporting the revival. This book is typical of various studies on WM mission, as just noted in several examples, in that the mission statement of WM and religious experiences are either overlooked or not given requisite primacy.

Other histories, including the recent ones, tend to be local or national. An example of a recent study is *The History of Canadian Methodism* by Neil Semple.⁶³ His study does give holiness and religious experience greater prominence, but is restricted to Canada and does not assess Methodism there within the framework of its mission statement and religious experience. Nevertheless he does say that, ‘private Methodist religious practice based on an emotional, experiential vision, underlay and paralleled all church work,

⁶¹ Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 2nd edn. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1970), i: 369ff.

⁶² McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission* (See pp. 97–102 for revival report).

⁶³ Semple, *Canadian Methodism*.

helped to define who a Methodist was, and supplied the essential foundation for Methodist social religion in the country.⁶⁴ However, Semple does not pursue this sentiment to the extent that his statement suggests. That is, if religious experiences ‘underlay ... church work’ then it might be expected that his study would relentlessly trace the manner in which it did so. His chapter on indigenous mission is a case in point, where neither religious experience nor holiness receive due attention.⁶⁵ In addition, in Semple’s statement that ‘they believed the drive for emotional spirituality, social morality, and the expansion of missions around the world was well established’, are found allusions to the two features of holiness and religious experience.⁶⁶ Although his study commendably raises the issue of holiness to its justified status, Semple treats it under headings such as social and moral order and does not tend to view experiences such as conversion in the light of the pursuit of holiness as did eighteenth and nineteenth century WM.⁶⁷ Consequently, the work of Canadian Methodism is not viewed within a holiness–religious experience framework even though Semple gives these features prominence that might have embarrassed earlier writers.

Our third reason for reappraisal, already alluded to in §1.2.2, is that Methodist practice and belief may only be interpreted satisfactorily from within its own worldview. Therefore, unless WM is evaluated through its mission statement and associated religious experiences, a range of variant, even though valuable conclusions may be reached that fail to take account of the *raison d’être* of WM as it defines itself. Defining a people or movement from the outside is always tenuous. The so-called ‘participant observer’ or ‘actor’s eye’ perspective is the most desirable.⁶⁸ In the case of this dissertation, we will view WM through one of its own missionaries, John Smithies, albeit using appropriate comparisons with other missionaries and adherents. It should be reemphasised that the aim of the dissertation is to interpret WM practices from its own viewpoint, as far as that is possible, in a similar manner to which other cultural practices are observed and interpreted. Defining a practice is one thing (‘thin description’), as Geertz points out, adequately interpreting practice is another (‘thick description’).⁶⁹ It is highly inappropriate, after all, if a study on a given culture assesses practice

⁶⁴ Ibid., 70.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 148–178.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 148.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 53–70, 127–147, 211–238, 334–362.

⁶⁸ Geertz, ‘Thick Description’, 3–30; Paul G. Hiebert, *Cultural Anthropology*, 2nd edn. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1983), 5–7; Stephen A. Grunlan and Marvin K. Mayers, *Cultural Anthropology: A Christian Perspective*, 2nd edn. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988), 233–250.

⁶⁹ Geertz, ‘Thick Description’, 3–30.

ethnocentrically or anachronistically as would be the case when limited by rationalistic modernism in that holiness is interpreted merely as imperialism or Victorianism, for example, and religious experiences dismissed as medieval Catholic magic or psychological dysfunction.⁷⁰ Since it would be unthinkable to study an indigenous culture from any other perspective than its own, this dissertation will take the position of interpreting, as far as possible, WM practices from its own perceived meaning. This third reason combines with the previous two, namely, current interest in Pentecostalism and nominal treatment in relevant texts on WM, in proposing why a case for reappraisal is substantial.

Finally, it is surprising that both fundamental features of WM, namely, to spread scriptural holiness through the land and religious experience, have received limited attention in important studies on WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century. Further to the neglect of these two WM features is the crucial issue of their association with each other making a study of their interconnectedness obligatory. It is this deficit in our knowledge that we will attempt to remedy by presenting a reappraisal within such a framework, and one that will attempt to answer questions regarding missionary objectives and motivation. Consequently, we expect that the dissertation will provide an innovative understanding of WM mission in the reviewed period through investigating the nature, practice and outcome of its mission statement and associated religious experiences, as well as their complementarity.

§1.4 Definitions

Before we move on to the next chapter (§2.0) to review the historical background of WM and its mission, it is important to provide definitions of essential words and terms used in the dissertation to enable the reader an easier pathway through the material. We begin with *conversion*.

Conversion is a word used frequently in the dissertation and needs to be located within its Wesleyan setting.⁷¹ Methodists believed that conversion was usually a distinct, instantaneous experience, variously referred to as ‘salvation of the soul’, ‘receiving the peace of sins forgiven’, ‘made happy’, as well as other descriptive terms that will be

⁷⁰ E.g., Thompson, *English Working Class*, 385ff; Charles Goodwin, ‘The Religion of Feeling: Wesleyan Catholicism’, *History Today* 46, 10 (October 1996): 44–49; Carol Holly, “‘Grand and Sweet Methodist Hymns’: Spiritual Transformation and Imperialistic Vision in Harriet Prescott Spofford’s ‘Circumstance’”, *Legacy*, Amherst, 18, 2 (Oct 31, 2002): 153ff.

⁷¹ David Lowes Watson, ‘Methodist Spirituality’, in *Exploring Christian Spirituality: an Ecumenical Reader*, ed. Kenneth J. Collins (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000), 172–213; Kenneth Collins, *John Wesley: a Theological Journey* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003), 129–153.

explained at appropriate places in the dissertation.⁷² Conversion was accompanied by the ‘witness of the Spirit’, a religious experience (defined below) that was a particular hallmark of Methodism, although it derived from earlier Puritans. ‘Witness of the Spirit’ was a ‘divinely’ given assurance of conversion resulting in a sense of forgiveness, peace and relief from guilt, as revealed in John Wesley’s conversion at Aldersgate.⁷³ Demonstrating that Methodism was renowned for its belief and participation in sudden, experiential conversion, William James noted in his classic, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, that ‘the more usual sects of Protestantism have no such store by instantaneous conversion’.⁷⁴

Dissenter, another commonly used word in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and therefore important for this dissertation, refers to those Protestant Christians outside the EC, such as Congregationalists, Baptists and Presbyterians.⁷⁵ The EC, of course, was the Church of England, severed from Rome by Henry VIII (1491–1547) who became its new head when he and parliament passed a series of Acts (1532–6).⁷⁶ However, under Elizabeth I (1533–1603) the EC became ‘officially Protestant’ through the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity. But even further, through the Subscription Act (1571), ministers were obliged to subscribe to the Thirty Nine Article of Religion, a Protestant credo. Methodists were, strictly speaking, not a denomination initially and, according to Chadwick, ‘were not sure whether they were Dissenters’.⁷⁷ However, Methodists inevitably fell into the dissenting category, although reluctantly at first.

Evangelical is an important word used in the dissertation but notoriously difficult to define. A contemporary definition, and one that Hart (citing George Marsden) says ‘has become de rigueur among religion scholars’, states that Evangelicals are conservative Protestant Christians who believe in the ‘final authority of Scripture’, in ‘the real, historical character of God’s saving work recorded in Scripture’, in ‘eternal salvation only through personal trust in Christ’, in the ‘importance of evangelism and missions’ and in ‘the importance of a spiritually transformed life’.⁷⁸ In the eighteenth century,

⁷² E.g., SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844; Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 59.

⁷³ Watson, ‘Methodist Spirituality’, 172–213; Collins, *John Wesley*, 129–153; Wesley, *Works*, i: 90–91.

⁷⁴ James, *Varieties*, 226–227.

⁷⁵ Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 370–439.

⁷⁶ John Guy, ‘The Tudor Age (1485–1603)’, in *The Oxford History of Britain*, ed. Kenneth O. Morgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 257–326.

⁷⁷ Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 370.

⁷⁸ D. G. Hart, *Deconstructing Evangelicalism: Conservative Protestantism in the Age of Billy Graham* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2004), 48–49.

John Wesley used the word *evangelical* to refer to reformation doctrines, particularly salvation through faith alone (*sola fide*). Those in the EC who believed in salvation through faith alone, he called ‘evangelical brethren’.⁷⁹ Therefore, to establish a working definition for the dissertation, *Evangelical* will refer to Protestants who believed that conversion to Christianity through faith alone was a necessity for every person and who therefore practiced vigorous evangelism including missionary endeavours to this end. In addition, Evangelical Christians usually believed in revival as a powerful means toward the goal of conversion. Evangelicals of the nineteenth century also subscribed to the points of the Hart’s definition noted above, but so did most Protestants.⁸⁰

Holiness, also called sanctification (see below), is a fundamental word in the dissertation, and is customarily thought of (in relation to nineteenth century Evangelicals) as a high standard of moral behaviour (sometimes labelled ‘Victorianism’) including strict marital fidelity, sexual abstinence except within marriage, temperance or total abstinence from alcohol, and strict observance of the Sabbath (Sunday). This observance meant regular church attendance and detachment from amusements so that the day would be dedicated to the worship of God and contemplation of spiritual matters.⁸¹ In addition, holiness meant simple dress and avoidance of fashion, wholesome speech free from profanity or coarseness, and generally speaking, a morally upright life. However, holiness meant far more to Wesley and the Methodists that followed him. To Wesley, it was first of all ‘freedom from outward sin’ (at conversion) followed by steady progress in freedom from all inward sin toward the goal of entire sanctification.⁸² However, above everything else, holiness meant loving God and neighbour with all the heart.⁸³ While the former were certainly components of holiness, and are the features most held up to scrutiny (and ridicule), the real essence of holiness for Methodists was sincere love.⁸⁴ Viewing the motive and essence of Methodists’ practice of holiness presents a perspective that must be taken into account when assessing the movement. This view is of crucial importance for the

⁷⁹ See Wesley, *Works*, v: 6, 10–11, 28, for examples of conversion and ‘evangelical’.

⁸⁰ See Hart, *Evangelicalism*, 19–32; Alec R. Vidler, *The Church in an Age of Revoltuion: 1789 to the Present Day*, 3rd rev. edn. (London: Penguin, 1974), 36–44; Carey, *Believing*, 10–19.

⁸¹ Louis Billington, ‘Revivalism and Popular Religion’, in *In Search of Victorian Values: Aspects of Nineteenth Century Thought and Society*, ed. Eric M. Sigsworth (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988): 147–161.

⁸² Davies, ‘Our Doctrines’, i: 147–179.

⁸³ Wesley, *Works*, xi: 387–388.

⁸⁴ E.g., Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 455–468; Richard J. Helmstadter, ‘The Nonconformist Conscience’, in *The Conscience of the Victorian State*, ed. Peter March (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1979), 135–172; Thompson, *English Working Class*, 385–440.

dissertation because the WM objective to ‘spread scriptural holiness through the land’ is part of the framework through which its mission will be reappraised.

In addition, Methodists considered that conversion was the beginning of a life of holiness.⁸⁵ Since Methodists believed that without holiness a person would not ‘see the Lord’ (Hebrews 12:14), meaning obtain eternal life, the pursuit of holiness was critical. Holiness was also something in which adherents were expected to grow. Further, there was a second conversion–like experience called instant sanctification (explained below) which accelerated Methodists in their progress toward perfection. However, it was expected that growth in holiness would be gradual and lifelong. Further, a more helpful understanding will be provided for the dissertation if we keep in mind the primary essence of holiness, namely, wholehearted love for God and people that was applied practically.

The name, *Methodist*, as used here is synonymous and interchangeable with *Wesleyan*, and refers to that Christian movement founded by John Wesley in the 1700s as a society within the EC. *Wesleyan Methodism* (WM), descended from founder John Wesley and is the Methodist denomination regarded as mainstream, and that to which Smithies belonged.⁸⁶ By Smithies’ time, WM was a separate denomination, although it regarded itself a daughter of the EC still referring to itself as a society (or Connexion) well into the nineteenth century. Although the word *Methodism* in the nineteenth century could refer to any Methodist branch, or the movement as a whole including its offshoots, in this dissertation it will refer to WM unless otherwise stated. The distinctive features of WM require explanation that is more particular.

The WM ministry model includes, *soul–saving* (efforts to bring about conversions), *revivalism*, *conversion* with associated religious experiences (noted above), a subsequent experience referred to as *instant sanctification* (explained below), the *society* (a local WM church which included *class meetings*, *bands* and the *discipline* of the society), the *Connexion* (the entire WM denomination), *local preachers* (lay preachers), and Sabbath and day schools.⁸⁷ As mentioned earlier, other Evangelicals⁸⁸ (including those within the EC and among Dissenters) could identify some of these

⁸⁵ Wesley, *Works*, xi: 387–388.

⁸⁶ See Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 370–391.

⁸⁷ For a detailed description of WM organisation, see Davies, ‘The People called Methodists’ in *History of the Methodist Church*, i: 145–273.

⁸⁸ Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 5.

features in their ministry paradigms but none would have espoused them all, as did the Methodists.⁸⁹ A more detailed description follows.

The *revival*, referred to often in the dissertation, was an important means of saving souls. Chadwick says that ‘Methodists confessed that every preacher ought to be at heart a revivalist’.⁹⁰ To Methodists, revival was the spontaneous, powerful working of God’s Spirit at various seasons, usually occurring during society meetings, although the phenomenon could continue for weeks, affecting people in their homes and places of employment.⁹¹ Wakefield says that in ‘the nineteenth century in all branches of Methodism there was a perennial longing for revival, revival, and still more revival’.⁹² Through passionate evangelistic preaching and earnest prayer, it was a WM expectation, and indeed its experience, that spiritual awakenings (revivals) would occur resulting in the sudden conversion of whole groups of people at one time.⁹³ On such occasions, already converted adherents would be revitalised in their faith. Alternative terms for revival, as shown in Smithies’ writings, include ‘outpouring of the Spirit’, ‘awakening’, the ‘making bare of God’s arm’, as well as other terms and variations on these terms.⁹⁴ Revivals have attracted attention through the last four centuries for their sometimes bizarre nature in which participants fell to the ground with groaning, weeping and loud cries. Such scenes were frequently followed by equally emotional outpourings of joy from the newly converted. Revivals, then, were a sense of something divine that was ‘from above’ and consisted of religious experiences on a communal scale.⁹⁵

The *saving of souls* was of extreme importance to Methodists as indicated by founder John Wesley’s (1703–1791) admonition to his adherents, ‘You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work.’⁹⁶ To Wesleyans, all people were created in God’s image but had been separated from God because of sin. All humankind, therefore, needed to be reconciled to God through conversion.⁹⁷

⁸⁹ Vidler highlights the uniqueness of the Methodists who regarded themselves connected to the EC rather than being Dissenters but were held at arm’s length by both. See Vidler, *Church*, 40–41.

⁹⁰ Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 378.

⁹¹ Even the cautious Jabez Bunting (1779–1858), Wesleyan Methodist leader during the nineteenth century, acknowledged the appropriateness of revivals, calling them spiritual ‘thunderstorms’ (Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 379).

⁹² Gordon S. Wakefield, *Methodist Spirituality* (London: Epworth, 1999), 40.

⁹³ Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 158–161.

⁹⁴ E.g., SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 6 September 1830; SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 15 August 1835; SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

⁹⁵ See James, *Varieties*, 226.

⁹⁶ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 339.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, v: 76.

Consequently, soul saving was a primary concern of WM missionaries including those in the first half of the nineteenth century and therefore essential for our understanding in this dissertation.

Sanctification, or particularly, *instant sanctification*, is a term frequently used in the dissertation describing a religious experience subsequent to conversion which provided Methodists with a dramatic deepening of their faith, including purification of their spiritual lives. They believed that the experience removed sinful propensities rather than creating sinless perfection, since recipients were still subject to ‘involuntary transgressions’.⁹⁸ In addition, Wesley said, ‘I cannot but believe that sanctification is commonly, if not always, an instantaneous work’.⁹⁹ Instant sanctification was also known by such terms as ‘sanctification’ (although gradual progress in holiness was also called sanctification), ‘made perfect in love’, ‘entire sanctification’, ‘second blessing’, and occasionally ‘baptism in the Holy Ghost’.¹⁰⁰

A variety of terms defines the operation of WM societies so integral to Smithies’ ministry paradigm.¹⁰¹ The *society* refers to a local Methodist church or parish. Wesley said that ‘society’ was simply the best word available to describe his congregations.¹⁰² Another probable reason for this name was his reluctance to break away from the EC and call regular Methodist gatherings, ‘churches’.¹⁰³ The *class meeting*, an indispensable WM feature, was usually a weekly gathering of 10–20 people to assist members in their pursuit of holiness as well as to bring seekers to conversion. *Bands* were even smaller gatherings of either men or women that met as intimate accountability groups for the particular purpose of fostering growth in holiness.¹⁰⁴ The *discipline* was a code by which the society conducted itself. In John Wesley’s own words:

⁹⁸ Ibid., xi: 396, 418.

⁹⁹ Ibid., vi: 520.

¹⁰⁰ Collins, *John Wesley*, 178–204; E.g., SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 3 December, 1833; 7 December 1834.

¹⁰¹ See Wesley D. Tracy, ‘Spiritual Direction in the Wesleyan–Holiness Tradition’, in *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: a Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices*, eds. Gary W. Moon and David G. Benner (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2004), 115–136; David Lowes Watson, *Class Meeting: Its Origins and Significance* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship, 1987) and Williams, *Constitution and Polity*.

¹⁰² Wesley, *Works*, viii: 250.

¹⁰³ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity: Volume II: Reformation to the Present*, rev. edn. (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1975), ii: 1023–1029.

¹⁰⁴ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 258–259.

And remember! A Methodist Preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist discipline! Therefore you will need all the sense you have, and to have all your wits about you!¹⁰⁵

Local Preachers were lay people who were assistant, and sometimes substitute ministers within societies.¹⁰⁶ This ingenious feature aided the spread of Methodism as well as providing pastoral care for adherents. Wesleyan Methodists did not rely on their ‘ordained’ ministers alone.¹⁰⁷ As Latourette says, ‘lay [local] preachers became characteristic of Methodism’.¹⁰⁸ At Wesley’s death it was said that ‘He lived to see, in these kingdoms only, about three hundred itinerant, and one thousand Local Preachers, raised up from the midst of his own people’.¹⁰⁹

Love Feasts were regular meetings of Methodists, usually convened once a quarter where a simple meal was eaten, hymns were sung, mutual confession of sin was made, prayers were offered for one another, and members shared their stories of personal faith. The atmosphere of the gatherings was more spontaneous and charismatic than the Sunday meetings. *Love Feasts* added considerable impetus to Methodists’ vitality.¹¹⁰

Religious experience, another fundamental expression used in the dissertation, refers to a direct awareness, perception or experience of God that WM believed made ‘it possible ... to enjoy the relation of loving communion with God’.¹¹¹ Wesley described it as God’s outpoured love, the immediacy of God acting on the soul in a tangible manner.¹¹² Similarly, Tannehill defines religious experience as a belief ‘that the individual can come into immediate contact with God through subjective experiences which differ essentially from the experience of ordinary life’.¹¹³ As already noted, to Methodists, conversion, instant sanctification, revivals, and even the practice of personal spirituality consisted of, or included religious experiences.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., viii: 339.

¹⁰⁶ Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 101–104.

¹⁰⁷ For example, included on a marble obituary tablet in City Road Chapel, London, is the statement that John Wesley ‘lived to see, in these kingdoms only, about three hundred Itinerant, and one thousand Local Preachers, raised up from the midst of his own people; and eighty thousand persons in the societies under his care’ (Wesley, *Works*, v: 45); A 1907 statistic shows that the paradigm persisted for WM in England at that time had 2,445 ministers but 19,672 local preachers (Cyril J. Davey, *The Methodist Story* [London: Epworth, 1955], 170).

¹⁰⁸ Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1024–1027.

¹⁰⁹ Wesley, *Works*, v: 58.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., viii: 258–9; Davies, *Worship*, iv: 261–264.

¹¹¹ William P. Alston, *Perceiving God: The Epistemology of Religious Experience* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 2.

¹¹² Wesley, *Works*, viii: 107.

¹¹³ Robert C. Tannehill, *Dying and Rising with Christ: A Study in Pauline Theology*. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 32. (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1967).

Further to the definitions just provided, as other terms occur, meanings will be supplied at their point of use. The next preparatory step is to briefly survey historical settings for the dissertation.

§2.0 Methodist macrohistory

§2.1 Introduction

In order to facilitate our reappraisal of WM mission, this chapter will review Methodist macrohistory to provide the setting for a microscopic view of one missionary within the movement, namely, John Smithies. We will first consider the WM worldview and its eighteenth century milieu, followed by a scan of the first half of the nineteenth century in which WM missions prospered, concluding with a survey of the context and outline of Smithies' three missionary appointments. The period dealt with is the era of John Wesley (1703–1791) and his brother Charles (1707–1788), until the mid nineteenth century. Central considerations will be the circumstances in which Methodism originated and flourished including economic, political, philosophical, and religious conditions.

§2.2 Rise of Methodism

§2.2.1 Preparation for Methodism

The new age of philosophy, which in part prepared the way for the rise of Methodism, had its roots in the seventeenth century with René Descartes (1596–1650) who is epitomised by the well-known Cartesian, *cogito ergo sum* ('I think therefore I am').¹ Descartes affirmed belief in God saying that the clear concept of God confirms God's existence. However, the scepticism precipitated by Cartesian thought began to erode traditional belief. Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), on the other hand, opposed the Cartesian premise especially in relation to faith and reason.² Whilst he, the brilliant mathematician, concurred with Descartes' appeal to reason, he argued that faith is included in reason but not subservient to it since it is derived from God, that science and faith, knowledge and belief should co-exist and complement each other, and that there can be no actual disagreement between them. In fact, faith informs reason where mysteries occur. John Wesley's mother, Susanna Annesley Wesley (1669–1742), was influenced by Pascal's *Pensées* agreeing with Pascal that reason alone would eliminate

¹ Grenz and Olson, *20th Century Theology*, 18–19; Arguably these roots go back to scholasticism and its attempts to affirm Christian doctrine by reason (Latourette, *Christianity*, i: 496–498).

² E.g., Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, rev. edn. (London: Penguin, 1995), 53–57.

the ‘supernatural’ and ‘mysterious’. Pascal’s explanations still stand as formidable theses.³ Nevertheless, a new age had dawned and religious dogma was under notice.

During the same period, the first half of the seventeenth century, a group referred to as the Cambridge Platonists embraced the new era of reason.⁴ These were university men who presented the reasonableness of faith vis-à-vis the dogmatic assertions of Puritans. In the spirit of Pascal, they affirmed that reason and faith were not mutually exclusive but rather complementary. Their motivation was to relate faith to the new age. Mysticism, albeit a ‘balanced’ mysticism, was an important part of the Cambridge Platonists’ schema preserving them from the coldness of pure rationalism. Their writings played an important part in the formation of Wesley’s life and belief. This led him to Thomas à Kempis’ book, *The Imitation of Christ*, which became recommended reading for all Methodists as evidenced in one of Smithies’ letters where he mentioned distributing the book to Newfoundland Methodist societies.⁵ The nature of the Platonists’ writing plus the content of *The Imitation*, both of which highlight the interior life including religious experience, places Wesley and the Methodists in touch with the mystical tradition of Christianity, providing some background for our chapter on religious experience (§4.0). The later seventeenth century Latitudinarians, protégées of the Platonists, carried reasonableness further so that mysticism disappeared resulting in inevitable coldness. They had forgotten that religion was a matter of heart as well as mind. Latitudinarians were influential EC clergy, unlike the Platonists, so their sway was felt more widely. By the time of Wesley, in the early to mid-eighteenth century, much of the church had been affected by the deadening effects of Latitudinarianism creating a vacuum for the ‘vital Christianity’ of Wesley.

Deism was also influencing religious conditions in England just prior to Wesley so that many church leaders felt a degree of alarm.⁶ This had been aggravated by John Locke (1632–1704) and his *Reasonableness of Christianity* that made way for the Deism of the eighteenth century. Locke opposed enthusiasm in religion proposing a rational, non-dogmatic faith much in tune with the Latitudinarians. On the other hand, Locke’s defence of the Revolution of 1688 played a significant role in the new era of toleration which began to be experienced from the late seventeenth to the early eighteenth century.

³ Gerald R. Craig, *The Church and the Age of Reason 1648–1789* (London: Penguin, 1970), 37–43; Edwards, ‘John Wesley’, i: 37–79.

⁴ Craig, *Age of Reason*, 67–72; Edwards, ‘John Wesley’, i: 37–79 (esp. pp. 42–43).

⁵ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 29 January 1836.

⁶ Craig, *Age of Reason*, 75–80; Edwards, ‘John Wesley’, i: 37–79.

It was Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* that was later the focus of an article by Wesley.⁷

The new way of thinking was further epitomised by Thomas Paine's (1737–1809) *Age of Reason* that asserted that the Bible was inferior to nature in its revelation of God.⁸ Christianity, he argued, was a kind of atheism because it promoted the worship of a man (i.e., Jesus Christ). Since his works were widely known and distributed, his influence provoked the kind of alarm just noted. This anxiety was also recorded in the observations of Thomas Jackson, President of the Methodist Conference in 1839, in his book celebrating the Centenary of WM. He said that prior to Wesley's rise there had been a move to 'natural' religion, an appeal to 'the light of nature', as opposed to the evangelical 'revealed' religion, and even a move to Arianism from Trinitarian orthodoxy.⁹ Samuel Wesley (1661–1735), father of John, also revealed this trend believing that contemporary Dissenters were greatly influenced by Arianism.¹⁰ These themes were seen by Evangelicals to be both symptomatic and causal of coldness in religion. As noted, the trend had commenced earlier, Morrill referring to a general attitude in the late seventeenth century to religion as a 'hobby', which 'Puritans of previous generations could not have conceived anything so anaemic'.¹¹ Ministers were promoting the reasonableness of Christianity, the ethical duty of Christians, and God as a distant creator and sustainer rather than an ever-present Saviour who desired 'the transformation of the world'.¹² The relationship between philosophy and the religious conditions of the day were closely connected as indicated here. However, there were other conditions in the church that prepared the way for the rise of Methodism.

In the EC at this time, a glimmer of light appeared in Dr Thomas Bray's (1656–1730) formation of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) in 1698 for the

⁷ Wesley, *Works*, xiii: 455–464.

⁸ Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1007, 1074, 1230.

⁹ Arianism derives from an early deacon Arius (256–336) who taught that Christ 'was not truly God' (Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* [Allen, TX: Christian Classics, n.d.], iii: 6–10); Paul Langford, 'The Eighteenth Century (1688–1789)', in *The Oxford History of Britain*, rev. edn., ed. Kenneth O. Morgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, 2001), 399–469; Thomas Jackson, *The Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism: A Brief Sketch of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Wesleyan-Methodist Societies throughout the World* (London: John Mason, 1839), 3–5.

¹⁰ Edwards, 'John Wesley', i: 37–79.

¹¹ John Morrill, 'The Stuarts (1603–1688)', in *The Oxford History of Britain*, rev. edn., ed. Kenneth O. Morgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 327–398.

¹² John Bowle, *The English Experience: A Survey of English History from Earliest Times to the End of Empire* (London: Phoenix, 1971), 358–361, 390, 430–433; Langford, 'The Eighteenth Century', 437–438; Morrill, 'The Stuarts', 327–398; Robert Kiefer Webb, *Modern England: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, 2nd edn. (London: Allen and Unwin, 1980), 31–39.

purpose of disseminating low cost Christian books of practical spiritual value.¹³ The society shortly after spawned the missionary organisation known as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (1701) under whose auspices Wesley and his brother Charles went as missionaries to Georgia in 1735. Laurence Coughlan was appointed to Newfoundland under this sponsorship in 1765 although his ministry is regarded as the foundation of Methodism there.¹⁴ Societies such as these provided precedent for the formation of Methodist ‘societies’ within the EC, meaning Methodism was not a Dissenting group in the strictest sense until later in its history. Thus, the late 1600s and early 1700s was a time of modest spiritual prosperity for the EC, but the church was also affected by political entanglement and pluralism connected with clerical non-residence or absenteeism.

Pluralism, the appointment of clergy to more than one parish, produced the not uncommon practice of clergy neglecting one parish in favour of another, usually the one in which they resided.¹⁵ Non-residence or absenteeism sprung from this practice because a second, poorly paid parish might never be occupied, and in some cases never even visited. An incumbent collected both (if appointed to two) stipends, although in many cases incumbents presided over more than two parishes. This was scandalous in some instances where large fortunes were amassed. Bishop Hutton was a glaring example of one who reportedly died with a fortune of £50,000, none of it going toward any benevolent purpose. In others, it was a way of survival since many parishes paid a pittance. A parish not attended or visited may have had a curate appointed who would hopefully care for its needs. These curates were often treated poorly being compensated with a bare subsistence. Such abuses brought ridicule on the church adding to the dissatisfaction of the public opening a further window for the scrupulously honest and diligent Methodists who were shortly to appear on the scene.

As for Dissenters, when the Hanoverian era commenced in 1714, Dissenters supported George I (1660–1727) against the Jacobite uprising of 1715 expecting additional toleration in return.¹⁶ The Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts were subsequently repealed and the Act for Quieting and Establishing Corporations allowed Dissenters to hold some public offices under certain conditions. Then the Indemnity Acts (from 1727) released Dissenters from penalties of previous acts. But that was as far as Dissenters’

¹³ Craig, *Age of Reason*, 55–59; Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, i: 256–263.

¹⁴ Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 28.

¹⁵ Craig, *Age of Reason*, 120–127.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 133–139.

reward went, although they desired much more. The nature of Dissent at the early part of the century found Presbyterians drawn into Unitarianism in Trinitarian controversies, mentioned above, whilst Baptists and other Independents fell back to their defensive position of Calvinism. This created a vacuum of another kind because Calvinism had become unpopular due to its tendency to legalism and formalism, and Unitarianism was regarded as heretical and certainly not Evangelical. In addition, their influence and numbers began to decline shortly after Wesley's rise and thus his orthodoxy and Arminianism had more ready acceptance. However, the Methodist and Calvinist George Whitefield (1714–1770), also had great success in Britain but particularly in America.

The church's coldness, therefore, prior to and during Wesley's rise, provided fertile ground for his message.¹⁷ In fact, the contrast between the two found Wesley often wearing the title 'enthusiast', so that he was forced to write a number of rebuttals.¹⁸ The EC authorities were very nervous about enthusiastic spirituality (which to them meant extremism and fanaticism, not simply being enthusiastic), just as they were suspicious of anything that threatened the accepted order, particularly since it was fairly recent that Tories and Jacobites were deemed synonymous and Wesley was high church and Tory. For Wesley and his 'new' spirituality, these were the 'best of times' and 'the worst of times'.¹⁹ They were the best because he was eminently successful due to ripe conditions such as the low state of religion and emerging industrialisation which resulted in population displacement and thus anomie. They were also worst for Wesley because he was opposed, at times violently, particularly early in his ministry and was always held at arm's length by his own (Established) church.²⁰

The rise of Methodism and its later missionary expansion also found an advantageous environment in the pre-industrial development already well under way during George I's reign (1714–1727) and gathering strength throughout the eighteenth century.²¹ By the time John Wesley was born in 1703, England was a large scale exporter of goods, particularly to the American colonies, and also had been extensively engaged in such endeavours as cod fishing in Newfoundland since the sixteenth century. Newfoundland was also one of Methodism's earliest missionary outposts (1765), and Smithies' first

¹⁷ Henry Offley Wakeman, *An Introduction to the History of the Church of England: From the Earliest Times to the Present* (London: Rivingtons, 1898), 395–436.

¹⁸ E.g., Wesley, *Works*, viii: 105–106, 110, 214, 405–412, 432–434, 445–468, 483.

¹⁹ Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (London: Wordsworth, 1993), 3.

²⁰ Wakeman, *Church of England*, 395–436.

²¹ Bowle, *English Experience*, 268, 405–412; Patrick O'Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland: A History to 1843* (St John's, NL: Long Beach, 1999), 10–12, 16, 55; Webb, *Modern England*, 68–69.

missionary appointment in 1828. It was England's aggressive search for and establishment of new markets that is thought to be a major factor in its later industrial expansion, since demand for its goods required more efficient and larger manufacturing capacities.

A principal English export in 1700 was woollen goods and although its production had been giving some concern, it began to show signs of reviving especially in the West Country.²² A little later, emerging industrialised centres such as those associated with iron smelters, as well as villages and small settlements neglected by the EC, provided fertile soil for Wesley's evangelical message. An early impediment to industry of all kinds was the appalling road system making transportation by sea the most efficient means. England's inland waterways were also inefficient and far behind France. Improvement in transportation began to appear in the mid eighteenth century as turnpikes multiplied due to new Acts of Parliament enabling local trusts to be set up to build and maintain roads, and collect tolls. About the same time, the inland waters ways began to improve so that overall, England's transportation was transformed, aiding its burgeoning agricultural market. Wesley and his preachers were also able to utilise the newly improved and extended roads to accelerate their itinerant ministry. Agricultural regions which were escalating through improvements such as cultivation, threshing and drainage and more intentional dissemination of farming knowledge, were not the main focus of Wesley's ministry since he concentrated on the rising industrial centres and smaller villages remote from EC parishes where he perceived a greater need.

A darker side of English trade was African slavery, which flourished in the American colonies and the West Indies, providing its merchants with substantial economic advantage since it is estimated that from 1700 to 1850, more than nine million slaves were traded.²³ Concurrently with the slave trade in the West Indies, Methodism's earliest missionary endeavours flourished there so that even locations accommodating the sinister face of English trade were conducive to WM mission. The slave trade also occupied Wesley's attention provoking his vigorous condemnation in a published article in 1774, as well as his strong support for the reformer William Wilberforce (1759–1833).

²² Herbert Butterfield, 'England in the Eighteenth Century', in *History of the Methodist Church*, i:3–33.

²³ Bowle, *English Experience*, 405–412; Christopher Harvie, 'Revolution and the Rule of Law (1688–1789)', in *The Oxford History of Britain*, rev. edn., ed. Kenneth O. Morgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 2001; 475–481; Langford, 'The Eighteenth Century', 424–448; Webb, *Modern England*, 108–109; Wesley, *Works*, xi: 59–79, xiii: 153.

In addition, the expansion of London as a commercial focal point of the nation's industrial growth was beyond doubt as the city emerged as one of 'the most dynamic' in the 'Western world'.²⁴ Wesley also utilised the strategic importance of London as one of his major bases for Methodism, as well as his final home situated within the grounds of his City Road chapel. The city became the site of Methodist headquarters, especially the WMMS, situated at 77 Hatton Gardens, from where Smithies was sent to Newfoundland in 1828 and to which he addressed more than eighty letters. Whilst London's expansion and that of various industrial centres in the nation added considerable wealth to the already affluent and to a new class of 'capitalist farmers', many were reduced to poverty, adding to an already large pool of poor.²⁵ Disparity between the poor and wealthy engendered considerable unrest, which at times resulted in riots. The plight of the poor occupied Wesley's attention from his earliest beginnings and he urged his followers to imitate his example.²⁶ It is to Wesley's life and ministry that we now turn our attention.

§2.2.2 The rise and spread of Methodism:

When dying, John Wesley's father, Samuel, exhorted him saying, 'The inward witness, son, the inward witness ... that is the proof, the strongest proof of Christianity!'²⁷ (Inward witness is the WM and earlier Puritan view that conversion was attested to by divinely imparted assurance.)²⁸ It was this advice that was to be a theme of his life and ministry and a primary hallmark of Methodism although he went through a period of agony in search of his own inward witness. Samuel also had a keen interest in missions, offering his services as clergyman to James Edward Oglethorpe's (1696–1785) settlement in Georgia.²⁹ Ironically, it was John and Charles who were later to sail to Georgia as missionaries sent by the EC Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, referred to earlier. But prior to this, John had entered Oxford in 1720.³⁰

²⁴ Langford, 'The Eighteenth Century', 426, 424–448.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 424–448

²⁶ Bowle, *English Experience*, 405–412; Harvie, 'Revolution', 475–481; Langford, 'The Eighteenth Century', 424–448; Webb, *Modern England*, 14–23, 107–122; Regarding the poor, see Wesley, *Works*, ii: 59, vii: 123, 286, xii: 301–302.

²⁷ Wesley, *Works*, xii: 100.

²⁸ Watson, 'Methodist Spirituality', 172–213.

²⁹ Oglethorpe is regarded as the founder of the State of Georgia. In 1735, Georgia was a settlement and colony of Britain (see Juliet Gardner [ed.], *The History Today Who's Who in British History* [London: Collins and Brown, 2000], 612).

³⁰ Edwards, 'John Wesley', i: 37–79.

Oxford's part in shaping Wesley was at least threefold, not least of which was his education.³¹ First, upon completing his MA, he found himself equipped with an ability in reasoning and logic and subsequently attained a position as lecturer in Greek, logic, and later, philosophy. Although his parents had warned John against rationalism, neither they nor he avoided the application of careful reasoning to faith as well as to other issues. Christianity was indeed reasonable, but reason had to have solid foundations. Second, at Oxford Wesley came under the influence of the writings of Cambridge Platonists which taught him about spiritual interiority and the knowledge of God through mystical experience. Although Wesley did not embrace all their teaching, he nevertheless recommended reading their works for the value they did contain. His father's advice about the inward witness undoubtedly resonated with part of the Platonists' views on mystical experience. The Holy Club was the third influence afforded at Oxford that shaped his life.

Just prior to the Holy Club's formation, Wesley responded to Samuel's call in 1727 to assist him as curate at Wroot.³² Charles had commenced a society prior to John's return to Oxford in 1729. The society, called the Holy Club, met regularly for prayer, study of scripture, and social work among the poor and imprisoned. These habits attracted the derisive term, 'Methodist'; a name that stuck. This club was WM in embryo; the training ground for Wesley's bands, classes and societies. The name, Holy Club, indicates its purpose which Wesley stressed when describing the group later, saying, 'but still holiness was their point'.³³ This 'point' of holiness became *the* driving force of Wesley's ministry. The Holy Club readily looked to John for leadership, enjoying about five years of disciplined personal growth and service as a group of never more than about twenty-five. The group included the Wesley brothers and George Whitefield (1714–1770), the third principal leader of Methodism in Great Britain, and principal in the Great Awakening (1725–1760) in North America. The Holy Club disbanded when John and Charles sailed for Georgia.

It was in 1735 that John and Charles Wesley, ordained clergymen of the EC, sailed for Georgia to be missionaries to the Indians. They were unsuccessful in this missionary endeavour working mainly with settlers. Returning to England in a dispirited state, John Wesley lamented, 'I went to America to convert the Indians, but oh! who shall convert

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 299–300.

me?’³⁴ His already acute perception of the need for conversion with accompanying inward witness was made even more poignant through the influence of the Moravians, first on board ship en route to America, then by personal acquaintance with August Gottlieb Spangenberg (1704–1792) in Georgia, and Peter Böhler (1712–1775) upon Wesley’s return to England. It was shortly after this, on Wednesday 24 May 1738, that he received his well-known evangelical conversion.³⁵ His heartfelt conversion, mission experience and earlier Holy Club involvement were to influence the beliefs and practices of WM for the next two hundred years. This will be demonstrated in Smithies’ ministry and his nineteenth century missionary endeavours.³⁶

A crucial span of Wesley’s history encompassed the reign of George II (1683–1760), which ended in 1760.³⁷ It was the period of Wesley’s missionary journey to Savannah Georgia in 1735, his evangelical conversion in 1738, and the early years of Methodism whose membership reached 25,000 by 1767, just seven years into the reign of George III (1738–1820). The early years of George II were difficult for England as epidemics of various kinds broke out across the country causing a death rate exceeding any of recent times discounting the small rise in population over the previous 60 years, so that it stood at about 5.2 million in 1731. This figure was probably lower than the mid seventeenth century. The ingredients of diluted Christianity, economic growth juxtaposed with poverty (including social unrest), travel and expanding empire, provided the setting for the Wesleyan world of Evangelical revival. Although a middle-class Tory, Wesley found great acceptance among the poor and artisan classes, although during the first ten years of his ministry, he faced mob violence and narrowly escaped death a number of times.

The reason for the intensity of persecution was the complete novelty of Wesley’s ministry and its consequent jarring of accepted behaviour and convention.³⁸ The spectre of ordained clergy, complete with their clerical attire, speaking to crowds of common people in the open fields, offering Christianity through heartfelt conversion, simply stunned both commoners and the EC alike. Added to the spectacle were the manifestations, shrieks, groans and a general outflow of emotion. The former was

³⁴ Ibid., i: 74; John Telford, *The Life of John Wesley* (London: Epworth, 1953), 92.

³⁵ Wesley, *Works*, i: 103; Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1025.

³⁶ Rupert E. Davies, *Methodism* (London: Penguin, 1963), 53–58; Edwards, ‘John Wesley’, i: 46–53; Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1024–1027; Webb, *Modern England*, 39, 127–128; Wesley, *Works*, i: 103.

³⁷ Bowle, *English Experience*, 364–368; Edwards, ‘John Wesley’, i: 53–55; Langford, ‘The Eighteenth Century’, 415, 422–424; Webb, *Modern England*, 44–49.

³⁸ Edwards, ‘John Wesley’, i: 53–55.

difficult enough to handle, but the latter exceeded all bounds. If this was not enough, at one period of public fear (1744), Wesley was confused with current political events, being suspected of association with the Young Pretender.³⁹ Of course, the Methodist bands, class meetings and midnight ‘love feasts’ evoked images of dark and secretive practices in the public mind further adding to the suspicion. The persecution was often sparked by a landowner (sometimes he was a magistrate as well, further complicating the issue) or an EC clergyman. The former had grievances with the ‘levelling tendencies’ of the revivalists’ in preaching to common people, and for the latter, it was the breaking of accepted church conventions. Together, they incited mobs that found a new sport in which to engage themselves. Staffordshire and Cornwall were major areas of rioting, with those at Cornwall in 1745 being particularly vicious. The courage of the Wesleys is legendary, John occasionally stepping calmly amidst threatening mobs asking what it was they wanted. His calmness disarmed the mob whereupon Wesley would address the crowd, usually with great effect. The persecution did not stop their work; they carried on relentlessly. Eventually the opposition proved to be excellent publicity for accelerating the revival’s influence.

George III (1738–1820) privately confided in Charles Wesley’s son, also called Charles, that he believed that George Whitefield, his uncle John and father Charles, as well as Lady Huntingdon (1707–1791), who introduced Methodism to the upper classes, had done more to promote true religion than ‘all the dignified clergy’ of the EC ‘put together’.⁴⁰ George III was known for his moral strictness, exemplified on one hand by his devotion to wife and family, but on the other by harshness in the way he tried to control his children’s lives, particularly in their choice of spouses.⁴¹ Wesley seemed to support this assessment since he wrote that George III ‘believes the Bible ... fears God’ and ‘loves the Queen’ (A Letter to a Friend, 1768).⁴² Religious matters, namely, the deep divide between Catholics and Protestants, were also an issue in George III’s reign demonstrated by his personal order to the military to put down the Gordon Riots in 1780. The riots were a violent protest over the rejection of a petition to repeal the Relief Act of 1778, which did away with repressive anti-Catholic laws. Lord George Gordon (1751–1793), president of the Protestant Association, led a march to Parliament of

³⁹ Wesley, *Works*, i:460, 463.

⁴⁰ Frederick C. Gill, *Charles Wesley: The First Methodist* (New York: Abingdon, 1964), 188–189; Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 284–286.

⁴¹ Bowle *English Experience*, 376–378, 383–387, 394–403; Langford, ‘The Eighteenth Century’, 451, 453–459, 465; Webb, *Modern England*, 96–97, 144–147.

⁴² Wesley, *Works*, xi: 16.

between 40,000 to 60,000 people to present the petition. Occurring over a period of 10 days in London, the unrest left more than 450 people dead. The riots portray the depth of anti-Catholic sentiment in the nation at the time. Wesley visited Gordon in the Tower after his arrest and from his journal entry it is not clear whether or not he supported Gordon. There is some debate about this especially in light of Wesley's anti-Catholic attitude.⁴³ On the other hand, his ambivalence toward Catholics is demonstrated in relation to his visits to Ireland and the opposition his adherents faced there. Wesley's letter, 'To a Roman Catholic' (directed to Irish Catholics), shows mildness and ecumenicity incongruent with his other statements.⁴⁴ This will be discussed later in the dissertation in relation to the next century's WM missionaries' approach toward Catholics as demonstrated in Smithies.

Wesley ministered for more than fifty years until his death in 1791.⁴⁵ He laid the foundation for what was to become an organisation that not only outgrew the Methodism of his time, but which spread around the world leaving a significant legacy for future Christianity as well as future societies in general.⁴⁶ The vehicle for the preservation of this legacy was the genius of WM organization derived wholly from its founder. Wesley organised his new converts at first into bands, little groups of two or three who regularly met to encourage and sustain each member's newfound faith and promote growth in holiness. He then found it necessary, as numbers grew, to form 'classes' of between 10–20 people for the same purpose and to appoint 'class leaders'. Members were on trial for a period of time before being issued with a full 'ticket' of membership into these classes. Societies were formed next comprised of groups of bands and classes. Wesley then formed circuits consisting of groups of societies in a given area over which, in time, a superintendent was appointed. Another early initiative, at first resisted by Wesley, eventually proved to be a most effective tool of Methodism; this was the lay, or 'local', preacher. This 'Methodistic' style organisation featured strongly in the work of nineteenth century missionaries like Smithies as he and his colleagues rigorously applied the pattern laid out for them by Wesley, as we shall see.

The nature of the meetings of Methodism evolved in association with its structure. As noted, these included the love feast, watch-night services, meetings of the bands and

⁴³ Ibid., iv: 194–195; See also Roy Hattersley, *A Brand from the Burning: The Life of John Wesley* (London: Little, Brown, 2002), 365; Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 310–313.

⁴⁴ Wesley, *Works*, x: 80–86; See also Richard P. Heitzenrater, *The Elusive Mr. Wesley*, 2nd edn. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003), 191–201.

⁴⁵ Davies, *Methodism*, 72–74; Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1026–1027.

⁴⁶ See Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 42–46.

classes, as well as the weekly meetings of societies.⁴⁷ This organisational system and its content were based upon the Moravian pattern developed by Count von Zinzendorf (1700–1760), leader of a pietistic group in Hernhut, Germany, with whom Wesley spent some time in a visit shortly after his evangelical conversion in 1738.⁴⁸ Wesley's system is credited with being the basis for movements such as the Chartists, Trade Unions and to some extent even the Communist Party. There is no doubt that Wesley's 'cellular' organisation was a valuable aspect of Methodism as far as its expansion and longevity were concerned. The history and features of Methodism, as just outlined, have a direct bearing on the rise of Wesleyan missions as represented in Smithies' ministry. Of significance is the content of Methodism, its belief in 'vital religion', sudden conversion, scriptural holiness, evangelistic preaching and the revival, all so important in the ministry of early nineteenth century Wesleyan missionaries like Smithies. In addition, the structure was vital for the preservation of their 'cause'.

By the end of Wesley's life in 1791, there were 71,668 Methodists in Great Britain constituting what was in reality a new denomination, although Wesley to the end of his life was opposed to such establishment.⁴⁹ Methodism had spread at least to Scotland, Ireland, North America, the West Indies, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland by the time of Wesley's death.⁵⁰ Afterwards, the movement separated into three main branches, the mainstream being WM. The other two were the New Connection in c.1795 and Primitive Methodism in 1810. In spite of its troubles, Methodism was to remain vibrant until the early twentieth century. In America, one reason given for its incredible growth was the word, 'revival', although there were other significant reasons, not the least of these was the ministry of Bishop Francis Asbury. In other places such as the Pacific Islands, Newfoundland, Africa and Australia, missionary zeal and to a greater or lesser extent, revival played a significant role. There can be no doubt that Wesley's genius for organisation also provided a sound structure for the growth of his churches long after

⁴⁷ See also Watson, *Class Meeting*.

⁴⁸ Davies, *Methodism*, 72–74; Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1026–1027.

⁴⁹ Estimating WM adherents is fraught with difficulties since its strict membership admission requirements meant that 'attendants at worship' might be four to six times the number of members. Even this presents a problem because many attendees would have classified themselves as Church of England, at least in its earlier history in England, but also to some extent in the colonies. Taking membership as a baseline is certainly safe, but conveys little idea of the impact of Methodism on a given area. That is, its influence was often enormous whereas statistics may show low membership. This would be truest at Wesley's death when the numbers given above do not reflect the impact of Methodism on Britain (See also Langford, 'The Eighteenth Century', 438).

⁵⁰ Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116.

his death but the vital nature of the movement's faith was its real secret, as will be demonstrated.⁵¹

Another feature, which preserved and perhaps increased the Methodists' strength and growth demonstrating the vitality of its faith, was the phenomenon of their music.⁵² In addition, the music of Methodism has particular relevance to religious experience since it gave expression to deepest religious feelings.⁵³ Charles Wesley was the poet of the movement writing over 7,000 hymns and poems during his lifetime. These hymns were a blend of popular music of the day and orthodox Protestant Christian doctrine. It is claimed that in the generation after Wesley, when no 'apostolic' leader existed, the hymns of Charles Wesley carried the movement forward. The Methodist liturgy though based on the Common Book of Prayer used by its leaders was nevertheless unique. Added to this liturgy was the ingredient of the 'love feast', noted above, a time of eating and spontaneous worship. Evidences of Methodist liturgy in the nineteenth century will surface as we survey Smithies' letters and the ministries of his contemporaries.

§2.3 Nineteenth Century: The Mission Age⁵⁴

§2.3.1 Conditions ripe for mission

The reign of George III (the last nine years with his eldest son as regent) covered a tumultuous yet strategic era for Britain. The period included growing radicalism, the Seven Years War, the American War of Independence (1775–1783) together with the loss of the American colonies, the French Revolution (1789–1799), the French Revolutionary Wars (1793–1802), the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815) and the Industrial Revolution.⁵⁵ It also covered the periods of John Wesley's later ministry and death (1791), and the formation of posthumous Methodism including the rise of the WMMS from 1813, which sent Smithies first to Newfoundland and many other missionaries to all parts of the globe. It was also during George III's reign that Britain found itself in possession of a vast Empire, encompassing British North America, India and the West Indies, and the newly emerging southern world, which included parts of Africa, Pacific Islands and Australia. Even after the loss of the American colonies, Britain's empire was immense. Expansion of empire together with continuation of aristocratic leadership

⁵¹ See Latourette, *Christianity*, ii:1027–1028; Marty, 'North America', 407; Stevens, *Methodism*, 64–67, 224–225;

⁵² Davies, *Worship*, iv: 256, 261–263.

⁵³ See Davies, *Methodism*, 97; Holly, 'Spiritual Transformation': 153ff.

⁵⁴ For 'mission age', see Carey, *Believing*, 58–70 and Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1063ff.

⁵⁵ Bowle, *English Experience*, 376–378; Langford, 'The Eighteenth Century', 450–453; Webb, *Modern England*, 80–82; Smith, *Methodist Church*, i: 17–25.

in league with the Crown, meant that Britain's influence carried over until the end of Victoria's reign. The missionary movement was borne along to an extent with Britain's expansion as it 'civilised and christianised' settlers and indigenous peoples of newly acquired (or invaded) territories.⁵⁶

It was during the period of the loss of the American colonies and the Gordon Riots that the John Wilkes (1727–1797) saga emerged.⁵⁷ Wilkes became known as a proponent of common rights vis-à-vis government oppression and was seen as a kind of folk hero. He opposed the American War of Independence and also the Gordon Riots since he was a supporter of religious toleration. Wilkes was also a radical and therefore attracted few friends in government. Neither did he find support from the churches, being a Deist and writer of a pornographic paper, *Essay of a Woman*, partly for which he spent two years in prison. Wesley engaged with Wilkesite thought in his articles 'Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs' (1768) and 'Thoughts upon Liberty' (1772). In these, he took his usual Tory line in support of the King, warning against dangers of the mob.⁵⁸ In relation to the American colonies, Wesley, who was never afraid to speak out on political matters, wrote at least two articles, 'A Calm Address to Our American Colonies' and 'Observation on Liberty', addressing these issues in the spirit of the Wesleyan objective to 'reform the land'. Although initially favouring the Americans, he finally took a stand against them as the articles show.⁵⁹ The American War of Independence and Wilkes' activities are symbols of liberal ideas earlier engendered during the eighteenth century and which provided a fertile environment for the Methodist advancement and its novel ideas and methods.

Although Enlightenment Rationalism continued to challenge old traditions there was growing weariness with its soul-destroying pre-eminence of logic and reason opening the way for the emergence of Romanticism, a movement embracing feeling, imagination and the ideal.⁶⁰ Simultaneously, a new tide of moral conscience was breaking upon the people of Britain fuelled by recent fires of Evangelical revival which in many ways was about to intensify throughout the nineteenth century producing, among other things, what we term, 'Victorianism'. Then there were the social pressures

⁵⁶ Bowle, *English Experience*, 364–368, 394–403; Langford, 'The Eighteenth Century'; 459; Webb, *Modern England*, 81, 92.

⁵⁷ Bowle, *English Experience*, 378–385; Langford, 'The Eighteenth Century', 434, 448, 453, 458–459, 464, 466; Webb, *Modern England*, 82–86.

⁵⁸ Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 375–376; Wesley, *Works*, xi: 14–33; 34–36.

⁵⁹ Wesley, *Works*, xi: 80–118; see also Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 376–380.

⁶⁰ Bowle, *English Experience*, 394–396; Harvie, 'Revolution', 470–517; Webb, *Modern England*, 122–127, 132–155, 163–168.

brought on by population, agricultural and industrial expansion, and urbanisation, each of these precipitating a variety of outcomes, including riots on the one hand, prosperity on the other. Growing unrest among a number of key groups troubled an aristocracy already sensitive from the recent French Revolution, as pressure for reform mounted particularly when the Napoleonic Wars ended.

As noted, Enlightenment Rationalism persisted in the nineteenth century continuing to challenge both orthodox and Evangelical faith and practices.⁶¹ It was David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874) and his *Leben Jesu*, published in 1835, which opened the door for serious questioning of the Bible as a historic and scientific document rather than solely a faith text. Chadwick says ‘modern divinity dates’ from Strauss’s work although it is largely disregarded now.⁶² A gradual shift toward a ‘more reasonable faith’ had a monumental effect on the nineteenth and twentieth century church making Evangelicals defensive and even embattled as ‘higher criticism’ established itself in mainline Christianity.

However, at the same time, Romanticism, which is thought to have bloomed from 1780 to 1820, touched art, poetry, architecture, religion and social order.⁶³ Romanticists wanted an immanent God rather than one who was exiled to transcendent Deism. They sought to experience spirituality rather than just define it. They imagined an ideal world in Platonic terms, and in many ways would identify with postmodernism. It was natural that Evangelicals would hold things in common with Romantics due to their experientialist belief, expectation of the coming Kingdom of God, and their aversion to an intellectualised faith. Evangelical precursors of Romanticism were William Cowper (1731–1800), whose poetry pre-empted it, and William Wilberforce (1759–1833), who would certainly not have called himself a Romanticist, but who passionately committed himself to transform his generation into an ideal world. Even Wesley provided early influence through his belief in a ‘Christian world’, heart experience, and together with Charles his brother, provided thousands of hymns expressing such realities. Other examples are Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834), for whom truth had to be grasped and felt, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) who although not a Briton, had a profound effect on subsequent Christian belief and to whom the essence of religion was ‘immediate consciousness of the Deity as he is found in ourselves and in the world’.

⁶¹ Bowle, *English Experience*, 358–366, 390, 430–433; Grenz and Olson, *20th Century Theology*, 286ff; Webb, *Modern England*, 122–125.

⁶² Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 530ff.

⁶³ R. W. Harris, *Romanticism and the Social Order 1780–1830* (London: Blandford, 1969), 9–37.

William Wordsworth (1770–1850) was another Romanticist for whom God was the author of nature and immanent in it.⁶⁴ Emily Brontë also has been classified as Romanticist, her *Wuthering Heights* being viewed in the ‘enthusiastic [Methodist] tradition’.⁶⁵ Enlightenment Rationalism and the more recent Romanticism, therefore, made their own impact on Britain and the world. While Rationalism tended to quench the exercise of faith, and transcendentalise deity tending toward Deism, Romanticism opened a window to faith as well as bringing God near.⁶⁶ Philosophical and religious revolution, as just discussed, was indicative of another significant reform in the nineteenth century, the parliamentary and legislative.

A landmark reform that also paved the way for other crucial reforms noted below was that by Parliament in 1828, namely, the repeal of the Test and Corporations Acts, which previously limited Dissenters from occupying municipal and state office, though it still prevented them from entering the universities.⁶⁷ Following in the train of this repeal, the year after, the Catholic Emancipation (Relief) Act (1829) finally passed, granting Catholics the right to sit in parliament although they could never aspire to the throne since the Act of Settlement 1701 dedicated that to Protestants. George IV (1762–1830), in keeping with the spirit of Hanoverian succession, resisted the move for Catholic relief every inch of the way, finally weeping as he signed it into law. The effect of these reforms, which opened the way to the passing of the Reform Bill, was also felt in Newfoundland where Catholics were elected to the first House of Assembly there in late 1832, the first sitting being 1 January 1833 under Governor Thomas Cochrane (1789–1872).⁶⁸ Smithies reported to the WMMS on the violence that attended the second election in 1836, so strong were the feelings between Protestants and Catholics since the first election.⁶⁹

William IV’s brief reign (1830–1837) was notable for a number of reforms by the Grey, and then Melbourne ministries, the most influential being the just noted Reform Act of

⁶⁴ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* (New York: Harper, 1958), 101.

⁶⁵ Mason, ‘Emily Brontë’.

⁶⁶ Bowle, *English Experience*, 413–416, 433–437; Harris, *Romanticism*, 105–125, 126–148; Harvie, ‘Revolution’, 514–517; Webb, *Modern England*, 125–127; Steve Wilkens and Alan G. Padgett, *Christianity and Western Thought: A History of Philosophers, Ideas and Movements* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000), ii: 26–27.

⁶⁷ Bowle, *English Experience*, 421–426; Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i. 7; Harvie, ‘Revolution’, 494–499; Webb, *Modern England*, 186–203, 225–230, 242–249.

⁶⁸ Frederick W. Rowe, *A History of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Toronto: McGraw–Hill Ryerson, 1980), 250, 259ff; O’Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland*, 151–152;

⁶⁹ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 14 December 1836.

1832 which removed from the electoral system many long-criticised voting irregularities granting the franchise to more middle class citizens and eliminating fifty-six rotten and pocket boroughs.⁷⁰ Then in 1832–1833, another pivotal reform occurred with the emancipation of slaves although the slave trade had been abolished much earlier in 1807. Methodist and other missionaries in the West Indies at that time came under considerable persecution as slave owners refused to accept the approaching emancipation seeing missionaries as a party to what they perceived as a scheme to destroy their industry.⁷¹ Even after emancipation, landholders used every means to avoid their new responsibilities.

As far as change and reform through industrial and commercial expansion is concerned, possibly nothing better exemplified Britain's dominance in the world than the Great Exhibition in 1851 in the Crystal Palace.⁷² Initiated by Queen Victoria's consort, Prince Albert, from May to October more than 6 million people came to view the 13,000 exhibits. As the exhibition made obvious, Britain was by this time fully self-conscious of its industrial transformation. In addition, its population had surpassed 26 million (incl. Wales, Scotland and Ireland) by 1851, an enormous leap since 1801 when it stood at much less than half that number. By the next year, there were 11,000 kilometres of railway line across the country including two to Scotland as well as to the north and south coasts of Wales. Indeed, Britain's industrial ascendancy was now found in steam driven machines, steel, and its railways, whereas it was in agriculture, wool and cotton that it had predominated.

Protestants and Catholics benefited from the development that Britain and its empire experienced in the nineteenth century.⁷³ On the other hand, the 'Church of England ... continued to suffer from some of the shortcomings which had been only too evident during the whole of the eighteenth century', and was 'confronted with an enormous need for adjustment'.⁷⁴ The EC inability to cope with immense changes such as expanding population, industrial and commercial growth as well as urbanisation, compounded by its absenteeism, pluralism, inadequate evangelism and pastoral oversight, placed the church in danger of becoming a 'minority religious establishment'.

⁷⁰ Bowle, *English Experience*, 419, 421–426; Harvie, 'Revolution', 494–499; Webb, *Modern England*, 146–147, 186–203, 215–218, 225–230, 242–249.

⁷¹ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, ii: 300ff.

⁷² Bowle, *English Experience*, 424–430; Harvie, 'Revolution', 506–510; Matthew, 'The Liberal Age', 518; Webb, *Modern England*, 117–119, 268–271, 285–286.

⁷³ Bowle, *English Experience*, 403, 433; Vidler, *Church*, 246–248;

⁷⁴ Kenneth Hylson-Smith, *The Church in England from Elizabeth I to Elizabeth II* (London: SCM, 1997), ii: 201ff.

The EC recovered but not until after 1830, although there was substantial gradual growth prior to this date. WM, on the other hand, filled part of the gap, experiencing phenomenal growth (17,000 overseas members in 1813 excluding America, and 200,000 by 1863), the reasons for which were internal as well as external including the just noted vacuum created by an inert EC.⁷⁵ The church's inner vitality was inspired in part by its founder's vision of a 'Christian world'.⁷⁶ (Other major reasons for missionary motivation will be uncovered as the dissertation progresses.) Externally, causes that favoured the missionary enterprise of Methodism (along with other Christian denominations) were spreading empire, just noted societal changes, and industrial revolution. For example, the Crown encouraged missionaries to 'christianise and civilise' inhabitants of those countries into which the empire had expanded as exemplified by an instruction given to Governor Hutt of the Swan River colony.⁷⁷ There was, therefore, a role for the Christian church in the expansion of empire.⁷⁸ Evangelicals like the Methodists saw this as a providential opportunity to 'preach the gospel to all creatures' (Matthew 28:18–20).

Perhaps the most important factor in the remarkable missionary enterprise of the nineteenth century was the Evangelical revival that commenced in the previous century.⁷⁹ The Revival coupled with news of Captain Cook's voyages, William Carey's pioneering missionary ideas and endeavours, early Moravian and Methodist missions, mixed with the expansion of the British Empire and the sovereign's express request for the churches to 'christianise and civilise' inhabitants of new lands, as just noted, all provided powerful fuel for the missionary explosion. The prominent missionary societies originated during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, such as the Church Missionary Society, the London Missionary Society, the Baptist Missionary Society and the Scottish Missionary Society. These all played a part in making the nineteenth century 'the greatest century since the first' in missionary expansion.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ George G. Findlay and Mary Grace Findlay, *Wesley's World Parish: A Sketch of the Hundred Years' Work of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, c.1913), 214fn.

⁷⁶ Wesley, *Works*, v: 45; Vidler, *Church*, 248.

⁷⁷ McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 21.

⁷⁸ See quote by Queen Victoria to this end, cited in Carey, *Believing*, 55.

⁷⁹ John McManners, 'The Expansion of Christianity (1500–1800)', in *Oxford History of Christianity*, ed. John McManners (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 310–345; Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1031–1035.

⁸⁰ Latourette, quoted in Vidler, *Church*, 246; See also Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1031–1035.

Another reason for church expansion was simply that people sought a better life in the new colonies of the expanded empire.⁸¹ The lure of good weather, farming conditions, and the possibilities of new mineral discoveries provided impetus for new settlers, the majority of whom were Protestant, at least in the early days of settlement in the Swan River although Catholics were in the majority in the earlier settled Newfoundland numbering three to each Protestant in the capital, St John's.⁸² Turmoil, plague and new freedoms such as Catholic Emancipation (threatening for Protestants) would have also had their impact making migration to a new land an attractive proposition. Added to this were improving modes of travel and 'new mechanical inventions', which made settlers' prospects even more attractive.⁸³ *The Swan River News* tells of a 'half-pay officer' who sought to make a better living in Australia, a surgeon who believed he would find better opportunity, and two youths who sought better living and health.⁸⁴ In the same way, Methodist settlers like the Hardeys seeking a better life, provided additional motivation for missionaries such as Smithies. It was the persistent requests from these and other Methodist families in the Swan River that resulted in his appointment to the colony.⁸⁵ Convict emigrants must not be forgotten since they rapidly swelled numbers in the Colonies and were candidates for zealous Evangelicals.

Another contributing factor in church expansion may be explained by events like the disastrous cholera epidemic of 1831–1832, which came from the Middle East via Europe, claiming the lives of over 30,000 in Britain alone. William IV called for a national day of fasting and humiliation in March 1832 because of the impact of the epidemic.⁸⁶ Also, the occurrence of the so-called Captain Swing Riots where a person signing himself, 'Captain Swing', warned farmers of 'wrath to come' which was quickly followed by burning of farms and damage to farm machinery, much like the Luddites of the previous decade.⁸⁷ These riots were an unplanned uprising of disenfranchised poor who saw the new threshing machine as a further threat to their well-being. Then there was the strange occurrence of *glossolalia* and other *charismata*

⁸¹ McManners, 'The Expansion of Christianity (1500–1800)', 310–345; Latourette, *Christianity*, ii: 1031–1035; Vidler, *Church*, 246–256.

⁸² E.g., According to the *Census of the Colony of Western Australia* cited by D. M. Bourke, in 1848 Catholics numbered just 7.29% of the population but had grown to 16.98% by 1854 (D. M. Bourke, *The History of the Catholic Church in Western Australia* [Perth, WA: Vanguard, 1979], inside cover); O'Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland*, 122–123.

⁸³ Vidler, *Church*, 246–248.

⁸⁴ *Swan River News and Western Australian Chronicle* 16 (London, 1 April 1845), 139.

⁸⁵ E.g., SOAS, Box 515, George Lazenby to WMMS, London, 28 August 1836.

⁸⁶ Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 37.

⁸⁷ Bowle, *English Experience*, 411.

at Edward Irving's (1792–1834) Catholic Apostolic Churches in Scotland that sounded a trumpet call to the effect that 'the coming of the Lord draweth nigh' (James 5:8). Such incidents were thought to have produced an apocalyptic trend in Protestantism that may have provided impetus for its worldwide missionary thrust. The settings for these were the above-noted events such as the French Revolution (1789–1799) and its associated atheism, wars with France (recently concluded in 1815), and the Catholic Emancipation Act (1829), which sparked fears of rising 'popery'. The occurrence of these and similar events of the period, spurred Evangelicals to mission since the 'end of all things was at hand' (1 Peter 4:7).⁸⁸ These events and sentiments would not have escaped Smithies' attention due to their significance and the fact that he was a regular reader of the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine (WMM) that carried topical articles designed to urge Methodist labourers to 'work while it is day' (John 9:4).⁸⁹ Writer, Charlotte Brontë, in *Shirley* (1849), conveys something of the power of the publication, albeit in a negative vein, referring to the 'mad Methodist Magazines'.⁹⁰ In anticipation of more detailed examination of the missionary activity of WM in the first half of the nineteenth century, through the eyes of John Smithies and others, the history of WM immediately after Wesley will be briefly reviewed at this point.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, WM had a succession of leaders but one stood out as authoritative as Wesley himself, if not as charismatic.⁹¹ Rev Jabez Bunting (1779–1858), though criticised by many for his authoritarian style, was just the person needed at such a crucial time in WM history. It was through him and his colleagues that Methodism, including its missionaries like Smithies, continued to flourish although the movement was beset by further divisions as new Methodist schisms occurred. There appears to be a parallel between Methodist schism and the growing movement for reform in England. For example, although Wesley had empowered lay people, appointing class leaders, local preachers, and women into new ministries, the movement's overall leadership remained authoritarian and male dominated. The incongruence between the lay movement and authoritarian leadership caused severe tensions. The root of this style undoubtedly derived from Wesley.⁹²

⁸⁸ Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 35–38.

⁸⁹ E.g., SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 15 June 1831.

⁹⁰ Charlotte Brontë, *Shirley* (London: Penguin, 1993), 292; Elizabeth Claghorn Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (London: Penguin, 1997), 93–94; Mason, 'Emily Brontë'.

⁹¹ Findlay and Findlay, *Parish*, 23–31; Jackson, *Centenary*, 176; Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 374–376.

⁹² See Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 246–248.

Before Wesley died, through a 'Deed of Declaration' he appointed the 'legal hundred', an annual conference of one hundred trusted ministers.⁹³ This conference resisted lay participation on some key questions resulting in the formation of the breakaway Methodist New Connection in 1796, the first schism from Wesleyan Methodism, under the leadership of recently expelled preacher Alexander Kilham (1762–1798). He had vehemently objected to the lack of lay voting rights and was regarded as schismatic in an atmosphere tense from French Revolution and Tom Paine excitement. In addition, Kilham's backers were radicals, which made the Methodist hierarchy even more nervous since the latter's sympathies, like their founder, were Tory. The second major schism occurred with the refusal by Hugh Bourne (1772–1852) and William Clowes (1780–1851) to cease conducting American-style revivalist camp meetings. They were summarily expelled from the WM Church and consequently founded the *Primitive Methodists* in about 1810, their first chapel being erected in 1811. We may accept 13 February 1812 as the date that the Primitive Methodists were formally established although their first conference was not held until 1820. The third offshoot began on 9 October 1815 with the commencement of what was to be named *Bible Christians* by 1819, the date of their first conference, led by William O'Bryan (1778–1868). O'Bryan was a lay preacher who simply went where he felt God had called him and being an unapproved preacher who had absented himself from class meetings due to his preaching, he was expelled. Such was the stern nature of Methodist discipline. Eventually however, O'Bryan found himself isolated from his own denomination in 1829 for exercising the same authoritarianism that originally spawned the Bible Christians. Other splits occurred but the most damaging was about the time of Chartism in mid-nineteenth century through a series of 'Fly-Sheets' in which the Wesleyan leadership, particularly Jabez Bunting, came under sustained criticism for autocratic style. Tens of thousands of people (estimated to be as high as 100,000) left WM at this time, which in turn drastically affected its income. Many of those who left or who were expelled, later became members of a new denomination, the United Methodist Free Churches, formed on 14 May 1857. The loss of membership from the WM Church directly impacted the WMMS' ability to meet all the needs of its far-flung missionary enterprise. Smithies felt the effect of this as his Swan River letters reveal.⁹⁴ However, this was only a temporary setback for Methodism.

⁹³ Bowle, *English Experience*, 411; Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 380–386; Davey, *Methodist Story*, 29–32, 59–68, 69–77, 86–94, 102–110; Davies, *Methodism*, 144; Harvie, 'Revolution', 505.

⁹⁴ E.g., SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1850.

Happier events than the schisms just noted unfolded earlier in Yorkshire in 1813 as a locally arranged meeting of the Leeds' Circuit launched what was to become the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS) by 1818.⁹⁵ Wesleyan mission was already a substantial endeavour before 1813, as noted earlier, but had been directed to that point by Thomas Coke. WM members consequently directed their donations and in some cases their services as missionaries to other established missionary societies in the absence of their own. To George Morley can be attributed the launching of the WMMS, although his intention was a network of support based at Leeds. On 6 October 1813, the Leeds circuit met to initiate a means for the perpetual support of missions in light of a new, expensive missionary endeavour in Ceylon for which Morley believed there had been inadequate planning for ongoing financial support. He returned home from the conference determined to rectify the situation from his circuit in conjunction with associated circuits in the vicinity. A local society was launched at Leeds but gradually other circuits followed until finally, in 1817, the WM Conference embraced a whole network of mission support societies into one missionary society. The WMMS had its first official meeting in May 1818, and became a significant factor in global Wesleyan advance. It was the WMMS that sent John and Hannah Smithies to their several missionary appointments.

§2.3.2 Smithies' early life and ministry overview

Smithies might accurately be called a second generation Wesleyan Methodist who breathed the same atmosphere as the first. Indeed some of his peers, particularly his mentors, were colleagues and acquaintances of Wesley himself as already noted.⁹⁶ What we have in Smithies, then, is an example of second generation Methodism who was still inspired by Wesleyan revival, as well as a person who lived in the overlap of the Georgian and Victorian periods characterised by the transition from the early industrial to high industrial period. John Smithies was born at Sheffield, Yorkshire, on 4 July 1802, to John (a shoemaker) and Charlotte (nee Machan) Smithies.⁹⁷ His parents were married on 22 September 1801, also at Sheffield.⁹⁸ According to Branagan, biographer of John's grandson Frederick Smithies, John was from a 'prominent non-conformist [dissenting]' family 'of Wood Green, near Tottenham', and had been 'for a number of

⁹⁵ Jackson, *Centenary*, 166–167; Findlay and Findlay, *Parish*, 25; Smith, *Methodist Church*, 21–24.

⁹⁶ Findlay and Findlay, *Parish*, 23–31.

⁹⁷ Entered in the marriage register of Church of St Peter and St Paul, Sheffield, as *Smythies*.

⁹⁸ Photocopy of marriage register, September 1801, of the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Sheffield, UK (Perth, WA: Uniting Church Archives); Handwritten copies (Perth, WA: Uniting Church Archives).

generations'.⁹⁹ Why John's parents were married at Sheffield and he was born there, when they had lived 'for generations' in London is not known. Just five years after Smithies' birth, a daughter, Hannah, was born in London on 7 December in 1807 to an obscure former Royal Navy able seaman, William Witt, who had been discharged in 1800.¹⁰⁰ Hannah was to become Smithies' wife.

Smithies' first missionary appointment was to Newfoundland, at that time a colony of England, which achieved representative government in 1832, and later became a province of Canada in 1948.¹⁰¹ As noted, Methodism was established early here and by the time of Smithies' arrival had been a WM district for thirteen years (since 1815). Two years after his arrival, in 1830 he married Hannah Witt, who after receiving permission from the WMMS, journeyed to Newfoundland for this purpose.¹⁰² Three children were born to them in Newfoundland. To understand the environment that the new missionary and his young family were first engaged, we will now outline the history of Newfoundland including the geography, nature of settlement, and the establishment and early progress of Methodism.

Newfoundland's history, says Rowe, 'is inextricably bound up with its environment'.¹⁰³ Situated at the easternmost tip of North America, its closest point to Europe, Newfoundland lies between latitude 46.0 north and 52.0 north, and between longitude 52.0 west and 60.0 west, between the Gulf of St Lawrence and the Atlantic Ocean. The island is directly influenced by arctic currents making the climate severe in winter. It also has an absence of good soil for cropping, but was sought after for centuries for its seal and cod fishing, so much so that Newfoundland was thought of as a 'convenient base for West Country fishing ships'.¹⁰⁴ However, it was not only the British who sought the lucrative fishing grounds. The French, Portuguese, and the Spanish, were at times aggressive competitors. For about two hundred years, the so-called French Shore (from 1713 this consisted mainly of the north eastern shore from Cape Bonavista to Port Riche, and from 1783, the western and north eastern shore from Cape Ray to Cape St. John) was a source of argument from the time it was ceded to the French in the Treaty

⁹⁹ J. G. Branagan, *A Great Tasmanian: Frederick Smithies, O.B.E., Explorer, Mountaineer, Photographer* (Launceston, Tas: Regal, 1984), 1.

¹⁰⁰ Handwritten notes (Perth, WA: Uniting Church Archives).

¹⁰¹ Rowe, *Newfoundland*, 259–286, 437–464.

¹⁰² Smith, *Methodist Church*, 419–420.

¹⁰³ Rowe, *Newfoundland*, 1–22.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 173.

of Utrecht (1713). Britain achieved sovereignty over the whole island in 1904, finally settling the long agitation.

Newfoundland was the original home of indigenous people including the so-called Ancient Maritime Indians from as early as 3000 BCE until c.1200 BCE, followed by Groswater Palaeo–eskimos from c.800 BCE, who were not Indians but ‘descendents of Siberian hunters’.¹⁰⁵ By about the first century CE, the Dorset Palaeo–eskimos appeared in Newfoundland, the former Groswater Palaeo–eskimos having disappeared. The Dorset Palaeo–eskimos ‘either withdrew’ or ‘became extinct’ by c.800 CE. The modern Beothuks’ ancestors were likely to have been Indians who ‘intruded’ into Newfoundland in c.500 CE, approximately the time that the Dorset Palaeo–eskimos were receding although no proof exists that they caused their disappearance. However, the Beothuks’ ancestors can be identified from 1,000 CE. Unfortunately, by the time of Smithies’ first appointment to Hant’s Harbour in 1828, the last Newfoundland Beothuk had only one year to live. Her name was Shanadithit who died in 1829.¹⁰⁶

Europeans did not ‘discover’ Newfoundland until c.985 CE.¹⁰⁷ According to the *Grønlandinga Saga*, ‘originally oral records of [Norse] voyages made around 1000 CE’, which were ‘committed to writing’ in 1250 CE ‘or later’, a Norse discoverer, Bjarni Herjolfsson who lost his way between Iceland and Greenland stumbled onto what was likely Newfoundland.¹⁰⁸ Leif Eiriksson followed him in c.1000 CE. He went ashore and built ‘large houses’ in which to spend the winter. Evidence of early Norse settlement on the northern tip of Newfoundland is extant dating from c.1000 CE lending weight to these theories of European discovery. Whether Herjolfsson or Eiriksson did encounter Newfoundland, there were Norse that did from the year noted above, so that to them belongs the first European discovery. Eventually, John Cabot (1450–1499), acting on behalf of the Henry VII (1457–1509) of England, claimed the island (uncertainty exists that it was Newfoundland) in 1497, although it was mainly a symbolic gesture since there was no real settlement and governor until August 1610.¹⁰⁹ However, Cabot’s voyage certainly aroused English interest in North America and raised the rich fishing grounds of the Grand Banks to public awareness. Sir Humphrey Gilbert (c.1537–1583) made a more formal declaration in 1583 proclaiming on behalf of Elizabeth 1 that

¹⁰⁵ O’Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland*, 1–7.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 137–138.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 7–20.

¹⁰⁸ Rowe, *Newfoundland*, 33.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 119ff.

Newfoundland was part of British dominion. In addition, Gilbert sought to establish Christian worship and practice according the EC tradition. Newfoundland was for years a staging point for cod and seal fishing rather than a settlement, the British government discouraging, even forbidding settlers in the Western Charter (so-called) of 1634.¹¹⁰ As noted earlier, the island finally became a legal colony of Britain in 1824 although colonisation had been taking place from the early seventeenth century and British sovereignty claimed for three centuries. The first governor of the colony, Sir Thomas Cochrane (1789–1872), took up his post in 1825.¹¹¹

As for Newfoundland society, O’Flaherty says that the early seventeenth century was ‘often rowdy and brutal’ and ‘governed ... by custom, not law’.¹¹² Rowe paints a picture of overuse of alcohol, particularly rum, due to sea-faring origins and rum being ridiculously cheap. Children were customarily served three doses of rum a day, and could often be seen drunk in the streets. The public houses were a perennial problem.¹¹³ Wilson confirmed this assessment and that it lasted even into the early nineteenth century according to his *Newfoundland and its Missionaries*. He said, ‘Fifty years ago [he wrote in 1866]... rum was considered almost a necessity of life’.¹¹⁴ After all, he observed quoting a local, how could a person exist without ‘a drop of rum to keep the cold out?’ He also noted that ‘fond parents often unthinkingly taught their children the habit’. He said that the ‘evil was a shocking enormity’. By his date of writing, however, Newfoundlanders were mostly acting and thinking differently.

The houses in early nineteenth century Newfoundland outports were all timber and the tilts ‘covered with boards, or spruce rinds’.¹¹⁵ Tilts were houses for temporary accommodation built for seasonal occupations for fishermen, furriers and woodcutters.¹¹⁶ Homes were simply furnished with carpet in the living room and sand floors in their kitchens. There was a large fire in the corner of the living room that was also used for cooking, homes having no stoves for this purpose. Each house had an enclosed garden attached but contained very little other than a few potatoes, vegetables

¹¹⁰ O’Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland*, 30.

¹¹¹ Kevin Major, *As Near to Heaven by Sea: A History of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Toronto: Penguin, 2001), 196–197.

¹¹² O’Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland*, 25.

¹¹³ Rowe, *Newfoundland*, 251ff.

¹¹⁴ Wilson, *Newfoundland*, 347–353.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ G. M. Story et al. (eds.), ‘tilt’, in *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 367–368.

and currants.¹¹⁷ Most of the emigrants came to Newfoundland from poor areas of England, Ireland, Scotland and the Channel Islands, and local merchants failed to provide education for their workers whilst ‘they gained almost boundless wealth’. By the 1820s, therefore, the people remained limited in their education.¹¹⁸ Writing about the late nineteenth century, Lumsden described the Newfoundlander as ‘happy, easy going ... with little apparent regard for the value of time’. He also described the people as superstitious with ‘a streak of fatalism’. When speaking of the death of a shipmate, a reasonably frequent occurrence, Newfoundlanders accepted it as fate.¹¹⁹ Although Lumsden’s assessments were from a later date, they afford a reasonable appraisal of what Smithies encountered earlier in the century.

According to D. W. Johnson and Semple, Methodism began in Newfoundland in 1765 through the agency of missionary Laurence (also spelt ‘Lawrence’) Coughlan, an Irish Methodist convert.¹²⁰ Although the EC Society for the Propagation of the Gospel sponsored him, Coughlan viewed himself a Methodist preacher. He established a society (church) after the Methodist model using Harbour Grace as his base where ‘a great work of grace began among the people in Harbour Grace, Carbonear, Blackhead, and other communities about the Bay [Conception Bay]’. Four key lay members continued the work after Coughlan returned to England in 1773. These workers were Thomas Pottle (Carbonear), Arthur Thomey (Harbour Grace), John Stretton (Harbour Grace) and John Hoskins (Old Perlican).¹²¹

In 1785, Wesley sent John McGeary as the first authorised Methodist missionary to assist in the work.¹²² He left after a short period in Newfoundland but another minister, George Smith commenced in 1794, establishing a society at Bonavista Bay. In 1796, according to Johnson, ‘he was joined by William Thoresby, who remained at Conception Bay’, while Smith established societies at ‘Greenspond, Trinity Bay, and Bonavista’.¹²³ It was during McGeary’s short tenure that Rev William Black (1760–1834) visited for a brief period from 10 August 1791, at the urging of Wesley and

¹¹⁷ Wilson, *Newfoundland*, 355.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 358–360.

¹¹⁹ James A. Lumsden, *The Skipper Parson on the Bays and Barrens of Newfoundland* (London, Kelly, 1906), 93–97.

¹²⁰ Johnson, *Methodism*, 242; Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 28–30; see also Hans Rollmann, *Early Methodism in Newfoundland* (St. John’s, NL: Memorial University of Newfoundland), URL: <http://www.mun.ca/rels/meth/index.html>.

¹²¹ Johnson, *Methodism*, 242–243; Rollmann, *Early Methodism*.

¹²² Johnson, *Methodism*, 242; Rollmann, *Early Methodism*.

¹²³ Johnson, *Methodism*, 244.

Thomas Coke, the latter known as ‘the Foreign Minister of Methodism’.¹²⁴ His visit is renowned as a time of revival that left the churches with no fewer than two hundred converts. The effect of the revival also greatly encouraged the churches and resulted in the formation of new Methodist class meetings and the procurement of new property. Rev Richard Knight (1788–1860) regarded the revival under Black as the salvation of a floundering Methodism in Newfoundland at that time.¹²⁵ However, Arthur Kewley says that his claim must be regarded as ‘emotional’. He says, ‘there seems to be little doubt that Methodism in Newfoundland was still in a precarious state at the beginning of the nineteenth century’.¹²⁶

Notwithstanding the revival under Black and the encouragement it brought, the growth of Methodism was slow until the early 1800s.¹²⁷ At that time, three Irish Methodist ministers, William Ellis, Samuel McDowell and John Remmington, began their labours and were to play ‘an influential part in establishing Methodism on firm foundations in the land’. Johnston said, ‘under this “Irish Trio”, the work of God greatly prospered all around Conception Bay, Trinity, Bonavista and other districts’, and noted that 314 members were recorded in the Methodist Minutes of 1813. ‘Attendance at worship’ numbers were always much higher than membership records, so there may have been up to 1000 worshippers each Sunday.¹²⁸ Johnston also reported that around the same period, as more ministers and circuits were added, Newfoundland became an official Methodist District (1815).¹²⁹ By 1816, the official list of Newfoundland ministers showed:¹³⁰

St. John’s – George Cubitt.	Island Cove and Perlican – John Bell.
Carbonear – John Walsh.	Port de Grave – James Hickson.
Harbour Grace – Ninian Barr	Bonavista – Thomas Hickson.
Blackhead – John Pickavant.	Trinity Harbour – William Ellis.
Western Bay – John Haigh.	Fortune Bay – Richard Knight.
	Hant’s Harbour – John Lewis

This list is of interest to the dissertation because Smithies mentioned most of the above locations as those in which he worked. He was also a contemporary of several of the ministers on the list. For example, Richard Knight officiated at John and Hannah’s

¹²⁴ Johnson, *Methodism*, 244; Findlay and Findlay, *Parish*, 14; Rollmann, *Early Methodism*.

¹²⁵ Richard Knight, ‘Memoir of the Rev William Black, of Halifax, Nova-Scotia’, in *WMM for 1837*, 241–250.

¹²⁶ Arthur E. Kewley, ‘The First Fifty Years of Methodism in Newfoundland 1765–1815: Was It Authentic Methodism?’ *The Bulletin* 26 (March–June, 1977): 6–26.

¹²⁷ Johnson, *Methodism*, 245–246.

¹²⁸ E.g., Table for Van Diemen’s Land, p. 68.

¹²⁹ Johnson, *Methodism*, 246.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 247.

wedding (1830), and John Pickavant was District Chairman when Smithies was secretary (1837).¹³¹ The station at St John's, the capital of Newfoundland, witnessed the early development of Methodism in the period of Remmington's ministry (1804–1810), and in the year of the appointment of its first minister, John Pickavant (c.1794–1848), a chapel was built in 1815.¹³² This chapel was the forerunner to the present Gower Street United Church. John Smithies served as a minister of this church from 1835 to 1837.

Methodist membership in Newfoundland increased by 50% between 1830 and 1832 to 2,000.¹³³ This may be attributed to a 'tide of religious revival', which will be expanded on later in the dissertation. At the time of the establishment of the Eastern British American Conference (1855), the Methodist Church had more than 13,000 members, '88 ministers and 102 Local Preachers', in all four districts.¹³⁴ Lench records 28,990 adherents (not members) by 1872.¹³⁵ By the turn of the century, Methodist numbers were estimated to be 30.5% of the population at 61,379 adherents out of a population of 217,037 (1901 census).¹³⁶ The census also records 76,259 Roman Catholics and 73,016 Church of England adherents. The Methodist conference figures confirm these numbers since the statistics for 1903 show 11,665 members with 16,617 Sunday school teachers and scholars.¹³⁷ The former census figures reflect numbers who deemed themselves Methodist but may not have been practising members. All this must be set in the context of a rugged geography and inhospitable climate, which paralleled the distinctive nature of Newfoundland Methodism.

It was at age twenty–six that Smithies left England in 1828 to spend nearly ten years in Newfoundland.¹³⁸ From this point, he was more detached from occurrences in Britain though never too far away due to colonial connections. Of interest is that Smithies' English experience predated many of the major national changes, which commenced the year after he left for Newfoundland. As implied above, this meant his memory of

¹³¹ Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church Conference Archives); Pitt, *Windows of Agates*, 73.

¹³² Johnson, *Methodism*, 250–251.

¹³³ Findlay and Findlay, *Parish*, 39.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 136.

¹³⁵ Charles Lench, *An Account of the Rise and Progress of Methodism, On the Grand banks and Fortune Circuits from 1816 to 1916* (Grand Banks, NF: 1916), URL: <http://ngb.chebucto.org/Articles/burin-methodist.shtml>.

¹³⁶ Lumsden, *Skipper Parson*, 37–39; Lumsden's figures can be substantiated since Johnson records 74,152 Methodists at the 1923 census, about 29.4% of Newfoundland's total (Johnson, *Methodism*, 248–249).

¹³⁷ Lumsden, *Skipper Parson*, 44.

¹³⁸ So Smith, *Methodist Church*, 179.

England was Georgian and in a sense pre-industrial although industrialisation ‘became, quite suddenly, unmistakable’ by 1829.¹³⁹ Newfoundland, on the other hand, was relatively unaffected by industrialisation when Smithies arrived, the island concentrating on seal, cod and the newer herring fisheries.¹⁴⁰ The first mine was not established there until 1864; the railways commenced well after that.¹⁴¹

Three children were born to the Smithies in Newfoundland. John Samuel was born at Burin on 2 February 1832, William Joshua at Blackhead on 2 July 1833, and Alice Hephzibah also at Blackhead on 22 April 1835.¹⁴² Smithies laboured in Newfoundland from 1828 to 1837, writing about 30 letters to his missionary society superiors. His letters speak extensively of his ministry and that of WM in Newfoundland.¹⁴³ The character and habits of the people also form part of the content of his letters providing a picture of his life, ministry and the milieu in that place. Some of the topics he covered include hardships, famine, epidemic and revivals. Places from which he wrote in Newfoundland include St John’s, capital of Newfoundland, and outports, Hant’s Harbour, Burin, Carbonear and Blackhead.¹⁴⁴

It was into a tumultuous and industrialised English life, Smithies re-entered after his nine-year absence in Newfoundland.¹⁴⁵ During this period in England, McNair says he ministered mainly in the Derbyshire circuit.¹⁴⁶ He was, in fact, stationed at Bakewell, Derbyshire, and wrote a letter from there to the WMMS.¹⁴⁷ We wonder how he adjusted in light of the many changes that had taken place, not the least of these in his own family. In 1836, Hannah Smithies and children had returned to England while Smithies was appointed to the Abaco Circuit in 1837 (Abaco is one of the Family Islands in the Bahamas).¹⁴⁸ Hannah was pregnant and needed to be in England for the latter part of her confinement and delivery due to accompanying illness. As it turned out, John did

¹³⁹ Harvie, ‘Revolution’, 470–517.

¹⁴⁰ O’Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland*, 126–151; Major, *Heaven by Sea*, 282ff.

¹⁴¹ Major, *Heaven by Sea*, 282ff.

¹⁴² Handwritten copies (Perth, WA: Uniting Church Archives).

¹⁴³ See SOAS, Boxes 96–99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 1828–1837.

¹⁴⁴ *Outports* originally meant any port outside London but came to mean ports outside St John’s, NL (Story et al., *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, 363).

¹⁴⁵ Harvie, ‘Revolution’, 470–517; A. N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (London: Arrow, 2002), 34–47; Davies, *Methodism*, 151–152; Davey, *Methodist Story*, 48ff; Primitive Methodism was a breakaway group from WM (Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 386ff).

¹⁴⁶ William McNair, ‘A Second Look at the Early Years of Methodism in Western Australia: 1830–1855’, *Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal* 7, 1 (1969): 79–87.

¹⁴⁷ *WMM for 1838*, 356; SOAS, London, WMMS Correspondence Home 1803–97, Box 5, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 July 1839.

¹⁴⁸ *WMM for 1837*, 397.

not take up his appointment in the Bahamas ‘due to an indisposition’.¹⁴⁹ An indication of how the Smithies felt about re-entering England is found in his letter written from Bakewell on 16 July 1839 in response to an invitation from the WMMS to accept a post in the Swan River colony.¹⁵⁰ John said that he and Hannah felt that their missionary days were over and that they were content to settle into the more comfortable English parish life.¹⁵¹ However, after much discussion and prayer, he and Hannah decided to accept the invitation, although they thought they might leave one or two of the older children in England due to the rigours of colonial life.¹⁵² We know that they did not do this and we know also that their fifth child Thomas Jackson was about to die at the age of thirteen months. Mary Elizabeth, their fourth child who was born in London on the 4 October 1837, had previously died in April 1838.¹⁵³ Despite their initial reluctance to accept another missionary appointment and the sad demise of their youngest child, they set sail for the Swan River colony in Perth, Western Australia, on 8 January 1840 although their ship could not leave until 17 February due to ‘contrary winds’.¹⁵⁴

The southern world into which Smithies now entered was as strange as it was distant from either Newfoundland or ‘mother’ England. Thought to be part of a ‘super continent called Gondwanaland’, over 40,000 million years ago Australia split off from ‘Antarctica, South America, Africa, Madagascar ... New Zealand and New Guinea’ to form a separate island continent, the only continent now comprising one nation.¹⁵⁵ Western Australia was also called New Holland at the time of Smithies,¹⁵⁶ since the Dutch had so named the western part of the continent, the eastern part earlier being

¹⁴⁹ Minutes of the Bahama District Meeting of the WM Church, 28 March 1838 (Archives of the Bahamas).

¹⁵⁰ SOAS, London, WMMS Correspondence Home 1803–97, Box 5, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 July 1839; The *WMM* records Smithies as stationed at Bakewell (*WMM for 1838*, 356).

¹⁵¹ SOAS, Box 5, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 July 1839.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Uniting Church Archives (Perth, WA); SOAS, Box 5, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 July 1839. Smithies notes that Thomas was eleven months old at the time of this letter. A note at the archives mentions him dying in August 1839, making him thirteen months old at his death. He was certainly not on the voyage with them to Swan River, which commenced on the 8 January 1840; Arriving children records derived from Family Marriages and Births (St. John’s, NL: United Church Archives), sighted 14 July 2004; Mary Elizabeth and Thomas Jackson’s birth and death records also derive from a note in a family Bible (Perth, WA: Uniting Church Archives); Smithies’ letters to the WMMS in 1836 and 1839 (SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, 14 December 1836; SOAS, Box 5, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 July 1839).

¹⁵⁴ *WMM for 1840*, 181–182, 358.

¹⁵⁵ Keith Suter, ‘Australia – One Land: Two Peoples’, in *Contemporary Review* 283, 1651 (August, 2003): 84–90.

¹⁵⁶ E.g., SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 18 January 1841.

called the 'South Land', then upon settlement, New South Wales.¹⁵⁷ However, European history is but a moment in time when compared with that of the first inhabitants of the state, and indeed the nation.

Indigenous history in Australia goes back some 50,000 to 60,000 years with no actual Aboriginal memory of migration to Australia.¹⁵⁸ It is conjectured that the original indigenous people settled in Australia from the islands to the north, crossing over land bridges from Timor and New Guinea when the sea level was much lower, or by wading across the Torres Strait from New Guinea. Similarly, Tasmanian Aboriginals migrated to that island across Bass Strait from mainland Australia about 20,000 to 30,000 years ago when sea levels were still low, but with the rise of the sea to near its present level Tasmanian Aboriginals became isolated, developing into a unique people though closely related to mainland Aboriginals. Indigenous languages were as different from each other as French, English and German, but some words were identifiable across the continent. The people were hunters and gatherers and were nomadic; although contrary to reputation, had defined paths of travel and areas of habitation so that they were not 'aimless wanderers'.

At the time of English settlement (also called occupation and invasion), the indigenous population was thought to be approximately 750,000 although some estimates are as high as 1.5 million.¹⁵⁹ About '250 distinct languages' were spoken by 'about 600 or 700 tribes'.¹⁶⁰ In Western Australia, the indigenous inhabitants arrived in the initial migration about 55,000 years ago in the north west of the state slowly moving southward over the next 20,000 years.¹⁶¹ Aboriginal people were present in most parts of the state by the time of European visits. When the First Fleet arrived in Botany Bay in 1788, it is estimated that there were 52,000 Aboriginals in WA (Neville estimated 55,000), with 2,000 to 3,000 in the vicinity of Perth in 1840.¹⁶² Nyungar people of whom the Swan River Aboriginals were part, inhabited the southwest region of the state

¹⁵⁷ James Sykes Battye, *Western Australia: A History from its Discovery to the Inauguration of the Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924), 35; see also map in Pamela Statham-Drew, *James Stirling: Admiral and Founding Governor of Western Australia* (Crawley, WA: University of Western Australia Press, 2003), 204.

¹⁵⁸ Suter, 'Australia', 84–90.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australia Now, Statistics – Tasmania, History: Aboriginal Occupation*, URL: <http://www.abs.gov.au/> Aboriginal occupation.

¹⁶¹ Sylvia J. Hallam, 'The First Western Australians', in *New History*, ed. Stannage, 35–71.

¹⁶² C. D. Rowley, *The Destruction of Aboriginal Society* (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin, 1970), 384; A. O. Neville, 'Relations Between Settlers and Aborigines in Western Australia', in *Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal* 2, 9 (1936): 10–46; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 41.

from Jurien Bay to Esperance and were thought to number above 6,000 perhaps even above 10,000.

Swan River Aborigines consisted of ‘at least a dozen social units’.¹⁶³ Smithies probably ministered to the ‘Whadjug (originally occupants of the Perth area), the Balardong (located around York), and the Bindjareb (around Pinjarra)’, although as Berndt says, ‘members of other named units were undoubtedly present’ such as ‘Bibelman (Pipelman or Bibbulmun) as one division of the wider contemporary Nyungar (or Nyoongar, or other spellings)’.¹⁶⁴ Nyungars existed by hunting, fishing and trapping, kangaroo being a favourite. They also gathered a variety of seeds and plants and uniquely used quartz for their spear and knife-edges. Colonists came to be looked on with disdain partly because of the treatment inflicted on the Nyungars.

Shortly after the infamous ‘Battle of Pinjarra’, the government appointed a ‘native interpreter’ in the person of Methodist Francis F. Armstrong (c.1813–1896), a man who was to become Smithies’ close colleague.¹⁶⁵ The Battle of Pinjarra occurred in October 1834 when a party of soldiers led by Governor Stirling shot and killed between 19–30 Aborigines (estimated by the surveyor general Septimus Roe and Joseph Hardey) although the official records show fifteen slain.¹⁶⁶ Armstrong was commissioned to establish a ‘Native Institution’, subsequently set up ‘at the foot of Mt Eliza, on the river bank below the present Kings Park’. The institution was to be their reserved area from which Aborigines could go about their traditional life and were given a boat to assist in fishing. The reserve was a place of protection from which they could go and come as they pleased. Armstrong, having voluntarily learned their customs and languages since arriving in the colony with his family at the age of seventeen, made an ideal advocate.¹⁶⁷ As noted, Armstrong was a Methodist, part of a well-established community of them in the colony.

The Swan River colony was located in Western Australia (WA), Australia’s largest state which has an area of 2,525,500 square kilometres; or, nearly a third of the nation’s total. The capital, Perth, is situated on the Swan River, sixteen kilometres from its mouth

¹⁶³ Ronald M. Berndt, ‘Foreword’, in McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, xv–xxiii.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ Ronald E. Turner, *Foundations Not Made with Hands* (Perth, WA: Wesley, 1984), 10–13.

¹⁶⁶ Neville Green, ‘Aborigines and White Settlers in the Nineteenth Century’, in *New History*, ed. Stannage, 72–123; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 3–15; Rowley, *Aboriginal Society*, 64–65; Turner, *Foundations*, 10–13.

¹⁶⁷ Green, ‘Aborigines’, 72–123; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 3–15; Rowley, *Aboriginal Society*, 64–65; Turner, *Foundations*, 10–13.

(Fremantle) at the base of Mt Eliza at latitude 31.56 south and longitude 115.50 east. Governor James Stirling (1791–1865) officially settled the Swan River colony (Perth) three years after Albany, in 1829. Stirling had earlier explored the Swan River in March 1827 in H.M.S. *Success*.¹⁶⁸ The beginnings of Methodism in the Swan River colony virtually coincide with the establishment of the colony itself, as Colwell points out.¹⁶⁹ The *Tranby* was one of the very early vessels to reach the Swan River, leaving Hull on 9 September 1829 arriving at Fremantle in February 1830. Two of the Methodist families on board had also contracted the voyage. Those families, the Hardeys and Clarksons, were to become prominent not only in the history of Methodism but also in Western Australia. There were other Methodists on the vessel. Immediately on arrival, the first Wesleyan service in the state was conducted at Fremantle.¹⁷⁰ Methodists who had earlier settled in Perth prior to the *Tranby* included James Inkpen and family and the just noted Francis F. Armstrong. These arrived on the *Gilmore* and were among the colony's earliest settlers.¹⁷¹

The Hardeys set up their prefabricated house at Fremantle and made it available for church (EC and Methodist) services.¹⁷² Joseph Hardey mentioned an early service in his diary. He recorded:

February 28th, 1830, Mr Davies, Church Minister, preached in our house this morning, and I spoke in the evening to upwards of 50 people, the first time, I believe, the Fremantle people have been addressed by the Methodists.¹⁷³

Another eyewitness to this meeting was a female passenger en route to Tasmania with the minister, Mr. Davies. She wrote that at the close of the EC morning service, Joseph Hardey announced a Methodist service at six o'clock that evening and invited all present to attend.¹⁷⁴ The passenger attended this service and reported loud singing, long prayers and inspirational preaching, practices typical of Methodists of the day and in sharp contrast to EC services.¹⁷⁵ Another incident from 'an ancient chronicle', as Jenkins called it,¹⁷⁶ reported 'well dressed and tolerably educated' people 'who should have known better', who attempted to disturb the meetings 'at various times'. These

¹⁶⁸ Green, 'Aborigines', 72–123.

¹⁶⁹ Colwell, *Century*, 337–341; A. J. Sampson, 'A History of Wesleyan Methodism in Western Australia, 1829–1956' (Thesis, M.A., University of Western Australia, 1958), chap. 1.

¹⁷⁰ Colwell, *Century*, 337–341.

¹⁷¹ Charles A. Jenkins, *A Century of Methodism in Western Australia 1830–1930* (Perth, WA: Methodist Book Depot, 1930), 5.

¹⁷² Sampson, 'Wesleyan Methodism', chap. 1.

¹⁷³ Jenkins, *Methodism*, 8.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁷⁵ Davies, *Worship*, iv: 253–256.

¹⁷⁶ Jenkins, *Methodism*, 14.

disturbers of the peace called the Methodists, ‘Ranters’.¹⁷⁷ The use of the term ‘Ranters’ is interesting because it usually applied to Primitive Methodists who were known to be more strident and emotional in their preaching. Chadwick says, ‘When Victorians talked of Ranters they meant Primitive Methodists’.¹⁷⁸ It is understandable that the term would be used at times in reference to Methodists in general and perhaps Yorkshire Methodists, as were the Hardeys, in particular.¹⁷⁹

The Hardeys soon relocated to what is now the Peninsula in Maylands. Governor Stirling having made a land grant, they established a home and farm, and again, their Methodist services.¹⁸⁰ Joseph Hardey’s third house on the site, now called Tranby House, was built in 1839. It still stands and is a heritage building and tourist attraction.¹⁸¹ In the near vicinity are Clarkson Reserve, Hardey Road, and Tranby Road. Joseph Hardey, formerly a Yorkshire local preacher, took the lead in the first Methodist services. Guildford and Perth were also sites of Methodist meetings. These early Methodists decided to centralise their meetings in Perth, although they were keen to hold services in as many places as possible, initially conducting them under a jarrah tree in Hay Street. A brass plaque in the street’s footpath commemorates this.¹⁸²

January 1833 saw the arrival of more Methodists from England, namely George Shenton and two more Clarksons, Charles and Bernard.¹⁸³ Sufficient momentum had now been achieved to establish a permanent chapel. On 12 May 1834, to the newly formed WM committee, James Inkpen sold a parcel of land fronting Murray Street for this purpose. A brick chapel was built on the site and opened on 22 June 1834 by Joseph Hardey. The building itself was only 30 by 18 feet. However, the establishment of a chapel provided impetus for activities such as Sunday school for the children. Importantly, it also provided a sense of identity and permanence for the Methodists in the young colony.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 387.

¹⁷⁹ For use of this term, see Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 386ff.

¹⁸⁰ Colwell, *Century*, 337–341; Sampson, ‘Wesleyan Methodism’, chap. 1.

¹⁸¹ Ruth Johnston, *The Tranby Hardeys* (Welshpool, WA: Parmelia, 1988), 21.

¹⁸² Ibid., 24; Colwell, *Century*, 337–341.

¹⁸³ Sampson, ‘Wesleyan Methodism’, chap. 1.

¹⁸⁴ Colwell, *Century*, 337–341.

Having established themselves to this point, these zealous lay Methodists began in earnest to seek for an ordained minister from England.¹⁸⁵ Seven years of persistence seemed to go unheeded until at last in 1837, the WMMS appointed and sent the Rev William Longbottom to the Swan River.¹⁸⁶ However, Longbottom's ship, *Fanny*, en route via Hobart, ran aground near Encounter Bay, South Australia. Not long afterward, on 17 August 1838, Longbottom discovered a Methodist congregation in Adelaide, which begged him to remain as its minister. He consented and thus never fulfilled his original appointment!¹⁸⁷

Finally, in 1839, the WMMS appointed Rev John Smithies to fill the post not taken up by Longbottom due to his 'relocation'.¹⁸⁸ He arrived in June 1840 with his wife Hannah and four children (two children having died in England, namely, Mary Elizabeth, aged seven months, and Thomas Jackson, aged thirteen months), John Samuel, William Joshua, Alice Hephzibah, and Hannah Mary who was born at sea just two weeks out of Fremantle.¹⁸⁹ He said,

We are happy and thankful to be able to inform you of our safe arrival in this distant and interesting part of Missionary enterprise, and that as a family we are all well and ready to carry on in our great work. Our voyage was one of great mercy, and crowned with many blessings.¹⁹⁰

Although Smithies said that the family were well, Hannah Mary had been born (23 May 1840) without, according to his letter, the medical care that he had thought would be available on the ship.¹⁹¹ His arrival in Perth on Saturday 6 June 1840, commenced a new phase in Smithies' long missionary career, as outlined below.¹⁹² This part of Smithies' life was probably the full-flowering of his ministry and provides an excellent window into his life and work as a Wesleyan Methodist in early Australia including his

¹⁸⁵ SOAS, Box 515, Michael Clarkson et al. to WMMS, London, 13 October 1830, 28 August 1836; Sampson, 'Wesleyan Methodism', chap. 1.

¹⁸⁶ Colwell, *Century*, 337–341; 1838 is given as the date of appointment by the following authors. This is not correct as the letters written by J. W. Hardey in 1837 show. See J. Bickford, *Christian Work in Australasia* (London: Wesleyan Conference, 1878), 176; John Blacket, *Missionary Triumphs Among the Settlers in Australia and the savages of the South Seas* (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1914), 201.

¹⁸⁷ Colwell, *Century*, 337–341.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*; Sampson, 'Wesleyan Methodism', chap. 1.

¹⁸⁹ Rumley and McNair say three children arrived with their parents but Smithies actually arrived with four children (Rumley and McNair, *Aboriginal Mission*, 33). See, arriving children records derived from Family Marriages and Births (St. John's, NL: United Church Archives), sighted 14 July 2004; family records derived from note in an old family Bible (Perth, WA: Uniting Church Archives); Mary Elizabeth and Thomas Jackson's birth and death records also derive from a note in an old family Bible (Perth, WA: Uniting Church Archives); SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 14 December 1836; SOAS, Box 5, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 July 1839.

¹⁹⁰ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 22 June, 1840.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*; Note in family Bible (Perth, WA: Uniting Church Archives); see also first Baptismal entry (Perth, WA: Uniting Church Archives).

¹⁹² For arrival date, see Rumley and McNair, *Aboriginal Mission*, 34.

part in shaping the colony but also his shaping by it and its conditions. The latter part of Smithies' work in the Swan River (1844–1854) involved labours at Alder Lake (Wanneroo), twenty kilometres north of Perth on the coastal plain, then York, ninety-seven kilometres to the east of Perth in the Avon Valley. The final move to Van Diemen's Land completed this period of his work.

The orphan status of Western Australia in its early years is echoed in an editorial of *The Swan River News and Western Australian Chronicle* dated 'London, January 1st, 1844'.

It says,

The Colony of Western Australia is less known, less populated, less sought after, than those which have started into being ten years after its formation, and which now possess thrice its population, and enjoy thrice the public notice of their older neighbour.¹⁹³

The periodical then proceeded to explain the reason for its publication, which was to provide a more complete picture of the Swan River colony to Londoners in the hope of attracting more investment and immigration. The paper existed for about five years and is a rich source of information about the early colony, although a measure of caution has to be used in interpreting its data because of the propagandist nature of the periodical, notwithstanding its emphatic claim to tell 'THE TRUTH' to its constituent readers.¹⁹⁴ Articles of relevance to this dissertation are contained in the series and will be used at appropriate points.

A description of Perth recorded just three years prior to Smithies' arrival comes from James Blackhouse who visited at the end of 1837.¹⁹⁵ He says that there were a few houses in each of Perth's several streets, however some of the houses together with their fences seemed to be 'going to decay'. As for the streets themselves they consisted of 'sand mixed with charcoal from the repeated burning of the scrub', although to enable easier passage along the 'principal street', there existed a slightly elevated and lightly paved 'causeway'. He said that 'beautiful native shrubs' grew along the garden borders although many were in a 'neglected state'. Perth homes were each surrounded by 'a portion of ground' and were spaced 'at short distances one from another' and were fenced with sawn timber. Houses at this time did not have plastered walls or glass in the windows and 'fleas were very numerous'. Added to fleas was the large mosquito population, particularly troublesome at night. Blackhouse's view of Perth is close to the

¹⁹³ *The Swan River News and Western Australian Chronicle*, No. 1 (London: 1 January 1844), 1.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁹⁵ Paul Hasluck, 'Glimpses of Early Perth and Fremantle, 1829–1839', in *Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal* 2, 13 (1933): 37–49.

Swan River colony that Smithies experienced when he arrived in June 1840. Fifteen years later, in 1855, Smithies left the Swan River for his new appointment in Van Diemen's Land.

The island of Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land) was formed by the melting of the poles some 18,000 years ago which resulted some 6,000 years later in the formation of an island separate from mainland Australia, known since 1853 as Tasmania.¹⁹⁶ The only island state of Australia, it is situated approximately 240 kilometres south of the state of Victoria across the Bass Strait, its northern border. Its southern and western border is the Southern Ocean, and the eastern border is the Tasman Sea. Tasmania was the second British colony in Australia. The total area of Tasmania including all islands within its boundaries is 68,331 square kilometres, about one per cent of Australia's total area (7,682,300 square kilometres). Tasmania has a coastline of 3,225 kilometres, and contains twenty-eight mountains of 1,220 metres or more in height. Its capital Hobart, presided over by the majestic Mt Wellington, is situated on the Derwent River.

Aboriginal people were thought to have inhabited the area some 20,000 years ago, as noted earlier, although some estimates say 35,000 years ago is more likely.¹⁹⁷ The indigenous people were hunters and gatherers, 'berries and eggs' being part of their sought after fare. Just prior to European settlement of Tasmania, there would have been a population of 4,000 to 6,000 indigenous people consisting of 'at least five language units'. It was in 1642 that Abel Tasman, a Dutch explorer, is thought to have made the first European 'discovery' of the island naming it Van Diemen's Land. French and English explorers followed much later in the following century, mapping some of the coastline and making usually friendly contact with indigenous inhabitants.

Fearing French occupation of Tasmania, New South Wales Governor King, sent Lieutenant John Bowen together with a group of convicts to settle the Derwent River area in 1803.¹⁹⁸ The following year, the British government officially installed Lieutenant-Governor David Collins (1756–1810), who eventually decided to establish a settlement on the Derwent having been originally sent to Port Phillip (Melbourne). Van Diemen's Land was answerable to Sydney notwithstanding its local administration.

¹⁹⁶ Leslie Lloyd Robson and Michael Roe, *A Short History of Tasmania*, 2nd edn. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1–18; Leslie Lloyd Robson, *The Tasmanian Story* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1987), 1–6; Lyndall Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, 2nd edn. (St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1996), xx–xxii.

¹⁹⁷ Robson and Roe, *Tasmania*, 1–18; Robson, *Tasmanian Story*, 1–6; Ryan, *Aboriginal Tasmanians*, xx–xxii.

¹⁹⁸ Ian Breward, *A History of the Australian Churches* (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1993), 12; Robson and Roe, *Tasmania*, 1–18; Robson, *Tasmanian Story*, 1–9.

Deputy Governors followed Governor Collins until Colonel Thomas Davey (governor from 1813–1817), and William Sorell (governor from 1817 to 1824). Van Diemen's Land was primarily a penal colony with large numbers sent mainly from Britain but also from New South Wales (approximate convict total: 66,000 or 40% of the population by 1840), and, early in its history, recently freed convicts settled from Norfolk Island. The last convicts arrived in 1853. After the French wars ended in 1815, Britain encouraged settlers to go to Van Diemen's Land.

Increasing numbers of settlers and convicts (12,623 in total by 1824) constituted a very real invasion to indigenous inhabitants, resulting in their displacement from traditional lands.¹⁹⁹ This situation precipitated the so called Black War in response to 'guerrilla' tactics used by Aboriginal people who burned settlers' houses and hay stacks, speared livestock, 'stole' provisions and killed many settlers, whom they viewed as invaders. In the Big River area, for instance, some sixty Europeans were killed between 1824 and 1831. Devastating revenge was exacted, however, in the form of 240 Aboriginal people killed by Europeans out of an estimated 300 who lived in the area. A 'highlight' of the Black War was the attempted round up of every indigenous person on the island by means of the infamous 'Black Line', an assembly of military personnel and settlers who 'swept' across the island toward Forestiers Peninsula on the south eastern coast. The venture failed since only two people were discovered and captured.

Governor George Arthur (1784–1854), acknowledging that his attempts had failed, employed another method to gather indigenous people with the aim of relocating them to Flinders Island in Bass Strait.²⁰⁰ He engaged the services of Methodist George Augustus Robinson who had some knowledge of the Aboriginal language as well as sympathy for, and acceptance by them. Robinson's personal attempts were 'successful' in spite of very difficult journeys. Called 'the Conciliator', later assessment of Robinson is not as kind although it is likely that his intentions were honourable in that he thought he was saving Aboriginals from certain destruction. As it turned out, he may have been largely responsible for their demise. It was thought until fairly recently that the Aboriginals gathered to Flinders Island were the last of their people and that with their deaths (the last being Truganini in 1876), indigenous people became extinct in Tasmania, ending a tragic and inexcusable saga in European Australian history.

¹⁹⁹ Robson and Roe, *Tasmania*, 1–18; Robson, *Tasmanian Story*, 1–9; Ryan, *Aboriginal Tasmanians*, 101–123.

²⁰⁰ Robson and Roe, *Tasmania*, 1–18; Robson, *Tasmanian Story*, 10–22; Ryan, *Aboriginal Tasmanians*, 124–159.

However, there were other survivors and by 1991, Tasmanian Aboriginals, ‘best called Palawa’, numbered in excess of 8,000 people (over 10,000 in 1994).²⁰¹ Nevertheless, the perception of Aboriginals’ demise, as well as the earlier hostility between them and Europeans, meant that little or no missionary work was carried on among indigenous people by any church, Methodist included.

In 1854, the year before the arrival of the Smithies in Tasmania (although their son, John Samuel, had arrived in 1848 for employment), Rev Robert Young, visiting WMMS representative from London, reported on the origins of Methodism in his *Southern World*.²⁰² He said that the first Wesleyan minister, Rev Benjamin Carvosso, arrived in ‘Hobart–Town’ from England in April 1820 and quickly discovered that the inhabitants were ‘destitute of the means of grace’ and generally lawless.²⁰³ Robson confirms this view saying that ‘Van Diemen’s Land was an extremely violent society’ and that ‘Wesleyan missionaries’ felt they ‘could never labour too long in such a barbarous society’.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, Carvosso quickly began his ministry to the local inhabitants who were not used to evangelistic preaching. The steps of a building used as a courthouse became the pulpit from which Carvosso preached, his wife Deborah who ‘conducted the psalmody’ at his side. Large congregations (100 people at the first service according to Colwell) attended the services at various times until Carvosso and his wife sailed for New South Wales.²⁰⁵ Rev R. Mansfield who had been on his way to New South Wales but was diverted to Van Diemen’s Land subsequently conducted services of the same nature.²⁰⁶

In the meantime, Carvosso wrote to London explaining the spiritual plight of the people in Tasmania requesting that the WMMS send a missionary there.²⁰⁷ Even before he received an answer, some soldiers of the 48th Regiment who had been converted in New South Wales, but were then settled in Hobart, began prayer meetings for the town’s people. The meetings were attended by increasing numbers and produced results

²⁰¹ Robson and Roe, *Tasmania*, 169; Ryan, *Aboriginal Tasmanians*, 288.

²⁰² Robert Young, *The Southern World: Journal of a Deputation from the Wesleyan Conference to Australia and Polynesia: including Notices of a Visit to the Gold Fields* (London: Hamilton, Adams and Co., 1854), 379–382; C. C. Dugan, *A Century of Tasmanian Methodism 1820–1920* (Hobart, Tas: Tasmanian Methodist Assembly, 1920), 10–69.

²⁰³ Young, *Southern World*, 379–382; Dugan, *Tasmanian Methodism*, 10–23.

²⁰⁴ Robson and Roe, *Tasmania*, 16; so also Dugan, *Tasmanian Methodism*, 11.

²⁰⁵ Colwell, *Century*, 271; R. D. Pretyman, *A Chronicle of Methodism in Van Diemen’s Land 1820–1840* (Melbourne: Aldersgate, 1970), 10–15.

²⁰⁶ Young, *Southern World*, 379–382; Pretyman, *Methodism*, 10–15; Dugan, *Tasmanian Methodism*, 10–23.

²⁰⁷ Young, *Southern World*, 379–382; Pretyman, *Methodism*, 16–21.

normally expected in Methodist preaching services in that a number of people were ‘convinced of sin’ and converted. Some lawless elements in the town tried to disrupt the gatherings by hurling rocks, shouting incessantly, breaking windows and pounding on the doors of the building.²⁰⁸ The disturbances were designed to intimidate attendees and stop their practice. However, the persecution simply increased the impact of the meetings with growing numbers of people attending and being converted. Shortly afterwards, under the threat of applying to Lieutenant–Governor Colonel William Sorell (1775–1848) for protection, opposition ceased and never occurred again in Hobart.

The first Methodist Class meeting was held in 1821, but the group was still without an ordained minister until later in that year when Rev W. Horton was warmly welcomed as its first resident minister.²⁰⁹ At that time, the growing congregation worshipped in a small weatherboard chapel. In 1822, Mr David Lord donated land for a new Methodist chapel that took nearly four years to complete. It was dedicated on 12 February 1826. Carvosso returned and took up the pastorate of the new Melville Street Chapel. He preached the inaugural sermon in the new sanctuary and remained as its minister for five years.

Young observes that the WM Church, from its beginnings in Van Diemen’s Land to the time of his visit in 1854, ‘continued to increase and extend until it had embraced nearly every town and village in the island’.²¹⁰ He said that the church was in a ‘very vigorous and prosperous state’. Young counted twenty–three chapels across the state, mostly ‘built of stone or brick’ and that there was not a ‘farthing debt on any of them’. This growth continued to the early part of the twentieth century resulting in 24,975 adherents of Methodism by 1920 out of a population of 191,211 (approximately 12% of the total).²¹¹

The state of Tasmanian Methodism may be gauged by the 1844 conference statistics (below), some eleven years prior to Smithies’ arrival and ten years prior to Young’s visit.²¹²

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Young, *Southern World*, 379–382; Pretyman, *Methodism*, 22–45; Dugan, *Tasmanian Methodism*, 24–55.

²¹⁰ Young, *Southern World*, 379–382; Dugan, *Tasmanian Methodism*, 7–9.

²¹¹ Dugan, *Tasmanian Methodism*, 7–9.

²¹² Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book of the Annual Meetings of Wesleyan Preachers of Van Diemen’s Land*, 4 October 1844 (Ref: NS 499/15).

Station or Circuit	Chapels	Other Preaching Places	Missionaries and assistants	Members	No of Sabbath Schools	No of Sabbath Scholars	Total attendance (all incl.)	Ave attendance
Hobart Town	6	1	1	202	7	460	2700	1700
New Norfolk	3	2	1	39	2	39	400	200
Ross & Etc	3	3	1	81	3	106	600	300
Launceston	7	7	2	326	3	300	2100	1500
Total	19	13	5	648	15	905	5800	3720

By way of comparison with Smithies' time (1855 onwards), the 1856 WM ministers' meeting minutes records worship attendance, 4100, chapels, 24, preaching places, 16, members, 763, and Sabbath School total, 1299.²¹³ So, only modest gains in some categories were made in the twelve years after 1844.

Into this background, John Smithies, his wife and family, found themselves immersed from 1855, having arrived in Hobart on the *Swordfish* on 28 May 1855.²¹⁴ According to the annual ministers' meeting minutes for that year, his first appointment was to New Norfolk, 33 kilometres north-west of Hobart.²¹⁵ The annual ministers' meetings were convened in the Melville Street Chapel, Hobart, Horton College, Ross, or the Patterson Street Chapel, Launceston. The 1858 minutes record Smithies stationed at Longford.²¹⁶ In another two years, we find him at Oatlands.²¹⁷ In 1863, Smithies is recorded at Mersey as a supernumerary. A later minute (1863) records an entry of respect for 35 years of ministry.²¹⁸ Respect for Smithies is also indicated by the placement of his name next to the chairperson of each meeting he attended, with the secretary's name placed after his, despite the fact that Smithies held no office. Another point of interest is a note in the minutes relating to Isaac Rooney's acceptance into WM ministry. Rooney was shortly to become Smithies son-in-law. He married Hannah Mary Smithies on 2 April 1865.²¹⁹ In addition, WM statistics at the time of its 1863 annual ministers' meeting show worship attendance, 6985; chapels, 39; preaching places, 32; members, 973; Sabbath school total, 2187, a considerable increase since 1856.

At the ministers' meeting of 1867, Smithies is again recorded at Mersey.²²⁰ Then at the 1868 meeting, he is recorded absent due to sickness. It is also the year of his daughter

²¹³ Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book*, 20 November, 1856 (Ref: NS 499/16).

²¹⁴ *Ibid.* (Ref. B2/39/19/p.116).

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 20 November, 1855 (Ref: NS 499/17).

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 10 November, 1858 (Ref: NS 499/16).

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 13 November, 1860 (Ref: NS 499/16).

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 20 November, 1863 (Ref: NS 499/16).

²¹⁹ Archives of Tasmania, Methodist Collection, *Marriage Affidavits Register* (Ref: NS 499/2961).

²²⁰ Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book*, 13 November, 1867 (Ref: NS 499/16).

Hannah Mary's tragic death in Fiji where she had recently accompanied her WM missionary husband, the Rev Isaac Rooney.²²¹ She died from puerperal fever shortly after the birth of their first daughter.²²² Smithies was again reported absent due to illness at the next two annual ministers' meetings.²²³ At the 1872 ministers' meeting, a record notes a letter of condolence sent to the Smithies' family on John's recent death.²²⁴

Included in this entry is the following:

Question II: Have any Ministers or Preachers on Trial died during the year?

Ans: John Smithies aged 70, in the 45th year of his itinerancy. The earlier period of his ministerial life was spent in the Newfoundland Mission, where his labours were signally owned of God in the conversion of many sinners from the errors of their ways. After a brief sojourn in England, during which he travelled in one of the Derbyshire Circuits, he was appointed by Conference to take charge of a Mission to Swan River in Western Australia. In that Colony for 16 years [actually just under 15 years] he not only faithfully preached the Gospel to the English settlers, but was instant in season and out of season in his efforts to educate and Christianise the poor degraded Aborigines, many of whom remember him with gratitude to this day.

In the year 1854 he was appointed to Tasmania, where he served the Church with earnest fidelity, as his strength would permit during the remainder of his life. The last 7 or 8 years of his stay on earth were spent in comparative retirement, necessitated by the infirmities of increasing years. His last pulpit service was in our chapel at Westbury, where he preached a funeral sermon for his beloved daughter Mrs Rooney who had died shortly previous in the Fiji Mission. The death of his daughter affected him strongly, and gave such a shock to his system, as his failing health was unable to sustain. From this time to the close of his life 2 or 3 years later, he was in age and feebleness extreme, but rested in the blood of Jesus Christ and was at peace. A favourite verse of his was –

‘A guilty weak and helpless worm,
Into thy hands I fall,
Thou art my strength and righteousness,
My Saviour and my All.’

Smithies' last words, 'I'll praise', are a fitting final expression given his life's work to spread his Redeemer's name throughout the earth.²²⁵

§2.4 Conclusion

Smithies' ministry in Newfoundland, the Swan River colony and Van Diemen's Land serves as a lens through which we will re-evaluate WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century. As this chapter has shown, the conditions in which Methodism and

²²¹ Ibid., 11 November, 1868 (Ref: NS 499/17).

²²² Isaac Rooney, *Diary extract on Microfilm*, ref: PRG 141 (Adelaide, SA: Mortlock Library): 43–45.

²²³ Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book*, 10 November, 1869, 9 November 1870 (Ref: NS 499/17).

²²⁴ Ibid., 13 November, 1872 (Ref: NS 499/17).

²²⁵ Ibid., 13 November 1872 (Ref: NS 499/17). These last words were from Isaac Watts' hymn: 'I'll praise my Maker while I've breath' (Isaac Watts, 'I'll Praise', in *The Methodist Hymnbook* [London: Methodist Conference Office, 1954], 370; The earlier favourite verse was taken from the hymn, "In age and feebleness extreme", by Charles Wesley (Charles Wesley, 'In Age', in *The Methodist Hymnbook* [London: Methodist Conference Office, 1954], 852).

its mission flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth century included evolving philosophies such as Rationalism and Romanticism, a declining EC, and rising industrialism with its progress on one hand, but social dislocation and anomie on the other. Added to these were periodic appearances of apocalyptic style agitations as epidemics, wars and social disturbances waxed and waned. The various political reforms added to the melting pot. Some of these factors created a vacuum that Methodism readily filled. Other conditions such as expanding British Empire provided an ideal vehicle for world missions in which WM was not only deeply involved but was also a vanguard.

Although these circumstances undoubtedly contributed to Methodism's rise and subsequent mission, they do not provide principal reasons for its advance. The answers lie beneath the surface and are not easily detected. To illustrate, one writer attributed Methodism's advance in Newfoundland to good organisation²²⁶ whereas another pointed out that even with its carefully devised organisation, WM principally existed because of its doctrines and experientialism.²²⁷ As Stevens asks, 'How can we conceive of a lifeless laity embodied in classes and meeting weekly to converse of Christian experience? Of love-feasts and prayer-meetings among dead formalists?'²²⁸ 'Or', he continues, 'how can we conceive ... of such a ministry preaching the distinctive doctrines of Methodism—distinguishable conversion, the witness of the Spirit, and Christian perfection?' It is the life and teaching of WM that better explain its existence and growth. A vital aspect of that life and teaching concerns the movement's objectives and motivation which we seek to discover first through examining its mission statement. It is to Smithies' ministry that we now turn our attention or order to investigate the WM mission statement.

²²⁶ So Kewley, 'The First Fifty Years': 6–26;

²²⁷ So Stevens, *Methodism*, iii: 499.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

§3.0 Holiness: the purpose of Wesleyan mission

‘... we should regard it a sore evil to divert Methodism from her proper work of “spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands.”’²²⁹

§3.1 Introduction

In the introduction to this dissertation, the WM mission statement was put forward as one part of a twofold interpretative framework within which the missionary endeavours of our ‘interpretive tool’, Rev John Smithies, would be assessed in order to achieve a reappraisal of WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century. The other part of the proposed framework was religious experience (§4.0). This section, therefore, will examine the mission statement, ‘to reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land’, how it was carried out in Smithies’ ministry and how its component parts served the greater goal of spreading holiness.²³⁰ From what is uncovered, a fresh picture of WM mission will emerge, especially when compared with samples from the work of other missionaries and relevant Methodist literature from the period. The reassessment will also make it possible to answer our primary question – what motivated WM mission in this period – as well as answer associated subsidiary questions.

To achieve these purposes, WM mission will be examined through the lens of Smithies’ ministry according to the three components of the mission statement, which will also shape the layout of this chapter, except in reverse order. A change of Wesley’s order is appropriate due to the key component, the spread of scriptural holiness, modifying the other two. These two components, namely, reform of church and nation, were aspects of the third, the spread of holiness, making it necessary to first unpack the latter aspect. Consequently, part one is titled, *The Spread of Scriptural Holiness* (§3.2), and includes the subjects of soul-saving (§3.2.1), sanctification (§3.2.2) and care of souls (§3.2.3). Part two, *Reform of the Church* (§3.3), includes the topics Established Church (§3.3.1), Catholic Church (§3.3.2) and Dissenters (§3.3.3). Part three, *Reform of the (nation) land* (§3.4), includes moral influence (§3.4.1), Aboriginal mission (§3.4.2) and Sabbath and day schools (§3.4.3). An interpretive framework comprising the Methodist mission statement and religious experience is an innovative and yet compelling method within which to undertake such a study since these two are arguably the most significant

²²⁹ Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 368.

²³⁰ Mission statement from Wesley, *Works*, viii: 299.

features of Methodism.²³¹ Consequently, a closer examination of the motivation and nature of WM missionary enterprise in the reviewed period is justified. However, it may also be argued that the above noted soul saving was the primary goal to which other goals were subsets and that this objective should be the principal interpretive framework. In this case, conversion and ongoing care of converts may be seen as primary objectives. There are, however, other important considerations.

For example, Wakefield says that a catch cry of Wesleyan missionaries at this period was ‘revival, revival, and still more revival’.²³² Revival was frequently mentioned in Smithies’ correspondence confirming this view.²³³ For instance, he used the word eleven times and regularly used other terms for revival such as ‘awakening’ and ‘outpouring of the Spirit’. In fact, the prominence of revivals could easily be taken for his primary mission and therefore the objective through which WM mission is viewed. To illustrate, early in his Swan River ministry, Smithies wrote, ‘Our congregation continues to increase and there are considerable prospects of the revival of the work of God in this town’.²³⁴ Smithies’ hope for revival was often expressed in such prayers or observations. However, in spite of its obvious value to him and wider Wesleyan advance, revival was a means to an end rather than an end in itself since its fruit was multiple conversions and deepened spirituality (and therefore progress in holiness) of adherents. This is shown in his words, ‘I wish I could report more favourably of its [the colonial work’s] spiritual prosperity, that we had a revival and souls added to the Lord, and walking in the comforts of the Spirit’.²³⁵ Further confirmation of the importance of revival (and coincidentally of the significance of Wesleyan progress) as means is provided by Stuart Piggin’s research where he discovered that particularly in the Methodist churches in nineteenth century Australia, ‘Revival was one of the major components in [its] unequalled numerical success’.²³⁶ Consequently, the meaning of revival, although an important feature, will be interpreted as a means to an end rather than the ultimate goal. That end surprisingly was not conversion, since like revival it was seen as a means to an end, the supreme goal being holiness. As Goldhawk says, ‘It

²³¹ So also *WMM for 1837*, 390–396; *WMM for 1838*, 428–435; Townsend et al., *Methodism*, ii: 421; Williams, *Welsh WM*, 37.

²³² Wakefield, *Methodist Spirituality*, 40.

²³³ See SOAS, Box 96–99, Smithies to WMMS, London; SOAS, Box 516–519, Smithies to WMMS, London.

²³⁴ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1841.

²³⁵ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1850.

²³⁶ Stuart Piggin, *Spirit of a Nation: The Story of Australia’s Christian Heritage* (Sydney: Strand, 2004), 40.

is evident that in spite of an emphatic insistence upon initial repentance and ‘conversion’, these were thought of as incidental to their fulfilment in holiness’.²³⁷

Although Goldhawk correctly identifies conversion as ‘incidental’ to its ‘fulfilment in holiness’ and quotes from the 1820 WM conference resolution which describes conversion as the entrance into holiness, he does not expand on this beyond a few comments.²³⁸ Further, he does not refer to holiness as the goal of WM mission but rather sees holiness as a third component of Wesleyan spirituality which influenced the other two, namely the ‘missionary impulse’ and ‘distinctive church order’. Indeed, he says that during this period, emphasis varied between these three distinctives whereas it is proposed here that holiness was the primary objective and motivation of the other two. Given Goldhawk’s focus on Wesleyan spirituality and that his ‘brief statements would require considerable expansion’, it is not within his purview to enlarge on these issues. Similarly, in Birtwhistle’s study on WM mission, where it might be expected that holiness would be highlighted, he rather states that the objective was ‘the conversion of the world’.²³⁹ Although a correct assessment, it provides an incomplete picture of WM mission in the period.

However, it is demonstrably obvious that the primary purpose of WM as affirmed at the ‘solemn’ Wesleyan Conference in Liverpool in 1820, was the ‘spread of Scriptural holiness through the land’.²⁴⁰ The meaning of holiness to Methodists was a state of high moral conduct characterised chiefly by love for God and people, which could only be attained through conversion.²⁴¹ It was manifest in many laudable Christian virtues but also included legalistic practices such as strict Sabbath observance and, later in the century, complete abstinence from alcohol.²⁴² These strictures attracted considerable attention and criticism in colonial Australia and elsewhere as Methodists exerted their moral influence in various communities.²⁴³ However, to reiterate, the original meaning of holiness was not a rigid moral code but wholehearted love for God and people. The WM conference of 1835 reaffirmed the 1820 resolutions, adding that the ‘spread of

²³⁷ Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116 (43).

²⁴⁰ Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142. The conference was solemn because of its consideration of the reason that the movement’s numbers had for the first time declined. See also Thomas Jackson and Robert Newton, ‘The Annual Address of the Conference to the Methodist Societies of Great Britain’, ‘The Annual Address’, in *WMM for the year 1838*, 428–435; Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 248–302.

²⁴¹ See Collins, *John Wesley*, 186–189.

²⁴² Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 2–7.

²⁴³ Carey, *Believing*, 87–89.

scriptural holiness through the land’ was ‘the original purpose of Methodism’ and that adherents were ‘to make this the great rule of all other designs, and to renounce or subordinate all other plans and pursuits to this our special calling’.²⁴⁴ The unequivocal nature of this statement is self-evident. Not only were ‘other plans and pursuits’ to be rendered secondary, they were to be renounced in favour of the spread of scriptural holiness. This reaffirmation sprung from the first loss of momentum in Methodist advance (recorded in 1820) since the time of Wesley, grieving leaders and members alike.²⁴⁵ The conference evidently believed that its decline would be arrested by sharply focusing on their great objective.

The mission statement reaffirmed at the 1820 and 1835 Methodist conferences derived from Wesley himself as shown in his following words:

What may we reasonably believe to be God’s design in raising up the Preachers called Methodists? Not to form any new sect; but to reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land.²⁴⁶

Wesley stressed this again in his depiction of the ‘People called Methodists’ when he said that ‘there was no other set of people among us (and, possibly, not in the Christian world) ... who so strenuously and continually insist on the absolute necessity of universal holiness both in heart and life’.²⁴⁷ Wesley believed, probably correctly, that Methodists were unique among Christians, including Evangelicals, for the reason given here, namely, the singular pursuit of holiness.²⁴⁸ The Liverpool Conference resolution, building on Wesley’s statement, set the tone of Methodism and its missionary objectives for the nineteenth century, including Smithies’ life and ministry since he commenced his work in 1828, between the dates of the two conferences.²⁴⁹ It is asserted here, therefore, that the primary goal of Methodism was the spread of holiness incorporating reform of the church and the nation (or land).²⁵⁰ Consequently, we would expect that this was Smithies’ and other missionaries’ goal of this period. In addition, since all other goals were a part of the pursuit of holiness, the meaning of conversion, sanctification, the care of souls and every other facet of WM mission should be

²⁴⁴ Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 313.

²⁴⁵ Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142.

²⁴⁶ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 299.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 353.

²⁴⁸ So also Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 421; Colin W. Williams, *John Wesley’s Theology Today* (London: Epworth, 1960), 167.

²⁴⁹ So Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142.

²⁵⁰ See ‘The Form of Discipline’, which was inserted into the 1835 minutes from the 1797 conference, as well as the 1820, 1821 and 1835 conference excerpts and minutes in Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 248–315.

interpreted in this light rather than ‘the conversion of the world’, a ‘conversion enterprise’, or ‘civilising and christianising’.²⁵¹ In Wesley’s words, the objective was to ‘bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and, with all your power, to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord’.²⁵² This goal involved change of character and behaviour epitomised by an effusive love for God and people, as well as progress in the same, all of which constituted the essence and practice of holiness.²⁵³

As just noted, another means utilised toward the goal of spreading scriptural holiness through the land was reform of the church (§3.3). The *WMM for 1838* patently revealed this goal, saying, ‘Wesleyan Methodism ... has had an important bearing, directly and indirectly, upon the established Church, and upon other Christian communities, and indeed upon all ranks of society’ and that the ‘followers of John Wesley have done much to revive pure and undefiled religion in the world’.²⁵⁴ The nature of WM relationship to other segments of the Christian church, therefore, was deemed by it to be principally one of reformation. Consequently, to interpret satisfactorily the function of WM, a view from its own perspective is fundamental over against either a sectarian role sometimes attributed to it, or else silence on the subject.²⁵⁵

However, reform of the church as a goal of WM mission in the period under review is not a well studied aspect. In Birtwhistle’s essay, for example, reform of church is an unknown idea although he does say that WM mission may have stimulated the broader Christian missionary movement.²⁵⁶ He also says that WM fostered unity among missionary organisations by inclusions of other societies’ reports in the WMM.²⁵⁷ However, that WM sought reform of the EC and other churches as part of its missionary goal to spread scriptural holiness through the land is not part of Birtwhistle’s presentation, although it directly relates to his subject matter. In light, therefore, of limited discussion on reform of the church, given its importance to Wesley and later

²⁵¹ E.g., Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116 (43); Carey, *Believing*, 48, 70; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 146.

²⁵² Wesley, *Works*, viii: 310; Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 256.

²⁵³ The word holiness is derived from the Greek *hagios*, indicating a thing, person or people set apart as consecrated to God. In the NT, this state is brought about by the Holy Spirit, ‘the gift of the new [gospel] age’ (Horst, Seebass, ‘Holy’, in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, rev. edn., ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), ii: 224–229.

²⁵⁴ ‘On the Present Aspect of the times’, in *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

²⁵⁵ E.g., Aveling, ‘Religious Aspect’, 575–598; Beardsall, *Fastened to the Rock*, intro; Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; Kewley, ‘The First Fifty Years’: 6–26.

²⁵⁶ Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116 (esp. pp.1, 41).

²⁵⁷ E.g., *WMM for 1835*, 452–465.

WM mission, a review of this aspect is important in order to achieve a fresh understanding of WM mission in the period studied.

Reform of the land is a third means toward achieving the WM objective (§3.4). Moral influence, indigenous mission where applicable, and Sabbath and day schools were each looked on as methods exerting a wholesome influence on society even if souls were not saved. Wesley, for example, wrote articles on topics such as slavery, smuggling and drunkenness, as well as highlighting injustices of the wealthy against the poor.²⁵⁸ Although moral influence was a less important mission than soul saving, it was nevertheless a vital means toward the ultimate goal of spreading holiness through the land and, as noted, it aroused considerable attention during the nineteenth century, especially in relation to Sabbatarianism (strict observance of the Sabbath), and what became later known as ‘wowsersism’, also referred to as ‘Victorianism’.²⁵⁹ We need not look further than the poetry of Henry Lawson (1867–1922) to find evidence of wowsersism in Australia. Lawson lamented:

We mustn't be glad on a Sunday now,
For fear of a fine or gaol;
Nor drink of the ginger ale:
We must not go to a picture show,
No matter how pure it may be:
On a moonlit night, when the stars are bright,
We scarce dare stroll by the sea
 We scarce dare stroll by the sea,
 For the plain clo, “John’s” about,
 And the she–male nigh with an evil eye,
 And the Wowseradite is out.²⁶⁰

Methodists, along with other Evangelicals in the second half of nineteenth century Australia, were viewed by some as a kind of ‘moral police’ due to their vigorous promotion of temperance and Sunday observance.²⁶¹ This is reflected in Lawson’s lines above. Their attitude may be difficult to understand from a twenty–first century viewpoint but Methodists felt justified in their methods since they believed they were preserving a healthy moral and spiritual world for their children and grandchildren in

²⁵⁸ E.g., Wesley, *Works*, xi: 53ff, 59ff, 164ff, 169ff, 174ff.

²⁵⁹ See Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 455–467; John William McElroy, ‘A Study of the Identity and Mission of the Uniting Church in Western Australia’ (Dissertation, D.Min, San Francisco Theological Seminary, 1985), chap.3; Piggin, *Spirit*, 50ff; Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 105.

²⁶⁰ Colin Roderick, ed., *Henry Lawson Collected Verse Volume Three: 1910–1922* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1969), 64–66.

²⁶¹ E.g., Breward, *Churches in Australasia*, 139; Roger C. Thompson, *Religion in Australia: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 16–18.

the same manner that the preservation of the physical environment is argued for today. To them the spiritual was infinitely more valuable than the material.²⁶²

The WM missionary ‘reform of land’ agenda is not widely discussed as shown in a number of earlier studies.²⁶³ However, Turner mentions the considerable impact of Methodist tracts in the development of Victorian attitudes, but without reference to the ‘reform of land’ objective.²⁶⁴ Consequently, an appraisal of this neglected facet will add to our knowledge of WM mission objectives in the reviewed period. Further, in relation to indigenous mission as part of the WM ‘reform of land’ agenda, Birtwhistle suggests that this facet of ministry equates to serving the poor, according to Wesley’s exhortation, albeit doing so overseas.²⁶⁵ He says nothing more in this vein other than that the WM mission goal was to convert the ‘heathen’, presumably including indigenous people. Regarding the significance of Sabbath and day schools, Turner notes them, although he says their impact was not noteworthy for conversions, lending weight to our proposition that their purpose was largely one of moral influence in reforming the land.²⁶⁶ However, Turner has nothing to say about Sabbath and day schools in WM mission fields.

In light of the above, therefore, the aspects of moral suasion, indigenous mission, Sabbath and day schools will be examined according to the WM ‘reform of land’ objective within its greater goal of the spread of holiness, rather than that of ‘moral bankruptcy’, ‘imperialism’, or marginal importance due to silence.²⁶⁷ To examine the WM view, Smithies’ correspondence will be surveyed according to the three categories noted above (i.e., the spread of scriptural holiness, reform of the church and reform of the land) to discover evidence of Methodist missionaries’ primary and subsidiary goals and methods, as well as the meanings attributed to them. In doing so, an answer to their primary motivation will become evident. The first category is the spread of scriptural holiness (particularly in relation to soul saving, sanctification and care of souls), Methodists’ primary goal.

²⁶² See Smithies’ comments on spiritual values in SOAS, Boxes 516, 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841 and 10 January 1843.

²⁶³ E.g., Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, 113–142; Turner, ‘Methodist Religion’, 97–112.

²⁶⁴ Turner, ‘Methodist Religion’, 97–112 (esp. pp. 100–101).

²⁶⁵ So Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116.

²⁶⁶ Turner, ‘Methodist Religion’, 97–112 (esp. pp. 101–104).

²⁶⁷ E.g., Silence: Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; Moral bankruptcy: Carey, *Believing*, 48; Imperialism: Holly, ‘Spiritual Transformation’: 153ff.

§3.2 The Spread of Scriptural Holiness

§3.2.1 *Preamble*

In his first report to the WMMS regarding the rise of WM in the Swan River colony, Smithies clearly revealed the goal of the mission, echoing the original Wesleyan mission statement. He said,

It may be safely asserted that the friends connected with the Wesleyan cause here, have considerably contributed to the establishment of the Colony, and especially to its moral character, and but for them at the present day it's to be feared that notwithstanding there is a Church and Chaplain, and ordinances, that iniquity would over spread the land. Those connected with your Society have more or less, in different parts of this Colony, exerted a corrective, wholesome moral influence, and now though fewest, yet not least in moral worth and religious enterprize.²⁶⁸

The manner in which Smithies inferred that foundation Methodist families had achieved their goal of 'moral influence' was through the usual Methodism 'polity', namely, the establishment of prayer meetings, class meetings, Sunday services, erection of a chapel, and a Sunday school.²⁶⁹ On the other hand, he said that due to EC apathy, without Methodism, evil would 'over spread the land'. In saying this, the WM mission statement of holiness over spreading the land was obviously in view. Methodist influence was due, said Smithies, to the work of the Hardeys and Lazenbys, et al.; that 'a corrective, wholesome moral influence' then existed in the colony. Smithies' summary is important because, since he was providing an overview of the establishment of early Methodism in the Swan River prior to his arrival, it provides insight into the overall goal of the colonial pioneers. It also resonates with the WM mission statement as expounded above and therefore has pertinence to the dissertation. At this point, the goals of soul saving, sanctification and care of souls will be examined in more detail in light of the WM mission statement, the spread of scriptural holiness.

§3.2.2 *Soul-saving*

Soul saving (conversion) was primary in the cause of spreading scriptural holiness as noted in Wesley's quote above about saving as many souls as possible and using all means to build up converts in holiness. His strong belief that without holiness people could not 'see the Lord' (Hebrews 12:14), and that conversion was 'perfection begun', provided a clear objective for Methodist missionaries to go zealously about their task and in this is demonstrated a reason for their motivation.²⁷⁰ If the goal of conversion

²⁶⁸ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 19 January 1843.

²⁶⁹ For 'polity', see Frank Baker, 'The People called Methodists: Polity', in *History of the Methodist Church*, eds., Rupert E. Davies, et al., i: 213–255 and Williams, *Constitution and Polity*.

²⁷⁰ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, 33–34; Wesley, *Works*, vi: 74–75; viii: 328–329; xi: 387–388.

was crucial and if it features prominently in Smithies' letters, as we will now investigate, then we may accept that the primary goal of holiness was in view, given what has been said about conversion being entrance into a life of holiness. This is especially the case if he revealed that soul saving contributed to the goal of spreading scriptural holiness or at least showed to the converted the need to pursue holiness. This is an important question because some writers assume that Methodist missions subscribed to the same goal as other colonial missions, namely, conversion alone.²⁷¹ Smithies' correspondence from Newfoundland will be used as an initial sample of conversion in his missionary endeavours. Before turning to his letters, however, the Newfoundland WM district minutes for 1829–1850 should be noted.²⁷² On the opening page of the minute book is a question, 'are you going on to perfection?' Other questions are, 'what is Christian perfection? What is the difference between justification [conversion] and sanctification [gradual progress in holiness] and entire sanctification?' These questions were addressed to candidates for ministry and since Smithies was ordained in Newfoundland, it can be accepted that these questions were put to him. In fact, the questions were put to every candidate for WM ministry as shown by Williams.²⁷³ Conversions in Newfoundland (and in every WM district), therefore, should be reviewed against the background of these questions that show emphatically that conversion was only an entry point to holiness. It is important to keep this in view, because it is unreasonable to expect that each time a record about soul saving or conversion is located in Smithies' correspondence that holiness will be noted in connection with it. At times it will be mentioned, as might be expected, but not necessarily every time or even often. On the other hand, the frequent mention of conversion can be taken as significant evidence for holiness as the supreme goal given the example of the questions to ministers just noted. In addition, it will be more than sufficient to find substantial coterminous evidence that holiness was regarded as the ultimate goal and that conversion was the entry point.

In Smithies' correspondence there are seventeen occurrences of the word 'salvation' (salvation occurs when a person, or 'soul' is saved, or converted) in a total of about

²⁷¹ E.g., So Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116; Axtell says that conversion was the supreme goal of earlier North American missionaries (James Axtell, *The Invasion within: the Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1985], 218); Carey speaks of the 'great conversion enterprise' to which Methodism was a primary contributor in Australia (Carey, *Believing*, 48, 70).

²⁷² Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

²⁷³ Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 252ff.

thirty of his Newfoundland letters.²⁷⁴ One example is his second letter where an extract from his journal states, ‘The Lord was present to save; several in distress; one obtained salvation very clearly and began to exhort his own wife and others to believe and Christ would save them.’²⁷⁵ Also revealed in this instance is his use of the word ‘save’. Tracing this word, we discover fifteen instances in his Newfoundland letters. In addition, other words of typical Methodist terminology identify conversion in Smithies’ letters such as ‘converted’ (five occurrences), and brought to the ‘knowledge of the truth’ or ‘knowledge of God’ (four occurrences). Furthermore, a number of other references to conversion exist which may only be understood from the context and a more intimate knowledge of Methodist terminology.²⁷⁶ In the same letter from Hant’s Harbour, Smithies wrote, ‘Two precious souls obtained salvation, and we are increased to ten.’²⁷⁷ Here the situation was different in that conversions occurred at a class meeting. Class meetings were small groups of between 12 to 20 people, at times convened in homes. What is of interest here is the fact that members of class meetings gathered to seek for holiness, even before they were converted.²⁷⁸ The fact that two were ‘saved’ in the class meeting shows that they were converted as part of their progress toward holiness. The frequency of Smithies’ references to conversion, then, can be taken as evidence of his zeal for holiness for two reasons. The first is Wesley’s directive, which was included in nineteenth century WM polity, to ‘save as many souls as you can’ then ‘build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord’.²⁷⁹ If Smithies was saving as many souls as he could, as evidenced from his many references, we can accept that he was also pursuing holiness as the goal for these converts. Second, the instance of questions in the WM Newfoundland minutes about the need to pursue holiness beyond conversion, and the fact that these questions were undoubtedly put to Smithies, (and every WM missionary) reinforces the conviction that he would have sought holiness as a further step to conversion.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁴ The precise number of letters is not known since there are references to Smithies’ letters in the Methodist Magazine and elsewhere which cannot be located at the SOAS.

²⁷⁵ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May 1829.

²⁷⁶ See Semple’s note about the range of Methodist terminology (Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 59).

²⁷⁷ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May 1829.

²⁷⁸ See Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 480; Wesley, *Works*, viii: 248ff, 269ff, 310.

²⁷⁹ E.g., Wesley, *Works*, viii: 310; Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 252ff, 256.

²⁸⁰ Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John’s, NL: United Church of Canada Archives); E.g., Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 252ff, 256.

Further evidence is found in Smithies' comments on the prospects for his school students as those who would become 'trees of righteousness'.²⁸¹ In the context of the students' expected conversions, he said that 'we hope by God's blessing, that the rising generation will experience from it [the Sabbath school] present and eternal advantages'. We take Smithies' meaning to be that students being converted and educated in the Methodist school would be stable pillars of righteousness (holiness) in the community and thus spread holiness through the land. A similar example is found in Smithies' prayer for Newfoundland in his second letter, 'O that the inhabitants of the land might learn Righteousness'.²⁸² The prayer shows that although conversion is implicit, the intended goal was holiness throughout Newfoundland. If his only goal was conversion, his prayer would have been worded accordingly, such as, 'O that the inhabitants of the land might be saved'.

Another instance is found in his report from Blackhead in which he said that the 'Spirit of conviction, of penitence, of holiness is graciously afforded us and inspires us with the hope that ere long the time to favour Zion will come and cause the wilderness to blossom as the rose and become a fruitful field'.²⁸³ This is an obvious prayer for revival inspired by the present encouraging conditions. 'Conviction' and 'penitence' refer to the first two steps toward conversion wherein it was expected that participants first would be convinced of sinfulness and then be penitent, meaning they would repent or turn from sin as part of the conversion experience. Smithies' use of the word 'holiness' in the same sequence indicates the outcome; namely, conversion as entry into a life of holiness. If on the other hand, Smithies meant conversion as an outcome in his use of the word 'penitence', holiness may still be taken to be the primary goal. In either case, it is noteworthy that holiness and not conversion was the intended goal in this example. To summarise the Newfoundland evidence, the WM district minute book makes an emphatic statement about holiness and its importance through and beyond conversion that would have influenced Smithies' ministry there. In addition, Smithies' reports on conversions as well as his prayers and comments, show that his goal was to spread holiness, or righteousness, through the land, and that conversion was an integral part of this mission. Therefore, the meaning of conversion to this WM missionary, as noted so far, was entry to a life of holiness.

²⁸¹ Smithies' minute, 20 May 1829, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850, (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

²⁸² SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 September 1829.

²⁸³ Smithies' minute, 21 May 1834, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850, (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

In relation to Smithies' labours in Swan River, Western Australia (1840–1855), Marian Aveling says that Smithies' mission, like the Anglicans, was probably viewed by colonials as one of 'converting the heathen ... as a means of making the conquered peoples into useful, and humble, members of white society'.²⁸⁴ She further says that early WA missionaries' (including Smithies) goal of the conversion of Aboriginal people was unsuccessful.²⁸⁵ Similarly, William McNair and Hilary Rumley say that Smithies' mission was to teach indigenous Australians the 'tenets of his faith' rather than 'understand their spiritual life'.²⁸⁶ More stridently, Hilary Carey speaks of the 'conversion enterprise' of Evangelicals in early Australia, and their 'morally bankrupt religion'.²⁸⁷ From these comments, it is understood that conversion was believed to be Smithies' and other missionaries' primary assignment in relation to indigenous Australians. It is also understood that the mission of conversion was inevitably connected to civilising and was largely unsuccessful. Consequently, to see if an alternative to these viewpoints may be uncovered in his Australian letters, conversion in Smithies' Swan River ministry will be considered first within the framework of the WM goal of spreading of holiness.

A review of the use of 'conversion' and associated words in approximately fifty of Smithies' letters from Swan River reveal the following:²⁸⁸

Salvation	Convert	Knowledge of truth or of God	Other terminology, like 'happy', 'peace'
94	19	12	14

The above occurrences include only references to conversion. The preponderance of words relating to conversion, therefore, indicates the strong motivation Smithies displayed for his mission of soul saving. In this regard, it may also be accepted here as it was seen in Newfoundland that frequent references to soul saving meant that holiness was his ultimate goal for same reasons, specifically, Wesley's directive to his ministers and the questions in the Newfoundland district minute book, both of which we know were put to every WM missionary in every mission field.²⁸⁹ However, additional indicators of holiness as the supreme goal are evident. For example, shortly after arrival in the Swan River, he wrote, 'And when at your missionary meetings ask the friends of Missions to pity Australians, save Australians, to bring many Australians to God and

²⁸⁴ Aveling, 'Religious Aspect', 575–598.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 146.

²⁸⁷ Carey, *Believing*, 48, 70.

²⁸⁸ SOAS, Box 516–519, Smithies to WMMS, London.

²⁸⁹ E.g., Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 252ff, 256.

glory by their prayers and contributions and it shall be done.²⁹⁰ This example holds particular interest due to its statement of purpose for the whole mission. It shows Smithies writing to the home mission pleading for assistance for the specific mission it and he had, and which he knew would move them most, that was the conversion of indigenous people ‘to God and glory’. It may be taken that in this instance he did not refer to settlers but to indigenous Australians, in whom there was keen interest at home.²⁹¹ Of particular interest is Smithies’ use of the word ‘glory’. He said that his aim was to bring Australians ‘to God and glory’. It is in this latter word that we find reference to the goal of holiness. Glory, to Methodists in this context, referred to the completed or fully realised work of salvation (or redemption), and consequently the goal of perfection or holiness, begun at conversion. The concept is taken from St. Paul’s words, ‘from glory to glory’ (2 Corinthians 3:17–18), which includes the idea of being continually changed into the image of God, that is, the process of perfection.²⁹² Wesley describes this in his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, which was influenced in part by writings of Early Church Fathers such as Gregory of Nyssa’s *Life of Moses* and *Commentary on the Canticle*.²⁹³ Wesley spoke about the image of God being restored within the human soul, much like Gregory of Nyssa’s metaphor in *On Virginity* regarding restoration of a tarnished drachma.²⁹⁴ New converts, therefore, were set on this road to perfection (glory) through conversion. Therefore, to bring indigenous people to glory meant to bring them, through conversion, to a life whereby the image of God was increasingly restored in them until they attained perfection. The restoration of the image of God is the same as growth in holiness. Therefore, the goal of indigenous mission presented to the WMMS by Smithies was holiness through conversion. A verse of Charles Wesley’s famous hymn, ‘Love divine, all loves excelling’ demonstrates the WM use of glory in the lines:

Finish then Thy new creation [complete what was begun at conversion],
 Pure and spotless let us be [make us perfect, holy];
 Let us see Thy great salvation,
 Perfectly restored in Thee [completed or fully realised salvation];
 Changed from glory into glory [from one level of perfection to another],

²⁹⁰ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October 1840.

²⁹¹ E.g., See SOAS, Box 516, WMMS to William Longbottom, India, 28 March 1837.

²⁹² See Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 430; and Watson, ‘Methodist Spirituality’, 172–213 (esp. pp. 176–177).

²⁹³ Wesley, *Works*, xi: 378–379; Herbert Musurillo (ed.), *From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa’s Mystical Writings* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s, 1961, 2001); Frank Whaling, (ed.), *John and Charles Wesley: Selected Prayers, Hymns, Journal Notes, Sermons, Letters and Treatises* (New York: Paulist, 1981), 300 (for glory).

²⁹⁴ Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.), *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), v: 357–359; Musurillo, *From Glory to Glory*, 112–117.

Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise [entire sanctification: 'made perfect in love'].²⁹⁵

Another way Smithies showed a connection between goal and means was in recounting conversions in his reports from the Swan River colony to the WMMS. As already suggested, he was usually careful to show change of character, whether or not the allegedly converted person was colonial or indigenous. It was important to him that such transformation took place because this was the ultimate proof of genuine conversion notwithstanding Methodist's insistence on the evidence of 'witness of the Spirit'.²⁹⁶ This evidence of transformation derived from Wesley's irritation with the Reformation doctrine of forensic justification, which he felt tended toward antinomianism if 'actual righteousness' was not part of the process.²⁹⁷ That is, a convert was more than just 'declared righteous' through faith; he or she entered a pathway of actual righteousness or holiness. Transformed individuals, therefore, were core to Methodists' vigorous pursuit of holiness. The more converted and consequently transformed individuals there were, the more the nation would be reformed and holiness spread over the land. Wesleyans, therefore, were more intentional about character change in converts rather than mere alteration in outward behaviour.²⁹⁸ It was important to them that the inner life was transformed, that character traits were evident such as courage, kindness, love, peace and serenity in the face of all kinds of trials. WM missionaries were not merely seeking new religious belief and practices in their converts or loyalty to their liturgy; they sought authentic interior transformation resulting in changes in outward behaviour. To them, this was holiness begun. The following examples from Smithies' letters show the importance of personal transformation in connection with conversion.

The accounts of Wo-burt, Mary No-gyle and an unnamed Aboriginal girl are three cases worth noting from Smithies' letters.²⁹⁹ Wo-burt was a girl of about sixteen years of age who attended the Swan River mission school and slept at the mission each night. During the day when not at school, she stayed with another family in the town where she also worked. In her latter situation, she was 'in the habit of seeing and hearing a good deal which [belonged] to the gaieties and frivolities of life', wrote Smithies. The

²⁹⁵ Charles Wesley, 'Love Divine', in *The Methodist Hymnbook* (London: Methodist Conference Office, 1954), 373.

²⁹⁶ E.g., Wesley, *Works*, v: 132–134.

²⁹⁷ Williams, *Wesley's Theology*, 57–73.

²⁹⁸ E.g., Watson, 'Methodist Spirituality', 172–213.

²⁹⁹ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

means of Wo–burt’s conversion was a dream. It seems that her dream was identical to No–gyle’s and occurred on the same night. The dream deeply affected the girls, as well as other students who heard its account. Smithies wrote,

This dream excited her fears and whilst she related it before the scholars it was with much sobbing and many tears, and also our prayers that it might be a blessing to her and many. The influence of these tuitions by dreams and visions of the night was soon seen in her knowledge of the sin and wickedness of her own heart, and in the use and blessedness of prayer and faith in Christ.

Shortly after the dream, Wo–burt’s conversion took place. Smithies said that the ‘manner of it was so natural, simple and clear as to leave no doubt at all as to its reality and being of God’.³⁰⁰ On the day of her conversion, Smithies received a request from the family with whom Wo–burt worked that she care for their child while they convened a party at the house. Fearing that Wo–burt would be exposed to ‘moral evil’, the request was refused. However, due to miscommunication she did stay at the home all night. It turned out to be the night of Wo–burt’s conversion. Smithies gave the following account of it:

On the following day I saw Wo–burt coming on the Mission grant to the School. It was raining tremendously and she [was] walking slowly, cheerfully and unconcernedly beneath the teeming shower. I said, haste, haste, Wo–burt, out of the rain. She merely smiled and walked leisurely on. She then went into the school and stood in her wet clothes and wished to speak to *Misses*. Mrs Smithies seeing tears in her eyes asked her if she was *mendick* (sick). She replied no. She was asked what then? O she said, “Me think last night God give me new heart”. Being then asked how it was, she said “Me mind baby, me eat, drink, sleep nothing. Child sleep and me think this night me die. *Winja* soul get down? Me think hell *mya*, me feel heart too much troubled and wicked. Me then pray God, long time pray. Trouble little bit go away. Me pray again and trouble more get away. Then me think God give new heart, then me three times pray and feel very happy, and me now happy.”

‘The above change’, said Smithies, ‘was not only declared by this Australian girl, but her spirit, life and demeanour all showed she had Jesus Christ put on’. His expression, ‘Jesus Christ put on’, is derived from St Paul (Galatians 3:27) and indicates transformation. He said that previously Wo–burt had been ‘a troublesome, noisy girl, creating quarrels by night, throwing herself into fits and in various ways annoying and disturbing the peace of the Mission’. However, Smithies said that following her conversion she had become a ‘meek, quiet, thoughtful, praying girl proving her faith by her works’. Two important features are revealed in Smithies’ account. The first is the tangible experience of conversion (the subject of the next chapter, §4.0). It was an event that Wo–burt could identify and define. Second, conversion resulted in a transformation

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

of her character that Methodists identified as the commencement of a life of holiness.³⁰¹ As mentioned above, Smithies was careful to note change of character as evidence of genuine conversion and in doing so showed that conversion resulted in holiness. Smithies demonstrated, therefore, the purpose of conversion, namely, that it served the higher goal of holiness and thus the WM mission statement.

The second example is the conversion of No-gyle who lived three years with the Smithies.³⁰² She was an unfortunate victim of European disease, dying whilst still a teenager. No-gyle was 'naturally mild and amiable', wrote Smithies. She was only once known to lie and on that occasion it was to save another girl from punishment. Even then she afterwards felt guilty about it. No-gyle longed and 'prayed for a new heart'. (Methodists believed that no matter how good-natured, all were sinners in need of forgiveness.) She frequently prayed, 'Lord save me. Jesus give No-gyle new heart. O who will all night pray with me for a new heart?' It was shortly after that she experienced the dream noted above. The precise nature of No-gyle's conversion and its outcome are not as clear in this example. Nevertheless, Smithies said that the 'dream it is believed was useful to herself and others in the school'. By 'useful' he meant that the dream contributed to their conversions. The circumstances surrounding No-gyle's death provides evidence of her conversion and the outcome. Smithies reported that although she was in great pain, 'she delighted in singing and prayer' and that she 'had a blessed confidence in her Saviour and hope full of immortality, and when asked why she wished to die (for she had no fears) she answered that I may go to heaven and see Jesus'. Smithies wrote that she 'also was very anxious to be baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity'. After the rite was administered, she asked that everyone leave her room because she wanted to be alone. Sending for Mrs. Smithies to sit by her side, wrote Smithies, 'she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus without a struggle and is now safely landed in the arms of God'. In his final eulogy, Smithies said, 'Her life was lovely, she was beloved by all and her death was peace and full of hope. Truly she died the death of the righteous and her end was peace.' Evidence of conversion, in No-gyle's case, was her serenity, even joyfulness in the face of death, whereas before she received her 'new heart' No-gyle had been terrified of death. To Methodists, this serenity was expected in those making progress in holiness especially when confronting death.³⁰³ This was the 'death of the righteous'. We may take the meaning of the word 'righteous' to be 'actual

³⁰¹ 'Justification is sanctification begun' (Wesley, *Works*, xi: 387–388; Watts, *Dissenters*, 432).

³⁰² SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

³⁰³ See 'Happy Deaths', in *WMM for 1837*, 515–516; Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 429.

righteousness', or holiness, not just 'imputed righteousness', or justification, given the details of this conversion and our knowledge of Wesley's view on righteousness.³⁰⁴ Although this second case is not as obvious as the first given the amiable character of No-gyle, it nonetheless shows the same characteristic of conversion as means leading to the goal of holiness.

The third case, as already noted, involved an unnamed indigenous girl, 18 years of age.³⁰⁵ According to Smithies, she had been one of the 'most wicked and troublesome' of the students and due to her state was not permitted 'the rite of baptism' which had been recently administered to other students. However, through a distinct religious experience, she 'was enabled to believe in Jesus', reported Smithies. She was obviously converted and Smithies said she was 'made so happy that she exclaimed O me happy now. Me love Jesus now'. Smithies ended the account at this point since he went on to recount other conversions. We gather that the experience of her conversion was vivid and that such a change took place in her that Smithies was able to say that she was *previously* a troublemaker, implying that she was not so anymore. In addition, the girl's expression that she now loved Jesus, resonates with Wesley's definition of holiness which was nothing less than love for God and people. The act of conversion, therefore, was a means to the end of her transformation; a beginning in holiness. This was the meaning of conversion to Smithies and WM missionaries in this nineteenth century period.

In summary, we can say then that the Methodist goal of the spread of holiness by means of conversion may be seen in the ministry of Smithies and that the meaning of conversion may be interpreted as the entry point into the life of holiness. It may also be accepted because of the widely published WM position that the spread of holiness was the movement's primary objective as exemplified in the conferences of 1820 and 1835.³⁰⁶ However, can we also accept that Methodists in general placed great value on, and interpreted conversion and subsequent character change as that which began a life of holiness, and that reports of this nature are what the WMMS wanted to hear? An answer is sought through the following examples.

§3.2.2.1 Comparisons

The first comes from Newfoundland but at a later date than Smithies' period there and serves as a comparison, as well as further evidence, that holiness was the mission's goal

³⁰⁴ Williams, *Wesley's Theology*, 57–73.

³⁰⁵ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

³⁰⁶ Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 313.

and was served by means of conversion and revival. On 6 February 1855, Rev Edmund Botterell wrote,

I rejoice to have to inform you, that a very great revival of religion has, for some time, been in progress in the Bonavista Circuit [Newfoundland]. Not fewer than one hundred and fifty persons have, in Mr. Smith's opinion, recently experienced conversion to God. All these will not be numerically added to our church; but then they will be gained to our cause, which is that of true holiness all over the world.³⁰⁷

Botterell's comment is palpable that the 'cause', a Methodist label for the entire movement and its purpose, conformed precisely to the affirmations of the 1820 and 1835 conferences. The connection between conversion and holiness, and therefore a clear view of the mission statement, is noted here.

In addition, the *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* (WMM) carried sections entitled, *Religious Intelligence* and *Missionary Intelligence*, both of which contained updates on various missions and missionaries as well as the current year's annual addresses from the conference President and Secretary. The annual addresses, the genre of which is pastoral, provide important insights into the state and content of global Methodism during this period. To illustrate, President Edmund Grindrod (1786–1842) and Secretary Robert Newton (1780–1854) wrote on 8 August 1837 that the 'growth of the spirit of piety [holiness] we esteem to be the most essential to our connexial prosperity, as well as to your individual security and happiness'.³⁰⁸ They meant the individual piety of ministers and members here, but highlighted corresponding importance to the success of Methodism. They went on to say that Wesley considered the maintenance of the doctrine of perfection (or holiness) 'essential to the perpetuation of that great work.' Consequently, they urged constituents to follow Wesley's example and that of his colleagues in pursuing personal holiness as well as its public proclamation, because neglect of these would be injurious to the work. What was their work? It was that they should not 'be content without doing something daily to promote the salvation of sinners and the glory of God'.³⁰⁹ The 1837 address, then, demonstrates the primacy of conversion and holiness to Wesleyans, and knowing their meaning that conversion is 'sanctification [perfection] begun', we see that conversion as means to holiness was crucial for the movement's momentum. The following year's annual address was even

³⁰⁷ *WMM for 1855*, 378.

³⁰⁸ Edmund Grindrod and Robert Newton, 'The Annual Address of the Conference to the Methodist Societies of Great Britain', in *WMM for the year 1837*, 390–396.

³⁰⁹ See the use of 'glory' here again, as noted earlier, indicating the glorious work of the Spirit in perfection, although it could also mean 'for the honour of God'. It likely included both. See 'The glory of God is intrusted [sic] to us', in *WMM for 1842*, 369–370.

more palpable in urging holiness as the great object.³¹⁰ Here President Thomas Jackson (1783–1873) and Secretary Robert Newton said that the ‘entire strength of the Connexion should be put forth and exerted to secure those great objects for the sake of which Mr. Wesley believed that it was established’. The one object stressed in the address was, ‘To reform the nation, by spreading scriptural holiness over the land’. This exhortation was followed by an acknowledgement that the task of reform, which in the eighteenth century seemed obtainable, in the rapidly developing nineteenth was becoming daunting. Nevertheless, Methodists were to press forward with zeal in pursuit of their great object (the spread of holiness) which invariably included the ‘salvation of others’, and that the ‘interests of religion’ should be ‘found in a prosperous condition’ in every locality. Again, the connection between conversion and holiness is clear and permits an interpretation of the WM meaning of conversion as entry into a life of perfection.

Further evidence of the clarity of WM understanding of its mission during the period under review is found across the Atlantic in the MEC of North America, founded by Wesley in 1784 through Dr. Thomas Coke and Bishop Francis Asbury.³¹¹ At its 1828 conference, the Book Concern lucidly expressed its familiarity with Wesleyan mission in its managers’ report. It states:

... our own special call, as we have from the beginning believed to be the design of God in raising us up, to aid in spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands: — in a word, the cause of God and of our country, of the rising generation and of posterity, demand of us, at this crisis, an exertion bearing at least some ratio of proportion to our obligations and to our means. ... The great object of the Methodist Book Concern, from the beginning, has been to serve as an auxiliary in spreading Scriptural truth and holiness. With this view it has been the medium through which our Sunday school books and tracts have been issued, and it is intended also to be the medium for the publication of our Bibles and Testaments.³¹²

In addition, at the national conference of the MEC convened at Philadelphia in 1832, the bishops delivered an address that included the following sentiments emphasising clarity of understanding regarding the church’s mission. They said,

Our Missionary, Sunday School, Tract, and Bible Societies have been found most valuable and efficient auxiliaries to the grand itinerant system, in carrying on the blessed work of spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands.³¹³

Here the bishops link the ‘grand itinerant’ ministry of the church to its purpose highlighting several supporting auxiliaries, including missionary. Itinerancy was the

³¹⁰ Jackson and Newton, in *WMM for the year 1838*, 428–435; Wesley, *Works*, vi: 74–75; viii: 328–329; xi: 387–388.

³¹¹ See Collins, *John Wesley*, 213, 232–234.

³¹² Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 89–90.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, iv: 140.

genius of Methodism commenced by Wesley, continued especially in America, but wherever WM missionaries were found in the world.³¹⁴ The primary work of these itinerants, it is noted, was ‘the blessed work of spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands’. The means by which itinerants accomplished their goal was through soul saving and revival. Consequently, although soul saving was the most evident and prodigious fruit of itinerants’ work, it was in reality the entrance to their higher goal, scriptural holiness, which we may confidently accept was the WM meaning attributed to conversion during the first half of the nineteenth century.

As well as the conference addresses on both sides of the Atlantic, an earlier letter from the British WM conference to the MEC, dated 7 February 1816, states,

It is with gratitude to the Lord of all that we can say, he is still extending his kingdom among us, by the instrumentality of the preached word; and his servants have had much consolation in their labors, by seeing sinners powerfully convinced of sin, penitents born of God, and believers sanctified by the Spirit. God has lately been reviving his work in various places, particularly in the city of Bristol, at Salisbury, etc.: in the former place several hundreds have been brought to the knowledge of God their Savior.³¹⁵

We note here a connection between conversions and people being sanctified (made holy). Such connection is to be expected where the ultimate outcome of WM mission is holiness. The letter continues:

We can assure you we love this ‘good, old-fashioned religion,’ of a deep conviction for sin, a clear sense of justification by faith, and entire sanctification of the soul from all moral pollution, as well, if not better than ever.³¹⁶

The connection between conversion and sanctification, as just noted, is now reinforced by the authors’ assurance about ‘good old-fashioned religion’. By ‘old fashioned’ was meant the doctrine that Wesley espoused, but also inferred was the teaching of the Early Church, since Methodists believed that they were restoring NT Christianity. The goal of holiness, therefore, was closely allied to the saving of souls, and shows the kind of news that the WMMS loved to report as well as hear from its missionaries.

In conclusion, Smithies’ accounts of conversions and their meaning to WM of entry into a life of holiness, can be accepted, especially when compared with other WM evidence from the period. Consequently, his reports were the nature of those the WMMS wanted to hear, especially in the light of holiness (glory) as the goal of conversion. The assumption, therefore, that conversion was the primary goal of colonial missionaries, is

³¹⁴ Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 54–55.

³¹⁵ Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iii: 30–31.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

only part of the story as far as WM is concerned.³¹⁷ Further, in that holiness was the primary objective, the question, what motivated these missionaries, is partly answered. That is, they were motivated by their holiness objective. Closely allied to the central role of conversion in the pursuit of scriptural holiness was that of sanctification, the subject of the following section.

§3.2.3 Sanctification

Sanctification was obviously integral to the WM mission of the spread of scriptural holiness in the first half of the nineteenth century due to the word ‘sanctification’ being a synonym for perfection or holiness and one that was well-used in Wesleyan terminology.³¹⁸ Holiness, or sanctification, was a lifelong and therefore gradual process entered into at conversion and fostered through various means especially the class meeting, as outlined in the next section (§3.2.4). Smithies wrote about gradual sanctification from Blackhead, Newfoundland, saying, ‘I only regret that I do not make greater improvements in knowledge and holiness’.³¹⁹ He well knew that the spread of holiness included his own progress in holiness and for that reason this was his personal goal. In addition, it will be recalled that instant (or entire) sanctification was thought to be a second experience subsequent to conversion wherein a participant received instantaneous, divinely imparted love, raising the person to a new height of Christian perfection or holiness.³²⁰ Instant sanctification, therefore, was a conversion-like experience. Accordingly, sanctification to Methodists was both instantaneous and gradual. At least this was the original doctrine as Wesley defined it, but the history of the teaching during the nineteenth century displays some variations in Wesleyan missionaries.³²¹ Beardsall, for example, states that instant sanctification or so-called second blessing was seldom mentioned in Methodist minutes or correspondence in Newfoundland.³²² She says, ‘The question of “perfection,” or “entire sanctification,” rarely surfaces in Newfoundland Methodist writings.’ She cites a handful of references spread over the entire nineteenth century. Her point is that Newfoundlanders found a doctrine such as sanctification difficult to comprehend; they could more easily grasp an

³¹⁷ E.g. of conversion as goal: Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 218; Carey, *Believing*, 48, 70; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 146; Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142; Turner, *Methodist Religion*, 97–112.

³¹⁸ E.g., Collins, *John Wesley*, 178–204.

³¹⁹ SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 7 December 1834.

³²⁰ Collins, *John Wesley*, 193–195; See Wesley’s ‘Plain Account of Christian Perfection’, in Wesley, *Works*, xi: 366–446.

³²¹ See Wesley’s ‘Plain Account’, in Wesley, *Works*, xi: 366–446.

³²² Beardsall, ‘Fastened to the Rock’, chap. 3.

experience. Therefore, conversion was core to their faith, she says. Another North American observation, from the MEC conference of 1832, seems to concur with Beardsall's recent view.³²³ The conference article commences with a definition: 'When we speak of holiness, we mean that state in which God is loved with all the heart, and served with all the power' and 'we have further said, that this privilege may be secured instantaneously, by an act of faith, as justification was'. The definition is followed by the lament, 'Why, then, have we so few living witnesses that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin?"' It may be gathered from this lament that in 1832 relatively few people were experiencing instant sanctification, although it is uncertain what the author meant by 'so few'.

Beardsall's observation, therefore, may be expressing something symptomatic of Methodism for the first half of the nineteenth century, although not entirely. Her observation for Newfoundland may overlook the point made by Wesley that sanctification was not just a doctrine, but an experience and was instantaneous, as just noted, and as shown in §4.3. If it is true that sanctification was an experience, then we might expect outport Newfoundlanders did embrace it even though they might have found its doctrine difficult to understand. Is there confirmation of this in Smithies' letters written from Newfoundland between 1828 and 1837? Smithies was a young minister at this time and was well acquainted with the luminaries of early Methodism such as Rev Richard Knight (1788–1860), Rev John Corlett (d.1877), Newfoundland Wesleyan historian, Rev William Wilson (c.1800–c.1870), and Chairman, Rev John Pickavant (d.1848). If Smithies reported instances of sanctification then we may confidently expect that his accounts were customary among these Methodist colleagues since he would not have acted independently of them, and therefore sanctification was not as scarce as thought.

Before noting Smithies' references, the importance of sanctification in nineteenth century Newfoundland Methodism may be evidenced first through its Minute Book for 1829–1837. Under the title, 'A Statement of doctrines and questions which the candidates for the WM Missions are examined', as noted earlier, these questions are found: 'are you going on to perfection', 'what is Christian perfection' and what 'is the difference between justification and sanctification and entire sanctification?' Since Smithies served and completed his four year probation there from 1828–1832 and these

³²³ Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 144.

questions would have been put to him, then we would expect examples of instant sanctification in his letters and minute reports.³²⁴

References in Smithies' letters alone, though not prodigious, add to the handful cited by Beardsall, and are sufficient to establish the importance of entire sanctification, at least to him but also for Newfoundland Methodism generally in the first half of the nineteenth century. The references are found in his report in the minutes of 25 June 1832, and in his letters dated 13 September 1831, 3 December 1833, 2 July 1834, 7 December 1834, 29 January 1836, and 18 May 1837. In the 1836 letter, he wrote, 'We have seen the awakened mind, the troubled heart, the pardoned soul, and rapturous joy of those made perfect in love.'³²⁵ The expression, 'those made perfect in love', means second blessing or instant sanctification in Methodist terminology.³²⁶ In addition, a report from Richard Knight regarding the revival at Blackhead, which Beardsall also cites, includes instances of entire sanctification.³²⁷ It would seem that instant sanctification was not fading from the Methodist circuits of Newfoundland in the 1820s and 1830s, if Smithies and Knight are reasonable examples.

If the teaching on and experience of sanctification were integral to Newfoundland Methodism at this period, then we would reasonably expect to also see evidence in Smithies' Swan River ministry from 1840–1855. Remarkably, there does not appear to be one reference in his letters! This makes the Newfoundland references all the more significant, since there were fewer letters (c.30 compared to c.50) and points to other reasons for Smithies' meagre mention of instant sanctification. One consideration is the influence of the above named Wesleyan ministers who were Smithies' colleagues in Newfoundland. Did they keep him from being diverted from the teaching and practice of sanctification there, whilst his isolation in Swan River precluded the peer support he needed to maintain it? Chant's evidence for Methodists' references to sanctification in eastern Australia in the latter half of the nineteenth century lend weight to this possibility, since there was considerable collegial support among Wesleyan ministers in

³²⁴ Wesleyan ministers served four year probation periods before being 'ordained' or fully recognised by the Conference (Smithies' minute, 25 June 1832, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850, [St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives] and Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 46).

³²⁵ SOAS, Box 96–99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 13 September 1831, 3 December 1833, 2 July 1834, 7 December 1834, 29 January 1836, 18 May 1837; Smithies' minute, 25 June 1832, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

³²⁶ Collins, *John Wesley*, 193–195.

³²⁷ Richard Knight's minute, 19 May 1831, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

the east.³²⁸ The isolation of Smithies' ministry from the rest of Australia, therefore, plus the focus of his ministry on Aboriginal mission, may have diverted him from this vital aspect of mission so integral to the experience of sanctification and one that was associated with considerable revivalism in eastern Australia.³²⁹

It is likely, therefore, that in the period of Smithies' ministry from his return to England from Newfoundland in 1837, he cooled in his emphasis on instant sanctification, an emphasis peculiar to original WM that subsequently revived in the last half of the century. However, as shown below (§3.2.3.1), there is sufficient evidence from sources from the period, other than Smithies', to demonstrate that entire sanctification was still being taught and experienced in WM generally including its mission fields. That Smithies had not been diverted from his goal despite the absence of instant sanctification language is witnessed in his use of the words 'piety', 'moral' or 'morality' and 'spirituality', as well as his application to Wesleyan organisation, such as the class meeting (shown in §3.2.4), which was specifically designed to 'build up in holiness'.³³⁰ Later in his ministry, in his report for the year 1855 on the New Norfolk circuit in Van Diemen's Land, he revealed clearly the Methodist supreme goal using language close to that of the WM mission statement when he said 'we yet hope to see the cause of piety (holiness) rise and flourish'.³³¹ Smithies' commitment toward the spread of scriptural holiness, can nevertheless be evidenced, among other things, by his soul saving and moral influence mission, instant sanctification reports from Newfoundland, as well as frequent reports of class and associated meetings that were designed to build up members in holiness. Of these activities, there are sufficient examples shown throughout this section (§3.0).³³²

In summary, there appears little doubt that early nineteenth century Methodism in Newfoundland espoused and practiced Wesley's doctrine on sanctification in its quest for scriptural holiness. However, from 1840 onwards, Smithies made no mention of sanctification as a specific doctrine or experience, although he did speak about progress in piety, and his co-workers, Hardey and Lazenby, in a letter to the WMMS in 1843, said, 'we have no doubt our combined efforts under the blessing of God will be the

³²⁸ Chant, 'Pentecost', ch. 3.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ See Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 480; Wesley, *Works*, viii: 248ff, 269ff, 310.

³³¹ Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book*, 7 October 1845 – 13 November 1867 (Ref: NS 499/16).

³³² Watson, 'Methodist Spirituality', 172–213.

means of spreading vital godliness in this distant land'.³³³ Was Smithies representative of Wesleyan practice at this period, and did the change in his communication reflect a wider change in Wesleyan thought and practice? A likely scenario might run like this: Newfoundland encapsulated original Wesleyan teaching at the early part of the nineteenth century due to its direct roots to Wesley, detectable through ministers like Rev Richard Knight, an acquaintance of Rev William Black (d.1834) who corresponded with Wesley.³³⁴ In addition, Mary Stretton, a respected and influential Methodist in Conception Bay still living during Smithies' ministry period and who was known to him being a member of his church at Blackhead, was the widow of merchant John Stretton, a contemporary and also a correspondent of Wesley. John Stretton, an earnest seeker of Christian perfection, assisted in the early Newfoundland 'Methodist' work under the Rev Laurence Coughlan.³³⁵ These and other direct ties to Wesley, as well as the early English WM shaping of missionaries who came to Newfoundland and were present during Smithies' time there, coupled with the isolated nature of Newfoundland, tended to preserve and foster a primitive form of Wesleyanism, although Kewley decries what he perceives as excessive emotionalism during the first fifty years (i.e., 1765–1815).³³⁶ Kewley's observation may serve to confirm the view that instant sanctification was known and experienced during these earlier years since sanctification was usually a vivid experience known to be emotional.

In the meantime, Methodism in England changed as the century progressed. When Smithies returned there in 1837, he was reacquainted with this evolving Methodism. Two years later, he ventured to Australia where instant sanctification specific terminology is not detected in his letters. These two years in England, we suspect, influenced his theology and practice evidenced by his change in language. In other words, notwithstanding the call of the 1820 and 1835 conferences for a return to the message and practice of holiness, it would seem that sanctification as an instant experience, at least, was falling from vogue by the end of the 1830s influencing Smithies' ministry. We know that the doctrine resurfaced in the last half of the century,

³³³ SOAS, Box 517, G. Lazenby and J. Hardey to WMMS, London, 4 March 1843.

³³⁴ Richard Knight, 'Memoir of the Rev William Black, of Halifax, Nova-Scotia', in *WMM for 1837*, 241–250.

³³⁵ See Hans Rollmann, "'The Pillars Fall, Yet the Building Stands'", *Methodist Lay Preachers and Missionaries in Newfoundland after Coughlan: 1773–1791* (Unpublished Paper, Memorial University of Newfoundland, n.d.).

³³⁶ See Kewley, 'First Fifty Years': 6–26 and Arthur E. Kewley, 'The Influence of Isolation on the Theology of Methodism in Newfoundland 1874–1924', *Lecture to the Canadian Society of Church History*, May 1971: 1–47.

especially in North America but also in England, spawning a plethora of holiness groups that ultimately gave birth to the Keswick movement in the late nineteenth century and the Pentecostal movement of the twentieth century.³³⁷ Nevertheless, from the 1830s to about the 1850s there seemed to have been a decline. Do the facts support the just outlined scenario?

§3.2.3.1 Comparisons

On one hand, a sampling of WM Magazines from the period (e.g., 1838, 1842) provides reasonable evidence of instant (or entire) sanctification experiences in personal stories throughout its pages, and much about holiness and piety.³³⁸ From these samples, it would appear that sanctification as an experience and doctrine was current during this period. On the other hand, according to Kent, by 1840, ‘The doctrine of holiness ... was dividing the British Methodists’.³³⁹ He explains that leaders, Rev Jabez Bunting (1779–1858) and Rev Richard Watson (1781–1833), were expounding the doctrines of holiness differently to their forbear Dr Adam Clarke (c.1762–1832), a contemporary and friend of John Wesley who closely followed his doctrine of instantaneous sanctification.³⁴⁰ Watson, who produced the first major Wesleyan systematic theology in 1823 (*Christian Institutes*), admitted the possibility of instantaneous sanctification but emphasised rather, a gradual maturity in holiness. Although entire sanctification remained official Methodist teaching, and people like John Hannah, tutor at the Wesleyan Theological Institution, promulgated Wesley’s sanctification doctrine from 1843 till his death in 1867, Kent observes that the ‘Wesleyan middle class’ rejected instantaneous sanctification although there was strong support for revivalism as integral to Wesleyan tradition.³⁴¹ Other evidence for WM ambivalence toward instantaneous, second blessing sanctification may be found in conference chairman Rev Thomas Jackson’s review of 100 years of Methodism. Whilst he emphasised Wesley’s doctrine on conversion accompanied by witness of the Spirit, he passed over sanctification in one paragraph in the context of conversion and progress toward ‘final salvation’ which latter expression we may confidently take to mean the goal of holiness.³⁴² On the other

³³⁷ See Chant, ‘Pentecost’, ch. 3; Bebbington, *Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 188–194; Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 153–155; and Dayton, *Pentecostalism*; Watson, ‘Methodist Spirituality’, 172–213.

³³⁸ *WMM for 1838*, 113, 121, 155, 202, 345, 367, 370, 407, 412, 442451–452, 465; *WMM for 1842*, 630, 902–903.

³³⁹ John Kent, ‘The Wesleyan Methodists to 1849’, in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, eds. Rupert E. Davies, et al. (London: Epworth, 1978), ii: 213–275.

³⁴⁰ See also Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 400.

³⁴¹ Bebbington, *Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 188; Kent, ‘The Wesleyan Methodists to 1849’, ii: 213–275.

³⁴² Jackson, *Centenary*, 87.

hand, an article by Jackson just one year earlier (1838) represents his strong view of instantaneous sanctification. He wrote:

In this life there is a higher salvation to be enjoyed than you have as yet attained. As there is a gradual mortification of sin, so there is a moment when sin ceases to exist in the believing heart, and when our love is made perfect. And why should that all-important moment be deferred?³⁴³

There is no question here that conference president Jackson espoused Wesley's doctrine of instant sanctification, but in a lament immediately following, he wonders 'why this blessed state [was] not generally realised among Christians'. The reason was, 'that their faith [was] defective', he said. Jackson's lament confirms WM diffidence about the experience during this period, despite his firm belief in it and his urging of it on others. In summary, it seemed that ambivalence regarding instant sanctification existed during the 1830s and 1840s, although the pursuit of holiness was still paramount, as shown above. However, the belief and practice of instant sanctification was by no means absent and despite lapses in holiness language, as exemplified by Jackson's 1839 publication, his former article was palpable regarding its importance.

Rev Robert Young's (1796–1865) journal (1854) provides further evidence for instant sanctification in his reference to the Tongan revival of 1846. Here, he said many were 'sanctified wholly' and reflecting on the whole work in Tonga from his vantage point in 1854, said that 'many have lived and died in the possession of entire sanctification.'³⁴⁴ It will be noted here that this is evidence that sanctification persisted on this mission field in the first half of the century as it is likely to have done on other stations such as Newfoundland. Evidence of British Methodism's revived interest in sanctification in the last half of the century may be found in Strawson's comment that the noted Rev Hugh Price Hughes (1847–1902), conference president and founder of Methodism's Forward Movement, was one proponent who spanned the distance between traditional and contemporary views on sanctification.³⁴⁵ In Australia, Rev John Watsford's (1820–1907) autobiography provides further evidence. He said, 'I preached frequently to Christians on Entire Sanctification, and the duty of individual effort to save souls'.³⁴⁶ Watsford made a trip to England during his ministry where he met Hughes and would

³⁴³ *WMM for 1838*, 412.

³⁴⁴ Young, *Southern World*, 259–261.

³⁴⁵ William Strawson, 'Methodist Theology 1850–1950', in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, eds. Rupert E. Davies, et al. (London: Epworth, 1983), iii: 182–231; See also William G. Taylor, 'The Forward Movement', in *Century*, ed. Colwell, 689–706.

³⁴⁶ John Watsford, *Glorious Gospel Triumphs as seen in my Life and Work in Fiji and Australasia* (London: Kelly, 1900), ch. 7.

no doubt have been influenced by trends there.³⁴⁷ Revival of sanctification teaching in England came from two main sources; the first was a group of young Methodist ministers who sought an experience of ‘perfect love’.³⁴⁸ There followed annual conferences and a monthly publication supervised by two of this group, I. E. Page and John Brash, called *The King’s Highway*. The magazine ran for twenty–eight years impacting on a number of Methodist denominations. The second source was the rise of sanctification teaching in North America, which in turn influenced England, although principal roots for the English revival was its Methodist tradition through the above–mentioned ministers.³⁴⁹

Smithies’ probable loss of focus on the doctrine of instant sanctification from 1840 could be attributed to the ambivalence of British Methodism toward it as experienced by him during his two years in Bakewell (1837–1839) and to a lesser extent his struggles in promoting Aboriginal mission as well as a lack of peer support because of his isolation. Smithies’ slight shift in emphasis may also be taken as an indication of a course alteration in some Wesleyan missionaries and the movement generally. Nevertheless, the meaning WM attached to instant sanctification as demonstrated by President Jackson’s quote above, was that of an experience which powerfully accelerated a recipient’s progress in holiness shown in his words, ‘As there is a gradual mortification of sin, so there is a moment when sin ceases to exist in the believing heart, and when our love is made perfect. And why should that all–important moment be deferred?’³⁵⁰ Instant sanctification, therefore, remained a potent feature of WM in the pursuit of holiness, as was the case of gradual sanctification. Findlay and Holdsworth, for example, accurately identify entire (instant) sanctification with the missionary goal and impetus in their introduction. For example, they say, ‘Entire sanctification formed a vital tenet of the Wesleyan teaching’ and that ‘holiness’ and ‘full redemption [see previous note about ‘glory’ and its meaning of completed holiness and salvation] was the prelude to the outburst of missionary enthusiasm in the next generation’. Notwithstanding this conspicuous comment, however, they give little, if any further space to the subject in their five–volume work.³⁵¹ In addition, in the reviewed articles from the standard text on WM, while Goldhawk recognises the role of gradual and

³⁴⁷ Ibid., intro., which includes a letter of endorsement from Hugh Price Hughes.

³⁴⁸ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 153–155.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.; Bebbington, *Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 188–194; Watson, ‘Methodist Spirituality’, 172–213.

³⁵⁰ *WMM for 1838*, 412.

³⁵¹ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, 33–34.

instant sanctification in the early Victorian Methodists' goal of holiness, he does not state that the missionary cause was motivated by 'the urge after holiness', although he does acknowledge its influence on mission. Turner, another representative author, scarcely refers to sanctification, saying merely that Methodists were called to live pious lives, and that the class (and other society) meetings encouraged such piety.³⁵² On the other hand, both gradual and instant sanctification, in this dissertation, are viewed as integral to the fulfilment of the WM goal to spread scriptural holiness and, as such, provides additional understanding of WM mission in the period studied as well as further light on what motivated its missionaries. More evidence of the pursuit of holiness is found in Smithies' practice of Wesleyan 'polity' and 'means of grace', as sketched in the following section.³⁵³

§3.2.4 Care of souls

If saving souls and sanctification were crucial means in spreading holiness, nurturing souls was equally important and consequently we would expect to be a focus of Smithies' mission. WM had a well-organised system for the care of souls that has been the subject of many studies.³⁵⁴ Although Methodist organisation has attracted considerable attention, the suggestion that WM mission aimed solely at conversion as a primary goal is a significant under interpretation of its mission given the primacy of this aspect of Methodism in its pursuit of holiness.³⁵⁵ This organisation included what Methodists called 'polity', 'means of grace' and 'the discipline'.³⁵⁶ Polity consisted of the entire organisation of WM including its society meetings, ordained ministry, districts and conferences. The discipline involved the ordering of lives within this organisation including the spiritual standards that applied to members of class meetings, band meetings and societies. Means of grace referred to the sacraments of communion

³⁵² Turner, *Methodist Religion*, 97–112.

³⁵³ See Baker, 'Polity', i: 213–255; A. Raymond George, 'The People called Methodists: The Means of Grace', in *History of the Methodist Church*, eds. Rupert E. Davies, et al., i: 259–273; Lawson, 'Our Discipline', i: 183–209; Watson, 'Methodist Spirituality', 172–213.

³⁵⁴ E.g., Clair Allen Budd and Ronald W Freeman, 'John Wesley Meets Malcolm Knowles: Was the Class Meeting Andragogical?' in *Christian Education Journal* 1, 3 (Fall 2004): 63–79; D. Michael Henderson, *John Wesley's Class Meeting* (Nappanee, IN: Evangel, 1998); Kenneth Leech, *Soul Friend: Spiritual Direction in the Modern World*, rev. edn. (London: Darton Longman and Todd, 1994); Howard A. Snyder, *The Problem of Wine Skins: Church Structure in a Technological Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1975); Howard A. Snyder, *The Radical Wesley: Pattern for Church Renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1980); Tracy, 'Spiritual Direction', 115–136; Watson, *Class Meeting*; Watson, 'Methodist Spirituality', 172–213.

³⁵⁵ E.g., Axtell, *The Invasion Within*, 218; Carey, *Believing*, 48, 70; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 146ff.

³⁵⁶ See Baker, 'Polity', i: 213–255; George, 'The Means of Grace', i: 259–273; Lawson, 'Our Discipline', i: 183–209.

and baptism, prayer and preaching, and other ways through which the grace of God was thought to be conferred. Given the nature of these three categories, there was considerable overlap and interchange of terms. However, taken together, Wesleyan organisation consisting of its polity, discipline and means of grace, gave it notoriety (and recurring criticism), but also its great power. Its class meetings and band meetings were the core of the system and were fundamental in the pursuit of holiness.³⁵⁷

These meetings consisted of small groups of Wesleyan members who met regularly to encourage and pray for one another in order to promote mutual growth in holiness. As Wesley said,

It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society; but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord.³⁵⁸

It was through the careful organisation of Methodist societies that ministers used ‘all their power’ to build up their congregations in holiness. In addition, the class meetings were at times the means of conversions, because qualifications for membership included being an earnest seeker of salvation (and holiness), not necessarily a possessor of it.³⁵⁹ Therefore, since WM organisation was unique, and understanding the goal and content of class meetings and bands, the fact that Smithies reported such meetings demonstrates the maintenance of holiness beliefs and practices in his ministry and therefore what may be reasonably expected in missionary work in the period under discussion. Townsend et al., for instance, say that a band ‘was made up of like-minded persons who were seeking Christian Perfection’, and regarding their proliferation, they say that many ‘Methodist sanctuaries had a Band Room’.³⁶⁰

Birtwhistle’s lengthy article on missions, however, provides virtually nothing on the care of souls.³⁶¹ Referring in part to class meetings, ‘distinctive church order’ is noted by Goldhawk.³⁶² However, the nearest he comes to integrating class meetings and holiness is Goldhawk’s comment that holiness influenced the other two facets but he does not integrate ‘distinctive church order’ with mission although it may be implied. Turner notes class (and other society) meetings saying that they fostered piety but he

³⁵⁷ Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 480; Lawson, ‘Our Discipline’, i: 183–209.

³⁵⁸ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 310.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, viii: 270; Lawson, ‘Our Discipline’, i: 183–209.

³⁶⁰ Townsend, et al., *Methodism*, i: 285–286.

³⁶¹ Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116.

³⁶² Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, 113–142.

says nothing further about them.³⁶³ However, the care of souls through band and class meetings was fundamental to WM and primary to its missionary objective to pursue holiness. Therefore, in light of limited discussion regarding class and associated meetings, especially in relation to WM mission in the reviewed period, this dissertation will pursue a fresh understanding regarding the role of the WM care of souls in pursuit of its mission goal to spread holiness. What, then, did Smithies report about class meetings in his Newfoundland and Australian ministries?

In his Newfoundland letters and minute reports, Smithies made forty direct references to class meetings and four to bands. References to class meetings in his Australian correspondence number thirty and to bands, two.³⁶⁴ These references exhibit a high level commitment typical of WM missionaries of this period. Knowing the format of class and band meetings, as will be highlighted below, it may be confidently stated that the personal pursuit of holiness was unremitting in Smithies' ministry through this means. It may also be gathered from the fewer number of references to bands in his letters that they were less important; however, the nature of them makes it likely that they would be referred to less often. For instance, band meetings traditionally consisted of smaller numbers than classes and were grouped by gender.³⁶⁵ They were of a more confidential and searching nature and members were expected to have been converted as well as being participants in, or earnest seekers of sanctification so that reporting these meetings and their contents was less likely than class meetings. Only the more devout would have attended. Nevertheless, this does not mean they were scarce. Classes, on the other hand, being better known and attended, were reported frequently as just demonstrated.

Examples of Smithies' references to class and band meetings begin with his first letter from Newfoundland where he reported that he 'commenced service by reading the abridgement of prayers, preached to them three times in the day, met two classes and found their experience good and encouraging such as was made a blessing to me'.³⁶⁶ Class meetings were opportunities for ministers or appointed class leaders to assess members' progress in holiness and make suitable exhortations to them. In this case, since members were progressing well, Smithies was encouraged. The nature of questions put to members in these classes provides a good idea of what Smithies meant

³⁶³ Turner, *Methodist Religion*, 97–112.

³⁶⁴ SOAS, Box 516–518, Smithies to WMMS, London, 1840–1855.

³⁶⁵ See Watson, *Class Meeting*, 93ff; Wesley, *Works*, viii: 248–268.

³⁶⁶ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 9 September 1828.

when he reported that he ‘found their experience good’. To illustrate, the ‘General Rules of the United Societies’ states,

There are about twelve persons in every class; one of whom is 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 toward the relief of the poor.³⁶⁷

In addition, another sample found in ‘Minutes of Conversations between Wesley and Others’, the following appears:

(2.) Let each Leader carefully inquire how every soul in his class prospers; not only how each person observes the outward Rules, but how he grows in the knowledge and love of God.³⁶⁸

From these instructions to class meeting leaders, it may be observed how the meeting content was directed toward members’ spiritual development; their growth in holiness. It will be recalled that ‘knowledge and love of God’, in which a class member was expected to grow, constituted the essence of holiness.³⁶⁹ In reference to another meeting, Smithies said, ‘We were happily employed in preaching and visiting the people and many joined the Classes. O that the Lord may pour out of his Spirit.’³⁷⁰ In this case, evidence of concern for salvation was seen in people joining the classes. Classes, as just noted, were a kind of seekers’ meeting in addition to providing soul care to the converted.

As noted above, band meetings were like small class meetings. Paraphrasing Wesley’s words, the 1880 *Constitution and Polity of WM* described band meetings as ‘associations of three or four earnest Christians, the special object of whose intercourse was to obey the injunction, “Confess your faults one to another and pray for one another that ye may be healed (James 5:16)”’.³⁷¹ Wesley’s original instructions relating to band meetings demonstrate their nature as points (4) and (5) show:

(4.) To speak each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our soul, with the faults we have committed in thought, word, or deed, and the temptations we have felt since our last meeting. **(5.)** To desire some person among us (thence called a Leader) to speak his own state first, and then to ask the rest, in order, as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations.”³⁷²

³⁶⁷ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 270.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, viii: 301.

³⁶⁹ See Wesley’s ‘Plain Account’, in Wesley, *Works*, xi: 366–446.

³⁷⁰ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May 1829.

³⁷¹ Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 3–4.

³⁷² Wesley, *Works*, viii: 258.

Band meetings were intended, therefore, to be more personal, searching and intentional in producing growth of holiness, as noted above. An example of one of Smithies' band meetings follows:

This evening we commenced a Band meeting at our own house. It was well attended. We had far better experience than I had anticipated. All that spoke were clear as to the manner of their conversion, adoption [and etc.]. One poor penitent was clearly set at liberty while prayer was made for her. Another obtained the blessing of sanctification and a third spoke of having received that blessing during the day. Truly the signs of the times are precious here.³⁷³

From this account, we see that in the band meeting, the same attention was given to members' spiritual state as in the class meeting. This consisted primarily of progress in holiness since the reported conversion meant the beginning of perfection and, the two accounts of sanctification indicate accelerated progress in perfection. However, Smithies' terminology, 'poor penitent', does not necessarily mean conversion. Bands were originally designed to consist of fewer numbers so that there might be more concerted attention to growth in holiness, as noted above, but here the meeting was 'well attended' although Smithies did not say how many attended. The only difference detected was that it was convened in his home. The fact that little difference is discerned between the two and that the description of the band meeting mentioned one (possible) conversion and two cases of sanctification, demonstrates Smithies' commitment to the WM nature and purpose of band (and class) meetings. The lack of definition between the two types of meeting in his reports may also account for Smithies' scant reference to bands. However, there is evidence, according to Lowes, that the distinction between bands and classes blurred over time.³⁷⁴ Even Wesley, he said, confused the two in his writings although his original depiction of them provided clear differences. Though such blurring between the two meetings may have existed from Wesley's time, it would seem there was not a diminished purpose for either, given Smithies' just noted example. It was not until the end of the nineteenth century, as Carey and Townsend note, that Methodist bands and classes began to decline.³⁷⁵

Class meetings were also prominent in Smithies' Australian ministry. An initial report to the WMMS mentioned the existence of class leaders so that from the outset these were integral to the Swan River mission and had in fact begun prior to Smithies' arrival, the first being established at George Lazenby's home.³⁷⁶ Two years later, he reported

³⁷³ SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 13 December 1831.

³⁷⁴ See Watson, *Class Meeting*, 93ff; Wesley, *Works*, viii: 248–268.

³⁷⁵ Carey, *Believing*, 87–90; Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 480.

³⁷⁶ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1841; SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 19 January 1843.

the collection of ‘class monies’ providing evidence of the classes’ continuance.³⁷⁷ Class monies were collections taken at each class meeting, traditionally for the ‘relief of the poor’.³⁷⁸ In the same letter, Smithies reported the commencement of class meetings for the children of the Sabbath school, both ‘white and native’, as a means of securing their conversion. He wrote,

God hath assured us of late with an ardent hope and restless desire to see some of them, the elder boys and girls truly converted to God. This has led us to commence a class on the first Sabbath in the new year to which they are invited to remain after the school was over.³⁷⁹

Smithies’ stated intention for the commencement of class meetings for the children was their conversion (entrance into holiness) showing a primary purpose of these meetings. Growth in faith and holiness was another fundamental aim, as noted above. However, knowing the WM view that conversion was holiness begun, holiness may be said to be the sole purpose of the class meeting.

In reporting the lamentable defection of Henry Trigg from the society, Smithies mentioned that one of Trigg’s roles had been that of class leader.³⁸⁰ In his revival letter the following year, he noted the presence of revival in the class meeting.³⁸¹ Three class leaders are mentioned in 1845 in connection with the state of the WM society.³⁸² That there were three leaders for the Swan River society demonstrates the major function of class meetings considering that these three meetings catered for about fifty members (aside from the meeting noted above for school children) and that they were held regularly, probably weekly.³⁸³ There are a considerable number of additional references to classes in the Swan River but one more will be noted in connection with George Lazenby. Lazenby withdrew from the society when it was pointed out that he ought to attend to his class meetings.³⁸⁴ In Smithies’ application of ‘the discipline’, as noted earlier, we discover how important class meetings were in the Methodist polity. Other factors in Lazenby’s withdrawal included his failure to ‘keep his word and pay his debts’. He owed Smithies £20 upon which repayment Smithies had hoped to repay a benefactor in England. Smithies subsequently had to pay it out of his own pocket.

³⁷⁷ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 10 January 1843.

³⁷⁸ Watson, *Class Meeting*, 204–206.

³⁷⁹ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 10 January 1843.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 4 March 1843.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 26 October 1844.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 28 March 1845.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 25 October 1843.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 25 September 1850.

Lazenby also negatively influenced people in the congregation, which did not surprise Smithies since he knew he was involved in the notorious ‘Leeds organ affair’. In this latter saga, Lazenby must have taken sides with agitators who opposed the introduction of an organ into the Brunswick Chapel, Leeds, in 1827.³⁸⁵ The national conference under Jabez Bunting overruled the local district, upholding the trustees’ right to install the organ confirming Smithies’ comment that Lazenby was ‘defending such a spirit against Conference’. The application of the discipline in such matters illustrates the carefulness with which Smithies (and Methodism) conducted affairs to preserve the holiness of its members and society although it is admitted there was a measure of self-interest in this case, since Lazenby was tardy in paying a financial debt to Smithies. In addition, the content of class meetings was unique to WM and specifically designed to care for souls in their progress toward perfection. A final note regarding class meetings in the Swan River colony is made by Smithies’ successor, Rev William Lowe who reported, ‘Our class and prayer meetings and the week evening preaching are well attended’.³⁸⁶ This note is a fitting conclusion to Smithies’ Swan River ministry, demonstrating the continuing health of class meetings shortly after his new appointment to York. In this sense, his work was ‘not in vain’ to use one of his oft-repeated expressions, especially regarding the pursuit of holiness considering the nature of class meetings.

There are no instances of class meetings in Smithies’ reports or letters from Van Diemen’s Land from his arrival there in 1855. This is not unusual since there are only several letters extant from John and Hannah to the WMMS for this period due to the establishment of the new Australian WM Conference, which precluded the need for missionaries to provide written reports.³⁸⁷ However, we know that class meetings were important in Tasmania. In 1855, the time of the just noted inauguration of the Australian WM Conference, statistics show that there were 50 class leaders for about 4,000 adherents (these were attendants at worship, not just members). Over the next 13 years, numbers doubled; in 1868 there were 101 class leaders for 1538 members with 9693 people attending worship.³⁸⁸ The period between 1855 and 1868 (the span covering Smithies’ ministry) witnessed marked growth. He was superannuated in 1863 and died

³⁸⁵ Davies, *Methodism*, 142; Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 425–426.

³⁸⁶ SOAS, Box 518, William Lowe to WMMS, London, 30 August 1852.

³⁸⁷ Townsend et al., *Methodism*, ii: 256.

³⁸⁸ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 81; Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book*, 11 Nov 1868 – 10 Nov 1877 (Ref: NS 499/17).

in 1872.³⁸⁹ The increase that Smithies witnessed in his New Norfolk circuit, growth that included class meetings particularly, was typical of Tasmanian WM generally.³⁹⁰

Smithies' diligent use of class meetings for the care of souls throughout his ministry in three different nations, was a significant component of his mission to spread holiness. This conclusion is also reached from what he mentioned about examining the spiritual condition of class members in accord with WM polity and in connection with what is known about the nature and purpose of these meetings, namely, to build up members in holiness. In this, Smithies provides for us a cameo of WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century and, therefore, what class meetings meant to Methodists. In addition, another part of the answer is supplied to what motivated WM missionaries in this period, what was their objective, and how did this goal fit into the larger purpose, specifically, the pursuit of scriptural holiness.

Two other 'means of grace' existed for the care of souls in the larger design of spreading holiness, namely, the 'love feast' and the weekly meetings of the society. 'Society' is equivalent to a 'parish church', so we are referring here to the weekly meetings of a local Methodist church. The love feast, however, was not a weekly service but a quarterly one. Typically a two-hour service, love feasts consisted of prayer, hymn singing and personal testimony of God's goodness.³⁹¹ Traditionally, bread and water were consumed during the services; any residue being sold to assist the poor among constituents. The meetings were noticeably charismatic in nature and were a source of rich encouragement to members in their pursuit of holiness. To illustrate, Wesley spoke of the advantages of the love feast in his 'Plain Account of the People called Methodists'. He said,

Great and many are the advantages which have ever since flowed from this closer union of the believers with each other. They prayed for one another, that they might be healed of the faults they had confessed; and it was so. The chains were broken, the hands were burst in sunder, and sin had no more dominion over them. Many were delivered from the temptations out of which, till then, they found no way to escape. They were built up in our most holy faith. They rejoiced in the Lord more abundantly. They were strengthened in love, and more effectually provoked to abound in every good work.³⁹²

His report on the effectiveness of the love feast here, it will be noticed, is charged with holiness language and ideals. For instance, greater love for and unity with other

³⁸⁹ Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book*, 11 Nov 1868 – 10 Nov 1877 (Ref: NS 499/17).

³⁹⁰ In his minute, Smithies reports almost twice the attendees and members in 1857 from the previous year (Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book*, 7 October 1845 – 13 Nov 1867 [Ref: NS 499/16]).

³⁹¹ Davies, *Worship*, iv: 262–263.

³⁹² Wesley, *Works*, viii: 259.

members, forgiveness and cleansing of sins, the breaking of sin's dominion (a typical description of sanctification), building up in 'holy faith', being 'strengthened in love' and provoked to good works, are all component expressions of Wesley's definition of holiness. In addition, the very name 'love feast' (Jude 12) depicted the nature of the holiness that Wesley and the subsequent WM desired, that is, perfect love for God and people. The idea of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for members to express personally heartfelt love for God and other members through the means just noted. Love feasts died out by the end of the nineteenth century, according to Davies, due to growing 'respectability' of the membership and therefore diminished inclination to highlight charismatic experiences. The love feast was a significant means for the care of souls in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but was this so in Smithies' ministry?

Smithies reported love feasts on four occasions during his time in Newfoundland and Swan River, and at least one other occasion in minutes connected with his mission.³⁹³ On 18 July 1830, the first love feast since 1792 was conducted at Carbonear, Newfoundland, wrote Smithies.³⁹⁴ The practice of love feasts in early Newfoundland Methodism is born out in John Stretton's letters (1770-1791) to Eliza Bennis where he mentions a number of love feasts and their significance.³⁹⁵ The absence of a love feast for 38 years underscores Kewley's view that Methodism for the first fifty years in Newfoundland was not the authentic kind and that it was through the generation of ministers, which included Smithies, that true Methodism was instituted.³⁹⁶ The meeting about which Smithies wrote was a notable occasion with a number of conversions taking place. The 'presence of the Lord' made the 'meeting so profitable', he wrote. He further reported, 'A gracious influence pervaded every mind and to me it was a peculiar privilege indeed, and a means of quickening my soul'. The meeting itself consisted of a powerful message brought by the Rev John Haigh, and 'testimonials to the power of divine grace were short, clear and pathetic, yea out of the feelings of their hearts', wrote Smithies. From this outline, the charismatic nature of the love feast can be readily noticed together with the benefits of the service. That is, conversions took place,

³⁹³ E.g., SOAS, Box 97, 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 6 September 1830, 12 January 1836; Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829-1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives); SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 10 January 1843, 21 October 1847.

³⁹⁴ SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 6 September 1830.

³⁹⁵ John Stretton, *Correspondence with Eliza Bennis* (St. John's, NL: Memorial University of Newfoundland), URL: <http://www.mun.ca/rels/meth/texts/corres/corres2.html>, accessed 14 October 2004.

³⁹⁶ Kewley, 'First Fifty Years': 6-26.

Smithies' soul was 'quicken'd' and attendees testified to 'the power of divine grace'. The latter expression is crucial in that it conveys a meaning that could embrace instant sanctification as well as conversion.

To love feasts, therefore, was attributed great power to 'build up' Wesleyans 'in holiness' and thus provide the soul care which was part of their mission. This is confirmed in his next reference where Smithies stated, 'Our last quarterly love feast was so good a meeting as almost to appear like home'.³⁹⁷ In saying that it resembled an English love feast, we gather that Smithies meant a meeting containing the content, purpose and spirit of that in England and therefore we may safely accept that it was the same as that described by Wesley. Even late into his Swan River ministry (1847), the love feast provided strength and encouragement. Smithies wrote, 'Our sacramental means and love feast are encouraging occasions and seem to cement us with home and heaven and lift our sinking spirits up' and therefore evidently promoted holiness especially revealed in his expression 'cement us with home and heaven'.³⁹⁸ To be joined with heaven is taken to mean a heavenly state of mind and heart which indicate nothing less than a state of holiness. Smithies' note here suggests the regularity of love feasts that Davies said died out by the end of the century.³⁹⁹ Given the purpose of the love feast in WM polity, namely, 'to meet together to speak of Christian experience' (which experience included conversion and perfection), their regularity indicates continued usefulness in the pursuit of holiness during Smithies' time.⁴⁰⁰

The examples above relating to the regular meetings of Methodist societies in Smithies' ministry provide a picture of typical WM care of souls in their progress toward holiness, in addition to the usual saving of souls. Wesley organised Methodism, as Snyder says, 'not to make converts but to turn converts into saints'.⁴⁰¹ Consequently, considerable missionary energy was invested in the maintenance of the Wesleyan societal system to both preserve and grow members in holiness. This vigour demonstrates another part of the answer as to what motivated WM missionaries in this period. To further clarify the use of class and other meetings in the pursuit of holiness in WM, comparisons with other Methodist missionaries and literature follow.

³⁹⁷ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 January 1836.

³⁹⁸ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 21 October 1847.

³⁹⁹ Davies, *Worship*, iv: 262–263.

⁴⁰⁰ Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 6–7.

⁴⁰¹ Snyder, *Radical Wesley*, 2.

§3.2.4.1 Comparisons

As noted earlier, Townsend, et al., observe that many WM chapels had band rooms and that the meetings were ‘long continued’ in Methodism, although they also say that the practice of such an intense and intimate meeting was not intended to be permanent.⁴⁰² Watson agrees saying, ‘even as the classes became the basic unit of Methodist organisation, the bands were by no means neglected’.⁴⁰³ Band meetings along with love feasts did decline by the latter part of the nineteenth century, but in Smithies era, they were in common use.⁴⁰⁴ As also noted earlier, the fact that band meetings existed at all meant that participants were engaged in an intense pursuit of holiness.⁴⁰⁵ ‘It was here that the spiritual quest for perfection was fostered and guided’, says Watson.⁴⁰⁶ Therefore, since Smithies reported band meetings, albeit not frequently, it is evident that he and his contemporaries sought perfection according to the WM mission statement.

An example of the closely associated class meeting comes first from Bangalore in the WM Madras district, where the Rev Thomas Cryer wrote on 30 March 1837, ‘Immediately after the Tamul [sic] public service, the Tamul [sic] female class meets. An aged and respectable country–born woman assists me in this class; and I hope soon to constitute her the regular Leader of it.’⁴⁰⁷ Another instance comes from the South Seas, namely Lakemba, in the Feejee [Fiji] Islands, where Rev David Cargill wrote on 8 October 1836, ‘All of them [recent converts] have been meeting in class more than three months, and have walked worthy [i.e., in holiness] of their vocation’.⁴⁰⁸ A third example of numerous samples available comes from the African continent, namely Sierra Leone, where Rev Thomas Raston wrote on 23 July 1842, ‘We have a gracious work among the youths in this Institution. I meet them in class every Monday evening’.⁴⁰⁹ A fourth illustration comes from the ‘Memoir of the Late Rev Joseph Robinson’ who said that class meetings were used ‘not only as a means ... of increasing religion in his own soul, but as promoting holiness and establishment in most Christians with whom ... he had become acquainted’.⁴¹⁰ In Robinson’s comment is noted the purpose of class meetings

⁴⁰² Townsend, et al., *Methodism*, i: 285–286.

⁴⁰³ Watson, *Class Meeting*, 94.

⁴⁰⁴ E.g., Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 225–227.

⁴⁰⁵ Townsend, et al., *Methodism*, i: 285–286.

⁴⁰⁶ Watson, *Class Meeting*, 116.

⁴⁰⁷ *WMM for 1837*, 72–73.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 437.

⁴⁰⁹ *WMM for 1842*, 1059–1060.

⁴¹⁰ *WMM for 1837*, 401.

in promoting holiness, as well as their universal use for this purpose observed over ‘his long itinerancy’.

These four examples from across the globe indicate the proliferation, importance and purpose of class meetings so typical of WM missionaries abroad as well as ministers at home (Britain). In support of the importance of class meetings to Methodism, an 1881 editorial from Western Canada lamented the scarcity by that later date of ‘earnest willing class leaders’, which Brooks notes, signalled a ‘tendency which always heralded Methodist decline’.⁴¹¹ He added, ‘The class meeting had always been considered the corner stone of any brand of Methodism. Its decline meant an end to the very motive power of the movement.’ The statement, ‘motive power of the movement’, provides more evidence for what motivated WM missionaries in this period. In the light of this statement, Smithies’ diligence in convening class meetings is substantial evidence of the pursuit of holiness among his members throughout his ministry, so typical of his era. Further evidence comes from Townsend et al., who say, ‘Methodism has been faithful to its mission. That was defined by John Wesley as the spread of scriptural holiness; and amongst the most characteristic means he employed was the gathering together of seriously minded people into classes’.⁴¹² Townsend et al. emphasise that progress toward the goal of holiness was chiefly achieved through the class meeting. They added, ‘Until the end of the century [nineteenth] the class meeting remained the chief expression of fellowship between Methodists’, although as just noted, in Western Canada the class meeting was in decline late in the second half of the century.

The other ‘means of grace’ employed to progress adherents in scriptural holiness were the weekly meetings of the society and the quarterly love feast. Evidence that Smithies was one among many WM missionaries during the first half of the nineteenth century who utilised these means is easy to locate. For example, Beardsall details nineteenth century Methodist practice in Newfoundland in this regard.⁴¹³ She says, ‘The convert faced a variety of Methodist “disciplines,” including class meetings, love feasts, mid-week meetings, family prayer, and the Lord’s Supper’. Similarly, at the general conference of the MEC held at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in May 1832, the following statement was delivered:

Only let all who have been born of the Spirit, and have tasted of the good word of God, seek, with the same ardor, to be made perfect in love as they sought for the

⁴¹¹ William H. Brooks, ‘The Uniqueness of Western Canadian Methodism 1840–1925’, in *The Bulletin: Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 26 (March–June, 1977): 57–74.

⁴¹² Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 480.

⁴¹³ Beardsall, ‘Fastened to the Rock’.

pardon of their sins, and soon will our class meetings and love feasts be cheered by the relation of experiences of this higher character, as they now are with those which tell of justification and the new birth.⁴¹⁴

Here is noted first the MEC practice of class meetings and love feasts. It is a given that other weekly meetings such as prayer meetings and regular public services were held, as can easily be demonstrated.⁴¹⁵ The love feasts and class meetings frequently heard the shared stories of adherents' conversions and in this sense, the meetings nurtured converts' faith. The plea made at the conference was for adherents to earnestly pursue sanctification, 'to be made perfect in love', so that the meetings would also hear of these experiences and thus progress further in the pursuit of holiness. The class meetings and love feast therefore were singled out as nurturing places for the higher life of perfection. The above examples thus illustrate that Smithies' practice of band meetings, class meetings, and quarterly love feasts were common practices across Methodism, in addition to prayer meetings and regular weekly meetings of the societies. It has also been demonstrated that these meetings nurtured adherents' Christian faith particularly their progress in holiness, and therefore to Methodists this was the meaning attributed to them and consequently was an additional reason for motivating WM missionaries.

§3.2.5 Summary

The WM goal of saving souls was a first step in the ultimate goal of spreading holiness through the land (§3.2.2). Smithies spoke frequently of soul saving as did other WM missionaries in the field and ministers in England. Evidence that Smithies pursued holiness as the final objective in soul saving was found first in a list of questions put to ministerial candidates in the Newfoundland WM district minutes for 1829–1850.⁴¹⁶ Since Smithies was ordained in Newfoundland, these were questions he had to answer satisfactorily. Second, in Smithies' prayers we found evidences of his goal of holiness.⁴¹⁷ In addition, in Smithies' report from Blackhead, Newfoundland, that the 'Spirit of conviction, of penitence, of holiness is graciously afforded us', a third piece of evidence was uncovered regarding his goal of holiness in soul saving.⁴¹⁸ Fourth, Smithies' use of the word 'glory' also reveals the objective of perfection in conversion,

⁴¹⁴ Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 144.

⁴¹⁵ E.g., Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 197.

⁴¹⁶ Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

⁴¹⁷ E.g., SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 September 1829.

⁴¹⁸ Smithies' minute, 21 May 1834, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

given the meaning of holiness attributed to this word by WM.⁴¹⁹ Finally, Smithies' reports on conversions show his goal of holiness since he was careful to report changes in character of the converted. Consequently, through taking these five reasons together, in addition to the provided background teaching and comparisons, it may be established that Smithies pursued the goal of holiness in conversion (soul saving), in the same manner as other WM missionaries of the period. In this may also be seen WM uniformity in the pursuit of holiness. The meaning of conversion to Smithies and his WM colleagues, therefore, was entrance to a life of holiness.

In relation to sanctification (§3.2.3), both instant and gradual (both of which contributed to the life of holiness or perfection), Smithies spoke of entire sanctification experiences in Newfoundland that paralleled Wesley's doctrine and experience of perfection. However, in the Swan River colony and Van Diemen's Land, there is an absence of 'entire sanctification' language. However, Smithies spoke about holiness, morality, piety and righteousness throughout his letters so that his goal was clearly holiness. As earlier noted, British WM ambivalence was a likely cause of the cooling of Smithies' and other missionaries vigorous pursuit of instant sanctification. There is some evidence that in North America a similar cooling was experienced during the 1830s and 1840s. On the other hand, there is substantial evidence that the practice was still prevalent. Prominent WM leader, Rev Robert Young, who undertook a tour of the South Seas in 1854 as a representative of the WMMS, clearly identified the doctrine and evidence of instant sanctification in Tonga. It appears, therefore, there was ambivalence even among WM leaders. However, the last half of the century saw an upsurge of the teaching and practice of instant or entire sanctification in both America and Britain. Louis Billington points out that it was likely that Methodist offshoots such as Primitive Methodists pursued entire sanctification more ardently.⁴²⁰ WM lost tens of thousands of members in the late 1840s due in part to their conservatism. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the vicissitudes of the doctrine of entire sanctification during the middle period of the nineteenth century, sanctification teaching and practice, both gradual and instant, was prevalent throughout WM mission. This was evidenced by examples demonstrating that the meaning of sanctification to Methodists was growth in the holiness that they sought to spread through the land.

⁴¹⁹ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October 1840; Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 430; Watson, 'Methodist Spirituality', 172–213 (esp. pp. 176–177); Wesley, *Works*, xi: 378–379.

⁴²⁰ Billington, 'Revivalism', 147–161.

The care of souls (§3.2.4) in WM was practiced principally through its highly organised system of meetings such as band and class meetings, quarterly love feasts and the other regular meetings of societies such as prayer meetings and Sunday services. To Smithies and other Methodists, the meaning of the care of souls was the maintenance of converts' faith, nurturing their pursuit of holiness especially in band meetings and the closely related class meetings. Conversion, as noted, was the entrance into holiness. To be made perfect in love was the ultimate objective in the pursuit of holiness. Though not all achieved this goal, many claimed to have attained it.

Conversion, sanctification and care of souls, then, were integral components in the WM pursuit of holiness and therefore its increase through the nations. Consequently, to say that conversion was the primary WM goal, as some have stated, is to overlook sanctification as a primary objective and motivation for its mission work in the period (partly answering our primary questions). In addition, to not give primacy to the care of souls especially in its role toward achieving holiness, is to inadequately interpret Methodist mission in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴²¹ Therefore the understanding provided here adds to earlier knowledge regarding WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century. The second facet of the WM mission statement, and one that tends to be overlooked, is its agenda to reform the church, an integral part of its mission to spread scriptural holiness.

§3.3 Reform of the Church

§3.3.1 Preamble

The Wesleyan mission statement included 'reform of the land, particularly the Church'.⁴²² A principal reason for reform, according to Wesley and his followers, was a deficiency in the church of practical holy living as well as a void of 'vital Christianity'.⁴²³ For an example of what this reform meant to WM in Smithies' era, an article in the WMM for 1835 says that Methodists 'revived the almost obsolete doctrines of the atonement, justification by faith, the witness of the Holy Spirit, and the new birth'.⁴²⁴ Regarding the vital nature of their Christianity, the writer says, 'They preached these doctrines with the zeal of martyrs; and God so owned their labours, that the power of the truth was soon felt through the length and breadth of the land'.

⁴²¹ E.g., Aveling, 'Religious Aspect', 575–598; Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 218ff; Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116; Carey, *Believing*, 48, 70; Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMs*; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 146ff.

⁴²² Wesley, *Works*, viii: 299–300.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, 46–247.

⁴²⁴ *WMM for 1835*, 515.

Regarding other churches, the report adds, ‘The established church caught the flame; the Dissenters participated in the quickening power; Christianity resumed her native dignity; a thousand spiritual agencies sprang into existence’. Concerning godliness (holiness) as a primary reform objective, the same article states, ‘The probability is, that for one godly Minister in the land, when Mr Wesley claimed the world for his parish, there are now forty’. In addition, a study on Welsh WM in Smithies’ era also identifies this objective saying that ‘the aim of Methodism in both countries [England and Wales] was the same: to re–awaken the Church, and stimulate it to a keener sense of its duty and a greater awareness of its responsibility, “to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land”’.⁴²⁵ As these comments show, Methodists unashamedly saw themselves as agents of reform for Christianity in general.

As mentioned in the introduction, this segment of the mission statement (i.e., reform of the Church) was written by Wesley when Methodism was still part of the EC. By the time of Smithies, WM was a separate denomination, although it regarded itself as a connexion and daughter of the Church.⁴²⁶ Did the method of church reform in the first half of the nineteenth century, therefore, mean the same as in Wesley’s time? Questions to be addressed in this section are: what did Wesley mean by reform of the Church (or church). Could such meaning apply once separation took place? What meaning did Smithies attribute to reform of church, and how did he (and other missionaries of WM) fulfil this part of the vision, if at all? As noted earlier, there is limited awareness of the reform component of the WM mission statement, or else a view of Methodist mission as sectarian.⁴²⁷ Both of these positions leave a deficit as far as the meaning attributed to reform of the church by Methodists in the first half of the nineteenth century.

To the first question posed above, viz. what Wesley meant by reform of Church, an answer is found in ‘Minutes of Some Late Conversations between the Rev Mr Wesleys and Others’, where we find the following:

Q. 24. In what view may we and our Helpers be considered?

A. Perhaps as extraordinary messengers, (that is, out of the ordinary way,) designed,

(1.) To provoke the regular Ministers to jealousy.

(2.) To supply their lack of service toward those who are perishing for want of knowledge.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁵ Williams, *Welsh WM*, 37.

⁴²⁶ Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 370ff.

⁴²⁷ E.g., Aveling, ‘Religious Aspect’, 575–598; Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116.

⁴²⁸ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 309.

Here, Wesley said that Methodist preachers were to be regarded, not as ordained clergy (because most were not) but as extra-ordinary messengers within the Church to ‘provoke the regular Ministers to jealousy’ by supplying ‘their lack of service toward those who are perishing’. EC ministers were, in many cases, failing to provide care for their people especially in the crucial role of evangelists.⁴²⁹ In other words, they rarely proclaimed an evangelical message to which hearers could respond and become converted, transformed believers who pursued a life of holiness. As Methodist preachers faithfully filled this role, Wesley expected that EC clergy would notice their example, be provoked, and change their ways. His plan worked in many cases, but as might be expected, where it did not, it attracted criticism, opposition and sometimes persecution.⁴³⁰

In addition, since Dissenters and Roman Catholics also came within the fold of Christian church, did Wesley have these in mind when he spoke of reform of the Church? Undoubtedly he meant the EC since he was an ordained minister of that church and his concerns lay in that direction. However, his ancestors were Dissenting (grandparents on both sides), so did he include Dissenters in those he wished to reform?⁴³¹ In addition, his indebtedness to Catholic authors presumably evoked his concern for that church and its need for reform.⁴³² Therefore, what did Wesley say about reform of Dissenters and the CC, in addition to the EC, that might have influenced his followers, particularly missionaries in Smithies’ period? His articles, ‘An Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion’ and ‘A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion’ cover a range of his views of other churches and his desire for their reform.⁴³³ Wesley’s principal appeal to these churches was to forsake ungodliness and inconsistency and return to scriptural holiness. His plea revealed a longing to see all Christian churches reformed. However, the CC was an exception.

Regarding Anabaptists, Wesley observed, ‘there are unholy, outwardly unholy men in your congregations’. He then questioned, ‘how is this consistent with your leading principle, — “That no man ought to be admitted to baptism, till he has that repentance whereby we forsake sin, and living faith in God through Christ?”’⁴³⁴ Of other

⁴²⁹ See Vidler, *Church*, 33–44.

⁴³⁰ Edwards, ‘John Wesley’, i: 35–79.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

⁴³² Whaling, *John and Charles Wesley*, 10.

⁴³³ John Wesley, ‘An Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion’, in Wesley, *Works*, viii: 1–45 and ‘A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion’ (Parts I, II, III), in Wesley, *Works*, viii: 46–247.

⁴³⁴ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 183.

Dissenters, Wesley questioned their practice of inward and outward holiness. He said, ‘How is it then, my brethren; ... how is it, that the generality of you also are fallen from your steadfastness?’⁴³⁵ To English churches generally, including the EC, he offered a common lament: ‘Now, what can an impartial person think concerning the present state of religion in England? Is there a nation under the sun which is so deeply fallen from the very first principles of all religion?’⁴³⁶ In all his observations, which cover the whole Protestant church, Wesley’s benchmark, as noted above, was scriptural holiness as well as primitive, vital Christianity. His methods to achieve reform were first, the example of his ministers which would hopefully provoke jealousy and consequent renewal, and second, his written papers addressing the need for reform which provided a model for his followers to imitate. Sometimes, as Wesley did, his followers not only wrote articles but also rebuttals to various criticisms.⁴³⁷ He sought, therefore, reform for the whole Protestant church, but what was his attitude toward the CC?

For this, we turn first to his ‘Letter to a Roman Catholic’.⁴³⁸ He commenced this letter in a conciliatory tone saying, ‘I do not suppose all the bitterness is on your side. I know there is too much on our side also; so much, that I fear Protestants (so called) will be angry at me too, for writing to you in this manner’. After listing points of belief in which there was common ground (avoiding controversial issues), he concluded, ‘So far as we can, let us always rejoice to strengthen each other’s hands in God’. The tenor of Wesley’s letter is personal, affectionate and winsome, and was evidently addressed to individuals rather than to the CC as a church. Heitzenrater points out that there was ‘a motive of self preservation’ in the letter in that Wesley wanted his itinerant preachers to be well-received in Ireland.⁴³⁹ However, we can accept that Wesley was sincere in his ‘catholicity’ here. On the other hand, he scathingly condemned the CC as an institution, in concord with Protestant feelings of the time.⁴⁴⁰ It appears that on one hand Wesley’s extensive reading of Catholic writers, to whom he was deeply obligated, provided him with confidence that faith and vital Christianity existed, or could exist, in members of

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, viii: 182.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, viii: 201.

⁴³⁷ E.g., Wesley, *Works*, viii: 105–106, 110, 214, 405–412, 432–434, 445–468, 483; SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, *Inquirer Article*, October 1840.

⁴³⁸ Wesley, *Works*, x: 80–86; see also Heitzenrater, *Mr. Wesley*, 191–201.

⁴³⁹ Heitzenrater, *Mr. Wesley*, 192.

⁴⁴⁰ See Hylson–Smith, *Church in England*, ii: 282–285; T. E. Jessop, ‘The Mid–Nineteenth–Century Background’, in *History of the Methodist Church*, eds. Rupert E. Davies, et al., ii: 161–212; for Wesley’s ambivalence, see Heitzenrater, *Mr. Wesley*, 191–201.

the CC, whilst on the other hand, the ‘Papist’ system was irredeemable. To illustrate, in his ‘Advice to an Englishman’, he said,

Do you know what the spirit of Popery is? Did you never hear of that in Queen Mary’s reign; and of the holy men who were then burned alive by the Papists, because they did not dare to do as they did; to worship angels and saints, to pray to the Virgin Mary, to bow down to images, and the like?⁴⁴¹

In Wesley’s opinion, conversion was necessary to achieve reform in Catholics. If they were all converted, he believed that ‘there [would] not be a Papist in the nation’, referring to Ireland, but the same applied to England, or any nation.⁴⁴² Wesley’s ambivalence toward Catholics, it will be seen, carried over to missionaries in the nineteenth century; that is, a conciliatory attitude toward individual Catholics in a desire for their conversion and spiritual growth, but unyielding opposition to the system. In summary, Wesley sought reform for the whole Protestant Church, his benchmark being scriptural holiness and vital Christianity, but held no hope for institutional Catholic reform, only conversion of individual Catholics (to vital Christianity, but really to Protestantism).

After Wesley, once Methodism established itself into a separate ‘Connexion’ (denomination), its method of reforming the Church had to be reassessed.⁴⁴³ For one thing, Methodist preachers were appointed (not quite ordained) with full ministerial status within their own structure so that they no longer had the power to influence from within as loyal members of the EC. However, the capacity of WM to influence the wider church, Established, Dissenting and Catholic, lay in its power of example. As we now know, WM was a potent catalyst for change influencing the Christianity of the day, as well as leaving a lasting legacy.⁴⁴⁴ Reform of the church, therefore, is not a feature merely to consign to Wesley’s time, imagining that because WM separated from the EC, that this agenda was lost. To illustrate, the *WMM for 1838*, in an article ‘on the present aspect of the times’, reveals the WM meaning of the reform of church agenda in asking,

What has awakened the Church of England from her lethargy and long slumber, and provoked her to love and to good works, but the self-denying and devoted labours of Ministers who never were Episcopally ordained [i.e., Methodist ministers].⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴¹ Wesley, *Works*, xi:182–183.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, x: 132.

⁴⁴³ The Wesleyan Methodist ‘Connexion’ referred to its ‘chain of societies’ (Lawson, ‘Our Discipline’, i: 183–209).

⁴⁴⁴ E.g., Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 27–46; Dayton, *Pentecostalism*, 35–60; Synan, *Holiness–Pentecostal Tradition*, 1–43; Synan, *Century of the Holy Spirit*, 15–37.

⁴⁴⁵ *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

In addition, that WM perceived itself responsible for the restoration of vital Christianity in other churches, in the same article we read, ‘The followers of John Wesley have done much to revive pure and undefiled religion in the world’ and that WM ‘has had an important bearing, directly and indirectly, upon the established Church, and upon other Christian communities’.⁴⁴⁶ The WM attitude to the CC in the first part of the nineteenth century remained substantially the same as Wesley’s, but was hardening. This was due in part to the perceived threat to WM by new freedoms granted to Catholics by the Catholic Emancipation (Relief) Act 1829. Wesleyans regarded the CC, or popery, as it they called it, as an apostate system to be opposed, ‘stemmed against’, and surmounted by zealous WM missionary work.⁴⁴⁷ From this point of view, it might be argued that a section on reform of the CC is irrelevant to the dissertation. However, given the WM belief that it was at the forefront of the reform of Christianity, that the CC was a Christian church, that the WMM contained numerous articles on ‘popery’, and that WM missionaries like Smithies encountered the CC frequently in their ministries, its inclusion here is important. Although the nature of WM reform in relation to the CC was quite different to other churches, zealous reform was nevertheless encouraged. The reality is, reform of the *whole* church was a vital facet of WM mission to spread scriptural holiness in the first half of the nineteenth century, and therefore should have a significant profile in our current knowledge.⁴⁴⁸ Unfortunately, as shown later, this is not the case and is the reason this reappraisal is necessary, to bring a fresh understanding to a neglected area.

In his letters, Smithies referred often to other churches, the principal two being the EC and the CC, with Dissenters being a third. Although it may be argued that WM was properly a denomination from the time Wesley commissioned his Deed of Declaration on 28 February 1784, it still referred to itself as a connexion well into the nineteenth century. The Deed established a conference to govern its societies.⁴⁴⁹ In addition, Methodists officially used the Book of Common Prayer in their liturgy, or John Wesley’s abridgment of it, and did not officially ordain ministers (although they appointed them) in deference to the EC until the early nineteenth century.⁴⁵⁰ However, the relationship between the two churches was tenuous. The Evangelical party in the EC

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ E.g., *WMM for 1842*, 390–391.

⁴⁴⁸ Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142; Turner, ‘Methodist Religion’, 97–112.

⁴⁴⁹ Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 241–247.

⁴⁵⁰ Walsh, ‘Methodism’, i: 275–316.

had an affinity with the Wesleys but the so-called ‘high church party’ held the ‘schismatics’ at arm’s length. For example, a high church bishop in the Swan River colony, Western Australia, launched a verbal assault on Smithies in 1840. As Puseyism or the Oxford Movement emerged during the 1830s, Methodism found itself facing renewed opposition from the Church.

The CC, on the other hand, was regarded with disdain (and fear) by most British Protestants, including Wesleyans, since Britain was Protestant.⁴⁵¹ However, the period from Smithies’ birth in 1802, until his first missionary appointment in 1828, was one of growing reform including relief from restrictive laws for both Dissenters and Roman Catholics. It was a time when community attitudes were evolving from old intolerances to a new spirit of understanding. However, from the earliest days of Methodism Wesley urged his ministers and members to act in a tolerant and non-divisive spirit toward other Christians.⁴⁵² Roman Catholics, though, seemed to be in a different category, on the very edge of Christianity. In spite of this, Methodists were expected to act with goodwill toward Catholics for after all, said Wesley, many saints such as Thomas à Kempis were Catholics.⁴⁵³

Other Dissenters, such as Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Baptists (Wesleyans did not regard themselves as Dissenters in Wesley’s time and shortly thereafter) generally worked with WM although it could be an uneasy friendship.⁴⁵⁴ The main reasons for uneasiness were Methodists’ Anglican ties on the one hand, and Dissenting Calvinism on the other. Smithies’ experience with Dissenters was primarily in the Swan River colony. In this case, they worshipped with the Methodists since there was no other Protestant church until 1843, other than the EC (although Hasluck mentions an Independent Chapel at Guildford, Swan River colony, in 1838).⁴⁵⁵ The uniqueness of Methodist church ‘polity’ made it awkward for other Dissenters to integrate. Some Dissenters in the Swan River colony actually refrained from attending any church partly for this reason.⁴⁵⁶ To see how Smithies interacted with other churches with a view to

⁴⁵¹ Jessop, ‘Mid-Nineteenth-Century’, ii: 161–212.

⁴⁵² ‘Catholic Spirit’, in Wesley, *Works*, v: 492–504.

⁴⁵³ ‘A Disavowal of Persecuting Papists’, in Wesley, *Works*, x: 173–175.

⁴⁵⁴ Jessop, ‘Mid-Nineteenth-Century’, ii: 161–212.

⁴⁵⁵ Paul Hasluck, ‘Guildford: 1827–1842’, in *Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal* 1, 2 (1928): 1–19.

⁴⁵⁶ Stuart Bonnington, *Like a Mustard Seed: The Presbyterian Church in Western Australia 1829–1901* (Vermont, VIC: Bonnington, nd.), 7.

their reform according to the WM mission statement, we turn to his letters for references first to the EC.

§3.3.2 The Established Church

Smithies first mentioned other churches in his second letter from Hant's Harbour on the East Coast of Trinity Bay, Newfoundland.⁴⁵⁷ Quoting from his journal, he wrote that on 15 October 1828 he met an old man in the morning, who was 'on the verge of the grave and on speaking to him concerning his precious soul, he quickly replied that he had done what he could towards his welfare, viz. he had received the Sacrament, and had been conformed (as he called it), meaning confirmed'. Upon asking the man 'what he understood by that ordinance, he replied he supposed the Bishop had put a right spirit in him'. Smithies then lamented, 'O when shall the darkness of these ages be done away?' He then reported his reply, 'that no Preacher, Priest, or Bishop, could do anything of the kind for him; no one but Christ could give him a clean heart and renew a right spirit within him'. Smithies likely attributed this ignorance to neglect by the EC rather than it being directly responsible. The Church lacked clergy and chapels in Newfoundland at this period, clearing the way for Methodist advance in many instances.⁴⁵⁸ Nevertheless, in his prayer that the 'darkness of these ages be done away', Smithies' motivation for reform of the church comes to the fore. In addition, his explanation to the elderly man demonstrates how he attempted to educate and therefore reform his ideas.

An entry from Smithies' journal on 24 October 1829 records his visit to 'Trinity to make some marriage entries'.⁴⁵⁹ Trinity is located on Trinity Bay on the opposite side to Hant's Harbour, a distance of about 45 kilometres, slightly west of due north. The day following being Sunday, at '11 am [he] read church service and preached from Psalm 46:5', then in the 'Afternoon from Genesis 19:17 and in the evening at 6 o'clock from Psalm 14:1'. Smithies was despondent about the congregation saying, 'The congregation in this place considering the number of inhabitants is very small indeed and consequently discouraging to the preacher'. A further cause for despondency, he said, was 'an high church interest in this place which does all it can to suppress the rise of Methodism.' The high church party regarded Methodism as a schismatic, pseudo-church outside of salvation, so it is not difficult to understand why it would do all in its power 'to suppress the rise of Methodism'.⁴⁶⁰ Consequently, the only means available to

⁴⁵⁷ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May 1829.

⁴⁵⁸ Beardsall, 'Fastened to the Rock', chap. 3.

⁴⁵⁹ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 7 December 1829.

⁴⁶⁰ Jessop, 'Mid-Nineteenth-Century', ii: 161-212.

Smithies and other missionaries for the reform of this EC party were the example of their evangelical service plus public protestation where warranted (as we will see later). Smithies was to be troubled throughout his ministry by the high church party. Nevertheless, Wesley's methods were fruitful in that the EC was provoked by these nineteenth century WM missionaries.

From late 1835 to early 1836, a horrendous smallpox epidemic in St John's, Newfoundland, claimed between 600 and 800 people, according to Smithies.⁴⁶¹ His statement is repeated in his report to the WM district meeting found in the minutes of 28 May 1836, although instead of citing numbers there, he spoke of a 'severe and depopulating disease the Small Pox by which many were called to their long home'.⁴⁶² In addition to the immense loss, Smithies had two main laments. He said, 'Would that it were, we should have joy in sorrow, consolation in distress, but alas for this people few are affected and regenerated or saved by these visitations from God.' Contrary to the reasons sometimes given for evangelical revivals, namely the presence of death,⁴⁶³ Smithies reported,

The tidings of sickness are now so common, the sight of mourners going about the streets such an every day occurrence, even to the number of ten in one day, that the moral influence thereof is vanished and man dies and 'gives up the ghost' but few are concerned to say where is he?⁴⁶⁴

Then commenting on a practice of the EC, Smithies said, 'Such is the imaginary influence of "the rites of the Church" being performed for the sick and dying, that if it is only done all is safe and well'.⁴⁶⁵ As often occurred in his letters, such comments evoked an immediate prayer. In this case it was, 'O that this film of delusion were but swept away, that a "purer language" were poured upon them, that our God might but arise and maintain his own cause amongst us'. Smithies' concern was that people would be prepared for eternity by their conversion, followed by a life 'worthy of their calling' (Ephesians 4:1), rather than depending on a last minute ritual to so prepare them. He therefore saw a hindrance to vital Christianity and godliness by the 'imaginary influence' perpetrated by the Church, namely, that ritual could displace the need for genuine godliness of life (showing his commitment to progress in holiness). It was a primary concern of Methodists for people to be prepared for eternity by conversion and

⁴⁶¹ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 January 1836; The epidemic is confirmed by O'Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland*, 166–167, although the numbers are difficult to confirm.

⁴⁶² Minute, 28 May 1836, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

⁴⁶³ E.g., Watts, *Dissenters*, 406–421.

⁴⁶⁴ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 January 1836.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

a life of holiness.⁴⁶⁶ In addition, Smithies' prayer that 'this film of delusion were but swept away' and that "'a purer language" were poured upon them' as well as his criticism of the EC in this prayer is palpable evidence of his desire for reform of the church.

Smithies' letter of 12 January 1836, written from the capital, St. John's, concludes with a mixed report about his relationship with the EC.⁴⁶⁷ On the one hand, he reported, 'we have a very good understanding with the pious and clerical [and] we are unitedly engaged in advocating the interests of the Temperance Society established by the very Rev Archdeacon'. In addition, Smithies wrote, 'there is now a Bible Society forming which we doubt not may be a blessing'. However, he complained, 'having such a good understanding with these and others I am truly sorry there should have been any cause for annoying it'. Therefore, what seemed to be progress for many was causing grief to others. Smithies continued,

It should seem that the Report of the work given in our last Report for Port De Grave has given great offence to that people. The Clergyman of that place as is supposed and believed to have sent forth a very scurrilous article by way of comment on the report.

It would seem that the efforts of Methodists and sympathetic Anglicans in promoting the Temperance (and Bible) Societies caused the local Church clergyman at Port De Grave to react. His reaction, said Smithies, 'was of course directed at our excellent Chairman, who sent home their report. He of course has appeared in public stating his perfect readiness to justify all he has said'.⁴⁶⁸ Smithies' response was that he hoped that the whole matter would be dropped 'because the odium of the article is [upon] him', presumably meaning the writer who was thought to be the Port De Grave EC clergyman. Such were the tussles faced by Smithies and the Methodists. They may have enjoyed happy cooperation with one EC clergyman, but at the same time opposition and criticism from another.⁴⁶⁹ The reaction evoked from various EC clergy, however, calls to mind Wesley's advice that one part of Methodists' armoury to reform the church was to provoke clergy to jealousy; another part being the public protestation that the Newfoundland Methodist chairman was prepared to make. It will also be recalled that WM's close association with and recent separation from the EC made the Church particularly sensitive. Smithies' reports from Newfoundland regarding his interaction with other churches, therefore, should be interpreted within the framework of WM

⁴⁶⁶ Wesley, *Works*, vii: 117–127

⁴⁶⁷ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 January 1836.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁹ Jessop, 'Mid-Nineteenth-Century', ii: 161–212.

desire to see churches reformed rather than a sectarian or other attitude. Such an interpretation is consistent with his partnership with an EC clergyman on the project of the Temperance and Bible societies at Port De Grave, his prayers for reform, as well as what we know of WM methods toward reform that included protests where necessary. In Smithies' attitude, methods and desire for reform are seen part of the answer to discovering WM missionaries' motivation and objectives, as well as how subsidiary goals fitted into the primary mission of spreading scriptural holiness.

Smithies returned to England in 1837 and after a two-year ministry in Bakewell, Derbyshire, the WMMS sent him to the Swan River colony in Western Australia from where Methodist settlers had been petitioning for a minister since 1830. One of Smithies' early letters to London from the Swan River mentioned a bill to provide for the building of chapels and ministers' salaries, which was at that time before the colonial government.⁴⁷⁰ This bill became a severe irritant to Smithies in connection with the EC. However, before that drama unfolded, Smithies found himself in a major controversy with the Colonial Chaplain.

In his next letter, Smithies forwarded a copy of the *Inquirer*, a local newspaper, which included his reply to a hostile sermon preached by the Colonial Chaplain, Rev J. B. Wittenoom (1788–1855), on the subject of 'schism'.⁴⁷¹ The article shows Smithies to be an erudite minister, citing articles from John Wesley, John Gillies (1712–1796), friend of the Wesleys and biographer of George Whitefield, and from Edward B. Pusey (1800–1882), leader in the Oxford Movement. The essence of the attack by Rev Wittenoom is explained by Smithies' opening remarks:

Will you permit me through the columns of your paper, to take some notice of the attack which was made last Lord's Day but one in the Church at Perth, by the Colonial Chaplain the Rev Mr. Wittenoom upon the dissenting world in general, and the Wesleyans as residing in Perth in particular, charging them with the awful sin of schism, and consequently deserving denunciation, excommunication and final perdition.

Such an entrance to the Swan River colony was not expected by Smithies nor welcomed by him. To have the Colonial Chaplain in opposition was unfortunate because he had the ear of the Governor, and therefore influenced him. It is no wonder that Smithies took the matter into the public arena in such a strong manner. Another reason he did so was the example set by Wesley, in which he confronted pertinent public issues in written articles with the intention of bringing about reform.

⁴⁷⁰ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 22 June 1840.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 8 October, 1840, 19 January 1841; *The Inquirer: A Western Australian Journal*, No. 9, 30 (September, 1840).

The Rev J. B. Wittenoom, first Colonial Chaplain who arrived in January 1830, was high church and therefore concerned to maintain a strong link between government and church. This made him reactive to Dissenters and particularly the proactive Wesleyans, although there had earlier been close cooperation between WM settlers and the EC, the latter using Joseph Hardey's house for its services as well as Methodists attending the EC Sunday morning services after their class meeting.⁴⁷² It is certain that Wittenoom's influence prevented the Wesleyans receiving some the benefits of the 1840 Bill passed in the Legislative Council on 16 July 1840. The Bill, 'An Act to promote the Building of Churches and Chapels, and to contribute toward the maintenance of Ministers of Religion in Western Australia', held early promise for Smithies.⁴⁷³ This was evident in Governor Hutt's initial favour toward the Wesleyans. However, he cooled considerably as time passed, bringing grief to Smithies who was desperate for financial assistance.⁴⁷⁴ It seems likely that Smithies' strong rebuttal of Wittenoom in the *Inquirer* may have hardened the latter's already hostile attitude resulting in his influence of Governor Hutt so that the expected financial benefits did not eventuate. Smithies laid out the sad affair in his letter of 19 January 1841.⁴⁷⁵ He had only been in the Colony for four months at the time of writing his rebuttal, yet already was engaged in serious confrontation with the 'powers that be'. His early engagement in controversy strengthens the view that he sought reform of the church through this first public protest, especially since it was prior to the government refusal of the much anticipated grant.⁴⁷⁶ To illustrate, an extract from his article in the *Inquirer* follows:

Puseyism says 'that the succession is everything and that private character and moral conduct is as nothing in the Minister', yet we think that piety of heart, morality of life, and spirituality in labours, are of much greater value in the eyes of man, angels, and God, than all the bold assumptions that can be made about 'We are the Ministry' – 'we are the Church' – 'we are the people'.⁴⁷⁷

As just noted, Pusey was a leader in what became known as the Oxford Movement.⁴⁷⁸ This movement, which was also influenced by John Henry Newman (1801–1890),

⁴⁷² Canon Alfred Burton, 'The Diary of Joseph Hardey', in *Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal* I:VI (1929): 17–28.

⁴⁷³ Copy of the original Act attached to Smithies' letter (SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October, 1840).

⁴⁷⁴ B. K. de Garis, 'Political Tutelage 1829–1870'; in *New History*, ed. Stannage, 297–325; Aveling, 'Religious Aspect', 575–598.

⁴⁷⁵ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 19 January 1841.

⁴⁷⁶ Wittenoom's attack was the first hint of official opposition, so Smithies would have been unaffected at this stage by the later refusal of funds from the government. At the time of writing of this article, he was still hopeful of receiving a grant and stipend (SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October, 1840).

⁴⁷⁷ See *Inquirer* article in SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, October 1840.

⁴⁷⁸ Jessop, 'Mid-Nineteenth-Century', ii: 161–212; Kent, 'Wesleyan Methodists', ii: 213–275.

advocated high church principles including, as shown here, apostolic succession. This meant that to Puseyism only those ordained by the EC were legitimate ministers. Therefore, Methodists were excluded unless ordained by the Church. Pusey also opposed 'enthusiastic' Christianity such as that found in Methodism. Smithies followed Wesley closely here in his protest that EC clergy had an obligation to nurture inward and outward godliness (holiness) regardless of their apostolic succession. This was a principal reform that Wesley sought to achieve and to exemplify.⁴⁷⁹ Smithies used Wittenoom's attack to stress this point in his rebuttal and thus to drive home the need for reform.

Another incident was sparked by the opening of the new Wesleyan chapel at Fremantle. Smithies estimated that about three weeks after writing his letter of 16 April 1842 to the WMMS, their chapel would have been opened.⁴⁸⁰ However, the building of the chapel 'created considerable jealousy and opposition from those who call themselves the Church party in these places and especially in Fremantle', he said.⁴⁸¹ Although the EC had been settled in Perth and Fremantle for eight to ten years, it had 'never set about building Churches till we commenced Chapels', reported Smithies. Since that time, two EC chapels had been started, but the walls of the Perth chapel were not yet built and the Fremantle chapel building was dragging on, wrote Smithies. His report is confirmed by Rev John Ramsden Wollaston (1791–1856), EC clergyman from Picton, 178 kilometres south of Perth. He wrote,

A large church is building [in Perth] and ought to have been built long ago but the funds are mismanaged and nearly exhausted. When I saw it the walls had not reached the top of the windows. There is a Sunday and Native School, the latter in the hands of the Wesleyans and successfully carried on.

What is our Church doing in this way? Nothing. The present Governor patronizes dissenting measures, not against the Church, but in conformity with his instructions and I take it for granted his own [Evangelical?] principles.⁴⁸²

Not only were chapels being built, Smithies continued, but strenuous efforts were also 'being made to reclaim the wanderers from the Church to Wesleyanism back again'. Philosophically, he mused, 'If these will succeed then they may succeed'.⁴⁸³ His musing seems to be one of resignation and perhaps hope that at last the local EC was showing signs of reform. Smithies was successful in this instance in both ways recommended by

⁴⁷⁹ E.g., 'A Farther Appeal', in Wesley, *Works*, viii: 136–200.

⁴⁸⁰ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1842.

⁴⁸¹ 'Fremantle' is the spelling frequently used at the time.

⁴⁸² Canon A. Burton, *Church Beginnings in the West* (Perth, WA: Muhling, 1941), 37–38; Alfred Burton (ed.), *Wollaston's Picton Journal 1841–1844* (Perth, WA: Brokensha, n.d.), 49–50.

⁴⁸³ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1842.

Wesley: first, their ministers were provoked to jealousy, and second, the Church had been roused to evangelistic and pastoral action.

The next report pertinent to this section is Smithies' letter of 10 January 1843 containing a report of the Sabbath school.⁴⁸⁴ He wrote,

The number of our Sabbath school has raised in consequence of an effort of the Church here in opening a school. Some twenty of our scholars left for a time but since have returned again. We much regret the want of more cordial and Christian feeling but while it [is] ours to suffer we trust it will be ours to study and pray, to do all we can to promote a better understanding.

Smithies did not say why students had returned but suggested they had left due to the EC's influence. The unhappy relationship between the two is revealed in this incident and in his comment, 'the want of more cordial feeling'. However, we also see a conciliatory tone in Smithies expressing a desire to 'promote a better understanding'. His tone reveals a desire to work with and not against the EC, demonstrating his lack of sectarianism and lending weight to the fact that his true desire was for reform of the church. Further evidence for reform is found in his letter written just a week later, and quoted earlier, where he said, 'but for them [early Wesleyan settlers such as the Hardeys] at the present day it's to be feared that notwithstanding there is a Church and Chaplain, and ordinances, that iniquity would over spread the land'.⁴⁸⁵ Understanding the WM intention to spread holiness over the land, his statement infers that the EC was in such need of reform that in spite of its presence, it would not prevent the spread of evil in the colony. From Smithies' two sentiments, namely, a desire to work with the EC, and his fear that its presence would not prevent the spread of evil, in addition to what we know about the WM reform agenda, we may safely interpret his relations with the EC as a desire for reform rather than sectarianism.

Smithies' attention, however, was directed again to the EC. He wrote, 'We are now nearly hemmed in as usual by the clergy.'⁴⁸⁶ He reported that Fremantle and the Upper Swan were previously neglected by the Church until the Wesleyans had commenced services. At this time, Smithies said, 'it became desirable to save poor unconverted people from being contaminated by Methodistic influence.' Consequently, the Church appointed ministers at the former two places and at York. Rev George King arrived in the colony in 1841, serving Fremantle and 'southern districts' until his departure for

⁴⁸⁴ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 10 January 1843.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid., 19 January 1843.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid., 25 October 1843.

Sydney in 1849.⁴⁸⁷ Upper Swan was served by Rev William Mitchell who arrived in the colony in 1838, followed by Rev W. R. Postlethwaite in 1843 allowing Mitchell to concentrate on Guildford. York was served by the Rev William Meares until his replacement in 1849 by Mr C. Harper.⁴⁸⁸ Again, in his letter of 26 October 1844, Smithies wrote, 'Before your Societies' labourers came out there were no churches, or chapels, or schools (but one which a few Wesleyans had raised up) and their [the EC] mortification is that we exist at all and progress in any thing good.'⁴⁸⁹ It is possible Smithies was thinking only of Perth and Fremantle, but his language and the context of the letter seems sweeping in its inclusion, meaning all of the Swan River. It would seem that Wesley's strategy of provoking the clergy to jealousy was very effective in the Swan River colony through Smithies' ministry. Without his ministry and the work of the Wesleyans, the EC may have slept on for several decades more. Consequently, reform of the church in this sense was a notable achievement, even if it was through provocation. Nevertheless, provocation was a method recommended by Wesley to be used in pursuing reform.

In the second part of the same letter, Smithies wrote that just as Catholicism could not assist the people of the Colony, he feared that 'Church of Englandism' was 'in similar circumstances'.⁴⁹⁰ The two EC ministers (probably Mitchell and Postlethwaite) had confined themselves to the outskirts of the town and, according to Smithies, 'There is positively no religious truth, or experience or influence in the land among them'. The practice of their religion among their own constituents led to 'neglect of salvation, delusion and loss of soul'. In other words, not only was their influence ineffective in the general community but even their own adherents were as perishing souls, according to Smithies. His critical comments again demonstrate his perception of the EC as an impotent, un-revived church, much in need of reform. Smithies' criticism also reveals how WM viewed itself, namely, as an agent of reform for vital Christianity and therefore charged with a responsibility to bring change.

⁴⁸⁷ T. G. Heydon, 'The Early Church in Western Australia', in *Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal* 2, 11 (1932): 1–15.

⁴⁸⁸ Battye, *Cyclopaedia of WA*, ii: 82–83 (Battye says that Postlethwaite arrived in 1841); Eliza Brown, *A Faithful Picture* (Fremantle, WA: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1977), 23; Burton, *Church Beginnings*, 33; Burton, *Wollaston's Picton Journal*, 144; Albert Edward Williams, *West Anglican Way: the Growth of the Anglican Church in Western Australia from its Early Beginnings* (Perth, WA: Anglican Church of Western Australia, 1989), 68.

⁴⁸⁹ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 25 September 1846.

The arid state of the EC may be attributed in part to Wittenoom's 'high and dry' churchmanship.⁴⁹¹ The foundation of the colonial church in the Swan River was solidly high church, initially through Archdeacon Scott as Stannage points out.⁴⁹² The government and the church were seen to be one and acted together. The few Dissenters and Roman Catholics were tolerated but confined. When Smithies arrived in 1840, he entered this resistant environment. Blame for this antagonistic situation must largely be placed at the feet of Wittenoom since Governor Hutt was a member of the evangelical Clapham Sect (of the EC) of which William Wilberforce was a renowned member, and Major Irwin was an evangelical Christian, both of whom should have been sympathetic to Wesleyans. These are mentioned because they were both members of the Executive and Legislative Council, which ruled against the Wesleyans in their requests for assistance under the 1840 Act.⁴⁹³ In addition to the high church factor, the EC would have been threatened by the proactive nature of WM. The Swan River colony was small and since power was cosily contained within a Church–state nexus, evangelistic Methodists would have presented a threat that provoked the sensitivities of both Church and government. This would explain the ambivalent treatment handed out to the Wesleyans by the colonial government under Governor Hutt.

Returning to the subject of Wittenoom, Smithies was afflicted by the thought that the one person who had direct access to community leaders in the interest of their souls had 'no fear of God, no knowledge of salvation'.⁴⁹⁴ He simply "does his duty", i.e., read sermons and prayers and at the same time can attend concerts, card parties and etc., etc. [Card parties and concerts were signs of impiety to Methodists.] This mere outline of Church influence', wrote Smithies, 'will serve to show how important and necessary your Colonial work is in this place'. In saying this, he demonstrated the WM intention to establish 'vital Christianity' in the land. At this point, he renewed his oft–repeated request to the WMMS for another missionary. In this instance, Smithies was seeking to follow Wesley's advice to supply their [EC] lack of service (by an extra missionary). As noted earlier, reform in this instance meant going about evangelistic and pastoral work with such diligence as to provoke the EC clergy to 'love and good works'.

⁴⁹¹ Charles Thomas Stannage, *People of Perth: A Social History of Western Australia's Capital City* (Perth, WA: Perth City Council, 1979), 36; Williams, *West Anglican Way*, 29–40.

⁴⁹² Stannage, *People of Perth*, 34–36.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁴⁹⁴ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1846.

In a letter dated 21 October 1847, Smithies told the unexpected story of EC (and therefore government) and Methodist cooperation!⁴⁹⁵ The reason for the cooperative was the threat of the ‘Romanists’. On the Church and government side, this move was in line with the pledge that Governor and Legislative Council made at the Colony’s inception to defend against CC influence in government in conformity with Hanoverian succession.⁴⁹⁶ Smithies wrote:

The small day school counting about 30 children, we have latterly given into a Government school and which is prospering. The history of it is chiefly this: within the last year the Romanists here have strained very nerve to cajole or seduce Protestant children to their schools, schools which are conducted by six sisters of mercy. The Church nor Government have any efficient school. They sought an union with us, or we with them, it matters not by which union.

From fear of Catholicism and the poor state of Government and EC schools, the three teamed up to produce a school of substance. Smithies was happy for several reasons. First, he did not have to fund the school and second, at least one schoolmaster was Wesleyan. Third, catechism was excluded from the curriculum so that Church bias would not affect the children. Omission of catechism did not bother Smithies since Scripture reading, spiritual and moral principles would still be taught and, as noted, one of the head teachers was Wesleyan. Fourth, WM in harmony with the EC and Government, through a well-run, well-funded school, would be a formidable competitor to Catholicism. Fifth, the numbers attending the school were relatively large so that a good proportion of the colony’s children would receive a sound ‘Protestant’ education.⁴⁹⁷ Finally, Smithies nursed hopes that the school would eventually fall into Methodist hands, since it had the more efficient school at the beginning and he felt that the EC would not maintain its interest. Through means of an effective school with solid Wesleyan support, Smithies felt that the influence on the young by the ‘man of sin’, meaning the CC, would be minimised if not prevented. Consequently, the children of the colony (including EC children) would experience Wesleyan influence aiding, therefore, reform of the Church (and colony).

A significant event in the life of the Colony, but also in the ministry of Smithies and the Wesleyan work, was the visit of the Bishop of Adelaide, Rev Dr Augustus Short (1802–1883) in late 1848.⁴⁹⁸ Hannah Smithies’ letter to her son, John Samuel, who was almost seventeen years old at the time, expressed great affection for the Bishop, saying,

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid., 21 October 1847.

⁴⁹⁶ Cyril Bryan and F. I. Bray, ‘Peter Nicholas Brown (1797–1846): First Colonial Secretary of Western Australia (1829–1846)’, *Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal* 2, 18 (1935): 1–33.

⁴⁹⁷ See also Laadan Fletcher, ‘Education of the People’, in *New History*, ed. Stannage, 551–573.

⁴⁹⁸ Blacket, *Missionary Triumphs*, 215–216; Heydon, ‘Early Church’: 1–15.

My last was about a week since per *Champion* [ship's name], which took our highly respected Bishop of Adelaide. We feel we have lost a father and friend. He was much interested for native improvement and ever ready to converse and consult with their people on the subject. How much I wish I could give you a correct view of the very kind and truly apostolic manner in which he celebrated the marriages amongst them at Freemantle.⁴⁹⁹

The relationship of Short to the Smithies was, as Hannah said, fatherly and bishop-like. To him they paid great respect listening to his advice. Short officiated in the consecration of the Church of Saint George, the central Anglican chapel in Perth. He also consecrated EC chapels from Middle Swan to Albany (over 400 kilometres apart). He was a busy man!⁵⁰⁰ In view of Short's busy schedule, it was a generous act indeed for him to spend such time with and show sincere interest in the Wesleyan mission, a fascinating twist to Smithies' usual relationship with the Church in the colony. It seems the Bishop, whose diocese included Western Australia, was a truly ecumenical Christian. Smithies reverted to true WM in his encounter with the Bishop (Wesley had always regarded himself and his Methodists as a society within the Church of England), inviting him to perform marriage ceremonies and officiate in Wesleyan proceedings. However, it was Short's advice that changed their lives.

The result of Short's advice to Smithies was the sale of the mission at Gullillilup and a move to York where he established the colonial Methodist Church as well as a substantial mission. Both of these buildings are extant although the mission house is in ruins. Smithies wrote about Short's advice in another letter.⁵⁰¹ He said, 'this view of the case was strongly advised by the Bishop of Adelaide who visited it in 1850 [actually 1848–1849]'. Smithies reported the Bishop's glowing comments about the WM mission saying that 'His Lordship was pleased to express himself as greatly satisfied with our humble efforts and said more had been well done here than any of the Colonies to the Eastward'. High praise indeed! Then came the Bishop's counsel: 'his parting advice was, "Get out of this ill-adapted place"'. This they did, as just noted. Bishop Short, being a person of action, also asked Governor Fitzgerald (1791–1887) to provide Smithies what he needed to pursue the mission. Short was an example of a 'reformed' Bishop; the kind that Smithies desired for the Swan River. In a lament at the time, he wrote, 'Would that our Mother Church had many sons like him!'⁵⁰² In expressing this desire, he was both showing a non-sectarianism spirit and his desire for reform in the

⁴⁹⁹ Batty Library, Perth, WA. Hannah Smithies to John Samuel Smithies, Hobart, 2 January 1849.

⁵⁰⁰ Heydon, 'Early Church': 1–15.

⁵⁰¹ SOAS, Box 518, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1852.

⁵⁰² *WMM for 1849*, quoting a letter from Smithies dated 6 January 1849.

EC and that clergymen like Wittenoom would quickly diminish. However, it was Smithies' York mission that rapidly diminished, lasting barely three years before being handed back to the Government in late 1854. In early 1855, Smithies and family moved to Van Diemen's Land to take up his newest appointment at New Norfolk, (c.35 kilometres west nor west) of Hobart.⁵⁰³

Van Diemen's Land yields nothing of note about Smithies' relationship with other churches and his work to reform them. The main reason for this was a plan adopted at the WMMS Conference in London on 9 August 1854, whereby Australian and Polynesian Methodism became a separate conference on 18 January 1855, although WA remained answerable to London until much later.⁵⁰⁴ Consequently, very few letters were written from ministers to London, most business being enacted in district and state meetings. The minutes of these meetings were brief so that the detail previously recorded in letters was generally absent.

In summary, from the evidence provided above, an interpretation of reform of church may be readily demonstrated. For example, we have Wesley's mission statement as the context for reform, including his explicit objective, 'to reform the church'.⁵⁰⁵ In addition, there were the periodic assessments of WM found in its WMM that the EC and other Christian communities had been revived or reformed through Methodism, as well as other pertinent articles within the WMM.⁵⁰⁶ Finally, there was the palpable WM self-consciousness that it was a revival of 'vital' NT Christianity, giving it a natural propensity toward the reformation of all Christianity.⁵⁰⁷ These understandings, as just outlined, are crucial if an interpretation is to be gained of WM as it saw itself. Merely observing its practices will fail to achieve a satisfactory assessment.

Therefore, observing Smithies' ministry through this framework alerts us to what his intentions were for the EC and other churches, as indicated by his recurring criticisms vis-à-vis what he and his associates were zealously accomplishing. In addition, Smithies' rebuttal of the Colonial Chaplain in the Swan River colony in the *Inquirer*, especially his exhortation that clergymen should live holy lives, demonstrates a motivation for the reform of the church as part of the primary WM holiness objective. That his critique was not just sectarianism, or denominational superiority, is

⁵⁰³ McNair, 'Second Look': 79–87.

⁵⁰⁴ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 126, 137–140; McNair, 'Second Look': 79–87.

⁵⁰⁵ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 299.

⁵⁰⁶ E.g., *WMM for 1835*, 515; 529–533; *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

demonstrated by Smithies' willingness to work with the Bible and Temperance societies in Newfoundland, the joint school project in the Swan River colony, as well as his regard for the Bishop of Adelaide, Augustus Short. Consequently, by placing Smithies' experiences against the background of Wesley's mission statement and various WMM articles, we are provided with an interpretation of WM mission in the period as one engaged in the subsidiary but important objective to reform the Christian church, in this case the EC. This understanding is further substantiated when compared with other WM missionaries from his era.

§3.3.2.1 Comparisons

First WM missionaries to Australia, Rev Samuel Leigh (1785–1852) and Rev William Lawry wrote to the WMMS regarding Van Diemen's Land's need of missionaries.⁵⁰⁸ They commented on the incumbent Colonial Chaplain, Rev Robert Knopwood (1763–1838) at Hobart Town, saying he was a 'minister whose age and infirmities renders him unfit for duty (besides he is a swearing, drunken, debauched infidel)' and 'who as a magistrate would oppose a [Methodist] missionary with all his might if he had no authority from home'. A harsh comment indeed, but partly supported by an entry in Knopwood's own diary showing that he was indignant 'because his convict servant had stolen his brandy bottle' for which 'heinous crime ... he was brutally flogged'!⁵⁰⁹ The fledgling work of Christianity was evidently in need of reform in Van Diemen's Land, as indicated by Leigh and Lawry's criticism (similar to Smithies' regarding Wittenoom). EC clergy of this kind were those for whom Wesley desired reform. Demonstrating the fulfilment of his desire, a later WMM said, 'The probability is, that for one godly [EC] Minister in the land, when Mr Wesley claimed the world for his parish, there are now forty'.⁵¹⁰

Three years later, Tasmanian WM missionaries found Knopwood to be congenial and accommodating.⁵¹¹ When asked by the Lieutenant Governor Colonel William Sorell (1775–1848) to consult with Knopwood about a place to preach, WM missionary Rev Benjamin Carvosso received a friendly reception and helpful advice. Since WM missionaries did not oppose the EC and were desirous of saving souls, Knopwood

⁵⁰⁸ R. D. Pretyman, *Early History of Methodism in Hobart, 1820–40* (Hobart, Tas: Archives of Tasmania, ref: 499/2294), 1–5.

⁵⁰⁹ Geoffrey Stephens, 'Robert Knopwood Patron Saint of Rokeby: Bob, Pincher and Pony' in *The Knopwood Historical Lectures: A Pioneer History of the Derwent's South Eastern Shore* (Rokeby, Tas; Rokeby High School, 1988), 69ff.

⁵¹⁰ *WMM for 1835*, 515.

⁵¹¹ Pretyman, *Methodism*, 10–15.

encouraged their proposed work.⁵¹² Carvosso described Knopwood's cottage as 'pleasantly situated' with a 'flourishing garden', and Robson adds that he was 'fond of hunting, shooting and fishing in the eighteenth century style'.⁵¹³ This was in 1820 at the early development of Methodism in Hobart. Later that year, Rev Ralph Mansfield, a WM missionary appointee to New South Wales, visited Van Diemen's Land and called on Knopwood whom he also found to be polite and welcoming. However, Mansfield attended the EC service on Sunday 27 August 1820, and upon hearing Knopwood preach, wrote in his diary, 'the sermon was such as to strengthen my conviction, that the people are as sheep without a shepherd'.⁵¹⁴ According to these Wesleyan missionaries' criticisms, therefore, reform was greatly needed especially since soon afterward, Knopwood's EC high church colours were further unfurled.

Rev W. Horton, WM missionary, in his correspondence to the WMMS wrote, 'I want some direction from you, as to my cooperation with the clergyman of the colony'.⁵¹⁵ Confirming earlier information, Horton found Knopwood 'very friendly', but wrote that he was 'not very friendly to our cause'. He said this because three children baptised by Horton were re-baptised by Knopwood because he regarded the baptisms to be 'illegal and void'. Horton had promised only to baptise those distant from the main settlement or if close, only those who were sick and in urgent need of baptism. When Horton had earlier proposed baptising such children, Knopwood threatened that if he did, upon their death, he would 'refuse to bury them'. His threat was carried out sooner than expected. Horton's own child, born on 3 June 1822 and baptised urgently by him due to the infant's frailty, died shortly afterward.⁵¹⁶ Knopwood refused to bury the child since she was not baptised by him. Horton sought mediation from Lieutenant Governor Sorell who recommended to Knopwood that he should bury the child. Pretyman suggests that Horton realised that Knopwood was simply afraid to transgress EC tradition; he was not opposed to him and Methodism. There is debate about Knopwood's character as may be gleaned from different opinions above. Some thought him irreligious, whilst others saw him to be pastoral, caring and 'deeply religious'.⁵¹⁷ Whatever debate exists, WM missionaries during Knopwood's time believed that he was not interested in either saving or caring for souls, and that they must do it. Reform to them, as it was to

⁵¹² Pretyman, *Early History, 1820-40*, 1-5.

⁵¹³ Robson, *The Tasmanian Story*, 27.

⁵¹⁴ Pretyman, *Methodism*, 10-15.

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 30-31.

⁵¹⁶ Pretyman, *Early History, 1820-40*, 6.

⁵¹⁷ See Stephens, 'Robert Knopwood', 69ff.

Smithies in the Swan River colony, consisted of providing evangelistic and pastoral ministry to neglected Tasmanians and by doing so hopefully provoke existing EC clergy to jealousy and therefore reform.

The *WMM for 1838* confirms WM aspirations of reform for the EC making similar observations to those of missionaries, Carvosso, Horton and Smithies.⁵¹⁸ Whilst acknowledging that in the EC ‘much good remains’ and that the ‘piety and zeal of her Ministers have of late years greatly increased’, the author asks, ‘is the conduct of the whole of these [members] even moral, not to say, holy and devout?’ A church after the pattern of the New Testament ‘ought to be so organised as that every member should be placed under pastoral care and spiritual jurisdiction. Happily, in some congregations of the established Church, this evil [of not placing members under pastoral care] is remedied.’ However, the author added, ‘the controversy which has recently been revived in this kingdom by some of the Bishops and Clergy’, referring to the rise of Puseyism and the Oxford Movement, attributes ‘essential virtue, not simply to the piety of the men, but to [apostolic] succession itself’. These latter comments strike at the heart of WM concern for itself and other churches, namely, that genuine inward holiness resulting in outward practice should be the aim, rather than an affirmation of the tradition of apostolic succession, the latter by its very nature having the tendency to displace vital Christianity. For if apostolic succession (ordination only by the EC) was the benchmark for bona fide ministry, then holiness would be relegated to an inferior position. Therefore, the author continued, ‘the inevitable conclusion to which all must come, who believe the doctrine of Episcopal succession ... is, that the people must hear such a minister, though erroneous in doctrine and immoral in conduct’. An answer to such decay in the EC was that,

Ministers who were never Episcopally ordained [i.e., Methodists]; but who, moved by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel, have been wholly set apart to that office by some faithful Ministers of Christ, and have been honoured instruments of the conversion of many sinners from the error of their way.⁵¹⁹

It was these very ministers who had ‘awakened the Church of England from her lethargy and long slumber, and provoked her to love and to good works’. The foregoing, then, is a sample of the nature of WM reform of the Church particularly through example, protest and criticism as carried out by its missionaries and ministers in the first part of the nineteenth century. Reform of the entire church, nevertheless, includes Catholicism, which was included in the WM agenda as revealed in the next section.

⁵¹⁸ ‘Present Aspect’, in *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*

§3.3.3 *The Catholic Church*

This section will evaluate Smithies' approach to the CC in light of the WM reform of church objective and how he looked on reform of Catholics. It will be recalled that WM regarded the CC, or popery, to be in a different category to Protestant churches since it was 'apostate'.⁵²⁰ The CC, therefore, was to be opposed, 'stemmed against', and surmounted by zealous WM missionary work.⁵²¹ As a consequence, systemic reform was considered out of the question but individual spiritual reform or conversion, were both possible and to be desired, as examples from the WMM demonstrate.⁵²² Wesleyan self-consciousness about its role in revitalising all of Christianity, as well as the fact that the CC was a Christian church' though apostate, and that numerous articles on 'popery' appeared in the WMM, make it obligatory that Smithies' encounters with the CC are reviewed in this section.⁵²³

Smithies first referred to the CC in his second letter from Newfoundland.⁵²⁴ After meeting an elderly man from the EC, he said he 'met with two other persons, Roman Catholics, who would have nothing to do with' him, 'because they were not of our profession (as they said)'. His following lament reveals his view of Catholicism. He said, "'Wisdom is justified of her children'" for the true seed of Abraham are lovers of one another'. His inference was that Catholics were not the 'true seed of Abraham' meaning they were not genuine Christians, because they would not have anything to do with Methodists. In other words, it appeared as though Smithies believed that conversion to 'genuine' Christianity was necessary in this case and that CC reform here was one of individual salvation.

On 12 May 1829, Smithies included a journal entry in his letter which reads: '30th [30 January 1829] Passed on to Blackhead Station through melting snow, over rugged paths and towering cliffs. On our way had a conversation with a Catholic so called, who made a very free use of the name of "Devil"'.⁵²⁵ In conversation with the woman and her husband, it became clear to him that they were, to use Smithies' words, 'living without prayer, lost in ignorance and unforgiven'. It would seem that these folk were practising superstition rather than Catholicism, evoking his prayer for reformation, 'O when shall the darkness of the people come to an end?' He then '[p]rayered with them and left them'.

⁵²⁰ E.g., *WMM for 1842*, 390–391.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*

⁵²² E.g., *WMM for 1842*, 322–327.

⁵²³ E.g., *WMM for 1835*, 515; *WMM for 1842*, 63f, 212f, 302f.

⁵²⁴ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May 1829.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*

Settlers of Newfoundland, many from Ireland and often Catholic, were frequently bereft of any religious services or visits from their priests or ministers of any denomination.⁵²⁶ The effect of their neglect was often a syncretistic mix of superstition and Catholicism (or Anglicanism). The reform Smithies desired in such situations was the replacement of superstitious darkness with the ‘enlightenment’ of the gospel (conversion). That he prayed with them demonstrated his pastoral concern for their reformation.

On Tuesday 17 November 1829 at 7.00am, Smithies ‘travelled to Heart’s Content, and from thence to Heart’s Desire’ (c.25 kilometres south of Hant’s Harbour).⁵²⁷ He recorded: ‘at 12 o’clock. I was invited into an house, rested a few minutes and then proposed to pray with the family’. After the ‘master’ of the house called his neighbours together, to Smithies’ ‘surprise and pleasure every man woman and child were present’ He then spoke to them ‘from the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus [Luke 16:19–31]. All were very attentive and I trust profited’, he said. He then prayed, ‘May these be numbered with the Lord’s jewels’. What delighted and surprised Smithies was the fact that there were ‘but six families in [that] place and five of them [were] Roman Catholics’. Perhaps Smithies was surprised at the sincerity and hunger of the Catholics, or maybe he saw them as potential Methodist converts? From his prayer, however, it seems that he sincerely desired their spiritual welfare and that he respected their faith in a truly ‘catholic spirit’.⁵²⁸ In saying, ‘may these be numbered with the Lord’s jewels’, Smithies may have been praying for conversion, but given the tenor of his journal entry, it appears that he was expressing a prayerful hope of the genuineness of their faith in a similar manner to prayers and hopes for his WM adherents. Here is evidence, therefore, of Smithies’ acceptance of what he perceived to be genuine faith, as well as his desire and prayer for individual reform in the CC in the same manner that Wesley expressed in his letter, ‘To a Roman Catholic’.⁵²⁹

However, in Smithies’ letter from St John’s on 29 January 1836, he complained, ‘Many of the natives and settlers in this Island for want of means of visitation, instruction, for baptizing their children have gone over to Catholicism’.⁵³⁰ He believed that those who turned to Catholicism were ‘twice dead and deeply prejudiced against the truth and mercy as it is in Jesus’. The reason for including this observation in a relatively short

⁵²⁶ Beardsall, ‘Fastened to the Rock’, chap.3.

⁵²⁷ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 7 December 1829.

⁵²⁸ ‘Catholic Spirit’, in Wesley, *Works*, v: 492–504.

⁵²⁹ Wesley, *Works*, x: 80–86; see also Heitzenrater, *Mr. Wesley*, 191–201.

⁵³⁰ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 29 January 1836.

letter was to argue for more missionaries, as his following prayer reveals. He prayed, ‘O that we had but more labourers in our vineyard here, more messengers bearing tidings, more heralds preparing the way of the Lord Jesus’. The depth of antagonism to Catholicism (reminiscent of Wesley) is clearly manifest in Smithies’ complaint, an antipathy that provided impetus for his mission of reform and the restoration of ‘vital’ godliness and ‘true Christianity’, and perhaps included a cryptic reference to the absence of the EC. His mention of ‘natives’ most likely referred to those who had settled in Newfoundland from previous generations (also called ‘planters’) for apart from a small population of Micmac Indians in the southern coasts, which had no Methodist mission among them, there were virtually no Beothuks or other indigenous people extant in Newfoundland at the time of writing.⁵³¹

The above instances reveal ambivalence in Smithies, also detected in Wesley and which is reflective of Methodism generally. For example, wholesale condemnation of Catholicism is evident throughout WM correspondence and literature on one hand, while on the other hand, prayer for the reformation of individuals was offered and sincere faith was prayed for, accepted and commended. Concomitantly, reform of the church appeared to require the destruction of the Catholic system, although individual reform was possible wherever sincere faith, such as that noted above, was present. This ambivalence most likely stemmed from Wesley’s hybrid origins as one deeply influenced by Catholic authors, but who was also a true child of the anti-catholic times, as well as being a descendant of the Reformation.⁵³² Consequently, the WM reform of church agenda was ineffective as far as the CC was concerned, apart from a small number of conversions and growth of faith in others. What reform may have been possible in the church at large had both Wesleyans and Catholics adopted, to use Wesley’s expression, ‘a catholic spirit’?⁵³³

Later, at the time of Smithies’ career in the Swan River colony, Roman Catholic clergy arrived for the first time. He reported, ‘We have this week [he wrote on 25 October 1843] had an arrival of three Roman Catholic Priests who are leaving no stone unturned to proselytise the ignorant and unwary’.⁵³⁴ Without further comment about this, he made another plea to the WMMS for a missionary who would have the added task of ‘having now to stem against Church, Catholics, Babtist [sic] etc.’ From this latter

⁵³¹ See Story et al., *Newfoundland English*, 340–341, 382–383; Rowe, *Newfoundland*, 29–30, 153–172.

⁵³² Cf., Watson, ‘Methodist Spirituality’, 172–213.

⁵³³ Wesley, *Works*, v: 493–504.

⁵³⁴ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

statement, we see that Smithies viewed his Wesleyan role as that of spreading ‘vital’ Methodist Christianity to thwart the advance of ‘unreformed’ segments of Christianity, namely, the EC, Catholics, and Dissent (Baptist). Since Wesleyans believed that they had a divine call to restore vital and primitive Christianity, they sought restoration in other churches.⁵³⁵ If renewal was not forthcoming or possible, they sought success for Methodism so that it would stymie the (unrestored) impact of others. However, where restoration occurred, Wesleyans were delighted to applaud and encourage the progress in those individuals and churches of whatever denomination.⁵³⁶

The arrival of which Smithies spoke, consisted of Rev John Brady, Belgian priest Fr. John Joostens, and catechist, Patrick O’Reilly, who arrived in Perth from Albany on 4 November 1843.⁵³⁷ This concurs with Smithies’ letter dated 25 October 1843, which stated ‘this week’ because his letters took time to write and send. Brady was courteously received by Governor Hutt and granted land for the erection of a place of worship, the foundation of which was laid on 16 January 1844. Brady left the year following to raise funds for the new building leaving Joostens in the colony to carry on the work. The latter commenced a school in the unfinished building. Whilst overseas, on 18 May 1845, Brady was appointed the first bishop to the new Perth diocese, which he had proposed to Rome. The Catholic population around this time was very low, estimated at no more than ninety people ‘within a radius of ten miles’ of Perth, although Rome had gained an impression that there was a population of at least 3,000 Catholics in the proposed diocese (Newbold believes that there were 306 Catholics in 1846).⁵³⁸ Smithies wrote, ‘It is believed there are not 100 Catholics in the whole colony of 4,000’.⁵³⁹

A later Catholic party arrived in 1846.⁵⁴⁰ The party included Sisters of Mercy who established a small school. They offered ‘every inducement’ to children in the Wesleyan school to leave and attend theirs. Smithies wrote that the Catholics ‘are indefatigable and profess great love and charity to us, speak well of Wesleyans and us, promise to teach children anything, but nothing about religion of any kind’. How did Smithies (and the Wesleyans) respond to this ‘olive branch’? He said,

⁵³⁵ E.g., *WMM for 1835*, 433–437.

⁵³⁶ E.g., *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

⁵³⁷ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

⁵³⁸ Bourke, *History of the CC in WA*, 8–11; Martin Newbold, ‘The Sisters of Mercy: First Teaching Sisters in Australia’, in *Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal* 7, 6 (1974): 26–34.

⁵³⁹ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 21 September 1845.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 25 September 1846; Newbold, ‘The Sisters of Mercy’: 26–34.

We have lifted up our voice against the whole system of iniquity, have used a little common sense and reason in the matter and shown the cloven foot, the spirit of the system and the object of the same and yet some have been dazzled with a glittering, cheap (college called) education.

He evidently did not trust their conciliatory approach but strongly opposed the CC advance by raising a protest, a method of reform exemplified by Wesley as noted above, although Smithies did not explain how he did this. Following precisely the view of his founder, he called Catholicism a ‘system of iniquity’, opposed to genuine Christianity and therefore incapable of reform. Smithies also believed that, ‘A mountain [had] been put in motion to move a mole hill’, meaning that the elaborate liturgical entry procession plus the large CC contingent designed to overwhelm the population in favour of Catholicism had failed, apart from a few who were won over. After nine months, wrote Smithies, it became obvious that the Bishop, Vicar General and his associates had made a grave miscalculation. Their constituents still numbered about a hundred, there were virtually no converts, and their financial means were insufficient ‘for an imposing establishment so that their prospects [were] dark’. Smithies believed that the Catholics could not achieve any moral or religious benefit.

In a later letter, Smithies returned to the subject of Catholicism.⁵⁴¹ ‘If you [WMMS] give us another labourer’, Smithies plead, ‘we should be able to conduct our work with more efficiency’. From his point of view, the districts to the south (as far as King George Sound, over 400 kilometres away) and east (the nearby hills areas including Toodyay) would be visited and the ‘efforts of Romanism counteracted’. The resulting good, said Smithies, would be incalculable. It was important to him that the Roman ‘error’ should be stopped and therefore the settlers contacted before Catholics had a chance to reach them. This was becoming more urgent to Smithies because the ‘Romanists [had] penetrated 100 miles more eastward on the Victoria Plains and [were] located and labouring in their way purely among Aborigines’. At least the settlers were being left alone, although given his concern for Aboriginal people, Smithies would have been distressed by the Catholic advance. The Catholics to whom he referred were Rosendo Salvado (1814–1900) and Joseph Benedict Serra (1810–1886) and company, who at first spent three months living in the bush among the indigenous people of Victoria Plains in 1846. A little later, on 1 March 1847, interim Lieutenant Governor Clarke made a grant of twenty acres to the CC that became the Benedictine Monastery

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., 21 October 1847.

of New Norcia.⁵⁴² In 1850, Smithies issued yet another plea for a missionary with a warning to the WMMS regarding the state of the work in Swan River.⁵⁴³ He said that the Catholic Bishop had visited Rome, and was returning with ‘about 11 Sisters of Mercy to establish Nunneries, and about 250 Irish Catholic labourers and farmers’. On this basis, he argued for another worker so that evil would be prevented (meaning the spread of Catholicism) and ‘souls would be saved’. At this point Smithies left the subject of Catholicism.

Smithies’ record about the entry of the CC into the Swan River colony, reflects his loathing of the Catholic system, one commonly shared by WM. Rather than reform of the CC church, it was defence against a ‘system of iniquity’ that, in his view, threatened genuine Christianity. Whilst he desired and prayed for reform and was accepting of ‘genuine’ faith in individual Catholics, Smithies’ antipathy was manifest in the Swan River case. Reform in this situation meant stopping CC advance at all costs by an additional missionary or two sent from England to accelerate the WM work before the CC could gain a foothold. The effective work of WM, therefore, would eclipse that of the CC so that the Christian church in the Swan River colony would be the revived, vital kind as portrayed by WM. In achieving this, Methodists would fulfil their objective to spread holiness through the land. The irony of this stance, as noted earlier, was that WM regularly distributed the book of Catholic writer Thomas á Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, for the purpose of the spiritual growth of Methodist readers! In addition, the holiness mission of WM and well as its emphasis on religious experience inherited substantial content from Catholic authors.⁵⁴⁴

§3.3.3.1 Comparisons

Articles from the WMM demonstrate that Smithies’ attitude in relation to reform as well as his experiences with the CC as just sketched was a fair representation of Methodism in his period. The WMM was widely circulated including to WM settlers and serving missionaries as shown in Joseph Hardey’s and Smithies’ letters.⁵⁴⁵ Since the magazine contained editorials, ‘religious intelligence’, and lengthy reports from missionaries, it is a rich source of WM history, particularly for this dissertation. There are numerous

⁵⁴² George Russo, *Lord Abbot of the Wilderness: The Life and Times of Bishop Salvado* (Melbourne: Polding, 1980), 37–56.

⁵⁴³ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1850.

⁵⁴⁴ See David D. Bundy, ‘European Pietist Roots of Pentecostalism’, in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988), 279–281.

⁵⁴⁵ E.g., SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 15 June 1831; SOAS, Box 516, Hardey to WMMS, London, 3 November 1837.

articles and reports on ‘Popery’ including one called, ‘Popish Hostility to the Scriptures’.⁵⁴⁶ Here, an ‘Extract from the Annual Charge of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Bruges, for Lent, 1838’, reads in part, ‘fortify yourselves, in our name, against the subtle machinations of a Society alike hostile to God and the Holy Church’. The society about which the Bishop wrote was none other than the Bible Society. The Society’s aim was simply to translate the Scriptures into the language of peoples with whom missionaries laboured to assist them in their work. It is easy to see how such an article would convince Methodists of the need for CC reform since if the latter opposed the Bible Society, it therefore must have been opposed to the Scriptures. Commentary like this was periodically employed to bring before readers the ‘evils’ of the CC system to further cement the view that the ‘evil system’ was desperately in need of reform, if it was not already irredeemable. The *WMM for 1842*, for example, included articles on ‘Popery in Malta’, ‘Popery in New Zealand’, and ‘Popery in England’, which all carried these sentiments.⁵⁴⁷ The inevitable conclusion was that conversion of Catholic adherents was the only likely pathway to reform.

To underscore this position, stories of Catholics adherents’ conversions were from time to time included in the WMM. One in particular contained copies of letters to and from a ‘converted’ priest to his Bishop.⁵⁴⁸ A reply to the Bishop of Pamiers from converted priest, Abbé Maurette, stated, ‘who would not be ashamed to be a Priest, now that the avarice and worldliness of many Priests are the cause of impiety and infidelity among the people?’ A quote like this demonstrated the need for scriptural holiness, and therefore the need for reform of the Catholic clergy (and people). The Bishop’s answer showed WM readers the unreasonableness of the CC system and therefore its terminal condition. To illustrate, the WMM has the Bishop saying, ‘In your blindness and under some unaccountable delusion, you have chosen ... contrary to the principles not only of the faith, but of common sense ... most scandalous to Christians and society’. The article continues with exchanges of this kind, all designed to show Methodists that only one pathway was open to reform the CC and that was conversion of individuals. The occurrence of a French priest’s conversion, such as that of Maurette’s, provided Methodists with cause for great rejoicing, as well as firing their enthusiasm for more such conversions toward their goal of reform of the church. In this way, they would spread scriptural holiness through the land.

⁵⁴⁶ *WMM for 1838*, 224–225.

⁵⁴⁷ *WMM for 1842*, 63f, 212f, 302f.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 322–327.

A quaint letter to the editor in the 1837 WMM ponders the ‘Salvability of the Pope’.⁵⁴⁹ It suggests that not only do Protestants consider the Pope ‘an enormous sinner’ and “‘the man of sin, the son of Perdition [2 Thessalonians 2:3–4]”” but Catholics also deem him so. This conclusion is reached because for an ordinary deceased Catholic, ‘a few masses are said for the repose of his [sic] soul; but when the Pope dies, masses are said in his behalf throughout all Romish places of worship throughout the world’. This presumably tongue-in-cheek article shows a restrained ridicule but clearly portrays the depth of antipathy to ‘popery’ and ‘papists’ and consequently their perceived need of reform, excluding the Pope who was possibly insalvable, although the author said he ‘would not insist that he cannot’ be saved.

In addition, other WM missionary attitudes toward the CC are detected in the WMM for 1842 where Rev William Woon reported from the WM Mission Station at Mangungu, New Zealand.⁵⁵⁰ Woon detailed the opposition of French Catholic missionaries who displayed to the indigenous inhabitants a chart of church history with Protestant churches shown as severed branches falling into hell. Woon hoped ‘that the errors of that wretched system’ would be exposed so that the people would not be deluded. In sentiments similar to Smithies, Woon lamented that these ‘agents of the Pope’ were making ‘every effort ... to bring the aborigines of this country, and of the islands in general, into the pale [sic] of their church’. He was hopeful, however, that they would not be successful because of the circulation of the Scriptures among the people and the stability of existing indigenous converts. In summary, these comparisons demonstrate that Smithies’ attitudes and actions toward reform of the CC were common to WM in that such reform was confined to individual conversions since the Catholic structure (and perhaps the Pope himself) could not be saved. Dissenting churches, on the other hand, had a more hopeful potential for reform, according to Methodists, although some unease existed between them as demonstrated by Smithies’ Swan River encounters.

§3.3.4 The Dissenters

That WM also considered itself responsible for reform within the dissenting world is unquestioned.⁵⁵¹ Its quest for vital Christianity, which included holiness of life and religious experience, meant that WM thought of itself as an example to un-revived sections of the church, and therefore called to awaken it from sleep. Examples from

⁵⁴⁹ *WMM for 1837*, 470–471.

⁵⁵⁰ *WMM for 1842*, 212–213.

⁵⁵¹ E.g., *WMM for 1835*, 515.

Smithies' ministry in this section indicate this WM attitude, although in a unique way. In the first example, a Dissenter comes to Smithies for spiritual guidance, and in the other, one of his stalwart lay leaders leaves the Swan River WM society under a cloud.

The first instance is also recorded in §4.4.⁵⁵² The setting was the Swan River colony revival in April 1844. The account concerns a Baptist minister's son who approached Smithies in distressed state. He believed that the reason for the man's distress was the working of God's Spirit during the revival that awakened a deep concern about the salvation of his soul. Smithies conversed and prayed with him. Afterward the man went home returning a day or two later to report his conversion. Although this account may be regarded as a straightforward case of conversion, the fact that the man was a Dissenter demonstrates how church reform often unfolded. As in this case, through conversion in a Methodist meeting or revival, a Dissenter's transformed life became an agent of change and reform in his or her church tradition. Methodists were pleased with occurrences of this nature because it fulfilled their reform objective. They preferred this to proselytising. Although this case is the only one reported by Smithies, it is nevertheless a valid example of the reform of a Dissenter.

The second example is unusual, and came from within Smithies' WM society in the Swan River colony. The first inkling of it is found in his words, 'We have now two Local Preachers, Messrs Hardey and Lazenby'.⁵⁵³ A noticeable omission is Henry Trigg (1791–1882) who was part of the noble three pillars of Swan River Methodism. Trigg, in addition to being a Wesleyan leader, was Colonial Superintendent of Public Works from 1838, responsible for building the first barracks next to the town hall in the city of Perth.⁵⁵⁴ A letter to the WMMS from Lazenby and Hardey alerted it to the defection of this former stalwart leader.⁵⁵⁵ Apparently, there had been an undercurrent of discontent, the source of which was difficult to identify at first. 'When lo', said Lazenby and Hardey, 'to our great surprise Mr Trigg who had sustained the threefold office of Local Preacher, Class Leader and Chapel speaker makes his appearance in this disreputable man's paper.' The paper referred to was the *Inquirer*. Trigg, they said, wrote 'a most treacherous and antichristian letter', which was stoutly opposed by them in the two local papers. Bonnington paints a different picture of Trigg as 'one of the most devout' in the colony who left the Methodists because of his objections to Smithies' Arminian

⁵⁵² SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 5 September 1844.

⁵⁵³ SOAS, Box 517, Lazenby and Hardey to WMMS, London, 19 January 1843.

⁵⁵⁴ Turner, *Foundations*, 6–9.

⁵⁵⁵ SOAS, Box 517, Lazenby and Hardey to WMMS, London, 4 March 1843.

doctrine and uncooperative actions, although he does not say what these actions were.⁵⁵⁶ Lazenby and Hardey also warned the WMMS that Trigg was expected to apply to the London Missionary Society (an interdenominational missionary society consisting predominantly of Congregationalists)⁵⁵⁷ for another missionary (presumably Congregational) to come to the Colony. Since the WMMS and LMS had a close working relationship, the authors felt that the former could warn and influence the latter against Trigg's approach. In any case, Lazenby and Hardey believed there was no room for another missionary in the Colony and that such a person could not be supported.

It was only eight months previous (9 August 1842) that Smithies had remarked, 'Our local aid here is but small yet valuable. Messrs Hardey, Lazenby and Trigg, are my fellow travellers and labourers in this new, hot and sandy vineyard of the Lord.'⁵⁵⁸ These three local preachers formed a band of Smithies' closest supporters. They contributed to the work financially as well as in their preaching and leadership roles from the beginning, and were responsible for the foundation of Methodism in the colony. Of the three, only Joseph Hardey was to remain, since Lazenby also later left the society, as already noted.⁵⁵⁹ Henry Trigg's defection was the early seed of the Congregational Church in Perth. He gathered a group of people together for regular services that grew to over thirty people. Their first chapel was built in September 1846. Trigg did indeed approach the LMS through whose auspices a minister, Rev James Leonard, was sent to take up his duties as the Congregational minister in 1851. By then, the new denomination had been in existence for six years, Trigg serving as its lay minister for that period.⁵⁶⁰ Therefore, Smithies was responsible indirectly for the establishment of the Congregational Church in Swan River. His Arminianism and 'uncooperative ways' were said to be the principal reasons. Consequently, Methodism was responsible for at least one of these reasons, if not both. Arminianism was certainly integral to Wesleyan doctrine and evidently irritated the Congregational (i.e., Calvinist) Trigg although he endured it for a number of years probably because there was no alternative church in the Colony other than the EC where he had been earlier a member and first choirmaster.⁵⁶¹ Second, since there is no evidence that Smithies was an

⁵⁵⁶ Bonnington, *Mustard Seed*, 10.

⁵⁵⁷ So Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 401.

⁵⁵⁸ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 9 August 1842.

⁵⁵⁹ See p. 105–106 regarding Lazenby; SOAS Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1850.

⁵⁶⁰ McElroy, 'Uniting Church', chap.2.

⁵⁶¹ Turner, *Foundations*, 6–9.

uncooperative person, on the contrary he was described as ‘cheerful and jolly’ by Thomas Farmer (1827–1891), the rigor of the Episcopal style WM discipline served as an aggravation to Congregational (i.e., democratic) and impulsive Henry Trigg.⁵⁶² Consequently, since Methodists such as Smithies would not deviate from either their Arminian doctrine or their WM ‘discipline’, in this sense they were reformers by maintaining their standards of doctrine and holiness, setting an example for the fledgling Congregational group and in an unintended way ‘provoking’ them to the ‘good’ work of a new church in the colony. In one way or another, Methodists irritated or encouraged other churches to good works.

Smithies’ comment, noted earlier, about the arrival of a Catholic missionary party was followed by a plea to the WMMS for a missionary who would have the added task of ‘having now to stem against Church, Catholics, Babtist [sic] etc’.⁵⁶³ His mention of Baptists most likely refers to the Congregationalists (or Independents) led at the time by Trigg. Other than his reference to the conversion of the son of a Baptist minister in 1844,⁵⁶⁴ there is little evidence of Baptists as a group or denomination in WA prior to the 1890s (although, as noted earlier, Hasluck mentions an Independent chapel in Guildford in 1838, which had the occasional ministry of Abraham Jones).⁵⁶⁵ Baptists were similar to Congregationalists in their polity, being congregational and self-governing rather than Episcopal like the Methodists. In addition, Congregationalists were Calvinist whereas WM (there were Calvinist Methodists) was Arminian.⁵⁶⁶ This distinction was the source of considerable controversy in Wesley’s day, continuing to the time of Smithies and beyond.⁵⁶⁷ Further, Baptists and Congregationalists both originated from the Separatist mould of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Congregationalists in Britain were at that time forming themselves into a denomination (1830–1860), which formation included a suggested union with Baptists (this did not eventuate). In the early part of the 1800s, the two groups looked more like independent local chapels or congregations. It was therefore easy to confuse the two. Chadwick says that in ‘happy circumstances there was little to distinguish them [Baptists] from

⁵⁶² Jenkins, *Methodism*, 18; Turner, *Foundations*, 6–9.

⁵⁶³ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 26 October 1844.

⁵⁶⁵ See Leslie J. Gomm, *Blazing Western Trails: The Story of William Kennedy Pioneer and Pathfinder* (Sydney: Packer, 1935); Hasluck, ‘Guildford’: 1–19.

⁵⁶⁶ The essence of Arminian beliefs was that salvation was a free gift to all and that humankind was free to choose, whereas Calvinists believed some were ordained to salvation and that these were irresistibly drawn to it (Davies, *Methodism*, 87).

⁵⁶⁷ E.g., Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 198–202.

Congregational dissenters'.⁵⁶⁸ Smithies' reference to Baptists, therefore, is likely to have referred to his strife with Trigg, the attendant discontentment and the resultant and continuing Congregational group. More importantly, the three churches mentioned, the EC, Catholic and Baptist, each needed to be 'stemmed', according to Smithies. Although reform meant inner transformation, to Methodists it also involved staunching so-called harmful or unproductive influences. The means by which Smithies sought to stem the influence of these churches was the addition of another WM missionary whose work would preclude a need for theirs and, in addition, presumably provoke these churches to 'love and good works'.

§3.3.4.1 Comparisons

The following examples serve to illustrate the typicality of Smithies' experience with that of other Methodist missionaries in this period, as well as the WM attitude toward reform of Dissenters. The WMM article cited earlier serves as a first suitable comparison. It says, 'They [Methodists] preached these doctrines with the zeal of martyrs; and God so owned their labours, that the power of the truth was soon felt through the length and breadth of the land'.⁵⁶⁹ The report then adds, 'Dissenters participated in the quickening power; Christianity resumed her native dignity; a thousand spiritual agencies sprang into existence'. The first quote demonstrates the WM view of its ministers' and missionaries' faithfulness to the doctrines (and disciplines) of the kind that irritated Trigg in the Swan River colony. The second quote demonstrates the revitalising influence on Dissenters that WM believed it exerted. By these two methods, reform of the church is patently revealed and confirms Smithies' experience.

The second instance comes from Newfoundland and relates to the Congregational Church of St John's.⁵⁷⁰ When the so-called apostle of Nova Scotia, the WM Rev William Black visited St. John's in 1791, he preached at the St. John's Congregational Church where he was warmly received by Rev John Jones who had been 'greatly impressed' by Rev Laurence Coughlan, pioneer of Newfoundland Methodism.⁵⁷¹ WM enjoyed cordial relations with the church for a number of years until 1810. From that year Rev Edmund Violet sought rigorously to apply Calvinistic doctrine complaining of 'gross improprieties of the Arminians in the Church' [referring to Methodists who

⁵⁶⁸ Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 400–412.

⁵⁶⁹ *WMM for 1835*, 515.

⁵⁷⁰ Pitt, *Windows of Agate*, 11, 20–23.

⁵⁷¹ Coughlan may be regarded as the pioneer minister of Methodism in Newfoundland although he was not officially appointed by Wesley (see Johnson, *Methodism* 241-243; Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 28-30).

worshipped in his chapel because they did not have their own]. This understandably put him off side with recently arrived Wesleyan Missionary, Rev John Remmington. WM, in this period, clashed with Dissenters on the subject of Calvinism in a similar way to Wesley. Being Arminian, Methodists from time to time sought to reform Dissenters in this aspect of their doctrine and resultant practice causing friction as noted in the example of Trigg in the Swan River, and in this example of Edmund Violet in St. John's.

A third illustration is found in the WMM for 1838 in the 'Memoir of Mr. William B. Briggs', written by notable Wesleyan leader Rev Dr Elijah Hoole (who was known to Smithies).⁵⁷² Briggs was a local preacher for a time in the Hull circuit, a class leader and was deeply involved in later life with the cause of missions working at the WMMS headquarters at Hatton Gardens, London. It was here that Elijah Hoole (1798–1872), who served as WMMS secretary from 1834–1872, had close association with him.⁵⁷³ Briggs died in 1835. Hoole wrote that Briggs had been a member of a Dissenting group. He said that Briggs 'found great deadness growing over' his soul. Even the best of the group, Briggs reported, 'seemed to be spiritually asleep, and many could live in unrighteousness without trouble'. Attending Methodist services a few times, Briggs said that he 'began to think of withdrawing from the Dissenters' because the Methodist preaching 'came home to ... [his] heart'. In 1805, Briggs was accepted into the local Methodist society from which time he said that he 'experienced a considerable progress in the divine life'. One of the deadening factors that Briggs attributed to the Dissenting society was its Calvinistic doctrine. Illumination of Methodist doctrines assisted his spiritual progress, he said. Brigg's example of renewal and spiritual growth demonstrates the need for reform that WM saw among Dissenters at that time. Happily, as the century progressed, the spiritual temperature of Dissent increased, led substantially by Methodist revival.⁵⁷⁴

In summary, the conversion of the Baptist minister's son in the Swan River colony, illustrates one means toward reform of Dissent that occurred through WM missionaries in this period. Another means was the steadfast practice of WM doctrines and disciplines that resulted, on the one hand, in the separation of Briggs from his Dissenting group and on the other, the departure of Trigg from WM in the Swan River

⁵⁷² *WMM for 1838*, 41–52; for Smithies reference to Hoole, see SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1842.

⁵⁷³ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, i: 108.

⁵⁷⁴ E.g., *WMM for 1835*, 515.

colony. Briggs left because he wanted Methodist teaching and practice, whereas Trigg resented it when pressed on him by Smithies. In Briggs' case, as a former Dissenter, he was reformed but his previous group up to that time was not. In Trigg's case, as far as we can ascertain, he refused to accept WM doctrine and practice and we assume he also rejected the kind of reform that WM believed it was bringing. Nevertheless, Trigg was provoked by the zeal of Smithies' typical WM belief and practice.

§3.3.5 Summary

Wesley's goal to reform the church was continued in the first half of the nineteenth century by Wesleyan missionaries like John Smithies. As in Wesley's day, WM influenced the church at large through its message and practice of holiness, its characteristic religious experiences including revivals, vigorous evangelism and mission work, and by its growth. Its progress in Britain and overseas was initially a source of irritating incentive to other churches although as the century passed, and churches were less intimidated, greater cooperation and unity prevailed as witnessed in many places.⁵⁷⁵ The CC was in a different category because it was regarded by most Protestants as apostate and only reformable by the conversion of individual adherents. Nevertheless, whether Catholic or Protestant, Methodists sought reform through conversion and progress in holiness, whether or not the converted stayed in their own churches. Evidence of church reform was not as obvious to individual missionaries at that time on the micro scale, other than conversions, revivals and other personal renewal experiences. However, the WMM carried articles from time to time demonstrating the effect of Methodism on the wider church.⁵⁷⁶ On the macro scale, and with the benefit of hindsight, church reform is palpable and can be attributed to the WM to a large degree. For example, Birtwhistle states that it 'has been suggested that the great missionary outgoing of the [nineteenth] century ... owed much ... [to] the Wesleys and their followers'.⁵⁷⁷ Also, Martin says that Methodism is the 'second of the three main waves of Anglo-Saxon Protestant religiosity', the first being Puritanism and the third, Pentecostalism.⁵⁷⁸ In addition, Cragg calls the Wesleyan period 'one of the most remarkable episodes in the history of the church', and Hattersley calls Wesley 'the leader of the Second Reformation'.⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁵ E.g., *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁶ E.g., 'Present Aspect', in *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

⁵⁷⁷ Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116.

⁵⁷⁸ Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 27, 1–46.

⁵⁷⁹ Cragg, *Age of Reason*, 143; Hattersley, *A Brand from the Burning*, vii.

Smithies' encounters with the EC (§3.3.2) were seen to be generally negative except for occasions like cooperatives in Newfoundland Temperance and Bible Societies, Swan River Education, and the visit from Adelaide of Bishop Short to the Swan River colony. The positives were evidence that WM was not sectarian, as they were sometimes accused, but genuinely sought reform and ecumenism. The antagonism and reaction, on the other hand, shown by EC clergy in Newfoundland, Swan River colony, and Van Diemen's Land is understandable given the weakness of their missions, the aridity in some of their ministries coupled with the vigorous nature of WM mission. In short, they felt threatened. Although understandable, it does show the need for reform especially where the Evangelical revival had not touched. This was more often than not in the EC high church party as discovered by Smithies in the Swan River colony and the first WM missionaries to Van Diemen's Land. In such cases, the methods of reform available to Smithies and other Wesleyan missionaries were the same as those used by Wesley, namely, public protest through letters or articles, and by vigorous engagement in ministry that, as Wesley put it, would provoke other clergy to jealousy, and consequently 'to love and good works'. Smithies' work was responsible for accelerated efforts by the EC in the Swan River colony and so in this case Wesley's strategy was successful.⁵⁸⁰ Unfortunately, WM mission also provoked EC clergy on occasions to both open and subtle resistance especially when closely associated with government, as was the case with colonial chaplains. The very presence of WM missionaries around the world, who were often very early in the colonies where a colonial chaplain presided, served as an irritant to the EC. That irritant was evidently effective toward reform (though not the only reason) given the increase of EC mission through its societies such as the Church Missionary Society and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts during the period under review.⁵⁸¹ There were other reasons for EC reform, of course, such as the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century and the Evangelical Party in the EC, but to Wesley and his followers, including missionaries in the first half of the nineteenth century, can be attributed substantial credit for reform.

The same cannot be said for WM reform of the CC (§3.3.3). Its influence was limited to individual conversions, and there were a number, similar to the example shown earlier. Although Wesley's objective was to reform the entire Christian church, the CC was a different case. The system itself, 'popery' as he called it, was considered irredeemable

⁵⁸⁰ E.g., Aveling, 'Religious Aspect', 575–598; SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1842.

⁵⁸¹ E.g., Hylson-Smith, *Churches in England*, iii: 277–317.

although some individuals possessed genuine faith and were able to progress in their faith, according to Wesley. However, it was evident that he believed every Catholic needed genuine Wesleyan style conversion, in which case in time there would probably be no CC since they would all be converted Protestants. From reading Smithies' letters, contemporary correspondence and WM literature from the period, the same beliefs persisted well into the nineteenth century. Catholicism as a system was equated with the Antichrist, but individual Catholics were converted. The CC did experience remarkable reform and growth in the nineteenth century, but not of the nature hoped for by Wesleyans.⁵⁸² Reform for WM was seen in the just noted CC conversions which inevitably resulted in converts joining a Protestant, and in the case of WM mission, usually a Methodist church.

Reform of the Dissenting world (§3.3.4), of which Methodists initially did not see themselves, took on a slightly different form given its similarities to WM. However, Dissenters were generally Calvinists, which tended to restrict them from proactive forms of Christianity.⁵⁸³ At least this was true of old style Dissent which viewed excessive (or any) human effort as a substitution for God's work. Revival, for example, would occur when God wanted it, not because Christians worked toward it or earnestly sought it.⁵⁸⁴ As for evangelism, God would save those whom God had chosen; missionary endeavours, therefore, were not required.⁵⁸⁵ Baptist missionary William Carey (1761–1834) had to contend with this attitude among his constituents.⁵⁸⁶ Apart from Calvinism, other main differences included Episcopal government and the class meeting system. However, due to Methodists and Dissenters being separated from the EC, they were both on the receiving end of unjust laws and government restrictions. Consequently, they were often found working together, especially from the mid to latter part of the nineteenth century.⁵⁸⁷ Nevertheless, since WM was a movement of inward vital Christianity, holiness, revivals and religious experience, it sought reform on these bases regardless of affiliation. Dissent, therefore, was a candidate for reform as much as any other segment of Christianity. In light of the above, a statement made earlier about

⁵⁸² Ibid., iii: 128–137.

⁵⁸³ E.g., Watts, *Dissenters*, 450ff; Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Leicester, UK: IVP, 2004), 194–198.

⁵⁸⁴ E.g., Townsend et al., *Methodism*, ii: 287–288; Iain H. Murray, *Revival and Revivalism: The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism 1750–1858* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994), 20–21, 379–380.

⁵⁸⁵ E.g., Townsend et al., *Methodism*, ii: 287–288.

⁵⁸⁶ Noll, *Evangelicalism*, 194–198; Townsend et al., *Methodism*, ii: 287–288.

⁵⁸⁷ Vidler, *Church*, 134–145.

reform of the church may be accepted as a valid interpretation of WM meaning, namely, that ‘Wesleyan Methodism ... has had an important bearing, directly and indirectly, upon the established Church, and upon other Christian communities’. Further, the statement continued, ‘followers of John Wesley have done much to revive pure and undefiled religion in the world’.⁵⁸⁸ Consequently, a view of Methodism as sectarian, or on the other hand, to overlook the reform of church agenda in its mission work, fails to satisfactorily portray the nature of WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The above, namely reform of the church, demonstrates an important aspect of the WM mission statement to spread scriptural holiness through the land and why it has been reviewed here. Since reform of church is a crucial facet, it is strange that our knowledge of it has been limited. In Birtwhistle’s essay, for example, reform of church as a component of the WM mission statement is not mentioned except for the ‘suggestion’ that WM inspired the Christian church missionary movement.⁵⁸⁹ The work of Wesleyan missionaries such as Smithies in the Swan River, on the other hand, had considerable interaction with other churches, particularly the EC. In this regard, we have shown that on occasions, in addition to provoking the EC to action, he expressed prayerful desires for reform of the church.⁵⁹⁰ Religious experiences also played a role here too, WM being criticised by other churches for its ‘enthusiasm’ and ‘emotionalism’ thus showing that the movement was distinguished for this feature.⁵⁹¹ When we compare Smithies’ experiences with other WM literature from the same period, it becomes patently evident that WM in its mission to spread holiness through various lands, carried on with Wesley’s vision to reform the church.⁵⁹² Here, then, is the second crucial aspect of WM mission as well as another reason for its missionary motivation, namely, its call to reform the church. We now turn to the third and final objective of the WM mission statement.

⁵⁸⁸ ‘Present Aspect’, in *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

⁵⁸⁹ Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116 (esp. pp. 1, 41).

⁵⁹⁰ E.g., SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May 1829.

⁵⁹¹ E.g., *WMM for 1842*, 392–403; 747; Brontë, *Shirley*, 292; Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 275–278, 539–540.

⁵⁹² E.g., ‘Present Aspect’, in *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

§3.4 Reform of the land

§3.4.1 Preamble

Wesley's mission statement, 'to spread scriptural holiness over the land', included the goal, to 'reform the nation [or land]'. In addition to and apart from soul saving, Methodists sought to bring about reform and the 'restraint of evil' in society through their moral influence. Reform of the land through moral influence was intrinsic to their ultimate objective to spread scriptural holiness. Called a significant social reformer, Wesley was never afraid to speak out on moral issues, although paradoxically he was shy of creating political disturbance.⁵⁹³ He advised his leaders and followers accordingly, that is, to bring moral suasion but never to cause public disturbance. His writings contain a smattering of articles demonstrating his attempt to bring moral influence not only to his constituents, but also to the public. To illustrate, his articles, 'A Word to a Swearer', 'A Word to a Drunkard' and 'A Word to a Smuggler' are moral homilies to those involved in these 'evils'.⁵⁹⁴

The cause of mission to indigenous people was also close to Wesley's heart being earlier influenced by his father's interest in Colonel Oglethorpe's settlement in Georgia, to which he and Charles later went as missionaries to 'convert the Indians'.⁵⁹⁵ The brothers failed dismally, but through Thomas Coke and the later WMMS, as noted in the introduction, the WMMS commenced its immense operations that covered the globe by half way through the nineteenth century.⁵⁹⁶ Other means by which Wesley sought to reform the land were initially through schools for the poor and, later, Sunday and day schools. As Wesley reported in his 'A Plain Account of the People called Methodists':

They [the Methodist schoolmasters] have now under their care near sixty children: The parents of some pay for their schooling; but the greater part, being very poor, do not; so that the expense is chiefly defrayed by voluntary contributions. We have of late clothed them too, as many as wanted.⁵⁹⁷

Such was the concern of Wesley, and such were the beginnings of WM Sabbath and day schools, initially set up for the poor, but later vastly expanded to include education of children wherever Methodism was established. His comment that Sunday schools were 'one of the best institutions which have been seen in Europe for some centuries', shows Wesley's regard for them and the reason for their early adoption by him.⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹³ Collins, *John Wesley*, 206–214; Edwards, 'John Wesley', i: 37–79.

⁵⁹⁴ Wesley, *Works*, xi: 167–170, 174–178.

⁵⁹⁵ See Wesley, *Works*, i: 74, v: 1–47; Telford, *Life of John Wesley*, 92.

⁵⁹⁶ Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116.

⁵⁹⁷ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 265–266.

⁵⁹⁸ See 'Sabbath and day schools', §3.4.4, and Wesley, *Works*, xiii: 119.

Consequently, the next generation of Methodists followed Wesley's example through their moral influence, indigenous missions, and the establishment of Sabbath and day schools. Nineteenth century Methodists spoke out on what they believed to be moral issues although WM leaders warned constituents against joining causes such as Luddite and Chartist (although a number Methodists were Chartists), especially those that espoused public disturbance and opposition to government.⁵⁹⁹ Methodists hoped to stem the tide of moral evil and irreligion creating a climate in which the preaching of the gospel might flourish, family life be strengthened, and society would be ordered, decent and Christian. Their ultimate goal, however, was the spread of holiness over the nations resulting in fervent love for God and people. To these ends, Methodists were intensely engaged in establishing mission stations from Britain to Newfoundland, the West Indies to Van Diemen's Land, and within these were indigenous missions, Sabbath and day schools.⁶⁰⁰ Their purpose, as already shown, was conversions and the pursuit of holiness. In addition, through civilising and education, Methodists hoped to reform the nations so that future generations might enjoy righteousness and productivity.

Contrariwise, as noted earlier, the WM 'reform of land' agenda has been generally overlooked or, on the other hand, the work of missionaries including Methodists described as morally bankrupt, or imperialist.⁶⁰¹ Since we are seeking to interpret the WM meaning of its mission practices rather than an ethnocentric or anachronistic view, the former positions are inappropriate for our purposes. In the first place, to neglect this part of the mission statement, as will be shown, passes over a crucial facet of missionary endeavour and consequently part of the purpose and motivation of WM missionaries. Second, to attribute moral bankruptcy to WM mission does not square with comments like those of McNair and Rumley regarding the 'buffer' provided through Smithies' work for indigenous people against white invasion in the Swan River colony, notwithstanding failures of nineteenth century mission due to 'cultural divergence'.⁶⁰² Third, the imperialist view is one that ignores 'the record of missionary opposition on so many occasions both to colonial governments and colonial capitalism'.⁶⁰³ The moral influence cause of WM missionaries in pursuit of reform of the land in the first half of

⁵⁹⁹ Wesley, *Works*, xi: 167–170, 174–178; Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 79–80; Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 370–380; Webb, *Modern England*, 128.

⁶⁰⁰ E.g., Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116; Findlay and Holdsworth. *History of the WMMS*.

⁶⁰¹ E.g., Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116; Goldhawk, 'Methodist People', ii: 113–142; Turner, 'Methodist Religion', 97–112; Carey, *Believing*, 48; Holly, 'Spiritual Transformation': 153ff.

⁶⁰² McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 146ff; Barley, 'Out of Step', 26–32.

⁶⁰³ Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116 (esp. p. 9).

the nineteenth century we examine first, employing Smithies' ministry as a sample. This will be followed by an investigation into WM indigenous mission (§3.4.3) and Sabbath and day schools (§3.4.4).

§3.4.2 Moral influence

A palpable example of moral influence in Smithies' ministry is found in his account to the WMMS regarding the rise of Methodism in the Swan River colony. He wrote,

Those connected with your Society have more or less, in different parts of this Colony, exerted a corrective, wholesome moral influence, and now though fewest, yet not least in moral worth and religious enterprise.⁶⁰⁴

Smithies said that moral influence was exerted through the establishment and operation of the usual facets of WM polity, including chapels, class meetings, and schools. In addition, Methodists' lifestyle and mission work were used to exert this same influence. Another example of moral influence is an incident in which Smithies prevented his indigenous students from attending Foundation Day celebrations to protect them from the so-called immoral influence of colonial society.⁶⁰⁵ His action attracted critical newspaper attention.

Further, in his reply through the press to Colonial Chaplain Rev J. B. Wittenoom's hostile sermon, Smithies referred to his mission field as a 'great moral vineyard', an expression that provides a further clue to his, and therefore WM views on influencing society.⁶⁰⁶ 'Vineyard', to Smithies, meant his field of mission work. His use of the adjective 'moral' referred to the nature of his work (i.e., moral influence) rather than the present state of the colony given his comments, 'It is lamentable the low state of morals in this country' and what he called the low morals of the indigenous people.⁶⁰⁷ He also expressed a desire for 'moral and religious improvement' of indigenous people demonstrating Smithies' belief that preparatory work was needed toward their desired conversion.⁶⁰⁸ Then referring to the York, Toodyay and Beverley districts in Western Australia, he lamented that, 'Morals are and must be very low where no Sabbaths are, or ordinances are observed and a faithful minister's voice is heard to tell them the way to the kingdom'.⁶⁰⁹ In this instance, Smithies attributed the attainment of a high moral state to observance of the Sabbath in addition to the presence of a minister and attendant

⁶⁰⁴ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 19 January 1843.

⁶⁰⁵ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841; This incident is further discussed on p. 161–162.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, October 1840.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 8 October 1840.

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 18 January 1841.

⁶⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 8 October 1840.

ordinances of the church. Here is further evidence that a pervading moral influence over towns, peoples and districts was a desirable mission. We also perceive the reason behind the strict observance of the Sabbath that Methodists and others sought to impose on their respective communities, namely, a wholesome moral influence. Throughout Smithies' letters, his use of the word 'moral' is prolific. It is abundantly clear that he sought to bring moral influence to bear on the colony, including indigenous people, and that this influence would pave the way for the conversion of many. Conversely, even if people were not converted, a 'wholesome moral influence' would pervade the communities. Through the means of moral influence and conversion, therefore, Methodists believed that they would reform the land and spread scriptural holiness.

Another means by which Wesleyans sought to influence society was their campaign for abstinence from alcohol. This battle was fought in cooperation with Temperance Societies as seen in examples from Smithies' letters. As early as 1835, he was engaged in work with the Temperance Society in Newfoundland. Since Newfoundland had a peculiar problem with alcohol abuse, particularly rum, it was understandable that a Temperance Society to be set up there.⁶¹⁰ Smithies reported,

I find my time fully occupied here, what preparing for the sanctuary, visiting the sick and the society, and attending to other engagements as with Temperance Society (and by the way if you could dear Sirs favour us with any tracts on this subject they would be most thankfully received) and other meetings.⁶¹¹

In his letters, there are several similar references to temperance and abstinence.⁶¹² Also noted here is Smithies' reference to tracts. Turner mentions the instrumentality of Methodist tracts in forming Victorian attitudes demonstrating the potency of this means, although he does not make a connection with the WM objective to reform the land.⁶¹³ Another example in Smithies' Australian letters refers to several among the Swan River military joining the 'Total Abstinence Society', which name reflects the Methodists' stance.⁶¹⁴

The fight against alcohol continued throughout both John and Hannah Smithies' life and ministry as further evidenced by a little tract written by Hannah in June 1889 for the 'Youthful Ones' in which she urged total abstinence along with belief in the gospel. She cited the example of Rev T. Hutton who in the 'ten years he was chaplain of

⁶¹⁰ Rowe, *Newfoundland*, 251–258.

⁶¹¹ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 15 August 1835.

⁶¹² E.g., SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 15 August 1835, 12 January 1836; SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1848.

⁶¹³ Turner, *Methodist Religion*, 97–112 (esp. pp. 100–101).

⁶¹⁴ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1848.

Northampton Gaol, he never saw a total abstainer a prisoner there'.⁶¹⁵ The Smithies' engagement in the fight for total abstinence through societies and tract distribution, therefore, was part of their campaign to influence society and achieve reform in the land. Their moral influence mission was part of the WM objective to reform the land and should be interpreted within its overall agenda to spread scriptural holiness in order to obtain a satisfactory understanding of WM mission in this period. The Smithies' work was typical of Methodist missionaries from this period, as will now be shown.

§3.4.2.1 Comparisons

Frequent articles in the WMM on the importance of the Sabbath confirm that other Wesleyans sought to exercise the same moral influence as Smithies in their desire to reform the land and that he was not an isolated example. To illustrate, the 1842 edition of the WMM includes two essays and six other articles on the Sabbath.⁶¹⁶ Samples from these show clearly that observance of the Sabbath leads to reform of the land. Peter M'Owan, for example, said that the Sabbath 'was intended to prevent the poor from being oppressed'.⁶¹⁷ He added, 'exalted piety whether national or personal, has been invariably characterised by reverential regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath; and that declension in religion has been as regularly marked by its desecration'.⁶¹⁸ Further, he said that through Sabbath observance, 'the benefit to the church and the world would be great and lasting'.⁶¹⁹

In relation to WM moral influence on alcohol consumption, Temperance Societies emerged from about 1820 in Britain and were even stronger in North America.⁶²⁰ The temperance movement was controversial even among Evangelicals between those advocating total abstinence and those who, as the name implies, urged temperate use of alcohol. Methodists eventually decided in favour of the former and were vigorous supporters of the societies. The American Temperance Society was formed in 1826 and though praised by the MEC for its excellent work, the church declined an invitation to join the society because Wesleyans 'had always been a temperance society, having made abstinence from intoxicating liquors as a beverage a term of church communion'.⁶²¹ A statement from the 1832 conference of the MEC patently

⁶¹⁵ Hannah Smithies, *Thoughts for the Youthful Ones*, (Tract, Burnie, Tas: family collection, 1 June 1889).

⁶¹⁶ *WMM for 1842*, 28, 118, 198, 284, 380, 460, 602, 833.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 292.

⁶²⁰ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 227–230.

⁶²¹ Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 117.

demonstrates its view that abstinence from alcohol is a means to reform the land. It states:

And we close by remarking, that we look upon all as implicated in the duty and the interest, and we shall cheerfully and promptly concur with all in an effort to expel the demon of intemperance, not only from our churches, but from the nation, whose welfare and fortunes must be always viewed in intimate connection with its morals.⁶²²

A final example of reform is from Upper Canada where a number of indigenous chiefs favoured Methodism because adherence to WM preserved their people from the devastating effects of alcohol.⁶²³

There is no doubt that by means of moral influence, including Sabbath observance and temperance campaigns, Smithies and Wesleyans everywhere believed that the land could be reformed and were therefore motivated by this objective. Their ‘moral campaigns’, therefore, being perceived by them as part of their ‘reform of land’ agenda within the greater goal of spreading scriptural holiness, should be interpreted in this manner if a true picture of WM in this period is to be achieved vis-à-vis a view of ‘civilising’ or ‘wowsersism’, for example. The WM moral influence agenda should also be assessed in conjunction with its other goals to obtain a discrete picture of WM since other churches also pursued some of these goals. It was its missionary practices influenced by the WM emphasis on holiness, characterised by love for God and people, together with its emphasis on religious experience (reviewed in §4.0) that distinguished Methodism. Another means by which WM sought to achieve its goal of reform of the land was through its mission to indigenous peoples.

§3.4.3 Indigenous mission

Indigenous mission was an important WM endeavour since missionaries sought the conversion of Aboriginal peoples and their growth in holiness through class meetings and other means in exactly the same manner as they sought these goals in Britain and in other mission fields. Nevertheless, Aboriginal mission is located under this section of the chapter due to the distinctive reform objective. It is a mistake, however, to think that Methodists did not seek the reform of Britons and white Australians discretely from their conversion agenda. Methodists often lamented the poor state of morality and spirituality among the white population, both at home and in the colonies.⁶²⁴ Nevertheless, although there was a marked distinction between Methodist Britons and

⁶²² Ibid., 157.

⁶²³ Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 155.

⁶²⁴ E.g., SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October 1840.

‘unregenerate’ Britons, there was a more obvious difference between Methodist Britons and indigenous people. The reform of indigenous people in new lands, therefore, presented a more apparent reform mission due to greater differentiation between cultures. As part of this mission, Methodists were concerned to ‘protect’ indigenous people from invasive white culture. A third aspect of indigenous mission was practical concern for the poor that Wesley urged on his followers.⁶²⁵ Jennings shows unambiguously that ministry to the poor was integral to Wesley’s holiness agenda. Indigenous people were the ‘new poor’ in the early nineteenth century and therefore recipients of this facet of WM mission. As Birtwhistle says,

that other consuming passion of the earlier period, loving care for the unprivileged and the poor in Christ’s name, was now ... increasingly overseas.⁶²⁶

In addition, in relation to his Swan River to Aboriginals, Smithies said,

Here we have literally no poor, the few paupers which are here and supported by Local Government, are such from intemperance and dissolute habits and lives. After the first Sacramental collection here I enquired for the poor to distribute it as at home, but to my surprize they told me there were none, nor have I to this day, given away a fraction of our Sacramental monies to any of the Colonists We however find great demand for all such surplus means amongst the natives.⁶²⁷

Smithies’ comment here adds to the sentiments of Jennings and Birtwhistle confirming that he regarded Swan River Aboriginals as the new poor and as such, they were part of his reform mission. In this, we see a continuation of Wesley’s holiness project. While it is true that WM reform may be loosely regarded as ‘christianising and civilising’, which in reality meant an imposition of a mixture of European and Christian values, Methodist ideals were quite different for the reasons just given (i.e., reform of all cultures including European). Therefore, the comment that Smithies was perceived by colonists as desiring to make Aboriginal people into ‘useful, and humble, members of white society’, does not fully appreciate the WM intention nor interpret their meaning as they viewed themselves.⁶²⁸ To reiterate, in addition to, but discrete from conversion and growth in personal holiness, part of the WM mission statement was reform of the land within its larger agenda of spreading scriptural holiness. In the case of indigenous mission, reform included moral improvement, education, protection from the evils of white society, and ministry to the poor. Consequently, due to this distinct WM purpose, the topic of Aboriginal mission is placed in this section, reform of the land.

⁶²⁵ For discussion on Wesley’s regard for the poor, see Theodore W. Jennings, *Good News to the Poor: John Wesley’s Evangelical Economics* (London: Abingdon, 1990), 15, 47–70.

⁶²⁶ Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116.

⁶²⁷ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841.

⁶²⁸ Aveling, ‘Religious Aspect’, 575–598.

As noted already, Smithies' work in Newfoundland involved no indigenous people though at least one report assumes it did.⁶²⁹ The last indigenous people seen in Newfoundland, according to Wilson, were the Beothuks in 1823.⁶³⁰ Rowe observes that there were certainly no indigenous people by 1825–1826. Smithies' work in Newfoundland commenced after these dates, in 1828. It was a different situation when he began his ministry in the Swan River colony, Western Australia in 1840, where his notable work amongst Aboriginal people has been well studied.⁶³¹ He was sent to the colony for the twin goals of the spiritual welfare of Methodist settlers and local Aboriginals. We learn this from the mandate given by the WMMS to Rev W. Longbottom, which defaulted to Smithies since Longbottom failed to arrive in Perth due his shipwreck in South Australia.⁶³² An early estimate says there were 55,000 indigenous people in Western Australia with about 300,000 throughout the continent although estimates vary considerably, even up to 1.5 million.⁶³³ The circumstance in Van Diemen's Land was not unlike Newfoundland in that there was no indigenous missionary work there to speak of due to the perceived extinction of Aboriginal people by 1837, the last full-blooded indigenous person (as was thought) dying in 1876. In recent times, a movement of people identifying themselves as descendents of the Palawa numbered over 10,000 by 1994. However, perceived extinction of indigenous people by the mid nineteenth century precluded any missionary endeavours.⁶³⁴

Smithies commenced his first mission in the Swan River colony on the church's Murray Street property in 1840, where a residence and mission house were built.⁶³⁵ In 1844, the mission moved to Lake Goolelal, as it is presently known, or as Smithies severally called it, Sheffield Park, Alder Lake, Wanneroo or Gullillilup, but usually Gullillilup. Revival broke out and continued briefly at the commencement of the Gullillilup mission. Then in 1852, the mission moved to York where it soon afterward ceased in 1854. Alongside the Aboriginal missions were the colonial chapels at Perth, Fremantle

⁶²⁹ E.g., Wesley Lutton, *The Wesley Story: Centenary of Wesley Church, Perth, Western Australia 1870–1970* (Perth, WA: WA Newspapers, 1970).

⁶³⁰ Rowe, *Newfoundland*, 167–168; Wilson, *Newfoundland*, 443.

⁶³¹ E.g., Aveling, 'Religious Aspect', 575–598; Barley, 'Out of Step', 26–32; John Harris, *One Blood: 200 years of Aboriginal Encounter with Christianity: A Story of Hope*, 2nd rev. edn. (Sutherland, NSW: Albatross, 1994), 269–278; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*; etc.

⁶³² See SOAS, Box 516, WMMS, London, to William Longbottom, India, 28 March 1837.

⁶³³ Neville, 'Settlers and Aborigines': 10–46; Suter, 'Australia', 84–90.

⁶³⁴ Robson and Roe, *Tasmania*, 34–35, 169–174.

⁶³⁵ For details of Smithies' Swan River mission, see SOAS, Box 516–518, Smithies to WMMS, London, 1840–1855; Harris, *One Blood*, 269–278; Charles A. Jenkins, 'Early Years of the Methodist Church in Western Australia', in *Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal* 2, 13 (1933): 3–15; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*; Sampson, 'Wesleyan Methodism', ch. 1.

and York, with outstations at the Peninsula Farm, Guildford, Grove Farm and Wanneroo (once the mission had moved from there). The WMMS and local private supporters such as George Shenton expended some £12,000 on the mission during Smithies' time, an enormous commitment although spread over fifteen years.⁶³⁶

There are aspects of the mission that warrant closer study due to their connection with the WM goal of reform of the land in pursuit of spreading scriptural holiness. The first is the day school. Given Smithies' attention to soul saving and progress in holiness, what was his aim for the mission day school? The substantial financial and human resources poured into the mission indicates a significant reason for the school's existence. A clue is provided in his first letter describing the state of Methodism in the colony. Here Smithies mentioned that a Sabbath school had been in existence for several years and included 70 settlers' children and 30 Aboriginal children.⁶³⁷ He said they were hoping for the salvation of the white children and that the indigenous children were learning 'letters and things belonging to the worship of God'. We gather that Aboriginal children were candidates for salvation too, but that some education was first necessary. In another letter, Smithies provided further clues to his goal in his report to the WMMS. He said, 'Our Sabbath School is full of children. We hope that the seed is being sown which will produce fruit in due season'.⁶³⁸ The kind of fruit desired was the awakening of the children to their need of salvation followed by conversion. Consequently, Smithies sought conversions through a preparatory process of education in his school. It is in this preparation, therefore, that his reform agenda is detected since children were educated in general learning (reading and math) as well as Christian teachings. By these means, Smithies expected that through his schools righteousness (or holiness) would influence the land, aside from but including conversion.⁶³⁹

In the pathway towards the conversion of scholars, there was a subsidiary but important goal of protection. Smithies wanted to protect the children from the unsavoury influence of white society as indeed Governor Hutt had been commissioned to do in his mandate to encourage the establishment of religion.⁶⁴⁰ As noted previously, an example of this was well publicised at the time, namely, Smithies' restriction on students from attending

⁶³⁶ Jenkins, 'Early Years': 3–15; See also Harris, *One Blood*, 269–278; McNair, 'Second Look': 79–87; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 1981.

⁶³⁷ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October 1840.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, 16 April 1841.

⁶³⁹ E.g., Smithies' minute, 20 May 1829, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives); SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 10 January 1843.

⁶⁴⁰ Jenkins, 'Early Years': 3–15; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 21.

the Foundation Day celebrations and races on 1 June 1841.⁶⁴¹ The *Inquirer's* editor, Francis Lochee, attacked Smithies for showing disrespect to the people of Perth in suggesting that the majority of the colony, including the Governor, were morally and spiritually in error for attending the races and ball to celebrate the Colony's foundation. Smithies' reply was fearless, however, quoting the Early Church Fathers, Tertullian and Origen, even citing page and paragraph numbers.⁶⁴² What comes to light here is the difference between Methodist values and white cultural values and consequently Smithies' reform posture toward colonial society. In addition, his protection of Aboriginals demonstrates reform of a different kind toward them. In episodes like this, Smithies sought to be a reformer of indigenous people by protecting them, as he thought, from European evils, and a reformer of colonials by exposing their 'unchristian' conduct. In both of these facets, reform was part of his larger holiness objective as he sought to influence the colony.

Smithies' reform agenda is further revealed in his report to Governor Hutt regarding the mission school where he laid out his goals, although these would undoubtedly have been crafted to suit Government and societal expectations. He wrote,

With such civilizing and Christian means and the blessing of God upon them, your Committee are looking for still more permanent and satisfactory fruits of their labours, such as restraint from moral evil, implanting the fear of God and guiding their hopeful steps in the way of peace.⁶⁴³

Here, then, are three important reform goals: avoidance of evil, the worship of God as Methodism defined that worship, and a peaceful existence, which we take to mean a way of life free from violence (particularly between indigenous people and settlers given the troubles at the time). These aims would no doubt have pleased the Governor and general public, but we know that Smithies had an assignment of reform of the land in mind. In the same report, he revealed his mission in the words, 'it is the object of the Wesleyan Missionary Society to spread their Redeemer's name as far as possible in this and all other countries'. Then he added the reason, namely, that they be 'so educated to be the means in the hands of Almighty God by which the Aborigines of this Country will be brought to the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord'. Education, then, was a tool of reform resulting in these 'denizens of the soil', as Smithies sometimes called them, being restrained from moral evil and becoming worshipers of God and peaceful

⁶⁴¹ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841.

⁶⁴² *The Inquirer, A Western Australian Journal*. Perth, WA, 9, 23 June 1841; *The Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, Perth, WA, 5, 19, 23, June 1841.

⁶⁴³ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 19 January 1843.

members of society.⁶⁴⁴ Further, Aboriginals would be productive for their own people by spreading Christian doctrine (and therefore scriptural holiness) through the land thus achieving moral and spiritual reform. It was in this way that he sought to reform the land in the case of indigenous inhabitants. However, were these aims the same for his mission farms at Gullillilup and York?

A statement of purpose with a different slant in relation to the mission farm at Gullillilup is found in Smithies' report to the WMMS in his letter dated 26 October 1844 in which he said,

For some two years past we have been endeavouring to obtain a few acres (say 4 or 5) of land for native purposes, to teach them to cultivate land, grow produce, and especially in connection with school operations, the means of grace and the blessing of God, to socialize them and bring before their attention the advantages belonging to civilized and Christian life.⁶⁴⁵

Although Smithies' aim was to bring Aboriginal people to salvation and then to build them up in holiness according to Methodist discipline, his reform agenda is evident here. This letter is the same one in which he reported the revival, undoubtedly a highlight in his missionary career. However, alongside his goal of soul saving was his aim to 'socialise' and 'civilise' which we take to mean assisting Aboriginals to interact beneficially with white society and to adopt those European ways that would profit them. These goals, however, should be interpreted by Methodist ideals which were quite different to the general white population and therefore to what might normally be understood as 'civilising and christianising'. In the first instance, Smithies treated indigenous people as he would have treated the poor in Britain or Newfoundland, indicated by his desire for them to attain educational, agricultural and moral self-sufficiency, as well as to learn the 'holiness of labour', so that they could be insulated as far as possible from the surrounding culture.⁶⁴⁶ Indeed, as noted above, Smithies said that in the absence of the poor in the colony, he had indigenous people to care for.⁶⁴⁷ This treatment was similar to Wesley's ministry to the poor (including schools for the poor) which he encouraged his followers to emulate as an integral part of spreading scriptural holiness.⁶⁴⁸ In addition, WM restrictions such as avoidance of fashion, alcohol, parties and frivolous amusements, as well as strict Sabbath observance, meant that 'socialising and civilising' did not mean simply integrating them or making

⁶⁴⁴ E.g., SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841.

⁶⁴⁵ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

⁶⁴⁶ Joseph Bowes, 'The Australian Aborigine', in *Century*, ed. Colwell, 153–173 (esp. p. 173).

⁶⁴⁷ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841.

⁶⁴⁸ Jennings, *Good News*, 15, 47–69.

Aboriginals ‘useful, humble servants’ but enabling them to adapt to the current threatening colonial invasion. McNair and Rumley’s comment, therefore, about Smithies being a buffer against ‘European intolerance and excess’ concurs with this view.⁶⁴⁹ Then in a very late letter, Smithies said that he was ‘endeavouring to break up the fallow ground in this new [York] Circuit’ and that he hoped ‘to see fruit of our toil in the conversion of souls, as well as in endeavouring to benefit the Natives of this soil’.⁶⁵⁰ Teaching English and agricultural self-reliance, while at the same time instilling Christian values in his Aboriginal students to protect them from moral dangers, was how Smithies hoped to benefit them aside from conversion. He sought to reform indigenous peoples, therefore, according to this Wesleyan objective within the higher purpose of spreading holiness.⁶⁵¹ Consequently, his efforts and those of other WM missionaries in this period should be interpreted in this light and in doing so we recognise another one of their goals and consequently what motivated their endeavours.

§3.4.3.1 Comparisons

Three earlier Australian Aboriginal WM missions had commenced before Smithies’ and serve as comparisons with his Swan River mission. These missions parallel Smithies’ reform of the land direction within the greater WM objective to spread scriptural holiness. For example, William Walker established the first mission in the Sydney area in 1821, but within three years after building a school for a handful of indigenous children at Parramatta, the mission closed.⁶⁵² This first Methodist experiment in Australia, therefore, utilised the education of children in its attempt to reform the land. A second attempt at Aboriginal mission ended in circumstances that were even more dismal. Walker’s former associate John Harper, who ‘possessed exceptional knowledge’ of indigenous people, had a ‘strong sympathy with them’ and ‘gained some mastery of their language’, set out to establish an ‘agricultural settlement’ on the promise of Government assistance.⁶⁵³ However, the Government reneged on its land grant and the project never eventuated. This second WM mission project proposed another technique later used by Smithies, demonstrating the commonality of WM methods; this was an ‘agricultural settlement’. The reform benefits expected for indigenous people in this

⁶⁴⁹ McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 144ff.

⁶⁵⁰ SOAS, Box 518, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1852.

⁶⁵¹ Regarding ministry to the poor as a holiness objective, see Jennings, *Good News*, 15, 47–69.

⁶⁵² Bowes, ‘The Australian Aborigine’, 153–173; Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 149–150.

⁶⁵³ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 150–151.

mission farm model were self-sufficiency together with the likelihood of protection from invading whites.

A third Australian attempt at indigenous mission was made by Joseph Orton at Port Phillip in 1836, although it was WM missionaries Benjamin Hurst and Francis Tuckfield who were appointed to establish and run an agricultural settlement similar to that earlier proposed in New South Wales.⁶⁵⁴ This time the mission had reasonable government support, being granted 64,000 acres eighty miles west of Melbourne. Some success attended the mission, the missionaries winning the hearts of the indigenous people. A fatal error was made, however, by trying to achieve wider coverage. Several 'tribes' were drawn together near to the mission but this precipitated constant rivalries and unrest between them. In addition, unprincipled whites began moving into the same area adding to the mix of resentment and opposition so that after five years of hard work, the government withdrew its aid and the work closed.⁶⁵⁵ However, Tuckfield, depending on his own resources, sought permission to re-establish the work. Receiving approval, he reduced his land holding, contained the mission to one tribe only and commenced the project again running it for five more years. At its peak during this second period, the mission contained 45 indigenous people, 'half of whom were children'. Nevertheless, in the face of further invasive white settlement, the mission was finally closed in 1848, the stock sold and the land resumed by the government. Thus, the third WM mission experiment closed notwithstanding moderate success in its second phase.

Although other Christian missionaries used comparable strategies, these Australian examples demonstrate at least that WM missionaries used similar methods to Smithies. Since we know that his methods served a distinct reform agenda, it can be accepted that his colleagues' activities did as well. However, the following examples demonstrate WM reform more clearly and serve as an additional comparison to Smithies' ministry. The first example is from Upper Canada where WM missions to indigenous people also employed among other strategies education and farming along with the prohibition of alcohol.⁶⁵⁶ These methods within their reform agenda served the people so well that indigenous people were more favourable to Methodists. Their chiefs wisely judged that being part of an alcohol free farming village that provided education for their children was the kind of protection they needed. Consequently, reforms of this kind prompted

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁶ Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 148-178.

such comments as those made by Rev C. Buck in the WMM for 1835, who said, ‘Methodists were instrumental in stemming [the] torrent of infidelity and profanity’.⁶⁵⁷

A final comparison to Smithies’ Swan River mission is the WM mission in Tonga.⁶⁵⁸ In Methodist terms, the island of Tonga was reformed to the pinnacle of missionary expectations in that the entire population was impacted and tribal leaders won over and in many cases converted. However, commenting on reform as a separate issue to conversions in Tonga, Young said,

even those who have not submitted to its [Christianity’s] saving power have, nevertheless, felt its restraining influence, and in point of scriptural knowledge, and outward morals, would appear to advantage in general if placed in contrast with the same class of persons in either England or America’.⁶⁵⁹

Young provides an unequivocal example here of what WM reform of the land meant within the larger holiness purpose. He said that community standards of morality and knowledge of Scripture in Tongan society, even among those not converted, compared favourably to European settings. The desired outcome of a reformed land in addition to, but aside from conversions, was achieved in Tonga and serves as an ideal example as well as a comparison to Smithies’ ministry.

In summary, Wesleyan missionaries sought a common ‘reform of land’ objective in their indigenous missions. They used similar methods such as protection from the evils of white society and education in general learning as well as religion. In addition, missionaries utilised farming to enable self-sufficiency and to teach the ‘holiness of labour’, as well employing usual evangelistic and pastoral practices.⁶⁶⁰ Further, in their reform mission Methodists looked on indigenous people as the new poor and therefore a crucial part of their holiness objective. The missionaries’ goal, if people were not converted, was to ‘restrain evil’ and create a Christian society to achieve their greater objective, namely, that holiness would spread across the land. Smithies believed that Swan River Methodists were initially successful in this endeavour among the white settler community, but he did not achieve his goal in the indigenous community, albeit there were isolated successes, as pointed out by McNair and Rumley.⁶⁶¹ In uncovering indigenous mission as part of the WM ‘reform of land’ agenda, another facet of missionary objective and motivation has been unveiled. A further strategy through which Smithies pursued his mission is Sabbath and day schools, our next topic.

⁶⁵⁷ *WMM for 1835*, 515.

⁶⁵⁸ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 277–380; Harris, ‘No Moving’, 180–192.

⁶⁵⁹ Young, *Southern World*, 267–268.

⁶⁶⁰ Bowes, ‘The Australian Aborigine’, 153–173 (esp. p. 173).

⁶⁶¹ McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 144–153.

§3.4.4 *Sabbath and day schools*

Schools feature frequently in Wesleyan missions deriving from the earliest days of its rise in England. Wesley very early commenced schools for the poor, and was an early adopter of the Sunday School Movement.⁶⁶² Schools, both Sabbath (Sunday) and day schools, became integral to the Wesleyan master plan. The following quote from John Wesley demonstrates his strong attachment to the strategy. In a letter to Mr Charles Atmore on 24 March 1790, he said,

I am glad you have set up Sunday-schools at Newcastle. This is one of the best institutions which have been seen in Europe for some centuries, and will do more and more good, provided the Teachers and Inspectors do their duty. Nothing can prevent the success of this blessed work, but the neglect of the instruments. Therefore, be sure to watch them with all care, that they may not grow weary of well doing.⁶⁶³

In the early nineteenth century the policy of establishing Sunday and day schools was reinforced and maintained, as evidenced by Wesleyan leader Rev Jabez Bunting's strong stance against teaching of 'writing' in Sunday Schools.⁶⁶⁴ Ironically, he managed to have a ruling passed at conference that disallowed the teaching of writing *unless* it jeopardised the advance of their schools. In other words, the success of their schools was paramount, notwithstanding his opposition to teaching writing on the Sabbath. Reading, of course, was part of the Sunday school curriculum because through it children would learn of the Saviour. However, as Cliff points out, Bunting's opposition had more to do with control than theology. He was concerned about a lay movement (the Sunday School Movement) having too much power within Methodism. Bunting's sensitivity at this time derived from several factional threats to WM from within its own ranks. Methodism eventually instituted its own Sunday school movement.⁶⁶⁵

In Newfoundland, Smithies' first missionary appointment, Methodists established their day schools and Sunday (Sabbath) Schools very early, according to Rowe and Wilson. Methodists established both kinds of schools from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, writes Rowe.⁶⁶⁶ Wesleyan historian, William Wilson (1799–1869), a colleague of Smithies, wrote that,

The paucity of schools, and in consequence the great ignorance of the people, was a matter of much concern and anxiety to the early missionaries in Newfoundland.

⁶⁶² Philip B. Cliff, *The Rise and Development of the Sunday School Movement in England 1780–1980* (Surrey, UK: National Christian Education Council, 1986), 21–22.

⁶⁶³ Wesley, *Works*, xiii: 119.

⁶⁶⁴ Cliff, *Sunday School*, 81–82.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 81–83.

⁶⁶⁶ Rowe, *Education in Newfoundland*, 75–79.

Along the whole north shore [of Conception Bay], where there were some thousands of inhabitants, there was not a school of any kind, except our Sabbath school.⁶⁶⁷

The minutes (1829–1850) of the Newfoundland district of WM show continuity with Wilson’s sentiment and this facet of Methodist mission revealed in a list of questions with which ministry candidates were interrogated. Question 4 asks, ‘Have you superintended the schools in your circuit, and catechised the children in your Schools, and those of our friends and hearers as you have had opportunity?’⁶⁶⁸ This feature is also borne out in Smithies’ ministry in Newfoundland and the Swan River colony, and to some extent in Van Diemen’s Land. However, since the establishment of an Australian WM Conference in 1855 precluded the need for missionaries to write letters to the WMMS in London, the state and district minutes are the sources of information from this date and these were reduced to brief business entries from about 1858.

It is difficult, at times, to distinguish between the Sunday schools and day schools because the Sunday, or Sabbath school, provided instruction in reading, and the day school, Scripture and ‘morals’. In fact, both schools provided both facets of learning so that the difference was one of emphasis; Sunday schools emphasised religious instruction and day schools ‘general’ learning. In addition, as shown below, Smithies called a school conducted on Friday, a Sunday school. In the just noted minutes for 1829, at the District meeting held in Brigus, Newfoundland, on 20 May, Smithies reported,

The school was reopened on Easter day about 60 Boys and Girls now attend, and we expect about 30 more in a little time. At present we have a tolerable supply of Teachers, and we hope by God’s blessing, that the rising generation will experience from it present and eternal advantages. 24 of the children read in the New Testament, and a few now under deep convictions for sin and have joined society of whom we entertain good hopes. To hear the children on the Lord’s day sing the Hallelujahs of our God, is truly delightful indeed and we trust that these, in this otherwise barren soil but for the Sabbath School are as tender plants, shooting forth in the morning of life and that hereafter they will become trees of righteousness of the Lord’s right hand planting which shall be to his praise. John Smithies.⁶⁶⁹

This report is typical of another eight entries from Smithies in the Newfoundland minutes and provides a rich source for understanding the nature and purpose of this work.⁶⁷⁰ Salient features indicated in the above brief report are Smithies’ stated goals of

⁶⁶⁷ Pitt, *Windows of Agate*, 54; Wilson, *Newfoundland*, 266.

⁶⁶⁸ Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John’s, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁰ Smithies minutes 19 May 1830, 19 May 1831, 25 June 1832, 28 May 1833, 21 May 1834, 21 May 1835, 28 May 1836, 18 May 1837, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John’s, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

children receiving present and eternal benefits. Present benefits meant an ability to read and write as well as character development providing better opportunities in life. This was very important given the illiteracy existing in outport Newfoundland at that time. Eternal benefits meant conversion and a life of holiness, fitting people for eternity. Smithies enlarged on this saying that a number of children had been influenced through their studies of the NT and were earnest seekers of salvation even joining the Methodist society through which means they might be converted. This process was like planting seedlings in the community which, to Smithies, would one day rise to be a forest of ‘trees of righteousness’, thus influencing the land.

In a letter from Burin Bay, Newfoundland, Smithies wrote, ‘We have another Sunday School commenced this day in great Burin. My dear partner has conducted one in our Bay on a Sunday forenoon and Friday afternoon. These doubtless are means of good’.⁶⁷¹ He called the Friday afternoon school a Sunday school for the likely reason that it was primarily a scripture class. The good Smithies hoped for the school was the same as just noted, that the children would become ‘trees of righteousness’ influencing Newfoundland. Many other such entries in his letters demonstrate the same points relating to the nature of the schools, their frequency and importance, the lay involvement and the desired goals. There is no doubt that the Sabbath and day school were considered by Methodists in Newfoundland to be a significant part of their mission to reform the land and should be interpreted in this light.

Schools also featured prominently in Smithies’ Swan River ministry (1840–1855).⁶⁷² He mentioned an existing Sunday school commenced by the first Methodist settlers that included both colonists and Aboriginal children, as noted above.⁶⁷³ Soon after he arrived, he commenced a day school for Aboriginal children.⁶⁷⁴ Sunday schools continued to operate through the whole period of his ministry in the Swan River. A day school was established on the Gullillilup farm mission in 1844, and another at York when the mission moved there in 1852. These schools were strategic in Smithies’ methodology to attain conversions, but also to reform society in his greater goal of spreading scriptural holiness. This objective was unequivocally stated in his hope that ‘the future improvement’ of the colony was ‘closely connected with the religious

⁶⁷¹ SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 13 December 1831.

⁶⁷² Williams, *West Anglican Way*, 35.

⁶⁷³ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October 1840.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 18 January 1841.

character of [the] school'.⁶⁷⁵ As noted earlier, the Wesleyan day school for colonist children was threatened by endeavours of Roman Catholics from 1846. Out of necessity, the Wesleyans joined forces with the Government and the EC to form what was to be the beginning of public education in Western Australia.⁶⁷⁶ A most palpable example of the effectiveness of Smithies' mission and Sabbath schools was the revival that occurred there in 1844. Although not caused by, or limited to the schools, they provided fertile soil for the revival which began in the indigenous school at Gullillilup and made its greatest impact among the students of the schools.⁶⁷⁷

Sabbath and day schools, then, were vehicles of reform for young colonials and indigenous children through which it was hoped reform of the land would be achieved. McNair and Rumley confirm that Smithies' mission school 'was to be the main [WM] instrument in the civilisation and "moral and religious improvement" of the Aboriginal children', although they do not mention the WM objective to reform the land (nor, therefore, its part in the overall objective of the spread of scriptural holiness) through this means.⁶⁷⁸ Similarly, Turner says that Sunday schools were a significant WM movement, although their influence was not effective for evangelistic purposes confirming the purpose noted here, that is, one of moral influence in reforming the land.⁶⁷⁹

Van Diemen's Land Methodism also showed a strong commitment to Sabbath and day schools from its inception. For example, within the first year of the establishment of Methodism, the first Sunday school in Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land) was set up on 13 May 1821 with 23 scholars.⁶⁸⁰ From Smithies' letters little is known of the Van Diemen's Land Wesleyan schools with which he became involved from 1855. However, what can be gleaned from his and other sources demonstrates the continued use of this means of reforming the land. For example, Findlay and Holdsworth say that 'Sunday schools were multiplied and improved'.⁶⁸¹ Evidence of this is found in minute records from Smithies' era. For instance, 1,299 Sunday school students were recorded for 1854, for 1856 a total of 1,243 and 1,633 for 1857. This latter year was also the one that results began to appear for Smithies at his New Norfolk appointment from where he

⁶⁷⁵ E.g., SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 10 January 1843.

⁶⁷⁶ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 21 October 1847; Fletcher, 'Education', 551–573.

⁶⁷⁷ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844; see also §4.4.

⁶⁷⁸ E.g., McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 59–84 (p. 60).

⁶⁷⁹ Turner, *Methodist Religion*, 97–112 (esp. pp. 101–104).

⁶⁸⁰ Edward H. Sugden, 'Tasmania and Victoria', in *Century*, ed. Colwell, 267–297.

⁶⁸¹ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 73.

reported total worship attendance of 500; chapels, 3; preaching places, 5; members, 54; and a Sabbath school total of 136. This compared with 1856 totals of worship attendance, 300; chapels, 2; preaching places, 3; members, 27; and a Sabbath school total of 96.⁶⁸² By 1863, when Smithies was made supernumerary and stationed at Mersey, WM statistics for Van Diemen's Land showed total worship attendance at 6,985; chapels, 39; preaching places, 32; members, 973; and a Sabbath school total of 2,187. Methodism was also deeply involved in day schools so that by the time the 1870 Stephen's Education Act was passed in Tasmania and all denominational schools were abolished, Methodists had 70 day schools and 8,861 scholars.⁶⁸³ Surely, Sabbath and day schools were principal instruments for Smithies and his colleagues toward reform in Tasmania, as well as WM missionaries on all fields, as the following comparisons indicate.

§3.4.4.1 Comparisons

Statistics for 1837 show the vastness of the WM Sunday school movement at that time. Townsend et al., record, '3,339 Sunday schools, 59,277 teachers' and '341,442 scholars'.⁶⁸⁴ These figures are likely to have applied to Britain and WM mission fields but may have applied to Britain only. The MEC in North America had greater numbers given that adherents for the same year numbered 658,574 and that the following commentary on the 'Sabbath school' was included in an earlier conference minute (1832):

Among the most efficient auxiliaries in the religious instruction of our children, we may rank Sabbath schools ... Considering, then, the mighty and beneficial influence of Sabbath schools, allow us earnestly to recommend, that wherever it is possible, institutions of this kind shall be established, and zealously and perseveringly supported, by all who love the Lord Jesus, and care for the best interests of the rising generation.⁶⁸⁵

Globally, then, the WM Sunday school movement was immense. 1837 was the year Smithies returned to England from Newfoundland where for the same year at St. John's he recorded seventy two students and ten teachers.⁶⁸⁶ Most of the eleven (approx.) WM missionary stations in Newfoundland each included a report of its Sunday and day school statistics in the annual minutes demonstrating their importance in the mission strategy to reform the land. In addition, the importance of Sunday schools and day schools in the overall strategy is witnessed in their early establishment wherever

⁶⁸² Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book*, 7 October 1845 – 13 Nov 1867 (Ref: NS 499/16).

⁶⁸³ Sugden, 'Tasmania and Victoria', 267–297 (esp. p. 288).

⁶⁸⁴ Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 416.

⁶⁸⁵ Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 146, 295.

⁶⁸⁶ Smithies' minute, 18 May 1837, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

mission stations were commenced. As demonstrated above, in the Swan River colony, Methodist settlers established a Sunday school well before Smithies, their first minister, arrived.⁶⁸⁷ Likewise, in Sydney, NSW, Rev Samuel Leigh established a Sunday school within the first year of his arrival in 1815.⁶⁸⁸ In Van Diemen's Land, the island's first Sunday school was established in 1821, the year after the first WM missionary 'set foot' on the island.⁶⁸⁹

Finally, regarding the purpose of Sunday and day schools toward the mission objective to reform the land, the MEC expressed the sentiments of Methodists everywhere, stating in its conference minutes for 1832,

The good that has been accomplished by these [Sabbath schools] will never be fully known till that day arrives ... Then it will be seen how many inexperienced feet have been prevented from wandering into the mazes of folly and sin how many thoughtless wanderers have been arrested in their course, and brought back to the ways of righteousness ...⁶⁹⁰

The reform agenda can be clearly noted here by the long-term expectation of good being accomplished, prevention of evil, and conversion of 'wanderers'. Likewise, an article in the WMM reveals its content by the title *Religious Education for National Well-being*. The title also divulges the WM intention for Sabbath schools, namely, reform of the land. Indeed, part of the article reads, 'Sunday-schools are ... most important, as religious institutions; and the good effects they have produced furnish a striking illustration ... that ... religious education ... tends to the well-being of nations'.⁶⁹¹ Guided by such sentiments and their well-defined mission statement, WM missionaries established Sunday and day schools in every part of the globe.

§3.4.5 Summary

As demonstrated in John Smithies, WM missionaries in the first half of the nineteenth century sought to influence their respective places of mission. They did this through moral suasion (bringing about a moral, compassionate and peaceful society), indigenous missions where needed (providing self-sufficiency, reform, protection and assistance to the 'poor' and 'disadvantaged'), and through Sabbath and day schools (preparing a new generation to live by righteous and compassionate principles). Although the WM aim was primarily to bring about conversions so that the converted might begin a life of holiness, it was also its goal to bring about a moral and Christian condition in society

⁶⁸⁷ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October 1840; Jenkins, 'Early Years': 3–15.

⁶⁸⁸ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 22–23.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, iii: 66–67.

⁶⁹⁰ Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 146.

⁶⁹¹ *WMM for 1838*, 488–489.

through the means just noted. These mission efforts, therefore, would assist in reforming the land and in this way provide the greatest possible service of love to society.

§3.5 Conclusion

As stated in the introduction (§1.0), it is important that WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century be appraised within the framework of its mission statement if fresh understanding is to be gained. To review WM mission from other standpoints or by focusing on component facets in isolation may obscure and even distort what WM missionaries of this period were doing and what was motivating them to do it. Placing anachronistic or other interpretive frameworks over their work will not be helpful to this end. Therefore, when attempting to satisfactorily interpret the meaning of WM missionaries activities in order to grasp a new perception of its mission in the period, use of its mission statement is crucial. That new understanding as far as this chapter is concerned is that all missionary activity was influenced by and was an integral part of the WM mission statement, ‘to reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land’.⁶⁹² The second means by which WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century will be assessed is religious experience (§4.0). It is expected that this assessment will add even further understanding. However, before moving to that subject, a summary of the present chapter is important.

The key aspects reviewed in this chapter were, soul saving (§3.2.2), sanctification (§3.2.3) and the care of souls (§3.2.4) under the title *The Spread of Scriptural Holiness* (§3.2). The second section, *Reform of the Church* (§3.3), included a review of Smithies’ approach, as representative WM missionary, to the Established Church (§3.3.2), the Catholic Church (§3.3.3) and Dissenters (§3.3.4). The third section, *Reform of the Land* (§3.4), canvassed the subjects of moral influence (§3.4.2), indigenous mission (§3.4.2) and Sabbath and day schools (§3.4.4). All of these just noted facets were appraised within the interpretive framework of the WM mission statement because Wesley’s original directive was palpable as to the nature of WM mission. Also unambiguous was the declaration of the WM conference of 1835 (affirming the 1820 conference) that the ‘spread of scriptural holiness through the land’ was ‘the original purpose of Methodism’ and that adherents were ‘to make this the great rule of all other designs’, and were ‘to renounce or subordinate all other plans and pursuits to this ... special calling’.⁶⁹³

⁶⁹² Wesley, *Works*, viii: 299.

⁶⁹³ Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 313.

Therefore, the method employed in this dissertation unmistakably accords with that which Methodists understood to be their mission task in both the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century and consequently why appraisals using other means provide only a partial picture.

Consequently, through this methodology a new understanding was demonstrated first through Smithies' reports of conversions, sanctification experiences and care of souls, as well as through comparison with other WM literature from the period. For example, in Smithies' reports of and prayers for conversions, he exemplified his desire that righteousness would spread through the land.⁶⁹⁴ When reporting sanctification experiences, he showed that progress toward holiness after conversion was paramount, and in his diligence with class and other meetings, Smithies showed that progress in holiness was eagerly sought through this vital WM means.⁶⁹⁵ Consequently, in this chapter is shown first (§3.2.2), that soul saving provided entry into a lifetime pursuit of holiness for the converted and accordingly that holiness was the goal of conversion. Missionaries, therefore, sought to spread holiness across the land initially through conversion and were therefore motivated by this goal. The second aspect was sanctification (§3.2.3), believed by Methodists to be both gradual and instant. Gradual sanctification was the lifelong realisation of holiness, entry into which was gained through conversion. Instant sanctification, on the other hand, was a second conversion-like experience that brought about perfection in holiness, better described as a freedom from sinful inclinations since Wesley did not believe in the attainment of a perfect state (or sinless perfection) in this life.⁶⁹⁶ These initial experiences, conversion and instant sanctification, as well as gradual sanctification, were fundamental to WM missionary endeavours and motivation, so that to judge their purpose as merely conversion is to present a partial view, which is the case in a number of texts.⁶⁹⁷ The third facet reviewed in this section was the care of souls (§3.2.4) through the unique WM organisation which included class and band meetings, and love feasts. These were seen to be vital in the pursuit of holiness, since they were specifically inaugurated and conducted to build

⁶⁹⁴ E.g., Smithies' minute, 20 May 1829, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives); SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

⁶⁹⁵ E.g., SOAS, Box 96–99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 13 December 1831, 3 December 1833, 2 July 1834, 7 December 1834, 29 January 1836; Smithies' minute, 25 June 1832, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

⁶⁹⁶ Davies, 'Our Doctrines', i: 147–179.

⁶⁹⁷ E.g., Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 30–34, 144ff; Turner, 'Methodist Religion', 97–112.

members up in holiness.⁶⁹⁸ Therefore, since WM class meetings meant the pursuit of holiness, missionaries were highly motivated to establish and maintain them. This was the meaning of these meetings to Smithies and WM and is the way that we should understand them. In summary, a new understanding of WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century gained through Smithies' and other writings from the period is that soul saving, sanctification (instant and gradual), and the care of souls each served the greater goal of the pursuit of holiness. These goals are what missionaries were seeking to achieve above all, and therefore what motivated them. This new perception coupled with the other two sections of the chapter (namely, *Reform of the Church* and *Reform of the Land*, as summarised below) is significant and can stand alone as an important perspective. However, when combined with the important aspect of religious experience (reviewed in the next chapter – §4.0), an even greater understanding will emerge regarding Methodist mission, including its primary and secondary objectives, and what motivated its missionaries.

Next, it was shown that reform of the church (§3.3) was an important objective of WM mission integral to spreading scriptural holiness. Methodists were unabashedly self-conscious of their role in reforming the church as demonstrated by a WMM article on *The Present Aspect of the Times*.⁶⁹⁹ Smithies' ministry included encounters with the EC (§3.3.2), the CC (§3.3.3), and Dissenters (§3.3.4). His labours stirred the EC in the Swan River colony to 'jealousy' and to 'love and good works' as evidenced by the increase of its endeavours after he arrived and commenced building chapels.⁷⁰⁰ Smithies' Wesleyan influence on the CC was practically non-existent given the conditions in Newfoundland and the Swan River colony. Conflict, in the case of the CC, was more common than reform although Smithies' written prayers and comments in relation to the CC and some of its adherents reveal his desire for reform.⁷⁰¹ Individual conversion, it seems, was the most effective manner of reform of the CC. In relation to Dissenters, a Baptist minister's son was converted early in Smithies' years in the Swan River colony. Later an independent church was formed partly as a reaction to his application of WM discipline so that it could be said that he was responsible for reform through conversion, and that through faithfulness to WM doctrine and discipline he

⁶⁹⁸ Baker, 'Polity', i: 213–255.

⁶⁹⁹ *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

⁷⁰⁰ E.g., Aveling, 'Religious Aspect', 575–598; SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1842.

⁷⁰¹ E.g., SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May 1829.

provoked Congregationalist Henry Trigg ‘to love and good works’.⁷⁰² Smithies’ ministry was typical of Wesleyan missionaries of the period who were unique even from other Evangelicals, so that their presence and labours served as a comparison, if not an irritant to other churches. The progress of Methodist churches through their proactive mission work and unique methods were naturally a source of reform for other churches who sought to equal, if not imitate them. It can be easily seen, therefore, that WM missionaries in the first half of the nineteenth century were agents of reform to other churches.⁷⁰³ Consequently, reform of the church as part of the overall mission objective of WM to spread holiness across the land adds another layer to our renewed understanding of WM mission in this period, including what motivated its missionaries.

In addition, we saw that reform of the land (§3.4) in the pursuit of holiness was a significant part of the WM missionary endeavour. A number of Smithies’ statements identify his goal to reform the land. We also have seen that this was the case from his actions. A significant indication of this WM objective was his summary of Swan River Methodism just 18 months after his arrival. It will be remembered that he said that ‘the Wesleyan cause here, has considerably contributed to the establishment of the Colony, and especially to its moral character’ and ‘that notwithstanding there is a Church and Chaplain, and ordinances, that [without the Methodists] iniquity would over spread the land.’ He said that Methodists ‘have more or less, in different parts of this Colony, exerted a corrective, wholesome moral influence, and now though fewest, yet not least in moral worth and religious enterprise’.⁷⁰⁴ Clearly, reform of the land was a crucial part of his and the WM agenda.

Moral influence was the first component of the WM ‘reform of land’ objective reviewed through Smithies’ writings (§3.4.2).⁷⁰⁵ In addition to his summary of Swan River Methodism, another example was his non-participation in the Foundation Day activities of 1841 for the purpose of protecting his Aboriginal students from ‘moral evil’ and his public defence of his actions in the *Inquirer* and *Perth Gazette*.⁷⁰⁶ Smithies also demonstrated his goal of moral influence when he referred to the York, Toodyay and Beverley districts, which had no religious services. In such circumstances, he said,

⁷⁰² SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844; McElroy, ‘Uniting Church’, chap.2.

⁷⁰³ So *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

⁷⁰⁴ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 19 January 1843.

⁷⁰⁵ Jackson and Newton, in *WMM for 1838*, 428–435; Wesley, *Works*, vi: 74–75, viii: 328–329, xi: 387–388.

⁷⁰⁶ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841 (1st Letter); *The Inquirer*, 23 June 1841; *The Perth Gazette*, 23, June 1841.

‘Morals are and must be very low’.⁷⁰⁷ His moral influence objective was also demonstrated by his support of Temperance Societies in various fields, the distribution of tracts, and Sabbatarianism as also confirmed by selected comparisons.⁷⁰⁸ By this first means of moral influence, Smithies and other WM missionaries sought to reform their respective communities as part of their overarching goal to spread scriptural holiness.

Aboriginal mission was also a major task for Smithies toward reform of the land when sent to Western Australia (§3.4.3). His principal methods of ministry were a school to prepare students for a fruitful future through general learning (reading and math) and Christian teachings, as well as a farm to provide self-sufficiency in the face of white invasive settlement. Benefits of the mission included the ‘symbol’ Smithies presented to the colony of one who had Aboriginal interests at heart vis-à-vis the indifferent and at times brutal attitude of settlers to the indigenous population. In this, he may be seen as a reformer of the land.⁷⁰⁹ Reform of indigenous people, therefore, meant preserving them from a great deal of European culture for the purpose of reforming them into a Christian culture. (Smithies also wanted to see European culture reformed.) Indigenous people were also viewed as the poor whom Wesley urged his followers to serve.⁷¹⁰ Helping the poor aside from soul-saving activities (educating, clothing and feeding them etc.), was part of the WM reform agenda. Smithies’ mission experience in the Swan River colony may be taken as a fair representation of other WM missionaries’ intent and methods, although there were other WM missions that were notably ‘successful’ such as the Tongan and Fiji Islands, and the Upper Canadian missions. Young’s comment regarding reform among indigenous people, noted the moral restraint existing in Tonga due to Methodists’ endeavours there.⁷¹¹

In addition to the mission school, we have also seen that Sabbath and day schools were strategic in Smithies’ mission to reform the land, typical of nineteenth century WM missionaries (§3.4.4). Shaping the lives of children through the teachings of Scripture was a fundamental means of reforming the lands wherever he and his colleagues were appointed. Smithies’ comment about students being ‘trees of righteousness’ in

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid., 8 October 1840.

⁷⁰⁸ E.g., SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 15 August 1835, 12 January 1836; SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 September 1848; Smithies, *Thoughts for the Youthful*.

⁷⁰⁹ So McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 146ff.

⁷¹⁰ So Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; e.g., SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841, where Smithies reported ‘no poor’ in the Swan River colony but that in their place the indigenous inhabitants were in need of help from the WM.

⁷¹¹ Young, *Southern World*, 267–268.

Newfoundland plainly indicates this purpose.⁷¹² In addition, he believed that the hope of the Swan River colony resided in his schools.⁷¹³ General education was also thought to be useful in shaping future generations due to its Christian context thus contributing to the WM objective to reform the land.⁷¹⁴ Consequently, a third element has been added to our fresh perspective on WM mission. Not that moral influence, indigenous mission, Sabbath and day schools were unknown facets of the WM *modus operandi*, nor were they methods unknown to missionaries of other denominations. However, unique to WM these were integral to its ‘reform of land’ agenda and, in turn, intrinsic to the spread of scriptural holiness through the land. It will be remembered that it is in this interpretation of Methodist missionary endeavours in the first half of the nineteenth century that a fresh understanding is revealed. Consequently, such an interpretation places WM missionary endeavours within the overall mission statement, whereas there has been limited understanding of the primary goal of spreading scriptural holiness to which every other goal was subordinated.⁷¹⁵ In addition, when the subject of religious experience (reviewed in §4.0) is integrated with the facets of this chapter, a substantially new view emerges in contrast to reviewing and emphasising isolated aspects.

Finally, Smithies and his colleagues were certainly focused on soul saving, sanctification, care of souls, reform of the church, and reform of the land through moral influence, indigenous mission and Sabbath and day schools. Their fixed purpose and therefore primary motivation in all of this, however, was to spread scriptural holiness, thus influencing society, people and nations. Their aim was to influence their milieu in such a manner that future generations would benefit from their ministry. Their ultimate objective meant loving God and people in effective and practical ways producing a peaceful and compassionate society as well as a people ready for eternity. This objective, as explicated in the WM mission statement, has inextricable ties to the remaining crucial element to be considered in the dissertation, that of religious experience.

⁷¹² Smithies’ minute, 20 May 1829, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John’s, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

⁷¹³ E.g., SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 10 January 1843.

⁷¹⁴ Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 146.

⁷¹⁵ See Williams, *Constitution and Polity*, 313.

§4.0. Religious experience: the supreme passion

‘Methodism is superlatively the realisation of a supreme passion – subjectively an experience, and objectively an expansion’.¹

‘To realise the divine passion moving through a “heart strangely warmed” – that is the principle, the characteristic trait, the all of Methodism’.²

‘The essential element of personal experience in Methodism was thus producing its natural result. Herein lay the seed of a world–wide expansion.’³

§4.1 Introduction

Religious experiences were a crucial part of nineteenth century Methodism as patently indicated in Gaskell’s *Life of Charlotte Brontë* and Emily Brontë’s *Shirley* where reference is made to ‘mad Methodist Magazines full of miracles and apparitions, and preternatural warnings, ominous dreams, and frenzied fanaticisms’.⁴ Although the statement is exaggerated and may better describe Primitive Methodist magazines,⁵ it conveys an undeniable perception of the experientialist character of Methodism. Another nineteenth century novelist, American Harriet Prescott Spofford, expressed the same thought in *Circumstance* where she ‘grounds the heroine’s religious experience in the singing of Methodist hymns’ and of ‘the ecstatic spiritual experience that results from the singing of hymns’.⁶ However, twenty–first century writers attempting to uncover this same characteristic of Methodism are faced with a quandary. For instance, Goldhawk says that outward evidences of Christian practice may be readily detected and understood, whereas inward experience ‘may elude the observer and defy description’.⁷ This presents a dilemma to the historian because, ‘Faith in God is a living experience, which discloses its quality in the last resort only to those who share in it at a particular time’.⁸ In spite of this difficulty, unless an attempt is made to discern the religious experiences of WM missionaries and their adherents, we will acquire only a fragmentary understanding of their mission and the motivation for their ministry achievements due to the integral part religious experiences played in early nineteenth century Methodism.⁹ Indeed, the ministry of John Smithies and his Methodist colleagues cannot be understood apart from their religious experiences, since they were

¹ Brian Wibberley, *Marks of Methodism and Other Studies*, 2nd edn. (Adelaide, SA: Whillias and Ormiston, 1905), 13.

² *Ibid.*, 15.

³ Townsend et al., *Methodism*, ii: 287.

⁴ Gaskell, *Charlotte Brontë*, 93–94; Brontë, *Shirley*, 292; Mason, ‘Emily Brontë’.

⁵ Regarding Primitive Methodist Magazines, see Billington, ‘Revivalism’, 147–161.

⁶ Holly, ‘Spiritual Transformation’: 153ff.

⁷ Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142.

⁸ *Ibid.*, ii: 113–142.

⁹ Davies, *Methodism*, 97.

distinguishing marks of Methodism. Hence, the purpose of this section is to interpret WM mission through its religious experiences, utilising the writings of John Smithies alongside that of his missionary colleagues, as well as drawing from pertinent Methodist literature from the period. In doing this, a more detailed understanding will be gained regarding of the nature of these experiences and their role in motivating missionaries. As pointed out in the introduction, interpreting WM mission within the framework of religious experience is rare, even though religious experiences are referred to in various texts on Methodism and its mission.¹⁰ Placing WM missionary endeavour within the locale of religious experience, therefore, is an innovative methodology and one that will provide further perspective regarding WM mission in Smithies' era, thus adding significantly to our knowledge of the movement. This addition is especially important when religious experiences are comprehended in connection with the WM mission statement to which they were intrinsic and with which they should be interpreted to gain an understanding resembling that of nineteenth century WM. Before we proceed, however, some background is necessary.

Religious experiences were significantly present in the life of Methodist founder, John Wesley, first seen in his conversion then in his ensuing ministry.¹¹ He was branded 'enthusiast' partly for this reason, and spent considerable effort refuting such accusations.¹² In Wesley's spiritual formation, his father's influence on him regarding religious experience is shown by the deathbed exhortation to his son, that 'the inward witness ... is the proof, the strongest proof of Christianity!'¹³ Second, John's interaction with the Cambridge Platonists' writings on mysticism and the inner life added to his understanding of religious experience.¹⁴ In addition, it was Wesley's contact with the Moravians, particularly August Gottlieb Spangenberg (1704–1792) in Georgia and Peter Böhler (1712–1775) upon return to England, which crystallised his personal need of inner witness.¹⁵ Wesley's definition of inner witness is described in terms of religious experience in his subsequent evangelical conversion where he reported that his 'heart was strangely warmed within him', that he had received intuitive knowledge that his

¹⁰ E.g., Goldhawk, 'Methodist People', ii: 113–142; Williams, *Welsh WM*, 37.

¹¹ E.g., Wesley, *Works*, i: 96, 170; Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 528–540.

¹² The term 'enthusiasm' has many meanings but at the time of Wesley it was a derogatory term akin to our 'fanaticism' or 'emotionalism'; See Davies, *Methodism*, 30; Knox, *Enthusiasm* and James D. G. Dunn, 'Enthusiasm' in *The Christ and the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 32–42. For an example of Wesley's refutations, see Wesley, *Works*, viii: 103–107.

¹³ Wesley, *Works*, xii: 100.

¹⁴ Edwards, 'John Wesley', i: 42–43.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

sins were forgiven and that Christ was his Saviour.¹⁶ Another famous example of religious experience other than conversion occurred at a love feast at Fetter Lane on 1 January 1739, together with Whitefield, his brother Charles and about sixty others. He said, ‘About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground’.¹⁷ This remarkable event was recorded without comment by Wesley but demonstrates the place of religious experiences in his early formation, exemplified in participants falling to the ground as those overpowered, as well as in their cries of joy.

Influenced by his spiritual formation, Wesley espoused religious experience as essential to ‘vital religion’.¹⁸ To illustrate the nature of these experiences, we again quote Wesley, who said,

Suppose, for instance, you are employed in private prayer, and God pours his love into your heart. God then acts *immediately* on your soul; and the love of him which you then experience, is as immediately breathed into you by the Holy Ghost, as if you had lived seventeen hundred years ago [meaning at the time of Christ and Apostles].¹⁹

This quote is part of Wesley’s rebuttal to a charge of ‘enthusiasm’. His argument was that he simply believed and practiced nothing less than the church had always believed and Scripture enjoined. In his refutation, he quoted from traditional church writings emphasising religious experiences that he thought ought to have been common to all Christians. These included inspiration of the Spirit when reading Scripture, peace of conscience through remission of sin, consciousness of inward faith, awareness of the indwelling Spirit, and assurance of truth in the heart. All these experiences were *felt*.²⁰

Wesley further expounded his meaning of religious experience in an ‘Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion’ where he said,

It is the feeling of the soul, whereby a believer perceives, through the ‘power of the Highest overshadowing him,’ both the existence and the presence of Him in whom ‘he lives, moves, and has his being;’ and indeed the whole invisible world, the entire system of things eternal. And hereby, in particular, he feels ‘the love of God shed abroad in his heart.’²¹

This unequivocal statement of religious experience demonstrates what Wesley expected in the practice of ‘vital religion’ and therefore expected in his followers, not the least his leaders, and subsequently would have expected in second-generation ministers and

¹⁶ Wesley, *Works*, i: 103.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, i: 170.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, i: 151; v: 124.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, viii: 107.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, viii: 103–107.

²¹ *Ibid.*, viii: 4–5.

missionaries like Smithies. In reviewing his statement, we observe that he said that the believing soul ‘feels’ and ‘perceives’ God through the power of the Spirit. He also said that the soul perceived the eternal and spiritual dimension through the same means and, integral to this, the believer predominantly sensed God’s love. Wesley’s explanation fits Alston’s definition of religious experience as the direct awareness, perception or experience of God, which makes ‘it possible ... to enjoy the relationship of loving communion with God’.²²

Wesley’s position will now be outlined regarding the place of religious experience in relation to the three categories by which this section is arranged, namely, (1) personal spirituality, (2) conversion and sanctification, and (3) revival. Regarding the first, Wesley wrote about religious experiences that buoyed personal spirituality. In his journal entry dated 25 December 1744, he said,

I waked, by the grace of God, in the same spirit; and about eight, being with two or three that believed in Jesus, I felt such an awe and tender sense of the presence of God as greatly confirmed me therein: So that God was before me all the day long. I sought and found him in every place; and could truly say, when I lay down at night, ‘Now I have *lived a day*.’²³

It can be seen from this example, which is one of many, that on this occasion Wesley was enriched and sustained by a sense of God’s presence. These are the kind of experiences we seek in Smithies’ writings as representative Wesleyan missionary in the reviewed period. His experiences will be compared with other contemporaries to gauge their nature and commonality. As we find instances, the meaning of religious experience will be uncovered. This discovery will add to our understanding of the character and impetus of WM missionary work which may otherwise be obscured since, as noted above, missionary work is usually studied on the basis of its practices and results, not its underpinning spirituality and, in particular, its religious experiences.²⁴

Wesley also addressed the subject of religious experience in relating stories of conversion and sanctification, or as he described sanctification, those ‘made perfect in love’ or ‘renewed in love’. In one of his stories, he wrote about Grace Paddy, of whom he said,

Such an instance I never knew before; such an instance I never read; a person convinced of sin, converted to God, and renewed in love, within twelve hours! Yet it is by no means incredible; seeing one day is with God as a thousand years.²⁵

²² Alston, *Perceiving God*, 2.

²³ Wesley, *Works*, i: 479.

²⁴ E.g., Birtwhistle’s silence on religious experience in his authoritative article on WM mission (Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116).

²⁵ Wesley, *Works*, iii: 235.

In this case, Paddy was convinced of her sinfulness whereas before she had been ‘careless’ toward religion. Conviction of sin was often accompanied with considerable anguish and weeping as it was in this instance. Her conviction was followed by conversion, which we know to be evidenced usually by the tangible witness of the Spirit (see below). Shortly after this, Paddy received the so-called second blessing, instant sanctification. Wesley showed amazement at this because to that point, September 1765, he had not heard of the occurrence of entire sanctification so soon after conversion. His description conveys the incidence of distinct religious experiences. Regarding her experience, Wesley reports Paddy saying, ‘During his last prayer I was quite overwhelmed with the power of God. I felt an inexpressible change in the very depth of my heart’.²⁶ Her description fits our definition of religious experience showing the place that Wesley gave it in conversion and sanctification in a similar manner to the following story of sanctification.

Wesley related the story of a Mrs V., about whom he had ‘no doubt but she [was] perfected in love’.²⁷ He reported her saying, ‘But just then God revealed himself to my soul. I was filled with joy unspeakable’. The perception of God, in this case, filled Mrs V. with ecstatic joy, an obvious religious experience associated with her ‘second blessing’. ‘If you seek it by faith’, said Wesley, ‘then expect it now’, for ‘it is infinitely desirable’, that ‘it should be done instantaneously’.²⁸ In another example, Wesley related the experience of Elizabeth Longmore who had purportedly received instant sanctification. She said,

I felt my soul was all love. I was so stayed on God as I never felt before, and knew that I loved him with all my heart. When I came home I could ask for nothing; I could only give thanks. And the witness, that God had saved me from all my sins, grew clearer every hour. On Wednesday this was stronger than ever. I have never since found my heart wander from God ... He is never out of my thoughts: I see him always; although most at preaching and in my band and class. But I do not only see him; I feel him too, so as I cannot express.²⁹

Longmore’s account shows increased and sustained love for God, the essence of Methodist holiness, to be the meaning and value of her experience. Another part of the nature of her instant sanctification was consciousness of God’s presence. The awareness of God’s presence and the increase of love resonate with Alston’s definition of religious experience noted above. Wesley’s comment on Longmore’s experience and another whom he had cited was that, ‘Constant communion with God the Father and the Son

²⁶ *Ibid.*, iii: 234–235.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, iv: 254–255.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, vi: 52–54.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, ii: 528.

fills their hearts with humble love. Now this', he said, 'is what I always did, and do now, mean by perfection [instant sanctification]'.³⁰ Wesley recounted many such stories, but these are sufficient for our purposes to indicate the importance of religious experiences in conversion and sanctification.

Revival is the third facet in which we uncover Wesley's regard for the place of religious experience. During his public ministry, at times of revival, hearers would occasionally fall to the ground in great distress, sometimes crying out with weeping and groans. In one example, Wesley reported,

One, and another, and another was struck to the earth; exceedingly trembling at the presence of His power. Others cried, with a loud and bitter cry, 'What must we do to be saved?' And in less than an hour seven persons, wholly unknown to me till that since, were rejoicing, and singing, and with all their might giving thanks to the God of their salvation.³¹

As shown here, such incidents usually resulted in relief from guilt and a sense of peace and joy for participants. Indeed, to Wesley and his Methodists, such experiences often meant conversion and were evidence of the 'hand of God'.³² This sample of revival is one of many from Wesley's journals that demonstrate his regard for experiential Christianity. It is this and the just noted two categories that are to be examined in the work of Smithies and missionaries of the first half of the nineteenth century, namely, personal spirituality (§4.2), conversion and sanctification, and (§4.3) revival (§4.4).

Since such occurrences were core to the impetus, nature and outcome of original Wesleyan spirituality and ministry, as demonstrated from Wesley's experiences, this section will examine whether religious experiences carried the same significance in nineteenth century missionaries like Smithies. If religious experiences were a primary measure by which they gauged the progress of their spiritual life and ministry success, and were also shown to be an empowering, motivating and sustaining force, then to Smithies and his colleagues, religious experiences were far from being incidental curiosities from a medieval past as Goodwin proposes.³³ In this regard, although religious experiences within WM are acknowledged, descriptions of them tend to be toned down or minimised to make them more acceptable. To illustrate, keeping in mind Wesley's example just given, Goldhawk presents religious experiences in Methodism as 'emotional excitement and depth of feeling, often characteristic of the time' which certainly contained something genuine, since 'not all were deceived'. He seems to mean

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., i:196.

³² Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 528–535; Wesley, *Works*, iv: 466–470.

³³ Goodwin, 'Religion of Feeling': 44–49.

here that at the core of the ‘emotional excitement’ there was something authentic. Then quoting at length from Samuel Drew, whose language he says is ‘more sober and analytical than was normal in most cases’, he lists the ‘authentic notes’ such as ‘gratitude’ and ‘joy’. However, if this more cautious approach is to be accepted, how then would we assess Wesley’s revival account and his earlier report of sixty people falling to ground under the ‘mighty’ power of God and rising with joy and singing, only when they could finally recover?³⁴ How may we separate the ‘emotional excitement’ from the authentic here? Although it is true that no account of WM could ‘be complete without reference to such events’, mere ‘reference’ results in the kind of reductionism that has obscured the Methodism of the era here reviewed. In this dissertation, religious experiences will be interpreted, as far as possible, according to WM explanations from the period studied, allowing these accounts to speak for themselves and thus avoid reductionism.

Expressing similar caution to Goldhawk, Davies says,

The Methodist emphasis on ‘religious experience’ is well-known in religious circles, and is of course very vulnerable to psychological attack. But it is only in part derived from Wesley. He never based a single doctrine on it, but always appealed to Scripture. If, however, a doctrine was propounded by Scripture, and therefore trustworthy, he was very willing to show that it was confirmed by experience – which is, of course, a respectably traditional method of establishing a proposition. Still less did he found any doctrine on ‘feelings’.

Charles Wesley says a great deal about feelings in his hymns, in such phrases as ‘My God, I know, I feel Thee mine’, and seems to lay great emphasis on them. But he did not mean by this word mere emotions; he refers, rather to that consciousness of personal relationship or of truth which comes to the whole personality, and not to the mind and senses alone, nor even chiefly to the mind and senses – he means what in the case of the poet is sometimes called ‘imaginative awareness’. John certainly never sought to prove a religious truth by feelings in the modern restricted sense; feelings in the fuller sense were part of what he meant by experience, and of what caused him to refer to real Christianity as ‘experimental (we should say *experiential*) religion’. ‘Experience’, wrote John Wesley, ‘is properly alleged to confirm’ doctrine.³⁵

Here Davies tries to clarify for the reader the important distinction between ‘mere emotions’ and the inner awareness of divine reality. However helpful his comments may be in their protection against mere emotionalism or, as Cox calls it, a ‘celebration of feelings’,³⁶ the fact remains that ‘inner awareness’ cannot easily be separated from emotions as if human beings were not integrated entities. Here again is where a danger of reductionism exists. However, to accept WM interpretation of religious experiences

³⁴ For Wesley’s report of this experience, see Wesley, *Works*, i: 170.

³⁵ Davies, *Methodism*, 97.

³⁶ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 313.

(from Wesley to Smithies) means recognising that Methodists frequently had deep inner awareness along with ecstatic emotional experiences. Of course there were varying degrees and ratios of both, but the point is that distinctions between inner awareness and emotion or that which is felt in the emotions and mind vis-à-vis that which is felt by the whole being is fraught with interpretive subjectivism. On the other hand, it is readily admitted that some WM experiences were ‘mere emotions’ but that does not negate the fact that many were not, at least by WM definition. In any case, since there is considerable historical distance between us and nineteenth century Methodists, there is no way to discern between the two, apart from indications in WM literature such as Smithies’ and his colleagues’ correspondence and that of the WMM.

In addition, Davies points out the crucial distinction between establishing belief on experience to that which confirms belief. Wesley, he correctly points out, refused to accept religious experience as a basis for belief, but as an affirmation of Christian doctrine.³⁷ If Christian teaching was genuine, then it must also be experiential. Further, it is also true that religious experiences are subjective and therefore open to psychological questioning, as Davies points out. For example, mystical experiences and their connection with schizophrenia has been the subject of study in the area of mental health so that an understandable prejudice may exist toward religious experience.³⁸ Further, Goodwin says that human libido, aroused to extremes of excitement by the stresses and strains of external circumstances, could uninhibitedly vent itself, deriving cathartic and spiritual benefit from the mass hysterical outbursts of popular Methodist revivalism.³⁹ However, in spite of such comments as those made by Goodwin, and the caution expressed by Goldhawk and Davies, there are also serious studies that legitimise the beneficial nature of religious experiences.

Morton Kelsey’s *The Other Side of Silence* is one example.⁴⁰ In his work, Kelsey says, ‘Unless there was some *experience* (author’s italics) of a loving creative Deity, prayer and meditation and contemplation were meaningless to me ... This is an *experience* of the ineffable, not just logical data.’ Earlier in his work, he makes the observation that ‘While ... many psychologists [are] contemptuous of spiritual experience, some of the

³⁷ See also Knox where he expresses relief that Wesley did not insist on ‘witness of the Spirit’ in every conversion (Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 537–540).

³⁸ E.g., Sandra Stahlman, *The Relationship Between Schizophrenia and Mysticism: A Bibliographic Essay*, June 1992; see also Morton Kelsey, *The Other Side of Silence: Meditation for the Twenty-First Century*, rev. edn. (New York: Paulist, 1997), 161–166.

³⁹ Goodwin, ‘Religion of Feeling’: 44–49.

⁴⁰ Kelsey, *Silence*, 159–204.

most important modern studies indicate that people do have experiences from outside the space–time world and that these do not represent regression or mental deterioration’. In demonstrating a difference between psychotic spiritual experiences and those that are not, Kelsey says, ‘Psychotics can have great spiritual experiences but cannot do anything with them’. This is due, he says, to being ‘so absorbed in what is going on inside that it becomes impossible to deal with outer reality’. On the other hand, in WM accounts of religious experiences, the outer as well as the inner life undergo profound change producing love for God and people thus transforming ethical behaviour. In a final word, Kelsey maintains, ‘Our spiritual experiences need to show their reality in ... loving actions’, which is also the point of Wesley and his followers.

Second, Harvard’s religion professor, Harvey Cox, says, ‘As both scientific modernity and conventional religion progressively lose their ability to provide a source of spiritual meaning, two new contenders are stepping forward –“Fundamentalism” and ... “experientialism”” (in its various forms).⁴¹ He quotes Jewish Rabbi Arthur E. Green who laments the failure of tradition to impact contemporary individuals saying that it will be the mystical side of Judaism to which young people will turn. Rabbi Green, says Cox, ‘calls for the equivalent of an experiential revival’. Cox continues, saying that he agrees with Paul Tillich, ‘who maintained that all religions *must* [author’s italics] be subject to what he called “experiential verification”’. Tillich’s comment, conveyed by Cox, resonates with that of Davies’ that Wesley based doctrine not on experience, but on Scripture, although experience confirms Scripture. ‘Experience, after all,’ continued Cox, ‘is the experience of something. Even in the most “experientially” oriented spiritual movements, experience itself is not the Source, it is the means by which the Source is known.’ In this comment Cox demonstrates the value of religious experience without the embarrassment of some key writers on WM, showing plainly that there is great value in experiential belief. In a final comment he says, ‘Experience does not create the spiritual reality. It makes something real *for me* [author’s italics] which was not real before.’ Cox also warns about the dangers of experientialism but is forthright about stressing the value, legitimacy and need for religious experiences so long as they have precise definition and do not become lost in a ‘vacuous cult of experience’ and a ‘contemporary celebration of feelings’.⁴²

⁴¹ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 299–321 (esp. pp. 300, 308, 316).

⁴² *Ibid.*, 313.

A third example is the classic, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, in which some Wesleyan cases are examined.⁴³ This text is used here because it is a classic in the field and remains a substantial resource. Author William James (1842–1910) said that a religious experience should be detected by an ‘element’ or ‘quality’ that will be ‘most prominent’ and that ‘we can find nowhere else’. It will be more readily noticed, he said, in those ‘intense’ and ‘exaggerated’ experiences where a participant is carried along, not by ‘an effort of volition’ but by ‘a higher kind of emotion’ in which ‘no volition is needed’. James describes the nature of religious experience in conversion saying, ‘Throughout the height of it he undoubtedly seems to himself a passive spectator or undergoer of an astounding process performed on him from above. There is too much evidence of this for any doubt of it to be possible’.⁴⁴ James also said that it is certain that many people do not possess their religion in their conceptions only but in the form of ‘realities directly apprehended’. The warmth or coldness of a believer’s faith, he says, fluctuates on the basis of their sensitivity to these realities. The result of such religious experiences, wrote James, is a quality of life that ‘no other emotion’ can produce.⁴⁵ Although James believes that religious experience is a psychological state, he also allows a ‘divine’ source, is ‘antireductionist’ and therefore validates the kind of experiences noted in WM.⁴⁶

A final example proposes that Wesleyan spirituality, including its ‘spiritual affections’ (i.e., religious experiences), may provide benefit for clinical practice.⁴⁷ Kilian and Parker say that Wesley was not a ‘pure experientialist’ since he made ‘room for reason, experience and church tradition’ placing him within the ‘Aristotelian–empiricist tradition’. Agreeing with Davies’ comment above, they say that Wesley utilised experience to affirm knowledge, but ‘did not make experience the sole criterion’. His religious experiences were not purely emotions, but had a ‘transformational character’ and served to reinforce belief so that a participant’s Christian life tended to be more mature and stable. Another ‘clinical implication’, say Kilian and Parker, is that ‘the actual transformation that happens through a relationship with God, has consequences in one’s relationships with fellow humans. The quality of one’s relationships’, they say,

⁴³ James, *Varieties*.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 226.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 45–52, 58, 64.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 485ff; Oonagh McDonald, ‘Psychology of Religion’, in *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1978), 813.

⁴⁷ See also Markus K. Kilian and Stephen Parker, ‘A Wesleyan Spirituality: Implications for Clinical Practice’. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 29, 1 (Spring, 2001): 72–80.

‘as a measure of maturity is a concept that is central to object relations psychology’. These views also resonate with James’ just noted comment about religious experience producing quality of life.

Consequently, since there are serious studies that legitimise the benefit of religious experiences, as the above brief representative survey indicates, this chapter will be developed with confidence and lack of awkwardness.⁴⁸ It is religious experiences such as those seen in Wesley’s writings that we seek to uncover in Smithies’ life and ministry. We will question whether he testified to religious experiences of the Wesleyan model even though he ministered more than 40 years after Wesley. If he did, we will also seek to discover the meaning of these experiences to him and those to whom he ministered, as well as their relationship to the WM mission statement. In addition, we will ask whether the indigenous people in Western Australia with whom Smithies worked received similar religious experiences, and whether these were beneficial and had meaning for them. In answering these questions, we will potentially uncover a feature of nineteenth century WM mission that was a major impetus to its life and mission and that was utilised to gauge the nature, effectiveness, indeed the reality of its labours. As stated earlier, even though it is well known that Methodism was an experientialist movement, a study of the prominent place of religious experiences in Methodist mission in the first half of the nineteenth century and their relationship to its mission statement is atypical as indicated by its undervaluing in a range of texts.

The method of presentation in this chapter will be to categorise Smithies’ experiences under the titles, (1) *Personal spirituality*, (2) *Conversion and sanctification*, and (3) *Revival*. Another category that could have been added is the *meetings* of Methodist societies, such as class meetings, prayer meetings and love feasts because such meetings were frequently occasions of religious experiences, as Beardsall points out.⁴⁹ However, since experiences in Methodist meetings are adequately covered within the three categories just noted, a separate title of *meetings* is not warranted. Therefore, where there were occurrences of religious experience within society meetings, these will be noted under respective headings. Following a discussion on each category of religious experience, comparisons will be made with other missionaries or appropriate Methodist

⁴⁸ See also Alston, *Perceiving God*; Olivier Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism* (New York: New City, 1993), 230–269; Kelsey, *Silence*, 159–204; Andrew Louth, ‘Mysticism’, in *Early Christianity: Origins and Evolution to AD 600*, ed. Ian Hazlett (London: SPCK, 1991), 208–217; Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981).

⁴⁹ Beardsall, ‘Fastened to the Rock’, chap. 3–4.

literature from the period, or both, closing with a brief summary. A conclusion will complete the section. We begin with religious experiences in personal spirituality.

§4.2 Religious experience in personal spirituality

In this section, personal spirituality is defined as a Methodist's relationship to his or her God, how this relationship was practised, as well as its fruit of love (holiness). The WM missionary and adherent's spirituality was guided by the Christian Scriptures as well as John Wesley's writings and other literature such as regular issues of the WMM.⁵⁰ A focus here will be how individual missionaries, particularly Smithies and his constituents, responded to situations such as difficulty, opposition and the challenge of mission. In discovering the particular place that religious experiences played in Smithies' life we expect to understand their meaning to him in motivating, sustaining and enriching his personal spirituality, and as a consequence their role in contributing to the WM mission of spreading scriptural holiness. In addition, by examining Smithies' experiences and comparing them with other missionaries from his era we expect to gain a new understanding of the role of religious experiences among Methodist missionaries generally. Finally, while conversion and sanctification (to be discussed in the following segment, §4.3) are a crucial part of Wesleyan spirituality, they are not included here (§4.2) to enable a clearer view of the everyday spirituality of WM missionaries of this period.

The first letter Smithies wrote to the WMMS from Newfoundland was sent from Hant's Harbour, Trinity Bay. The letter records our earliest evidence of religious experience in his personal spirituality.⁵¹ He said,

I do not regret leaving home, friends, and all for this blessed work. Sickness, danger and all the occurrences of this life are nothing in comparison with the enjoyment of the presence of Christ, the blessedness of the work, and the probability of becoming useful in our day and generation to the souls of men.⁵²

Smithies' mention of the 'enjoyment of the presence of Christ' indicates that to him Christ was a real person with whom he could experience enjoyment through relationship. Along with the other two reasons, namely, 'blessedness of the work' and usefulness 'to the souls of men', the presence of Christ brought him compensation for leaving the comfort of home and friends. Such 'enjoyment' could be accounted for by other sources such as the first flush of a new venture especially felt by one still youthful (aged 26 at the time), and in the belief that he was doing something very worthwhile.

⁵⁰ See Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 321, 420–423.

⁵¹ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 9 September 1828.

⁵² *Ibid.*

However, he indicated by his statement that the experience of the presence of Christ had much meaning for him. To Smithies it meant an experience of the kind Alston described, which enabled him to enjoy communion with his Lord.⁵³ Here, then, we have an example of spirituality being enriched, even strengthened in the face of Smithies' major change and loss. In addition, there is an indication that his experience strengthened him for missionary service demonstrating a supplementary though crucial meaning of his experience.

Another reference in his second letter is of interest.⁵⁴ Smithies wrote, '[I] enjoyed one of the happiest winters I ever did. His presence makes a paradise! My new Class has increased to twenty members, most of whom enjoy Christ.' Reminiscent of Wesley's 'day of God's presence' cited earlier, his joy expressed here was centred in the 'presence' of Christ, as also noted in his first letter.⁵⁵ He called it a paradise. This sense of the divine presence was evidently tangible and outstanding to Smithies. He also said that his class meeting participants 'enjoy Christ'. By this, he would have meant that class members enjoyed their status as Christians. In the context he placed it, however, it is likely that Smithies meant they also enjoyed the *awareness* of Christ. The meaning and therefore the value of this religious experience is that Smithies' and his members' spirituality was enriched through joyful consolation in the midst of a harsh Newfoundland winter.

From the capital of Newfoundland, St. John's, Smithies wrote a third letter in which he said, 'I continue to enjoy health of body, and through his grace some spirituality of mind'.⁵⁶ It is difficult to know precisely what he meant by 'some spirituality of mind' but he seemed to indicate a state of divinely provided spiritual sensitivity or awareness. This is reinforced and expanded by his statement, 'The Lord was pleased to manifest himself unto us and graciously to assist and bless me, so as to make my cup run over with holy joy'. This occurrence was in a meeting in which other religious experiences were noted. He said, 'while speaking in the evening from Psalm 107 v.8 and administering the Sacrament afterwards, we had a melting down of many hearts and many could rejoice in God their Saviour'. In Smithies' expression, 'the Lord' being 'manifest', is found unmistakable reference to the perception of God, the nature of which in this case was 'holy joy'. Along with this experience, an empowerment was

⁵³ Alston, *Perceiving God*, 2.

⁵⁴ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May, 1829.

⁵⁵ Wesley, *Works*, i: 479; SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 9 September 1828.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 2 September 1829.

given to him for his preaching thereby adding further meaning. The effect on his listeners was their ‘melting down’, evidently meaning a softening of their emotions, resulting in their ‘salvation’ (conversion) indicated by his words, ‘many could rejoice in God their Saviour’. Thus, the experience of empowerment was fruitful in the saving of souls showing a connection between religious experience in personal spirituality and the WM mission; that is, religious experience assisted in achieving his goal of soul saving.

On 7 December 1829, Smithies again wrote from Hant’s Harbour. He said: ‘Afterwards met the class, felt no weariness of body but could say with our Poet, “Labour is rest and pain is sweet if thou my God art here”’.⁵⁷ The consciousness of God’s presence is undoubtedly intended here in his affirmation with its consequent meaning to him plainly stated. Smithies again quoted this line in another circumstance in a letter written from the same place on 5 May 1830. He wrote,

Dec 6th Sunday. [1829] At 9 a.m. I travelled to Seal Cove and visited an aged and afflicted follower of Christ. Her pains were great but ‘O the power of grace divine’ which raised her mind above all earthly things and enabled her to say that ‘labour is rest and pain is sweet when thou my God art here’. She had no complaint whatever, nothing but praise for God, we sang, prayed and departed.⁵⁸

As he earlier referred to God’s presence being a compensating strength to him in the weariness of labour, Smithies cited this example of the case of extreme sickness and the existence of pain, to show the same benefit of the consciousness of God’s presence. He said that the sick woman’s mind was lifted above ‘all earthly things’, meaning her pain and discomfort. From these two examples we gather that Smithies personally experienced and witnessed in others one of the expected fruits of Methodist spirituality and therefore goals of ministry: to encourage members to know and experience Christ and his presence as their source of strength.

In the same letter he spoke about the death of one of the male members of the society at Hant’s Harbour.⁵⁹ In a journal entry dated 18 January 1830, Smithies said he ‘attended him almost daily while he was ill’ and that the man ‘felt the power of saving grace and showed it to all that attended him in his illness and departure by exhorting our members to faithfulness’.⁶⁰ Here Smithies highlighted a core Methodist belief in the ‘felt experience’ of conversion, and in this case, an enduring consciousness that enabled the sufferer to testify accordingly to his visitors. Regarding the man’s final moment, Smithies recorded:

⁵⁷ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 7 December, 1829.

⁵⁸ SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 5 May, 1830.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

When I interrogated him concerning his state, he would answer me with terms of gratitude to God, in a scriptural way so much so, as, to surprise me, saying, ‘These light afflictions ... are but for a moment. I am enlightened by the Spirit. What am I O thou glorious God. I’ll praise my Maker while I’ve breath’ and thus he continued praising his Saviour until, ‘he sunk in the blissful dreams away and visions of Eternal day’. I was ready to say to all, ‘May we die the death of the righteous and may our last end be like unto his’. His end was happy.

It was an important feature of Methodism that members ‘died well’.⁶¹ Wesley himself accounts of such ‘happy deaths’ in his letters.⁶² Smithies followed the Wesleyan pattern of ‘interrogating’ dying adherents about the status of their faith, then reporting on the happy deaths of various members. Later in this same letter, for example, he reported ‘the happy deaths of three in this Circuit this winter, who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises’.⁶³ This, to Methodists, was an evidence of the reality and benefit of their ‘felt’ spirituality; that members should have tangible consolation at death. Hence, it was a goal of Smithies’ ministry that his members were well prepared for death through the experience of Christ and salvation so that at their decease they would know joyful assurance (the meaning of the experience) as epitomised in this letter.

A further example of religious experience in personal spirituality is found in Smithies’ letter dated 7 December 1834 from Blackhead Station, Conception Bay. Here he wrote,

God is graciously supplying us with grace, with heavenly wisdom, with the quick[en]ing and sanctifying influence of his Spirit, making our souls more like himself and I trust more meet to be useful in his Church.⁶⁴

The words ‘quicken[ing]’ and ‘influence’ we understand as perceived experience, rather than an imperceptible latent influence, due to the immediacy of Smithies’ language as well as comparison of this kind of terminology with that in other letters. The influence produced, according to the writer, Christ-likeness and productive works ‘in his Church’. Inclusions of this sort in Smithies’ letters allow us to detect the meaning of the religious experiences as well as their relationship to the goal of spreading scriptural holiness. These were not just experiences for their own sake, but for Smithies and his members they had a meaningful outcome for spirituality and ministry. It may also be noted from his reference that sanctification derived from such experiences. This demonstrates the gradual aspect of sanctification, vis-à-vis instant sanctification

⁶¹ Charles Wesley’s observation quoted in Heydon, ‘Early Church’: 1–15; See also ‘Happy Deaths’, in *WMM for 1837*, 515–516.

⁶² E.g., Wesley, *Works*, xiii: 39, 84.

⁶³ SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 5 May 1830.

⁶⁴ SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 7 December 1834.

(considered below). It also highlights both the nature of the progress toward the goal of holiness and the integral part played by recurring religious experiences.

A sample of the connection between religious experience and empowerment for ministry is found in Smithies' letter to the WMMS dated 15 August 1835, written from St John's. Here he referred to a letter received from the WMMS Secretary, Rev J Beecham (1787–1856).⁶⁵ Beecham, he said, 'enjoins in particular the inward experience of the great truths which we preach and that we might expect as a "general rule" that God will bless our word to others.' Smithies then wrote, 'I bless God I feel it so'.⁶⁶ The reason he did 'feel it so' is found in his following words:

The Lord is giving us some tokens for good, our congregations are numerous and exceedingly attentive, our week evenings services are well attended, our members are reviving, our Sunday school is assuming a cheering aspect (on Sabbath next we shall address the scholars publicly and the following Wednesday a public meeting of Teachers, Friends as at home) we have a few wanderers returning and others as awaking out of their sleep of sin and death and enquiring their way to Zion. O that the Lord may rain down righteousness upon and send us prosperity. I trust shortly to be able to communicate that God is making bare his holy arm.⁶⁷

Smithies was obviously encouraged at the prosperous state of the work at St John's at this time indicating signs of revival and expectation of its full-flowering. These comments were evoked by the just noted letter connecting 'inward experience' with the proclamation of the gospel. This is further confirmation that Methodists in this period were pursuing a similar pathway to their founder particularly when it came to 'inward experience' in connection with their cardinal teachings of conversion and perfection. A confirmation of Smithies' belief (and that of the WMMS Secretary) is also noted here in that such experiences would ensure 'as a "general rule" that God' would 'bless' their efforts providing a fruitful outcome.⁶⁸ A clear line can be drawn once again between religious (inward) experience and what this meant to Smithies and Methodists generally (we can safely accept), namely, a productive outcome in ministry and therefore a direct relationship to their objective to spread scriptural holiness.

It will serve our purpose now to take up our present theme in England, to where Smithies had returned in 1837, and then in the Swan River colony, Western Australia, his next appointment. Whilst in England, Smithies wrote a letter to the WMMS

⁶⁵ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 15 August 1835; Rev John Beecham was secretary of the WMMS from 1831 to 1855 and Conference President in 1850 (Kent, 'Wesleyan Methodists', ii: 215fn).

⁶⁶ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 15 August 1835.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

responding to its request for him to go to the Swan River.⁶⁹ He said that on reading the letter he ‘immediately took refuge in such a sanctuary’, mentioning that his text for the next Sabbath day’s sermon was ‘God is a refuge’ (Psalm 46:1). We cannot know exactly what he meant by this expression, but given the context of the letter, which indicates mixed and troubled feelings about the request of the WMMS, it can be deduced that he meant a place of peace. Of course, people have various ways of quietening their emotions and finding peace or tranquillity that may or may not involve religious experience. However, the fact that Smithies states that he took refuge in God shows that at the very least God was sufficiently immanent to him that he could find in God a ‘refuge’. Out of that place he and Hannah decided that ‘the will of the Lord be done’, showing the meaning of the refuge he had found in God, that is to say, the experience of peace that enabled them to come to a decision about which subject both John and Hannah had been disturbed.

Prior to Smithies’ arrival at his next appointment, the Swan River colony, several settler families had been busily engaged in establishing Methodism. By 1834, they had erected a ‘neat brick chapel’ in Murray Street, Perth, and as was the habit of early nineteenth century Methodists, they attended the EC services on Sunday mornings. Principal among them were the Hardeys, brothers Joseph and John, and their families. An interesting note is found in Joseph Hardey’s diary dated 1 August 1830 where he records, ‘I have felt the Lord present and precious.’ From this diary entry we gather that at least one in the congregation who awaited the arrival of the first minister (in 1840) was accustomed to the nature of religious experiences known to Smithies.⁷⁰ The meaning of the tangible presence of ‘the Lord’ to Joseph Hardey was strength in his day to day trials, in his case physical pain, and therefore it was ‘precious’ to him.

Another example of religious experience in the midst of trial was recorded the year following the revival of 1844 (described below). Smithies and the mission he established at Gullillilup experienced severe setbacks that overshadowed the revival.⁷¹ His trials concerned a number of deaths among Aboriginal pupils and acute financial difficulties brought on by unfulfilled government promises resulting in a heavy burden on several supporters of the WM society and mission. Increasing troubles of this nature beset the work for the remainder of Smithies’ Swan River ministry. It was in these trials that Smithies reported further religious experiences. The story of Caroline Barrett’s

⁶⁹ SOAS, Box 5, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 July 1839.

⁷⁰ Burton, ‘Joseph Hardey’: 17–28; Johnston, *Tranby Hardeys*, 24–27.

⁷¹ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 28 March 1845, 21 September 1845.

death is one case.⁷² He said that her ‘extreme love of prayer was delightful to all who knew her. For weeks before her departure her constant request was that we should pray for her and with her’. He further explained that Caroline, on ‘several occasions when hearing of friends coming from the country ... immediately sent a request that they would come in and pray with her’. Even when alone, ‘she was night and day engaged in this exercise of prayer and praise to God for all his mercies to her’ as well as giving ‘her grace to love him and feel happy in the expectation of death’. Smithies wrote of Caroline’s patience and courage and that ‘she was an example to all’. In her words reported by Smithies, she said,

If Caroline in bush now too much frightened about death coming soon, but now I love Jesus, he always with me, and make me very happy, too much happy. Me want to die and be with my dear Saviour. He talk to me in night and day and say ‘Caroline make ready and come to me’.

‘Indeed’, said Smithies, ‘it was delightful to be with her and hear her remarks after a portion of Scripture had been read to her. She loved to think of what she had learned in the Sabbath and day school’. Shortly before her death, she said, ‘All happy, all glory, Jesus waiting for poor Caroline’. To Smithies, the genuineness of Caroline’s Christian faith evidenced by the experience of her joy and peace in the face of death, as well as her awareness of the presence of Jesus (a key description of religious experience), were crucial evidences of the success of his ministry. It is true that missionaries like Smithies were gratified when Aboriginal people showed evidences of civilisation and education, including English manners, but it was Christian spirituality evidenced by the reported religious experiences from which he gained greatest satisfaction. Caroline’s story was followed by a similar moving account of Christiana, ending this section of his letter. Smithies’ accounts of Caroline and Christiana demonstrate the nature and meaning of religious experiences and their indisputable connection to personal spirituality and therefore to the goal of spreading scriptural holiness. To ascertain the typicality of Smithies’ reports on religious experience, comparisons with other suitable sources now follow.

§4.2.1 Comparisons

Other Wesleyan missionaries reported religious experiences as an integral part of their spirituality, which serve to demonstrate their common occurrence and acceptance. First generation Methodist missionary and ‘apostle’ to the MEC, Bishop Francis Asbury (1745–1816), is our first example. In a letter to Wesley (c. May 1783), he said, ‘The

⁷² Ibid., 21 September 1845.

present Preachers suffer much, being often obliged to dwell in dirty cabins, to sleep in poor beds, and for retirement [prayer] to go into the woods'.⁷³ 'But', he continued, 'we must suffer *with*, if we labour *for* the poor. As to myself ... [my] soul is daily fed, and I find abundant sweetness in God'. Asbury's expression, 'abundant sweetness in God', shows that he looked to the experience of God's presence to sustain him through his deprivations. He is legendary for his missionary efforts in America, being compared to Wesley himself for his achievements.⁷⁴ Asbury's example is used here because his ministry overlapped the period between first and second generation WM missionaries and therefore demonstrates his likely influence on Smithies' contemporaries in North America. However, since our focus is on second-generation Wesleyans, our next examples are sourced from that period.

A sample has already been provided above regarding local preacher Joseph Hardey from the Swan River who wrote in 1830 of his enjoyment of Christ's presence that supported him in a time of pain. Another example comes from the Memoir of Mrs Charlotte Slater (1800–1840).⁷⁵ Her diary for 3 May 1816, records:

In what sweet peace the Lord kept me throughout the day! How freed from those temptations which formerly assailed me! What union and communion have I enjoyed with God! The class meeting in the evening was a precious season: the Spirit of the Lord was graciously felt; and, I believe, not one went away unedified.

This example resonates with Wesley's day of God's presence referred to earlier, as well as Smithies' references to the 'sweetness' of the presence of Christ. An understanding of Methodist spirituality and the part played by religious experiences is clarified here. In Slater's next diary entry, she says, 'I am truly happy in the love of God, and enjoy the comfortable influences of His Spirit'. The memoir records selected events of her life from this point until her death on 20 April 1840, when she passed away 'with great tranquillity'.

Another example of religious experience integral to personal spirituality is found in the biography of WM, Mrs Hillaria Shrewsbury (1802–1835), of Graham's Town, South Africa.⁷⁶ Her diary records frequent references to 'her peace and joy in believing', as well as her continual desire for 'communion with God, and of the enjoyment of his presence'. The author, her WM missionary husband, Rev William J. Shrewsbury, related the story of their passage from Barbados, where they had been stationed, to St.

⁷³ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, i: 244.

⁷⁴ Keith J. Hardman, *Seasons of Refreshing: Evangelism and Revival in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994), 118–123.

⁷⁵ *WMM for 1842*, 900ff.

⁷⁶ *WMM for 1838*, 241–255.

Vincent (they were soon after appointed to Grenada). His wife commenced ‘the pains of travail’ near midnight and there was no assistance on board the boat. A few hours after landing safely at their destination, she gave birth to a son. Her husband reports that Hillaria ‘was so exceedingly comforted and supported by the grace of God, that her body appeared to be endued with supernatural strength and vigour’. He said, ‘She declared to me that her soul was so filled with holy joy that she could scarcely refrain from singing aloud the praises of God in the midst of the pains of labour’. Hillaria’s story resembles several of Smithies’ accounts in which religious experience eclipsed difficulty, even pain. Consequently religious experience to WM missionaries and adherents in this period meant consolation in the face of various trials.

In summary, to Smithies and other Wesleyan missionaries, the presence of religious experiences was a vital component of their personal spirituality in which they found meaning. When they were not present, the missionary felt weakened. When present, religious experiences sustained their lives and work providing fortitude during trial or even persecution. These experiences were also a source of their progress in holiness (e.g., God’s presence enriching personal spirituality and overwhelming love experienced in instant sanctification) as well as a benchmark for it (e.g., witness of the spirit and assuring peace). In addition, religious experience was an impetus for the ministry of missionaries, an unseen power that drove them forward; an often overlooked factor when studying the work of Wesleyan missionaries. Consequently, integral to the WM objective to spread scriptural holiness, were the crucially associated religious experiences, in this case in personal spirituality. In the following examples, religious experiences will be reviewed in connection with conversion and instant sanctification, the so-called second blessing.

§4.3 Religious experience in conversion and instant sanctification

Conversion and instant sanctification (or second blessing), it will be recalled, were believed by Methodists to be core experiences. Conversion was regarded as both an initiation into the Christian life and the life of holiness (conversion is sanctification begun), and in the case of instant sanctification, freedom from sinful inclinations and therefore an acceleration in the progress toward holiness.⁷⁷ Both experiences were usually accompanied by a ‘witness of the Spirit’, a distinct religious experience, although sanctification (not instant sanctification) also involved a gradual growth in perfection or holiness. For this reason, it is appropriate to combine our study of

⁷⁷ See ‘Plain Account’, in Wesley, *Works*, xi: 366–446; Watts, *Dissenters*, 432.

conversion and instant sanctification in this section. It is in conversion and entire or instant sanctification that we seek to understand the part that religious experience played and therefore its meaning, particularly in the practices of missionaries in this period. In doing so, we hope to attain a fresh understanding of what motivated missionary endeavour; an assessment that is unusual though crucial. We draw again from Smithies' writings and comparisons with other WM missionaries and literature from his period.

In his second letter to the WMMS from Hant's Harbour, Newfoundland, Smithies referred to conversion and accompanying religious experience.⁷⁸ He wrote: 'One poor soul attained the pearl of great price, such an instance of the power of God to save I scarcely ever saw before'. We are left to ponder the precise nature of this 'instance of the power of God', but we are made aware that it was tangible, observable, and included the conversion of the person. This is understood by the words 'attained the pearl of great price' that refers to a parable of Jesus where a rich merchant sold everything to obtain a priceless pearl (Matthew 13:44–46). Jesus told this story in reference to himself and the gospel he brought. The readers of Smithies' letter were meant to understand that this was a powerful conversion, a significant transformation and therefore a valuable ministry outcome, thus connecting religious experience with mission. Smithies' account also demonstrates further meaning of the experience since through it conversion was detected. Missionaries of this period, as they did in Wesley's day, expected a discernible gauge of initial conversion.

Other instances of religious experiences in conversion in this second letter occurred at Seal Cove where many were said to be 'in distress', and at Harbour Grace from where he wrote that the 'Lord was with us, many in distress, one or two obtained salvation.' He continued:

Bro Corlett preached at Mosquito from Zacchaeus, a powerful time it was. The house was crowded, numbers in distress, for those we had a prayer meeting and the Lord was present to save. In the evening I preached again at H G [Harbour Grace] from Heb[rews] 11, afterwards many stayed at the meeting and several obtained a sense of salvation

These snippets are pregnant with religious experience language. The connection between God being present and people being in distress conveys an idea of divine awareness that communicated to attendees a consciousness of their need of forgiveness. The benefit Smithies intended to show was that people 'obtained salvation' (from sin) meaning they were converted. Further, when John Corlett preached, Smithies declared it to be a 'powerful time' with 'numbers in distress', and the 'Lord was present to save'.

⁷⁸ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May, 1829.

In addition, Smithies mentioned that some had ‘obtained a sense of salvation’, clearly showing the role of experience in the event of conversion; it was something the recipient ‘felt’ and ‘sensed’. Semple points out that Methodists used such expressions as ‘shorthand’ to readily transmit information to each other without the need for lengthy explanations.⁷⁹ This was derived from Wesley’s description of his own conversion in terms of a ‘heart strangely warmed’, according to Semple. In this case, these were scenes depicting religious experiences integral to conversion. Although our purpose here is to uncover examples of religious experience in conversion, we cannot fail to notice that conversion, which was the entrance into a life of holiness, was a goal at which Smithies and his colleagues passionately aimed toward spreading holiness. Consequently, here is further evidence of the inseparable relationship between religious experience and the WM mission statement, the reason why utilising this twofold framework is crucial if both the *raison d’être* and *modus operandi* of WM mission of this period are to be more completely understood.

Another example of religious experience in conversion is provided in Smithies’ letter of 2 September 1829, where he wrote that

one young lady in particular at one of the class meetings was brought to experience a sense of divine favour [Smithies’ underlining]. It was very clear and so manifest to all that we were melted down into gratitude to our common Father as we sang – ‘Praise God from whom all blessing flow’.⁸⁰

Smithies’ expression ‘melted down’ meant a softening, or mellowing of emotions due to what was apparently a touching event. In this case, it was the ‘sense of divine favour’ to a young woman. It is not easy to ascertain what the woman was experiencing in the ‘sense of divine favour’ but in the tenor of Methodism it likely meant that she, like Wesley, was converted with an accompanying awareness that God was her Saviour. In other words, she felt and knew her sins forgiven through the ‘sense’ of God’s love and peace. The other participants were all ‘melted down’, as Smithies said, by her experience, since ‘it was very clear and manifest’. Obviously, the whole group was deeply affected by what they witnessed; that is, an observable experience with a clear outcome. The result of the experience was the conversion of the woman, plus the resulting spiritual impact on the witnesses. The meaning of religious experience in this case is palpably connected to the WM desired mission outcome, namely, transformative conversion as well as the observable evidence of conversion which contributed toward the goal of holiness.

⁷⁹ Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 59.

⁸⁰ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 September 1829.

Meanwhile, from a new station, Blackhead, Conception Bay, Smithies mentioned a case of ‘second blessing’, which, as already observed is a ‘sanctifying’ experience subsequent to conversion. He said,

Our public services, as preaching and prayer meetings have been well attended and we trust that these have not been ‘in vain in the Lord’ but otherwise by them some have been quickened – and many comforted and a few have received the first or second blessing at the Lord’s hands – and are now rejoicing in the possession thereof. To the Lord be all praises.⁸¹

This experience, not unlike conversion, was said to be usually instantaneous, and often accompanied with vivid perceptions of God, as earlier noted in Wesley’s examples. Smithies referred to this experience by his use of the term ‘second blessing’, since this was Methodist’ parlance for instant sanctification. It is frustrating that Smithies did not explain himself further. However, what we do see is resultant rejoicing because of these experiences of first and second blessing. It is obvious that this was no mere subscription to doctrine but tangible events producing observable experiences. These evoked praises to God from Smithies who saw the blessings as meaningful to his people and therefore fruitful toward the fulfilment of the WM mission goal. This example further adds to the evidence that religious experience and the WM mission statement were inseparable, and that religious experiences provided evidence to missionaries that their goals were being achieved, in this case conversion and sanctification. Consequently, religious experience cannot be viewed as an accessory or an aberration; it was intrinsic to the transformative nature of both conversion and sanctification as well as the evidence of both.

Other instances of first and second blessings are found in Smithies’ letter of 2 July 1834 written from Blackhead, Conception Bay.⁸² Here, he reported,

The Spirit is perfecting the work of his saints and making some holy a pattern of good works, bringing pardon to others making them joyful in God and His mercy. One instance of this kind occurred here but a week or two ago. One who had been a member for some years became sorely afflicted during which time she was deeply awakened to a sense of her spiritual poverty and was led to cry night and day for salvation, at length God appeared unto her as the ‘fairest among ten thousand’ took away her sins ‘granted her peace and joy through believing’. She is now become a living affectionate and undaunted witness of Jesus power to save. ‘Glory be to God’.

This account is undoubtedly one of sanctification because of Smithies’ words, ‘the Spirit perfecting the work of his saints’, coupled with the fact that the person in question had been a member for many years. In addition, the expression ‘all love’, is a strong indicator of sanctification because Wesley described the experience as nothing more or

⁸¹ SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 3 December, 1833.

⁸² Ibid., 2 July, 1834.

less than love to God and neighbour.⁸³ However, the words, ‘took away her sins’, may lead a reader to understand this experience to be conversion, but this is unlikely. William James made this assessment when describing what was to him conversion when in fact it was the experience of instant sanctification.⁸⁴ Accounts of sanctification often read like conversion in Wesley’s letters and other WM literature where freedom from guilt and sin were reported (see §4.3.1). The account describes the benefits of the recipient’s entire sanctification (second blessing) as relief from the guilt of sin, peace of heart, and a sense of ‘affection’ and ‘all love’, all of which involved distinct religious experiences. Such benefits would naturally inspire ministers like Smithies to pursue the same outcome of holiness through instant sanctification for all, and to detect its occurrence through the experiential indicators just noted.

Smithies followed the above account with a prayer that ‘a spark from the heavenly altar will reach us and ignite the spiritually combustible [matter] into a holy flame of love to God and [humankind]’.⁸⁵ In this prayer, there is a recognisable reference to Wesleyan sanctification in the words ‘holy flame of love to God and [humankind]’. As just noted, Wesley explained sanctification as the experience and practice of perfect love toward God and people.⁸⁶ Smithies added to the prayer above, ‘All we want is – more of his divine presence’.⁸⁷ We have seen that ‘divine presence’, to Smithies, was perceptible and is here connected to a practical outcome: sanctification, or love. The benefit derived from the experience was a sharpened love by which recipients might serve God and people more effectively, notably in the ‘saving of souls’, but also in practical works, evidencing holiness. An even clearer example of religious experience in instant sanctification is shown in a later example from Newfoundland where Smithies wrote, ‘We have seen the awakened mind, the troubled heart, the pardoned soul, and rapturous joy of those made perfect in love.’⁸⁸ Here it is unambiguous that love is the outcome and that ecstatic joy is the nature of the experience. Yet again, we observe the inseparable connection between religious experience and the WM goal of scriptural holiness in Smithies’ ministry.

⁸³ Wesley, *Works*, xi:367–368.

⁸⁴ See James, *Varieties*, 227–228.

⁸⁵ SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 July, 1834.

⁸⁶ Wesley, *Works*, xi: 446.

⁸⁷ SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 July, 1834.

⁸⁸ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 29 January 1836.

In his letter dated 25 October 1843 from the Swan River colony, Smithies reported the ‘satisfactory conversion’ of two indigenous children, as noted in the previous section.⁸⁹ By ‘satisfactory’ he meant certain and obvious. These conversions are noted here again because to Methodists like Smithies, conversion included the experience of ‘inward witness’. The conversions are reported in the second letter of the same date. Features of the conversions included a dream by which one of the girls named Wo–burt was led to conversion.⁹⁰ To the missionary, Wo–burt’s experience and the subsequent change in her behaviour provided evidence of ‘satisfactory conversion’. The dream and Wo–burt’s new happiness, whereby she said she knew that God had given her a new heart, were religious experiences integral to her conversion. The other conversion of a girl named Mary No–gyle, also noted earlier, included similar features of a dream (actually the same dream as Wo–burt), the certainty of a new heart, and God’s love.⁹¹ The second story is particularly touching since it records Mary’s death shortly afterward. She died peacefully and courageously.

These two conversions demonstrate the receptivity of indigenous people to Wesleyan spirituality and its religious experiences. The classic signs are present in these cases, such as distress over the possibility of God’s judgement, followed by happiness upon discovering God’s acceptance, then peace and love that gave hope and calmed fear, even the fear of death.⁹² Additional to these experiences was a noticeable transformation of character. Cases of this nature are what gave Smithies cause to say that his work had been fruitful and lasting in spite of the obvious failure of his two mission stations. This fact again reinforces the point that conversions included detectible religious experiences and were thus crucial to Smithies’ ministry in achieving scriptural holiness.

The above cases of conversion are unique for their dreams, which we may also call religious experiences. Smithies did not report dreams in other accounts of conversion in his ministry. Dreams and visions were not foreign to the Wesleyan movement and it seems for this reason Smithies accepted Aboriginals’ accounts of them at face value especially in the light of the result: the conversion of the recipient and a consequent

⁸⁹ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² William James calls this a classic process in instantaneous conversions of the Evangelical revival including Wesleyans (James, *Varieties*, 227–228).

transformed life.⁹³ When reporting one conversion as noted above, his comment, ‘The dream it is believed was useful to herself and others in the school’, confirms this.⁹⁴ Smithies’ acceptance of dreams as useful in the practice of Wesleyan Christianity, demonstrates compatibility with a facet of Aboriginal spirituality.

Regarding the place of dreams in indigenous spirituality, Aboriginal leader Ron Williams says that before Europeans came to Australia, ‘God’ sometimes led Aboriginal people through dreams and visions.⁹⁵ ‘A lot of them have dreams’, he said. They also had dreams and visions about tormenting spirits. Djiniyini Gondarra agrees saying,

Sometimes, individuals may also meet the Spirit world through visions or dreams, or being possessed by a Spirit which, for a short while, controls the behaviour of the individual and speaks through him, perhaps in a strange Spirit language. When dreams are vivid and unusual people ask others to help interpret what the Spirit powers are saying to warn, command or reward.⁹⁶

Blacket adds that Aboriginal people ‘hear the inner voices of the spirit world through such means as ... dreams’. The dreams recorded in Smithies’ letters bear witness to these statements. A dream (or vision), which was central in a more recent example of Aboriginal conversion to Christianity in Burnt Bridge, northern New South Wales, adds additional evidence.⁹⁷ Further, Ella Simon, probably Australia’s first indigenous JP, observed that Christianity complemented her Aboriginal spirituality.⁹⁸ She was referring of course to values and teaching, not to the human systems that surround Christianity or to religious experiences directly, although she may have implied this.

Further evidence that Aboriginal spirituality was compatible with Wesleyan religious experience is found in John Blacket’s *Fire in the Outback* that recounts a number of Aboriginals’ stories of conversion including experiences similar to those reported by Smithies.⁹⁹ Regarding the early preaching of Christian beliefs, Blacket says that, ‘Westerners have taught these by reason rather than by spirit and experience, without

⁹³ E.g., *WMM for 1835*, 261-274; Wesley, *Works*, i: 206, where Wesley said that ‘dreams, visions or revelations ... might be from God, or they might not’. He allowed them but did not promote them; See a commentary on dreams and visions in Methodist practice in Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 420-436.

⁹⁴ SOAS, Box 517, John Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

⁹⁵ John Blacket, *Fire in the Outback: The Untold Story of the Aboriginal Revival Movement that Began on Elcho Island in 1979* (Sydney: Albatross, 1996), 31-33, 36, 44; Djiniyini Gondarra, ‘Aboriginal Spirituality and the Gospel’, in *Aboriginal Spirituality: Past Present Future*, ed. Anne Pattel-Gray (Melbourne: Harper Collins, 1996), 41-53.

⁹⁶ Gondarra, ‘Aboriginal Spirituality’, 41-53.

⁹⁷ E.g., Arthur Leo Roy, ‘Aborigines in Capitalist Society: A Focus on the North West of New South Wales 1824 – 1985’ (Dissertation, PhD, Somerset University, 1986), chap. 6.

⁹⁸ Ella Simon, *Through My Eyes* (Blackburn, VIC: Collins Dove, 1987), viii.

⁹⁹ Blacket, *Fire in the Outback*.

realising how differently Aborigines learn and view the world'.¹⁰⁰ Regarding this point, Blackett quoted Aboriginal leader Ron Williams who said,

I get more excited looking at [life] from an Aboriginal culture than the European culture I've grown up with ... When I see it from an Aboriginal point of view, I can easily go back into the dreamtime and eternity more quickly than having to question God [through an abstract rational Greek world view].¹⁰¹

The nature of Aboriginal spirituality in its amenability to dreams, therefore, provided a point of contact with Wesleyan spirituality complementing its effectiveness. This being the case, perhaps Smithies would have been more successful had he attempted to understand Aboriginal spirituality in the light of his own, particularly in relation to religious experience? It is certain that Smithies' sense of success, in the face of the failure of his two mission stations, was due to conversions among the indigenous people as shown above.¹⁰² The aspect of religious experience, then, deserves more focus than the usual evaluations which exclude its mention.¹⁰³

On the other hand, George Russo makes the comment that the CC under Salvado at New Norcia had greater success than did Methodists (Protestants) in Perth because CC liturgy included colourful ceremony that better suited Aboriginal spirituality.¹⁰⁴ Russo criticised Protestants for expecting instant conversions rather than the gradual conversions sought by the CC. Contrariwise, it is argued here that WM religious experiences may have been more potent than 'colourful liturgy' as demonstrated in conversion stories recorded by Smithies as well as those seen in the 1844 revival at the Swan River colony.¹⁰⁵

An important feature noted from the revival is the method used to bring people to conversion. Generally, seekers after WM conversion were advised to attend all the means of grace and to pray for a 'new heart' until they knew they had received it. An example of this means, noted earlier, is Smithies' conversation with a Baptist minister's son in the Swan River colony.¹⁰⁶ Hence, resonating with William James' comment on Methodist religious experiences, conversion was regarded as divinely derived; the

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 44.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² See Harris, *One Blood*, 278, quoting Smithies' letter, September 25, 1852

¹⁰³ E.g., Barley, 'Out of Step', 26–32.

¹⁰⁴ He does not mention Methodists but Evangelicals. However, Methodists were the only Evangelicals working with the indigenous people early in the ministry of Bishop Salvado (Russo, *Lord Abbot of the Wilderness*, 131).

¹⁰⁵ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

seeker receiving conversion ‘from above’.¹⁰⁷ However, Bennett says that Methodists were early adopters of the more modern method of ‘altar calls’ in Australia, but there is only one instance mentioned in Smithies’ ministry (his revival letter) where he said, ‘Our order has been to invite penitents to come and kneel before the communion, ten or a dozen distressed souls did so this evening and for sorrow and sighing they gladly received the peace and the gladness of them that believe’.¹⁰⁸ Although Smithies’ description here appears similar to the kind of ‘altar call’ seen today, it should be noted that these penitents were already in a state of distress prior to the invitation, and we know from the rest of this letter that people often prayed for hours before they came to a knowledge of conversion. The more mechanical process of later Billy Graham–style ‘invitations’, namely, to walk to the front of a meeting to ‘receive Christ’, was absent from these early conversions. The reason it is important to note this practice is to prevent an anachronistic understanding of WM due to present–day conversion practices within Evangelicalism.¹⁰⁹ Modern day evangelical conversions are of a more contrived process whereby converts express belief in certain essential tenets of faith followed by a so–called ‘sinner’s prayer’.¹¹⁰ The prayer is succeeded by, or included in, a public testimony such as walking to the front of a meeting, as just noted. The current practice, therefore, has largely lost its ‘come from above–ness’ (and religious experience) as practiced by early Methodists and must be borne in mind when trying to understand and interpret WM conversions in this period.¹¹¹

§4.3.1 Comparisons

Reports abound of religious experiences in conversion and instant sanctification from other Wesleyan missionaries in the period under review, but several examples will suffice to compare with those of Smithies. The first is that of Bulu’s conversion in the Tongan revival of 1834. He said, ‘My heart was full of joy and love, and the tears streamed down my cheeks’.¹¹² He consequently felt called to preach to Fijians saying,

¹⁰⁷ James, *Varieties*, 226.

¹⁰⁸ David Bennett, *The Altar Call: Its Origins and Present Usage* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000), 150–157; SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

¹⁰⁹ Iain H. Murray, *Pentecost – Today? The Biblical Basis for Understanding Revival* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1999), 50; Bennett, *Altar Call*, 163–176.

¹¹⁰ So also Patricia Cornwell, commenting on an interview with Karl Barth in connection with Evangelist Billy Graham’s altar calls (Patricia Cornwell, *Ruth, A Portrait: The Story of Ruth Bell Graham* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1997], 204–205); Bennett, *Altar Call*, 163–176.

¹¹¹ Although Bennett says the WM church was the first to use ‘altar calls’ in Australia, there is only one instance that resembles the altar call in Smithies’ ministry, and in this case it did not consist of the mechanical process of the later Billy Graham style ‘invitations’ (Bennett, *Altar Call*, 150–157); SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

¹¹² *The Autobiography of Joseph Bulu* (1871), cited in Ian Breward, *Churches in Australasia*, 58.

‘My soul burned within me, and a great longing sprang up in my heart to go away to that land and declare the glad tidings of salvation to the people that knew not God’. A second example is that of George Apsey who called himself a ‘first born child of the revival’ referring to the 1829 revival at Carbonear, Newfoundland (referred to later). At his conversion it was reported that ‘the peace of God flowed in upon his heart’ and that ‘so clear was his assurance of salvation that no doubt ever seemed to trouble him’.¹¹³ A first sign of the Carbonear revival occurred when ‘a young Englishman, [who] unable to control his emotion, cried out in bitterness of spirit’, though one of the ‘most thoughtless young men of the place’. ‘Equally powerful’, wrote Smith, ‘was the influence of the joy which followed his entrance into the liberty of the Gospel’. A final example is that of Canadian Indians for whom ‘to a substantial degree Methodist success rested on the demand it made for a momentous, personal conversion experience and a profound commitment to Christ’.¹¹⁴ In addition, Semple says that ‘the release of spiritual energy, struck an especially receptive chord among Ojibwa and Iroquois’. Although Semple links Indian culture with conversion religious experiences in a similar manner to that noted above with Aboriginal culture and spirituality, conversion experiences manifested themselves similarly across the cultures including European and indigenous.

Regarding religious experience in entire sanctification in other fields from the first half of the nineteenth century, Rev Robert Young observed that during the Tongan Pentecost, in addition to many being converted, ‘others were “sanctified wholly,” and lived and died in possession of that great blessing’.¹¹⁵ He did not describe the nature of the ‘great blessing’ but we can take it to be a tangible and observable experience given our knowledge of the doctrine and the practices of the times. The fact that the ‘blessing’ was reported and that it was called ‘great’, is evidence of this. Where instant sanctification waned or declined, no attempt was made to either claim or report it. Another example is taken from the story of Electa Colwell (1797–1826) from Urbana, Ohio, a member of the MEC there.¹¹⁶ Colwell suffered the loss of ‘an infant son’ in 1823 and was understandably ‘visibly affected’. However, she was sustained during this time because ‘she *felt* (original italics) as a Christian, and bore it with becoming fortitude’. The thing that she ‘earnestly desired and prayed for’, however, was ‘that

¹¹³ Smith, *Methodist Church*, 97.

¹¹⁴ Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 166.

¹¹⁵ Young, *Southern World*, 261.

¹¹⁶ *WMM for 1837*, 247–249.

“perfect love which casteth out all fear”’. Colwell’s prayer was answered in that ‘she felt herself entirely given up and resigned to the will of her heavenly Father’. Tangible experiences were important in both instances of Colwell’s perception of her converted state and her knowledge of sanctification showing the meaning of her religious experiences to be both the gauge of spirituality as well as its sustaining power. A similar experience in the case of Daniel Dorsey (1757–1823) is our final example.¹¹⁷ ‘In 1810 he became deeply sensible of the necessity of holiness of heart’ and prayed earnestly for it. He ‘found deeper communion with God’ and ‘for eight years walked in the light of the Lord, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory’. However, ‘his happy state of mind he afterwards in a measure lost, but just previous to his death, he again was enabled to exercise a calm reliance on God, and submission to the divine will’.

In the above examples of conversion and instant (entire) sanctification, we gain an understanding of why Methodism was referred to by constituents as ‘experimental religion’.¹¹⁸ That is, salvation was a ‘felt’ experience, and instant sanctification was entrance into a state of deeper tranquillity, joy, love and communion with God. The *WMM* illustrates the Methodist regard for the importance of religious experience in the pursuit of holiness when it states, ‘And this sacred affection [referring to the love of God being ‘shed abroad in the heart’; a religious experience], thus produced, is the source of universal holiness’.¹¹⁹ Therefore, it was important to Methodists that they experienced tangible conversion and instant sanctification for two main reasons. First, Methodists knew they were converted or sanctified when they experienced these blessings in a vivid and perceptible manner. Second, the tangible nature of their experiences provided impetus and sustenance for their ongoing Christian life and ministry. Consequently, their ministers and missionaries proclaimed and looked for such religious experiences in the lives of those to whom they ministered in every mission field. In possessing these experiences, Methodist missionaries were empowered for their mission demonstrating what motivated them, and in looking for them in others they were able to gauge their success as they laboured toward their goal of spreading scriptural holiness. In addition, every occurrence of religious experience was a contribution toward the life of holiness, their greater goal. It is essential, therefore, that WM mission in the first part of the nineteenth century is viewed and interpreted within the context of religious experience given the fundamental role it played. Another noted

¹¹⁷ *MM for 1827*, 326–327.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 327; Grindrod and Newton, in *WMM for the year 1837*, 390–396, 390–396.

¹¹⁹ *WMM for 1842*, 300.

aspect in which religious experience played a major role is revival, our next subject for consideration.

§4.4 Religious experience in revivals

Revivals were a characteristic of WM in the nineteenth century as they had been in the previous one. This is indicated by Wakefield's comments that a Methodist catch cry of the time was, 'revival, revival, and still more revival'.¹²⁰ To use the term 'revival' in the first half of the nineteenth century implied profound religious experience. As the nineteenth century progressed, the term revival came to mean planned protracted meetings for the purpose of soul saving. Murray, in his book *Revival and Revivalism*, laments the replacement of 'genuine' revival as experienced by Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield and the Wesleys, with a 'science' of revivals perfected primarily by Charles Grandison Finney.¹²¹ The revivals of WM at the time of Smithies and his colleagues were generally 'old style', and were felt by them to be a sovereign work of God rather than the efforts of skilful, 'scientific' preachers.¹²² A noted president of the Methodist Conference at that time, Rev Jabez Bunting (1779–1858), acknowledged the need for revivals calling them spiritual 'thunderstorms' although he cautioned against excesses.¹²³ A first indication of revival in Smithies' letters was his prayer, 'O that the Lord may pour out of his Spirit'.¹²⁴ His prayer referred to the expectation early Methodists had of revival that would accelerate their ministry efforts gathering a harvest of conversions. Such revivals were thought to be the special work of God's Spirit, being attended with 'signs and wonders' that may be legitimately called religious experiences. The kind of 'signs and wonders' often included collective prostration of hearers who were overwhelmed by 'the Spirit', cries of agony, open confession of sin and prolonged weeping, followed by the ecstatic joy of the converted.¹²⁵ Smithies said nothing further about revivals in his 1829 letter but provided more detail the following year.

Smithies' next reference to revival came in a letter dated 6 September 1830 written from Harbour Grace, Conception Bay, bringing the welcome news about the Newfoundland mission field.¹²⁶ The news must have been greeted with immense excitement in London,

¹²⁰ Wakefield, *Methodist Spirituality*, 40.

¹²¹ Murray, *Revival and Revivalism*, xvii–xxii.

¹²² See Bebbington, *Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 99–102.

¹²³ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 114–117; Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i: 378–379; David Luker, 'Cornish Methodism, Revivalism, and Popular Belief, c. 1780–1870'. (Dissertation, PhD, Oxford University, 1987), chap. 7.

¹²⁴ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May, 1829.

¹²⁵ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 306.

¹²⁶ SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 6 September 1830.

as it was in Newfoundland. There is also a sense of the apocalyptic in Smithies' report since he described the downturn of the vital Newfoundland fishing industry as 'signs of the times'. However, as divine 'compensation' there was another side to the story since he reported,

as to spiritual matters, I suppose Newfoundland never knew such a gracious outpouring of the Spirit as at this time, so that if spiritual mercies are more valuable than temporal ones – the saving of souls better than the increase of wine or oil – the concerns of eternity far more important than those of time (as we all believe they are) and, if these things may be considered as a rich compensation for other privations – then Newfoundland with hundreds of her inhabitants, are compensated in the highest sense, as you will perceive by the letters of the Brethren on those Stations to which I refer.¹²⁷

This 'gracious outpouring' is Methodist terminology (taken from the Bible) for revival.¹²⁸ The phenomenon of revival witnessed at this period resulted, according to Smithies, in the conversion of hundreds and was claimed by him to be the greatest in the history of Newfoundland to that date. Two previous revivals, one under Laurence Coughlan and the other under William Black, did not attain half the numbers of purported conversions, so Smithies' claims were with good reason.¹²⁹ Just what occurred, he reveals later in this and other letters. Some corroboration will be included from other sources in the comparisons below (§4.4.1) to provide as complete a picture as possible as well as to understand the widespread occurrence and expectation that WM missionaries had of revivals.¹³⁰ Smithies' comment about 'spiritual mercies' being 'more valuable than temporal ones', is representative of Methodists of this era and has been criticised. Beardsall, for example, says that Wesleyans failed to agitate for reform in the face of an oppressive Newfoundland merchant class who were largely responsible for the plight of Newfoundland 'planters'.¹³¹ It is true that Wesleyans placed spiritual needs above physical and material, and that they failed to oppose the merchants and ruling class, so the criticism is just. However, as Beardsall also points out, there was significance added to members' lives through Methodism that endures to the present; a quality of faith that did indeed sustain Newfoundlanders through the hardships of life and continues to do so. She says,

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Cf., Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; Rufus Anderson, 'The Promised Advent of the Spirit for the World's Conversion: A Sermon', in *WMM for 1842*, 15–26.

¹²⁹ Rollmann, *Early Methodism*.

¹³⁰ E.g., Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives); Smith, *Methodist Church*.

¹³¹ Beardsall, 'Fastened to the Rock', intro.; 'Planter': a term meaning settler fishermen (see Story et al., *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*).

Whatever it has failed to do at the socio-economic level, the religious practices of Newfoundland Methodism have proved a powerful draw for generations of marginalised, neglected Newfoundlanders.

David Luker makes a similar observation about the affect of revivals in Cornish Methodism in the first half of the nineteenth century.¹³² He says that the ‘Methodist chapel, with a high nominal affiliation, was very often the central social forum of the village, and became a communal refuge and a symbol of communal solidarity’. Nineteenth century Methodists, like Smithies, were convinced that if a person’s spirituality was sustained by the kind of ‘vital religion’, which included religious experiences of the nature outlined in this section, then it was worth more than life itself. Believing thus, they devoted themselves to this ideal with a passion. Although lacking in some aspects of social action on behalf of the poor, Wesleyan missionaries left a legacy in their religious experiences for poorer Newfoundlanders that sustained them through the harshness of their environment so that Methodists were social reformers of a different kind.¹³³

In a further example, revival is unambiguously reported in his journal entry dated Sunday, 15 August 1830, where Smithies wrote,

At Blackhead within this last six months 230 souls have been gathered into the fold of Christ; At St. Johns in 3 months 60; At Carbonear in 4 months 40, and at Western Bay in 2 months 50 have been added and by this time I think not less than 400 have been brought nigh, and what makes the work so valuable, is, that most of them are brought into the liberty of God’s dear children.¹³⁴

The revival he indicated earlier in his letter, which had come as compensation for the economic downturn of Newfoundlanders, is here reported. Some 400 people had purportedly been brought into their regular services within a six-month period. In saying, ‘most of them are brought into the liberty of God’s dear children’, Smithies meant that these were converted, apparently with evidence of the ‘inner witness’. The letter ends shortly after this entry leaving us tantalised by the absence of the details of the revival although he adds a little more in his letter one month later. Here he said,

The good work of God is prospering in an astonishing manner in this bay [Conception Bay]. The fire of heavenly love is burning rapidly and brightly throughout the whole of our station. More than five hundred souls have been brought out of the world into the Church since the District Meeting; most of them are savingly converted to God. And it seems to be the conviction and opinion of the brethren, that, ere our next District, the labours of the Mission will be crowned

¹³² Luker, ‘Cornish Methodism’, chap. 7.

¹³³ Beardsall, ‘Fastened to the Rock’, intro.

¹³⁴ SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 6 September 1830.

with an increase of not less than one thousand souls. 'Praise the Lord, O my soul!
And forget not his benefits.'¹³⁵

Although here again Smithies provided few details of the nature and extent of religious experiences, limiting his comments to overall results, combining what we know about revivals with his terminology in this letter, we can piece together a partial picture at least. He spoke, for example, about 'the work of God prospering in an astonishing manner'. These words convey to us an observer's awe of a spiritual movement of some magnitude and rapidity. In saying 'fire of heavenly love' which was 'burning rapidly and brightly', we cannot conceive of less than dramatic and vivid experiences occurring in meetings and homes of inhabitants of Conception Bay.

Then in 1834, Smithies reported that Methodism in Newfoundland was 'in as prosperous state' as he could remember, noting that in Bonavista '200 souls' had joined the church, most of whom were 'converted to God'.¹³⁶ For Smithies this was sound evidence of God's activity among them and, knowing the Methodist view of revival, we understand that the converted had experienced the 'divine presence' in a variety of manifestations such as distress, peace, joy and love (revealing what the 'divine presence' meant to them).¹³⁷ Here again is the connection between religious experience and its outcome. That is, religious experience is a direct awareness, or perception of God, and the experience itself provides 'information about God and ... relations to him', which in this case included the knowledge of conversion.¹³⁸

The first mention of religious experience in revival from the Swan River colony is found in Smithies' letter dated 16 April 1841, about a year after his arrival. It was in the form of prayer that '[God] will lay bare His holy arm'.¹³⁹ Smithies' prayer for the revelation of God's 'holy arm' is an expression meaning 'demonstrated' power (cf., Psalm 98:1-2; Isaiah 52:10) resulting in multiplied conversions; in other words, significant religious experiences.¹⁴⁰ This prayer is underscored later in the letter by his comment that the 'congregation continues to increase and there are considerable prospects of the revival of the work of God in this town'. Such prayers were scattered throughout Smithies' Newfoundland letters and now in his Swan River letters. His next is found in the words, 'We want the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us to quicken,

¹³⁵ Smithies to WMMS, London, extract from letter of 22 October 1830 (St John's, NL: United Church Archives, sighted 14 July 2004).

¹³⁶ SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 July 1834.

¹³⁷ Ibid.; Wesley, *Works*, v: 124-125.

¹³⁸ Alston, *Perceiving God*, 2.

¹³⁹ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1841.

¹⁴⁰ Wesley, *Works*, i: 196.

renovate, and save us all. O haste ye days of grace'.¹⁴¹ His words 'outpouring' (revival), 'quicken' (make alive by the Spirit), and 'renovate' (spiritual renewal) accord with the nature of religious experience and the WM goal of holiness as demonstrated in Wesley's *Works*.¹⁴² A similar prayer is found in Smithies' second letter of the same date.¹⁴³ Here he prayed for an 'outpouring of the Spirit', an expression meaning the extraordinary work of revival as patently shown in his Newfoundland letter of 6 September 1830.¹⁴⁴ He further prayed in a letter dated 16 April 1842, "that his salvation will not tarry" but that ere long among the Colonists and Aborigines he will make bare his holy arm'.¹⁴⁵ The experiential meaning of Smithies' prayer, 'make bare his holy arm', has just been noted and is used in another letter.¹⁴⁶ In a previous letter, he said, 'We have considerable prospects of the work of God in this town. "O haste ye days of grace"'.¹⁴⁷ Later, when telling of the death of Aboriginal John Wy-reup, he prayed, 'O that the Lord may make bare his arm among this people'.¹⁴⁸ In a short financial letter, Smithies has these similar words:

The Lord is giving us encouragement in the Colonial and Native department of our work and soon we trust with you and all friends of Missionary enterprise to be able to rejoice that the Lord is making bare his arm in the sight of the Nations and that the ends of the earth are beholding the salvation of God.¹⁴⁹

This paragraph may be taken to mean that he expected shortly to witness effective results in the conversion of colonists and indigenous people but knowing his language and his work in Newfoundland, we can be certain that he included in his expectation the revival he prayed for in his shorter prayers noted above. Such prayer in a different form is included in a later letter where he said, 'We are expecting the visitations of the Lord from on high to increase and cheer us in his Zion here'.¹⁵⁰ From these and other similar prayers and statements, such as the term 'visitations of the Lord', it may be seen that revival was perceived as a sovereign work of God, and therefore attended by religious experiences, which Smithies thought to be essential in his mission work.

¹⁴¹ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841.

¹⁴² E.g., Wesley, *Works*, viii: 103-104, ix: 117-173, 404-409, xi: 203-204, 407.

¹⁴³ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841.

¹⁴⁴ E.g., SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 6 September 1830.

¹⁴⁵ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1842.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1 May 1842.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 20 September 1841.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 28 October 1842.

¹⁵⁰ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 25 October 1843.

In April 1844, Smithies moved the core indigenous mission work out of the Perth environs to Gullillilup (now Lake Goolelal near Wanneroo) about 20 kilometres (12 miles) to the north. It was at this point that Smithies announced the answer to his prayers in the ‘beginning of a revival of religion among colonists and native scholars’.¹⁵¹ It occurred not long after Hannah Smithies had a life-threatening bout of dysentery. ‘It was during this consecratory process that the Spirit’s influences were felt’, said Smithies. His use of the word ‘felt’ is significant because it demonstrates an unmistakable example of religious experience in revival, which he further unpacks in his letter. The date of the revival’s commencement was approximately 15 April 1844 since he said it was about ten days after the baptism of about eighteen ‘aboriginal youths’ on 5 April 1844. The consecration to which he referred was that of the new mission at Alder Lake (Gullillilup). He reported that ‘one of our company was deeply wrought upon and here commenced visibly what has wrought gloriously in the salvation of souls’.¹⁵² His terminology, ‘deeply wrought upon’, meant a ‘divine’ influence upon the person that produced profound distress due to a perceived need for conversion.¹⁵³ Smithies also used the word ‘visibly’ demonstrating that the experience was not hidden or private. We are here to understand that intense religious experiences were occurring. He followed these comments with the story of the Baptist minister’s son who came to him in a similarly distressed state. Smithies conferred and prayed with him, after which the son returned home. A day or two later, ‘the Lord blessed him with a sense of pardon, peace and joy’; tangible religious experiences with fruitful result. This case of conversion, said Smithies, ‘created attention and produced effect among our singers, Sabbath school scholars and others’. ‘Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth’, wrote Smithies, and then recounted a number of stories from the revival in his next two sheets of the letter. Due to their importance, some highlights of the accounts will be related below. These incidents provide an account of a pivotal moment in Smithies’ ministry, one for which he had long worked, hoped and prayed, especially since his involvement in Newfoundland revivals. The crucial role that religious experience played at this strategic time also becomes more obvious in the following reports.

Smithies reported that the next Sabbath, 21 April, that the ‘morning service was attended with divine unction’.¹⁵⁴ As evidence for this, he mentioned that some ‘under

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 5 September 1844.

¹⁵² Ibid., 26 October 1844.

¹⁵³ E.g., Wesley, *Works*, ii: 14, 218-220.

¹⁵⁴ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

the word were found weeping which led us to thank God and take courage'. On the following Wednesday, he said that 'at the same place¹⁵⁵ the work of God still went on, several of the natives were deeply wrought upon and others, one of my own children, a boy of 10 years old was brought to an acquaintance with salvation'. The conversion of their son, William Joshua (born 2 July 1833), must have been a particular joy to both parents especially since he was 'saved' in true 'Methodistical' fashion.¹⁵⁶ Smithies' expressions, 'work of God', 'wrought upon' and 'brought to an acquaintance of salvation', reveal the primary contribution of religious experience. For example, the term 'work of God' conveys the meaning of a process divinely initiated, outside human control or engineering. The second term, 'wrought upon', we noted above and the last phrase we know to mean an inner awareness of salvation vis-à-vis intellectual understanding, given the fact that the boy would have had a good understanding of salvation before this time, just as Wesley did long before his conversion.

Later that night at the Gulllililup mission, the indigenous students who had been at the morning service, 'about 10 o'clock ... commenced another prayer meeting in the girls' room and there was no breaking of it up till 2 o'clock in the morning.¹⁵⁷ O to have seen these Australians bathed in tears, broken in heart, crying, "Jesus save me. O Lord save me; come and save now" would have astounded infidels and gladdened the hearts of our English friends as it has done ours', said Smithies. His meaning here is that the phenomenon of Aboriginal Australians experiencing the same religious experiences as British Methodists defied rational explanation. It is as though they were, in James' words, carried along by 'a higher kind of emotion' and that the participant was 'a passive spectator or undergoer of an astounding process performed on him from above'¹⁵⁸ Over the next week, Smithies reported that 'several of our eldest girls were savingly converted and afterwards three of the boys'. Smithies referred to two, 'Joseph and Mary Frazer' who 'are now rejoicing together in the faith and love of our Lord Jesus Christ'. He said that the 'genuineness of their conversion' was evidenced 'by their walk and conversation'. As noted above, Smithies' ultimate gauge of conversion was a transformed life (also the goal of conversion) and demonstrates again the inseparability of religious experience from the WM mission statement.

¹⁵⁵ In this case, we take it to be the central chapel in William Street, Perth, WA.

¹⁵⁶ A term used at the time (e.g., SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 July, 1834).

¹⁵⁷ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

¹⁵⁸ James, *Varieties*, 226.

The revival affected both the indigenous people and colonists, as already noted, and continued to do so.¹⁵⁹ On Tuesday 23 April at a prayer meeting in the chapel, Smithies reported that the ‘Lord was graciously present to convince of sin. Several young friends (colonialists) were the subjects of great distress of mind, prayer was made for them, and after some time four or five of them were made happy in the knowledge of pardoning love’. Following this, in the nearby school room, ‘another prayer meeting commenced’ and ‘many of the native female scholars were in great distress, and prayed most affectingly that the Lord would save these poor miserable sinners and give them new hearts’. Smithies then told the story of one of the girls, also noted in the previous chapter, who previously had been troublesome to the mission and consequently had been refused baptism. She was one who ‘was enabled to believe in Jesus and was graciously pardoned and made so happy that she exclaimed, “O me happy now. Me love Jesus now”’. Smithies said that the ‘meeting did not close till midnight. What could we do?’ he asked. ‘We dare not restrain the Spirit’s power’. The expression, ‘wrought upon’, was again used here in relation to the ‘Spirit’s power’ in the prayer meeting and supplies a further example of religious experience. In addition, conversions and phenomenal occurrences leading to the conversions, illustrate the nature, outcome and importance of religious experiences to Smithies and WM. For example, vivid evidences were provided to participants and observers of the occurrence of conversion, and lives were transformed so that converts entered into the pathway of holiness.

The following day a girl about the same age as the one just noted who had been ‘living at Mr Waldeck’s was so wrought upon at their family prayer that there was no pacifying of her at all’. Smithies continued:

She refused to be comforted except by Jesus Christ. She left the house and came through the streets to the mission premises weeping and wailing for her sins being unconscious that any one saw her. Two of the girls on the grant (and whom God has saved) saw her or rather heard her coming immediately went out and met and brought her into the school room with rejoicing. Instead of holding school that morning a prayer meeting was instituted and after a serious struggle on the part of the native girl (No-mack) the Lord graciously took away her sins, and made her happy in his love and favour. She also exclaimed, ‘The Lord save me. O Jesus love me, me love Jesus’.¹⁶⁰

The distress experienced by No-mack, as in other cases, concluded with intense happiness in the knowledge of God’s love and forgiveness. In the light of the reported distress of many, Smithies could be accused of preaching death and damnation to

¹⁵⁹ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

produce these phenomena.¹⁶¹ However, few revivals had occurred in his ministry, and since occurrences often started in prayer meetings, and the conclusion of the experience was a state of peace in the knowledge of salvation, it is not likely that Smithies' preaching psychologically induced the distress. Consequently, Methodists attached significant meaning to religious experiences due the valuable result in participants of a sense of acceptance, peace and love, producing serenity and happiness.¹⁶² Smithies certainly did so devoting his life to preaching and to witnessing religious experiences of this kind in his members. As noted earlier, James points out the idea of a convert being acted upon by a greater power, similar to Smithies' note about the Spirit's power not being restrained, and that the girl was 'wrought upon'.¹⁶³ This 'acting upon' is a principal feature of religious experience, as James and Smithies show, and one for which there 'is too much evidence ... for any doubt of it to be possible'.¹⁶⁴

The following day, Wednesday 24 April, Smithies reported that 'The Spirit of mourning was poured out and two souls obtained mercy'.¹⁶⁵ This occurred at a capacity prayer meeting at the house of 'Brother G.' With understandable excitement Smithies declared and prayed, 'The feeling and fire are spreading from house to house. O may it run throughout the land. Many are now saying, "What meaneth this?" Whereunto will it grow? On all the earth thy Spirit shower.' Two days later, Friday 26 April, at what is now known as Tranby House, the revival came to 'Bro Hardey's' at the 'Peninsula Farm'.¹⁶⁶ Smithies said that the 'news and power of the revival had reached and affected several of his children', and in the 'afternoon the house was filled with weeping and mourning by those who sought the Lord with all their hearts'. The conclusion to all this was that after 'some two hours of praying and pleading with them, the Lord saved three of the oldest children and one servant girl and boy. Truly', declared Smithies, "'salvation came to this house" and gladdened the hearts of parents and friends who were present'. The same pattern of religious experiences in revival is noted in this account. First there was 'weeping and mourning', then came impassioned prayer followed by certainty of salvation (conversion).

It is not difficult to imagine that at the next Sunday services (class meeting at 6.30am, main service at 10.30am, and an evening service in the bush), the atmosphere would

¹⁶¹ E.g., Watts, *Dissenters*, 414–418;

¹⁶² So James, *Varieties*, 228; See also Kilian and Parker, 'Wesleyan Spirituality': 72–80.

¹⁶³ James, *Varieties*, 226.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

have been electric.¹⁶⁷ Smithies confirms this assessment writing that there was a ‘good attendance and holy expectation that God would bless the means of grace this day’. He said that the ‘people being full of expectation of good things’, he ‘preached from “This day is salvation come to this house and etc.” and the Lord was truly with us blessing his word making it useful and comforting to young converts’. Due to the ‘converted native scholars’ being ‘very anxious to sing and pray with their bush relatives’, a service was held that evening in the bush and was addressed by ‘Messrs John, Joseph Hardey and myself’, wrote Smithies. He reported a ‘gracious and powerful influence’ that ‘pervaded the congregation’, conveying a scene of communal religious experiences typical in revivals.

Then at another prayer meeting on Monday 29 April, which was conducted at ‘Bro W’ (presumably Waldeck), Smithies reported a ‘breaking and melting influence among natives and white people chiefly the young’.¹⁶⁸ He wrote that the ‘Lord blessed two or three with his pardoning love and several went home weary and heavy laden especially one of our female friends and partner of one who had long been living to God’. This lady once home, ‘at midnight after a severe struggle for liberty and peace the Lord was pleased to manifest unto her his favour and make her happy, then she could and did rejoice with her partner’. The woman’s conversion was evidenced, said Smithies, in the fact that ‘she said how she loved those whom she had hated because they had sought her salvation. Now her heart and home are open to those who love Christ’. Meanwhile, continued Smithies, up until ‘near midnight the native girls in their school room and the boys in theirs were pleading in prayer for salvation and the Lord heard them and saved some of them’. One of the boys said that ‘he felt the love of Christ’ and then ‘went out and prayed with his sister’ with such dignity that it would ‘not have disgraced a privileged European’. Afterward, the boy, whom Smithies named Robert Jowett, visited ‘one of his old employers, with whom he had lived as servant boy and said, “Mrs M. the Lord give me a new heart, will you pray with me?”’ He then addressed himself to the master and said ““you must seek new heart.” Now he prays with a feeling and power for others that is really surprising’, reported Smithies. It is noted that these accounts containing outcomes according to the WM mission statement, are charged with images of religious experience such as ‘manifest’ power, ‘felt the love of Christ’ and prayer ‘with a feeling and power’. The inseparability of religious experience and the objective of holiness, therefore, is noted again in these instances.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

The following Tuesday night on 30 April, wrote Smithies, ‘A prayer meeting was held in the Chapel’ where a ‘goodly number attended’.¹⁶⁹ He reported that the ‘Lord was present to wound and heal. Five souls were brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God’, meaning these were converted. It will be noticed in these examples and the others to date that distress over the need of salvation usually culminated in the peace of their conversion, both states may be taken as religious experiences. Smithies continued, noting again religious experience of the nature of corporate manifestation of God’s presence, saying that there ‘were fully as many more in different parts of the chapel in a similar state. Surely the Spirit of awaking is going forth among the people. “On all the earth thy Spirit shower.”’

Such were the highlights of the revival during the month of April 1844, although pre-empting his report, in the third sheet of the same letter, Smithies said,

In July last we had a gracious visitation from on high. An awakening took place among colonists and natives in our school some 30 or 40 souls were brought from sin and Satan to God and his church and though some have gone back still the majority is holding on its way.¹⁷⁰

The former journal entries were definitely in April so either he meant April and not July, or that the revival commenced in April and concluded in July. Several issues surface in Smithies’ report. These include the importance of religious experience in the conversion of Methodists and the importance of manifestations in revivals, both of which were indicators of the Spirit at work in bringing people to conversion, and as evidence of revival. Religious experiences, therefore, cannot be ignored when undertaking any study of WM missions in the first half of the nineteenth century. To Smithies, the value of religious experience was its certification of ministry success as well as its motivating passion for Christian life and missionary work and therefore expected by him as a common occurrence, its ultimate expression being revival for which he longed but saw too seldom.

Smithies arrived to take up his Van Diemen’s Land appointment in early June 1855 and was appointed to New Norfolk.¹⁷¹ His appointment there was for approximately three years until 1857.¹⁷²

The 1857 report indicated a degree of breakthrough. Smithies reported:

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 9 July 1855.

¹⁷² Archives Office of Tasmania, *Minute Book*, 7 October 1845 – 13 November 1867 (Ref: NS 499/16).

[the] work of God in this circuit is now in an improving state; the number of hearers is much increased in the circuit; our members nearly doubled, – our finances improved. Our means of grace have been seasons of refreshing; the prospects are encouraging in several parts.

The language is indicative of a micro revival evidenced by the increase but also by his expression, ‘seasons of refreshing’; evidence of the tangible presence of God in the congregations. The statistical report in the minutes bears out Smithies’ report. The total worship attendance for 1857 is given as 500; Chapels, 3; Preaching places, 5; Members, 54; and Sabbath School total, 136, a substantial increase on the previous year.¹⁷³ Aside from his reference to progress in other circuits, Smithies recorded nothing further in the annual ministers’ meeting minutes regarding religious experiences as part of conversions, personal spirituality, or revivals.¹⁷⁴ Smithies’ experiences of revival with attending phenomena recounted above will now be compared with other accounts from his era, to ascertain the congruence of his reports with others in WM.

§4.4.1 Comparisons

T. Watson Smith corroborates Smithies’ reports from Newfoundland about the 1830 revivals and provides us with more details. He says that Rev Richard Knight told of a ‘rare visitation’ at Blackhead and nearby areas when three hundred and forty people were added to the list of members.¹⁷⁵ In saying ‘rare visitation’, the reader is alerted to the presence of the phenomenal, an occurrence where religious experiences transpired. Smith’s report of the ‘awakening’ at Blackhead was the station and the year to which Smithies referred (1830). Of particular note about this awakening or revival was the ‘absence at all stages of its progress of those excesses which sometimes marred the work of revival at that day’.¹⁷⁶ The absence of excesses in this revival would not have precluded occurrences of significant phenomena; only ‘excessive’ displays were absent. WM leaders from Wesley through to Bunting were concerned to curb excesses but encouraged the ‘usual’ religious experiences such as grief over sin, rejoicing at conversion and communal manifestations of both.¹⁷⁷ In an associated mission station at this time, Rev Adam Nightingale ‘reported an addition of one hundred and fifty eight members’ to his circuit. Although the numbers do not correlate exactly with Smithies’ accounts, the time and places identify the occurrences with the same revival. Reports of

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Shortly after Smithies’ report of the New Norfolk micro revival, the minutes ceased including ‘spiritual reports’ as had been the practice in Newfoundland and Tasmanian minutes.

¹⁷⁵ Smith, *Methodist Church*, 169.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ E.g., Murray, *Revival and Revivalism*, 393–395.

selected individuals were also included by Smith.¹⁷⁸ These selections, several of which are cited above (§4.3.1), provide an assessment of the power of the revival indicating the presence of significant religious experience. The scope of the revival itself demonstrates the range of the religious experiences. In addition, this example of revival further confirms that progress in WM mission was intricately tied to religious experience and cannot be understood apart from it.

Smith provides further accounts of revivals during this time and in the areas of Smithies' ministry although not directly connected with him. The first, also mentioned by Smithies, was at Carbonear under 'John Haigh's ministry during the winter of 1829'.¹⁷⁹ He reported that the thousand-seat chapel there could not house the hearers. The result of this revival was that over the following year, 'nearly two hundred persons ... were added to the membership'.¹⁸⁰ Smith's note highlights again the connection between revivals including what we can accept to be integral religious experiences, and the progress of the mission in that the large numbers of conversions contributed greatly to the spreading of scriptural holiness through the land. In this, a picture continues to emerge of Methodism as a movement that depended on revivals with intrinsic religious experiences to fulfil its mission task.

The net increase for the entire Wesleyan mission in Newfoundland for the year 1830, as noted above, was 568! This number was due to the two revivals reported by John Haigh and Richard Knight respectively.¹⁸¹ This report corroborates with Smithies' account in his letter of 22 October 1830, and with Smith's.¹⁸² John Haigh first reported the Carbonear revival in the minutes of the Newfoundland WM district. He said,

[T]he Lord graciously visited us with a copious outpouring of his Holy Spirit, whereby many were led to cry out for mercy – several obtained redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ, the remission of their sins, and were enabled to rejoice in Him as the Lord their Saviour.¹⁸³

In this case, Haigh reported that people cried out to God 'for mercy'. The cry for mercy was literal and was common in revivals providing evidence of the emotional quotient in religious experience. He also reported the conversion of some saying, 'several obtained

¹⁷⁸ See Smith's story of George Apsey, 'the first-born child of the revival', in *Methodist Church*, 170ff.

¹⁷⁹ Smith, *Methodist Church*, 169.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

¹⁸² SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 22 October 1830.

¹⁸³ Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

redemption' and 'were enabled to rejoice in Him as the Lord their Saviour', confirming the description above of the ecstatic joy of the converted in revivals. These conversions were important to Haigh and his mission evidenced by their focus in his report of the revival. He said that the revival continued so that by the time of the 1831 Newfoundland ministers' meeting, there were 283 members of the Society including those who were 'on trial'. This figure represented an increase of 180 members since May 1829. Haigh added with 'peculiar satisfaction' that these converts were persevering in their newfound faith in spite of many obstacles, 'especially their frequently long absence from the means of grace', evidently due to their employment in fishing or sealing. Haigh's note about the perseverance of converts is common in WM revival reports challenging statements like Goodwin's that Wesleyan revivals were 'followed by an equally dramatic decrease in membership as the revival came to an end'.¹⁸⁴ Revival and its fruit of conversion, or the 'saving of souls' was undoubtedly the passion of these nineteenth century missionaries in their quest to spread scriptural holiness. Haigh continued: 'To say that the means of grace have been well attended in the time of such visitation is only to say what may be reasonably and justifiably expected'. In other words, all the meetings of the Society were enjoying healthy attendances so that the work was encouraging to Haigh as well as to the whole WM district of Newfoundland (as mentioned by Smithies in his letter dated 22 October 1830).¹⁸⁵

Richard Knight reported the second revival from Blackhead, referred to above, in which he said that expectations at the commencement of the revival 'have since been realised beyond the hopes that were then indulged'.¹⁸⁶ He also described the attitude of the people during the revival, saying,

Every hour which could be redeemed from the pressing claims of the fishery was spent in sacred duty, and if ever those sweet lines in one of our hymns, 'our days are spent in doing good our nights in praise and prayer', could be applied, it was now.

Here another feature of revival is revealed, that is, an increase in the spiritual fervour and devotion of the participants. It is this very aspect which is indicated in the word *revival*; an awakening of faith and Christian experience and thus that which was crucial to members' growth in the holiness. Once again, this shows the connection between

¹⁸⁴ Goodwin, 'Religion of Feeling': 44–49.

¹⁸⁵ SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 22 October 1830.

¹⁸⁶ Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

revivals (and therefore religious experience) and the WM mission to spread scriptural holiness.

Knight also reported that the

result of this gracious (and to us unequalled) outpouring of the Holy Ghost has been that since its commencement we have added 340 members. 270 from among them and the classes previously formed have obtained justifying grace, and a few profess to have obtained entire sanctification. The work during every stage of its progress has been exempted from those excesses which sometimes attend revivals.¹⁸⁷

There are some interesting points to draw from this quote. Knight's words 'justifying grace' meant conversion. He was saying that 270 people in a relatively short space of time were converted. His earlier expression regarding an 'unequalled ... outpouring of the Holy Ghost', portrays a powerful and spontaneous event that took place over a period of months. This fact is revealed particularly in the word 'unequalled'. We gather that this was a revival with the usual phenomena of religious experiences but, in this case, without the 'excesses'. Another interesting and important feature of Knight's report is his note that a 'few' had professed 'to have obtained entire sanctification'. As we have seen previously, instant or entire sanctification was a distinct religious experience. This revival, then, witnessed religious experiences that included instant sanctification as well as conversions, both fundamental to the mission of WM.

Subsequently, in 1834, according to Smith, 'one hundred and twenty persons' became members of the Bonavista mission station and 'the manifested presence of the Holy Spirit' was also experienced in 1839 in the same place with similar results.¹⁸⁸ The 1834 revival was also reported by Smithies in his letter above.¹⁸⁹ In addition, another revival occurred at Carbonear in 1839, this time under the ministry of John Pickavant where in an eighteen-month period one hundred and fifty people became members of the society.¹⁹⁰ This was two years after Smithies had left Newfoundland for his brief ministry interlude in England. Smith refers to Smithies' Newfoundland ministry as 'ten years' useful ministry' prior to his move to 'Western Australia, to begin there a new mission'.¹⁹¹ It can be seen from the above reports that revivals were a significant part of the Newfoundland Methodist history and reason for its growth.¹⁹² In addition, and as

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Smith, *Methodist Church*, 174.

¹⁸⁹ SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 July, 1834.

¹⁹⁰ Smith, *Methodist Church*, 173–174.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 179.

¹⁹² So Findlay and Findlay, *Parish*, 39.

noted earlier, revivals are by their nature events consisting of religious experiences on a wide scale as shown by the numbers of conversions. Smithies' ministry therefore, like his colleagues, embraced revivals and attendant religious experiences.

Other comparisons with Smithies' writings on revival from WM missions of the period include a Tongan revival. Ian Breward writes, 'a "revival" broke out in 1834 and spread rapidly through the Tongan Islands with some of the same phenomena which had marked the early stages of the Wesleyan movement in Britain'.¹⁹³ The 'Tongan Pentecost', as it was called, was said to be 'one of the most memorable outpourings of the Holy Spirit Methodism [had] ever witnessed'.¹⁹⁴ During this revival at a Tongan village called Utui, 'there came upon the congregation an overwhelming spirit of contrition'. People fell 'prostrate ... and many cried aloud in agony, some making open confession of sins'. All night 'weeping and prayers for pardon continued' but by morning there were 'shouts of joy over the assurance of God's love. Nothing like this had been seen in the Islands before; the Tongan nature was thought to be incapable of spiritual emotion so poignant.' The same pattern was repeated in village after village and it was reported that over a thousand people were converted in one day. Although the Tongan revival was 'memorable', it was by no means an isolated event in the first half of nineteenth century in Methodist mission. In Nova Scotia, Upper Canada and Lower Canada, for example, there were similar occurrences. 'The Synod of 1820, held at Liverpool [Nova Scotia]', for instance, witnessed 'an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which lasted for many months and spread its blessings over a large part of the peninsula'.¹⁹⁵ This revival was reminiscent of an earlier widespread revival in the winter of 1806–1807. At this time, 'Nova Scotia was visited by a general revival of religion' where typically 'the power of God came down upon them, and they began to pray in good earnest, with cries and tears of repentance'.¹⁹⁶ Methodist missionary, William Black, who was instrumental in the previously noted revival in Newfoundland in 1791 (the year of Wesley's death), reported that 'scarcely a family in Liverpool was untouched by this [Nova Scotian] awakening'. The claims of large numbers being converted and whether or not converts remained in the church will not be examined here in an attempt to substantiate the value of revivals. However, it can easily be demonstrated that in the places here mentioned Methodist numbers at the time and long

¹⁹³ Breward, *Churches in Australasia*, 57.

¹⁹⁴ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 305–306.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, i: 319.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, i: 312.

afterward reflect the fact that the missionaries' work was eminently successful, so that substantial credit must be attributed to the reported revivals. For example, numbers in Newfoundland show that over thirty per cent of the population were Methodist in 1901, after more than a century of missionary work and many revivals.¹⁹⁷ Revivals and their attendant religious experiences, therefore, cannot be written off as short-lived psychological aberrations.¹⁹⁸

The features of these revivals compare with those of Smithies' accounts outlined earlier. That is, deep distress of sin, loud cries from some penitents, followed by extreme joy as recipients felt the peace of forgiveness and the overwhelming sense of God's love. There is also the clear impression in each of these revivals of people being 'wrought upon', as commented on by James. Methodist terminology for the divine perspective of revivals was 'outpouring of the Spirit', making 'bare God's arm', or of the 'power of God'. There is no question that WM missionaries of this period depended on revivals for their success, and that revivals contained or were intrinsically religious experiences. That is, they were encounters with the divine whereby participants gained knowledge of God and their relationship with God.¹⁹⁹ In other words, revivals were not revivals without integral religious experiences. Therefore, in this aspect of the ministry of Methodist missionaries in the first half of the nineteenth century, may be seen the importance and meaning of religious experience in pursuit of and integrally connected to their goal to spread scriptural holiness through the land. In addition, the motivation provided for missionaries by revivals may also be readily detected.

§4.5 Conclusion:

We have seen that in personal spirituality, conversion, instant sanctification, and revivals, Smithies expected religious experiences as integral features. The meaning of such experiences were seen by him to be a benchmark of genuineness and success, as well as being constitutive of the nature and motivation of his work, so that religious experience cannot be separated from his life and ministry without making both meaningless. Smithies' experiences in this regard were the same as those expected and experienced by his colleagues in WM missions around the world. Not that religious experience was the sole criterion because, to Methodists, holiness of life was the supreme evidence and goal of Christianity.²⁰⁰ Although holiness of character was the

¹⁹⁷ Johnson, *Methodism*, 329.

¹⁹⁸ Contra Goodwin, 'The Religion of Feeling': 44–49.

¹⁹⁹ Alston, *Perceiving God*, 2.

²⁰⁰ See Wesley, *Works*, xi: 366–445, 446.

supreme benchmark and goal for WM success, it is impossible to separate the role of religious experiences from this measure.

Personal spirituality (§4.2), the first subject to be reviewed in this chapter, was observed to be enriched and even buoyed by a sense of ‘God’s presence’, which provided joy and assurance in times of hardship, consolation in the presence of pain and sickness, and solace in the face of loss. Indeed a sense of God’s presence was a principal resource for personal spirituality thereby providing recipients with profound meaning in their religious experiences. For example, the feeling of God’s presence carried with it a deep awareness of God’s love contributing to the inner holiness for which Methodists craved. In addition, we have seen first that the value of intrinsic religious experiences in conversion was its transformative power resulting in freedom from sin and selfishness to begin a life of holiness. On the other hand, Goldhawk mentions religious experience in relation to personal spirituality albeit in a cautious manner as noted above. He is sceptical about the genuineness of reports regarding the ecstatic nature of WM religious experiences although ‘not all were deceived’.²⁰¹ However, rather than simply *refer* to religious experiences in personal spirituality, this chapter has brought them forward as a significant facet of WM mission.

Second (§4.3), conversion was attested to by the ‘inner witness’, together with associated joy and peace, so that a participant *knew* that he or she had been converted. Thus, conversion was a *felt* experience and expected to be so in every participant (although it was conceded by Wesley that conscious *assurance* may not always be present).²⁰² The fact that religious experience was intrinsic to conversion being part of its transformative power and a gauge of its occurrence, and since conversion was viewed as entry into a life of holiness, the connection between religious experience and the WM mission statement is obvious. In addition, due to its ‘mystical’ nature, the Methodist conversion experience, as well other WM religious experiences, resonated with indigenous people in missions around the world. The spirituality of WM and various indigenous peoples, therefore, bore complementarities that provided an avenue of engagement for missionaries, although this pathway was not always recognised.

In addition (§4.3), we saw that a second ‘conversion’ experience, called instant sanctification, was vivid and ecstatic, contributing significant meaning to participants due to accelerating their progress in holiness although growth in holiness was also

²⁰¹ Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142 (esp. pp.122–123).

²⁰² Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 539–540; Wesley, *Works*, xiv: 348–349.

deemed by Methodists to be gradual. Palpable meaning may also be attributed to religious experience in sanctification in that its evidence and qualities consisted in the ecstatic dimension of overflowing love, relief from guilt, profound peace and sustained focus on God. Therefore, key WM goals such as personal spirituality, conversion and sanctification, each integral to the development of holiness, cannot be separated from inherent religious experiences. A statement from the WMM is conspicuous in this regard. It says, ‘And this sacred affection [referring to the love of God being ‘shed abroad in the heart’; a religious experience], thus produced, is the source of universal holiness’.²⁰³ Consequently, a new understanding is provided here regarding religious experiences and their connection with personal spirituality, conversion and instant sanctification and therefore the WM pursuit of holiness which is integral to its mission statement.

Third (§4.4), we observed that, to Methodists, revivals were potent signs that God was working on their behalf to bring about numerous conversions and revitalisation of present members. Revivals were thought to be God-initiated rather than humanly produced occurrences and were attended with phenomena which at times surprised the participants (including missionaries) themselves. The phenomena, sometimes called ‘paroxysms’,²⁰⁴ included the communal sense of God’s presence that was frequently overwhelming causing people to fall to the ground. Groaning and weeping, due to an acute awareness of sin in those affected was also witnessed during revivals. Such scenes were frequently followed by ecstatic joy as participants entered into the conversion experience. Instant sanctification occurred during revivals with similar accompanying manifestations. Revivals, then, were an intensification of Methodist ministry since conversion and instant sanctification experiences that would normally have occurred over years of regular ministry, transpired in a short space of time, perhaps in just days or weeks. Some revivals went on for months but seldom years. As such, integral religious experiences were also intensified so that revivals were viewed as significant phenomena, sometimes appearing bizarre in nature. Methodists from time to time complained of excessive emotionalism during revivals, which excesses they generally sought to avoid.²⁰⁵ As noted above, WM ministers and missionaries eagerly sought after revivals for reasons easily understood, such as considerably increased ministry results. Due to such results, revivals provided substantial motivation for WM missionaries.

²⁰³ *WMM for 1842*, 300.

²⁰⁴ See Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 513–548; Watts, *Dissenters*, 406–421.

²⁰⁵ E.g., Luker, ‘Cornish Methodism’, chap. 7.

Although some, like Goodwin, question the genuineness and longevity of the fruit of revivals, conversely, Martin Marty attributes the enormous growth of Methodism in nineteenth century North America to one word, ‘revival’.²⁰⁶ Likewise, revivals in Australia were reasonably frequent during the nineteenth century and warrant more serious attention due to their significance.²⁰⁷ Turner merely notes that revival is ‘a religious phenomenon’ and that ‘the power of the dedicated evangelist’ should not be underestimated.²⁰⁸ Further, he prefers to find ‘economic and social motivation for revival’, citing E. P. Thompson for this purpose. The aim of this section, however, is to interpret WM religious experience through Smithies’ and his colleagues’ eyes so that their meaning might come to light rather than a rationalist ethnocentric viewpoint. In addition, our purpose is to show that the presence of frequent revivals in WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth also meant the presence of religious experiences. Indeed, revival could only be known by such experiences demonstrating in part their meaning to WM missionaries. Furthermore, the fruit of revival, namely conversion and instant sanctification, were both benchmarked by and composed of religious experiences, making the occurrence of revival with attendant religious experiences crucial in pursuit of the WM mission statement to spread scriptural holiness through the land. An understanding, therefore, of religious experience in revival, adds to our understanding of WM mission in the period studied especially when connected with the mission statement, to which it provided substantial resource and motivation.

Consequently, we can say that to Smithies and the Wesleyan Methodists of his era, Christian practice and ministry apart from integral religious experiences that motivated and validated their mission, was unthinkable. In addition, we can confidently say that the achievement of the Wesleyan goal of the spread of scriptural holiness was dependent on its religious experiences without which their goal could not be realised. This was the ‘vital Christianity’ of their forefather, John Wesley. In this way, John Smithies and his colleagues were true children of Wesleyan revival, but more importantly for this dissertation, WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century was motivated, sustained and benchmarked by religious experience. Consequently, the WM mission statement to spread scriptural holiness was inseparably linked to, and crucially dependent upon religious experience, in which case, the new perception of WM mission gained here is substantial.

²⁰⁶ Goodwin, ‘Religion of Feeling’: 44–49; Marty, ‘North America’, 396–436.

²⁰⁷ E.g., Piggin, *Spirit*, 40–41.

²⁰⁸ Turner, ‘Methodist Religion’, 97–112.

§5.0. Conclusion

§5.1 Introduction

What motivated WM missionaries in the first half of the nineteenth century? What were their primary and subsidiary objectives and how did their more usually featured goal of soul saving, for example, fit into the primary mission of spreading holiness? What function did religious experience have in their life and work? What connection was there between religious experience and missionaries' motivation and objectives? These questions have supplied the impetus for this dissertation. In this chapter, after briefly recalling the methodology employed and our reasons for reappraisal, we will enumerate the results including some implications for historical research into WM mission in the nominated period.

Our methodology included an interpretive framework consisting of the WM mission statement and religious experience within which we sought to address the key questions and reappraise Methodist mission (§1.2). This framework was chosen due to the acknowledged value of its component features to the whole movement as well as its direct relationship to the main questions.¹ In other words, to discover what it was that motivated WM missionaries in this period, it was necessary to view their work through the principal means by which motivation may be uncovered, viz. their mission objective and their acknowledged source of spiritual impetus (religious experience). The other facet of our methodology was to evaluate WM mission through the eyes of missionary John Smithies utilising his correspondence to the WMMS in London from the various missions in which he had been stationed. This approach may be called microhistory, although a middle of the road approach was adopted to avoid the 'Jonesville is America fallacy'.² In other words, to ensure that discoveries about Smithies' ministry were characteristic of wider Methodist mission, comparisons were made with missionaries and WM literature from the same period. In this way, the microscopic subject, Smithies, informed the macroscopic, Methodist mission, and has done so in a more satisfactory way due to uncovering more detailed evidence. An underlying aim in examining Smithies' ministry within this framework was to discover the meaning of WM practices from within its own world view, a method that Geertz calls 'thick description'.³ The discovery of WM meaning better informs our key questions because it provides a

¹ E.g., Williams, *Welsh WM*, 37.

² Brown, 'Microhistory', 1–20; Geertz, 'Thick Description', 3–30.

³ Geertz, 'Thick Description', 3–30.

culturally relevant study and guards against anachronistic or ethnocentric interpretations.

We proposed three reasons for undertaking a reappraisal of WM mission (§1.3). The first was current interest in contemporary Pentecostalism which has revived enquiry into holiness and religious experience impacting upon the study of nineteenth century Wesleyan mission.⁴ The second reason presented was that important studies on WM mission in the nineteenth century rarely situate the mission within the framework of the holiness objective and religious experience nor deal sufficiently with these primary features. Among other examples, we mentioned the major article on ‘Methodist Missions’ by Birtwhistle.⁵ In his assessment, Birtwhistle vaguely refers to the two features of holiness and religious experience.⁶ Added to this, we mentioned that most studies on WM mission are old, or if recent, were localised studies.⁷ In addition, we noted that there is little conversation regarding the relationship between the pursuit of holiness and religious experience in WM mission. The third reason given (also noted in §1.2) was that it is only when the practices of WM mission are interpreted from within its own world view, in our case using the framework of the WM mission statement and religious experience as viewed through Smithies’ ministry, that its true nature is uncovered. This third reason combined with the other two established our basis for reappraisal.

§5.2 Findings

What has been demonstrated through Smithies’ writing that provides a reappraisal of WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century and answers the primary and subsidiary questions enquiring into missionary objectives and motivation? In addition, what implications have been raised for historical research into WM mission? In answer, there are two crucial features. The first of these, as shown through Smithies and his colleagues (§3.0), was that the WM mission statement, ‘to reform the nation, particularly the Church [subsidiary goals]; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land [primary objective]’, played a major role in influencing every facet of mission activity and endeavour, and subsequently the manner in which WM mission practices

⁴ E.g., Cox, *Fire from Heaven*; Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*; Martin, *Tongues of Fire*; Synan, *Holiness—Pentecostal Tradition*; Synan, *Century of the Holy Spirit*.

⁵ E.g., Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; Goldhawk, ‘Spirituality and Worship’, ii: 113–142; Turner, ‘Methodist Religion 1791–1849’, ii: 97–112.

⁶ Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116 (esp. p. 2).

⁷ E.g., Old: Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*; Recent: Semple, *Canadian Methodism*.

should be interpreted.⁸ For example, conversion was the entrance to holiness (i.e., gradual sanctification), instant sanctification accelerated progress in holiness, and regular society meetings, especially class meetings, were designed to build up members in holiness. In addition, attempts to reform the land and the church (facets of the WM mission statement often overlooked) were efforts integral to spreading holiness. WM missionaries, therefore, regarded the spread of holiness as their major objective in all their endeavours. As original Methodism to Wesley was a ‘holiness project’ and that ‘holiness of life ... was the aim of his life, the organising centre of his thought, the spring of all action, his one abiding project’, so it was for WM missionaries in Smithies’ time as revealed through his ministry and other examples from the period.⁹

However, it is not as though we have not known the *fact* of the WM mission statement (although completely overlooked in some important articles), and to a degree its importance has been mentioned by some authors (although where referred to, it is not usually discussed in depth, if at all).¹⁰ Nevertheless, this dissertation has established the *extent* to which the mission statement influenced the spiritual life and work of missionaries and adherents in the period reviewed. Further, it has been demonstrated that the implementation of the WM mission statement dynamically interacted with religious experience so that each complemented the other. Consequently, what has been demonstrated is the all-embracing nature and motivating force of the WM mission statement with its focus on holiness as well as its complementarity with religious experience. These findings add substantially to our understanding of WM mission in this period and subsequently raise implications regarding its interpretation.

As to the second crucial feature, through examining Smithies’ writings, it may be concluded that religious experience (§4.0), a commonly underrated and misunderstood WM characteristic, formed the nature and inspired the motivation and the outcome of Methodist spirituality and ministry. In that it was constitutive of WM spirituality, religious experience contributed greatly to its holiness endeavour and was therefore inseparable from it. In addition, conversion was composed of and detected through religious experience, as was instant sanctification. Also, the personal spirituality of Methodists, which in reality was the life of holiness, was permeated with religious experiences, and revivals were multiform religious experiences. The personal pursuit of

⁸ Mission statement in Wesley, *Works*, viii: 299.

⁹ Jennings, *Good News*, 140; e.g., Grindrod and Newton, in *WMM for 1837*, 390–396; Jackson and Newton, in *WMM for 1838*, 428–435.

¹⁰ E.g., Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*; Williams, *Welsh WMM*, 37.

holiness in WM mission, therefore, meant participation in religious experiences. Conversely, participation in religious experiences resulted in growth in holiness demonstrating a dynamic, motivational synergy between the two. This complementarity was a fundamental feature of WM mission in the period and a significant perception brought to light in the dissertation.

Although it is also true that the *existence* of religious experience has been acknowledged, though obscurely in many studies, there has been negligible conversation about its nature and how it influenced the entire mission and spiritual life of those involved in WM mission.¹¹ Additionally, there has been limited information about the relationship between the WM mission and adherents' religious experiences, and how each was implicated in the other. For example, it has been demonstrated through Smithies' writings that intrinsic to the nature and spread of holiness, religious experiences fundamentally contributed to the fulfilment of the WM goal. Consequently, through examining the nature and outcome of the WM mission statement together with religious experiences and their relationship to each other, this dissertation has articulated an important new understanding of WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century.

§5.2.1 The spread of holiness

To enlarge on the above, we found that conversion (§3.2.2) was not a final objective but, as Wesley said, it was the beginning of a life of holiness, the latter being defined as love for God and people.¹² The holiness purpose of conversion we saw first in the Newfoundland WM district minutes for 1829–1850 which commenced with a series of questions to ministerial candidates. For example, a key question asked, 'are you going on to perfection?'¹³ Smithies' prayers that righteousness would spread across the land provided another example of his goal of holiness.¹⁴ His report from Blackhead, Newfoundland, that the 'Spirit of conviction, of penitence, of holiness is graciously afforded us' demonstrates a conspicuous third instance that his goal was holiness not

¹¹ E.g., Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116; Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*; Williams, *Welsh WMM*.

¹² See Wesley, *Works*, vi: 74–75, xi: 387–388; Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, i: 32–34; Collins, *John Wesley*, 186–189; Watts, *Dissenters*, 432.

¹³ Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

¹⁴ E.g., SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 September 1829; Smithies' minute, 21 May 1834, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

conversion.¹⁵ A fourth piece of evidence regarding the supreme WM objective (holiness) was found in Smithies' use of the word 'glory'.¹⁶ The meaning attributed to this word by WM was completed redemption, or fully realised salvation (perfection).¹⁷ In a fifth example, in his conversion accounts we saw that Smithies was careful to report character transformation in the converted.¹⁸ Consequently, placing Smithies' accounts (and the five reasons drawn from them) together with the clear teachings of Wesley as well as nineteenth century WM literature on the subject, in addition to other examples in §3.2.2, there is little doubt that Smithies regarded conversion as entry into a life of holiness.¹⁹ Therefore, evidence is hereby provided that holiness was the ultimate objective rather than conversion.

This view alters an understanding of the WM objective as principally concerned with 'conversion', or 'the conversion of the world'.²⁰ Goldhawk is one author who does recognise that conversion was 'incidental' to its fulfilment in holiness and notes that it was the entrance into holiness, but he does not expand sufficiently on these comments.²¹ On the other hand, Turner only briefly mentions conversion and holiness, but he does not explain a connection between the two. Similarly, McNair and Rumley's detailed study on Smithies' Swan River ministry does not go beyond salvation, civilising and christianising as WM goals.²² Consequently, to arrive at a more complete understanding of WM mission in this period, it is necessary to comprehend the paradigm in which missionaries worked and what mobilised them. That paradigm, as shown through Smithies and contemporary WM literature, is the spread of scriptural holiness as the primary purpose of WM mission with conversion not being the goal, but entry into a lifetime pursuit of holiness.

In addition, we found that instant sanctification (§3.2.3) with intrinsic religious experiences accelerated progress in holiness to a marked level since it was thought that the experience removed sinful propensities.²³ In that it did so, the experience

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October 1840.

¹⁷ See Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 430; Watson, 'Methodist Spirituality', 172–213 (esp. pp. 176–177); Wesley, *Works*, xi: 378–379.

¹⁸ E.g., SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844; Ibid., 25 October.

¹⁹ E.g., Grindrod and Newton, in *WMM for 1837*, 390–396.

²⁰ E.g., Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116 (esp. p. 43); Beardsall, 'Fastened to the Rock', chap. 3.

²¹ Goldhawk, 'Methodist People', 113–142.

²² E.g., Turner, 'Methodist Religion', 97–112; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 30–34, 144ff.

²³ Edwards, 'John Wesley', i: 37–79 (esp. p. 61); Wesley, *Works*, xi: 396, 418, 446; e.g., *WMM for 1842*, 630, 904.

contributed greatly to the goal of holiness. Further, the cellular structure of WM as well as its other meetings, such as prayer meetings and love feasts, was designed to care for souls for the purpose of building up its members in holiness (§3.2.4).²⁴ Smithies reported a number of cases of instant sanctification in Newfoundland and throughout his letters made reference to meetings of the kind just mentioned (§3.2.3).²⁵ For example, he wrote, ‘Another obtained the blessing of sanctification and a third spoke of having received that blessing during the day.’²⁶ Regarding class meetings (§3.2.4), in one instance Smithies said that he ‘met two classes and found their experience good [meaning the genuineness of their faith and thus their progress in holiness] and encouraging such as was made a blessing to me’.²⁷ He also noted the ‘presence of God’ in class meetings implicating religious experience in the care of souls.²⁸ Comparisons with Smithies’ evidence were provided regarding instant sanctification and class meetings, showing that his understanding was typical in WM mission.²⁹

Conversion (§3.2.2), sanctification, both gradual and instant (§3.2.3), and the care of souls (§3.2.4), therefore, were subsidiary to the one end of holiness. Therefore, each of these experiences and practices, to Methodists, held the meaning of progress toward holiness rather than merely conversion to, or maintenance of their movement. It was this goal that provided their primary motivation. In addition, each of these important aspects of WM spirituality and mission were shown to be permeated with religious experiences so that without the latter (religious experience), there would have been no former (holiness). In this is revealed a complementarity between the two, and consequently, a synergy intrinsic to the motivation of WM missionaries in this period.

This review of sanctification and the care of souls adds to earlier understandings of WM mission. For example, whilst Birtwhistle’s examination of WM mission contains nothing about sanctification and the care of souls, this dissertation places sanctification and the organisation of WM, both of which consisted of religious experiences, at the forefront of its mission work to spread holiness. Also, whereas Goldhawk correctly identifies holiness as a ‘dominant feature’, the position taken in this dissertation is that

²⁴ E.g., Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 480; Wesley, *Works*, viii: 310.

²⁵ SOAS, Box 96–99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 13 December 1831, 3 December 1833, 2 July 1834, 7 December 1834, 29 January 1836; Smithies’ minute, 25 June 1832, in *Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850* (St John’s, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

²⁶ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 13 December 1831.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 9 September 1828.

²⁸ E.g., SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 13 December 1831.

²⁹ E.g., Young, *Southern World*, 259–261; *WMM for 1842*, 1059–1060.

the essence, objective and motivation of the missionary cause was holiness.³⁰ Similarly, Turner vaguely refers to sanctification.³¹ Beyond that he does not proceed. Likewise, McNair and Rumley have little to add regarding holiness, merely noting piety a number of times.³² Consequently, this dissertation provides further understanding regarding the extent of the goal of spreading scriptural holiness and therefore what motivated WM missionaries in that conversion, sanctification and the care of souls were each integral to the fulfilment of the objective. In addition, intrinsic (and inspirational) religious experiences were involved in each aspect.

Another feature demonstrated through Smithies' ministry, which we found to be part of the goal of spreading scriptural holiness, was reform of the church (§3.3).³³ The means by which Methodists sought reform of the church was through public protest, usually in the form of written articles, and setting a 'godly' example to the EC and other churches, consequently 'provoking [them] to jealousy', to 'love and good works' (Hebrews 10:24).³⁴ An example was cited from Smithies' ministry in the Swan River colony where the EC (§3.3.2) was roused from its complacency through the diligent efforts of Wesleyans there.³⁵ In addition, Smithies wrote a lengthy article that was published in the *Inquirer* as a protest against the Colonial Chaplain, J. B. Wittenoom, in which he stressed the need for clergymen to live holy lives.³⁶ It was also noted that on occasions, in addition to provoking the EC to action, Smithies expressed prayerful desires for reform of the church.³⁷ These were the pathways toward reformation utilised by WM missionaries that, as we have seen, worked at times although, as in Smithies' case, could bring opposition.³⁸ The CC (§3.3.3) was another case entirely because reform was confined mainly to conversion of individual Catholics, although Smithies' interaction with the CC was generally reactive. An earlier encounter with Catholic adherents in Newfoundland, however, demonstrated his pastoral and 'catholic spirit' as recommended by Wesley, although his and the WM's attitude were ambivalent; conciliatory to individual CC adherents, but antipathetic to the institution. Smithies'

³⁰ Goldhawk, 'Methodist People', 113–142.

³¹ Turner, *Methodist Religion*, 97–112.

³² E.g., McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 30, 151.

³³ See Kent, 'Wesleyan Methodists', ii: 213–275; Jessop, 'Mid–Nineteenth–Century', ii: 161–212.

³⁴ So Wesley, *Works*, viii: 309.

³⁵ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 16 April 1842; Aveling, 'Religious Aspect', 575–598.

³⁶ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, October 1840; *The Inquirer*, 30 September, 1840.

³⁷ E.g., SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May 1829.

³⁸ See Jessop, 'Mid–Nineteenth–Century', ii: 161–212; also, SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 8 October, 1840; 19 January 1841; *The Inquirer*, 30 September, 1840.

recorded encounters with Dissent (§3.3.4) were confined to the Swan River colony. In 1844, a Baptist minister's son was converted through his ministry, and later, a painful separation occurred in that Trigg, a Congregationalist, defected from the Swan River Methodists due to Smithies' rigorous application of WM discipline.³⁹ Although his efforts toward reform of Dissenters were therefore minimal, we noted that the EC and Dissenting churches were invigorated through Methodism and that its vision of reform of church was generally achieved. The WMM, for example, expressed such a view of itself in saying that 'Wesleyan Methodism ... has had an important bearing, directly and indirectly, upon the established Church, and upon other Christian communities', and that the 'followers of John Wesley have done much to revive pure and undefiled religion in the world'.⁴⁰ Reform of the church, therefore, was a significant component of the original WM mission to spread scriptural holiness through the land.

Reform of the church, however, is not a well-known goal of WM mission as indicated in Birtwhistle's article where in one comment he simply says there is a 'suggestion' that Wesley's followers were a catalyst in the great missionary movement of the nineteenth century.⁴¹ The work of Wesleyan missionaries such as Smithies in the Swan River, on the other hand, was marked by considerable interaction with the EC. Accordingly, McNair and Rumley report on Smithies' dealings with the Swan River EC, although they do not interpret this within a 'reform of church' framework because they are either unaware of it or it does not serve their agenda.⁴² When Smithies' experience is compared with other WM literature from the same period it becomes patently evident that the WM church in its mission to spread holiness through various lands carried on Wesley's vision of reforming the church.⁴³ Here then is another aspect of the WM mission statement the dissertation uncovers highlighting a crucial facet previously obscured and one that throws further light on missionary purpose and motivation.

Moral influence was found to be another component of the WM objective to spread scriptural holiness, as demonstrated in Smithies' writings (§3.4.2).⁴⁴ This aspect involved missionaries and members alike in various quests for the spiritual and moral reformation of communities in which they found themselves. A palpable example was

³⁹ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844; Bonnington, *Mustard Seed*, 10.

⁴⁰ E.g., 'Present Aspect', in *WMM for 1838*, 266–275; *WMM for 1835*, 515.

⁴¹ Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116 (esp. pp.1, 41); e.g., *WMM for 1835*, 452–465.

⁴² E.g., McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 53–56, 125–126.

⁴³ E.g., 'Present Aspect', in *WMM for 1838*, 266–275.

⁴⁴ Jackson and Newton, in *WMM for 1838*, 428–435; Wesley, *Works*, vi: 74–75, viii: 328–329, xi: 387–388.

Smithies' comment about the Swan River colony that, 'Those connected with your Society have more or less, in different parts of this colony, exerted a corrective, wholesome moral influence, and now though fewest, yet not least in moral worth and religious enterprize'.⁴⁵ Another example of moral influence in the Swan River colony was Smithies' non-participation in the Foundation Day activities of 1841 for the purpose of protecting his Aboriginal students from 'moral evil' and his subsequent articles in the *Inquirer* and *Perth Gazette* which forcefully presented the WM moral view.⁴⁶

Earlier research is meagre regarding the WM 'reform of land' agenda, although Turner, for example, points out the significant impact of Methodist tracts on the formation of the Victorian attitude.⁴⁷ McNair and Rumley, on the other hand, report Smithies' 'Foundation Day' incident but this is as far as they go; the WM 'reform of land' objective through moral influence is not within their brief.⁴⁸ However, as comparisons from the period readily show, reform of the land through moral influence was a common purpose on mission fields. This was demonstrated by, among other things, WM support of Temperance Societies in various mission fields, as well as its Sabbatarianism.⁴⁹

Two other measures we found had a 'reform of land' objective within the greater intention of spreading holiness (§3.4.3), namely, Aboriginal mission and Sabbath and day schools (§3.4.4). These are closely related since Aboriginal mission included Sabbath and day schools.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, as we have seen, indigenous mission was a feature of WM in this period wherever indigenous people existed.⁵¹ Aboriginal people were regarded by WM as needing reform since they had usually not been exposed to Christianity and therefore the opportunity of Christianisation.⁵² However, their goal being scriptural holiness, Wesleyans regarded all cultures in need of reform, including European, so it should not be thought strange that they desired reform for Aboriginals.⁵³

⁴⁵ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 19 January 1843.

⁴⁶ SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841 (1st Letter); *The Inquirer*, 23 June 1841; *The Perth Gazette*, 23, June 1841.

⁴⁷ E.g., Birtwhistle, 'Methodist Missions', iii: 1–116; Turner, 'Methodist Religion', 97–112 (esp. pp. 100–101).

⁴⁸ McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 56–58.

⁴⁹ E.g., Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 117; Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 155.

⁵⁰ E.g., Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 146–161.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, i: 110–124.

⁵² E.g., Bowes, 'The Australian Aborigine', 153–173; SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 18 January 1841.

⁵³ E.g., Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, i: 31–32.

Also, it was pointed out that since WM thought the way it did, their reform agenda should not be simply categorised as ‘christianising and civilising’ as that term is sometimes understood (i.e., turning indigenous people into useful members of white society).⁵⁴ Their meaning, by using the term, ‘reform of the land’, was the spread of holiness in the sense that individuals would be converted so as to love God and people with devotion and by practical actions. While this objective included soul saving, the intent of §3.4 was to demonstrate the WM reform agenda apart from soul saving, though it might include it. In Smithies’ words, instead of evil spreading through the land, a ‘wholesome moral influence’ would prevail.⁵⁵ Therefore, WM indigenous mission hoped to educate, protect and influence indigenous people to live in a Christian manner even if not converted, and to live self-sufficiently in the face of invading white settlement.⁵⁶

In addition, as noted in Smithies’ letters and suggested in Birtwhistle’s commentary, WM missionaries felt that in assisting Aboriginal people they were serving the poor according to Wesley’s example. In doing so, they were reformers aside from seeking conversions.⁵⁷ However, reforming the land in the sense of indigenous mission is not always included in earlier studies.⁵⁸ Smithies reported often on Aboriginal mission, including its reform agenda, during his fifteen-year ministry in the Swan River colony.⁵⁹ Here he employed similar methodology to other WM missionaries such as Sabbath and day schools, the mission farm model and, according to McNair and Rumley, protection of indigenous people from the ‘evils’ of white society.⁶⁰ In the instance of Smithies’ indigenous mission in the Swan River, McNair and Rumley provide a variety of examples since their study focuses on this theme.⁶¹ However, they do not relate their examples to the ‘reform of land’ agenda within the greater goal of spreading holiness being unaware, it seems, of this WM objective.

⁵⁴ E.g., Aveling, ‘Religious Aspect’, 575–598.

⁵⁵ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 19 January 1843.

⁵⁶ E.g., SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

⁵⁷ So Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; e.g., SOAS, Box 516, Smithies to WMMS, London, 20 September 1841, where Smithies reported ‘no poor’ in the Swan River colony but that in their place the indigenous inhabitants stood in need of WM assistance.

⁵⁸ E.g., Birtwhistle, ‘Methodist Missions’, iii: 1–116; Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142; Turner, ‘Methodist Religion’, 97–112.

⁵⁹ Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, 146–161.

⁶⁰ Bowes, ‘The Australian Aborigine’, 153–173; Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 146–151; McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 144ff.

⁶¹ E.g., McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 59–153.

In summary then, WM missionaries during the first half of the nineteenth century pursued a common objective to ‘reform the land’ through indigenous mission.⁶² Reform to them meant influencing an indigenous community so that Christian values predominated. It did not mean civilising indigenous people to make them suitable ‘members of white society’.⁶³ Reform of communities, indigenous or European, was an intrinsic component of the spread of scriptural holiness. Our reappraisal of WM mission highlighting this aspect is important given the lack of attention to such an important facet of its work.

Education of the young we also found to be part of the ‘reform of land’ agenda in the period under review (§3.4.4). This was evidenced by questions to ministers about their Sabbath and day schools’ progress as well as Smithies’ and his colleagues’ annual reports in the WM Newfoundland district minutes.⁶⁴ Smithies anticipated that through WM schools, a righteous influence would affect Newfoundland society.⁶⁵ In addition, Smithies felt that the ‘hope’ of the Swan River colony resided in the education process of his Wesleyan schools.⁶⁶ Education was expected to have a wholesome influence even if people were not converted. Accordingly, Sabbath and day schools were common among WM missionaries in this period being a crucial part of their reform objective.⁶⁷ The WMM provides a palpable example of the value of Sunday schools in reforming the land, saying that they are ‘most important, as religious institutions; and the good effects they have produced furnish a striking illustration ... that ... religious education ... tends to the well-being of nations’.⁶⁸ Methodists, therefore, understood that their subsidiary mission to reform the land involving Sabbath and day schools, as well as the closely related features of moral influence, reform of the church, and indigenous mission, was integral the supreme goal of spreading scriptural holiness through the land. WM interest was not solely to civilise, nor was it to add converts to Methodist membership; it was to achieve a holy society, a ‘Christian world’, one that loved God

⁶² E.g., Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 277–380; Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 148–178.

⁶³ Aveling, ‘Religious Aspect’, 575–598.

⁶⁴ E.g., Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John’s, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

⁶⁵ E.g., Smithies’ report in his minute, 20 May 1829, in Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the WM Church, 1829–1850 (St John’s, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

⁶⁶ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 10 January 1843.

⁶⁷ E.g., Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 416; Bangs, *History of the MEC*, iv: 146, 295.

⁶⁸ *WMM for 1838*, 488–489.

wholeheartedly and humankind practically, and herein is found a major component of WM missionary objective and motivation.⁶⁹

Surprisingly, in his article on WM missions, Birtwhistle does not raise the important role of Sabbath and day schools in its mission work. Similarly, Turner neglects to mention the function of Sabbath and day schools in WM missions. However, he does say that Sunday schools were a significant Methodist movement, although their influence was not as fruitful for evangelistic purposes.⁷⁰ This confirms the objective noted here, namely, one of moral influence in reforming the land aside from conversion. McNair and Rumley, on the other hand, provide ample evidence of Sabbath and day schools in the Swan River WM mission. However, they do not mention the WM aim to reform the land (nor, therefore, its part in the overall objective to spread scriptural holiness) through this means even though they recognise that the mission school ‘was to be the main [WM] instrument in the civilisation and ‘moral and religious improvement’ of the Aboriginal children’.⁷¹

Consequently, we have discovered that the WM ‘reform of land’ agenda was intrinsic to its mission to spread scriptural holiness.⁷² We have also seen that this agenda included reform of the church, moral influence, indigenous mission, and Sabbath and day schools, providing further understanding regarding subsidiary objectives and their role in WM mission. In addition, although religious experiences were not as obvious in aspects of the reform goal, they did have an impact by attracting the attention of the outside community, other churches, indigenous people and school pupils, an example being the 1844 revival in the Swan River colony reported by Smithies.⁷³ The ‘reform of land’ objective, therefore, provides another significant part of the answer to our questions regarding WM missionary objectives and motivation in this period as well as raising further implications for interpreting WM mission.

Therefore, in answer to our first and second questions, missionaries were motivated in the first instance by their primary objective, holiness. It was their passion for holiness in their personal spirituality, their soul saving, their care of souls, their reform agenda, both reform of the church and of the land, that gave them impetus. In that holiness and

⁶⁹ See Wesley, *Works*, v: 45; Jennings, *Good News*, 139–156; Kent, ‘Wesleyan Methodists’, ii: 213–275; Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 28.

⁷⁰ Turner, *Methodist Religion*, 97–112 (esp. pp.101–104).

⁷¹ E.g., McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 59–84 (esp. p. 60).

⁷² E.g., Davies, ‘Our Doctrines’, i: 147–179; Grindrod and Newton, in *WMM for the year 1837*, 390–396; *MM for 1827*, 327.

⁷³ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

its propagation was their objective, it was not solely conversions, christianising or civilising, moralising, or proselytising. It will be recalled that holiness to Methodists was not simply ‘moral rectitude’, although this is how its Victorian manifestation is often interpreted by twenty-first century minds; it was in essence, love; fervent love for God, and compassion for people, which included service to the poor. In their holiness objective, therefore, is found a major ingredient of their motivation. The implication of these findings is crucial in respect to the manner in which WM mission in the period surveyed here is interpreted. For example, to accomplish anything resembling a sound analysis, WM mission cannot be simply assessed as a ‘conversion enterprise’, but as a ‘holiness project’ from start to finish.⁷⁴

§5.2.2 Religious experience

Our next range of findings relates to the nature and function of religious experience. Through Smithies’ writings and that of his Methodist contemporaries (§4.2) it was shown that religious experiences enriched the personal spirituality of WM missionaries, providing consolation, peace and strength during times of loss, hardship and trial. In addition, religious experiences generated joy, love and the ‘felt’ companionship of God’s presence in daily routines and in ministry activities. The under girding nature, therefore, of religious experiences in personal spirituality, served to enliven, vivify and sustain it as exemplified in Smithies’ first letter from Newfoundland where he spoke of ‘the enjoyment of the presence of Christ’ in the face of his missionary sacrifices.⁷⁵ In another letter he wrote, ‘[I] enjoyed one of the happiest winters I ever did. His presence makes a paradise!’⁷⁶ These, then, were the treasured meanings of religious experience to Methodists. In addition, it was shown that Wesleyans felt that the conscious presence of God taught them more about God and thus assisted them to grow closer to God.⁷⁷ Consciousness of God’s presence, a religious experience, was thus a sign to them of their progress. A connection between progress toward holiness is patently observed here since the consciousness of God (religious experience) brought participants closer to God (deepened spirituality and therefore progress in holiness).⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Carey, *Believing*, 48; Jennings, *Good News*, 140.

⁷⁵ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 9 September 1828.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 12 May, 1829.

⁷⁷ E.g., Humphries, ‘Biography: Memoir of Mrs Lobdell’, 192–204; SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 September 1829; *WMM for 1842*, 902.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

For the above reasons, the power and place of religious experiences (sometimes called religious affections) cannot be underestimated in the WM member and missionary.⁷⁹ This raises significant implications in that any enquiry into WM mission that does not fully take this into account presents only a partial picture and interpretation of the meaning of Methodism as a movement. Strangely, previous discussion about religious experience has been minimal. Goldhawk cautiously concedes to ‘gratitude, joy, confidence, love, peace and expectation’, but lacks a perception of their ecstatic nature and widespread occurrence. He also says that ‘this period would [not] be complete without reference to such events’, meaning religious experiences, but ‘reference’ is the extent to which Goldhawk goes.⁸⁰ However, rather than mere ‘reference’, our purpose has been to bring to the fore as completely as possible this neglected facet of WM mission. In revealing the meaning of religious experience in personal spirituality as understood by Methodists, we will help to fill a gap in our understanding regarding its primacy as well as its relationship to the mission statement and thus a significant cause of motivation in WM missionaries of the period.

Further, we found that religious experience was shown in Smithies’ ministry to be integral to conversion, instant sanctification and revivals (§4.3).⁸¹ It was important for WM Christians to undergo a tangible conversion because the nature of the experience gave it a transformative outcome.⁸² One example was Smithies’ report of a conversion in Newfoundland regarding which he said, ‘such an instance of the power of God to save I scarcely ever saw before’.⁸³ In addition, the empirical nature of the experience provided a means by which conversion was detected. The ‘witness of the Spirit’ in a converted person affirmed to Methodists that conversion had indeed taken place.⁸⁴ Consequently, religious experience within conversion was expected and sought as a benchmark as well as an agent of transformation and consequently demonstrates the meaning and importance of these experiences to WM. Since religious experience by its nature was transformative in conversion (as well as in other experiences such as sanctification), the inseparable link between it and the primary goal of holiness is palpable. The WMM provided an example of this link when it said, ‘And this sacred

⁷⁹ For the term ‘religious affection’, see Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1984), i: 234–343.

⁸⁰ Goldhawk, ‘Methodist People’, ii: 113–142 (esp. pp.122–123).

⁸¹ See Watson, ‘Methodist Spirituality’, 172–213; ‘Plain Account’, in Wesley, *Works*, xi: 366–446; *WMM for 1842*, 900–906.

⁸² E.g., Wesley, *Works*, iii: 235.

⁸³ E.g., SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 12 May, 1829.

⁸⁴ E.g., Wesley, *Works*, xii: 100; *WMM for 1842*: 124ff, 292ff, 392ff.

affection’, speaking of the love of God poured into the heart (Romans 5:5), ‘is the source of universal holiness’.⁸⁵ In light of this statement, it is surprising that discussion is negligible in the literature regarding a direct link between religious experience and holiness. Nevertheless, as the WMM quote shows, this was the meaning of religious experience to Methodists in that period.

As mentioned earlier, although the supreme benchmark of conversion was character transformation resulting in a life of devotion to God (holiness), that conversion was an experience there was no doubt. As noted in §4.3, an important feature connected with this was the ‘process’ by which conversion was achieved. Seekers after conversion were advised to attend to the means of grace and to pray for a ‘new heart’ until they knew they had received it. An example was Smithies’ conversation with a Baptist minister’s son in the Swan River colony.⁸⁶ The result in his case was conversion a few days afterward evidenced by peace and a sense of pardon. Hence, as James said, conversion was regarded as divinely derived; the seeker receiving conversion ‘from above’.⁸⁷ It is important to note this understanding to prevent an anachronistic interpretation of WM due to present-day conversion practices within Evangelicalism.⁸⁸

In addition, we found that religious experience was intrinsic to instant sanctification (§4.3) and was much like conversion. In one example from Smithies’ Newfoundland ministry he wrote, ‘We have seen the awakened mind, the troubled heart, the pardoned soul, and rapturous joy of those made perfect in love’.⁸⁹ Hence, sanctification bore the same characteristics as conversion, except that it occurred subsequent to it and for this reason it was frequently called second blessing. However, instant sanctification was also called ‘made perfect in love’, ‘the blessing of sanctification’, ‘entire sanctification’, and the ‘blessing of holiness’, among other titles.⁹⁰ As indicated by these designations, the experience contributed greatly to Methodists’ goal of holiness confirming again the close connection between their mission statement and religious experience. Characteristics of instant sanctification, which can be seen to constitute a major part of the WM holiness goal, were an often overwhelming sense of love, peace, and fixed

⁸⁵ *WMM for 1842*, 300.

⁸⁶ SOAS, Box 517, Smithies to WMMS, London, 26 October 1844.

⁸⁷ James, *Varieties*, 226.

⁸⁸ Murray, *Pentecost – Today*, 50; Bennett, *Altar Call*, 163–176.

⁸⁹ SOAS, Box 99, Smithies to WMMS, London, 29 January 1836; Wesley, *Works*, ii: 528, iv: 254–255, vi: 52–54.

⁹⁰ E.g., *WMM for 1838*, 122, 407, 412, 442; Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 395–396; Synan, *Holiness—Pentecostal Tradition*, 6–7; Watson, ‘Methodist Spirituality’, 172–213 (esp. pp. 203–206).

attention on God and the things connected with God, as well as consistent serenity.⁹¹ These features we gather to be the meaning to Methodists of religious experiences associated with instant sanctification and provide further enlightenment as to missionary objectives and motivation.

The place and nature of religious experience in instant sanctification has not attracted concentrated attention as shown in Goldhawk's comment regarding 'emotional excitement' and his caution about delusion amidst the admitted genuine.⁹² His review of Samuel Drew's 'sober and analytical' list, namely, 'gratitude, joy, confidence' etc., is far from resembling the ecstatic experiences in Smithies' letters and in the WMM and MM.⁹³ His comments are typical of previous limited and cautious discussion on religious experience in WM from the period reviewed, and consequently why we have sought to provide a reappraisal of WM mission by showing the role of religious experience in instant sanctification and, therefore, its contribution to spreading holiness, including its motivational character to missionaries.

Further, we found that revivals consisted of all the religious experiences noted above only of a more intensified nature and in a communal setting (§4.4).⁹⁴ The fruit of revivals, therefore, was enriched spirituality, conversion and sanctification of the nature just described, but on a larger scale since revival by its very character occurred among communities, churches or districts. Revivals were eagerly sought due to consequent growth in all the areas mentioned, as well the size of the result, usually affecting dozens if not hundreds of people, as cited in Newfoundland revivals, and even thousands of participants over a short period of time.⁹⁵ Concomitantly, the scale of the fruit from revivals with their integral experiences accelerated growth in holiness, further demonstrating the close connection between religious experience and the WM mission statement.⁹⁶ Since revivals were frequent among Methodists in the nineteenth century, as indicated by the many accounts in each WMM, and since religious experiences were

⁹¹ E.g., SOAS, Box 98, Smithies to WMMS, London, 2 July, 1834; *WMM for 1837*, 121ff, 155, 202, 407, 412, 442.

⁹² Goldhawk, 'Methodist People', ii: 113–142.

⁹³ E.g., *MM for 1827*, 326–327.

⁹⁴ See Hylson-Smith, *Church in England*, ii: 119–168 (esp. p. 119).

⁹⁵ E.g., Extract from letter sighted 14 July 2004 at United Church Archives, St John's, NL: SOAS, Box 97, Smithies to WMMS, London, 22 October 1830.

⁹⁶ E.g., Minutes of the Newfoundland District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1829–1850 (St John's, NL: United Church of Canada Archives).

intrinsic to revivals, the prevalence of religious experiences in WM mission is patently demonstrated.⁹⁷

Religious experiences in revivals occurred in conversion and instant sanctification, but added to these was the communal sense of the presence of God including tears, groaning and prostrations, which some have termed paroxysms.⁹⁸ There were excesses in revivals that WM spurned. Of course, in the view of some writers, all Methodist revivals were excessive.⁹⁹ However, from the WM point of view there were acceptable manifestations and these resulted in valuable outcomes.¹⁰⁰ Excesses, on the other hand, were considered by WM to be fanaticism. Nevertheless, WM sought for and experienced frequent revivals on its mission fields and in Britain in the first half of the nineteenth century.¹⁰¹ Whatever assessment may be made concerning these revivals, they formed a crucial part of WM in this period and must be taken seriously when studying its mission.¹⁰²

Typical of a range of discussion on WM revivals of that era, Turner merely says, 'Periodic revivalism was always a feature of nineteenth-century Methodism', and that revival was 'a religious phenomenon'.¹⁰³ Further, he adds that it 'is tempting to seek economic and social motivation for revival', and presents some examples including from E. P. Thompson. His rationalist and minimalist approach is representative of discussion regarding the nature and benefit of religious experiences in WM revivals of this period and especially their connection to the WM holiness objective. Similarly, although McNair and Rumley report objectively on the 1844 revival in the Swan River mission, and do so in some detail, they make little commentary on reported religious experiences, nor do they connect them to the WM mission statement.¹⁰⁴ Some other studies on revival try to explain the reasons behind the phenomena from a rationalist viewpoint rather than analyse their nature and the associated religious experiences as WM viewed them.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁷ E.g., Luker, 'Cornish Methodism', chap. 7; *WMM for 1835*, 291, 375–377, 450, 563, 955; *WMM for 1842*, 57, 59, 686, 718, 1038.

⁹⁸ Hylson-Smith, *Church in England*, ii: 119–168; Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 513–548.

⁹⁹ E.g., Goodwin, 'Religion of Feeling': 44–49, Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 513–548; Thompson, *English Working Class*, 385–440.

¹⁰⁰ Murray, *Revival and Revivalism*, 391–398.

¹⁰¹ E.g., *WMM for 1835*, 291, 375–377, 450, 563, 955; *WMM for 1842*, 57, 59, 686, 718, 1038.

¹⁰² So Wakefield, *Methodist Spirituality*, 40.

¹⁰³ Turner, 'Methodist Religion', 97–112.

¹⁰⁴ E.g., McNair and Rumley, *Aboriginal Mission*, 97–101.

¹⁰⁵ E.g., Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 513–548; Thompson, *English Working Class*, 385–440; Watts, *Dissenters*, 406–421.

The manifestations of religious experience occurring throughout WM missions and on the home front (Britain) during this period were expected by Methodists and regarded by them as a crucial part of the movement's essence and strength in their mission and progress toward the goal of holiness. Indeed, they viewed these manifestations as 'the seed of a world wide expansion', a sign of revived NT Christianity and an authentication of their doctrine and practice.¹⁰⁶ 'Experimental religion', to Methodists, was important 'above all'.¹⁰⁷ WM was a mystical movement by any measure due to its expectation of frequent religious experiences.¹⁰⁸ Its mysticism gave it appeal, certainly to indigenous people but also to working and artisan classes, albeit the rich and respectable were not as enamoured, especially later in the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁹ However, for the 'outport culture' of Newfoundland, indigenous people in the Swan River colony, the indigenous of the Pacific Islands as well as Amerindians of Upper Canada during the period reviewed here, religious experiences were initially an attraction and, to those who converted, the essence of their WM Christianity and a major component of their holiness objective.¹¹⁰ To WM missionaries of the first half of the nineteenth century, therefore, religious experience was deemed essential to personal spirituality, conversion, sanctification, (both gradual and instant), revivals, and consequently to the missionary impetus and achievement of their mission statement. Religious experience, therefore, was a crucial, interrelated component of their entire missionary endeavour and provides important answers to our primary and subsidiary questions.

Consequently, an implication for historical enquiry is that to obtain an adequate understanding of the character of WM mission, careful examination and subsequent emphasis of its religious experiences is obligatory. Methodist mission cannot be studied in isolation from its experiential nature as if the movement consisted of a sequence of practices and events to be reported, categorised and commented on. Underlying its activity was a strongly flowing life force that a researcher ignores at the expense of a satisfactory outcome. This, then, was the prominent function of religious experience in

¹⁰⁶ E.g., Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, 420–436; Townsend et al., *Methodism*, ii: 287, 421; Wesley, *Works*, viii: 4–5, 103–107.

¹⁰⁷ So Townsend et al., *Methodism*, ii: 421.

¹⁰⁸ E.g., Davies, *Worship*, iv: 216; Townsend et al., *Methodism*, i: 27–62; Watson, 'Methodist Spirituality', 172–213; Whaling, *John and Charles Wesley*, 10;

¹⁰⁹ E.g., Davies, *Worship*, iv: 262; Plumb, *England*, 95; Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 166; Williams, *Welsh WMM*, 37.

¹¹⁰ Beardsall, 'Fastened to the Rock', part 1; Findlay and Holdsworth, *History of the WMMS*, iii: 305–306; Semple, *Canadian Methodism*, 166.

WM mission, but not entirely. The holiness objective and the religious experience quotient were so closely related that they formed a complex synergy. For example, to pursue a holiness objective meant participation in religious experiences. Conversely, to participate in religious experience meant growth in holiness. Mission was motivated, therefore, by the complex interaction of these two features. However, to quote Wesley, ‘but still holiness was their point’.¹¹¹ Subsequently, implications relating to the holiness objective, religious experience and the relationship between the two are significant for historical investigation into WM mission, and therefore must not only be included but highlighted in some detail.

§5.3 Finale

If it is true that the WM mission statement, ‘to reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land’, influenced every WM mission practice and endeavour in the manner shown in this dissertation as demonstrated through Smithies’ ministry (together with provided comparisons), then a substantial finding has been here provided.¹¹² In addition, if religious experience in all of its aspects was such an integral feature of WM spirituality and mission that it characterised the movement suffusing all of its activities, providing motivation, encouragement, and empowerment as well as evidence of ministry success, then an additional and crucial understanding has been uncovered adding to our knowledge of WM mission in the period reviewed. These two findings are sufficient to establish an innovative view of WM mission in the first half of the nineteenth century; one that answers the key questions of the dissertation as well as raising significant implications for future studies in that holiness and religious experience should not only be seriously investigated but accentuated.

However, this investigation has also demonstrated that the interaction between the WM mission statement and religious experience was of such a nature that one could not exist without the other, and that together they formed a synergy. Therefore, and even more significantly, if the mission statement which influenced every WM missionary endeavour, included and was largely dependent on religious experience, and conversely, if religious experience derived its meaning and existence from the pursuit of holiness so that each synergistically interacted with and was dependent on the other as this dissertation asserts, then an additional and substantial understanding has come to light

¹¹¹ Wesley, *Works*, viii: 299–300.

¹¹² Mission statement in Wesley, *Works*, viii: 299.

here. Consequently, these findings contribute considerably to existing knowledge of WM mission through rediscovering the place, nature, outcome and interdependence of the WM mission statement and associated religious experience as demonstrated from Smithies' writings and other examples from the period. This being the case, any evaluation of WM or its mission is obligated to not only include but make prominent this crucial complementarity.

The following words of missionary John Smithies provide an apt summary of the spirit of Methodist mission from the period as well as indications of the mission objective and religious experiences. Regarding the 1830 revival in Conception Bay, Newfoundland, he said,

The good work of God is prospering in an astonishing manner in this Bay. The fire of heavenly love is burning rapidly and brightly on the many suburbs of our station. May we have already the droppings of showers from above. 'May the Lord shortly pour all the Spirit of his love.' More than 500 souls have been brought out of the world into the church since the District Meeting, and most of whom are savingly converted to God, and it seems to be the conviction and opinion of the Brethren that ere our next District m the labours of the Mission, will be crowned with not less than 1000 souls. 'Praise the Lord O our souls and forget not His benefits towards us.' May the Lord ride on until all are subdued and the universe filled with the glory of God.¹¹³

¹¹³ SOAS, Box 96, Smithies to WMMS, London, 22 October 1830.

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