

**Shell-shocked Prophets: The influence of former Anglican army chaplains on the Church of England and British society in the inter-war years.**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

The role of Anglican army chaplains in inter-war church and society will be examined and judgements made on the extent to which their ideas and actions were influenced by their war-time experiences, leading to an impact on the inter-war Anglican Church and British society. The extent to which the intervention of the Church of England in social and industrial issues in the inter-war years was shaped by the activities and opinions of former chaplains will be examined using examples such as as in the work of the Industrial Christian Fellowship and Toc H. The significance of former chaplains in rituals of remembrance and the development of pacifism will be assessed and their contribution to discussions on ecclesiastical controversies such as Prayer Book revision and unity will be analysed. Similarly their views on marriage, divorce, contraception and the proper uses of the new media will be judged in the light of their impact of their thoughts on wider opinion.

The conclusion will make a judgement on the practical and ideological impact of their ideas and actions. It will be argued that they were a significant minority who became the catalyst for change.

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## Introduction

Robert Keable, <sup>1</sup>an Anglican army chaplain writing in 1919, said of chaplains returning from the front: "It is inconceivable that they will not make an upheaval: if they do not, it will be the central disappointment of my life."<sup>2</sup> F. R. Barry, <sup>3</sup>writing in 1970, looking back over his life and ministry, argued that: "The social and religious revolution started on the Somme and the Salient."<sup>4</sup> These quotations are indicative of the mixed feelings and expectations of army chaplains on their return from the Great War and the awareness throughout their ministry that their experiences at war had shaped them irrevocably. There is a clear sense that a new era had begun in which the chaplains, changed and in some ways strengthened by their experiences, were more self-consciously aware of the part they were to play in post-war church and society.

The role of the Anglican army chaplain during the Great War has received increasing attention from military and religious historians in recent years. The derogatory comments about Anglican chaplains which gained credence in the inter-war years as a result of accounts of the war by authors such as Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves and Guy Chapman, have to a great extent been refuted by Michael Snape and Edward Madigan. They have used a multiplicity of sources to paint a different picture, showing the way in which chaplains sought to adapt to their changing roles during the war and were able to provide spiritual and

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Keable had been teaching at St Andrew's Missionary College in the diocese of Zanzibar and served as a missionary in Basutoland until May 1917 when he was commissioned as a chaplain to the South African Labour Corps and was sent to France, serving mainly at Le Havre, M.F.Snape, "Church of England Army Chaplains in the First World War: Goodbye to ' Goodbye to All That'" *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 62, No. 2, April 2011, p.328

<sup>2</sup> Robert, *Wartime Reflections in France and Flanders* (London, 1919), p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> F. R. Barry, TCF 1915-1919, DSO 1916. Deputy Assistant Chaplain General, *Crockford's Clerical Directory*.

<sup>4</sup>F. R. Barry, *Period of My Life* (London, 1970), p. 56.

material help to the troops. During the war 3,030 Anglican chaplains served in the army,<sup>5</sup> so it can be seen that their return to their peace time positions was likely to have an effect on the life of the Anglican Church.

The chaplains who served in the army returned to a wide variety of church posts, bringing with them their experiences and expectations. Evidence from *Crockford's Clerical Directory*<sup>6</sup> shows them serving as parish priests, in Cathedral Chapters, teaching in schools and universities, as chaplains in prisons and hospitals and as full time workers for national institutions such as Toc H and the Industrial Christian Fellowship. A substantial number were destined to achieve positions of significant influence as Bishops, Deans, chaplains to the King and to be instrumental in matters concerning the influence of the church in industrial and political issues. Chaplains will be shown to have had an influence on Prayer Book revision, developments in theological thinking, moves towards church unity as well as having an important part to play in the resolving of industrial tension. Changes in society such as new divorce laws, the acceptance of contraception, and the responsible use of new media were aspects of the inter-war years which former chaplains were to involve themselves in. They were also influential in shaping attitudes to rituals of remembrance in the 1920s and attitudes to pacifism in the 1930s. Given the changes that occurred in the Church of England, institutionally, liturgically and in its attitudes to a rapidly changing society, it is important that the role of former chaplains should be examined and their significance analysed. Many of the chaplains considered in this thesis, especially those men who became national figures, were well- connected in the pre- war church and some reached senior rank in the war-time

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<sup>5</sup>M. Snape, *The Royal Army Chaplains Department, 1796-1953, Clergy Under Fire* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 184.

<sup>6</sup> *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, 1940.

Army Chaplains' Department (AChD). This is significant, as an important part of any debate surrounding the role of former chaplains is the extent to which their post-war activities were influenced by their war experiences alone, or had their roots in their background, training and pre-war careers. Also to be considered is the argument that the impact of the returning chaplains, being largely<sup>7</sup> of the younger generation of the pre-war clergy, might have been as a result of their youthful enthusiasm for reform, as evidenced by the actions of younger clergy who did not become chaplains, for example William Temple.<sup>8</sup> However, it will be argued that in the inter-war years the impact of former chaplains was not merely a generational issue, but was enhanced by their experiences in an unprecedented global conflict which gave their actions and opinions more moral authority than would otherwise have been the case. This question of the impact of former chaplains must be considered in the context of debates about the effect that the war had on British society as a whole and on the Church of England in particular. F. R. Barry realised this when he commented: "The question of religion after the war was part of the very much bigger question about England itself after the war."<sup>9</sup>

Questions about the way in which returning chaplains functioned as positive elements in many areas of church and national life can be answered by examining them in the wider context of the results of war on the economic, social and psychological condition of the British people and the way in which the church as a whole functioned in the inter-war years. There was an enduring idea in the twentieth century that the pre-war Edwardian

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<sup>7</sup>Men such as H. Southwell, L.H. Gwynne, B. Keymer and T. B. Hardy could have been considered to be in the older generation of pre-war clergy.

<sup>8</sup>William Temple, editor of *The Challenge* 1915-1918, secretary to the National Mission of Repentance and Hope, 1916, chairman of the Life and Liberty Movement 1917, Bishop of Manchester 1920, Archbishop of York 1929-1942, Archbishop of Canterbury 1942-1944 *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 1518.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 61.



years represented a halcyon era in which “there was an ordered way of life, a law, a temple, a city - a civilisation of sorts ..... a progressing and expanding civilisation.”<sup>10</sup> Juliet Nicholson has written of the ideas prevalent: “Some said that the twentieth century did not begin until 1914, that the extended Edwardian Idyll had lulled the English into a sense of that not only was everything all right with the world, but that it always would be.”<sup>11</sup> She continued by pointing out, as other historians have done that “In fact the structure of society had been changing, sometimes imperceptibly and sometimes ..... with great drama.” Although it is questionable the First World War represented a watershed after which everything changed the perception that this was the case fed into the inter-war years, which Richard Overy has described as “civilisation in crisis.”<sup>12</sup>

The effect of the war on British society has been the subject of controversy. Adrian Gregory and Dan Todman have produced evidence of benefits and improvements to the lowest sections of British society. Todman has shown that, “For many Britons, the war was the healthiest time of their life. War time changes in social policy and behaviour meant better health care for many civilians and in particular, better diet and medical attention for their children.”<sup>13</sup> Jay Winter has taken the infant mortality figures from the years 1914-1918 as evidence that material well-being had improved.<sup>14</sup> Gregory shows that “In face of often fierce middle class hostility members of the working class fought a modest war within the war, in the first instance to prevent intensification of exploitation and secondly to claw a

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<sup>10</sup>Leonard Wolf, cited in R. Overy, *The Morbid Age: Britain and the Crisis of Civilisation, 1919- 1939*(London, 2009), p. 2.

<sup>11</sup>Juliet Nicholson, *The Great Silence: 1918-1920 Living in the Shadow of the Great War* (London, 2010), p. 2.

<sup>12</sup>Richard Overy, *The Morbid Age: Britain and the Crisis of Civilisation, 1919-1939*, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup>Dan Todman, *The Great War, Myth and Memory* (London, 2007), p. 45.

<sup>14</sup>Figures cited in Adrian Gregory in *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (London, 2008), p. 288.

modest amount of benefit from the situation. ”<sup>15</sup>He says that at the end of the war one in three workers was unionised.<sup>16</sup>

Both Gregory and Todman have refuted the idea that every family was affected by death on the battlefield and also that the flower of English manhood had disappeared. Both have sought to minimise the effect of war losses on the psyche of the nation, Todman by a statistical analysis of deaths, and Gregory by work on the concept of mourning becoming institutionalised and nationalised. Richard Overy, in his book, *The Morbid Age* describes the collective anxieties of “Cassandras and Jeremiahs who helped to construct the popular image of the interwar years as an age of anxiety doubt and fear.”<sup>17</sup> He argues that this nihilism was not the product of an intellectual fringe but gained widespread acceptance as “one of the defining features of contemporary culture.”<sup>18</sup> The main strands examined are “Fear of eugenic disaster, the diseases of capitalism, the dark side of the human mind, the inevitability of conflict, the powerlessness of reason and the fear of political extremism.”<sup>19</sup> In contrast, Martin Pugh in *We Danced All Night*,<sup>20</sup> Roy Hattersley in *Borrowed Time*<sup>21</sup> and, to a certain extent, Juliet Gardiner in *The Thirties*,<sup>22</sup> stress the wide variations of experience in the inter-war years, including new social trends, low prices, the growth of new light industry and new housing, as well as describing the plight of the economy, the effect of strikes and rising unemployment. However much they may differ in their perspectives and conclusions, the need to examine the role of the church and of the former chaplains is emphasised by the

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 288.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>17</sup>Overy, *Morbid Age*, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 364.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 364.

<sup>20</sup>Martin Pugh, *We Danced all Night; A Social History of Britain Between the Wars* (London, 2008).

<sup>21</sup>Roy Hattersley, *Borrowed Time: The Story of Britain Between the Wars* (London, 2007).

<sup>22</sup>Juliet Gardiner, *The Thirties, An Intimate History of Britain* (London, 2010).

fact that these general, cultural histories of Britain in the inter-war years have very little to say about the Church of England or its clergy.

## **Historiography**

Any consideration of the way in which former chaplains had an impact on religion and society in the inter-war years must take into account the debate concerning the secularisation of society in the twentieth century, as the success or failure of the Anglican Church, including former chaplains should be seen in the light of changing ideas about religion in British society over a longer period. Hugh McLeod has questioned the views of Alan Gilbert, Robert Currie and John Kent who considered that the Victorian era saw increasing secularisation. He points to the fact that in the period 1902 - 1914 the percentage of Anglican baptisms to live births was 66 - 70%. This figure had risen in late Victorian Britain reflects the “process by which the Church of England put down roots in relatively newly-formed working class communities.”<sup>23</sup> Callum Brown’s work has denied that secularisation was necessarily the result of industrialisation and has called into question the concept of increasing secularisation occurring until the 1960s when it was exacerbated by the rise of feminism, cultural change and the growth of the permissive society.<sup>24</sup>

Jeffery Cox<sup>25</sup> and Sarah Williams<sup>26</sup> have completed in-depth studies of areas of London which set out to prove that the church was active in society and in many ways

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<sup>23</sup>Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Society in England 1850-1914* (London, 1996), p. 78.

<sup>24</sup>Callum Brown, *Religion and Society in Twentieth Century Britain* (London, 2005), Chapter Six.

<sup>25</sup>J.Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society - Lambeth 1870- 1930* (Oxford, 1982).

encouraged a close relationship with the church and the local population. Snape is of the opinion that Christianity “continued to exert a powerful and even defining influence on national and individual life.”<sup>27</sup> This assessment of the strength of religion and the Church of England in these areas forms an interesting backdrop to the attempts of the returning chaplains to show the relevance of the church in the parishes to which they returned.

The role of chaplains in the war has been discussed by Alan Wilkinson, whose book *The Church of England in the First World War* presents a detailed account of the role of the Church during the conflict. He is inclined, however, to emphasise the difficulties and failures experienced by the chaplains such as the paradox of role confusion,<sup>28</sup> whereas Snape’s work on the role of the chaplains during wartime is more positive, stressing the adaptation of chaplains to changing circumstances and emphasising the perception of the army commanders that the role played by the chaplains was of benefit to morale.<sup>29</sup> This theme has been continued in Edward Madigan’s recent work.<sup>30</sup> The in-depth considerations that these historians provide into the thoughts, actions and motivations of the chaplains in wartime enables debate on the effect of their wartime experiences to be formulated. Wilkinson’s book includes a discussion of the influence of former chaplains on rituals of remembrance, while Madigan’s has a chapter giving an overview of the post-war activities of Anglican chaplains, with some case studies of the more famous characters.

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<sup>26</sup> Sarah Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture: A Study of the South London Borough of Southwark 1880-1930* (Oxford, 1999).

<sup>27</sup> Michael Snape, *God and the Soldier, Christianity and Society in the Modern World* (London, 2005), p. 242.

<sup>28</sup> A. Wilkinson, ‘The Paradox of the Military Chaplain’, *Theology*, (1984), p. 249.

<sup>29</sup> Michael Snape, *The Royal Army Chaplains Department: Clergy under Fire* (London, 2007), p. 260 and *God and the British Soldier*, Chapter 6.

<sup>30</sup> E. Madigan, *Faith Under Fire, Anglican Army Chaplains and the Great War* (New York, 2011).

Recent works which deal with the general history of the Church of England during this period include those by Keith Robbins<sup>31</sup> and Adrian Hastings.<sup>32</sup> Recent relevant biographies include John Kent's work on William Temple,<sup>33</sup> although for biographical accounts of some of the major Anglican figures one has to look to the 1960s and 1970s for such examples as Charles Smyth's biography of Cyril Foster Garbett,<sup>34</sup> F. R. Barry's work on Mervyn Haigh,<sup>35</sup> and Dillistone's biography of Charles Raven.<sup>36</sup> As a detailed guide to the general history of the Church of England in these years, Roger Lloyd's history of the Church of England up to 1965 is still relevant and informative.<sup>37</sup> Controversies surrounding liturgy and the revision of the Prayer Book are covered by John Maiden in his examination of the events of 1928.<sup>38</sup>

The role of the church in society has been examined by John Oliver,<sup>39</sup> E. R. Norman,<sup>40</sup> Keith Thompson<sup>41</sup> and more recently Callum Brown.<sup>42</sup> The Industrial Christian Fellowship was the subject of a detailed study by Gerald Studdert Kennedy.<sup>43</sup> To date there have been no recent studies of the role of Toc H or biographical studies of Tubby Clayton or Studdert Kennedy. Historians dealing with remembrance after the war have included assessments of

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<sup>31</sup>K. Robbins, *England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales: The Christian Church 1900-2000* (Oxford, 2008).

<sup>32</sup>A. Hastings, *A History of English Christianity 1920-2000* (London, 2001) (paperback edition).

<sup>33</sup>John Kent, *William Temple: Church, State and Society in Britain, 1880-1950* (London, 1992).

<sup>34</sup>Charles Smyth, *Cyril Foster Garbett Archbishop of York* (London, 1959).

<sup>35</sup>F. R. Barry, *Mervyn Haigh* (London, 1964).

<sup>36</sup>F. W. Dillistone, *Charles Raven, Naturalist, Historian and Theologian* (London, 1975).

<sup>37</sup>Roger Lloyd, *The Church of England 1900-65* (London, 1968).

<sup>38</sup>J. Maiden, *National Religion and the Prayer Book Controversy, 1927-1928* (London, 2009).

<sup>39</sup>J. Oliver, *The Church and Social Order* (London, 1968).

<sup>40</sup>E. H. Norman, *Church and Society in England* (Oxford, 1976).

<sup>41</sup>Keith Thompson, *Bureaucracy and Church Reform: The Organizational Response of the Church of England to Social Change, 1800-1965* (London, 1970).

<sup>42</sup>Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-200* (London, 2000) and *Religion and Society in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain* (London, 2006).

<sup>43</sup>Gerald Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy, The Industrial Christian Fellowship 1919-1929* (London, 1982).

the role fulfilled by the Anglican Church and former chaplains include Mark Connelly,<sup>44</sup> who has looked at rituals of remembrance in South London parishes, and Bob Bushaway,<sup>45</sup> who linked rituals of remembrance with a political agenda of preserving the status quo. Patrick Porter has written about the insistence of former chaplains in Britain and Germany on the need to honour the dead by instigating reform while David Lloyd<sup>46</sup> has looked at the significance of battlefield tourism to the understanding of remembrance. Martin Ceadel<sup>47</sup> has made an exhaustive study of the development of the pacifist movement in the twentieth century with an assessment of both Raven and Sheppard but has not focussed on the significance of their careers as chaplains in war time. Jill Wallis<sup>48</sup> has chronicled the development of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Several biographies of H. R. L. Sheppard appeared later in the twentieth century<sup>49</sup> and Dillistone wrote his biography of Raven in 1975,<sup>50</sup> but no recent assessment of Raven or Sheppard has been written.

Anglican theological trends have been looked at by Michael Ramsay, Roger Lloyd, Horton Davies and, most recently, by Alan Wilkinson in *Dissent or conform?*<sup>51</sup> but otherwise, apart from specific topics such as Maiden's book on prayer book reform, there is a paucity of modern scholarship.

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<sup>44</sup>M. Connelly, *The Great War, Memory and Ritual: Commemoration in the City and East London, 1916-1939* (London, 2001).

<sup>45</sup>B. Bushaway, "Name upon Name" in R. Porter (ed.) *Myths of the English* (London, 1993).

<sup>46</sup>D. Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism, Pilgrimage and the Commemoration of the Great War in Britain, Australia and Canada* (Oxford, 1998).

<sup>47</sup>M Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain, 1914-1915. The Defining of a Faith* (Oxford, 1980).

<sup>48</sup>Jill Wallis, *Valiant for Peace: History of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1914-89* (London, 1991).

<sup>49</sup>R. Ellis Roberts, *H. R. L. Sheppard, Life and Letters* (London, 1942).

<sup>50</sup>F. W. Dillistone, *Charles Raven, Naturalist, Historian and Theologian* (London, 1975).

<sup>51</sup>Alan Wilkinson, *Dissent or Conform? - War, Peace and the English Churches 1900-1945*, (SCM, London, 1986).

## Primary Sources

The main evidence from former chaplains themselves consists of the ideas and opinions of fifty former chaplains who have left evidence in the form of books, essays, articles, diaries and speeches written both during the war and as a response to the post-war situations in which they found themselves, along with evidence of their actions. The essays in *The Church in the Furnace* were written in 1917 by serving army chaplains including many of the leading figures discussed in this thesis, for example, F. R. Barry, who was to become Bishop of Southwell, Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy, who was to be the chief missionary of the Industrial Christian Fellowship (ICF), and E. S. Woods, later bishop of Lichfield. Tom Pym, an activist for church reform and Geoffrey Gordon, later Bishop of Jarrow, wrote about their war-time thoughts and experiences in *Papers from Picardy*<sup>52</sup> published in 1917. William Carey, a naval chaplain wrote about the theological debates which had perplexed him in time of war in *Sacrifice and some of its Difficulties*.<sup>53</sup> Tubby Clayton's *Tales of Talbot House* was published in 1919.<sup>54</sup> Contemporary evidence of the wartime thoughts of more senior chaplains can be found in sources such as B. K. Cunningham's diary, which chronicles events at the clergy school at St Omer,<sup>55</sup> and the war-time papers of Harry Blackburne.<sup>56</sup> These and other books, such as Neville Talbot's *Religion Behind the Front and After the War*,<sup>57</sup> and Studdert

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<sup>52</sup>Tom Pym and Geoffrey Gordon, *Papers from Picardy* (New York, 1917).

<sup>53</sup>W. Carey, *Sacrifice and Some of its Difficulties* (London, 1918).

<sup>54</sup>P. B. Clayton, *Tales of Talbot House, Everyman's club in Poperinghe and Ypres* (London, 1919).

<sup>55</sup>B. K. Cunningham, *Diary of B. K. Cunningham*, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 2077.

<sup>56</sup>The Papers of The Very Revd H. W. Blackburne, RACHD archives, Amport House.

<sup>57</sup>Neville Talbot, *Religion Behind the Front and After the War* (London, 1918).

Kennedy's *Rough Talks by a Padre*,<sup>58</sup> written while the chaplains' experiences were still fresh, cast a clear light on what they were thinking during the war and allow, in the light of later books and ministries, a judgement to be made on how far these experiences shaped their post-war lives and careers.

Many of the more prominent chaplains continued to publish books in response to events in the 1920s and 1930s. F. R. Barry wrote *The Relevance of Christianity* (1931) and one of the first books to address the new discipline, psychology, *Christianity and Psychology* (1923). Rogers contributed, among other works, *The Church and the People* (1930) and Studdert Kennedy published a stream of popular books in the early post-war years including *Lies* (1919), *The Word and the Work* (1926) and *Democracy and the Dog Collar* (1921). Neville Talbot wrote an important book on unity, *Thoughts on Unity* (1920) and produced a range of publications during the 1920s and 1930s including *The Returning Tide of Faith* (1923) and *Before we meet at the Lambeth Conference* (1930). Several prominent and senior chaplains including Harry Blackburne<sup>59</sup> wrote later about their experiences in the front line. The 1960s and 1970s saw several of the former chaplains writing autobiographies including Barry with *Period of My Life* (1970) and William Drury with *Camp Follower* (1968). About the same time, biographies of Kenneth Kirk<sup>60</sup>, Charles Raven,<sup>61</sup> Studdert Kennedy,<sup>62</sup> Tom Pym,<sup>63</sup> and Dick Sheppard<sup>64</sup> were written. Although these are secondary sources and come from an era when sources were often not extensively footnoted and were in some cases anecdotal,

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<sup>58</sup>G. A Studdert Kennedy, *Rough Talks by a Padre. Delivered to Officers and Men of the B.E.F.* (London, 1918).

<sup>59</sup>H. Blackburne, *This also Happened on the Western Front, The Padre's Story* (London, 1932).

<sup>60</sup>E. W. Kemp, *The Life and Work of Kenneth Escott Kirk* (London, 1959).

<sup>61</sup>F. W. Dillistone, *Charles Raven, Naturalist, Historian and Theologian* (London, 1975).

<sup>62</sup>W. Purcell, *Woodbine Willie: An Anglican incident, being some account of the life and times of Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy, Poet, Prophet, Seeker After Truth, 1883-1929* (London, 1962).

<sup>63</sup>Dora Pym, *Tom Pym Portrait of a Life* (Cambridge, 1952).

<sup>64</sup>C. Scott, *Dick Sheppard, A Biography* (London, 1979).



they often contain verbatim copies of the correspondence and papers of their subjects. The activities of other chaplains can be found in reports in the church press and parish magazines. Many of the leading figures among former chaplains were members of Convocation, the National Assembly or Church Congress and their opinions and actions can be traced through the reports of speeches and minutes of these meetings during the inter-war years. The papers of Archbishops Davidson, Lang and Temple provide interesting comments on, and information about, individual clergy and on institutions such as Toc H and IC F. Each theme considered draws on a variety of different evidence, although some sources are so significant they appear in each chapter.

### **Agenda and methodology**

The debates surrounding the significance of the former chaplains' contribution to church and society can be looked at under several headings. The chapters of this thesis correspond to these different themes although there is some overlap and cross referencing. The arguments which will be presented are to a great extent based on the careers of former army chaplains serving in the Church of England and related institutions such as Toc H and the Industrial Christian Fellowship. In Chapter One an examination is made of the thoughts and actions of these men during the war and in the immediate post-war era. It is important to emphasise that the question of the post-war world was one which they thought about whilst experiencing war conditions and that these thoughts informed their plans and hopes for the future. There is no shortage of evidence that both men and clergy had their attitudes changed in "the furnace" and that the change in their thinking will be reflected in the post war years.

After an overview of the thoughts and actions of former chaplains in Chapter One, the subsequent roles played by them can be divided into themes. Chapter Two deals with the way in which chaplains realised some of their ideas concerning industrial relations and reform of social conditions. The way in which the church had been responding to social issues in the pre-war years is examined along with their contribution to the changing post-war social and industrial landscape. Their contribution to key organs of the Church of England, such as Convocation and the Church Assembly can be traced in the church press and national press and their comments in the local press and parish magazines show how often their thoughts were occupied by industrial reconstruction and social justice. The reactions of the chaplains to the depression and unemployment in the 1930s can be traced both in their autobiographical works and in their contemporary works in response to the situation, for example, the work of former chaplains in the Industrial Christian Fellowship will be examined, alongside the activities of prominent individuals who were involved in industrial issues such as Studdert Kennedy and John Groser.

The work of Toc H<sup>65</sup> in the interwar years examined in Chapter Three can be traced by the coverage of the organisation in the national and church press, as well as the *Toc H Journal*. The contribution of Toc H to British Society, founded by Tubby Clayton on the idealism and ethos of the war-time Talbot House, is probably one of the best known contributions of a former chaplain to Britain after the war, but it is important to use the available evidence to show how the movement was not only an ex-service organisation but a

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<sup>65</sup> Toc H was an organisation set up by Tubby Clayton which was to keep the memory of the fellowship of Talbot House alive and continue the ethos of service to others created at Talbot house during the war. It was called Toc H after its letters in the war time signalling alphabet – Toc being T, therefore Talbot House became Toc H.

way in which the next generation could learn to serve society and lessen class differences. The aim of this chapter is to examine whether Toc H succeeded in becoming “The Living Memorial” that Tubby Clayton wished it to be.

Their experience at war had made some of the chaplains aware that the training received by Anglican clergy had not prepared them well for what had been expected of them. Chapter Four examines the way in which the returning chaplains both raised the problem of relevant training and helped to contribute to solving it. Evidence from the church press show that this concern was widespread, along with concern about the numbers of men coming forward for ordination. The extraordinary venture of the Test School at Knutsford produced a large proportion of the next generation of priests for the Church of England but was controversial. The efforts of other former chaplains such as B. K. Cunningham, head of Westcott House, and Christopher Chavasse, master of St Peter’s College, Oxford, are examined to add to the evidence of the concern of former chaplains about the training of the clergy. Chapter Four also seeks to show the role played by former chaplains in developments in academic theology, drawing largely on the works of such authors as Charles Raven, Kenneth Kirk, E. G. Selwyn and Edwyn Hoskyns. Continuing the theme of academic debate and education the contributions of F. R. Barry and Tom Pym to the new discipline of Psychology are also examined. The chapter shows the variety of contributions that former chaplains had made to issues concerning the training of the clergy, theological debate and education.

Chapter Five examines the roles played by the returning chaplains in the ecclesiastical controversies of the inter-war years. The opinions of former chaplains fed into the larger

movement of Life and Liberty, the main reforming movement in the Church of England in the immediate post-war era in which several former chaplains were prominent. The Padres' Fellowship, which sought to retain the fellowship between padres of different denominations which had existed in the trenches, was short lived, but did indicate the large role former Anglican chaplains were to play in a major controversy of the inter-war years, that of church unity. The way in which chaplains from both wings of the Anglican Church spoke out about unity is examined. Chapter Five uses the contemporary works of the chaplains alongside articles in the church and national press to show how influential former chaplains of various Anglican persuasions were in the cause of unity. Continuing the theme of controversies, Chapter Five goes on to examine the influences that chaplains from the high, liberal and evangelical wings of the church brought to bear on the debates concerning liturgical changes leading to the attempts of the Church of England to reform the Prayer Book in the 1920s. John Maiden has examined in detail the debates surrounding the tortuous topic of Prayer Book revision and has accentuated the importance of the topic to debates surrounding church and state in the twentieth century. It can be shown that former chaplains, especially those involved in producing the 'Grey Book', made a significant contribution.

The emphasis in Chapter Six changes from ecclesiastical controversy to wider issues in inter-war society. It examines written evidence from the chaplains, in their books, articles and letters and their speeches in debates in the Church Assembly and Convocation, showing the ways in which they responded to changes in society regarding divorce and remarriage, contraception and sexual morality often differing sharply from the formal position of the Church of England on these matters. The chapter concludes by looking at the attitudes of

former chaplains to the uses of new technologies of radio and cinema. Dick Sheppard was a pioneer in the field of broadcast services and his work in this area was continued by his successor at St Martin in-the-Fields, another former chaplain Pat McCormick. Of course, this use of radio was not without controversy, which is well documented in letters to the press, debates in Convocation and Church Assembly. Probably more controversial was the growth of cinema after the war and in the interwar years. Particularly of concern was the Sunday opening of cinemas. Guy Rogers spent a considerable amount of time and effort in fighting a rearguard action in Birmingham against Sunday opening and the content of films to be shown on a Sunday. E. S. Woods had a different attitude. He realised that cinema was a fact of life and tried to find ways of using the technology in a positive way.

Chapter Seven examines the ways in which the former chaplains played their part in shaping, and responding to, attitudes towards remembrance and how this affected the later pacifism of some chaplains. The evidence for their attitude is to be found in their published works and also in private and public letters. Also important are their public opinions expressed at Remembrance services and occasions such as dedications of memorials, sermons, and at Armistice Day ceremonies during the inter-war years. The evidence showed that the chaplains were anxious to justify the sacrifices made in the war by attempting to build a better society. The discussion also assesses to what extent the Anglican chaplains' thoughts had changed to encompass a wider theology on sacrifice and redemption. As the changing international situation in the 1930s developed, some Anglican Clergy became prominent in the pacifist movement. The opinions and action of Charles Raven and Dick Sheppard in particular gave a lead to the peace movement and resulted in the setting up of the Peace Pledge Union.

Any consideration of the role of the returning Anglican army chaplains needs to be examined in the light of their war experiences and the impact of their war service on their later opinions and actions. The extent to which their pre-war training and careers had an effect on their post-war lives is also relevant. However, the former chaplains did not exist in a vacuum, and in order to fully assess their impact on the inter-war church, changes in both the Anglican church and in wider society must be examined to gauge the way in which the former chaplains used the spiritual and pastoral skills acquired in the war to develop a leading role in many aspects of the Anglican Church's ministry in the interwar years. The thesis will show that former chaplains were able to respond positively to the challenges of post-war church and society, largely as a result of a flexible attitude to many controversial issues which had its origins in their service in the Great War.

## Chapter One: Shell-shocked Prophets

The term “shell-shocked prophets” was used by the Revd F. B. Macnutt<sup>1</sup> in his essay in a war-time publication written by serving Anglican army chaplains, *The Church in the Furnace*<sup>2</sup> - a metaphor which has many echoes in the contemporary accounts of the war.<sup>3</sup> The collection of essays in which this appeared was written under war-time conditions and consisted of a wide-ranging series of ideas on how the chaplains could use their experiences to help renew the spiritual and practical life of the Church of England after the war.

The chaplains were presented as being moulded by the events of the war and empowered by new ideas and motivations. The essays in this volume gave the impression that the army chaplains emerged from the war with a whole new set of values and practical ideas which would help them set to right what they considered to be the failings of the established church in such matters as education, training of the clergy, the public worship of the church and its role in society. In 1916 it had already been recognised that the chaplains were in a good position to comment on the position of the church at home and at the front. George Bell, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, reporting on the replies of chaplains to questions posed by the Bishop of Kensington as part of the National Mission, talked about their “prophetic witness” and believed that “The chaplains of the navy and army had special

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<sup>1</sup>Revd F. B. Macnutt, Canon of Southwark Cathedral, served as Temporary Chaplain to the Forces (TCF) 1915-1918, becoming senior chaplain, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 870.

<sup>2</sup>F. B. Macnutt, ‘The Moral Equivalent of War’, in F. B. Macnutt (ed.), *The Church in the Furnace* (London, 1917), p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>See for example, Milner White, ‘Worship and Services’, in *Church in the Furnace*, p. 176 and P. B. Clayton’s article ‘Two men’s work’ *The Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> October 1920, p. 15.

opportunities for observing the nature and character of the churches' influence on a large and important section of church members."<sup>4</sup>

The chaplains were indeed shell-shocked, some in physical and mental ways<sup>5</sup> but many more by the insights they had gained into the nature of religion, in wartime and in society. Many were prophets, in that they returned with a determination to revitalise the church, renew its mission and establish its place more firmly in society. Bishop Gwynne,<sup>6</sup> Deputy Chaplain-General in charge of the Anglican army chaplains in France, described "The conviction that we must dare scrap that which is out of date and effete in our methods as to be able to mobilise and unify the enormous Christian resources now lying dormant."<sup>7</sup> Kenneth Kirk,<sup>8</sup> former chaplain and future Bishop of Oxford, realised that some clergy had been changed in ways which would not permit them to return to parochial ministry. He wrote in his essay "When the Priests Come Home.":

Some of the chaplains who have seen action will never come home, that is as parochial clergy. The powers that they have discovered affect their view of the future so deeply that they will seek some sphere of work, the mission field or the

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<sup>4</sup>*The National Mission of Repentance and Hope, A report on the chaplains' replies to the Lord Bishop of Kensington* (London, 1919), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>For example, the story of Revd H. Spooner in M. Moynihan, *God on Our Side* (London, 1983), p. 42. Spooner spent sixteen years in hospital after experiencing a nervous breakdown post-war. Also the Revd Cyril Hall, who committed suicide after being wounded in 1916 and suffering depression on returning to problems in his parish, *The Times*, 1 July 1919, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup>Bishop L. H. Gwynne, Bishop of Diocese of Khartoum (Sudan) 1908. TCF 1914-1919, Deputy Chaplain General in France 1915-1919. *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), P. 406.

<sup>7</sup>L. H. Gwynne, in the introduction to *The Church in the Furnace*, p. xx.

<sup>8</sup>The Revd Kenneth Escott Kirk, TCF 1914-1919. *Crockford's Clerical Directory*(1940), p. 1013.



colonies in which to minister with the freedom and opportunities they had in France.<sup>9</sup>

The use of the phrase “shell-shocked prophets” was, in the context of Macnutt’s essay, a pejorative one. He was referring to the opinions expressed by some ‘sturdy apologists’ about the validity of the new ideas expressed by what they saw as ‘doubting Jeremiahs’ who had returned from the war. Some churchmen felt that these radical opinions would subside when the “shell-shocked prophets” recovered and returned to normal church life.<sup>10</sup> The expression, however, seems to be a useful one to encompass the wartime experiences of the chaplains and their impact on post-war church and society. Their prophetic role stemmed from the desire of many of them to revitalise the church, renew its mission and establish its place more firmly in society. Bishop Gwynne, writing in 1917, considered that the war had given the chaplains increased insight and knowledge which would inform their post-war lives: “This knowledge has given them dreams and visions of a great spiritual fighting machine, which if realised may overcome the spiritual foes of humanity and allow the kingdom of God to operate on earth.”<sup>11</sup> Guy Rogers<sup>12</sup> commented: “Chaplains have come home rejoicing in the freedom from institutional life, new contacts with men and new ideas fermenting in themselves.”<sup>13</sup> The evidence points to the fact that many of them believed that they possessed a new vision of the church and its role and

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<sup>9</sup>Kenneth Kirk, ‘When the Priests Come Home’, F. B. Macnutt (ed.), in *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 409. Some prominent examples include Bishop Gwynne, who returned to Sudan and in 1920 became the bishop of the new diocese of Egypt and the Sudan, and Neville Talbot, who took up a post as Bishop of Pretoria in April 1920.

<sup>10</sup>F. B. Macnutt, ‘The Moral Equivalent of War’ in *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup>L. H. Gwynne, in the introduction to *The Church in the Furnace*, p. xx.

<sup>12</sup>T. G. Rogers, TCF 1915-1916, MC 1916, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 1157.

<sup>13</sup>T. G. Rogers, *Rebel at Heart* (London, 1956), p. 129.

relevance in the world. Christopher Chavasse,<sup>14</sup> in taking up his appointment to a parish in Barrow-in-Furness after his return from the front, said in his parish magazine:

The fact is we have began a new age, everything is in the melting pot. .... We cannot take up the old state of things which existed in 1914 ..... therefore the next year or two we must experiment, experiment, experiment.<sup>15</sup>

Tom Pym,<sup>16</sup> one of the chaplains most critical of the established church, summed up the attitude of the returning chaplains: "God will expect much of us now."<sup>17</sup> Three former chaplains, F. B. Macnutt, Neville Talbot and H. A. Southwell contributed to an appendix to the Archbishops' Second Committee of Enquiry, *The Worship of the Church* in 1918. This report was part of a series of enquiries set up in response to issues raised by the National Mission.<sup>18</sup> Macnutt, Talbot and Southwell felt they had the right to give their opinion: "As a body of men we shall be unable to go back to the old pre-war grooves."<sup>19</sup> An anonymous chaplain, writing at the request of Bishop Gwynne in 1917, foresaw some difficulties: "We are convinced that, unless great distinctive methods are used, and also some definite changes made, England's church will not thus secure the robust and virile influences of England's manhood."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> C. M. Chavasse, TCF 1914-1918, MC 1917, Croix de Guerre, 1918 *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 1153.

<sup>15</sup> *St George's Parish Magazine*, October 1919, cited in Selwyn Gummer, *The Chavasse Twins* (London, 1963), p. 73.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Wentworth Pym TCF 1914-, DSO 1917, Deputy Assistant Chaplain General VIII Corps 1917, Assistant Chaplain General, Third Army 1918, D. Pym, *Tom Pym: A Portrait* (Cambridge, 1952).

<sup>17</sup> D. Pym, *Tom Pym: A Portrait* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 57.

<sup>18</sup> The Archbishops' Committees of Enquiry were published by S. P. C. K. in 1918. The first was *The Teaching of the Church*, the second was *The Worship of the Church*, the third was *The Evangelistic Work of the Church*, the fourth was *The Administrative Reform of the Church* and the fifth was *Christianity and Industrial Problems*.

<sup>19</sup> Appendix to The Archbishops' Second Committee of Enquiry, *The Worship of the Church* (London, 1918), p. 33.

<sup>20</sup> Anonymous, *Can England's Church Win England's Manhood? By an Army Chaplain* (London, 1917), p. 8.

In order to appreciate the impact returning chaplains had on the post-war church it is, of course, necessary to consider the challenges faced by the Church of England at the turn of the twentieth century. Increasing industrialisation and urbanisation were seen as having engendered an increasingly secular outlook in society at large, particularly among the urban working classes, while a widely diffused confidence in human progress had led to a misplaced faith in human potential. Old orthodoxies were judged in the light of the new “God of science” and some were discredited by the implications of Darwinian thought<sup>21</sup> and by developments in biblical criticism.<sup>22</sup> English modernism, under its main proponent, Hastings Rashdall, was challenging traditional theology<sup>23</sup> and had initiated controversy which would continue into the inter-war years. Problems faced by the Church of England included falling attendance, a decline in the number of candidates for ordination and the need to reorganise parishes in the light of demographic change. Nevertheless, the pre-war church had been adjusting to meet these challenges. Frances Knight, writing about church reform in the late Victorian period and the years leading up to 1920, has described how: “ during this time religious identities and practices continued to be centrally important to large numbers of people” and that “Christians began ..... to fight for the most effective use of whatever ground was available to them in a world where politics was moving to the centre, and religion to the periphery.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>R. Lloyd, *The Church of England 1900-1965* (London, 1966), pp. 141-142.

<sup>22</sup>For example, A. Schweitzer, *The Quest For The Historical Jesus* (London, 1910).

<sup>23</sup>Hastings Rashdall, an influential Anglican modernist theologian. Rashdall set out his ideas in *Anglican Liberalism* in 1908, *ODNB*.

<sup>24</sup> Frances Knight, ‘Internal Church Reform 1850-1920. An Age of Innovation in Ecclesiastical Reform’ in Paula Yates and Joris van Eijnatten (eds.) *The Churches: The Dynamics of Religious Reform in Church, State and Society in Northern Europe, 1780-1920* (Leuven, 2010) p. 69

In the first decade of the twentieth century the church was adapting to meet the demands being made by the changes mentioned above. There was much activity in cities. Jeffery Cox has described the situation in Lambeth. The church carried out poor relief, was involved in thrift societies, medical services, education, ran Sunday schools, clubs, the Church Lads' Brigade, the Girls' Friendly Society, women's clubs, and a plethora of sporting and recreational clubs provided popular recreation and entertainment.<sup>25</sup> According to Cox, the churches were not too disappointed with a lack of success in terms of congregation increase, as they were responding to the need of the church to become more associated with democracy and social reform. This situation prefigured the 'holy grocery' dilemma<sup>26</sup> that later faced priests in the trenches over the competing demands of the material and spiritual needs of the troops. Cox sees this as a reason for the later decline in the influence of the church as the role of the church in social concern was taken over by the welfare state.

The church seems to have been becoming more aware of what Bishop Talbot<sup>27</sup> called "diffusive Christianity". He defined this as "The penumbra of the embodied Christian in the church".<sup>28</sup> He considered that the church "had an important influence on the lives of many people who seldom attended services."<sup>29</sup> Diffusive Christianity was a term made use of by the chaplains in the war whilst trying to understand both the appalling lack of religious knowledge and commitment on the part of the troops that they encountered, but also expressing the very real sense they had that men were not totally alienated from God.

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<sup>25</sup> J. Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth 1870-1930* (London, 1982), pp. 64-87.

<sup>26</sup> 'Holy Grocery' was a term which became synonymous with the idea that rather than concentrating on spiritual growth and revival in the trenches, the chaplain got diverted into becoming some kind of social workers, creating canteens and procuring cinema shows

<sup>27</sup> Edward Stuart Talbot, Bishop of Rochester 1895-1911, Bishop of Winchester 1911-1923. Talbot contributed an essay to *Lux Mundi* in 1889, *ODNB*.

<sup>28</sup> J. Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society* p. 93.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

Intellectually and theologically the church was also responding to the industrial and secular age with new theological initiatives. *Lux Mundi*, a collection of essays edited by Bishop Gore in 1889, introduced a more liberal trend in Anglo-Catholic theology. Horton Davies, summing up the pre-war decades, claimed that there was an optimistic religious immanentalism regarding social welfare and practising the social gospel. Other worldly transcendence was losing ground to liberal secularism which put emphasis on man's effort and he concluded that this was the means of alienating further the working class as mere worship seemed irrelevant.<sup>30</sup> Gore,<sup>31</sup> Temple and Inge<sup>32</sup> all had in common the desire to emphasise the importance of the incarnation as part of sacramental practice. This emphasis on sacraments was to be one which struck many chords with chaplains at the front where the incarnate God became central to worship. (see Chapter Five).

The matter of church reform was also one that came to prominence in the pre-war years. The Church Reform League had been examining self-government for the church which also became an aim of the Life and Liberty movement. *Essays in Aid of the Reform of the Church*, edited by Bishop Gore, appeared in 1898.<sup>33</sup> Frances Knight points to the emergence and growth of new Anglican societies founded in late Victorian and pre-war era, such as the Church of England Men's Society and the Mother's Union.<sup>34</sup> Roger Lloyd claimed that the

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<sup>30</sup>Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: The Ecumenical Century, 1900 to the Present* (London, 1996), p. 172.

<sup>31</sup>Charles Gore, vice president of the newly formed Christian Social Union in 1889. He edited *Lux Mundi* in 1889. Gore was one of the founder members of the Community of the Resurrection, 1892. Bishop of Oxford 1911-1919, *ODNB*.

<sup>32</sup>Ralph Inge, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral 1911, leading spokesman for the modernist wing of the Anglican Church and prolific author and journalist, *ODNB*.

<sup>33</sup>This volume included an essay By Henry Scott Holland, 'Church and State', and an essay by Arthur Lyttleton on 'Self Government of the Church'.

<sup>34</sup>Frances Knight, 'Internal Church Reform 1850-1920. An Age of Innovation in Ecclesiastical Reform' p. 71.

church was increasing in confidence by 1914, in contrast to increasing uncertainty in the political arena due to strikes, women's suffrage and Home Rule in Ireland.<sup>35</sup>

In order to come to some conclusions about the impact of the war on the chaplains who took part it is necessary to examine the background of the men who became temporary chaplains. Their experiences and opinions were developed before the intervention of war could possibly have coloured their evolving theology and thoughts on the church, even if it is accepted that the experience of war made them question many of these ideas. War in 1914 came as the Anglican Church was struggling with internal conflicts arising from the growth of the Anglo-Catholic movement, the problems posed by modern biblical criticism, and the rise of secularism. A study of the educational background of a substantial group of Anglican chaplains serving on the Western Front has been made by Edward Madigan.<sup>36</sup> He examined a sample of 723 chaplains mentioned in Bishop Gwynne's surviving 'Army Book'. He found that 411 of them were Oxbridge educated, with sixty four from Trinity College Dublin. Madigan points out that they lived in 'an atmosphere of exclusive privilege'.<sup>37</sup> However, many of these men had had the opportunity of working for university settlements in the East End of London where they lived among the local population. Men who took this opportunity to widen their experiences and later became chaplains included P. B. 'Tubby' Clayton,<sup>38</sup> F. R. Barry<sup>39</sup> and Neville Talbot.<sup>40</sup> After ordination, opportunities in the worldwide Anglican

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<sup>35</sup>R. Lloyd, *The Church of England 1900-1965* (London, 1966), P. 238.

<sup>36</sup>E. Madigan, *Faith Under Fire: Anglican Army Chaplains and the Great War* (New York, 2011), pp. 67-68.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>38</sup>P. B. Clayton. TCF 1915-1919, M.C. 1917. While at Oxford University, Clayton spent an evening every week helping at the Oxford and Bermondsey Mission at Bermondsey, B. Baron, *The doctor, The Story of John Stansfeld of Oxford and Bermondsey* (London, 1952), p. 207, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 251.

<sup>39</sup>Barry recounted the efforts of Oxford undergraduates, including himself, at the Oxford House at Bethnal Green, where he first met H. R. L. 'Dick' Sheppard, F. R. Barry, *Period of My Life* (London, 1970), p. 43.

Communion were varied. Some chaplains had served in large working-class parishes such as Portsea, which sent eight of its curates to serve as chaplains in the First World War.<sup>41</sup> Others served in the overseas mission fields or became chaplains to prisons or other public institutions. Familiar accounts of those who wrote of their wartime experiences underline this impression of varied pastoral experience before the war. F. R. Barry joined the Army Chaplains' Department (AChD) almost immediately after being ordained, following a brief spell as a fellow of Oriel College.<sup>42</sup> In contrast, Pat McCormick<sup>43</sup> served as a chaplain after ministering to mining communities in South Africa.<sup>44</sup> Neville Talbot was a former army officer and a bishop's son<sup>45</sup> while P. B. 'Tubby' Clayton had been a curate at Portsea.<sup>46</sup> It is clear, even from these few examples, that many of the Church of England's younger and more vocal chaplains had plenty of varied pre-war experience against which to gauge and understand their wartime experiences.

The Army Chaplains' Department had to be expanded rapidly to meet with the demand for its services throughout the war. At the outbreak of war the strength of the department was 117, from all denominations, but with the majority, eighty nine, being Anglican. The department was to grow in strength until in August 1918 there were 3,416

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<sup>40</sup>Neville Talbot TCF 1914-1919, M C 1915, senior chaplain fifth Division 1915, senior Anglican chaplain of XIV Corps 1916 and Assistant Chaplain General to fifth Army 1916. Talbot was involved with the Oxford Medical Mission which was renamed the Oxford and Bermondsey Mission in 1910, M. Snape (ed.), *The Back Parts of War: The YMCA Memoirs and Letters of Barclay Baron, 1915-1919* (Woodbridge, 2009), *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.1313.

<sup>41</sup>C. Smyth, *Cyril Foster Garbett, Archbishop of York* (London, 1959), p. 137.

<sup>42</sup>F. R. Barry, *Period of My Life* (London, 1970), p. 40.

<sup>43</sup>W.P.G. McCormick, TCF 1914-1919, D.S.O. 1917. *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 855.

<sup>44</sup>*The Times*, 17<sup>th</sup> October 1940, p. 7.

<sup>45</sup>F. H. Brabant, *Neville Stuart Talbot 1879-1943: A Memoir* (London, 1949), pp. 12-16.

<sup>46</sup>M. Harcourt, *Tubby Clayton: A Personal Saga* (London, 1956), p. 45.

The Parish of Portsea was a large, mainly working class parish in Portsmouth, which had a tradition of pastoral work among men and boys. Former curates of Portsea who served as chaplains and played a prominent part in the Church in the inter-war years include Bernard Keymer (see Chapter Two) and Freddie Hawks (see Chapter Five), Charles Smyth, *Cyril Foster Garbett, Archbishop of York* (London, 1959), p. 133.

chaplains, 1,941 of whom were Anglican.<sup>47</sup> Early recruitment was characterised by confusion, delay and rumours of a bias toward low churchmen by the Chaplain General, Taylor Smith. While the regular chaplains were participating in the retreat from Mons, and filling a variety of roles in the early mobile stages of the war, the temporary chaplains were experiencing difficulties at every turn. F. R. Barry described the situation:

When the padres first went out with the BEF the army had little idea of what to do with them. In battle they were left behind at base and were not allowed to go up to the fighting front..... A colonel would say ‘nothing for you to do today, padre’, meaning no corpses to bury.<sup>48</sup>

The Anglican chaplains were frustrated by orders forbidding them to visit the front line and this became a cause of criticism of their performance in the first part of the war. Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon, Guy Chapman and C. E. Montague were well known literary figures that were later scathing of the chaplains’ performance in the war. However, their criticism stands and can give us a good idea of the problems faced by chaplains with their public image. Graves’s main criticism of the Anglican chaplains rested on the contrast between them and the Roman Catholic priests who were allowed to go into the front line from the beginning of the war. He said of the Anglican Chaplains: “Soldiers could hardly respect a chaplain who obeyed these orders, yet not one in fifty seemed sorry to obey them.”<sup>49</sup> Guy Chapman also used this comparison: “The Church of Rome sent men into battle mentally and spiritually cleaned. The Church of England could only offer you a

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<sup>47</sup>M. F. Snape, *God and the British Soldier: Religion and the British Army in the First and Second World Wars* (London, 2005), p. 89.

<sup>48</sup>F. R. Barry, *Period of My Life* (London, 1970), p. 60.

<sup>49</sup>R. Graves, *Goodbye to All That: An Autobiography* (London, 1929), p. 158.



cigarette.”<sup>17</sup> Schweitzer believes that many British officers did not share Graves’ views and claims that his doubts about the bible ‘got on his fellow officers nerves.’<sup>50</sup> As a result of the efforts of chaplains like Neville Talbot,<sup>51</sup> Maurice Peel<sup>52</sup> and others who did go forward, and the realisation by the generals that chaplains were good for morale, these orders were eventually rescinded. However, the damage had already been done to the reputation of the Anglican chaplains who are, even now, sometimes compared unfavourably by historians to the Roman Catholic chaplains.<sup>53</sup>

By the beginning of 1916 the situation had changed and chaplains were allowed to move freely. They were realising the importance of their work at the front line as well as their essential work at field ambulances and bases. E. C. Crosse<sup>54</sup> was convinced that the nearer the chaplain could get to the front line the better.<sup>55</sup> By this time the Army Chaplains’ Department had overcome several ideological and practical problems relating to its deployment and was present at battalion level as well as being attached to base hospitals and field ambulances. Senior chaplains like Harry Blackburne<sup>56</sup> had worked hard at the organisation of the Department. Chaplains met regularly at divisional level to discuss their work, pray and keep up morale.<sup>57</sup> This was sorely needed as tensions concerning the

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<sup>50</sup>R. Schweitzer, *The Cross and the Trenches: Religious Faith and Doubt Among British and American Great War soldiers* (Connecticut, 2003), p. 85.

<sup>51</sup>E. Madigan, ‘The Life Lived Versus Balaam’s Ass’s Ears: Neville Stuart Talbot’s Chaplaincy on the Western Front’ *Royal Army Chaplains Department Journal vol. 47*. (2008).

<sup>52</sup> Maurice Peel had insisted on going into front line battle with his men at Festubert in 1915. He was later killed bringing in wounded at Bullecourt in May 1917, J. Walker, *The Blood Tub, General Gough and the Battle of Bullecourt 1917* (Staplehurst, 1999).

<sup>53</sup>For example, S. Loudon in *Chaplains in Conflict, The Role of Army Chaplains since 1914* (London, 1996), P.50.

<sup>54</sup>E. C. Crosse, TCF 1915-1918, MC and DSO 1917, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 305.

<sup>55</sup>E. C. Crosse Papers. IWM 80/22/1.

<sup>56</sup>H.W. Blackburne, CF 1903-1924, M.C. 1914, D S O 1917, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 118.

<sup>57</sup>The papers of the Very Revd H.W. Blackburne, DSO MC, RACHD Archives. The war diary of the senior chaplain to the 18<sup>th</sup> Division, the Revd G. A. Weston, details regular meetings of the divisional chaplains, TNA WO 95/2023.

chaplain's role were ever present. Much of the chaplain's time was spent in what Neville Talbot called "holy grocery" that is, ministering to the material and social needs of the troops rather than their spiritual needs. Many chaplains, however, found that these were intertwined. Geoffrey Gordon felt this dilemma keenly:

Those of us chaplains who feel ourselves pressed by our dilemma are occupying our time with things that the soldier would not describe as religious, but on every opportunity we are preaching insistently the inclusiveness of Christianity.<sup>58</sup>

This problem of priorities in the spiritual and material roles of the priest was often to inform the ideas and actions of returning chaplains.

During the war the chaplains were faced with the proximity of men who they would not have met in normal circumstances and whose values and ideas they would not have necessarily shared. However many chaplains had come from big industrial or slum parishes where the church was very active. Many had experience with men in the clubs which had been set up as part of the Church's attempt to appeal to the working class men and boys in such parishes.<sup>59</sup> The expectation that clergy would visit all the families in a parish regardless of attendance at church also ensured a wider pastoral experience. It is possible that the chaplains were more in touch with working class life than the officers, especially when one considers the variety of posts that the chaplains had been pursuing pre-war. Many of the Church of England's younger and more vocal chaplains had plenty of varied pre-war experience against which to measure their wartime impressions.

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<sup>58</sup>G. Gordon and T. Pym, *Papers from Picardy* (London, 1917), p. 112.

<sup>59</sup>This aspect of parish work is detailed in C. F. Garbett, *The Work of a Great Parish* (London, 1915).

The job of censoring letters often revealed to the chaplains the opinions of the enlisted men on religion and a variety of other matters. Richard Holmes was of the opinion that this “enabled them to see just how deep a current of belief flowed through the army.”<sup>60</sup> However, there was criticism of the chaplains from the ordinary soldiers which has survived in memoirs such as *Old Soldiers Never Die* by Frank Richards. Relationships with the chaplains were often soured by the remnants of pre-war class tensions and anti-clericalism. Much of the criticism of chaplains arose from the resentment of compulsory church parades, the perception that the chaplains were identified with authority, and the conflict between the basic tenets of Christianity and the experience of trench warfare. Corporal Houghton commented on the fact that his padre had prayers about “not leading us into any kind of danger” and continued:

I am sure the chaplain had not noticed the inconsistency of that phrase any more than the clergymen out here that profess a religion that teaches us that all men should be brothers and yet prays weekly for victory over our enemies.<sup>61</sup>

Although chaplains messed with the officers and probably had more in common with them, they still had to work hard to win the respect of their officer colleagues. Guy Rogers, chaplain to a Guards Brigade found this difficult at first but eventually his determination and persistence paid off. By February 1915 he wrote: “Great discussions at lunch - they push me now to discuss all sorts of religious and philosophical questions ..... it is pleasant to feel one’s position assured and it has given me the confidence to try and get further.”<sup>62</sup> Although

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<sup>60</sup>R. Holmes, *Tommy, The British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918* (London, 2004), p. 522.

<sup>61</sup>Malcolm Brown, *The Imperial War Museum Book of 1918: Year of Victory* (London, 1998), p. 13.

<sup>62</sup>T. G. Rogers papers, IWM (7/107/1).

relationships with officers and men were sometimes fraught, the chaplains worked hard to obtain a rapport. This job was made easier by the increased freedom of action of the chaplains and the heroism of individual chaplains. Bishop Gwynne's Army Book contains many cuttings from papers and comments by him on the circumstances in which a number of chaplains earned military honours for bravery in bringing in the wounded. The difficulties experienced by the chaplains made them more determined at the end of the war to build bridges with all members of society and to free the church from elitism and snobbery. Rogers also recommended that: "we must make ourselves accessible to all men. We must not burden ourselves with organisations; the impossibility of losing oneself in an organisation has been one of the chaplains' greatest safeguards at the front."<sup>63</sup>

The taking of services proved to be the most frustrating as well as the most rewarding part of the chaplain's job. Resentment of church parade and a growing sense of the importance of Holy Communion led them to concentrate more on voluntary service and communion services although Harry Blackburne and E. C. Crosse had a more robust attitude to church parade, seeing it as an essential part of the Army Chaplains Department's relationship with the army.<sup>64</sup> Both were effective in finding ways to make the parade service more accessible. Blackburne pioneered the breaking of the parade square formation to make a circle and also encouraged chaplains to experiment with more informal service styles and to dispense with the "parsonical" voice.<sup>65</sup> The numbers of candidates coming forward for confirmation were commented on in many chaplains' accounts of the war and Bishop Gwynne's diary shows that a considerable amount of his time was spent touring the Western

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<sup>63</sup>T. G. Rogers papers, IWM (7/107/1).

<sup>64</sup>E. C. Crosse papers, IWM (80/22/1).

<sup>65</sup>The papers of the Very Revd H.W. Blackburne, MC DSO RChD Archive.

Front to attend confirmation services.<sup>66</sup> This was possibly food for thought for chaplains as it reflected on the two-tiered system existing at home where it was automatic for middle and upper classes to be confirmed but not so for the working classes.<sup>67</sup> The memorial of Christ's sacrifice on the cross struck a chord with men about to give their lives in battle. Some chaplains had to revise some of their long held beliefs about the administration of communion. It was realised that that a fasting communion made no sense when services were quickly arranged and had to fit in with army routine. Blackburne realised not long after his arrival in France, "We have communion services at all hours of the day and night, one has to change one's ideas out here."<sup>68</sup> Informal services in dug outs became commonplace. Eric Milner White<sup>69</sup> in his contribution to *The Church in the Furnace* summed it up: "liturgy vanished with peace and rubrics paled in a redder world."<sup>70</sup> He also described the Book of Common Prayer as "semi-usable and semi-used."<sup>71</sup>

The burial service came under a lot of criticism from chaplains. C. I. S. Hood related an experience common to many chaplains when taking a burial service: "No light or book, so by heart I used what prayer seemed useful."<sup>72</sup> The net effect of the experience of the chaplains using the Book of Common Prayer in the trenches was that the conclusion was reached that the services of the Church of England had to be changed, that they were too archaic and complicated for many of the congregation at home and at the front. The expected revival of religion in the officers and men of the British Army did not materialise,

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<sup>66</sup> The diaries of Bishop L. H. Gwynne, Church Missionary Society Archives, XACC/18/F/1.

<sup>67</sup> Roger Lloyd, *The Church of England*, p. 163.

<sup>68</sup> H. Blackburne, *This also Happened on the Western Front, The Padre's Story* (London, 1932), p. 16.

<sup>69</sup> E. Milner-White TCF 1914-1918, DSO 1918, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 925.

<sup>70</sup> E. Milner-White, 'Worship and Services', *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 175.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>72</sup> C. I. S. Hood Papers, IWM (90/7/1).

and chaplains had developed a pessimistic view of the depth of religious feeling at the front. F. R. Barry asserted in his article in *The Church in the Furnace*: "It is untrue ..... that war is a reviver of religion."<sup>73</sup> Philip Crick<sup>74</sup> wrote in 1917: "It would seem that the Mobilisation of a large section of the young men of England has made it clear that the church has not succeeded in impressing upon the majority of them a sense of allegiance to her teaching and practises."<sup>75</sup> Neville Talbot believed that the gauging of religious feelings in the men was a complicated business. He was increasingly aware of the "inarticulate religion" of the ordinary soldiers: "deep in their hearts is a great trust and faith in God. It is an inarticulate faith but expressed in deeds."<sup>76</sup> *The Army and Religion*<sup>77</sup> Report was initiated by D. S. Cairns,<sup>78</sup> while he was at the base camp at Rouen. Michael Snape has pointed out that as the report was financed by the YMCA and Cairns was working for the YMCA and influential in raising funds for the association in Scotland, that he was given a free hand to indulge in his pessimistic view of the state of religion in the army.<sup>79</sup> The committee that produced the report was set up under the chairmanship of Bishop E. Talbot. Snape has called the Cairns Report 'deeply flawed' as it excluded evidence from Welsh and Irish sources and minimal input from Roman Catholic sources.<sup>80</sup> Many of the replies to the questions posed by the committee can be summed up in the remark attributed to Neville Talbot: "The soldier has

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<sup>73</sup>F. R. Barry, 'Faith in the Light of War' in F. B. Macnutt, (ed.) *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 36.

<sup>74</sup>Philip C. T. Crick, TFC, contributor to *The Church in the Furnace*, Fellow and Dean of Clare College Cambridge.

<sup>75</sup>Philip Crick, 'The Soldier's Religion' in *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 371.

<sup>76</sup>N. Talbot, *Thoughts on Religion at the Front* (London, 1917), p. 8.

<sup>77</sup>D. S. Cairns (ed.) *The Army and Religion* (London, 1919).

<sup>78</sup>D. S. Cairns, United Free Church of Scotland minister and theologian.

<sup>79</sup>M. Snape (ed.) *The Back Parts of War*, P.88. Snape cites YMCA, K27 YMCA War Work No. 14. France, YMCA Archives, University of Birmingham, a letter from E .C. Carter to O. McCowen to illustrate the financial considerations involved.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 87.

got Religion, I am not so sure that he has got Christianity.”<sup>81</sup> There was respect for Jesus in that men often revered him as a fellow sufferer and the opinion seemed to be that “All the best instincts feel that man will get a fair judgement in another world.”<sup>82</sup> The troops were reported as considering Christianity to be a negative set of ideas and as something irrelevant in their lives. In Chapter Four of the report, ‘Misunderstandings’, a “chaplain of experience” said that “institutional religion is widely identified with respectability and a negative code, but a generous or unselfish act was called ‘really Christian’.”<sup>83</sup>

Having established a general opinion on the unsatisfactory nature of religion in the army the report went on to speculate on the reasons. The social and economic conditions of life in post-Industrial revolution Britain was blamed for a spirit of materialism among the men at the front.<sup>84</sup> The educational systems of both church and state were blamed for the general ignorance of men about religion and doctrine. Neville Talbot also blamed the absence of a religious revival on both the nature of total war and the lack of spiritual equipment to deal with it; he considered: “We have been overtaken by the cataclysm of war in a condition of great poverty towards God.”<sup>85</sup>

The chaplains had many problems militating against the work of preaching the gospel and expanding religious awareness at the front. Unrealistic expectations from church leaders and civilians at home who were expecting a religious revival led to disillusionment and heart-searching on the part of the chaplains. Even when the realities of war hit home, the religious

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<sup>81</sup>D. S. Cairns (ed.) *The Army and Religion*, p. 9.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., pp. 23-24.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid, Chap Five, ‘Materialism and the Social Environment’.

<sup>85</sup>Talbot, *Thoughts on Religion at the Front*, p. 17.

condition of the troops in the army proved unsatisfactory. The Cairns Report confirmed what chaplains and committed laymen like Donald Hankey<sup>86</sup> already knew, that religion in the trenches, where it existed, was inarticulate, deistic and not specifically Christian.<sup>87</sup>

At home the church had been responding to war by formulating plans for a National Mission of Repentance and Hope. This was in response to the failure of the expected national religious revival to materialise and an attempt to identify the church with the struggle of the nation at war. Wilkinson described it as “an attempt to discharge its vocation to act as the Christian conscience of the country.”<sup>88</sup> Although even its critics worked hard to prepare for the mission it was generally judged to be a failure. F. Iremonger, a leading Anglican cleric, summed it up “There were no signs of a renewed desire on the part of the people of England to identify themselves and their ideal with the fellowship and worship of the national church.”<sup>89</sup> The results of the mission in terms of the church trying to understand where it had gone wrong, in the reports of the Archbishops’ Committees of Enquiry, are fruitful sources of the thinking of the immediate post-war church about what had gone wrong and how to proceed in the future.

As part of the soul-searching involved in the National Mission, the Bishop of Kensington<sup>90</sup> sent out a questionnaire to gather the ideas of serving army and navy chaplains. In a letter to chaplains the bishop posed four questions, asking them about their

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<sup>86</sup> Donald Hankey, pre-war ordinand and volunteer at the Oxford and Bermondsey Mission. While serving in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment he wrote a series of articles for *The Spectator* under the non de plume of *A student in Arms*. Following his death in action in October 1916 these essays were collected in *A Student in Arms* (London, 1916).

<sup>87</sup> D. Hankey, *A Student in Arms* (London, 1917), p. 110.

<sup>88</sup> Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London, 1978), p. 70.

<sup>89</sup> Cited by Wilkinson, *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>90</sup> John Primatt Maud (1860 - 1932) was the second Bishop of Kensington from 1911-1932, *ODNB*



difficulties in their work, to what extent they felt the church responsible for these difficulties, and asking for their suggestions for remedying these faults and preparing for the return of the troops to civilian life. He said:

We felt there was no body of men better qualified to give us an account of the religious state of the nation than those who are now in a special position to observe and judge what great masses of men think and feel on the vital subject of religion.<sup>91</sup>

The questionnaires were sent to 1,300 army chaplains and 300 navy chaplains. Their replies which were commented on by George Bell<sup>92</sup> as part of the report, gave a clear picture of the preoccupations of the chaplains.<sup>93</sup> Bell particularly wanted to draw the committee's attention to two themes arising from the answers: firstly, the misconceptions about the gospel and the church's responsibility for this and, secondly, the misunderstandings which had alienated people from the church. As in the Cairns Report, the chaplains commented on the widespread ignorance they had found. Another similarity to the Cairns Report was the comments of the chaplains on the good qualities of the men they had come across: "Of the splendid national qualities of devotion to duty, loyalty, cheerfulness and courage, chaplains do not weary of speaking."<sup>94</sup> A complaint of the chaplains was the very small number of recommendations of soldiers from parish priests that they had received which seemed symptomatic of: "the failure of the clergy to know the men."<sup>95</sup> The conclusion of the chaplains was that the church was responsible for the difficulties in their work at the front

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<sup>91</sup>*The National Mission of Repentance and Hope*, A report on the chaplains' replies to the Lord Bishop of Kensington (London, 1919), p. 5.

<sup>92</sup>George Bell was at that time domestic chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

<sup>93</sup>*The National Mission of Repentance and Hope*, 'A report on the chaplains' replies to the Lord Bishop of Kensington' (London, 1919), p.6.

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

and warned that special efforts must be made in preparation of “a real welcome by the church and the offer of service to all who return.”<sup>96</sup>

Harry Blackburne pointed to the fact that, under war conditions, positive aspects of cooperation between different denominations and different church parties were emphasised and negative ones ignored: “One has to change one’s ideas out here”.<sup>97</sup> Returning chaplains could not see why the absence of denominational strife could not continue after the war. Guy Rogers was of the opinion that “it seemed intolerable to return to the type of life where churches could not get together at the table of the Lord.”<sup>98</sup> Phillip Crick, writing in 1917 believed that men who had found faith in war-time would “simply have no use for any church that formulates religion in terms of division”, and that the church would lose these men. He urged that: “If there cannot be unity, there must be at least uniformity of aim.”<sup>99</sup> *The Times*, reporting on Archbishop’s Davidson’s visit to the front in January 1919, commented:

The chaplains have realised that ..... in the face of the forces of evil, the whole church must close up her ranks and have a united front towards the real enemy.<sup>100</sup>

It was not only Anglican chaplains that felt this urge to better peace-time relationships. From the chaplains’ conference held in March 1919 at the chaplains’ school at St Omer, a letter was sent to *The Times* signed by representatives of chaplains from the Anglican, Scottish Presbyterian, Wesleyan and Baptist churches and the YMCA which set out

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<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>97</sup>H. Blackburne, *This Also Happened on the Western Front* (London, 1932), p. 16.

<sup>98</sup>T. G. Rogers, *A Rebel at Heart*, p. 310.

<sup>99</sup>Phillip Crick, ‘The Soldier’s Religion’ in *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 365.

<sup>100</sup>*The Times*, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1919, p. 5.

their hope for the future of church unity. They suggested conferences and conventions to share ideas “as a regular and normal part of the life of the churches”, and that intercommunion be allowed “at least on such occasions as joint conferences and retreats where the spirit of fellowship already existing is deepest and fullest.”<sup>101</sup> The YMCA had been instrumental in organising united services in its huts, conducted by Anglican and Nonconformist clergy.<sup>102</sup> A measure of cooperation between the chaplains’ department and the YMCA can be seen in the fact that after the war Neville Talbot was offered, but declined, the position of the religious work secretary to the YMCA.<sup>103</sup>

The experiences and difficulties that chaplains endured under the conditions of war caused many chaplains to give careful thought to their own beliefs and theology. As the Dean of Worcester, W. Moore Ede, put it in his introduction to Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy’s <sup>104</sup>*The Hardest Part*: “These pages express the thoughts which come to the writer amid the hardship of the trenches and the brutalities of war. It is literally a theology hammered out on the battlefield.”<sup>105</sup> Studdert Kennedy wrote *The Hardest Part* as a response to the question frequently asked of him: “What is God like?” He was drawn to emphasise increasingly the immanence of God and his ability to suffer with us: “It is funny how it is Christ on the cross that comforts, not God on the throne.”<sup>106</sup> Like many other chaplains and soldiers he identified the suffering Christ with the soldier’s predicament but emphasised the eventual triumph of the crucified suffering God. Frank West in his biography of F. R. Barry said of

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<sup>101</sup>*The Times*, 1<sup>st</sup> April 1919, p. 9.

<sup>102</sup>M. Snape, *The Back Parts of War*: p. 86.

<sup>103</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>104</sup>G. A. Studdert Kennedy, TCF 1914-1918, MC 1916, J. K. Mozley (ed.), *G A Studdert Kennedy, By His Friends* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1929).

<sup>105</sup>G. A. Studdert Kennedy, *The Hardest Part*, (London, 1918), p. ix.

<sup>106</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 8.

Barry and Studdert Kennedy: “Both felt instinctively that the transcendent impassible God would not commend the gospel to an increasingly sceptical public. A God wholly removed from the sufferings of his children just would not do.”<sup>107</sup> Mervyn Haigh questioned the ability of the diffusive Christianity prevalent in the trenches to mesh with a post-war church. He questioned whether the church was wide enough in its theology and its attitude to provide a home for the men who had discovered an “inarticulate” religion during the war:

There are others, who reverently recognising the source of all diffusive Christianity is the work of the Christ through the church his body, yet begin to question whether the church is wide enough in its theology or in its outreach, to gather men such as this within its fold or embrace the God given opportunities now open before it in a post war society.<sup>108</sup>

His thinking widened his ideas on salvation. Studdert Kennedy also pursued this theme of the church’s ideas not being flexible enough, theologically, to keep up with the war-time developments in thinking by the chaplains: “Everywhere the followers of Christ are found outside the church. The Church of Christ has ceased in these days to be a pillar of cloud and fire ..... and has become a weak and inefficient ambulance brigade.”<sup>109</sup>

The chaplains, then, confronted in the war events which were to make them question the nature of their own faith, face the reality of a vast ignorance about Christianity, consider the failure of religious education and appreciate the poor image the Church of England had among ordinary men. However they had also discovered the large extent of inarticulate

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<sup>107</sup>F. West, *F. R. B. Portrait of Bishop Russell Barry*, (London, 1980).

<sup>108</sup>F. R. Barry, *Mervyn Haigh* (SPCK, 1964), p. 55.

<sup>109</sup> Studdert Kennedy, *Hardest Part*, p. 158.

religion and diffusive Christianity existing in the army and were determined to build upon that in tackling the issues that awaited in returning to their peace-time ministries. In what ways could the lessons, both negative and positive, of being witnesses to God in four years of war be put to best use in Britain in the future? Amongst the reactions of the chaplains was a clear sense of optimism and opportunity. Milner White emphasised the changes that the war had brought about: "An immense, spontaneous, amicable anarchy has sprung into being and this has been the church in the furnace."<sup>110</sup> He went on: "We are a new race, we priests of the furnace, humbled by much strain and much failure, revolutionaries not at all in spirit, but actually in fact."<sup>111</sup> This revolutionary spirit among some army chaplains had been brewing since mid-war. In 1915 in a book dedicated to the men who had died, F. R. Barry was thinking about the end of the war and his response to it: "A merely different world is not enough, we must see that it is a better one ..... what part will the church play in the building of the new world?"<sup>112</sup>

The church at home came in for a great deal of criticism from the chaplains at the front. Macnutt compared the "Heights to which men ..... rise to in the pursuit of duty, the self giving, the sacrifice," with "the cold calculating uninspired profession of Christianity which forms so large a part of the practical religion of the church."<sup>113</sup> He added that the churches' failure must be recognised: "to recognise it is the only possible attitude for faith." In his contribution to *The Church in the Furnace*, 'The Moral Equivalent of War', he recommended self-government for the church, escape from parochialism, a readiness to

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<sup>110</sup>Milner White, 'Worship and Services', in *Church in the Furnace*, p. 176.

<sup>111</sup>ibid., p. 176.

<sup>112</sup>F. R. Barry, *Religion and the War* (London, 1915), p. 1.

<sup>113</sup>Macnutt, 'The Moral Equivalent of War', in *Church in the Furnace*, p. 5.

face social evils and an end to sectionalism. Tom Pym was one of the most outspoken critics of the established church. This critical attitude was coupled with a strong sense of how the returning chaplains were to play a part in its future. He had been an extremely successful and popular chaplain who had been promoted to Deputy Assistant Chaplain General of XIII Corps. In spite of his privileged and establishment position before the war as curate and chaplain of Balliol College Oxford, he had spent his vacations living and working in Camberwell in the East End of London. He contributed an essay on religious education and training of the clergy to *The Church in the Furnace*<sup>114</sup> and was thinking seriously about church reform in the later stages of the war. He was asked to be present at the first meeting of the “Life and Liberty” campaign, a pressure group which had been set up to campaign for changes in the way the Church of England was run. (see Chapter Five) His views on the church after the war were considered by some to be extreme. He thought of a scheme called “plus and minus”, known as PAM, whereby groups of clergy would pool their resources and make a pledge to accept no church endowments or patronage until either the church was disestablished or it had had the chance to put its own house in order. Another outspoken critic of the status quo, Neville Talbot, felt that Pym had gone too far and that he was in danger of losing support and becoming a martyr to his own cause; He took to calling him “Ig” and warned “you don’t want to become a modern Ignatius Loyola do you Tom?”<sup>115</sup>

Pym’s ideas were discussed at a chaplains’ conference in March 1918 and the scheme was rejected. However, he continued to agitate and had not changed his ideas when writing to his wife in May 1918:

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<sup>114</sup>T. Pym, ‘Religious Education and Training of the Clergy’ in *Church in the Furnace*.

<sup>115</sup>D. Pym, *Tom Pym: A Portrait* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 50.

We talk of scandals and abuses disqualifying the church in preaching righteousness and the kingdom of God. Surely they even more disqualify the individual parson who depends on that system for his worldly advancement.

He urged chaplains and clergy at home to: “Resign and refuse livings and curacies. Don’t take the church’s preferment or the church’s money.”<sup>116</sup> In November, a few days after the Armistice, Pym went to stay the night with Bishop Gwynne, who according to Dora Pym, his wife, talked to him at length about his attitudes.<sup>117</sup> Ben O’Rourke,<sup>118</sup> a regular army chaplain who had been captured in the retreat from Mons and only released from a prisoner of war camp in 1915, kept a diary in 1918 and recounted in his entry for 23<sup>rd</sup> November the genesis of the revolutionary ideas of some of the chaplains which took place at a conference for Assistant Chaplain Generals:

Chiefly notable for a caucus which took place in [J. V. Macmillan’s]<sup>119</sup> room after dinner. They came back to the dining room and read out a new scheme for a community arising out of the reconstruction propaganda. Members of the community to pool their incomes and pledge themselves not to accept benefice

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<sup>116</sup> *ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>117</sup> *ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>118</sup> Ben O’Rourke, pre-war regular army CF. He was mobilised with the 4th Field Ambulance at Bordon on 10th August and was captured in the retreat from Mon

<sup>113</sup> J.V. Macmillan, TCF 1915-16, 1917-19, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* (1940), p.548.

<sup>114</sup> *The Diaries of The Revd B O’Rourke* (Unpublished).

<sup>115</sup> R.A. Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury 1903 -1928, *ODNB*

<sup>116</sup> G. K. A. Bell, *Randall Davidson* (London, 1935), p. 942.

while the church continued on present lines. They would work amongst the poor and live simple lives among the working classes.<sup>120</sup>

Archbishop Davidson<sup>121</sup> in his visit to the front in January 1919 held conferences at all the army headquarters and addressed chaplains and other officers. Bell said in his biography of Davidson: "The subjects were this time far more concerned with the future, than with immediate needs ..... They included church unity, demobilisation, church and labour, the permanent diaconate."<sup>122</sup> The Archbishop obviously picked up the unrest among army chaplains. Bell continued: "There was a plan for equalising stipends in the benefices and curacies to which the chaplains would return." Another scheme was for "rovers in each diocese - a kind of flying squadron of special missionaries under authority."<sup>123</sup> According to Bell, Davidson sympathised but did not find the chaplains very constructive in their views. He apparently thought the unrest and rebellion were due to an unwillingness to face the old parochial grind: "possessing so much freedom, how should they be servants again?"<sup>124</sup> Barry remembered:

We too were getting frustrated and developed our own view of "we" and "they" the chaplains at the front and the home church. We tended to blame everything on "the system" and particularly "the bishops" - always the whipping boys of dissatisfaction.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup>Ibid., p. 943.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid.

<sup>125</sup>Barry, *Period of my Life*, p. 62.



B. K. Cunningham<sup>126</sup> had some sympathy with the discontent: “without claiming to find any great remedy for past failure, this very restlessness and discontent is surely begotten of God and is consequently full of hope.”<sup>127</sup>

The chaplains had had to consider throughout the war the way in which the role that they had been performing had changed them and how prepared they had been for war. This led many to consider the role of ordination training and its suitability in providing able clergy in peace and war. Before the war the number of ordination candidates had been decreasing and by 1900 the situation had become critical. By 1908 the deficit in clergy was 5,204. The problem was compounded by the growth of the population and its concentration in industrial centres. To hold parishes in plurality or to create new parishes meant a special act of parliament for each individual case.<sup>128</sup> Candidates for ordination were predominantly upper or middle class. It was very expensive to be ordained, involving years of education, Roger Lloyd estimated a sum of £500 after secondary education. Also, unless a private income was available, taking up a poorly paid benefice was impossible. Bertie Bull,<sup>129</sup> a colleague of Charles Gore at the Community of the Resurrection, said: “We have invented class priesthood with a money qualification.”<sup>130</sup> After 1900 some bishops were beginning to waive the requirement to have a degree and colleges such as St Aidan’s and were training increasing numbers of non- graduate clergy. The Bishops were also starting to insist on some type of theological training although they did not enforce this until 1917. Neville Talbot in his

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<sup>126</sup>B. K. Cunningham, TCF 1917-1919, warden of the chaplains’ training school at St Omer, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 310.

<sup>127</sup>B. K. Cunningham, contribution to Anon, *Can England’s Church win England’s Manhood? By an Army Chaplain* (London, 1917), p. 43.

<sup>128</sup>Lloyd, *The Church of England*, p. 75.

<sup>129</sup> Bertie Paul Bull, *Community of the Resurrection 1894, Chaplain to South African Forces (Crockford’s Clerical Directory*(1940), p. 180.

<sup>130</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 150.

contribution to *The Church in the Furnace*, 'The Training of the Clergy', commented on how the chaplains had to overcome a pre-war aversion to the clergy and proved themselves worthy of respect and pointed to the gaps in training shown up by the stresses of war. He continued that theological training, when it existed, was too short and rushed.

P. B. "Tubby" Clayton, who had set up the Every Man's Club at Poperinghe in the war, had been in a good position to judge the state of religion among the troops and officers as they poured through the doors of Talbot House. He too was concerned with the training of ordinands but in a different context. Many of the men he had come into contact with had expressed a desire to be ordained if they survived the war. Clayton had kept a record of their names and thought up a scheme for a test school, that is, a preordination educational centre to assess the suitability of the candidate and bring his education up to the standard required. The two French temporary test schools set up in 1919 were joined together and the great venture of the test school started which was to provide priests who would have an influence on the Church of England for the next forty years. The setting up of Knutsford test school established the principle that in future none should be debarred from ordination training because of their lack of educational opportunities or financial background.

With the school at Knutsford well established, Clayton turned his attention to his other post-war ambition which was to start a club in London along the lines of Talbot House. What was to become the international movement of Toc H started at a meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 1919, and the first HQ or "Mark" as the houses were to become known, was set up in a flat in Red Lion Square, soon spilling over to two other London locations. The aims and actions of the new organisation were soon being advertised on the London

underground. The basis of the ideology of Toc H was apparent at this stage: the perpetuation of the active service atmosphere of fellowship, the extension of this tradition to the younger generation, and the continuation of the Talbot House tradition of service, thought and conduct.

The discussions at the Pan Anglican Congress in 1908<sup>131</sup> had shown clearly that Christian Socialist movements, for example the Guild of St Matthew and <sup>132</sup> the Christian Social Union, <sup>133</sup> had had an influence out of proportion to their small numbers. The question which was addressed in their session on social issues was: “Does Christianity point to a socialist society and if so, ought the church to be allied to the Labour Party?” The answer to these questions was a “resounding yes.”<sup>134</sup> The fifth report of the Archbishops’ Committee of Enquiry, *Christianity and Industrial Problems* gave a clear lead on the ways in which industrial problems and social inequalities could be dealt with: “We would urge our fellow Christians to ask themselves once more whether an economic system which produces striking inequalities of wealth is compatible with the spirit of Christianity?” The report continued, discussing the living wage, unemployment, sickness, industrial injury and child labour and expected the parish priests “to take the lead in the application of the Christian faith to social and industrial problems.”<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>131</sup>The Pan Anglican Congress was held in London in the summer of 1908 and was attended by 17,000 delegates from every church in the Anglican Communion. The Archbishop of Canterbury called it “a week without parallel on our history”, W. E. Gibraltar, ‘The Pan Anglican Congress’ in *The Irish Church Quarterly* Vol. 1. No. 4 (Oct., 1908, pp. 274).

<sup>132</sup> The Guild of St Matthew was formed by Stewart Headlam, prominent Christian Socialist in 1887. It was a society for high church clergy and laity sympathetic to socialism. *ODNB*

<sup>133</sup>The Christian Social Union was formed in 1889 and studied social conditions and social injustice. It was merged with the Navy Mission to form the Industrial Christian fellowship in 1919.

<sup>134</sup>Lloyd, *The Church of England*, p. 193.

<sup>135</sup>The Archbishops’ Fifth Committee of Enquiry, *Christianity and industrial Problems* (1918).

The report formed the basis of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, which in the inter-war years evangelised in industrial areas. Through its missions and crusades, educational work and political influence it created an impression of the concern of the church for the condition of the working class. The ICF was led by P. T. R. Kirk, an ex chaplain, and its chief missionary was the Revd Studdert Kennedy who travelled around the country evangelising and leading crusades. It was supported to a large extent by ex-chaplains.

Of the 111 in service bishops in *Crockford's Clerical Directory* in England and Wales in 1940, thirty - two of them were ex-chaplains, that is, 29%, which seems to show a healthy career path for many former chaplains. Among them were chaplains who became bishops of large or important dioceses: Salisbury Woodward<sup>136</sup> at Bristol, E.S. Woods<sup>137</sup> at Lichfield, Mervyn Haigh<sup>138</sup> at Coventry, F. R. Barry at Southwell, Christopher Chavasse at Rochester, Kenneth Kirk at Oxford and Geoffrey Lunt<sup>139</sup> at Ripon. There are also numerous entries of former chaplains who had either been overseas bishops and retired or returned home to a parish in England (for example, Neville Talbot who had been Bishop of Pretoria).

We have seen how former chaplains were convinced even before the end of the war that they had something specific to give to the post-war life of the church. The years before the Second World War would see changes in the Church's relationship with state and people. Former chaplains were to be involved in many of them from the rise of the pacifist movement to the first use of the broadcast media by the church. The agendas for the first Church Congresses to be held since the war, in 1919 and 1920 , show that former chaplains

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<sup>136</sup> Clifford Salisbury-Woodward, TCF 1916-1917, MC 1916, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.158

<sup>137</sup> E.S. Woods, TCF 1914-1919, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.822.

<sup>138</sup> Mervyn Haigh, TCF 1916-1919, mentioned in Despatches 1918, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.289

<sup>139</sup> Geoffrey Lunt, TCF 1917-1919, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 1137.

were represented prominently in major fora for the church's discussions. The variety of topics they covered prefigured the extent to which they would be involved in church affairs the inter-war years. In 1919 Tom Pym spoke on 'Social centres and welfare work', B. K. Cunningham on 'The faith that could move mountains' and E.K. Talbot<sup>140</sup> on 'The church of tomorrow'<sup>141</sup> In 1920 Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy spoke on 'Christ and the Labour movement' F. R. Barry on 'Incarnation' and Timothy Rees<sup>142</sup> and F. B. Macnutt led a discussion on the implications of the Lambeth resolution on unity.

The Revd Kenneth Kirk in his article 'When the Priests Come Home', said of the returning chaplains: "in so far as they are able to codify their experience, and keep it intact under the disintegrating influence of peace it will modify their methods in parochial work in many directions."<sup>143</sup> The following chapters will show in more detail to what extent their hopes and ambitions were achieved.

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<sup>140</sup>Edward Keble Talbot, TCF 1914-1920, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 1313.

<sup>141</sup>*The Times*, 9<sup>th</sup> October 1919, p. 9.

<sup>142</sup>Timothy Rees, TCF 1916-1919, J. Lambert Rees, *Timothy Rees of Mirfield and Llandaff* (London, 1945).  
139K. Kirk, 'When the Priests Come Home', *Church in Furnace*, p. 419.

## Chapter Two: Chaplains, Industry and Society.

In his contribution to *The Church in the Furnace*, E. S. Woods, later Bishop of Lichfield, stated a common belief among chaplains that the church had a post-war opportunity to make a difference in society. He thought that “The problem of securing justice and mercy in the world of industry”,<sup>1</sup> was one which the church could legitimately address and he advised the church to “Go on a crusade for the social justice and brotherhood of man.”<sup>2</sup> Gerald Studdert Kennedy described the experience of the war as being “both an accusation and a challenge”<sup>3</sup> to the returning chaplains, and that they returned with “A sense of corporate identity and a number of readily agreed objectives.” *The Church in the Furnace* became, according to him, “a kind of tract for frontline reformists.”<sup>4</sup>

Any assessment of the role of returning chaplains must take several criteria into account in making judgements about their significance in industrial and social affairs during the interwar years. Firstly, the extent to which their thoughts and actions were influenced by their pre-war experiences. Secondly, to examine the evidence that their conduct was based on their wartime experiences. Thirdly, it is necessary to put the evidence of their impact in the context of other initiatives by the church during these years. To what extent did the chaplains stand out as leading the field in their concern for social and industrial justice? Finally, the extent to which the Church of England was continuing to be relevant both to working men and industrial and business interests must be assessed in order to judge the returning chaplains’ effect on them.

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<sup>1</sup> E. S. Woods, *The Great Adventure*, in *The Church in the Furnace*, ed. F Macnutt (London 1917), p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.447.

<sup>3</sup> Gerald Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy, The Industrial Christian Fellowship 1919-1929* (London, 1982), p 51.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

It is possible that the returning chaplains, despite being aware of the evidence to show that the churches' "opportunity" in the trenches had not resulted in religious revival, were conscious of a change of attitude towards the clergy that had developed out of the comradeship of chaplains and men in the trenches. This realisation could form the basis of new work that the churches could do in society and industry. Bernard Keymer,<sup>5</sup> in his contribution to *The Church in the Furnace*, attempted to make sense of "the revelations of war" and the way in which the increased understanding created during the war could be continued. He claimed that: "War is dealing shrewd blows every day to prejudice, criticism and suspicion", but that there was still work to be done: "The wage earners are filled with a vague but profound sentiment that the industrial system ..... denies to them the liberties, opportunities and responsibilities of free men."<sup>6</sup> He considered that the heart of the question was in "The general status of labour, its insecurity and lack of freedom."<sup>7</sup> He continued:

It is up to the church to spiritualise the ideas of the industrial world. If the Church is to exert any influence it will be learning to see men as they really are, by trusting them and understanding the difficulties of rich and poor alike. Unless we are willing to learn, the church will be seen as having a patronising attitude.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Bernard Keymer, TCF 1916-1918, chaplain in RAF 1918, RACHD archives.

<sup>6</sup>Bernard Keymer, 'Fellowship in Industrial Life' in F. B. Macnutt (ed.), *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 130.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid. , pp. 141-142.

The heart of the question was in: "The general status of labour, its insecurity and lack of freedom."<sup>9</sup>

A. Lambardini, a former chaplain, preaching at Bishopsgate in March 1919, commented on his perception that there was a sense of expectancy as to how the church would respond to the post-war world: "Millions of men have learned from what they have seen and heard of the padres that a clergyman is out for more than taking services and sitting on committees."<sup>10</sup> Christopher Chavasse, who became Vicar of St George's Church, Barrow - in - Furness on demobilisation said in one of his first letters to parishioners: "In industry there is the problem of the union between capital and labour which we must have and to which we are groping."<sup>11</sup> Chavasse considered that in the days of troubled industrial relations immediately after the war: "There was one of two things imminent, one was a revolution; the other, a great revival."<sup>12</sup> He seemed convinced that it was a revival which would sweep the country.

M. Linton Smith,<sup>13</sup> later to be Bishop of Rochester, in his essay in *The Church in the Furnace*, 'Fellowship in the Church', believed that the chaplains had been successful in breaking down some of the class barriers in fellowship with men of all sorts during the war: "It must be made clear that the interest of the church lies in men because they are men, not because they have a position of wealth and position."<sup>14</sup> He believed that the experience of war would provide a "corrective" to barriers between classes: "it has clearly helped to break

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>10</sup>*The Church Times*, 21<sup>st</sup> March 1919, p. 282.

<sup>11</sup>C. Chavasse, *St George's Parish Magazine*, January 1920. Barrow-in-Furness Record Office, BPR11/PM/2.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., May 1921.

<sup>13</sup>M. Linton Smith TCF 1915-1917, DSO 1917, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.1248

<sup>14</sup>M. Linton Smith, "Fellowship in the Church", in *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 116.



down the barrier of ignorance, with its resulting suspicion between clergy and laity.”<sup>15</sup> He was not alone in regarding the post-war era as one in which a new relationship with the population could be built. The Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking at the memorial service for chaplains who had died, said:

Up and down the land a fellowship of mutual knowledge and mutual trust is now aflame with a larger outlook, a manlier sympathy and a new found loyalty to our Lord. See to it brothers that henceforth it should never wane and that the national church should be more and more the church of the people.<sup>16</sup>

P.B. “Tubby” Clayton was anxious that fellowship engendered in the war should not dissipate in the class tensions of peace:

The pit boys of today cherish an almost racial antagonism against the classes whose sons led the pit boys of yesterday against uncut wire. If the Talbot House movement can go forward with its programme of reconciliation ..... much good may come of it.

He continued: “The church must teach industry and commerce to say prayers together.”<sup>17</sup> Kenneth Kirk, in his essay, ‘When the Priests Come Home’, in *The Church in the Furnace* compared the relationship of church and government to the work of the chaplain in the trenches:

Brigadiers in France who refer almost every question affecting the well being of the men to the chaplains for comment and advice. When the character of the priesthood is so developed that county councils and committees do the same by the

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

<sup>16</sup> *The Church Times*, 4<sup>th</sup> July 1919, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> *The Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> October 1920, p. 15.

clergy at home, the Church of England can be certain that the ministry has absorbed the lessons of the war.<sup>18</sup>

The opinions of some chaplains in their replies to the questions asked in the Bishop of Kensington's Report showed that they believed that there existed a high degree of anti-clericalism and also that the identification of the church with the upper classes still persisted. The Bishop of Kensington in his introduction to the report said that he realised that "The church simply does not count as a live factor for social betterment."<sup>19</sup> George Bell's report on the answers of the clergy to the questions posed contained comments by the chaplains on the "social exclusiveness" of the church and the "social barrier" between clergy and people. One reply mentions "The failure of the church to witness in social things."<sup>20</sup>

F. B. Macnutt, in his essay in *The Church in the Furnace*, summed up what should be the attitude of the chaplain and the church in the post-war era. He quoted the Bishop of Oxford, Charles Gore, who had said in a sermon at a pre pre-war Church Congress that the clergy should have a "permanently troubled conscience." Macnutt advised that the "permanently troubled conscience" should "never rest until the spirit of Christ has won."<sup>21</sup> *The Church in the Furnace* was reviewed by *The Church Times* in January 1918 and it was recommended as being of use in the reconstruction of the church after war. The review

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<sup>18</sup>K. Kirk, 'When the Priests Come Home', in *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 426.

<sup>19</sup>*The National Mission of Repentance and Hope, A report on the chaplains' replies to the Lord Bishop of Kensington* (London, 1919), p. 17.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>21</sup>F. B. Macnutt, 'The Moral Equivalent of War', in F. B. Macnutt (ed.), *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 30.

recommended that its study might “With profit be taken as a basis in Rural Decanal chapters and other church meetings.”<sup>22</sup>

Gerald Studdert Kennedy, commenting on the former chaplains who joined the Industrial Christian Fellowship, was aware of the effect their war service had had on them:

A small but articulate proportion of the temporary chaplains returned from the war guilty at the failure of the church as a national institution, traumatically initiated into the dilemma of a socially effective faith and with some collective sense of issues requiring attention.<sup>23</sup>

As part of the Anglican church’s response to the war and as a follow up to the National Mission, the Archbishops set up Committees of Enquiry to look at the tasks of the post-war Church. The fifth report was called *Christianity and Industrial Problems*. The introduction recommended the need for a new beginning in industrial affairs. The main themes of the report were the living wage, adequate leisure, full employment, the status of labour, the adequate provision of education and health and housing. The basic incompatibility of the churches’ message and capital was stated:

We would urge our fellow churchmen to ask themselves once more whether an economic system which produces the striking ..... excessive inequalities of wealth which characterise our present society is one which is compatible with the spirit of Christianity.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>*The Church Times*, 25<sup>th</sup> January 1918, p. 64.

<sup>23</sup>Gerald Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, p. 51.

<sup>24</sup>The Archbishops’ Fifth Committee of Enquiry, *Christianity and industrial Problems* (London, 1918).

Historians have praised the Fifth Archbishops' Report as an important part of the development of the post-war church in its effort to further the social gospel. John Oliver called it: "an outstanding expression of Christian thought about post war society"<sup>25</sup> Gerald Studdert Kennedy claims that the report became "The charter document of the Industrial Christian Fellowship."<sup>26</sup> However, the ideas and actions, both of the post war church as an institution and the returning chaplains, must be seen in the context of the attitude and work of the church in the nineteenth century and in the years leading up to the war. E.R. Norman is of the opinion that the post-war church concentrated too much on its failures, and public repentance for them, and was over critical of its record on social action. He quoted the report of the third Archbishops' Committee of Enquiry, *The Worship of the Church*:

It is undeniable that the church's own record in the past stands in its way today .Old abuses, child labour, sweated labour, the intolerable conditions of housing and the monstrous evils of the slums..... long continued to exist with scarcely a protest from the church at large."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> J. Oliver, *The Church and Social order*(London, 1968), p. 49

<sup>26</sup> Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, p.51.

<sup>27</sup> E H Norman ,*Church and Society in England* (Oxford , 1976), p. 230

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. 230.

He commented “The authors’ ignorance of the positive passion found in the nineteenth century church for social improvement is remarkable.”<sup>28</sup>

How far had the church been involved in social reform in the nineteenth century? The term *Christian Socialist* was used by the group formed around F. D. Maurice in the 1840’s which for the first time brought two hitherto mutually incompatible terms together.<sup>29</sup> The wave of Christian socialism in the 1880s was reflected in the speeches of the Church Congresses. The publication of *Lux Mundi* in 1889 was important for its influence on ideas about society as well as its theological significance. In the preface Charles Gore wrote: “Development of Theology is rather the process in which the church ..... enters into the apprehension of the new social and intellectual movements of each age.”<sup>30</sup>

Two of its essays dealt with purely social aspects,<sup>31</sup> and later in the year its editor, Charles Gore, founded the Christian Social Union to further the social gospel. Its aims were to research the ways in which a better social order could be achieved. It campaigned through its publication *The Commonwealth*,<sup>32</sup> pamphlets and public meetings on such issues as housing and poverty. At its height in 1910 it had 6,000 members:

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. 230

<sup>29</sup> Maurice accepted the name ‘Christian Socialism’ for his movement in 1850 and published his controversial *Theological Essays* (Cambridge) in 1853.

<sup>30</sup> Charles Gore (ed.), *Lux Mundi: A series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation* (London, 1889), p. ix.

<sup>31</sup> W. J. H. Campion, ‘Christianity and Politics’ and R.L. Ottley, ‘Christian Ethics’ in *Lux Mundi*.

<sup>32</sup> *The Commonwealth* was founded by Henry Scott Holland in 1895.

It attracted the largest number of members of any organisation for social reform in the history of the Church of England, and created a tradition of social thought which continued long after its demise in 1919.<sup>33</sup>

John Oliver claims that it secured the passage of the Factory Act in 1901 and that the Christian Social Union had raised the profile of social and industrial issues amongst church people. This can be seen in the proceedings of Church Congress in the years leading up to the war. In Manchester in 1908 it discussed “The conditions of factory life” and “The main problems of Industry and commerce.”<sup>34</sup> In 1913 the congress debated “Rural Betterment” and “the ethics of property.”<sup>35</sup> In *The Times* report on these debates it was stated: “Here were four uncompromising collectivists preaching the ethics of the socialist gospel in undiluted form and by and large not with tolerance but with active sympathy.”<sup>36</sup> As commented previously, the importance in which social and industrial issues were regarded by the church can be seen particularly in the Pan Anglican Conference in 1908.

Several former chaplains, such as E. S. Woods, Harry Blackburne, Charles Raven<sup>37</sup> and Tom Pym became involved in the “Life and Liberty” movement which started agitating for church reform from 1917 onwards. Its leaders were involved in social reform in spheres such as the formation of the Industrial Christian Fellowship (ICF) and the preparations for the Conference on Politics, Economics and Citizenship (COPEC), and it was inevitable that some of its publications took a strong line on social and industrial issues. Its pamphlet *The Social message of the Church* said that: “The principles of a Christian social gospel should be

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<sup>33</sup>Alan Wilkinson, *Christian Socialism: from Scott Holland to Tony Blair* (London, 1999), p. 29.

<sup>34</sup>*The Times*, 9<sup>th</sup> July 1908, p. 4.

<sup>35</sup>*The Times*, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1913, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup>*The Times*, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1913, P. 7.

<sup>37</sup>Charles Raven, T C F 1917-1918 *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.1109.

cooperation, fellowship and mutual service. The implications of our existing social system are competition, profits and self interest.”<sup>38</sup> The proponents of the involvement of the church in the politics and practicalities of the social gospel after the war therefore had a sound basis in pre-war Christian Socialism. The impression remains, however, in the writings of the former chaplains, of their perception of the post-war era as being significantly different, with the church facing many and varied opportunities and challenges.

How different was the inter-war period to the challenges that faced Britain before the war? Richard Overy has claimed that social conditions on the home front during the war had improved for the poorest members of society.<sup>39</sup> The bargaining power of the unions had also increased in times of acute labour shortage. The growing confidence of the Trade Unions can be seen in the fact that between 1919 and 1921, 150,000,000 working days were lost through stoppages.<sup>40</sup> The post-war boom had resulted in many of the returning troops gaining employment in the post-war industrial economy. However, the boom was short lived, as the traditional industries, shipbuilding, mining and railways, then faced shrinking world markets. In the 1918 election the Labour Party had increased its vote from 500,000 to 2,500,000, winning sixty three parliamentary seats and becoming the official opposition party. Juliet Nicholson summed up their stance: “Labour’s goals included the immediate nationalisation and democratic control of vital public services, including mining, shipping, armaments and the electric industry.”<sup>41</sup> The mine owners were opposed to nationalisation

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<sup>38</sup> COPEC booklet, *The Social Message of the Church*, cited by Keith Thompson, *Bureaucracy and Church Reform: The Organizational Response of the Church of England to Social Change, 1800-1965* (London, 1970), p. 149.

<sup>39</sup> R. Overy, *The Morbid Age: Britain and the Crisis of Civilisation, 1919-1939* (London, 2009), p. 282.

<sup>40</sup> J. Wallis, *Valiant for Peace: History of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1914-89* (London, 1991), p. 45.

<sup>41</sup> J. Nicholson, *The Great Silence: 1918-1920, Living in the Shadow of the Great War* (London, 2009), p. 75.

and wages and working conditions in mines varied throughout the country.<sup>42</sup> Miners' strikes broke out in February 1919 and, by the end of the month, London was reduced to three day's supply of coal.<sup>43</sup> The government's response to the slump was to bring forward the decontrol of the coal industry resulting in more strikes in April 1921, which only ended on "Black Friday", when the prospect of a General Strike was averted by the collapse of the Triple Alliance of the transport, rail and mine workers.

The abandonment of building programmes during the war had worsened the housing shortage. Even though the Town Planning Act of 1919 required local councils to begin clearing slums and start building programmes, progress was slow and high rents caused by a housing shortage were often out of reach of the unemployed. The immediate post-war boom was followed in 1920-1921 by a recession. The Archbishop of Canterbury in his New Year's message of 1921 said: "More than two years have passed since our guns were silent. What of the hopes that were ours at Christmas 1918? Who, without a sinking of heart can look thoughtfully ..... on the rise of and character of unemployment in England?"<sup>44</sup>

The general world recession after 1929 did not help employment. A change from reliance on exporting traditional products such as coal to providing consumer goods for the home market meant that the employment situation was different in different parts of the country. Those employed in new manufacturing industries such as the electrical and automobile, rayon, hosiery, chemical and scientific industries in the midlands and the south east were experiencing a good standard of living as the Jarrow hunger marchers protested about unemployment, lockouts and falling wages. A slow economic revival in 1932-1937

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<sup>42</sup>C. Mowat, *Britain between the Wars 1918-1940* (London, 1955), p. 119.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>44</sup>*The Church Times*, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1921, p. 26.



helped, resulting in government investment in housing schemes, followed by the boom resulting from rearmament. It can be seen, then, that the church both locally and nationally had to react to a wide variety of circumstances over a period of twenty years.

### **The Church, Former Chaplains and the Nineteen Twenties**

The issues discussed in the Church Congress and Church Assembly in the 1920s reflected the engagement of the church with the post-war problems. Former chaplains had an important part to play in these discussions. In the 1920 Church Congress Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy spoke on "Labour and church membership". He started by saying that: "The relationships between the church and organised labour are very bad." He went on to develop his theme using "a racy dialogue between two imaginary characters-one representing organised religion and the other the organised labour movement." *The Church Times* correspondent described his speech as: "A clear and concise examination of the actual position of the church and labour opinion."<sup>45</sup>

The Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship (COPEC), met in April 1924. It was attended by 1,200 delegations from all Christian denominations excepting the Roman Catholics. Prominent among its participants were Charles Raven and Tom Pym, both former chaplains, as was J. V. Macmillan who was tasked by Archbishop Davidson with publicising the conference to the whole Anglican Church. E. K. Talbot, Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy, Oliver Quick,<sup>46</sup> F. R. Barry and R. G. Parsons<sup>47</sup> were members of the conference.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>*The Church Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> October 1920, p. 214.

<sup>46</sup>Oliver Quick, TCF 1917-1918, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.1100. He assisted B. K. Cunningham at the chaplains' retreat centre at St Omer.

<sup>47</sup>R.G. Parsons, TCF 1916-1917, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.1259.

<sup>48</sup>*COPEC The purpose, Scope and Nature of the Conference* (London, 1923), p. 3.

Charles Raven, as one of the two secretaries, was a prime mover in its organisation. Four years before the conference, studying and campaigning began. Iremonger, William Temple's biographer, described its object: "To seek the will and purpose of God for men and women in every relationship in their lives, political, social, industrial and the rest."<sup>49</sup> The organisers described their vision for the conference in their commission reports in 1924: "It is the first time in history that qualified and representative Christians have come together for considered and prolonged study of such questions in a common search for the will of God in society."<sup>50</sup> Twelve commissions were set up and 200,000 questionnaires filled in by seventy five centres. All of 1923 was devoted to studying the replies and producing the commission's reports. 1,500 delegates were present at the town hall in Birmingham.

In its first session, Charles Raven gave the report of the group working on *The Nature of God and His Purpose for the World*. The report discussed the reversal of the world's standards of value if true Christianity was to be achieved. True Christianity, he said "Gives honour not to great position or wealth but to the man who walks humbly with his God."<sup>51</sup> The report of the group looking at *Christianity and Industry* was critical of the industrial affairs in Britain. Their resolution read:

The immediate aim of Christians with regard to industry and commerce should be the substitution of the motive of service rather than the motive of gain ..... All talk of

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<sup>49</sup>F. Iremonger, *William Temple Archbishop of Canterbury: His Life and Letters* (London, 1948), p. 334.

<sup>50</sup>The COPEC Commission Reports (London, 1924), p. 5.

<sup>51</sup>COPEC Commission Report: *The Nature of God and his Purpose for the World* (London, 1924), p. 18.

democracy has a note of irony while men are valued mainly for what they have, a little for what they do, but least of all for what they are.<sup>52</sup>

*The Times* report suggested that the comments of the *Christianity and Industry* group were “more or less an unqualified indictment of the existing industrial system”. The report on *The Social Function of the Church* said that: “On class distinctions, the conference declared that Christians could recognise none in the church, and in the world must use their influence against any distinction which might offer an obstacle to true social communion.”<sup>53</sup>

Some delegates realised that this was all revolutionary opinion and that it could have far reaching implications. Mr Herbert Pickles, a working weaver, after hearing the report on *Christianity and Industry*, warned the conference that “In the resolutions that it was about to adopt it was playing with social dynamite.” Mr H. H. Elvin, after listening to the debate on *The Social Function of the Church*, prophesied:

If the churches carried out the recommendations of the commission to work for a Christian solution of social, political and economic questions, as he thought they ought to, it would result first in the emptying of many of the churches of their present occupants and then refilling them with a totally different set of men and women.<sup>54</sup>

At the end of the conference, the delegates came up with resolutions on a variety of topics, including education, the home, the relation of the sexes, leisure, the treatment of crime,

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<sup>52</sup>*The COPEC Commission Reports* (London, 1924) p. 289.

<sup>53</sup>*The Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> April 1924, p. 8.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*

industry and property, industrial relations, Christianity and war, and politics and citizenship.<sup>55</sup> The resolution on unemployment stated:

The conference considers that the continual recurrence of unemployment on a large scale ..... constitutes a challenge of primary urgency and calls upon the government either to hold or to invite and assist the Christian churches to hold, a searching enquiry into the causes of unemployment.”<sup>56</sup>

Archbishop Söderblom<sup>57</sup> praised the organisers of the conference: “It was a living thing, with a father, the bishop of Manchester, a mother, Lucy Gardener and a soul, Charles Raven.”<sup>58</sup> Despite having spent nearly four years on the project, Raven did not keep closely involved in the follow up initiatives. The continuation committee of COPEC was supported by the creation on “The Companions of COPEC”, resulting in regional conferences held in 1924 which established regional committees, which created the Tyneside Christian Social Council and the Birmingham Home Improvement Society.<sup>59</sup>

What had been achieved by COPEC? F. W. Dillistone, Raven’s biographer described the long term effect of the conference: “The COPEC report could well be regarded as a blueprint for the Welfare State.”<sup>60</sup> Raven, in a letter to *The Challenge* in November 1922, described the venture as:

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<sup>55</sup>*The COPEC Commission Reports* (London, 1924), pp. 277-292.

<sup>56</sup>*The Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> April 1924, p. 9.

<sup>57</sup>Nathan Söderblom, from 1914 Archbishop of Uppsala and Primate of the Church of Sweden.  
<http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bio/199.html>.

<sup>58</sup>B. Sunkler, *Archbishop Söderblom*, cited in F. W. Dillistone, *Charles Raven, Naturalist, Theologian, Historian* (London, 1975), p. 334.

<sup>59</sup>G. I. T. Machin, *Churches and Social Issues in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London, 1998), p. 34.

<sup>60</sup>F. W. Dillistone, *Charles Raven*, p. 120.

Unique in religious history, and should strike the imagination as no individual should do. Our quest is a cooperative effort in which every Christian communion in the country to pledge itself to take part.<sup>61</sup>

*The Church Times* in December 1926 reported that: "COPEC is, we understand, in the last days of its life. It was never intended to be more than a temporary association, with a mission to carry out the proposals of the Birmingham conference." The report continued, crediting COPEC with serving "an admirable purpose in quickening the Christian social conscience."<sup>62</sup> The overall achievement of COPEC has been debated, it being questionable whether in the long term the effects of COPEC were ideological or practical. Machin, writing on churches and social policy in the inter-war years said: "The effects of COPEC and its reports, certainly when set in the general context of collectivist discussion and planning which marked the interwar years, were far from insubstantial."<sup>63</sup> Dillistone credited Raven with the opinion, expressed towards the end of his life, that: "Whereas the foundations of a Christian society had been well and truly laid [at COPEC] no group of thinkers had carried on the task of raising the building above ground."<sup>64</sup> E. R. Norman criticised the conference as containing only what had been said for several decades but also considered that its main achievement had been "The extent to which social radicalism had penetrated the leadership

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<sup>61</sup>*The Challenge*, 17<sup>th</sup> November 1922, p. 123.

<sup>62</sup>*The Church Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> November 1926, p. 569.

<sup>63</sup>G. I. T. Machin, *Churches and Social Issues*, p. 34.

<sup>64</sup> Dillistone, *Charles Raven*, p. 122

of the church.”<sup>65</sup> He also considered that Raven had in mind significantly more radical consequences to the conference than those envisaged by William Temple.<sup>66</sup> However, when Raven was asked by the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), of which organisation he was chairman, to write a series of articles setting out the FOR’s aims on its social and economic responsibilities, he was unable to find time to complete this task and passed it back to the FOR social responsibility group to do.<sup>67</sup> The shift in his interest from Christian social policy to pacifism will be examined in Chapter Six.

When the Labour Party became the main opposition party after the 1923 election, 500 Church of England clergymen signed a memorial to Ramsay MacDonald congratulating him and assuring him of their support:

As a result of this, we look forward to the more serious consideration and more adequate treatment of the pressing problems and difficulties of our time ..... our particular calling, with its pastoral experience, gives us direct knowledge of the sufferings and deprivations ..... to which numbers of our fellow citizens are subjected to..... To find a remedy for which is the chief purpose and aim of the labour movement.<sup>68</sup>

It is interesting to note that Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy and P. T. R. Kirk did not sign the memorial, probably because of their position in the non-political and non-denominational ICF. Among the selection of the 500 signatures published by *The Church Times*, however, could be found some former chaplains, Harry Blackburne, F. R. Barry, B. K. Cunningham, O.

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<sup>65</sup> H. Norman, *Church and Society in England 1770-1970: A Historical Study* (OUP, 1976), p. 280

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287.

<sup>67</sup> Wallis, *Valiant for Peace*, p. 87.

<sup>68</sup> *The Church Times*, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1923, p. 297.

Quick, C. S. Woodward and E. K. Talbot.<sup>69</sup> Gerald Studdert Kennedy has pointed out that this action was not one without risk of censure. It was not “a gesture an Anglican clergyman could afford to make without thought.”<sup>70</sup> According to A. M. Scott, one of his congregation, C. S. Woodward lost at least one leading member of his congregation as a result of his signing the memorial.<sup>71</sup>

One of the most important of the efforts of Christians to engage with the industrial world and one in which former chaplains played a prominent part was the Industrial Christian Fellowship (ICF). Gerald Studdert Kennedy, author of a study of the ICF, *Dog Collar Democracy*, considered it to be: “An organisational response, easily the most effective and vigorous, to the catastrophic revelations of secularisation and alienation that emerged during the war.”<sup>72</sup> The Revd Lambardini, a former chaplain, in a sermon considering the role of the church in social and industrial questions of March 1919, reckoned that the ICF “Was going to be the one which would save the situation for the church.”<sup>73</sup> It developed out of a merger of the Navy Mission and the Christian Social Union. Its leader, the Revd P. T. R. Kirk,<sup>74</sup> who had been a chaplain in the war, felt that the term “mission” was out of date in the post-war world and smacked of condescension to the working class, and that the term fellowship was more appropriate. The headed note paper of that ICF proclaimed “We stand for Christ and his principles - independent of party.”<sup>75</sup> The fellowship had a headquarters

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>Gerald Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, p. 124.

<sup>71</sup>A. M. Scott, *Diaries*, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1925 (University of Glasgow), cited in Studdert Kennedy, *Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>72</sup>Gerald Studdert Kennedy, “Woodbine Willie: Religion and Politics after the Great War”. *History Today*, December, 1986, p. 42.

<sup>73</sup>*The Church Times*, 21<sup>st</sup> March 1919, p. 282.

<sup>74</sup>P. T. R. Kirk, TCF 1915-1918, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 771.

<sup>75</sup>Letter from P. T. R. Kirk to Archbishop Lang, on ICF headed notepaper, The papers of Archbishop Lang Vol. 117, ff. 246, Lambeth Palace Library.

staff and clerical area directors. It sent agents or missionaries to factories and canteens, to address trades unions, to stress the application of “Christian principles as the solution to their problems”<sup>76</sup> ‘These agents or lay missionaries were men who had been employed in factories, mines and workshops, but the fellowship’s other evangelical staff were the clerical directors and messengers who visited Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, and groups of business men. The fellowship was concerned with the practical application of the gospel: “We have to show them that God is love and that the Christian religion has a value for this life as well as for the life to come.”<sup>77</sup> They took part in many conferences between the church and the industrial world. Kirk found he needed a clerical messenger and, after hearing Studdert Kennedy speak, said of him: “I had no doubt his was the voice, and his the message for which we had been waiting.”<sup>78</sup>

Kirk set out the aims of the fellowship in his chapter on the ICF in *Modern Evangelistic Movements*: “The only hope lies in the evangelisation of the great labour movement. If the masses will not come to the church, the church will go to the masses.”<sup>79</sup> Although the ICF was not afraid to be political, the constant theme was the necessity of following Christian principles in commercial life. In Chapter Two of the ICF crusade manual Kirk described: “How society could only be changed by everyone leading a life guaranteed by Christian principles.”<sup>80</sup> The Bishop of Croydon,<sup>81</sup> in an

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<sup>76</sup>P. T. R. Kirk, ‘The Industrial Christian Fellowship’ in D. P. Thompson (ed.), *Modern Evangelistic Movements* (New York, 1924), p. 77.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 77

<sup>78</sup>P. T. R. Kirk, ‘Studdert Kennedy, ICF Crusader’, in J. K. Mozley (ed.), *G. A. Studdert Kennedy, By His Friends* (London, 1929), p. 166.

<sup>79</sup>P. T. R. Kirk, ‘The Industrial Christian Fellowship’ p. 85.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>81</sup> Henry Pereira, Bishop of Croydon 1920-1924, *Who was Who 1897-1990* (1991).



article on the ICF in *The Guardian* in February 1920, set out some of the ways in which the movement was progressing:

We are holding conferences in all parts of the country, which are free and open to all to come. The sternest criticism is welcomed, either of the church and labour, provided the name of Christ is respected. In this way we are giving trades unionists--- the opportunity to explain their desires and requests, and equally , the clergy and laity can show by their presence that they are dissatisfied with the spiritual and industrial conditions of England and that they no longer intend to remain silent in the face of injustice and wrong. ....Everywhere the results have been full of encouragement in destroying misunderstanding and expelling prejudice”<sup>82</sup>

The ICF became a broad church politically, with influences from both the organisations which had merged at its foundation. Writing in *The Times* in 1926 Studdert Kennedy made his thoughts clear on this issue: “The fellowship refuses to associate itself with any particular policy or party as being Christian to the exclusion of others.”<sup>83</sup>

The active lay supporters of the ICF were influential figures on the fringes of high politics and represented elements of all political opinion, among them Lionel Hitchens, director of Cammell Laird, Donald Maclean MP, Ben Spoor MP, H. Slessor, lawyer, and Trade Unionists H. H. Elvin and E. L. Poulton.<sup>84</sup> As well as Kirk and Studdert Kennedy other chaplains who were to become leaders of the post-war church were also members of the

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<sup>82</sup>*The Guardian*, 13th February, 1920, p. 118.

<sup>83</sup>*The Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> November 1926, p. 10.

<sup>84</sup>G. Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, pp. 22-23.

Industrial Christian Fellowship including Tom Pym, F. R. Barry, David Railton,<sup>85</sup> Charles Raven, Guy Rogers and C. S. Woodward.<sup>86</sup> Neville Talbot remained a supporter even after becoming Bishop of Pretoria. Many of the chaplains, as we have seen, saw hope of new relationships between men of different backgrounds. This point of view was not always agreed upon by former chaplains. Tom Pym was sceptical and was described by Gerald Studdert Kennedy as: “Looking ahead to the intensification of class hostilities in a society that would not reproduce the sense of common purpose and common danger informing the army.”<sup>87</sup>

The council of the ICF met regularly to discuss the issues of the moment and to decide action. In January 1921 under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Lichfield, J. A. Kempthorne it met to discuss unemployment, which seemed to be a result of the disintegration of the post-war boom. Their resolution was affirmed “the duty of every citizen and of the church and nation to give attention to the matter”,<sup>88</sup> and in July of that year the ICF was instrumental in helping set up an outdoor preaching pitch in the market at Leicester for local churches to preach and encourage debate. The ICF’s regular column in *The Challenge* reported successful open air preaching campaigns in Hull in March 1921. The preaching location was also one used frequently by communists. The report quoted “a bolshevist” as saying of the ICF preaching “It is the most honest thing that has come to Hull.”<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>David Railton, TCF 1911-1919, MC 1916, *ODNB*.

<sup>86</sup>The minute book of the ICF Council for 1920-1926 shows former chaplains well represented on the ICF Council, Lambeth Palace Archives, MS 4042.

<sup>87</sup>G. Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, p. 51.

<sup>88</sup>*The Church Times*, 14<sup>th</sup> January 1921, p. 34.

<sup>89</sup>*The Challenge*, 25<sup>th</sup> March 1921, p. 343.

In 1920, the ICF organised a number of special services on the Sunday before Labour Day, which became known in succeeding years as “Industrial Sunday.” This was a success which helped Kirk establish the ICF as a bridge between labour and industry, as the occasions were generally accompanied by the issues of letters signed by both leaders of the labour movement and industrial management.<sup>90</sup> The insistence that the solution to the social and industrial ills of the country could be only solved by adherence to Christian principles was the common theme of ICF preachers.

The links that some prominent ICF figures had with the Brotherhood Movement proved a useful conduit to the Trades Union Movement.<sup>91</sup> This movement had grown from a local artisan improvement society founded in West Bromwich in 1875 into a national labour movement which stressed individual responsibility to social needs. Due to these links the ICF developed a role at Trades Union Congress. The report of congress in 1921 recorded: “Special sermons were preached in eight of the churches of the city, the arrangements being made by the Industrial Christian Fellowship.”<sup>92</sup> At the Trades Union Congress in 1922 Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy preached to a large congregation on “The law of combat giving way to the law of mutual service.”<sup>93</sup>

At the beginning of 1926, it had become apparent that industrial trouble was brewing as the results of the Samuel Commission on the future of the coal industry<sup>94</sup> were awaited. In an uncharacteristically downbeat sermon delivered at York Minster in January C. S.

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<sup>90</sup>Gerald Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy* p. 144.

<sup>91</sup>Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, pp. 145-147.

<sup>92</sup>Trade Union Congress Report 1921, p .418, cited by G. Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, p. 147.

<sup>93</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>94</sup>The Commission, reporting in March 1926 recommended sweeping changes to the coal industry, including a reduction of miners’ wages and a withdrawal of the Government subsidy. D.H. Robertson, ‘A Narrative of the General Strike of 1926’ *The Economic Journal* Vol. 36, no. 143 (September 1926) ,p. 376.

Woodward admitted that in his opinion both the affairs of the church and the country seemed to be uncertain: “We are on shifting sand and we are bound to confess that we cannot see clearly ..... The church, like the community as a whole is marching in the dark.”<sup>95</sup> In addressing the Church Assembly in February 1926 the Archbishop of Canterbury referred to the possibility of serious industrial trouble in the early summer.<sup>96</sup>

The principles of the ICF were involved, not directly but through Kirk in the miners’ dispute and the General Strike of 1926. Together with Henry Carter, a prominent Wesleyan, he set up a group pledged to bring together the opposing parties. Stuart Mews, in his essay on the strike, recounted how a meeting with Thompson, a coal owner and Conservative MP, resulted in a set of conciliatory proposals which were to form the basis of the Archbishop of Canterbury’s intervention.<sup>97</sup> The BBC did not broadcast the Archbishop’s statement so Kirk and Carter chartered a car and delivered a copy of the appeal and a statement about the BBC ban to as many manses and churches as possible, and it was published in *The Times*<sup>98</sup> and *The British Worker*. After the strike was settled, a ‘Standing Conference’ of churchmen, including Kirk, the Bishop of Lichfield, the Bishop of Birmingham, and Charles Gore met at the headquarters of the ICF. They attempted to bring together the miners’ unions and mine owners to stop the miners’ strike which was ongoing. Their efforts were not successful and were criticised in some quarters. Hensley Henson, then Bishop of Durham, wondered “why it is that sincere and devout men..... are ever proposed to dogmatise ‘in the name of the Lord’, about practical problems of which neither morality nor religion can provide the

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<sup>95</sup> *The Church Times*, 8<sup>th</sup> January 1926, p. 55.

<sup>96</sup> *The Church Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> February 1926, p. 179.

<sup>97</sup> S. Mews, ‘The Churches’, in M. Morris (ed.), *The General Strike* (London, 1976), p. 328.

<sup>98</sup> *The Times*, 15<sup>th</sup> May 1926, p.4.

solution.”<sup>99</sup> Gerald Studdert Kennedy described how the recriminations which followed the ICF’s attempts to intervene both before and after the strike resulted in “a widespread scepticism” over the ICF’s claim that it was a “Non partisan interdenominational and impartial social concern and that it was a public instrument of reconciliation”.<sup>100</sup>

In a letter to *The Times* in August 1926 Kirk and Carter explained their actions. “The first and essential function of the church when face to face with intense industrial conflict is that of peacemaker” and continued: “We are convinced it is our bounden duty to ascertain the true position of the contending parties.”<sup>101</sup> William Temple’s biographer, Iremonger, considered that:

A result at least had been achieved by the churches group ..... its intervention changed completely the miners’ attitude towards the churches. By organised labour organised religion had hitherto been held to embody the reactionary spirit of a privileged caste.<sup>102</sup>

Gerald Studdert Kennedy, in his study of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, has placed much emphasis on the level of support for the organisation from Anglican clergy and lay people. Working from Studdert Kennedy’s engagement diary he drew up a list of 130 incumbents who had been visited by him, some more than once. By comparing a random sample with this group he revealed some useful information on the sort of incumbent likely to be a supporter of the ICF. For example, they were more likely to have had a faster career promotion to a large parish and their parishes were usually

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<sup>99</sup>*The Times*, 13th August, 1926, P.11.

<sup>100</sup>G. Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, p. 135.

<sup>101</sup>*The Times*, 5<sup>th</sup> August, 1926, p. 11.

<sup>102</sup>F. Iremonger, *William Temple* (London, 1948), p. 343.

well endowed and generally had more curates. Bringing military service as chaplains into the equation, Gerald Studdert Kennedy found that ICF clergy ordained before 1900 were 20% more likely to have gone to war than those in the random sample but that over 50% of the ICF clergy of those ordained 1900-1910 had volunteered. These statistics give us some evidence that ex-chaplains figured largely among those clergy who supported the ICF in the post-war years.<sup>103</sup> This impression is reinforced by evidence from Studdert Kennedy's engagement diary that many of the most frequently visited incumbents were former chaplains. From this statistical evidence we can conclude that the aims of the ICF were close to the heart of many returning chaplains.

### **The Role of Individual Former Chaplains**

#### **Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy.**

The most famous missionary for the ICF was Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy. He was the son of a vicar of Leeds. Ordained in 1908, he was placed in charge of the slum area of a parish in Rugby and showed promise in his preaching. William Purcell, drawing on conversations with staff who worked with Studdert Kennedy in Rugby, came to the following conclusion: "Geoffrey gravitated towards the slum area of the parish as a compass swings to north because it has a built in disposition to do so. It was part of the man."<sup>104</sup> As curate in Leeds he developed his gift for open air public speaking, encouraged by Samuel Bickersteth, the vicar. Like several clergy who went on to be popular with the troops in the war, he cut his teeth with men's and boys' clubs. His first parish of St Paul's, Worcester, was a poor parish giving

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<sup>103</sup> Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>104</sup> William Purcell, *Woodbine Willie: An Anglican incident, being some account of the life and times of Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy, poet, prophet, seeker after truth, 1883-1929*, (London, 1962), p. 60.

him plenty of experience of the poverty that existed in industrial towns. *The Church Times*, in reviewing *The Hardest Part* in November 1918, described his patch: “The block house, a modern suburb of distressingly mean streets and iron works.”<sup>105</sup>

P. T. R. Kirk, in his chapter about Studdert Kennedy in *Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy by his Friends*, emphasised the way in which his war time experience had influenced his colleague: “The sympathy which he felt for the suffering in battle was transmuted into an even more tender compassion for the hard pressed in industrial struggles.”<sup>106</sup> Purcell, in his biography of Studdert Kennedy, also emphasised the changes wrought in him by the war:

If he had become a national figure, he had also become a different man. The chaplain of the Rive Gauche canteen was dead. In place of that ingenuous participant in a just war there stood now an infinitely more mature person equally convinced that no war could be just.<sup>107</sup>

Kirk talked about the way in which Studdert Kennedy had no patience with partisanship in either a political or ecclesiastical sense. “He poured contempt upon those who talked as if it were an easy matter to settle our modern problems under a capitalist or socialist order.”<sup>108</sup>

At the ICF annual meeting in 1926, *The Church Times* correspondent described his speech: “His is ever the stuff to give to any spineless Christians who lurked in that great audience of idealists.” Studdert Kennedy told the meeting:

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<sup>105</sup> *The Church Times*, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1918, p. 356.

<sup>106</sup> P. T. R. Kirk, ‘Studdert Kennedy, I C F Crusader’, p. 167. In Mozley J. K (ed.), *G A Studdert Kennedy, By His Friends* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1929).

<sup>107</sup> Purcell, *Woodbine Willy*, p. 159.

<sup>108</sup> P.T.R. Kirk, ‘Studdert Kennedy, ICF crusader’, p. 172

I hate warming my hands at a fire, the coal for which has been grubbed out of the ground by men who are unable to live in proper dignity. I hate living in a world in which there is a nice end of town where there presumably all the nice people live and an end of dirty ramshackle pigsties where apparently all the nasty people live.<sup>109</sup>

Studdert Kennedy was not a rebel speaking out against the establishment continuously. According to Gerald Studdert Kennedy “His refreshing eccentricities thinly disguised an obedient churchman.”<sup>110</sup> It was important that in working for the ICF that he did not irritate the establishment too much, but he was not afraid to criticise. Moreover, he was not always preaching on the social gospel. In August 1926 he gave a series of devotional addresses at the Anglo-Catholic Summer School and made a vivid impression on *The Church Times* special correspondent:

No words can convey, to anybody who has not heard him the impression of the amazing personality of this priest..... A man working himself to death for God and the poor.<sup>111</sup>

Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy died in March 1929. The many tributes to him, services organised and memorials instigated, show his popularity and importance to many sections of society. He died in Liverpool, and after a requiem mass at St Catherine’s, Abercromby Square, 2000 people filed past the coffin. The vicar had received requests from working men to hold the memorial at a time convenient to them. The body was then taken to Worcester

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<sup>109</sup>*The Church Times*, 4<sup>th</sup> June 1926, p. 616.

<sup>110</sup>G. Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy* p. 57.

<sup>111</sup>*The Church Times*, 6<sup>th</sup> August 1926, p. 157.



where once again: “Thousands of people, mainly working class, paid their reverent homage. Crowds packed the streets to see the passing of the cortege to the cathedral: A large contingent of unemployed men, wearing war medals brought wreaths with them.”<sup>112</sup>

In March 1929 Kirk talked on ‘Woodbine Willie as I Knew Him’ and commented on his work for the Industrial Christian Fellowship: “His love for his work was indescribable. It was his mission in life to help men out of their doubts and he would have gone to the end of world to reclaim a criminal or win a soul for Christ.”<sup>113</sup> A close friend and colleague of Studdert Kennedy, the Revd J. K. Mozley, preached at a later requiem for him in April 1929 and summed up what many people felt: “From time to time, men have been raised up by God, inspired by the Holy Spirit with a message to deliver ..... such a man was Studdert Kennedy. There was no doubting his call or his message.”<sup>114</sup>

### **Tom Pym**

On his return from France, Tom Pym did not compromise the principles laid out in his ‘plus or minus’ (PAM) campaign, and took a job as Head of the Cambridge House Settlement at Camberwell. He was no stranger to the poorer areas of London as he had spent his vacations from his job as chaplain of Trinity College Cambridge in a workman’s flat that he had rented in Battersea. Here he had made friends with his neighbours and worked with young offenders in Wormwood Scrubs Prison. One of the his neighbours said of him: “He knew he could never be like us; he could always go up to the West End or stay with friends or

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<sup>112</sup>*The Church Times*, 15<sup>th</sup> March 1929, p. 331.

<sup>113</sup>*The Church Times*, 15<sup>th</sup> March 1929, p. 331.

<sup>114</sup>*The Church Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1929, p. 492.

relations, *but he did not go*; that drew him to us; even if he was not like us, *he was with us.*<sup>115</sup>

At the Cambridge House Settlement he set about raising the profile of South London in the consciousness of Cambridge University. He needed workers for clubs, committees and all the activities already in existence. During his time at Camberwell, Pym made several visits to Cambridge to find workers for the many clubs, care committees and the new ventures he had in mind. In his efforts to arouse the interest of Cambridge scholars, he preached at Trinity College for a memorial service for students who had died in the war and made it an occasion to preach on social service:

An appeal is being made in the university this week for a greater sense of comradeship between class and class within our nation. The appeal is being made to you to study the problems of our times ..... and to find how you yourselves can help to bring in a new order founded on righteousness. .... Shall we who have been spared the last claim of human comradeship----shrink from any lesson gained?<sup>116</sup>

He started a mixed club for a poor area, "Where gangs of wild boys and girls roamed the streets every night". There was also a Cambridge House library and bookshop designed for young adults who he felt would be unlikely to join in more formal structure such as public library. *The Church Times* reported that Cambridge House was in a position, considering its wide range of activities, to "gather up the threads and make them into a serviceable

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<sup>115</sup>D. Pym, *Tom Pym, A Portrait* (Cambridge, 1951), p. 42.

<sup>116</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 60.

whole.”<sup>117</sup> From July 1921 Cambridge House published *The Cambridge House Bulletin*, which was a “serious attempt to provide facts for thinking people”,<sup>118</sup> and aimed to encourage a sense of proportion in arguments about industrial disputes. This was supplemented by the Camberwell Model Parliament to encourage practice in debate and knowledge of current affairs. In 1922 Pym was appointed Rural Dean of Camberwell and in the general election of that year published a pamphlet in the name of the clergy of the rural deanery, aimed at “all people of goodwill who whether or not they hold the Christian faith, are prepared, in recording their vote, to put the common welfare before their own personal interests.”<sup>119</sup>

### **Christopher Chavasse**

Chavasse was demobilised from the Army Chaplains’ Department on Easter Monday 1919. His background was that of an Anglican in the evangelical tradition, as he was the son of Bishop F. J. Chavasse of Liverpool. After a degree at Oxford University, where he and his twin brother Noel excelled at sport, he was trained for ordination by his father in the company of other ordinands. His first curacy had been in the industrial town of St Helens. On demobilisation he was offered the living of St George’s in Barrow-in-Furness. The twins’ biographer describes how Christopher continued his sporting activities, playing rugby for the town and earning for himself a considerable reputation as a character in the process.<sup>120</sup> The town had experienced huge growth in the nineteenth century, its steel works being the largest in the world and had become a major ship building centre. However, the town was to

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<sup>117</sup>*The Church Times*, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1921, p. 93.

<sup>118</sup>Pym, *Tom Pym*, p. 65.

<sup>119</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>120</sup>S. Gummer, *The Chavasse Twins* (London 1963), pp. 42-43.

suffer in the post war reduction of ship building. Selwyn Gummer painted a picture of the problems he would face:

Seldom can a ministry have started under less propitious condition and with higher hope. There was mass unemployment, dire distress on all sides, disillusion on the part of returned conscripts and a local industrial situation which had been so geared to war as to offer no promise for the years of peace.<sup>121</sup>

In his letter to parishioners in November 1920 Chavasse talked about the “grim spectre of unemployment” which, he said, would “stalk among our towns this winter.” He was writing at the time of the miners’ strike and appealed “for us to refrain from all recrimination and bitterness.”<sup>122</sup> This point of view was echoed by a *Church Times* writer in 1921, in an article about the purpose of an ICF Crusade: “From the church point of view, Barrow is a most difficult town. Church building has not been able to keep up with growth of population.”<sup>123</sup> In an article in his parish magazine, Chavasse set out his objectives:

The fact is we have begun a new age. Everything is in the melting pot. My ministry among you coincides with the conclusion of the war. Even before the war changes were being mooted in the church. The war delayed them, but on the other hand, hastened and focused their intensity. We cannot take up the old state of things which existed in 1914. If we do so we stand still while the rest of the world

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<sup>121</sup>Selwyn Gummer, *The Chavasse Twins*, p. 71.

<sup>122</sup>C. Chavasse, *St George’s Parish Magazine*, November 1920. Barrow-in-Furness Record Office, BPR11/PM/2.

<sup>123</sup>*The Church Times*, 30<sup>th</sup> September 1921, p. 329.

continues in advance; and the people simply ignore the church as a useless out of date old dear.<sup>124</sup>

It was Chavasse, who, according to *The Church Times*, was a prime mover in inviting the ICF to mount a crusade in Barrow in September 1921. All the clergy of the area agreed and “well knowing the working class character of their parishes, had a genuine desire to hold out the right hand of fellowship to labour.”<sup>125</sup> In announcing the coming crusade in the parish magazine of June 1921 Chavasse referred to the full church on the occasion of the St George’s Labour Day service, which showed, he said, that :

The time is ripe for such an adventure, and that Labour is Christian at heart, though prejudiced against organised religion. To look at that full church on May the first , and to note all the prominent leaders of labour present, must have filled us all with thankfulness and with longing.

He asserted in St George’s magazine that the object of the crusade would be to try and bridge the gap between the church and labour and their needs in Jesus Christ.<sup>126</sup> In the July edition, Chavasse continued to publicise the crusade. He asked a series of questions:

What is a Crusade? It is a war of the Cross.

What does the Cross stand for? It is the symbol of self sacrifice.

What is the curse of the world? Selfishness.

What does the cross seek to do, then?

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<sup>124</sup>Selwyn, *The Chavasse Twins*, p. 73.

<sup>125</sup>*The Church Times*, 30<sup>th</sup> September 1931. p. 329, (special supplement).

<sup>126</sup>C. Chavasse, *St George’s Parish Magazine*, June 1921. Barrow-in-Furness record office BP11/PM/2.

1. To wage war on selfishness.
2. To put self- sacrifice in the place of selfishness.
3. To establish the Cross in your world, your nation, your home and your heart.

If the world, Europe, England, Barrow followed Christ, would things get better? You know they would.”

He finished his piece with the exhortation: “Throw in your lot with Christ and with the crusade. Join his army and defend his cause.”<sup>127</sup>

Chavasse explained to his readers in the August magazine some of the arrangements for the week, advertising services, meetings, visits to the factories and docks and open air meetings nightly. He emphasised the non-political nature of the crusade, but also said that: “no presentation of the gospel is complete today which does not take into account the conditions and environment of Christian men and women.” The official letter which went out all over Barrow and was printed in the August magazine talked about “the importance at this time of such an effort to create in all men a spirit of fellowship in industrial relationships.”<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup>Ibid., July 1921.

The crusade seems to have been a success with large crowds gathering at the open air meetings as well as attending the main Sunday meeting. On the Friday night Studdert Kennedy addressed a “huge public meeting and made a great impression.” At the end, “The crusaders expressed themselves as greatly encouraged by their reception.”<sup>129</sup> Writing in the parish magazine for November, Chavasse commented on the crusade: “No effort could more manifestly been blessed by God”. He was particularly impressed by the quality of the lay missionaries: “Trade Union men, who were enthusiastic Christians, and came to labour with a message as from one of themselves, and to which they were bound to listen.” He continued with the news the churches of Barrow were combining together to acquire a permanent missionary for the town.<sup>130</sup>

### **John Groser**

After a tough independent upbringing on an Australian outback mission station, John Groser was trained at Mirfield, and, after ordination, spent a year in a dockside parish, All Saints, Newcastle on Tyne before becoming a temporary chaplain to the forces in 1915. In Newcastle upon Tyne, he ministered to parishioners in the local doss house and prison and, in a futile attempt to get local businesses interested in their plight, first became aware of the general lack of interest in improving the lives of the poor:

I thought in my ignorance that all that was needed was to make the fact known and the natural decency of people would rise up to deal with the situation. But I was

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<sup>128</sup> C. Chavasse, *St George's Parish Magazine*, August 1921. Barrow-in-Furness record office BP11/PM/2.

<sup>129</sup> *The Church Times*, 30<sup>th</sup> September 1921, p. 328.

<sup>130</sup> *St George's Parish magazine*, Nov 1921. Barrow - in- Furness Record Office

mistaken..... I was receiving my first practical lesson in politics..... I only know that I trod on the toes of some of the business people of Newcastle; that I was lifting the lid off a hell that stank and was not pleasant to behold; that I was being called political because it was public policy to keep that underworld as far as possible out of sight and sound.<sup>131</sup>

His war service was described by Lt. Colonel A. Hanbury Sparrow, who remembered how Groser would spend the evenings visiting rather than sitting in the mess. He also described a situation in which he pressed Groser to take command of a section in the heat of battle and Groser refused. Groser's biographer, Kenneth Brill, thought that Groser's radical nature was already showing signs of its development in the war and that Hanbury Sparrow's account of his work as a chaplain showed:

A man whose angularity and uncompromising sense of righteousness were already plain. Before the end of the war he was already convinced that it had been unnecessarily prolonged - he was beginning to see, what many came to accept as fact later that the war itself was a crime against humanity.<sup>132</sup>

Moreover, he was making it known openly that he was doubtful of the allied cause.<sup>133</sup>

After the war, Groser came under the influence of Conrad Noel<sup>134</sup> - the 'Red Priest' - whose ideas reinforced Groser's opinion that the church should be involved in politics. In his book *Politics and Persons* Groser described the effect the war had on his ideas: "I found

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<sup>131</sup>Kenneth Brill, *John Groser, East End Priest* (London, 1971) p. 9.

<sup>132</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>133</sup>Wilkinson, *The Church of England in the First World War* (London 1978), p. 143.

<sup>134</sup>Conrad Noel, Vicar of Thaxted, Christian Socialist and founder of the Catholic Crusade, *ODNB*



myself up against a new set of problems in personal relationships which seemed more closely to demand political judgements.”<sup>135</sup> In October 1922 Groser moved to St Michael’s, Poplar. A parishioner in a later parish described Groser’s parishioners in Poplar as: “Dockers, unemployed, ex-service men and others who lived in uncertain poverty.”<sup>136</sup> Groser and his colleagues started successful street corner meetings using the crucifix, the cross of St George and the red flag as their symbols. He became the spokesmen for groups of workers in their battle with the Poor Law authority, the police and employers, negotiating in strikes and lockouts. His abilities as a speaker led him to appearances on Trade Union and Labour Party platforms, supporting the miners in the lead up to the General Strike. His attitude to the relationship of government with the unions was clear: “the breaking of the power of the Trades Union movement in Britain enabled the government to continue to promote quite ruthlessly and without opposition, a policy which led to the slump of the thirties, the growth of fascism and World War Two.”<sup>137</sup>

His political activities of course encountered opposition with attacks on him in the local and national press and actual threats of violence against him and his family. This political thread of his ministry came to a head when he was injured in a baton raid by the police while trying to calm a potentially violent confrontation in front of the town hall in Poplar in May 1926.<sup>138</sup>

Escalating disagreements with his vicar C. G. Langdon had already led to his receiving notice, with his fellow curate, Jack Bucknall, to leave the parish, despite the protests of the

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<sup>135</sup> John Groser, *Politics and Persons* (London, 1949), p. 8.

<sup>136</sup> Brill, *John Groser*, p. 32.

<sup>137</sup> Groser, *Politics and Persons* P. 51.

<sup>138</sup> Jack Boggis, ‘John Groser, Man of God’, *The Christian Socialist*, No. 32, May 1966, p.11

parishioners who visited the Bishop of London to object. The arrival of a new vicar postponed Groser's departure from Poplar for two years, but by March 1927 he had decided to leave. He was uncertain about his future as his political views and activism had made him an unsuitable candidate as vicar for most parishes. He was eventually placed as curate in charge of Christ Church, Watney Street, and fourteen months later Dick Sheppard, then Dean of Canterbury, confirmed him in the living. He was to stay at Christ Church until it was bombed out in 1941. He was again in conflict with the Suffragan Bishop of Stepney, Charles Curzon, in February 1929 over his decision to use the parish hall to offer hospitality to hunger marchers.<sup>139</sup>

In 1932 Groser was nominated by the Labour Party as a co-opted member of the committee dealing with applications for poor relief. He campaigned against the practice of "test work" - compulsory retraining of the unemployed in the local workhouse at Belmont. He was also part of the ongoing battle over rents in the district in the inter-war years. The standard of the rented accommodation was very low, and landlords would not spend money on renovation. The Suffragan Bishop of Stepney recalled how:

Groser took me and other, more influential, people to see these dwellings for ourselves and we found many of them in a disgusting condition. He also arranged a meeting at my house between representatives of both sides and the borough council--- Some of the landlords agreed to take action, but there were others who held out.<sup>140</sup>

As a result the tenants refused to pay their rents and were threatened with eviction. His involvement with the rent strikes culminated in June 1929 when tenants barricaded

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<sup>139</sup> Brill, *John Groser*, p.51.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, p. 100

themselves in a tenement block in Alexandria Buildings, Commercial Street, and Groser was one of a group of men, including both the Bishop and the Mayor of Stepney, who went to the landlord to argue the tenants case and negotiated an agreement.<sup>141</sup> A letter written to all Christian denominations in the area in 1932 shows his continued concern with conditions endured by local people: “we are arranging a conference in Stepney Deanery to discuss the social problems arising out of unemployment and the means test and to consider ways and means of making known the Christian attitude on these problems.”<sup>142</sup> In December 1938 the Stepney Defence League sent him a letter “Thanking you for the invaluable assistance you have given.”<sup>143</sup>

### **Timothy Rees**

South Wales was one of the areas most affected by the slump in traditional industries. In 1931 Timothy Rees was enthroned as Bishop of Llandaff. He had served in Gallipoli, Egypt and on the Somme, was mentioned in dispatches and awarded the Military Cross. He was one of eighteen Mirfield fathers to serve as chaplains. After the war he was placed in charge of the Leeds hostel attached to the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, and also took part in some of the earliest ICF crusades. Llandaff was a diocese which had been at the centre of the industrialisation of South Wales and was then in the grip of the depression which was having an extreme effect on the South Wales valleys. Unemployment figures in the diocese of Llandaff in 1936 ranged from 23% to 65% in the mining areas of Merthyr,

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<sup>141</sup> Brill, *John Groser*, p. 102.

<sup>142</sup> The Papers of John Groser, MS 3428, f.126, Lambeth Palace Library.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid*, f.11.

Rhondda and Bridgend. Added to this were the problems experienced with the crisis of disestablishment and disendowment.<sup>144</sup> In his enthronement address he said:

My heart goes out in sympathy to the broken lives and broken hearts that are the result of this depression. Would God that I could do something to help. Would God that I could make some contribution to the solution of this crushing problem.<sup>145</sup>

In March 1932 Timothy Rees was preaching in Cardiff in Holy Week, and was aware of the problems created by the rapidly growing suburbs of Cardiff. This, he realised, was “Creating new responsibilities for the church.” In the meantime, according to the report of *The Church Times* on his Holy Week sermons: “He is getting to know the city itself and takes every opportunity of meeting the leaders of the civic and business life.”<sup>146</sup> In April 1932 Rees launched “The Bishop of Llandaff’s Appeal” and asked *Church Times* readers to contribute. He said that:

The economic depression with which the whole world is struggling is felt nowhere more acutely than South Wales. In this diocese of Llandaff ..... is concentrated half the population of Wales. There are whole areas in it where the percentage of unemployment is higher than in any part of the United Kingdom.<sup>147</sup>

His contribution consisted of overseeing the social needs of the diocese. He regularly held open house at Llys Esgob (Bishop’s House) to groups of the unemployed. As chairman of

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<sup>144</sup>The Welsh Church Act, passed in 1914, was implemented in 1920. Disestablishment created the Church in Wales, which ended the Anglican Church’s special legal status in Wales. Welsh Bishops were no longer allowed to sit in the House of Lords. Disendowment meant that the endowments of the Anglican Church were distributed among local authorities and the University of Wales. Tithes were no longer payable to the Anglican Church.

<sup>145</sup>*The Church Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> October 1936, p. 595.

<sup>146</sup>*The Church Times*, 24<sup>th</sup> March 1932, p. 386.

<sup>147</sup>*The Church Times*, 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1932, p. 509.

the Llandaff Industrial Committee he discussed ways of alleviating the situation with local politicians and Industrial leaders. In November 1935 he led a deputation to Whitehall to ask for government help in the rejuvenation of South Wales. His biographer described how he made available a “band of young missionaries”<sup>148</sup>, a small unit of unmarried clergy who were dispatched to the neediest parishes in order to help with relief work. Although aware of the problems facing Wales and other depressed areas of Britain, Rees was adamant that defeatism would not help the situation. In a sermon to the Church Congress, held in Bournemouth In 1935, he commented on this defeatism:

Brethren, there has never been a time when it was more necessary than it is today to stress the fact of the complete and absolute victory of Christ ..... it is the vision of the victorious Christ that alone expels the spirit of defeatism.<sup>149</sup>

Although a prominent member of the Welsh establishment, Rees was definitely on the side of the working man. Lady Rhys Williams, who worked with him on the Llandaff Industrial Committee he had created, said:

Bishop Rees was among the first to see the great moral wrong committed by the British people as a whole against the people of the depressed areas in the 1930s..... The part played by him in remoulding the political thought of his time and risking the censure of the county well may have been more significant than we know.<sup>150</sup>

## **Guy Rogers**

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<sup>148</sup>J. Lambert Rees, *Timothy Rees of Mirfield and Llandaff* (London, 1945), p. 103.

<sup>149</sup>*The Church Times*, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1935, p. 439.

<sup>150</sup>J. Lambert Rees, *Timothy Rees of Mirfield and Llandaff* (London, 1945), p. 118.

Guy Rogers became vicar in the parish of West Ham after the war. When describing the reforming ideas of the returning chaplains he said:

No one, I think, was more thoroughly aroused and more sensitive to these new hopes or more anxious to turn the Church of England upside down than I was. I can see from the letters I wrote from the Front how eager I was to put into practice what I really believed the Spirit of God was teaching me about freedom in the approach to the Bible, human relationships ..... and the reconstruction and rehabilitation of parish life.<sup>151</sup>

Rogers made efforts to get and keep in touch with Labour. He accepted invitations to speak at meetings organised by the Labour Party and “preach from their platforms the social gospel as I saw it.”<sup>152</sup> An example of this was his speaking at a meeting organised during the rail strike by J. H. Thomas<sup>153</sup> He moved to Birmingham in 1925 to take charge of the famous St Martin’s in the Bullring. He recalled:

During the sad days of the General Strike I addressed the crowd every night in the Bullring. It was tricky business trying to keep out of politics and keep within the gospel. But it was not impossible to talk about their homes and families and how we all might help each other in times of stress.<sup>154</sup>

He then set in motion preparations which culminated in the nondenominational ICF crusade to Birmingham in 1930. The preparation for the crusade was carried out by all

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<sup>151</sup> T. Guy Rogers, *Rebel at Heart* (London, 1956), p.130.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>153</sup> James Henry Thomas, British Trade Unionist and Labour politician. NUR General Secretary 1917-1931, *ODNB*.

<sup>154</sup> Rogers *Rebel at Heart*, p. 221.

participants, and local crusade leaders were trained to take their part with the ICF agents and other visitors. The fact that the churches were working together was appreciated by the city officials and when, on the first day of the crusade, the processions of the crusade entered the Town Hall: “The Lord Mayor was waiting to receive them, and express the city’s welcome to organised religion.”<sup>155</sup> Rogers described how a new relationship with the Labour Party emerged as the crusade progressed. He admitted that: “The record of the church in the long struggle of Trades Unionism for recognition and power is not a very sympathetic one”, but those more cordial relations were established. A crusade official speaking to the Trades and Labour council to explain the crusade commented: “A new feeling of sympathy was created and the position of members of our committee who happened to be engaged in labour politics was immensely strengthened.”<sup>156</sup>

The crusade was led by E. S. Woods, who had recently been made Bishop of Croydon, and Dr Herbert Gray.<sup>157</sup> The evangelists worked in the factories, at open air pitches and in the parks for ten days. The resolution on “The Scandal of the Slums” was not, Rogers thought, “a mere pious resolution”. The resolution was asserted on behalf of all present at the large public meeting:

We record our solemn protest against the unchristian conditions under which so many of our fellow citizens live in the slums of Birmingham. We recognise frankly our share of the blame. We pledge ourselves in the name of Christ to do what lies in

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<sup>155</sup>T. G. Rogers, *The Church and the People* (London, 1931), p. 59.

<sup>156</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>157</sup> A. H. Grey, Scottish Presbyterian minister and former army chaplain who had worked closely with Harry Blackburne during the war. M. Snape, *The Royal Army Chaplains Department 1769-1953: Clergy Under Fire* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 231.

our power, *and to face the cost involved*, to secure the removal of this blot upon the fame of the city to which we are proud to belong.<sup>158</sup>

The crusade in Birmingham led to the setting up of the Christian Social Council, which was chaired by Rogers for seventeen years. It created the first community centre for the unemployed, in the years of depression and unemployment in the early thirties. This led to the city picking up the idea: “the city gradually followed suit in a real attempt to combat the physical and mental wastage of the life of its citizens.”<sup>159</sup>

### **Developments in the 1930s**

During the 1930s the Anglican Church as a whole continued to show its commitment to the social gospel. Men such as Cyril Foster Garbett, later Archbishop of York, and Basil Jellicoe were prominent in the cause of better housing. Under Jellicoe, the St Pancras House Improvement Society in the interwar years did much to transform the Somers Town area. Charles Jenkinson, vicar of St John’s, Leeds, was the mastermind of the “Leeds housing policy”.<sup>160</sup> The bishops of the Church of England were supportive of these and other ventures. Cyril Foster Garbett<sup>161</sup> took the lead in these debates. In 1930, in a debate on

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<sup>158</sup>Rogers, *The Church and the People* p. 64.

<sup>159</sup>Rogers, *Rebel at Heart*, p. 219.

<sup>160</sup> The Leeds housing policy was a large scale slum clearance programme in the 1930s which dealt with the problem in a specifically Christian way due to the efforts of Jenkinson who was a member of the Leeds City Council and mobilised Christians of all denominations in support of the policy, R. Lloyd, *The Church of England in the Twentieth Century 1900-1965*(London, 1968) pp. 325-333.

<sup>161</sup>Cyril Foster Garbett, Bishop of Southwark 1919-32, Bishop of Winchester 1932-42, Archbishop of York 1942-1955. In his book *In the Heart of South London* (1931) and his pamphlet *The Challenge of the Slums* (1933), he argued that the government should act to cure the overcrowding of south London, *ODNB*.



housing in Convocation, many of the bishops pooled their knowledge to build up “a knowledgeable survey of the housing problem in most of England.”<sup>162</sup>

Writing in the *Southwark Diocesan Gazette* in November 1932, R. G. Parsons, a former chaplain, tackled the problem of housing. Referring to the London City Council’s decision to improve the area around Waterloo Bridge, he suggested a widening of the scheme:

What a splendid opportunity for erecting a new housing area for the poorer citizens of the capital closer to the centre of the city? Are we really incapable of making use of it? If we are indeed a free country, where there is a will there is a way.<sup>163</sup>

He also had an opinion on what church people could do about unemployment:

I hope that every incumbent and every church in the diocese will deliberately set aside time to consider unemployment..... I lay it on the consciences of all the parishes to consider carefully what they ought to do.<sup>164</sup>

In *The Southwark Diocesan Gazette* on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1933, he made a strong plea for centres for the unemployed where “opportunities of definite occupation are offered”, as opposed to merely recreational facilities. He continued: “It is the duty of the Christian church to convince the public opinion of the nation to consider ..... new projects for dealing with

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<sup>162</sup> *The Times*, 14<sup>th</sup> February 1930, p. 16.

<sup>163</sup> *The Times* 27<sup>th</sup> April 1934 P. 19.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

fundamental maladjustments in our own economic and industrial system of which unemployment is such a symptom.”<sup>165</sup>

On 11<sup>th</sup> November 1932 *The Church Times* published an article ‘The Church and Unemployment.’ It reported that:

The cathedrals are being moved by the prevailing distress. Canon Woodward has put the case for the workless from the pulpit of Westminster Abbey, in connection with the establishment in Westminster of a new centre where the unemployed can rest and work.

The article also reported a scheme proposed by P. T. R. Kirk: “For those men, Mr Kirk said, who suffer from a nameless existence in which they are losing skill and will power ..... places of recreation are not enough.” Kirk suggested a barter system: “If they are banded together in centres working as Christian communities, the man who can carpenter will exchange his work with that of a man who can make a pair of boots.”<sup>166</sup> The Industrial Christian Fellowship was making its views felt on the reduction of benefits to the unemployed. Preaching in St Paul’s cathedral in March 1934, John Groser denounced the means test as an “inquisition”:

Can you imagine, what it means to be unemployed for so long ..... to be subjected to the inquisition of the means test? To have all your resources inquired into ..... you know that no neighbour can help you, because anything he may spare will be

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<sup>165</sup>*The Church Times*, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1933, p.595.

<sup>166</sup>*The Church Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1932, supplement, p. i-iv.

deducted from the small sum the state allows you to keep body and soul together.<sup>167</sup>

The report of the Industrial Committee of the Church Assembly was published in January 1935. It had considered social credit, banking and the economic system. Guy Rogers and P. T. Kirk were among its signatories. The report received a mixed reception in the Church Assembly in February. It was criticised because it put forward three different solutions to unemployment and also because some members of the assembly did not see the need for the church to be concerned with such problems. R. G. Parsons defended the report: "The report did not aim to secure the assent of the assembly about any one proposal for such elimination [of employment]" and continued "but no one could pretend to ignore the appalling significance of the wilful destruction of the fruits of the earth and the prevention and restriction of production."<sup>168</sup>

James Geoffrey Gordon, by 1932 the suffragan Bishop of Jarrow, had served as an Assistant Chaplain General on the Western Front. As Bishop of Jarrow he identified with the plight of the unemployed. In 1934 he was part of a committee which set up an unemployed residential centre at Hardwick Hall<sup>169</sup> and in 1935 joined the North Eastern Development board for housing.<sup>170</sup> In July 1936 he wrote to *The Times* during the negotiations for a syndicate to set up a steel works in Jarrow, which was being opposed by the iron and steel federation:

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<sup>167</sup> *The Church Times*, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1934, p. 333.

<sup>168</sup> *The Times*, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1935, p.16.

<sup>169</sup> *The Times*, 16<sup>th</sup> April 1934, p. 11.

<sup>170</sup> *The Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> November 1935, p. 16.

We who live in Durham County do not think of the unemployed as merely a problem, but as persons, men and women, boys and girls, in urgent need. I would plead with the industrial magnates, not in the dust of their controversy to lose sight of the individual peoples of Jarrow, whose hopes have been so consistently raised during the past two years and as constantly disappointed.<sup>171</sup>

On 5<sup>th</sup> October 1936 the Jarrow marchers set off to London to present a petition to Parliament. At the civic service Gordon blessed the march, but caused controversy by a letter to *The Times* denying that he gave his approval to the crusade: "To pray for God's blessing on the marchers was and is surely a duty, but it by no means involved support for a march, the wisdom and usefulness of which many of us are more than doubtful."<sup>172</sup> Ellen Wilkinson<sup>173</sup>, MP for Jarrow, was disappointed: "His blessing at our starting point has meant a lot to the men, and it hurt when he explained that that was only because the mayor asked him to come."<sup>174</sup>

There seemed more emphasis on the political voice of the church. In March C. S. Woodward, speaking for the first time as chairman of the ICF, said:

Today politics touched every section and every part of human life and if it was held that the Christian Church had to keep her hand away from everything that might conceivably be called political, it meant that the Christian church must seek to take no part in influencing ordinary life.

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<sup>171</sup>*The Times*, 13<sup>th</sup> July 1936, p. 16.

<sup>172</sup>*The Times*, 17<sup>th</sup> October 1936, p. 8.

<sup>173</sup> Ellen Wilkinson was elected labour M P for Middlesbrough in 1924 and later Labour M.P for Jarrow in 1935. *ODNB*

<sup>174</sup> Untitled press cutting, illustration in Tom Pickard, *Jarrow March* (London, 1981) p. 117.

However, he stopped short of being politically partisan: “He urged that they should understand in every party there were some sincere and genuine Christian men.”<sup>175</sup> In May of that year Timothy Rees was more downbeat in his assessment of the national situation. He talked about: “the turn of events in the world of politics, commerce and industry ..... preparations for war, a vast army of the unemployed” but continued in a more positive vein: “In the ICF they had a body of men who believed it was not enough to preach Christian principle, but that these principles must be applied to everyday life.” He appealed to the parties in industrial disputes to go to arbitration rather than having strikes and lock outs. He ended with a stirring assertion that God was in all of these problems:

They cannot keep God out of commerce and industry because he was there already. In every workshop and mine, every meeting of a board of directors, every conference of trade unions. He stood there, either despised and rejected or acclaimed as leader and king.<sup>176</sup>

John Groser had no qualms about the political nature of Christian activities on behalf of the poor. After his adventures in the General Strike, and following various disputes with the Church authorities over his activism he settled in a parish in Watney Street Stepney in 1929 and continued his social and political agenda. He recalled in later life his opinion of the religious establishment:

In England, every large scale religious organisation, whether established or not, has in modern times, become so tied up in the social order with which their privileges, power and economic independence are so inextricably bound up that their leaders

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<sup>175</sup>*The Church Times*, 6<sup>th</sup> March 1935, p. 250.

<sup>176</sup>*The Church Times*, May 1935, p. 665.

have tended to equate the decision of the governing body of that social order with the will of God.<sup>177</sup>

Throughout the later 1930s the Church continued to comment on social and industrial problems. Former army chaplains were prominent in their contributions. In October 1935, 7,000 churchmen met in the Albert Hall to “Voice their abhorrence of slums, unemployment, materialism and social evils.”<sup>178</sup> Temple was in the chair, and of the twelve bishops on the platform, six were former chaplains: Haigh of Coventry, Havard<sup>179</sup> of St Asaph, Woods of Croydon, Moberly of Stepney,<sup>180</sup> Simpson of Kensington<sup>181</sup>, Rose of Dover<sup>182</sup> and C. S. Woodward, Bishop of Bristol. Woodward spoke on housing. He said that a decent house was “an indispensable condition of a full and complete life ..... because it is where boys and girls grow up and where their characters are made.” He went on to spell out the minimum requirements for a decent house and that there were still tens of thousands of families who had not reached that minimum.

C. Salisbury Woodward had practical suggestions. He recommended the setting up of: “A social service committee in each P. C. C. [Parochial Church Council] to acquaint itself and enlighten the congregation about housing conditions.”<sup>183</sup> He also recommended that the rents charged by local councils should be monitored. As an outcome of this meeting a memorial was sent to Stanley Baldwin, the Prime Minister. It called his attention to:

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<sup>177</sup> John Groser, *Persons and Politics*, p.85.

<sup>178</sup> *The Church Times*, 1<sup>st</sup> November 1935, p. 553.

<sup>179</sup> W. T. Havard, TCF 19115-1919, mentioned in despatches 1916. DSO 1917, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), P. 1177.

<sup>180</sup> R.H. Moberly, TCF 1917-1919, *Crockford's Clerical Directory*(1940),p. 1280

<sup>181</sup> B. F. Simpson TCF 1916-1918, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 757.

<sup>182</sup> A. C. Rose, TCRN 1914-1919, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 375.

<sup>183</sup> *The Church Times*, 1<sup>st</sup> November 1935, p. 534.

The pledge taken by up to six thousand members of the Church of England to urge upon you our desire that the government will adopt such courageous policy in dealing with social evils as we believe that public opinion at the last election expected and favoured.<sup>184</sup>

It continued:

We are much concerned with the claims of the miners for a wage which will assure them comparative comfort. ---- We, baptised members of the Church of England, affirm that we are most deeply disturbed in conscience by the unreason and injustice of prevailing social conditions.<sup>185</sup>

The signatories to this memorial included E. S. Woods, C. S. Woodward, Dick Sheppard and P. T. R. Kirk. As a result of an appeal made by *The Times* in July 1936 by C. S. Woodward, Dick Sheppard and F. R. Barry, the Jarrow Unemployed Social Centre received enough funds to continue for another twelve months.

In November 1936 the Church Assembly devoted a morning to debate on the distressed areas. P. T. R. Kirk moved a long resolution explaining the Assembly's deep concern at "The continuation of severe and prolonged unemployment in the depressed areas". Unemployment, he explained, had only been reduced by workers moving out of these areas. The resolution stated that the assembly "is concerned that the palliative measures adopted have shown themselves wholly insufficient". The resolution went on to

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<sup>184</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> *ibid.*

demand the revision of the Special Areas Act<sup>186</sup> by giving the commissioners more power, and also urged the government “To investigate all possible way of securing a more balanced economy.”<sup>187</sup>

On St Andrew’s Day 1936, Bishop Walter Carey,<sup>188</sup> former naval chaplain, preached at a city church. The sermon was reported by *The Church Times* under the headline, “A bishop beards mammon in the city - vested interests and means test arraigned”. He first dealt with what it meant to be Christian: “It means to say to the Lord, I am yours: no longer my own.” His prayer that morning had been “Lord Jesus here’s another day, and I belong to you, hooray!” He then turned to the state of England:

I look around England, all is not well: there are 36 millions who live in fear about the future, many are liable to lose their jobs at four hours notice ..... when they are old all they can expect is an old age pension ..... Don’t let us go putting wages and dividends and profits before human beings.

He then moved on to the distressed areas where he thought :“the real difficulty is vested interests----But I say if we were to waste 50 millions it would not be wasted really, on giving them heart and hope and a job in the distressed areas, It would be worthwhile even if it were uneconomic. Don’t let us go putting wages and dividends and profits before human beings.”

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<sup>186</sup> The Special Areas Act, 1934, identified South Wales, Tyneside, West Cumberland and Scotland as areas with special employment requirements, and invested in projects like the new steelworks in Ebbw Vale, South Wales.

<sup>187</sup> *The Church Times*, 27<sup>th</sup> November 1936, p. 532.

<sup>188</sup> Walter Carey, TCRN, 1914-1919. Bishop of Blomfield, South Africa, 1921-1934, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 209.



He made clear his political independence: "I do not care tuppence ..... whether I vote for Conservative or Liberal or Socialist. I want to get things done and I am ready to vote for the man who will get things done." He asked the question: "Can we Christianise the social and economic basis of all life?" he wondered if, "We are right doing it in small bits-perhaps the communists are right in doing it by a crisis. But unless a Christian Church can do the job properly through a democracy, the communists will certainly do it someday in their way."<sup>189</sup>

An article on the Birmingham COPEC Housing Association in *The Church Times* in December 1936 shows that this follow on from the conference was still functioning usefully in the late thirties. The association had decided that renovating housing was good, but that what was really needed was new housing. In the previous few years they had built both houses and maisonettes on land formerly occupied by slum tenements: "All the houses have a bath, hot and cold water and indoor sanitary arrangements. Each house also has a small garden. A children's playground has been provided." The report continued on the work of COPEC: "There is still urgent need for the work of the COPEC society. In the past ten years it has carried out various experiments that have inspired other housing reformers."<sup>190</sup>

In February 1938 the ICF announced a crusade for the Rhondda valley to be held in May. The Bishop of Llandaff would commission forty crusaders. G. Snowden, missioner for Cardiff, stressed the importance of the crusade: "To allow a community to suffer and degenerate as the people in the Rhondda valley have done was to violate all Christian teaching about the sanctity of human personality."<sup>191</sup> Canon A. I. G. Shields, an ex-chaplain,

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<sup>189</sup> *The Church Times*, 4<sup>th</sup> December 1936, p. 675.

<sup>190</sup> *The Church Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> December 1936, p.706.

<sup>191</sup> *The Church Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1938 , p. 142.

led the crusade and Bishop Kempthorne was the chaplain. The Bishop of Llandaff, Timothy Rees, wrote in the Crusade handbook:

All the Rhondda Valley should welcome the crusade, because the crusade brings a message of hope. The forces of defeatism and despair are striving to possess the soul of the Rhondda. Unemployment, poverty and the migration of the cream of the population by the thousand every year, have all left their mark on the district: yet it is with a profound thankfulness that we note that the people of these valleys have not lost their morale: they are reaching to respond to the message of hope."<sup>192</sup>

## **Conclusion**

It can be argued that much of the work of the Anglican Church on social and industrial issues had been progressing from pre-war days and had its roots in the Christian socialism of the second part of the nineteenth century. The war had emphasised the necessity for action and had resulted in one of the Archbishops' Committees of Enquiry being devoted to these problems.

We have seen in Chapter One how the backgrounds of army chaplains varied, from clergy who had shown considerable concern for the social gospel pre-war, such as P. B. 'Tubby' Clayton, Tom Pym and Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy, to men straight from ordination and university posts such as F. R. Barry. The evidence shows that many Anglican Army Chaplains returning from war had clear and urgent ideas about the need for social reform and the changing of the ways in which industry operated. They had experience in the way both the amelioration of class differences under difficult circumstance and the benefit of

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<sup>192</sup>*The Church Times*, 20<sup>th</sup> May 1938, p. 591.

disciplined and determined cooperation by all in a desperate task. They considered the post-war situation a desperate task and were often despairing of the entrenched views and values of both management and work force, preventing a fairer and more equal social and industrial system developing. The activities of the former chaplains show that they possessed “the permanently troubled conscience” and they set about in various ways the easing of this conscience. The economic problems of the interwar era did not make the progression of the collectivist ideas held by many clergy easy. As Machin explained: “The Governments of the time were probably less sympathetic to their point of view than they would have been if the economy had been healthier.”<sup>193</sup>

The work of the Industrial Christian Fellowship is an important part of the evidence for former chaplains’ involvement in social and industrial matters. Although formed from two pre-war societies, the Christian Social Union and the Navy Mission and an interdenominational movement, it was led by an ex-chaplain and received support from many others, including those who had reached prominent positions in the Church hierarchy. Its practical effect in the organisation of meetings, crusades and campaigns was a vital part of assuring the working population that the Church was on their side and fighting for them, despite apparent evidence to the contrary. To complement this the ICF had contacts with the managers and owners of industry and was able to work on persuading them to take a Christian view of industrial relations. Gerald Studdert Kennedy, in his study of the ICF, considers the major impact of the movement took place in the nineteen twenties: “If it made a politically significant contribution to public consciousness it was in the first decade of its

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<sup>193</sup> Machin, *Churches and Social Issues*, p. 35.

existence,”<sup>194</sup> but we have seen how it continued to bring before the churches and society the particularly serious problems of industrial life in the thirties. It did not conform always to mainstream Anglican opinion. Bishop A. C. Headlam complained in Convocation in 1933 about “the enormous amount of harm which the ICF is capable of doing.”<sup>195</sup> Michael Furse,<sup>196</sup> Bishop of St Albans defended the fellowship by denying that “It was in the pay of the Bolsheviks”.<sup>197</sup>

It is debateable whether the influence of COPEC had a large effect in a practical sense but it certainly set out the arguments for radical change and has been praised as we have seen for containing in it much that was to be achieved by the Welfare State. It certainly set standards to which other initiatives and movements could aspire. E. R. Norman considered that after the General Strike, and also as a consequence of the depression, “a gulf had opened up between the ordinary assumptions of the lay world and the Church’s leadership” and that the Anglican Church as a whole was therefore less inclined to pursue radical social policies. However, the work of individual and sometimes high profile former chaplains continued in the 1920s and 1930s. P. T. R. Kirk, in a personal role rather than as a representative of the ICF, was involved as we have seen in the attempts of churchmen to intervene in the General Strike. John Groser was an overtly political supporter of the working man in London. Studdert Kennedy in his preaching and writing did much to explain the

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<sup>194</sup>G. Studdert Kennedy, *Dog Collar Democracy*, p. 9.

<sup>195</sup> Convocation of Canterbury 19<sup>th</sup> January 1933, ix, 3, pp.129, 139, cited by Machin, *Churches and Social Issues* p. 43

<sup>196</sup>Michael Furse, Bishop of Pretoria 1909-1920, translated to St Albans in 1920. Although not a TCF, he spent several months on the Western Front in 1915. On his return to Britain, he lobbied the government on the necessity for conscription and on the shortage of munitions. He also took part in discussions leading to the appointment of Bishop L.H. Gwynne as Deputy Chaplain General. *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* (1940)p.1176, M. Furse, *Stand Therefore : A Bishop’s Testimony of Faith in the Church of Our Fathers* (London 1953), pp.73-80

<sup>197</sup>Convocation of Canterbury 19<sup>th</sup> January 1933, ix, 3, pp.129, 139, cited by Machin, *Churches and Social Issues* p. 43.

Christian social gospel to a popular audience. Timothy Rees was a champion of workers in the South Wales valleys. Tom Pym worked practically and in raising political awareness in Camberwell. The church press and the national press of the interwar years furnished many accounts of former chaplains who became bishops, particularly Woodward, Parsons and Woods, speaking out on social reform issues such as housing, education and unemployment.

We have seen the efforts of the Anglican Church as a whole to respond to the living and working conditions in interwar society and the effects of the changing industrial and economic landscape. However, not all clergy approved of liberal and left wing action and the church was often split over issues such as the General Strike. Callum Brown described the effect of the war and changing circumstances on some: "The impact of the war, the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the rise of Labour militancy in its wake all frightened the churches ..... Many clergy became deeply opposed to labour and the trades unions and the gap within Christian politics widened."<sup>198</sup> Brown thinks that after the General Strike: "Many working class communities ..... regarded the mainstream churches as agents of capital."<sup>199</sup> Often the official line of the Anglican Church was timid and inclined to compromise. The significance of the stand made by the clergy including many former chaplains in offsetting this opinion by their concern and action must have been considerable.

Callum Brown considers that the old fashioned evangelistic crusade had outgrown its usefulness by 1930, although he does exempt the Rhondda Crusade from his criticism because of its "discussion groups on the social implications of the gospel."<sup>200</sup> Despite the picture he draws of an increasing gulf between working class communities and the churches,

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<sup>198</sup>C. Brown, *Religion and Society in Twentieth Century Britain* (London, 2006), p. 145.

<sup>199</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>200</sup>Brown, *Religion and Society*, p. 159.

he admits that “There is little evidence that the depression caused a significant membership crisis for Christianity.”<sup>201</sup>

Looking at the bigger picture of the economic social and industrial changes and challenges in the inter-war years it can be seen that former chaplains played a significant part on the stage of industrial and social reform. It can be argued that some of their motivation stemmed from their pre-war experiences, but from the wartime and post-war evidence it can be seen that the war had had an effect on their ideas of what the post-war era should look like. E. S. Woods, in his book *Everyday Religion* published in 1921, summed up the attitude of the returning chaplains: “The life in which God moves is the life of societies and nations, indeed a better correspondence with that life in industrial and international relations is the only hope for the future of the world.”<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>202</sup> E. S. Woods, *Everyday religion*, (London, 1923) cited in a review in *The Challenge* 12<sup>th</sup> January 1923, p. 12

### **Chapter Three: P. B. 'Tubby' Clayton and Toc H.**

Philip Clayton has become an iconic figure, both as an army chaplain and as the founder and leader of Toc H. He was universally referred to as "Tubby" and both his war-time ministry at Talbot House and his post-war ministry as founder of Toc H became symbolic of the ways in which something positive could emerge from war. In assessing his role as a clear example of the way in which former Anglican army chaplains contributed to church and society, several questions must be asked: to what extent was the Toc H organisation an extension of the fellowship and Christian witness of Talbot House and a symbol of remembrance of the losses of the war? To what extent was its aim to provide a new generation of Christian leaders and to perpetuate the wartime ethos of service in peacetime? To what extent was it dependent on the personal strength of, and dynamism of Tubby himself?

Philip "Tubby" Clayton had nothing obvious in his background which was to predispose him to working for social reform and equality and setting up Toc H. His educational background was conventionally upper middle class, reading Theology at Oxford and progressing to ordination in 1908, after a period as a research student with the Dean of Westminster in Deans Yard, London. Tubby's family had its roots in the north of England, his grandfather being a clergyman. However, Tubby was the son of tough and courageous ex-colonials who had farmed in Australia before returning to England when Tubby was a small boy. Money in his childhood was scarce and he won scholarships enabling him to attend St Paul's School and Exeter College, Oxford. At school and at Oxford he gained a reputation for high intelligence combined with a very sociable personality: "The general testimony of his school friends seems to be that Philip was already what he has been ever since, the most

socially minded of human beings with a positive genius for universal friendliness.”<sup>1</sup> His later disregard for rank and status was prefigured by his habit of walking and discussing issues as “pal with pal” with the High Master of St Paul’s, George Walker.

At Oxford his sociability continued, drawing to him a wide variety of friends who would drop into his rooms at Exeter at all hours of the day and night. Tubby came under the influence of Scott Holland and Christian Socialism, contributing some articles to *The Commonwealth* edited by Scott Holland. He also met Dr John Stansfeld and became involved in the work of the Oxford Mission at Bermondsey. Charles Booth described Bermondsey in 1899 as “The greatest area of unbroken poverty in England.”<sup>2</sup> Alec Paterson <sup>3</sup> said of the area “The part that lies closest to the river is far poorer than the rest. On these streets poverty has set a seal, and its many problems have sunk their tangled roots deep into the life of the people.”<sup>4</sup> Dr Stansfeld encouraged students from Oxford to spend weekends and vacations at the mission, where they started clubs and classes. Tubby described how “The Franciscan figure of Dr Stansfeld had passed through the ‘varsity and bidden us to the boys’ clubs at ‘Dockhead’, ‘Gordon’ and ‘Decima.’”<sup>5</sup> Tubby spent Thursday evenings in these places where, as Barclay Baron put it: “His own missionary spirit, trailing a cloak of delicious whimsy, was perfectly in tune.”<sup>6</sup> Tubby often said that Bermondsey was the true cradle of

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<sup>1</sup>T. Lever, *Clayton of Toc H* (London, 1972), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>B. Baron, *The doctor, The Story of John Stansfeld of Oxford and Bermondsey* (London, 1952), p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>Alec Paterson was involved with the Oxford Bermondsey Mission and spent several years as an unpaid teacher in an elementary school in Bermondsey. He wrote about his experiences in *Across the Bridges* (London, 1911), M. Snape, *The Back Parts of War, the YMCA Memoirs and Letters of Barclay Baron, 1915-1919* (Woodbridge, 2009), p.8.

<sup>4</sup> A. Paterson, *Across the Bridges* (London 1911), p. 1, cited by C. Smyth, *Cyril Foster Garbett*, p. 141

<sup>5</sup>B. Baron, *The doctor*, p. 14.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 207.



Toc H.<sup>7</sup> It was Barclay Baron's opinion that the "Toc H spirit" was in fact the same spirit that had inspired the workers at Bermondsey: "Had they not been used to the phrase 'The OBM spirit' for years? Were the two spirits, at their best, not identical?"<sup>8</sup> Lord Nathan<sup>9</sup> in his preface to a mature work of Tubby's said of Tubby in these years: "Tubby, like so many of his generation was caught in the upsurge of the social conscience that marked the first decade of the century. It caught him, it held him, he never forgot."<sup>10</sup>

As a curate in the parish of Portsea, working in boys' and mens' clubs, he showed a talent for encouraging boys and men in their faith. He wrote an article, 'Lads and Young Men' in C. F. Garbett's book, *The Work of a Great Parish*,<sup>11</sup> which detailed the life of the Parish of Portsea in the pre-war years. Tubby's opinion was that "A parish that neglects its boys is like a country that fails to develop its mineral resources."<sup>12</sup> Tubby seemed to have been remarkably good at running the boys' clubs, gathering large numbers of boys from the area, most of whom also went on to bible classes, many to confirmation, although it is typical of Tubby's egalitarian and open mind that the officers of the clubs did not have to be confirmed. A colleague of Tubby's at Portsea, E. G. Bucknill,<sup>13</sup> wrote of his talent: "His speciality was the genus BOY. He loved boys for their own sakes, instinctively and sincerely ..... they flocked around him, drawn as by a magnet."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>9</sup>Henry Louis Nathan was a Liberal, later Labour, politician. He was made first Baron Nathan of Churt in 1940. Harry Nathan was a contemporary of Clayton at St Paul's school and a lifelong friend and supporter of Toc H.

<sup>10</sup>The Right. Hon. Lord Nathan, in the foreword of P. B. Clayton, *To Conquer Hate* (London, 1963), p. vi.

<sup>11</sup>C. F. Garbett, *The Work of a Great Parish* (London, 1915).

<sup>12</sup>P. B. Clayton, 'Lads and Young Men', in C. F. Garbett, *The Work of A Great Parish*, p. 115.

<sup>13</sup>E. G. Bucknill, Curate at Portsea 1913-199, *Crockfords Clerical Directory* (1940), P. 178

<sup>14</sup>Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 32.

In 1915, after declaring that “After the war there will be only two kinds of men, those who had been in it and those who had not”<sup>15</sup>, he volunteered as a chaplain to serve on the Western Front and soon became involved in the setting up of Talbot House, a centre which became the famous ‘Haven in Hell’<sup>16</sup> through which so many men passed for rest, recreation and if they wanted, religion, during the war. Barclay Baron<sup>17</sup> recounted how his friends from Bermondsey, who were in the Ypres area, called in on Talbot House. “They found him in an infectious atmosphere of gaiety and deep purpose in which the doctor, if he had been there, would have delighted.”<sup>18</sup> The house was run on strictly egalitarian lines. The prevailing ethos summed up in the notice above Tubby’s study door: “All rank abandon ye who enter here.” Julian Bickersteth<sup>19</sup> remembered dining in the house: “We had our meal with Tubby and three private soldiers - the first time I had ever sat down to eat out here in uniform with soldiers.”<sup>20</sup> Officers were charged five francs for board and lodging on “the Robin Hood principle of taking from the rich to give to the poor.”<sup>21</sup> The Revd W. Muirhead, later on the staff at All Hallows Church, Tower Hill, with Tubby, described the classless atmosphere:

Class was forgotten in common fellowship in its rooms. The ranker officer met the non-commissioned nobleman with easy welcome. The one time frequenter of a

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<sup>15</sup>William Drury, *Camp Follower* (Dublin, 1968), p. 13.

<sup>16</sup>*Punch Magazine* 1915, cited in G.F., ‘What is Toc H? The Story of a Light’ in P. B. Clayton (ed.), *The Smoking Furnace and the Burning Lamp* (London, 1927), p. 73.

<sup>17</sup>Barclay Baron, (1884-1964). Member of the Oxford Bermondsey Mission pre-war. After working for the YMCA during the war he became a member of Toc H. He wrote the early history of the movement *The Birth of a Movement 1919-1922*(London, 1946), and served as its vice president and travelling secretary. M. Snape, *The Back Parts of War*, p. 13.

<sup>18</sup>Baron, *The Doctor*, p. 207.

<sup>19</sup>The Revd Julian Bickersteth, T C F 1915-1919.

<sup>20</sup>Paul Chapman, *A Haven from Hell: Talbot House, Poperinghe* (Pen and Sword, 2000), p. 60.

<sup>21</sup>P. B. Clayton, *Tales of Talbot House, Everyman’s Club in Poperinghe and Ypres 1915-1918* (London, 1919), p. 28.

public school forgot his snobbishness as easily there as the one time frequenter of a public house discovered his worth.<sup>22</sup>

Tubby summed up the purpose of the house: "Its whole raison d'être was always to be an Emmaus Inn, a home from home where friendships could be consecrated, and sad hearts renewed and cheered, a place of light and joy and brotherhood and peace."<sup>23</sup> Many soldiers made their way up to the beautiful chapel in the loft and many made their first and last communion there.

Tubby's spiritual and political development was much affected by his experiences in Talbot House. Regular debates were held discussing, for example, the role of women, the nationalisation of the railways, the problem of Ireland and the colour problem in the empire.<sup>24</sup> These gave Tubby an opportunity to absorb the thoughts and opinions of the wide spectrum of British male society that passed through the doors of the house. The egalitarian rules of the house were popular with the men.

The ethos of unstinted welcome and hospitality was one which earned Tubby the names 'Boniface' or 'The Innkeeper' from his friends. Captain L. F. Browne, in his postscript to *Tales from Talbot House*, "The Innkeeper", described his impression that "Talbot House was to the BEF in the salient what House Beautiful was to the pilgrims in Bunyan's wonderful 'Similitude of a dream.'"<sup>25</sup> It was obviously an ethos which it was hoped would pervade the infant Toc H. Browne ended his tribute to Tubby by asking: "Is it too much to hope that London may have its Talbot House with Boniface to welcome all comers and cheer them on

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<sup>22</sup>G.F. Macleod, 'What is Toc H?' p. 73.

<sup>23</sup>P. B. Clayton, *Tales of Talbot House*, p. 36.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

their way?”<sup>26</sup> F.R. Barry, writing a review of *Tales of Talbot House* in *Ducdame*, the magazine of Knutsford Test School, in December 1919, wrote:

The tale of Talbot House is a radiant story of warmth and light and fellowship and joy breaking into the record of the Salient. Talbot House, in its old form, must be started again in a ‘place’ in London.<sup>27</sup>

In his history of the Toc H movement, Barclay Baron suggested that many of the principles that the later Toc H was founded upon had their roots in the first four years of the movement, but it can be seen that many of them also stemmed from the work at Talbot House at Poperinghe. The idea that “Christian fellowship” was the whole basis of Toc H, the idea that “active service” was the “essential spring and outcome of fellowship”, and “the principle that layman and padre always work hand in hand”,<sup>28</sup> all these could be clearly seen in the way Tubby ran Talbot House. Baron also described a scene in the small flat in Red Lion Square which was the first centre of the developing movement which was reminiscent of Poperinghe in the old days: “The same ever present tea, the same strangely assorted but always enthusiastic collection of men, the same lively conversation which lasted until the small hours.”<sup>29</sup> When the Royal Charter of Toc H was granted in 1922 it stated in its preamble that Toc H was founded in order to continue the work initiated in Talbot House during the Great War.<sup>30</sup> Tubby, preaching at Great St Mary’s, Cambridge, in 1938, could see that what he had tried to achieve in Talbot House had informed the “four points” of the organisation:

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>27</sup>B. Baron, *The Birth of a Movement-1919-1922. The Story of Toc H* (London, 1922), p. 73.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p 15.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

On the ground floor of the Talbot House the open door led straight to rough fellowship. Men of all sorts, born in all kinds of bedrooms, were brothers there. This is our aim today. On the first floor we catered for men's minds. We tried to teach fair thinking, it is needed. On the next floor of the Flanders house, men wrote home. Today men's hearts must learn to love more widely. A steep stair led men in the old Talbot House up to the attic. Here, kneeling they received the source of courage.

He then concluded: "Such was the old Talbot House. I dwell upon it; for if the upper room is ever left beyond the common habit of Toc H, the movement will desert its heritage."<sup>31</sup>

At the end of the war Tubby rescued from Talbot House many scraps of paper with the names of people who had been communicants during the war. These were to be the "foundation members" of an organisation that was crystallising in his mind to perpetuate the work and ethos of Talbot House. At Christmas 1919 he sent out a funny postcard cum invitation in the form of a field postcard to resume contact and establish interest in such an organisation, the starting point being a Talbot House set up in London. There were 4,000 on the roll, 500 of them in London. The replies showed much interest but Tubby was determined to prioritise his work at Knutsford first, and this meant a six- months delay. However, Tubby continued to plan, writing a series of articles for *The Challenge* during the summer together with an article for *St Martin's Review* to publicise the new venture. In the article he painted a vivid picture of Talbot House as it was in the war, stressing the informality and Christian fellowship. He then asked the question:

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<sup>31</sup>P. B. Clayton, *To Conquer Hate* (London, 1963), p. 197.

What then is to happen to the fellowship of Talbot House? It is plainly too great to lose. Its lovers have a dream of finding some house ..... and the rent thereof, of hoisting the old sign board there and taking the consequences.<sup>32</sup>

The Revd G. F. Macleod , writing about Toc H in 1926, recalled Tubby and friends talking in Tubby's room, post war. He said that their two main 'grouses' were, firstly, lamenting the "loss of spirit that had been so glorious in war and had strangely disappeared with the return of peace" and secondly, the realisation that "the real loss of war was in ..... the terrific loss of the very best men."<sup>33</sup> Regarding the first point they asked the question: "how can we keep alive the spirit of fellowship and service? How can we perpetuate it among the younger brothers of those Elder Brethren ..... who have gone onwards?" It was the answers to these questions which Macleod argued had encouraged the ideas of the early Toc H.

*Tales of Talbot House* was published in September 1919. A review in *Punch* is indicative of the opinion that the war had in some cases been revelatory in a positive way: "Those who believe that the war brought its own revelation will find abundant proof in these gaily serious pages."<sup>34</sup> The book sold out quickly, going on to second and third editions and raised the profile of the new plans to build a Talbot House in London. The first committee meeting of "intimate confederates" was called for 15<sup>th</sup> November 1919. The agenda for the meeting was set out in army style, and after the "assembly point" and "zero hour" had been stated under the heading of "information" and "the nature of the country", the main business was set out:

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<sup>32</sup>*St Martin's Review*, September 1919, the magazine of St Martin-in-the-Fields, cited in Baron, *Birth of Movement*, p. 71.

<sup>33</sup>G. F. Macleod, 'What is Toc H?' pp. 76-77.

<sup>34</sup>Baron, *Birth of a Movement*, p. 73.

The attack on the problem of reopening Talbot House will be carried out by a round table conference ..... troops being drawn from Talbotousians, past present and to come. The attack will be covered by a creeping barrage of expert Londoners and a section of clerical tanks will cooperate.

The aim of the meeting, the agenda went on to explain, was to find ways of “maintaining the old fellowship and extending it to the younger clerks, civil servants and students of London.”<sup>35</sup> In a document accompanying the agenda is a report from Tubby which stressed that the organisation was not a backward looking one: “Auld Lang Syne is not our primary object.” Plans were put forward to offer a reasonably priced hostel for young working men and students and to “Infuse in them the traditional spirit of the old house and to lighten the loneliness of lodgings.” The document emphasised the forward looking nature of the movement by stating that “Youth made the greatest sacrifice and it is to this youth that the world owes most in return.”<sup>36</sup> The executive committee met again on the 19<sup>th</sup> November and the 17<sup>th</sup> December 1919. The influence of Bermondsey and Talbot House can be seen by the active participation of Alec Paterson and Neville Talbot on this committee. Writing to George Bell on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1919, Tubby reported: “I feel tremendously thankful and hopeful over the whole thing. It is quite plain now that T.H.[Talbot House]has more in front of it than behind it.”<sup>37</sup>

A poster campaign on the London Underground system in the spring of 1920 showed the crystallisation of the aims of Toc H. It defined the aims of Toc H as :

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>37</sup>Letter from P.B. Clayton to George Bell , 33<sup>rd</sup> November 1919, Papers of Bishop Bell, Vol. 248, f.84.

1. The perpetuation of the active service atmosphere of fellowship.
2. The extension of this tradition to the younger generation.
3. The continuance of the House tradition in service, thought and conduct.

It promised "First class club premises and hostel accommodation."<sup>38</sup> However the funds of the infant organisation were not at the stage to achieve these aims. An enthusiastic fund raising campaign continued in the spring of 1920. Two high profile supporters, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Field Marshal Plumer became presidents. Enough money was raised to set up Toc H Mark One at No. 23 Queen's Gate Gardens which was set up as a peacetime replica of Talbot House.

Lt. Col. Shiner, who was to become the first warden of "Mark One", wrote some recollections of the very early days, firstly at Red Lion Square: "There were five of us in this original team which joined to set up ..... a Toc H hostel. Here we lived a month or two gathering fragments of the family of Talbot House, Poperinghe round us."<sup>39</sup> After moving to Queen's Gate and being made warden he described how they set about gathering enough members living there to pay for the new house's expenses. He said of the original inhabitants of Mark One: "We were, very properly, an odd crowd - a mixture of young and middle aged, of professional and manual workers."<sup>40</sup>

Tubby's cause for concern was the perceived need for a set of principles which would guide younger members and help make the transition of the movement from one of wartime comradeship and service to one, as Barclay Baron put it, of "Service to society as a

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<sup>38</sup>Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 96.

<sup>39</sup>Barclay Baron, *Birth of a Movement*, p. 96.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 97.



whole and to less fortunate fellow beings in particular.”<sup>41</sup> He was particularly concerned with the fate of the thousands of young men who left their homes to live and work in the big cities:

There is no feature of our civilisation more fraught with the gravity of evil than the fact that every city contains young men, unchallenged to the work of any great cause outside their own career.<sup>42</sup>

It was at this time that the custom of inviting experts in their field to speak developed into regular “guest nights”. These often resembled a sort of “human zoo” in their variety.<sup>43</sup> *The Guardian* reported on the House at Red Lion Square in February 1920:

Before the war the London clerk or young businessman who lived in lodgings was the loneliest man imaginable. Now his position is even worse, as he has come to know the companionship of military service. Toc H gives him this companionship and the influence it exerted at Poperinghe will be exerted in London, but in a far wider measure.<sup>44</sup>

As the movement spread out of London it was becoming a national movement. In January Tubby was able to write to Lord Salisbury<sup>45</sup> that there were seventy branches in England and that some of the regional branches were well on their way to opening their own houses.<sup>46</sup> This created some problems of control and leadership. In response to this

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>42</sup>John Durham, *Talbot House to Tower Hill, A ‘Tubby’ Clayton Anthology* (London, 1960), p. 104.

<sup>43</sup>G. F. Macleod, ‘What is Toc H?’, p. 78.

<sup>44</sup>*The Guardian*, 6<sup>th</sup> February 1920, p. 142.

<sup>45</sup>James Edward Hubert Gascoyne Cecil, fourth Marquess of Salisbury (1861–1947), politician and prominent lay churchman, trustee of Toc H. Tresham Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, P. 100, *ODNB*.

<sup>46</sup>Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 101.

Tubby sent out a letter to foundation members in the regions appealing for them to become local leaders:

The step that we are now taking in the formation of local branches all over the kingdom is vital to the welfare and development of the new work and it is of the utmost importance that Toc H should be represented by a foundation member whose sense of service and fellowship can be relied upon.<sup>47</sup>

The leadership was forthcoming, an example being Pat Leonard, a former chaplain who moved from being chaplain in Cheltenham College to be Staff Padre of Toc H in Manchester. Leonard had been a popular and successful army chaplain, identifying closely with the men of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division in which he served.<sup>48</sup> He had won the DSO for bringing in wounded under fire.<sup>49</sup> Gary Sheffield considers that “He clearly played a key role in maintaining military morale in his battalion and seems to have achieved a reasonable balance between his welfare and spiritual duties.”<sup>50</sup> The qualities Leonard had shown in the war were clearly one which were to make him a leading figure in the Toc H Movement. One of his first tasks was to foster the growth of Toc H branches in Lancashire and the Midlands. His success in the Manchester area was “phenomenal”.<sup>51</sup> One of his descriptions of Toc H gives a sense of his infectious enthusiasm:

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<sup>47</sup> Baron, *The Birth of a Movement*, p. 81.

<sup>48</sup> G. Sheffield, ‘Chaplains in Context : British Army Padres and the “Bureaucy of Paternalism in the First World War”’, p. 118 in E. Madigan and M. Snape (eds.), *The Clergy in Khaki: New Perspectives on British Army Chaplaincy in the First World War*, (Aldershot, forthcoming).

<sup>49</sup> University of Birmingham, Church Missionary Society Archives, ACC/18/7/1, Bishop L. H. Gwynne’s ‘Army Book’.

<sup>50</sup> G. Sheffield, ‘Chaplains in Context’ p. 190.

<sup>51</sup> Philip Leonard-Johnson, *Pat Leonard D S O – A Memoir* (2010). <http://www.toch-uk.org.uk/documents/Pat%20Leonard%20Memoir%20%28Final%29.pdf>. (Feb 2011).

Toc H then is a family of men seeking to create among themselves such love that it may overflow into every nook and cranny of the social world in which they live.

Each group and branch is an infectious hotbed of radiant joy and fellowship.<sup>52</sup>

A report in the *Manchester Guardian* in April 1921 on the opening of a 'Mark' in Manchester showed that the aims and organisation of the movement were reaching and being understood by a wider audience: "The aim is not merely to perpetuate the old BEF fellowship, but rather to use the goodwill to save the younger generation. It is also felt that such a home would be a very practical war memorial."<sup>53</sup>

Another cause for concern was the perceived need for a set of principles which would guide younger members and help make the transition of the movement from one of wartime comradeship and service to one which would serve society as a whole. In the summer of 1920 Alec Paterson, Tubby and Dick Sheppard met to hammer out the aims and objects which would unite the Toc H movement. The ideas which Alec Paterson and Tubby produced were remarkably similar and at the meeting the "four points" of the "Toc H compass" emerged. "FELLOWSHIP - to love widely, SERVICE - to build bravely FAIRMINDENESS - to think fairly, THE KINGDOM OF GOD - to witness humbly."<sup>54</sup> At the same time, Tubby was working out the philosophical and spiritual implications of the aims of Toc H. He saw these in terms of reconciliation "of man with God and man with man", and of fellowship in service: "You cannot love men till you work alongside, and know how much you need them. The harder the common task the deeper the common sympathy."<sup>55</sup>

Running alongside this was the need for social equality: "The work of Toc H is, therefore to

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>*The Manchester Guardian*, 21<sup>st</sup> February 1921, P. 3

<sup>54</sup>Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 104.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 104.

bind in a single tether those who would else be poorer for their ignorance of each other.” This should militate against the fact that “Civilian life sinks us all in one rut or another, according to the bedrooms we were born in or the trades we follow.” He was clear on the position of Toc H:

Toc H thus aims not at the stampeding of the whole social system, but the creation of a place and atmosphere in which the younger generation at least may meet their otherwise unknown contemporaries.<sup>56</sup>

As the organisation grew in the early twenties the principles of service became more established. As well as Toc H Marks One and Two in London, new houses were opened in Manchester and Leicester. Following suggestions from Lt. Col. A. Murray-Smith, of the Cheltenham Branch of Toc H, the houses acted as centres of supply to the need of local social and welfare associations and the local Toc H members helped out in these according to their time and talents. No new social service organisation was intended or started. He summed up his hopes for the future:

That in the course of time, as people find that Toc H can furnish willing and capable fellows to help in every town where there is a branch, any organisation that wants a helper for some job or other will, as a matter of course apply first to the Toc H Branch, knowing from common experience that they will not be disappointed.<sup>57</sup>

The Revd G. F. Macleod, writing on “What is Toc H?”, and discussing the bonds that held the organisation together, emphasised that “common life giving service that will alone keep

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>57</sup>Baron, *Birth of a Movement*, p. 105.

human beings together.”<sup>58</sup> It is significant that when talking about the social service aspect of Toc H, he related it back to the war: “We seek humbly to create a living war memorial - something alive and eager and outgoing.”<sup>59</sup>

In a sermon in 1938, Tubby described how the “Mark” system worked:

The Marks are residential houses meant to consecrate the mobility of commercial life..... . In London, Marks have much to do. They are not merely lodgings; they are founded to be our college system in the world ..... they can be depots of good natured help, dealing with men whom the old parish system is bound to miss.<sup>60</sup>

In 1921 and 1922 the members in the London Marks were making friends with a wide variety of men who became supporters of the movement, among them A. A .Milne and G. K. Chesterton<sup>61</sup> from literary circles, Lord Robert Cecil,<sup>62</sup> Aubrey Herbert,<sup>63</sup> Bishop Gore,<sup>64</sup> and Sir Oliver Lodge,<sup>65</sup> all of whom were respected “for various high mindedness.”<sup>66</sup> Tubby recalled how in the coal strike, pledged to think fairly, Mark Two invited three people with differing viewpoints on the issues to speak at guest night. His comment was, “Politics taught like this improves with telling.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>G. F. Macleod, ‘What is Toc H?, p. 70.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>60</sup>P. B. Clayton, *To Conquer Hate*, p. 196.

<sup>61</sup>G. K. Chesterton, old boy of St Paul’s school and author of the ‘Father Brown’ books, *ODNB*.

<sup>62</sup>Lord Robert Cecil, politician and peace campaigner, architect of the League of Nations and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1937, *ODNB*.

<sup>63</sup>Aubrey Herbert, diplomat, politician and supporter of Albanian nationalism, *ODNB*.

<sup>64</sup>Charles Gore, Bishop of Oxford 1911-1919, *ODNB*

<sup>65</sup>Oliver Lodge, physicist and pioneer of the commercial use of radio, *ODNB*.

<sup>66</sup>Baron, *Birth of a Movement*, p. 107.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 107.

Tubby was proud of the chapel at Mark One, which had been furnished as a replica of the one in Talbot House. In the Annual Report for 1921 he explained the role of the chapel in the life of the mark:

Sunday services are rarely held, since it is clearly not the task of the house to offer a substitute for church attendance: worship is here a weekday thing, intended to annul the divorce so common between religion and working life, a point Gilbert Talbot<sup>68</sup> stressed in one of his last letters.<sup>69</sup>

In December 1921 plans were made for a celebration of the anniversary of the opening of Talbot House in 1915. A party was proposed at Grosvenor House, to be preceded by a service of thanksgiving at St Martin-in-the-Fields at which Tom Pym preached. At Grosvenor House "1,500 members, culled from every class, cheerfully chewed sausage rolls."<sup>70</sup> The enthusiastic celebrations included the signing of a large 'Round Robin' by all present which was addressed to members who would be present at the centenary of Toc H in 2015. Typically of Tubby, it was written in a light hearted vein: "To be serious in a document of this character would be unconvincing to the last degree. We therefore content ourselves with wishing all many happy returns of the day and remaining your obedient ancestors at Toc H."<sup>71</sup> It convincingly summed up the optimism felt by the infant Toc H at this time.

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<sup>68</sup>Lt. Gilbert W. L. Talbot, brother of Neville Talbot and son of Bishop E. S Talbot. He was killed at Hooge in the Ypres Salient on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1915. It is thought that Neville Talbot, instigator of Talbot House, named the house in memory of his brother.

<sup>69</sup> Toc H Annual Report 1921, Toc H Archive , University of Birmingham , section 6 G1, P. 7

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>71</sup>Lever, *Toc H*, p. 108.

1922 was to prove an important year in the development of the movement. In January Tubby embarked on a lecture tour of Canada which was very successful, attracting large audiences and raising funds. Also during 1922 steps were taken to put the organisation on a formal footing by establishing a constitution and being incorporated by Royal Charter. Toc H thereby became an institution, with the Prince of Wales as its patron. Its four objects were stated. The first objective was to preserve and encourage the traditions of service began in wartime, the second was to encourage social service “as between and for the benefit of all ranks of society”. The third was to promote a wide interest in all people for the needs of their fellow men. The fourth was to mitigate the “evils of class consciousness” in order to “create a body of public opinion free from all social antagonisms.”<sup>72</sup> The objectives were phrased in formal and legalistic language, which was felt to be too austere, and at a meeting on December an additional one, known thereafter as “The Main Resolution” was drafted and passed which more accurately summed up what was in the hearts and minds of members. It ended:

We pledge ourselves to listen now and always for the voice of God, to strive to know his will revealed in Christ and to do it fearlessly. Reckoning nothing of the world’s opinion, or its successes, for ourselves or this our family, we will endeavour to think fairly, to love widely, to witness humbly and to build bravely.<sup>73</sup>

The idea of the lamp of maintenance and the ceremony of light that was built around it was partly a result of Murray-Smith’s idea that a half minute silence be given at the beginning of meetings to remember old friends “left behind in the Salient” and partly as a

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., pp. 127-128.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

result of Barclay Baron and Tubby's desire to come up with a badge or symbol to represent Toc H. In May 1922 Baron and Tubby came up with a design for a lamp with the double cross of Calvary, also part of the coat of arms for Ypres. Each full branch of Toc H was to be presented with a lamp which was a replica of the original lamp presented to Toc H by the Prince of Wales, and each had the inscription *In Luminae Tuo Videbimus Lumen* - In thy light shall we see light, (Psalm 36.9). The ceremony of light consisted of the chairman saying:

"With proud thanksgiving let us remember our elder brethren.

They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old.

Age shall not weary them or the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning.

We shall remember them.

After the response: we shall remember them, and after a minute's silence, the chairman says:

Let your light so shine before men that they see your good works.

The branch replies:

And give glory to our Father which is in heaven.<sup>74</sup>

The symbol of the lamp was to be used in the birthday celebrations of 1922 which were being planned on a large scale. It was held in the Guild Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> December in the presence of the Prince of Wales, the Lord Mayor of London, the burgomasters of Poperinghe

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 122.



and Ypres, Neville Talbot and his father, Bishop E. Talbot. Over 2,000 people were present. The patron, the Prince of Wales had presented a lamp which would be used to light the lamps which were to be presented to the branches. *The Times* gave advance notice in its columns in November of the ceremonial that had been planned:

From each of the branches taking part there will be a delegation. Each delegation will go to the platform, carrying a lamp, banner and petition. Lord Salisbury ..... will receive the delegations and present them to the Prince of Wales who will light the lamps.<sup>75</sup>

The Prince, in his address, spoke of his friendship with Gilbert Talbot and his memories of Talbot House. He described the movement as “determined to raise out of a great tragedy a great opportunity for good.” He referred to the wide ranging scope of Toc H’s mission: “It has a very great work ahead of it: a work which competes with no other task, but supplements the achievements of all”. But he also referred back to the memory of the war when lighting the lamps: “As I light them, let our thoughts be with pledges of service and brotherly love.”<sup>76</sup>

In March 1924 Toc H organised a mission in London Churches. It was opened by the Bishop of London and led by Edward Keble Talbot, MC, former chaplain and brother to Neville and Gilbert. The mission was run by eight former army chaplains including Herbert

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<sup>75</sup>*The Times*, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1922, p. 9.

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*

Fleming<sup>77</sup> and Pat Leonard. The mission held services and meetings three times daily in London Churches.<sup>78</sup>

In July 1922 Tubby had been offered the living of All Hallows on Tower Hill by Archbishop Davidson. In accepting this challenge, Tubby provided a base for Toc H and also started a pastoral ministry to the financial centre of London which was to be a large part of his interwar work. All Hallows became a place where city workers could come and eat their packed lunches, and the way in which regular services gradually attracted larger and more youthful congregations. Writing fifteen years later, Tubby acknowledged the debt that Toc H owed to All Hallows but also the debt that All Hallows owed to Toc H:

Toc H throughout the world has been enriched, assisted and safeguarded from All Hallows ..... Without All Hallows it is more than likely that Toc H would now be moribund. .... The debt on the other side is as deep. Without Toc H All Hallows would have had a scope more confined, more conventional.<sup>79</sup>

Peter Monie, the first treasurer of Toc H paid tribute to Archbishop Davidson's confidence in Toc H in firmly attaching it to All Hallows. He maintained that Davidson was "the first person outside it [Toc H] to have a real vision of its possibilities and be willing to take risks."<sup>80</sup> Tubby set about the regeneration of Tower Hill, enlisting the help of the Lord Mayor of London, and gathering around him willing supporters, including Lord Wakefield.<sup>81</sup> They

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<sup>77</sup> Herbert Fleming, TCF 1914-19, First Hon. Administrative Padre to Toc H. *A Toc H Birthday Book* (London 1936), p. 13.

<sup>78</sup> *The Church Times*, 7<sup>th</sup> March 1924, p. 263.

<sup>79</sup> Lever, *Toc H*, p. 119.

<sup>80</sup> 'Statement on Toc H and the Denominational Issue', by Peter Monie, 1926, (month unspecified), the papers of Archbishop Davidson, Vol. 217, ff. 190-191, Lambeth Palace Library.

<sup>81</sup> Charles Wakefield, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Wakefield, oil industrialist and philanthropist. *OD N B*

turned the run down area of Tower Hill into a more attractive place with space for children to play. Tubby, preaching in 1938 described the significance of the work.

The guild church of Toc H is on Tower Hill; and since the love of God is not confined within the walls where God in Christ is worshipped, a number of the older city men in Toc H have undertaken to reform Tower Hill. .... Lord Wakefield has placed Toc H on Tower Hill in a position of permanence, bestowing freehold buildings for the erection of a great colony of Christian influence.<sup>82</sup>

In 1927 the relationship between All Hallows and Toc H was formalised by the setting up of a trust fund made possible by a large donation. The aim of the trust fund was to provide funds and training for Toc H chaplains and to place on a secure financial basis for the organisation, making sure that the link between them embodied in Tubby would continue by linking the incumbency of All Hallows permanently with Toc H. A press release exclusively for *The Times* sent out on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> November stated:

The Trust owes its origin to a twofold desire to safeguard the spiritual work of the association by the creation of a system of endowed chaplaincies ....., to perpetuate for all time the close associations of the last five years between Toc H and the church of All Hallows Berkyngchriche, which has come to be regarded as the spiritual rallying point for the Anglican members of Toc H. .... All lovers of the great movement, which was born amid the havoc of the Great War ..... will read with thankfulness that a further landmark in its spiritual progress has been reached.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>P. B. Clayton, *To Conquer Hate*, p. 198.

<sup>83</sup>Press release November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1927, papers of Archbishop Davidson, Vol. 217, f. 130. Lambeth Palace Library.

In 1922 Tubby was invited to Canada to visit and encourage the Toc H branches there. Before he went he asked Barclay Baron to put together a short history of the movement which he did in ten days, called *Toc H, Birth of a Movement*. During the tour of Canada and America, he was impressed by the role of women in public affairs<sup>84</sup> and when he returned he decided that Toc H should have a Women's auxiliary which became The League of Women Helpers. Its role was described by Barclay Baron. "The undertaking of social service of all kinds for women and girls which would run parallel to that of Toc H."<sup>85</sup> It gained the nickname of Toc Emma, the initial letters of the weapon Trench Mortar.

At the beginning of 1925, it was decided that Tubby would set off on a worldwide tour, accompanied by Pat Leonard. The purpose of this tour was to raise funds and also raise awareness of the movement supporting the branches that had sprung up overseas. It also seemed fitting that Toc H should be part of the hopeful internationalism of the 1920s which was manifesting itself in the League of Nations and the Edinburgh and Lausanne conferences in the 1920s and which would inform some strands of the pacifist movement in the 1930s. Starting in North America and Canada, they progressed to New Zealand and Australia before returning home via Jerusalem. An account of their send off in *The Toc H Journal* was enthusiastic:

This ten months of their absence from Europe is more filled with incredible possibilities than at any other time since our re birth in 1920 ..... . None of us can

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<sup>84</sup>M. Harcourt, *Tubby Clayton* (London, 1953), p. 155.

<sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 155.

foretell what the padre adventurers will be led to accomplish around the world before December.<sup>86</sup>

On his return, Tubby was wary of overestimating the results of the tour, but was encouraged by what he found:

Everywhere Toc H is still beginning or even beginning to begin. Some units, Adelaide for example, have already found their feet, others, especially in the USA, are just struggling for a foothold.<sup>87</sup>

*The Church Times* in December 1927 commented on the increasing overseas element in the Toc H organisation: "As it seems to us, Toc H should help towards the realisation of a world citizenship which is no longer an utopian dream but the one object of some statesmanship."<sup>88</sup> Tubby's biographer, Tresham Lever, considered that: "By his travels he had given an international significance to the movement that was his life and of which he was the soul."<sup>89</sup>

The high point of the decade of the 1920s was the purchase by Lord Wakefield of the original Talbot House in 1929 and his gift of it to the Toc H movement. Tubby and Toc H had already been organising battlefield trips to the Ypres Salient, and the provision of a base at Talbot House helped provide a focus for remembrance and a practical help to those who wished either to revisit the scene of their war service, or visit the graves of friends.

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<sup>86</sup>*Toc H Journal*, March 1925, vol.3, p. 86.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup>*The Church Times*, 9<sup>th</sup> December 1927, p. 701.

<sup>89</sup>T. Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 140.

In October 1927 Tubby leased a house from the London port authority to become a conference and retreat centre for clergy and also parish and Toc H workers. *The Church Times* thought this a valuable resource “for the use of weary and spiritually tired men and women.”<sup>90</sup> On 5th December 1930 the Prince of Wales outlined a scheme for the organisation and administration of Toc H to be put on a permanent basis with a paid general staff. For this an endowment of £250,000 was needed and an appeal was launched which was broadcast by the BBC. By December 1930 £140, 000 had been raised.<sup>91</sup> An editorial in *The Times* expressed its opinion of Toc H’s work in the twenties: “This strangely named body has become in a single decade of peace to stand for much that is simple vivid and unpretentious in the whole field of applied Christianity.”<sup>92</sup>

By 1930 the annual birthday celebrations and festival of light had grown too large and had to be decentralised. The ceremony at Westminster Abbey was confined to the branches of the Greater London area, as there were now forty six branches and sixty four groups nationwide. *The Church Times* reported that there were more than 4,000 members in the London Area. The 1930 celebrations included the starting of the World Chain of Light. Tubby and some foundation members had travelled to the upper room in Poperinghe and lit the lamp before the altar the previous evening. It was announced in Westminster Cathedral that:

This night in the upper room of Talbot House there is lighted a lamp. This begins the world chain of light which by tomorrow will have encircled the globe. To far friends

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<sup>90</sup>*The Church Times*, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1927, p, 493.

<sup>91</sup>*The Church Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> December 1930, p. 755.

<sup>92</sup>*The Times*, 8<sup>th</sup> December 1930, p. 9.

and near, the Flanders household flame shall shine, recalling Christ and true men of his name.<sup>93</sup>

The highlight of the celebration at the Albert Hall was the return of Tubby from Poperinghe and the broadcast of his speech to “the world”. *The Church Times* said: “Many branches overseas were awaiting its delivery over the ether.” During his speech Tubby read a message from the Prince of Wales:

Many years after the Great War, one shortage at least continues, that is the loss of leadership. It is to help in finding and inspiring leadership that Toc H seems to be so significant; and those who would be leaders must learn to lead through Fellowship and service.<sup>94</sup>

In December 1931 the birthday celebrations were held at Crystal Palace. The Prince of Wales talked about the decentralisation of the movement: “Toc H now has a widespread responsibility resting at last on local leadership, discovered among its local membership.” He mentioned the two projects that Toc H was then involved in, the expansion of the hostel for sea-going boys in Southampton and the clubs for pit boys in the mining districts of Durham.<sup>95</sup> In 1933 Tubby returned from a trip to British West Africa where he became aware of the extent of the problem of leprosy and made an appeal to members on this behalf. As a result it was reported in *The Times*: “members of Toc H have volunteered to serve for five

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<sup>93</sup>*The Church Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> December 1930, p. 755.

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup>*The Times*, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1931, p. 14.

years without salary in the Leper colonies under the auspices of The British Empire Leprosy Association.”<sup>96</sup>

During the 1930s, more reference was made to the increasingly difficult economic situation and the ways in which Toc H could contribute. The Seventeenth Annual Report of Toc H talked about the work of Toc H in the special areas which had been designated by the government as areas of special deprivation. The editorial in the *Toc H Journal* in October 1931 emphasised the role that the organisation could play in what it called “the national crisis”:

It is becoming clearer that success in facing our national emergency will depend ..... not on financial matters alone, but on the spirit of the people. It is in this situation that Toc H can play a real part. The spirit it claims is precisely what the nation needs ..... there will be much need for overtime in voluntary service this winter.<sup>97</sup>

In 1936 Toc H celebrated its coming of age. Tubby wrote a letter to *The Church Times* asking for the prayers of its readers for the coming week of celebrations. He stressed the importance of the corporate communion being organised for Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June, with 4,000 Anglicans communicating at All Hallows throughout the morning and nearby venues arranged for the other denominations. *The Church Times* reported on the week’s activities, mentioning the “great service of dedication” held at St Paul’s Cathedral. The order of service was described as “An order of service of great beauty - every word meant something”. The text of the Archbishop of York’s sermon was “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” He said that:

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<sup>96</sup>*The Times*, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1934, p. 8.

<sup>97</sup>*Toc H Journal*, October 1931, Vol. 9, p. 393.



Toc H ..... handed on to successive generations, irrespective of rank and class in a common hope and a common allegiance to the captain of their destinies: It comes of age as a movement of youth, to whom the older men have handed on the torch.

He went to stress that this common heritage must be expressed in worship as well as action. The Crystal Palace was the venue for the celebrations on the Saturday night. Banner bearers and lamp holders in the long procession were from branches in England, Wales, Scotland, Australia, Africa, India, China and South America. The Duke of Kent read a message from the new King, Edward VIII: "The example of the elder statesman it is now for you to make your own: as Toc H stands tonight full grown it must be ready to light those lamps to shed their light in the paths of the future."<sup>98</sup>

### **The effect of the Great War on Toc H.**

Toc H had "Its birth far back in the furnace"<sup>99</sup> as Tubby put it and it was natural that the ethos developed in the Great War would have an appreciable effect on the development of the organisation. The yearly birthday celebrations were rooted firmly in the remembrance of wartime experience and the fallen "elder brethren". A review of *Plain Tales from Flanders* in 1929 emphasised Tubby's view of the role of the army chaplains in cementing "The comradeship which is established ..... the common bond of faith" and continued: "Thus was the spirit of Toc H the secret of its success. It bound men together in Christian brotherhood."<sup>100</sup> As Tresham Lever, Tubby's biographer put it: "The bond of fellowship forged in the war remained strong between the old members and was jealously

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<sup>98</sup>*The Church Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> June 1936, p. 806.

<sup>99</sup>P. B. Clayton, 'Two Men's Work' in *The Smoking Furnace and the Burning Lamp*, p. 36.

<sup>100</sup>*The Church Times*, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1929, p. 460.

preserved.”<sup>101</sup> A. C. Jarvis, war-time chaplain and Chaplain General in the post-war years, wrote in February 1928:

I am proud to reflect that Toc H is the child of the Royal Army Chaplains’ Department. Its founder was one of us, and went forth under our banner and, as such, was the instrument used of God to bring into being an organisation which, I consider, the embodiment of the greatest religious movement of this age, the distinctive glory is that it had won and linked up a vast residuum of young manhood untouched by organised Christianity.<sup>102</sup>

Talbot House, and the war - time ethos and the need for remembrance were apparent in much of the development of the new Toc H. As Lt-Col. A. M. Murray Smith from the Cheltenham branch commented:

At the front in the war we were extraordinarily happy because we had found our feet for perhaps the first time in our lives in service for others. Now we are civvies, things seem bleak, we miss our objective and we miss the clear sense of working unselfishly together for a common object. Without Toc H we should feel, many of us desperately lonely.<sup>103</sup>

Barclay Baron felt that there was a distinct sense that this service and comradeship felt during the war should be able to continue in peace time. He wrote: “If these precious things, almost the only credits of war, were suffered to slip away in peace time, their world they felt

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<sup>101</sup>Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 102.

<sup>102</sup>Memorandum from the Chaplain General, 27<sup>th</sup> February 1928, papers of Archbishop Davidson, Vol. 217, f.158.

<sup>103</sup>Baron, *Birth of a Movement*, p. 112.

would have been hardly worth fighting for.”<sup>104</sup> There seemed to be a distinct sense of unwillingness to relinquish the nostalgia for wartime comradeship, of the unacceptability for some of its former inhabitants that the Talbot House atmosphere should fade away.

The ethos of remembrance within Toc H seems to have been clearly understood outside the movement also. The editorial in *The Church Times* on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1927 reports on the ceremony of presenting original wooden crosses from war graves, these having been replaced by Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC) headstones, to each newly commissioned branch. The editorial comments that these were “constant reminders to members of Toc H groups that the spirit of self sacrifice and brotherhood must be preserved and carried on in the tasks and routines of civil life.”<sup>105</sup>

In the interwar years Toc H relied to some extent on the cooperation of various groups that had been in the war. Ex-servicemen wanted to retain the sense of comradeship and service experienced and saw in the movement a perfect vehicle for this. As Toc H grew it also benefitted from the work of former chaplains. Pat Leonard DSO,<sup>106</sup> who had been chaplain at Cheltenham College, resigned and became a full time provincial member of staff and leader of the Manchester branch. Padre Goodwin,<sup>107</sup> formerly of the Little Talbot house at Ypres, who had seen service in Mesopotamia, worked for Toc H in Newcastle and Hugh Sawbridge,<sup>108</sup> who had been a chaplain with the Leicester Brigade, went to Leicester and started a Toc H branch there which resulted in the setting up of Mark XI. Throughout this era also establishment figures with war backgrounds such as Lord Plumer, Lord Salisbury, and

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<sup>104</sup>Ibid.

<sup>105</sup>*The Church Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1927, P. 686.

<sup>106</sup>M. P. Leonard, TCF 1914-1918, DSO 1916, *Crockford's Clerical Directory*(1940), p.812.

<sup>107</sup>A. R. Goodwin, TCF 1918-1919, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.516.

<sup>108</sup>H. F. Sawbridge, TCF 1915-1919, MC 1916, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.1188.

Bishop Neville Talbot also played an important role in raising awareness of Toc H. An important source of support was the Prince of Wales, who never failed either to appear at the birthday celebration or send a message. His constant themes in these messages were the links between remembrance and looking towards the future. The abdication of the king in December 1936 came as a blow to Toc H. Lord Salisbury wrote to Tubby on the 26<sup>th</sup> December: "We in Toc H have a great debt of gratitude to the former Prince of Wales, and you probably have been in despair at the blow."<sup>109</sup> The Toc H Annual Report of 1937 placed on record "The debt of affection and gratitude which Toc H owes its first patron, H.R.H. the Duke of Windsor, for his sincere belief in the meaning and purpose of the movement."<sup>110</sup>

However, it was realised that the emphasis on war and remembrance should not be the main one. There was concern that it should not become merely an ex-serviceman's organisation. It was essential that it capture the hearts and minds of a new generation. One of Tubby's major post-war themes however was the idea of the younger brother taking on the challenge and having to bear double the burden: "Let the younger brother know that there lies on him not only one man's work but two and sonship and service will be rendered with diligence that will know no rein."<sup>111</sup> This concept cleverly combined reverence for the wartime origins of the movement with emphasis on its post war role.

The main principles of Toc H as it emerged in the immediate post-war years were the continuance of the fellowship of the war years and the encouragement of men of all different classes and outlooks to work together in improving society through fellowship, fair-

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<sup>109</sup>T. Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 206.

<sup>110</sup>Toc H Annual Report 1927, Toc H Archive, University of Birmingham, Section G1, P. 7.

<sup>111</sup>*The Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> October 1920, p. 15.

mindedness and service. *The Church Times*, in an editorial written in December 1926, tried to sum up the ethos of the movement:

The ideal around which Toc H is built is eminently Christian. The movement is a war movement but does not exist to revive old antagonisms or fight old battles again. It is just the simple constant reminder of the fine dead of the fine fellows who marched away..... and who never made home again. The fellows who are left behind, inherit a responsibility as they inherit a fine tradition. The idea of Toc H is that this responsibility of service shall be regarded as the jolliest and most splendid of duties.<sup>112</sup>

Always in Tubby's writings and speeches the effect of his war service was apparent. He felt strongly that the ethos of companionship experienced by those who visited Talbot House should inform the service and fellowship of the younger generation, and that their sacrifices should somehow be reflected in the work of their younger brothers and friends.

### **Toc H and the Social Gospel.**

In a report on Toc H in Glasgow in 1926, the Revd G. F. Macleod gave an insight into the many jobs in the community that the ethos of service and job mastery had given rise to:

Toc H is finding personnel for a boy's club in Glasgow, and scout masters. It had ten men going around the houses of the blind, keeping their wireless set in order. Once a month it entertains crippled children in the Toc H rooms. Toc H men are running

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<sup>112</sup>*The Church Times*, 17<sup>th</sup> December 1926, p. 715.

the only Rover troop started among Borstal boys in prison. One member is tutoring another for a forthcoming examination.<sup>113</sup>

Macleod explained that every man who joined Toc H understood what service is. At the ceremony of initiation he was asked “What is service?” and he replied “It is the rent we pay for our room on earth.”<sup>114</sup> He also commented on the wide ranging membership of the movement:

Toc H has never press ganged men into attendance, but on different evenings during the course of the years it has had within its walls Borstal boys, the leader of a razor slashing gang, an ex-communist, and one of the best known pick pockets. In each case they have been brought by a friend of Toc H, but the point is that in no case have they failed to return of their own accord. How far we did them any good we do not know. We do know they did us good. The risk increases the fellowship.<sup>115</sup>

In the Toc H annual report of 1927, under a heading of ‘a few key facts for a new friends of Toc H’ the social objectives were described: “It is ‘power house’ for social services of every kind, directed in each place by a voluntary Jobmaster. Toc H in no way competes with existing societies; it encourages and trains its members to help them.”<sup>116</sup>

The practical effects of the movement on the problems of interwar conditions in industrial and disadvantaged areas and population cannot be quantified. It is intangible because of its

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<sup>113</sup>G. F. Macleod ‘Toc H, A Report from Glasgow in 1926’, in *Smoking Furnace*, p. 85.

<sup>114</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>115</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>116</sup>Toc H Annual Report 1927, Toc H Archives, University of Birmingham, Section G1, P. 7.

diversity and individuality. The beneficial effects were felt by both the Toc H members and the recipients of the many and various tasks doled out by the job masters.

Another theme of Tubby's was the absence of class and social distinction within Toc H. He wanted the egalitarian nature of the original Talbot House to be replicated in the movement and in society as a whole. He was concerned that despite the fact that in the war: "a whole manhood dresses in the same colour and had to stand in the same colour mud."<sup>117</sup>, post-war society was divided on class lines once more. As G. F. Macleod put it in a Toc H service in Glasgow:

The kind of distinctions that men had thought were gone were raising their ugly heads again and the war that was to end war looked very much as if it had succeeded only in creating a new form of strife.<sup>118</sup>

Tubby saw Toc H acting as a series of bridges to cross the gulfs of society:

Toc H, is in fact, a fourfold bridge built from both ends at once. It is a bridge to leap the gulf which inherited class hatred makes even more disturbing between the young employer and the young employed, and Toc H spans happily from both sides at once. It is a link which is at last beginning to lessen the alienation between the younger men and organised religion. Now Toc H is spanning the wide seas which separate the young men of the empire, pitifully ignorant of one another and lacking any great unifying force.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup>G. F. Macleod, 'What is Toc H?', p. 71.

<sup>118</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>119</sup>*The Times*, 25<sup>th</sup> November 1925, p. 19.

The classless and egalitarian ethos of Toc H is perhaps one reason why Toc H made little impact in recruiting from the army in the interwar years. Despite the fact that the movement had been born out of the war, it seemed to have little appeal to regular soldiers. In 1930, Tubby complained to Lord Plumer, an influential supporter of Toc H: "We are faced with the pathetic fact that the army as a whole is ignorant of Toc H, and, if anything, rather averse to playing its part in what is rapidly becoming the biggest and most wholesome men's Society in the Empire."<sup>120</sup> Michael Snape is of the opinion that the results of Lord Plumer's subsequent appeal in an Army Council Circular were disappointing: "no doubt because the movement's ethos was still seen as being incompatible with the hierarchical sensibilities of the army."<sup>121</sup> Significantly, Lord Plumer's <sup>122</sup>last words to his friend and biographer, Charles Harrington, were "build up Toc H in the army".<sup>123</sup>

Although the Toc H movement was ambitious to reform society, it rarely appeared political. In one sense this was a result of its wide appeal to all sections of society, drawing on support from the church establishment, industrial leaders, philanthropists, ex-service men and working men. The occupants of the marks and the members of the branches were drawn from a wide variety of social class. Another reason was Tubby's personal attitude to party politics and class struggle. He had no particular political agenda. One of his biographers

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<sup>120</sup>Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 164, cited in M. Snape, *God and the British Soldier, Christianity and Society in the Modern World* (London, 2005), p. 219.

<sup>121</sup>M. Snape, *God and the British Soldier*, p. 219.

<sup>122</sup> Field Marshal Viscount Plumer had visited Talbot House during the war, and became president of the Toc H Committee in 1920. Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 61.

<sup>123</sup>Lever, *Clayton of Toc H*, p. 166.



says that he had “a political disinterestedness bordering on naiveté”<sup>124</sup> and that he made no worthwhile response to the discussions that followed the General Strike in 1926.

However, Tubby was instrumental in setting up industrial chaplaincies in big corporations in the thirties, particularly with Anglo Persian oil and in the Port of London Authority.<sup>125</sup> Neville Talbot was thought this work valuable and in a letter to Mervyn Haigh, then chaplain to Archbishop Lang, in August 1933 he described the success of these industrial chaplaincies: “The chaplains really belong to the family. It is quite in line with what the chaplains did in the war who really got inside and came to belong to the military units.”<sup>126</sup>

While some former chaplains were busy trying to reform the church in the Life and Liberty movement and contribute to industrial harmony through the Industrial Christian Fellowship, Tubby’s main purpose was to create harmony between different classes and ages through practical work as a memorial to those who were no longer there to do it.

## Conclusion

To what extent then can the work of Toc H and the influence of Tubby’s vision be attributed to his role as chaplain and the experiences of him and his fellow chaplains during the war? How important was the organisation in the post-war life of the church and in society?

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<sup>124</sup>M. Harcourt, *Tubby Clayton*, p. 185.

<sup>125</sup>Letter from Neville Talbot to Mervyn Haigh 14<sup>th</sup> August 1933. Archbishop Lang Papers, Vol.117, f. 176 Lambeth Palace Library.

<sup>126</sup>*Ibid.*

We have seen how Tubby's pre-war career predisposed him to champion those who were oppressed and gave him the ability to inspire men to want to serve God and change society. This was also true of many of the chaplains who served in the Ypres sector, had links with Tubby and were to contribute to Toc H by being full time or voluntary chaplains in the interwar years. The birth of Toc H and its objectives are clearly rooted in the war experience of Tubby. His desire to see a continued remembrance of the dead was combined with a determination to challenge class barriers to continue to build a new sort of society is an example of the change that could be effected out of the "furnace" of war. The Revd J. Derbyshire, preaching in 1927, said: "Toc H is almost unique in its endeavour to make permanent all that was best in the temper of the war, and to apply it to the slow and laborious task of rebuilding."<sup>127</sup> In *Two Men's Work* Tubby said, "Alone among the ex-service clubs of today it [Toc H] had its birth far back in the furnace, before the fire grew cold and now is in free and rapid growth ..... Socially it faces foursquare to all parts of the compass."<sup>128</sup> We have seen how the ethos and values of Talbot House engendered and encouraged these aims and permeated the thinking of the post-war organisation.

Toc H, although an Anglican institution to begin with, became interdenominational with Nonconformist members and chaplains. However, it retained a strong sacramental emphasis with all its major celebrations being preceded by services of Holy Communion. It never became embroiled in the debates about unity and intercommunion, being content to act together but communicate separately. Its whole ethos in worship, was as in action, was to bring men together in a way that made denomination or class irrelevant. B. K.

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<sup>127</sup>J. H. Derbyshire, 'Lift up your hearts' in *The Smoking Furnace*, p. 107.

<sup>128</sup>*The Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 1920, p. 15.

Cunningham in a speech to the Toc H staff conference in 1931 criticised the conferences of “like minded” churchmen as not being of much value as far as the development of fellowship was concerned. He also felt that “undenominationalism is a poor, thin thing.” Toc H was able to provide fellowship in direct relation to the variety of people from different religious backgrounds “In a joint sharing of the spiritual wealth of Toc H.”<sup>129</sup>

Some contemporary opinions give a flavour of how Toc H was esteemed in the interwar years. Edward, Prince of Wales, said in 1921: “Toc H is plainly one of the best things of its kind emerging from the years of sacrifice.”<sup>130</sup> Dick Sheppard said in 1921: “It is one of the very few good things to come out of the war.”<sup>131</sup> In 1932 Harry Blackburne recalled: “The question sometimes asked was ‘has anything good come out of the war?’” His answer was invariably the same. “yes – Toc H”. He continued: “Toc H stood firstly for loyalty to the past, secondly for loyalty to the present and future and thirdly for loyalty to Jesus Christ.”<sup>132</sup>

William Temple wrote in *The Manchester Guardian* in 1924:

Toc H is one of the two good things to come out of the war. I don’t know, beside the League of Nations, what else there is that was good came out of the war. I believe it to be the best and possibly the only permanent expression of the fellowship realised in the war that we have in this country.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>129</sup>*Toc H Journal*, October 1931, Vol. 9, p. 434.

<sup>130</sup>*The Times*, 16<sup>th</sup> December 1921, p. 7.

<sup>131</sup>*The Times*, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1921, p. 8

<sup>132</sup>*The Times*, 27<sup>th</sup> June 1932, p. 14.

<sup>133</sup>*The Manchester Guardian*, 5<sup>th</sup> February 1924, P. 11.

The Chaplain General, A. C. E. Jarvis, in 1928 described Toc H as “An outflow of the incarnate life of Jesus Christ. Through no other conception can I account for its initial work or its subsequent appeal and triumph.”<sup>134</sup>

Toc H was seen by its members as “the redemption of war.”<sup>135</sup> It could be said that Toc H was also unique in that it built upon some good things that had come out of the war as opposed to other post-war initiatives that had their roots in revulsion at the horror of war. Toc H was born in what Tubby called “the furnace of war” but may claim to have become the “living memorial” he wanted. The movement drew its strength from those who remembered the war and wanted to replicate the good in it: comradeship, fellowship and service, but also did its utmost to recreate this fellowship in an outward looking and heterogeneous organisation, in which there was room for all classes and all shades of Christian opinion. Although in its “Ceremonies of Light” and birthday celebrations it stressed remembrance, in its work in its society it stressed the future. The Bishop of Manchester, William Temple, speaking in 1926, summed it up:

Of all the movements that came out of the war, Toc H had the truest vitality, because quite unashamedly it had based itself on a remembrance of fellowship, in endurance and in suffering. Memories, however, tended to grow dim, and unless there was something that perpetually reinforced the vitality of the movement it

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<sup>134</sup> Memorandum from the Chaplain General, 29<sup>th</sup> February 1928, the papers of Archbishop Randall Davidson, Vol. 217, f. 157, Lambeth Palace Library.

<sup>135</sup> J. Derbyshire, ‘Lift up Your Hearts’, in *Smoking Furnace*, p. 107.

could hardly grow stronger year by year. With remembrance, therefore was coupled the reality of service.”<sup>136</sup>

Tubby summed up the ethos of the movement he created. He spoke on the Christian ethos of Toc H at the birthday celebrations in December 1923:

It is clear that for many years to come that the earthquake love which flows in every vein of this now far reaching society sprung not from the living nor even from the dead but from the very heart of Christ in Flanders.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup>*The Church Times*, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1923, p. 711.

<sup>137</sup>*The Times*, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1923, P. 13.

## Chapter Four: Chaplains, Training and Education

The Archbishop of York, Cosmo Gordon Lang,<sup>1</sup> in a visit to the newly opened 'test' ordination school for service candidates at Knutsford in June 1919, was impressed by what he found. He was conscious of the desperate need for more ordinands. His speech was reported in *The Church Times*, and his comments included the opinion that "Unless the services let loose a stream of men to replenish the resources of the church in holy orders", then the church "was done." He said of the prospective ordinands at Knutsford that they were: "Called to the ministry at one of the greatest epochs of the history of the church or the world. They were standing between two worlds, the one gone and the one still to come."<sup>2</sup> The returning chaplains, several of whom were running Knutsford, had, as a result of their war experiences, definite views on the subject and ways of reform.

The role of the Anglican army chaplain came, as we have seen, under intense scrutiny from many quarters during and after the war. Criticised by men and officers of the army, chaplains were not immune to criticism also from the church at home and from their own army chaplain leaders. Many chaplains were introspective and critical of their own performance. Many of the more reform-minded chaplains were thinking deeply about the way in which they had been prepared for ordination and the way in which theological colleges in Britain generally prepared their clergy for peace or war. The reaction to C. R. Benstead's denunciation of padres in *Retreat - A story of 1918*, published in 1930, shows that such a representation or misrepresentation of chaplains was heartily resented and refuted

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<sup>1</sup>Cosmo Gordon Lang, Archbishop of York 1909 -1928, Archbishop of Canterbury 1928-1942, *ODNB*.

<sup>2</sup>*The Church Times*, 20th June 1919, p. 755.

by a wide section of society.<sup>3</sup> The book was criticised by *The Church Times* and *The Guardian*<sup>4</sup> and P. B. “Tubby” Clayton published a robust rebuttal of the portrayal of the main character in *The Daily Telegraph*.<sup>5</sup>

The image of the bluff, spiritually incompetent or socially inept chaplain, however, must have had some credence for contemporaries. As we can see by the examples in Bishop Gwynne’s and Harry Blackburne’s *Army Books*<sup>6</sup>, some chaplains were not cut out for their role. In Blackburne’s *Army Book* one chaplain is described as a “rather disappointing man” and another was found “not suitable-rather a grouser.”<sup>7</sup> Senior chaplains were well aware of the strains chaplains were under and the need to have a system to ease the situation. Divisional army conferences and retreats, the chaplains’ school at St Omer and “chats” with Deputy Chaplain General Gwynne were all part of this system. The difficulties chaplains faced were also to do with the general perception of the clergy in the war and post-war periods. Michael Snape refers to Blackburne’s opinion that “if there was a barrier between chaplains and the other ranks it lay in the fact that the clergy were perceived as remote and aloof figures in civilian life.”<sup>8</sup> Inevitably the previous experience and training of some chaplains had not fitted them for their role and returning chaplains could see that the training of the clergy was a question to be addressed. It was Neville Talbot’s opinion that

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<sup>3</sup>Scrapbook of press clippings kept by Rev. Dr. A. C. E. Jarvis during his time as Chaplain General C. 1930. Section headed: ‘Retreat’ - C. R. Benstead, controversial letters and criticisms, RACHD Archives, Amport House.

<sup>4</sup>Edward Madigan, *Faith under Fire, Anglican Chaplains and the Great War* (New York, 2011), p. 15.

<sup>5</sup>*The Daily Telegraph*, 7<sup>th</sup> February, in 1930 Scrapbook of press clippings kept by Rev. Dr. A. C. E. Jarvis, during his time as Chaplain General C. 1930. Section headed: ‘Retreat’ - C. R. Benstead, controversial letters and criticisms, RACHD Archives, Amport House.

<sup>6</sup> University of Birmingham Special collections Church Missionary Society Archives, XACC/18/Z/1, ‘Army Book’ of L. H. Gwynne.

<sup>7</sup>The war- time papers of The Revd H. Blackburne, MC DSO, RACHD archives, Amport House.

<sup>8</sup>M. F. Snape, *The Royal Army Chaplains Department, Clergy Under Fire* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 239.

“The church as a society did not set herself either to train or examine closely those who offered themselves for her ministry.”<sup>9</sup>

The question of the suitability of the training given to clergy, as with other ideas on church reform and the importance of the social gospel, had been brought into clearer focus by the experiences of chaplains and soldiers in the armed forces. The Fifth Report of the Archbishops’ Committee, on *Christianity and Industrial Problems*, maintained that some of the problems clergy faced were because of their social origins: “They should be ‘outside class’”. To this end the report recommended that: “It is therefore of the first importance that they should possess the pastoral gift of intelligent sympathy to every class in the community the community they are called to serve” and that “clergy should be drawn from every class”, being given “training in economic and social science.”<sup>10</sup> The report of George Bell on questions posed to chaplains by the Bishop of Kensington in 1916 added its voice to demands for better training for clergy: “Let the theological colleges take a definite line on teaching the clergy to lead and let all the candidates be compelled to go.”<sup>11</sup> The Archbishops’ Committees’ report on *The Evangelistic Work of the Church*, commented on the future training of the ministry: “It is essential that no man should enter upon his ministry without specific training in dealing with souls: this will involve at least some knowledge of moral and ascetic theology and of the psychology of conversion and sanctification.”<sup>12</sup>

In a letter to chaplains at the front in 1916, entitled *Ordination after the War*, Archbishop Davidson acknowledged that there were men whose preparation for ordination

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<sup>9</sup>N. Talbot, ‘The Training of the Clergy’, in F. Macnutt (ed.), *The Church in the Furnace* (London, 1917), p. 271.

<sup>10</sup>The Archbishops’ Fifth Committee of Enquiry, *Christianity and Industrial Problems* (London, 1918), p. 103.

<sup>11</sup>The Bishop of Kensington’s Report, *The evidence received from chaplains in the Navy and Army in responses they have given to the following letter* (London, 1917), p. 31.

<sup>12</sup>The Archbishops Third Committee of Enquiry, *The Evangelistic work of the Church* (London, 1918).



was suspended by the war and many more for whom “the war has brought for the first time an earnest desire for ordination.” This would mean that “The church of the future recruits for its ministry men of all kinds of upbringing, circumstances and education.” This he admitted will give rise to “an unusual demand on requirements as to training and examination”. The task would not be easy, but the archbishop clearly saw a role for ex-army chaplains in the training process: “It is to this enterprise I invite you when the war is won.”<sup>13</sup>

J. C. V. Durrel, the Chief Commissioner of the Church Army in France, wrote in *The Church Times* in December 1918 about the prospect of ordination candidates among ex-servicemen:

They will be men with a message. They will have learnt in such a school as an older generation dreamt of, of what the gospel of Christ crucified means to the world of today.<sup>14</sup>

He reported that, under Bishop Gwynne, “Opportunities have been given for an expression of this vocation with the result that 1600 of the B.E.F. have offered themselves as candidates for Holy Orders.” Significantly, Field Marshal Haig had launched an appeal on the 14th November 1919 on behalf of a fund for training ex-soldiers for ministry. Durrel concluded: “They will come to the cure of souls with a firsthand knowledge of every type of man and of the standard of living and thinking which prevail in various classes of society.”<sup>15</sup>

Tubby Clayton had been giving some thought to the matter of post-war recruitment since 1915. He admitted that: “Even before the war the number and quality of the

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<sup>13</sup>The war-time papers of The Revd H. Blackburne, MC DSO, RChD archives, Ampert House.

<sup>14</sup>*The Church Times*, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1918, p. 461.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid*

candidates for orders had caused grave misgivings.” This he blamed on “The miserable penury which the richest church in Christendom was contented to consider adequate for the bulk of its ministers and to the narrow class of society from which they were mostly drawn.”<sup>16</sup> Neville Talbot was certainly considering the role that poor training had in the perception of the professionalism of the chaplains at the front in 1917. He was not too critical of the chaplains’ role in the war as he considered that they had won over the troops from a hostile position to one more favourable by a mixture of “devotion, gallantry” and by “methods certainly less reputable such as ‘holy grocery’”.<sup>17</sup> He held that their experiences in wartime responsible for their development: “Active service has been a liberal education to them.”<sup>18</sup> However, he was critical of the system that produced the chaplains .In his contribution to *The Church in the Furnace*, “The Training of the Clergy”, he said: “Unless the Church of England clergy are better trained in the future than in the past , other measures of church reform will be neutralised.”<sup>19</sup> Kenneth Kirk was more robust about the way Chaplains performed during the war but also said “It should be possible in theological colleges to instil more forcibly the avoidance of those tricks, which, both in church and out of it too often the make the parson unpleasantly conspicuous. Many chaplains have sloughed them off almost miraculously at the front; cannot they discover some way to scotch them at home?”<sup>20</sup>

In order to gauge the extent to which ex-chaplains were involved and successful in changing and developing the training of ordinands in the Anglican Church, it is necessary to look at ordination training in the pre-war years and to assess how prepared Anglican priests

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<sup>16</sup> P. B. Clayton, *Tales of Talbot House, Everyman’s Club in Poperinghe and Ypres 1915-1918* (London, 1919), p. 89.

<sup>17</sup> N. Talbot, ‘The Training of the Clergy’, p. 270

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>20</sup> K. Kirk, ‘When the Priests Come Home’ in F. Macnutt (ed.), *The Church in the Furnace* (London, 1917), p. 422.

were, whether for war or parochial life. As we have seen, the supply and training of the clergy had been actively discussed since the end of the nineteenth century when the recruitment of ordinands was failing to keep pace with industrialisation and population growth. In 1904 the Lower House of Convocation adopted a resolution which recommended that every diocese developed an organisation which would encourage candidates for ordination. The Upper House of Convocation had recommended in 1906 <sup>21</sup>that all clergy should have a degree, but the war resulted in the requirement for degrees to be suspended, initially to 1917, but in practice, indefinitely.

Pre-war ordinands had been ordained after following a variety of training routes. A large number, 57% in 1898, were Oxbridge or Trinity College Dublin graduates who had been ordained straight from university or had spent a little time in a theological college such as Cuddesdon and Wycliffe Hall at Oxford or Westcott House in Cambridge. Of 723 chaplains in Gwynne's *Army Book*, 410 were Oxbridge educated.<sup>22</sup> Another post-graduate option was to take part in a more informal training situation in a small group under the tutelage of a bishop or other senior churchman such as J. C. Vaughn at Doncaster or Samuel Bickersteth at Leeds, both prominent clergy with a reputation for successful training of ordinands. Some ordination candidates had taken Theology degrees at the universities at London and Durham which had emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and had gained a prestigious reputation. Others obtained Theology diplomas at Chichester, St Aidans, and St John's Highbury, including Bishop Gwynne and Bishop Taylor Smith. Other possibilities were to obtain an AKC (Associate of King's College,) from King's College London or an LTh from Durham. Mirfield

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<sup>21</sup>*The Times*, 5<sup>th</sup> May, 1906, p. 13.

<sup>22</sup>Madigan, *Faith Under Fire*, p. 67.

students, after receiving grounding at the College of the Resurrection, usually took a Theology degree at the University of Leeds before completing their education at the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield. Graduates of St David's College, Lampeter, sometimes took a further degree at Oxford or Cambridge, or, after completing a degree at Lampeter, completed their theological and pastoral training at St Michael's College, Aberdare. The Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield and the Society of the Sacred Mission at Kelham stood out not only because of the young age they took students and the length of their training but because they took candidates who would have otherwise not have been able to afford to be ordained. Significantly, for places at Mirfield and Kelham demand far outstripped supply.

Phillip Crick, writing in his essay 'The Soldier's Religion' in *The Church in the Furnace* stressed the need to educate the clergy at all levels if the church was to use the "opportunity" presented by the fact that "men will be inclined to listen to her [the church's] voice during the process of social reconstruction that must inevitably follow the war." He continued: "The clergy must be prepared, devotionally and intellectually."<sup>23</sup> He considered that the training of clergy was inadequate, echoing Neville Talbot's complaint that it was too short and not specialised in Theology, considering that "The minimum qualifications for admission to Holy Orders in our church compare most unfavourably with those required in other Churches, or in other callings, such as the medical profession." He called for a "higher level of specialised training even at the cost of a diminution of numbers."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Philip Crick, 'The Soldier's Religion' in *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 365.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 366.

In 1912 the Central Advisory Council of Training for the Ministry (CACTM) was established, to rationalise the different methods of training. However the process of theological training continued to come in for criticism. The Bishop of Liverpool, F.J. Chavasse commented in the 1901 Church Congress: "There could be no doubt that the present special training of the clergy was often lamentably inadequate. The time is too short and the range of subjects too limited."<sup>25</sup> The charge of non-professionalism was to be one which the chaplains had to face during the war. Neville Talbot was aware of this and stated his opinion that the chaplains were ".....amateurs. It is not enough. Lack of training, rule of thumb, drift and makeshift will not do. They can only lead to second best."<sup>26</sup> Talbot suggested that more time was needed in theological college, together with a longer diaconate and more time given to professional development. He praised the development of one year courses in such colleges as Cuddesdon, but thought they were attempting the impossible: "The normal course is only a year long. It is fatally too short", and added "It is hardly too much to say that the minimum character of training at Theological college create a maximum separation between the clergy and laity. For there is time to contract clerical diseases but not time to get over them."<sup>27</sup> He stressed that the post-war training of ordination candidates would need adequate financing if it was to be successful and that financial provision would be needed for post-ordination training. In B. K. Cunningham's opinion:

The pre war theological college system as judged by the padres it produced did not come well out of the experience of war. The devotional training had been along too

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<sup>25</sup> *The Times*, 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1901, p. 7.

<sup>26</sup> Neville Talbot 'The Training of the Clergy', p. 270.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 277

narrow lines and depended too much on a favourable environment, and when that was no longer given the padre was apt to lose his bearings.<sup>28</sup>

The war had made the supply of ordinands decline as many of those in training had joined up as combatants and prospective candidates had been killed. It was clear to chaplains like Tubby Clayton and Neville Talbot that, as Talbot put it, “The fortunes of the war are going to be vitally bound up with the passing into the ministry of those who have borne arms.”

<sup>29</sup>Talbot was optimistic about the effect on the church of ex service candidates for ordination: “Visions arise of a great band of men arising to reinforce the ranks of the ministry- men of tested and grateful faith, experienced in fellowship, converts to discipline. They might be a bridge over the gulf of misunderstanding which divides clergy from laity.”<sup>30</sup>

### **Knutsford**

The test school at Knutsford was set up as a response to the growing conviction among both the church at home and chaplains at the front that a way must be found to train the rapidly growing number of servicemen who had expressed a desire to be ordained when the war was over. In 1917, the archbishops pledged to pay for the training of ordinands, many of whom would not have been able to afford it in normal circumstances. R. V. Burne<sup>31</sup> said of the scheme:

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<sup>28</sup>J. R. H. Moorman, *B.K Cunningham*, (London, 1947), p. 103.

<sup>29</sup>N.Talbot, ‘The Training of the Clergy’p. 285

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p, 286.

<sup>31</sup>R.H.V. Burne, TCF 1917-1918, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 186

It was the first time that the church, acting as a corporate body, officially provided and financed a scheme of training for its ordination candidates. For the first time it was to show that poverty was not a bar to ordination.<sup>32</sup>

Tubby Clayton had carefully recorded the names of and nurtured the vocations of some of the possible candidates and, from 1916 onwards, George Partridge of the Central Church Fund had been working on the finances. Chaplain J. V. Macmillan assisted Tubby in devising a school to gather those who had expressed an interest and to test their suitability. E. S. Woods, who had been a chaplain at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst during the war, was involved in the interviewing of service candidates coming forward for ordination in 1919. Woods was impressed by the quality of the candidates:

I can't tell you how profoundly I have been touched by many of the men ..... I can't help feeling that the coming into the ministry of many of these splendid fellows is going to be of one of the factors that are going to renovate the old church.<sup>33</sup>

During his time in France, E. S. Woods covered 2,100 miles and interviewed 280 candidates out of the 400 the church accepted for testing.<sup>34</sup>

F. R. Barry was appointed Chief Instructor at the temporary camp set up at Le Touquet, where there was a dearth of educational equipment and students learnt their Greek alphabet by writing the letters in the sand. Twelve of the assistant instructors under Barry were or had been army chaplains. Barry, in his foreword to the *Le Touquet Times*, the magazine of the school camp, explained that "The church has made a big experiment of

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<sup>32</sup>R. H. V. Burne, *Knutsford* (1959), p. ix.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>34</sup>Oliver Tomkins, *Edward Woods* (London, 1957), p. 45.

which there should be a printed record.”<sup>35</sup> The magazine also has a report on the Archbishop’s message on visiting the school on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 1919. The Archbishop is reported as saying: “You are sharers with me in the tremendous responsibilities of these days. Each of you has a tremendous responsibility upon you, not only because of the peculiar opportunities of the calling which you are preparing yourselves to follow, but because of the greatness of the times, because of the deep significance of the foundations which must now be laid on the ruins of broken civilisation.”<sup>31</sup> This spirit of optimism and sense of significance was echoed by Barry. “I firmly believe that we have started here a fellowship which will last all through our lives. Years hence we shall look back on Le Touquet as on the watershed of a great river---- we must always remain a band of brothers.”<sup>36</sup> The magazine contained a spoof letter purporting to be one mislaid by a student, but actually providing a humorous vehicle by which the reader would be able to become acquainted with the routine at the camp:

We are a motley crew, from many divisions and every sort of unit..... I was chosen for a “trial spin”, and landed here just before Christmas with about seventy others in like case. We now number 170..... We get up at about 7.00, earlier on celebration mornings. At 7.30 we are summoned ..... to family prayers in the chapel. The morning is spent in lectures and classes; sometimes we wrestle with the mysteries of Greek grammar..... Sometimes our Science instructor leads us to the

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<sup>35</sup> *Le Touquet Times*, Jan 1919, R. V. H. Burne Collection, Cheshire County Record Office.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*



heights of scientific enquiry. Sometimes the History man gives us a rapid survey of ancient history from Noah to Nebuchadnezzar.<sup>37</sup>

After physical jerks at 12.00, dinner was served and in the afternoon free time was spent in football matches, or walking by the sea or visiting Le Touquet. More lectures after tea were followed by evensong and a simple supper. Before lights out concerts or debates were held and prayers at 9.30. The letter was also possibly intended to encourage more candidates for ordination as a section as its end read: “you would just love this place and all the cheery comradeship of it. Perhaps when you get back from Mesopotamia, you will look us up?” The letter was an alternative and humorous way of explaining and publicising the school and although it was supposed to be from “Bill” to “Dick” it is not hard to see the style of Tubby throughout.<sup>38</sup>

F. W. Foxley Norris, writing in *The Church Times* in 1921 in response to a letter of criticism about Knutsford, explained:

In 1918 there were a large number of candidates from the army and navy, about two thirds of them needed pecuniary help. Most of them had left school long ago and passed no exams since. If a great deal of money was not to be wasted it was essential that we devise some means of finding out whether they were intellectually capable of making good use of the grants. Let it be once and all understood that

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

Knutsford is not in any sense a theological college, neither is it a necessary step in every ordination candidate's training. It supplied and still supplies a want.<sup>39</sup>

Tubby was despatched to find permanent accommodation in England and in March 1919 the school moved to Knutsford Gaol, Cheshire. Barry, who was still under thirty and very aware of his "vast new responsibility", gathered an eclectic and talented staff around him. Several of the leading figures had been army chaplains. Mervyn Haigh returned from service in East Africa to join the staff, Tubby Clayton was, of course, present and they were joined by J. F. Clayton<sup>40</sup>, recently demobilised, and former chaplain, F. M. 'Psycho' Sykes, agreed to join them for a while before returning to his parish. Barry realised that the difficulties of the operation were immense and felt a mixture of apprehension and enthusiasm. Later he recalled: "I shall never forget evensong on the first night when we assembled in the parish church and sang Psalm 126: 'When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, then were we like unto them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with joy.'"<sup>41</sup> In his own memoir *Period of my Life*, Barry remembered his feelings of inadequacy:

So we opened our doors and the first batch came in. Now that we had them, what were we to do with them? We might hope to learn methods as we went along, but we had to be pretty clear in our objectives.<sup>42</sup>

The staff, however, were optimistic. R.V Burne who was in later years to be principal said:

"Under the inspiring leadership of our chief and with the sense of power begotten by

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<sup>39</sup>*The Church Times*, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1921, p. 298.

<sup>40</sup>J. F. Clayton, TCF 1916-1919, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), P. 251.

<sup>41</sup>F. R. Barry, Preface to R. H. V. Burne, *Knutsford*.

<sup>42</sup>F. R. Barry, *Period of My Life*, p. 70.

fellowship we believed that we should be able to make an impact on the Church of England and bring it new life and a more up to date look. The world was at our feet.”<sup>37</sup>

Barry, writing in the first edition of *Ducdame*, the magazine of the test school, was conscious of the roots of the test school as a direct response to the challenges caused by war: “It is into this world, shaken by war from its complacent materialism into a state of uncertainty and self distrust, that school has been launched.”<sup>43</sup> Haigh writing in later years linked the success of the school to the common experience of war shared by all: “All those at Knutsford had been delivered in varying degrees from the same fiery furnace ..... We had been gathered out of the heart of a great tragedy into the heart of a great opportunity.”<sup>44</sup>

Burne was in charge of the curriculum and devised, with the help of Fr Frere of the Community of the Resurrection, a test exam which would be accepted as entrance to university or theological college. Barry kept the Religious instruction firmly under his wing and lectured every morning to the whole school. He remembered “ostensibly it was biblical exposition, with the aim of making the bible come alive for them. But in fact I was telling them everything I knew and everything I wanted them to know about the real meaning of Christianity and its significance for the contemporary world.”<sup>38</sup> Tubby Clayton in his *Plain Tales from Flanders* gave some idea of the practical difficulties involved in using the prison. He described the buildings. “The elephantine humour of its long forgotten and forgiven architect built this stupendous nightmare in the shape of a K, each arm of which contained upon 4 floors about 200 cells.”<sup>39</sup> For a while study in the cells, which had become bedrooms and studies was impossible because the gas lights were situated outside the cells. He

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<sup>43</sup>*Ducdame*, The magazine of the Ordination Test School at Knutsford, Issue one, summer 1919, (D 3917/32).

<sup>44</sup>F.R.Barry, *Mervyn Haigh* (London, 1962) p.67.

recounts however that the practical difficulties were soon overcome by men who had been used to the trenches. A cartoon pinned up on the notice board at one point depicted a man with head in hands in a prison cell with the caption "What has brought him to this?" Beneath it was written "The Church of England".<sup>45</sup>

The school was divided into houses each bearing the name of a prison wing. Tubby's house was B.1V and consisted of members, including a colonel, a naval commander, several junior officers, some NCOs and some riflemen and privates. The strict daily regime, which began at 6.45 a.m. and ended at 9.30 p.m., was leavened by an atmosphere of gaiety and sometimes horseplay, often at the instigation of Tubby or Mervyn Haigh. Plays and operettas were devised and performed. The atmosphere can be deduced from the title of the magazine, *Ducdame* being "A Greek invocation for the calling of fools into a circle."<sup>46</sup> The mixture of academic improvement, riotous enthusiasm, nonjudgmental fellowship and a deep spiritual core to be found at Knutsford can have come as no surprise to those who had spent any time at Talbot house during the war.

On 5<sup>th</sup> December 1919 a letter to the editor of *The Church Times* from a 'Knutsfordian', referred to previous criticism in the paper about Knutsford's reputation for levity and jollity engendered by its magazine *Ducdame*. He responded: "You state that *Ducdame* gives the impression of riotous confusion and that preparation for the priesthood is taken as great jest. This you feel does the school an injustice." He went on "Would you suggest we drop the joyous jesting and adapt funereal seriousness?" He explained that "Just

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<sup>46</sup>*Ducdame*, Issue One, summer 1919.

as the army was a collection of civilians in uniform, so Knutsford is a collection of soldiers in civvies. They are just ordinary beings who feel called to the priesthood.”<sup>47</sup>

The school at Knutsford was not immune to controversy and criticism, not least from the colleges who had been struggling with the financial implications of training men who had not the educational or financial means to go forward for ordination without benefit of the central fund. There were regular advertisements in *The Church Times* from Mirfield and Kelham appealing for funds for their work in training ordinands who were without means. It was realised, however, that Knutsford in due course would provide theological colleges with candidates to be trained. An article in *The Guardian* in April 1920 defended the record and usefulness of the school:

Some of the theological colleges complained that Knutsford was a wasteful system of education, carried on while they themselves remain empty. This was only temporary. These same colleges are now practically full and partly with Knutsford men.<sup>48</sup>

*The Challenge* newspaper also praised Knutsford in May 1920, commenting on its role as a successful pre-university and ordination institution. It reported that so far there were sixty Knutsford students at Oxford or Cambridge, fifteen at Durham, seven at Leeds, thirty five at Manchester, seven at Bristol and twenty at King’s College London. There were Knutsford men at some Welsh universities and at Cheshunt, Salisbury, St John’s Highbury, and Kelham. Six hundred and seventy five men passed through Knutsford out of which 435 were eventually ordained. The report in *The Challenge* commented: “There is no doubt that

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<sup>47</sup>*The Church Times*, 5<sup>th</sup> December 1919, p. 538.

<sup>48</sup>*The Challenge*, May 1920, p. 3

it saved the church from serious disaster, especially in the years 1921-24.”<sup>49</sup> Of the men ordained during this time 40% were ex-service men mostly from Knutsford. *The Guardian* summed up their contribution:

The insistent call of the clergy for increased salaries is accompanied by an equally insistent cry for help from the churches and parishes. Were it not for Knutsford there would be no immediate hope of supplying any but the smallest part of that help.<sup>50</sup>

Barry recalled a reunion of Knutsford men in 1969. In that year there were 450 priests in active work or recently retired who began their training at Knutsford. These figures probably included ex- students of the college at Harwarden, where the college moved in 1926 after several years based in a house near Knutsford. The Knutsford students had gone all over the world, several becoming bishops, including Bishop Leonard Wilson of Birmingham, Bishop Ambrose Reeves of Johannesburg and Bishop George Clarkson of Pontefract.<sup>51</sup> Despite the difficulties that could have arisen when ex servicemen of widely differing backgrounds were placed in the hothouse atmosphere of Knutsford in less than ideal conditions, Barry had felt from the beginning that all would be well:

For the salient fact about life in Knutsford prison was that it was a *Koinonia* experience. With a tragedy shared in common behind them and a common hope and expectancy before them, the pattern of the resurrection, they could hardly avoid being welded into

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<sup>49</sup>*The Guardian* 30<sup>th</sup> April 1920, p. 434.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> F. R. Barry, *Period of my Life* (London, 1970), p. 77.

a close and exhilarating friendship ..... no ground could possibly have been more favourable for building up a dynamic community.”<sup>52</sup>

The initiatives at Le Touquet and Knutsford and the success of the test school bear witness to the desire of the chaplains to build on the more successful aspects of their work during the war and to ensure that the Church of England was provided with clergy who despite their social or educational background would bring their wartime experiences to the work of post-war reconstruction.

### **B. K. Cunningham**

The work of B. K. Cunningham at Westcott House was another strand of the former army chaplains' concern with the training of the clergy, different from, but complementary to, the work at Knutsford. Cunningham had been warden of an intimate and elite theological hostel at Farnham. At the time of the reunion of the Farnham Hostel men in 1913, 105 men had been trained there. Cunningham's biographer, Moorman, said of these years: "His genius for friendship and his faculty of winning the affection and loyalty of his men has resulted in a new kind of community."<sup>53</sup> The war resulted in the closure of the hostel and Cunningham became the much admired and loved leader of the "Chaplains' Bombing School" - the retreat centre for army chaplains at St Omer. Between the school opening in February 1917 until its closing in March 1919, 873 chaplains visited the school and gained spiritual refreshment and intellectual stimulus under Cunningham's benign direction.

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>53</sup>J. H. R. Moorman, *B. K. Cunningham, A Memoir* (London, 1946), p. 48.

At the end of the war, Cunningham was asked to talk to the chaplains who were just about to embark on the Knutsford adventure. He spoke of the “common life” which had been such a feature of Farnham: “Our part is to be careful nurses of the common life, to keep that healthy and strong, and to see that no individual is allowed to stand apart from it.” He continued by emphasising the need to develop priests with their own distinctive personality. “First the making of the man and then the priest must be built on the man.”<sup>54</sup> He reminded the new staff of Knutsford of the influential nature of their task:

Reverence and individuality work from within outward, and when we correct a man it is better, when possible to let it be self correction ..... you will be terrified at the extent to which these boys look to you. You will have tremendous power; be careful not to use it. Influence yes, but power, no.<sup>55</sup>

In 1919 Cunningham was asked to be the principal of Westcott House in Cambridge. Unlike Talbot, he did not value professionalism in the clergy, preferring to concentrate on the individuality of the priest. In his first Embertide letter at Westcott House he wrote:

I am anxious too, that men ordained from this place, to whatever school of thought they belong, should be above all else *real* in character and belief and worship. It is, as those of us who have been chaplains know well, the strong and wholesome demand of this generation.”<sup>56</sup>

He was determined that the college should have no church party bias and made sure that men from all kinds of churchmanship were included among the students. He did not want his

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 96.



students to be exclusive and only mix with like minded men. Moorman commented "To B K 's way of thinking, such men were losing something fundamental to true Anglicanism, and he was determined that while they were at Westcott house, if never afterwards, they should learn to mix with men of a different churchmanship from their own and understand something of the other's point of view."<sup>57</sup> An example of his fair-mindedness on issues of churchmanship was the fact that when vestments were to be introduced into the chapel in 1929, they were to be used three times a week but no one was to know in advance when those times would be.

Cunningham chose H. E. Wynn<sup>58</sup> as his vice principal, an ex-chaplain whom he had got to know in France. As at many of the theological colleges, the candidates after the war contained a large contingent of ex-servicemen who had faced the reality of life and death on the battlefields. However, during the twenties the intake of the college became more varied. These were not the "English gentlemen" who had dressed for dinner at Farnham Castle and, according to Moorman, Cunningham had difficulty adjusting. In his diary in 1924 he wrote:

I rather think our "Knutsford" element is too numerous and out of proportion to public school men come to the end of term with some sense of relief and a deepening feeling that that I am much to blame for not being able to care for those who are not by birth gentlemen.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 100

<sup>58</sup>H. E. Wynn, TCF 1914-1919, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), P. 1512

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

However, he adjusted eventually and was able to work well with the changed conditions. He continued to supervise several generations of ordinands until his retirement in 1943.

### **Christopher Chavasse**

In 1922, Christopher Chavasse was invited to return to his roots and become rector of St Aldates in Oxford. The living was augmented by the overseeing of the Oxford Pastorate, which catered for the needs of evangelical Christian students. The Bishop of Oxford, at Chavasse's institution and induction, spoke of his war record: "Without exaggeration, for gallantry in the field, service and self sacrifice there is none who has shown greater powers of leadership and has given a nobler example of gallantry, endurance and self sacrifice than your new rector."<sup>60</sup>

At the Islington conference<sup>61</sup> on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1926, Chavasse's father Bishop F. J. Chavasse<sup>62</sup> spoke about the vision he had for a new Oxford college where students could be trained for ordination in an evangelical atmosphere and tradition. The donations he received as a result of this speech enabled his tentative plans to go ahead. It was proposed that St Peter's Le Bailey become the college chapel and Christopher Chavasse was invited to become the incumbent, holding it in plurality with St Aldates. Bishop Chavasse died in February 1928 and Chavasse decided to resign from St Aldates and dedicate himself to the

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<sup>60</sup>Selwyn Gummer, *The Chavasse Twins* (London, 1963), p. 86.

<sup>61</sup>Annual Evangelical Conference instigated in 1860 in Islington but taking place in Church House Westminster from 1920.

<sup>62</sup> Francis Chavasse, Evangelical Bishop of Liverpool 1900-1923, *ODNB*.

task of setting up St Peter's Hall, establishing it as a memorial to his father. He put the scheme to the vice chancellor, stating:

Its primary objects are to promote religion and education generally and especially to assist students of limited means, to encourage candidates for Holy Orders and missionary work abroad, and to maintain the principles of the Church of England as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.<sup>63</sup>

The first provisional council of trustees met during the Trinity Term of 1928 and even though the new buildings would not be in place by the Michaelmas Term, Chavasse put an advertisement in the press announcing an entrance exam. Thirteen students were accepted as a result and St Peter's rectory was used as a hostel, the aim being to achieve the status of a permanent private hall as quickly as possible. As a result the arrangements for academic studies of the new students had to be supervised by the censor of non-collegiate students. The decree which was to be presented to Convocation in January was published in the *University Gazette* in December 1928. When, in January 1929, the application for a licence granting private hall status came before the university convocation, the discussion did not proceed as smoothly as hoped. The new college had come under attack from some Anglo-Catholic academics led by Dr. K. E. Kirk, as it was feared that the hall would have too much of an evangelical influence in the Tractarian stronghold of Oxford. However, a vote was taken and the application for a licence to become a university private hall was granted by 260 votes to 60.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Gummer, *The Chavasse Twins*, p. 114.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 116-117.

By the end of its first year St Peter's had forty students with three resident tutors and their master, Chavasse. Chavasse realised that St Peter's would not attract students of high academic ability as it had no scholarships and no fund to provide them. Therefore in order to raise the profile of the college he offered places to students of outstanding sporting ability. As well as making its mark in the sporting life of the university, St Peter's became, as Chavasse had hoped, a focus for evangelical students and ordinands. A group of students meeting at the college, constituting what Gummer called "a wave of religious enthusiasm", organised a meeting at Oxford Town Hall in November 1933 in which "The town hall was packed, whilst half the university listened in complete silence to the personal testimony of five undergraduates, who were prominent leaders at the union or in different branches of sport."<sup>65</sup> Chavasse reported his feelings to the council after this event. He regarded the founding of St Peter's Hall, which went on to become St Peter's College as one of his greatest achievements. "You can do things in Oxford ..... which have results all over the world. And what can be more influential than shaping the lives of young men who are to be the leaders of the future."<sup>66</sup> These were poignant words from a man who had seen his own twin brother and so many other potential leaders of the twentieth century die in the trenches.

### **General developments in ordination training**

Throughout the interwar years former chaplains continued to concern themselves with the next generations of clergy. At a Kelham College's anniversary in London in 1935, C. Salisbury Woodward, by then Bishop of Bristol, made some criticisms of the existing system for training ordinands: "The Bishop felt that the time has come to overhaul her machinery in

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

order to ensure men shall be properly prepared for the work of leading souls.” He thought that the system of selections of ordinands was haphazard, especially in the case of the 40% who did not apply for financial help. In their case the decision was left up to themselves and the heads of theological colleges. Salisbury Woodward advocated the setting up of regional selection boards “Composed of one or two bishops and heads of theological colleges and one or two laymen, before everyone who offers himself for holy orders must appear.” His second point dealt with the actual training, which he considered to be too intellectual and not practical enough. He thought that the training given to an ordinand overlooked the fact that: “His chief work will not be to give reasons for the faith that is in him, or argue with atheists, but to live among simple souls, going about doing good and building up the Kingdom of God.” He advocated also training in Christian psychology and more time to be given to pastoral work: “Training that will equip them for preparing lads for confirmation, for dealing with the spiritual difficulties of for visiting the sick and dying”. He concluded by asking for a longer period of training. This emphasis on pastoral and psychological training, emphasising the practical aspects of relationships with people has an echo of the lessons learned by many of the chaplains from their war time experiences. In a slight contrast, Kenneth Kirk, speaking at the same occasion dwelt on the necessity of ordinands to be trained to take on the ‘Platonists’ in society who thought of the church “as a sort of celestial Rotarian society” and were inclined to take the jolly and pleasant parts of the Christians gospel ignoring the “unpalatable sterner aspects”. Kirk deplored this trend and commended the more “Monastic training centres such as Kelham”, to fight the trend of materialism and “Keep alight the Christian lamp of learning and civilisation.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

In 1929 William Temple chaired an ecumenical conference, the 'Conference on Preparation for the Ministry', at York. The conference received letters from a wide spectrum of clergy from all denominations, including some former chaplains. B. K. Cunningham wrote that although the training in devotional matters in Anglican theological colleges was good, the standard of intellectual and theological ability of the students varied considerably. However, he pointed out that this posed questions and a dilemma:

Of the ten men ordained from this college at Advent, four had taken first class in their respective Triposes. The ten are now working ..... in typical English parishes, and it can hardly be claimed that the honours men appear to function more efficiently than the pass men. Is the system at fault? Ought there to be a differentiation of ministry from the start?<sup>68</sup>

Charles Raven also warned against a complacent attitude: "It is dangerous to suggest that no really radical changes are needed." He considered that: "It is not enough to study Theology in terms of Bible and Creeds and then to get a smattering of popular Science and Sociology: we must somehow relate our Theology to the actual outlook and circumstances of today: and this we have hardly begun to do."<sup>69</sup>

### **Academic Theology**

As some former chaplains were concentrating on the training of ordinands others were making contributions to education by breaking new ground in theological thinking, both in

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<sup>68</sup>Pamphlet, *Conference on the Preparation of the Ministry*, (month unknown), Nottinghamshire Record Office, p. 2. DD 1332/112/4.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1.

doctrinal matters and moral and pastoral issues. Robert Keable, writing about a discussion on religious reading material he had with another chaplain during the war, said:

There is not a shadow of a doubt that the body of religious men who, before the war, thought that religion wanted restating, and the religion of the Church of England, especially, refining, have come into their own. They have found an excuse for articulation and an opportunity such as no reformers of our day have ever had.<sup>70</sup>

Charles Raven had returned from the trenches with his life view altered and some of his theological assumptions challenged. Like Studdert Kennedy he was critical of the concept of the impassibility of God, and in his article, *The Holy Spirit*, written at the front, he emphasised this, basing his argument on Romans 8, v v.18-28, with its language of cosmic struggle. In 1923 his book, *Appolinarianism* earned him a Cambridge DD. This book was well received by the critics as an important contribution to English Theology. Meanwhile he had been developing his ideas on how the church and society needed to change. In an essay called 'The New Reformation', later published in *Anglican Essays*, he set out his ideas both for the post-war world and for the incorporation of the physical sciences into theology. His attitude was one of acceptance of the modern scientific methods of observation, experiment criticism and verification. He was critical of the theology taught at university, commenting: "As if a detailed study of the authorship of Isaiah or the manuscript evidence for a few verses in the gospels ever helped a man to see God or to preach Christ."<sup>71</sup> From 1920-22 he edited *The Challenge*. Dillistone considered this editorship an important aspect of Raven's contribution to the post-war ideological and theological climate of opinion:

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<sup>70</sup>R. Keable, *Standing By: Wartime Reflections in France and Flanders* (London, 1919), p. 42.

<sup>71</sup>F.W.Dillistone *Charles Raven Naturalist, Historian, Theologian*, (London, 1975), p. 114.

Within a short space of time he had brought to the attention of thoughtful church members some of the issues which were to assume increasing importance in the next twenty years. Reunion, Christianity and war, religion and science, the new relationship between the sexes, the ministry of women, planned parenthood, Christianity and Eastern cultures, Christ and modern philosophy.<sup>72</sup>

Raven was responsible for the organisation of the 1926 Church congress at Southport on the theme of *The eternal Spirit*. He had been working on the themes of the relationship of Christian Doctrine to biological and psychological sciences in preparing for giving the Noble lectures at Harvard and the Hulsean lectures at Cambridge and they were combined in his work *The creator Spirit* published in 1927. The preface states:

The purpose of this book is simple, if its scope is ambitious. It is an attempt to show that the work of the Holy Spirit is to be traced in the creative as well as the inspirational energies of The Godhead; that creation, incarnation and inspiration reveal the same eternal values, that biology and psychology bear witness to love rather than to will.<sup>73</sup>

Dillistone considered that Raven's aim was to set forth afresh the splendour of the Divine unity in terms of creation, incarnation and inspiration."<sup>74</sup>

It can be seen that Raven's efforts towards working out his theological position contain in them the fruit of the seeds that had been planted in his evolving the concept of a "New Reformation" based on his experiences during and after the war. Although Raven's was an academic understanding of the problems of the meaning of the war for belief and

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid, P.129.



society, his thoughts are echoed in the writings and actions of other former chaplains as they struggled to apply their experience to life in the inter-war years.

Kenneth Kirk had been senior chaplain of the 66<sup>th</sup> Division. His contribution to *The Church in the Furnace*, 'When the Priests Come Home' contained his views on the relationship which he believed had sprung up between priests and men in the front line and quoted from a soldier's letter in which the man said that long talks in the huts had "done him more good than if you had preached a sermon every day." Kirk commented: "I doubt if in their parish at home the same lads and the same chaplain would have ever got on speaking terms at all."<sup>75</sup> This breaking down of social barriers prompted Kirk to think deeply about the education of the working class. As a result he wrote *The Study of Silent Minds*<sup>76</sup> in which he advocated a more comprehensive education, including the study of great literature, institutions, psychology and logic. His experiences of dealing with men's theological questions at the front by asking another man to answer and explain led him to stress the cooperative nature of learning. "No spiritual activity, however great its triumphs may appear, is on the road to ultimate success unless it is adding to the corporate wealth and friendship of a city of friends"<sup>77</sup> Although this book disappeared from later lists of Kirk's work, his biographer is of the opinion that the book constituted: "a clear exposition of principle which guided his thought and work in later years."<sup>78</sup> It also gives a clear idea of how his views on education had been shaped by his experiences in war.

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<sup>75</sup>K. Kirk, 'When the Priests come Home' in Macnutt (ed.), *Church in Furnace*, p. 414.

<sup>76</sup>K. Kirk, *A Study in Silent Minds, War Studies in Education* (California, 1918).

<sup>77</sup>E. Waldrum Kemp, *The Life and Letters of Kenneth Escott Kirk*(London, 1959), p.46.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

On returning to Oxford to resume his academic career, Kirk turned his attention to the comparatively new field of Moral Theology. He had already spoken in his essay, *When the Priests Come Home*, of the practical application of Moral Theology.

Moral Theology has been much abused yet it is exactly what is needed the science of applying the broad principles of Christianity to particular cases ..... it is pathetic that too often the vicar or curate is the last person in the parish to detect a hypocrite or rebuke an impostor; pathetic, also, that he is the last to recognise excellence in an outward pagan.”<sup>79</sup>

In 1918 he had given lectures to temporary chaplains at Catterick and Ripon army camps and from these lectures wrote his *Some Principles of Moral Theology and their Application* in 1920, followed by *Ignorance, Faith and Conformity* in 1925, and *Conscience and its problems* in 1927. Kirk’s work put Moral Theology on the academic agenda.<sup>80</sup> In 1925, the chair of Pastoral Theology at Oxford University was changed to the Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology and in 1933 Kirk was appointed to the position. In 1937 he was consecrated Bishop of Oxford.

In 1927 *Essays Catholic and Critical* appeared, edited by a former chaplain E. G. Selwyn.<sup>81</sup> Ramsay considered it to be representative of the “newer catholic liberalism” which he thought was written in “conscious succession to *Lux Mundi*.”<sup>82</sup> Since 1920 E. G. Selwyn, as

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<sup>79</sup>Kirk, ‘When the Priests Come Home’, p. 434.

<sup>80</sup>*Some Principles of Moral Theology and their Application* (1920), *Ignorance, Faith and Conformity* (1925), *Conscience and its Problems* (1927).

<sup>81</sup>E.G Selwyn, TCF 1918-1919, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* (1940), P. 1201.

<sup>82</sup>A. M. Ramsay, *From Gore to Temple: The development of Anglican Theology between Lux mundi and the Second World War, 1889-1939*. (London, 1960), p. 102.

editor of *Theology*, had given the new liberalism a platform.<sup>83</sup> Eric Milner White, former wartime chaplain, contributed an essay entitled 'The Spirit and The Church in History'.<sup>84</sup> Edwin Hoskyns' contribution, 'The Christ of the Synoptic Gospels' condemned liberal modernist theology, speaking against negative criticism of the New Testament. Hoskyns had been a chaplain to a Lancashire Territorial regiment during the war, had won a Military Cross and had returned to become a popular and respected lecturer of Theology at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Michael Ramsay, later Archbishop of Canterbury, remembered: "Hoskyns's lectures on the Theology and Ethics of the New Testament were an exciting experience for us who heard them in the 1920s."<sup>85</sup>

Oliver Quick, who had been trained by B. K. Cunningham at Farnham Hostel, had been working with his former principal at the chaplains' school at St Omer during his time as an army Chaplain. His main contributions to analytical theology were *The Christian Sacraments* (1927) and *Doctrines of the Creed* (1937). Ramsay claimed that Quick expounded "A liberal orthodoxy" but was not linked to any particular party within the church.<sup>86</sup> Quick was one of several former chaplains including F. R. Barry and E. G. Selwyn who were appointed to the Archbishops' Commission on the Doctrine of the Church of England in 1921. Its brief was to "Consider the nature and grounds of Christian doctrine with a view to demonstrating the extent of the existing agreement within the Church of England, and with a view to investigating how it is possible to remove or diminish existing differences."<sup>87</sup> As the commission did not report until 1938 it was, as F. R. Barry remembered, a little out of date.

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<sup>83</sup>Roger Lloyd, *The Church of England 1900-1965*, p. 272.

<sup>84</sup>Ramsay, *Gore to Temple* p. 103.

<sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>86</sup>Ramsay, *Gore to Temple*, p. 107.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 156.

However Barry, writing in his memoirs, considered the report: "Still well worth reading, anyone who reads it today he might be surprised to discover how 'liberal' it was and what a width of interpretation it allowed as legitimate in the Church of England."<sup>88</sup>

The discoveries and theories of Sigmund Freud regarding the unconscious and primitive forces controlling minds were being developed in pre-war Austria and Germany and slowly developed into the practice of psychoanalysis. The ideas of Freudian psychoanalysis seemed to go against ideas of free will and rationality, which had implications for the clergy in their spiritual and pastoral work, so it was perhaps inevitable that some clergy would investigate and comment on the use of psychology in the work of the priest. It was also perhaps to be expected that former chaplains should have been prominent in this, given their increased insights into the character of men in the trenches.

Tom Pym was among the first clerics to write on psychology and its impact on practical and pastoral theology. His aim was "to provide something of the nature of and a summary of psychological theory, in so far as it bears on Christian faith and ethics."<sup>89</sup> He recommended that all dioceses had an expert trained in psychological approaches to pastoral work and that all ordinands should receive some training, perhaps some having the opportunity of "a short medical course" and some time spent on studying psychoanalysis.<sup>90</sup>

F. R. Barry entered the field in 1923 with a book entitled *Christianity and Psychology* in which he attempted to survey the most recent thinking on the subject and consider its implications for ministry. In his introduction he asserted: "I am convinced that nothing but

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<sup>88</sup>F.R. Barry, *Period of My Life*, p. 88.

<sup>89</sup>Tom Pym, *Psychology and the Christian life* (London, 1921), p. 8.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, 111.

added strength and depth and range of our religious lives, and even still more in ministerial work, can come from a careful study of psychology.”<sup>91</sup> In the chapter on “instinct” he summarised some of the Freudian theories, and said. “It must be recognised that the instinctive and non rational forces deeply colour and affect the rational.” In Chapter Four, ‘Psychology and the Religious Life’, he explained that “It is in the power of anyone who will read the Gospels eagerly and without prejudice to see how the cardinal teaching of Christianity fits in with the facts which psychology brings to light, and answers the need of the soul.”<sup>92</sup> He considered that: “it goes without saying that to know a little about the way in which our minds work cannot fail to be useful to everyone of us in trying to make the best of our lives and to live in a right relationship with God.”<sup>93</sup> He dealt with the problem of free will in his last chapter, ‘Psychology and the Christian Faith’, and concluded:

It remains true that the whole lesson of psychology warns us that we are not born free. All of us are selves in the making. Freedom is not something to be realised: it is not an axiom, but an achievement. We become free only when our whole selves are caught up into a harmonious controlling purpose ..... and that, in the fullest sense, is love.<sup>94</sup>

Although Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy has not been remembered for his contribution to academic theology, Stuart Bell, in his examination of the theology of Studdert Kennedy, has said that he was “arguably the most original thinker to emerge from the Great War and its immediate aftermath.”<sup>95</sup> Studdert Kennedy was the main advocate of the idea of divine

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<sup>91</sup>F. R. Barry, *Christianity and Psychology* (London, 1923), p. 14.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid, p. 21.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., p. 286.

<sup>95</sup>S. Bell, ‘The Theology of ‘Woodbine Willie’ in Context’ in E. Madigan and M. Snape (eds.), *The Clergy in Khaki: New Perspectives on British Army Chaplaincy in the First World War* (Aldershot, forthcoming), p. 153.

possibility in the inter-war years. Bell is of the opinion that it is strange that this aspect of Studdert Kennedy's reputation has been ignored and that his fame rests on his role as an army chaplain and his work for the I C F. He quotes the obituaries for Studdert Kennedy to prove this point, e.g. the opinion expressed by D. F. Carey: "Studdert Kennedy was the last to make any claim to be a theologian in the exact sense of the word."<sup>96</sup>

We have seen that some former chaplains were prominent in academic theological circles in the post-war years but, as Bell points out, the theological opinions of an army chaplain with "a colourful reputation"<sup>97</sup> were not likely to have achieved prominence in a field dominated by intellectual elite. The publications of Studdert Kennedy in the last year of the war and the first years of peace show clearly that his ideas of a suffering God had developed as a result of his war-time experiences,<sup>98</sup> exemplified in *The Hardest Part* which was written in response to the question asked him by many soldiers 'what is God like? He wrote: "I don't know or love the Almighty potentate ..... my only real God is the suffering Father revealed in the sorrow of Christ."<sup>99</sup>

The idea of a suffering God was one with which other former chaplains engaged, for example, F. R. Barry and Timothy Rees. Barry, in his contribution to *The Church in the Furnace*, 'Faith in the Light of War', writing before the end of the war, said of God: "He is not outside the struggle against evil, He is in it, in the turmoil and the pain, sharing with us in the

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<sup>96</sup> D.F. Carey, 'G. A. Studdert Kennedy- War Padre' in J.K. Mozley (ed.), *G.A. Studdert Kennedy- By His Friends* (London, 1929), p. 149.

<sup>97</sup> Bell, 'The Theology of Woodbine Willie', p.155.

<sup>98</sup> G.A. Studdert Kennedy, *The Hardest Part* (London, 1918); *Rough Rhymes of a Padre* (London, 1918); *More Rough Rhymes of a Padre* (London, 1920); *Peace Rhymes of a Padre* (London, 1920); *The Sorrows of God and Other Poems* (London, 1921).

<sup>99</sup> G. Studdert Kennedy, *The Hardest Part*, (London, 1918), pp. xiii-xiv.

toil and the conflict.”<sup>100</sup> Bell has pointed out that Timothy Rees’s most famous hymn *God is Love, Let Heaven Adore Him* contains the lines:

And when human hearts are breaking  
Under sorrow’s iron rod,  
That same sorrow, that same aching,  
Wrings with pain the heart of God.<sup>101</sup>

Although Studdert Kennedy and his fellow chaplain colleagues’ ideas were not acknowledged in the inter-war years by the mainstream academic theologian elite, Bell makes it clear that they were a forerunner of changes in theology prompted by the sufferings of the second world war which made the idea of divine passibility more pertinent.

### **Education**

Another educational field in which former chaplains were to be found in the interwar years was that of secondary education, particularly in the development of the Woodward Schools. The movement, which promoted the formation of public schools with a distinctly Anglican Christian ethos, was founded by Nathaniel Woodward in 1848 for:

The promoting and extending education in the doctrine and principles of the Church of England ..... by means of colleges and schools, but that no such college or school should be opened without the permission of the bishop of the Diocese.<sup>102</sup>

By 1914 the administration of the schools had been organised into four regional chapters.

The largest of these was the Western Area, the college of Saints Mary and Nicholas. In

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<sup>100</sup> F.R. Barry, ‘Faith in the Light of War’, in Macnutt (ed.), *The Church in the Furnace* (London, 1917)p. 49.

<sup>101</sup> J.L. Rees (ed.), *Sermons and Hymns by Timothy Rees* (London and Oxford, 1946), p. 110.

<sup>102</sup> Extract from founders statutes quoted in *The Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1914, p. 9

charge of this area, including the schools of Hurstpierpoint, Bloxham, Ardingly and Lancing, was the Provost of Lancing. In 1914 there were sixteen schools in different parts of the country. H. K. Southwell became the Provost of Lancing in 1902. He continued this responsibility, interrupted by service as a chaplain until his appointment as Bishop of Lewes in 1920, but returned in 1926 when he retired from this position. His obituary in 1937 stated, "He will chiefly be remembered for his services to the Woodward Schools and for his work as Assistant Chaplain General during the war."<sup>103</sup> On Southwell's death, in 1937, the responsibility of Provost of Lancing was given to Kenneth Kirk, then Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology at Oxford University, soon to be made Bishop of Oxford.<sup>104</sup> In the same year Kirk wrote *The story of the Woodward Schools*. R. C. Freeman, clerk to the Woodward corporation commented that this book was "The only really well written book on that foundation in 100 years"<sup>105</sup> Despite many other commitments, Kirk seemed to have taken this responsibility seriously and visited many of the schools regularly. His biographer, Kemp, said of him: "for the Woodward Corporation, he was above all the right man in the time of need."<sup>106</sup>

E. C. Crosse had left for New Zealand after his service as chaplain and had taken up an appointment as headmaster of Christ's College, Christchurch. He returned in 1934 to become headmaster of a Woodward school, Ardingly, at a time when its numbers were low because of the financial problems of prospective parents caused by the economic depression, and its future was uncertain. He set about restoring its viability. In a history of

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<sup>103</sup> *The Times*, March 11<sup>th</sup> 1937, p. 18.

<sup>104</sup> *The Times*, April 7<sup>th</sup> 1937, p. 18.

<sup>105</sup> E. Waldrum Kemp, *The Life and Letters of Kenneth Escott Kirk*, p.191.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.



the school his achievements are described: "In six and a half years of hard work, Ardingly had been restored to prosperity and was full to overflowing."<sup>107</sup>

Crosse's first step, a bold one under the circumstances, was to lower the fees. This allowed parents to send their boys paying, including travel and books, under £100 a year. He achieved this by cutting down on luxuries and the amount spent on administration. In a report of speech day at Ardingly in June 1934 he was quoted as saying in explanation of the economies: "He did not think that it hurt any boy to black his own boots and wait on himself far more than was often done and generally learn to do with a minimum of personal service."<sup>108</sup> He drew on his experience in New Zealand encouraging students from poorer homes to take up scholarships.

## **Conclusion**

Former chaplains had drawn on their experiences of the way in which they had coped under wartime conditions to inform their concerns and actions in the field of training for ordination. They had been in a prime position to witness occasions on which a chaplain's training had not equipped him for his task. Knutsford had given many men an opportunity of turning their wartime ambitions of entering the church into reality unfettered by financial constraints. The presence of men such as Haigh, Barry and Clayton ensured that the atmosphere reinforced the sense of vocation that the candidates experienced in France, ensuring that it was not lost on their return, and eased the transition of the men with vocations to a peace time career in the church. Chavasse, with St Peter's College at Oxford, expanded the opportunities of a Christian-based university education and Cunningham

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<sup>107</sup>R. Perry, *Ardingly 1848-1946, A History of the School* (London 1951), P. 237.

<sup>108</sup>*The Times*, June 18<sup>th</sup> 1934, P. 9

presided over several generations of ordinands with the wisdom he had shown in running the chaplains' school at St Omer.

The inter-war years saw vital developments in modern theological thinking, especially applying the evidence provided by natural and scientific knowledge to the understanding of contemporary theology. Raven was instrumental in developing incarnational theology, while Barry and Pym sought to apply psychology to the Christian faith. Kirk broke new ground in the fields of moral and pastoral theology while chaplains from different traditions contributed to volumes of essays expounding both new ground in Liberal Catholicism and Liberal Evangelicalism. In their contributions to the training of ordinands they were very significant in ensuring that the Church of England continued to be served by a sufficient number of well trained clergy. In the development of theological scholarship in the inter-war years former chaplains seem to have been very much at the centre and sometimes at the forefront of contemporary developments and it is clear that many of their arguments stem from the intellectual and emotional turmoil they experienced in the trenches.

## **Chapter Five: “Revival not Reformation,” Former Chaplains and Reforms in the Church of England in the Inter–War Years.**

Kenneth Kirk, in his contribution to *The Church in the Furnace*, ‘When the Priests Come Home’ was optimistic that disagreements and church party strife would not have a large part to play in the post-war church:

Even though much remains difficult and uncertain and at cross purposes in the future of the church, we shall have to secure a sense of her divine mission and her supernatural strength to trouble over much. Peevish controversy and ill tempered denunciation will lose much of their present vogue.<sup>1</sup>

This seems an optimistic opinion in view of the controversies and changes which developed in the Anglican Church during the 1920s and 1930s. Many of the chaplains from all fronts in the Great War returned with both a sense of the church’s inadequacy and a desire to reform it. Often their personal theology had been challenged and also their understanding of the way in which the church must relate to its people if it was to go forward. There were internal conflicts regarding the whole order and future of the church’s liturgy and doctrine which caused controversy and change in the 1920s and in which the former chaplains were to be involved. The chaplains who have left the most detailed record of their thoughts, and those whose actions can be traced in contemporary sources, belonged to the evangelical, catholic and liberal wings of the church and so their influence can be seen to be operating throughout the whole church.

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth Kirk, ‘When the Priests come Home’ in F. B. Macnutt (ed.), *The Church in the Furnace* (London, 1917), p. 420.

## The Life and Liberty Movement

On the occasion of Archbishop Randall Davidson's visit to the front in May 1916, he had some detailed and fruitful discussions with the chaplains he met there. At a conference of Fourth Army Chaplains, the topics under discussion were: "The National Mission, ordinands, new plans for services after the war, the nature of the impression made on the men, the sort of service that suits best and so on."<sup>2</sup> We have seen that there was considerable interest in the state of the church and its role in the future among chaplains at the front, and this pressure continued with the ideas expressed to Archbishop Davidson on his next visit in January 1919. Many questions were asked and suggestions made in the discussions that took place at the time of the Archbishop's latter visit, on subjects such as church parties, clergy pensions and grouping of the country parishes, the nature of church government, disestablishment, unity with other denominations and the role of women. A particular issue with Tom Pym was that of advowsons.<sup>3</sup> He was on the extreme wing of the chaplains in France and not many of his ideas were accepted by his fellow chaplains, but he stuck to his principles, not accepting a living or appointment paid for by the church but returning to work post-war as warden of Cambridge House, a Cambridge University settlement in Camberwell. The discussions which took place among the Anglican army chaplains however were in tune with developments on such issues on the home front led by William Temple and Dick Sheppard, who had in 1917 initiated a 'ginger group' to press for more urgent and far reaching reform in the church and was to grow into the Life and Liberty movement. At an inaugural meeting in March 1917 at St Martin -in-the-Fields vicarage they agreed that "the

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<sup>2</sup>M .F. Snape, 'Archbishop Davidson's Visit to the Western Front, May 1916,' in M. Barber, S. Taylor and G. Sewell (eds.), *From the Reformation To The Permissive Society* (Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 480-481.

<sup>3</sup>Advowsons put the disposal of livings in the hands of patrons who could sell this right if they desired.

first thing to press for was self government”, so that “The church, when set free, may really tackle the great problems that perplex men, and be a source to which men can turn for inspiration.”<sup>4</sup>

The problems being highlighted by the chaplains and by the emerging Life and Liberty movement were not new ones. There had been a movement for church reform from the 1890s when the Church Reform League was formed, which called for “self government-by means of reformed houses of Convocation.”<sup>5</sup> As a result of this increasing concern the Representative Church Council was set up.<sup>6</sup> It had little power, but provided a template on which future reforms could be based. Roger Lloyd said of it: “If there had been no Representative Church Council, there would certainly have been no Enabling Act in 1919.”<sup>7</sup>

Discussion about reform had gained the support not only of liberal Catholics and the English Church Union, an Anglo-Catholic body, but also liberal evangelicals such as Guy Rogers and E. S. Woods, both former chaplains. The Life and Liberty Movement was to press for more urgent and far reaching reform. The intentions of the group were stated in their letter to *The Times* on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 1917, describing themselves as “A vigorous forward movement.” The letter continued: “Those who are promoting this movement are convinced that we must win for the church full power to control its own life, even at the cost, if necessary, of disestablishment and of whatever consequences that may possibly involve.”<sup>8</sup> Keith Thompson argues that one of the factors which influenced the creation of this group

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<sup>4</sup>Minutes of a meeting on March 29<sup>th</sup> 1917, the papers of Archbishop William Temple, Vol. 46, f. 23, Lambeth Palace Library.

<sup>5</sup>*Reform of the Church. The proposals of the Church Reform league*, quoted in *The Times*, 10<sup>th</sup> August 1896, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup>The Representative Church Council made up of the two convocations and the two houses of laymen, had met together in Church House for the first time in July 1904, <http://www.churchhouse.org.uk/>.

<sup>7</sup>Roger Lloyd, *The Church of England in the Twentieth Century 1900-1965* (London, 1968), p. 234.

<sup>8</sup>*The Times*, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1917, p. 10.

on the home front was the discovery by the chaplains of the “alienation of the working classes from the church.”<sup>9</sup>

The organisers were aware of the support for change in the church from chaplains at the front and from its inception were encouraging input from chaplains. Harry Blackburne wrote about his summons to speak at the first Life and Liberty conference: “Dick has asked me to say a few words at the Life and Liberty meeting at Queen’s Hall.”<sup>10</sup> He was also asked to be on what Sheppard called his “revolutionary committee”, but sounded a word of caution: “We have to construct as well as destroy: the latter easy enough, but the former mighty hard.”<sup>11</sup> He recounted a meeting that Bishop Gwynne had arranged at the chaplains’ school. Among those present were “Neville and Ted Talbot, Tom Pym, B.K. Cunningham, Sykes, Barry and myself. We had a great talk about Life and Liberty and what we ought to do out here in regard to it.”<sup>12</sup> Bishop Gwynne was of the opinion that these opinions held by chaplains stemmed from positive ideas, not from negativity: “I firmly believe that the discontent to which they gave expression is not a sign of weakness, but on the contrary, a sign that we are willing to face the facts.”<sup>13</sup> William Temple had received a letter from chaplains of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division in France in July 1917, which put forward their fears:

No matter what type of party we belonged to of old, we are all now haunted by the fear that the Home Church cannot see and will not rise up to meet the needs which

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<sup>9</sup>K. Thompson, *Bureaucracy and Church Reform: The Organizational Response of the Church of England to Social Change, 1800-1965* (London, 1970), p. 157.

<sup>10</sup>H. Blackburne, *This Also Happened on the Western Front* (London, 1932), p. 97.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 120.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>13</sup>L. H. Gwynne, in the introduction to *The Church in the Furnace*, p. xi.

have shocked each of us on entering, as ministers of Christ, this huge intermingling of all sorts and conditions of our country men.

They continued expressing concerns that matters would not change: “having seen with our eye the vanity and harmfulness of many old grooves, we are about to return to them.”<sup>14</sup> In December 1917, the council of Life and Liberty issued a letter asking: “could church reforms really wait until peace came?”<sup>15</sup>

It is possible that the speed at which Life and Liberty got off the ground might have been helped by the outburst of reforming opinions from chaplains at the front. Temple, writing to Davidson in February 1917, informed him that:

The group that Dick Sheppard has got around him are people who are really keen on what the church stands for and want to be really keen on the church. But the war and the mission have brought them to boiling point.<sup>16</sup>

Charles Raven, writing in *The Challenge* in November 1918, suggested that the chaplains “refuse, if need be to take any part in organized and traditional religious life unless certain things which are now just topics for debate are carried out.”<sup>17</sup> Neville Talbot, writing to his father, Bishop E. S. Talbot of Winchester, early in 1918, was impatient: “So, before we come

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<sup>14</sup>Letter from the Church of England chaplains of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division to William Temple, July 1917. Papers of Archbishop William Temple, Vol. 46, f.23, Lambeth Palace Library.

<sup>15</sup>A. Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London, 1978), p. 372.

<sup>16</sup>Unpublished letter, Lambeth Palace Library. Temple-Davidson 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 1917. Quoted in Thompson, *Bureaucracy and Church Reform*, p. 159.

<sup>17</sup>*The Challenge*, Nov 29<sup>th</sup> 1918, p. 12.

back, make a fundamental change. Act on the Life and Liberty appeal. I feel that the church is kind of ditched like an old vehicle without wheels. So, put wheels on the bus.”<sup>18</sup>

At the first anniversary of the Life and Liberty movement at Queen’s Hall a resolution was put forward for an Enabling Bill. This was seconded by E. S. Woods. *The Church Times* reported the meeting: “E. S. Woods said that there were a great deal of men who maintained a connection with organised religion. They had, however, given up expecting that the official representative of Christianity would do anything. They demanded reality.”<sup>19</sup> He continued, “The church spoke of itself as an army, but it was more like an ambulance. It should be a sort of expeditionary force of the kingdom of God.”<sup>20</sup> As we have seen, Archbishop Davidson had expressed some exasperation at the impetuosity of the chaplains, implying that they were in fact unwilling to return to the routine of parish life. Archbishop Lang, on a visit to the front in 1917, was pleased in some ways with the opinions of the chaplains: “It is good to see the discontent which prevails with the conventional ways of the church ..... Life and Liberty were moving and the chaplains were outspoken”, but also, like Davidson, he was critical. He thought that they had “Not much sense of proportion ..... and are very ignorant of the position and problems of the church at home”, and that they were “In some danger of adjusting the church to the army rather than of lifting the army to the church.”<sup>21</sup> George Bell commented on the answers received from serving chaplains to a questionnaire in 1916 as part of the Bishop of Kensington’s Report. He seemed aware of the contribution the ideas of the chaplains could have to the post-war church:

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<sup>18</sup>F. H. Brabant, *Neville Stuart Talbot 1879-1943, A Memoir* (London, 1949), p. 71.

<sup>19</sup>*The Church Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> July 1918, p. 43.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>J. G. Lockhart, *Cosmo Gordon Lang* (London, 1949), p. 257.



As men who are face to face with reality they are insistent in that the task of renewal and reconstruction must be taken in hand by the church herself if she is to win a hearing from the nation.<sup>22</sup>

The enthusiasm for church reform and Life and Liberty was not, however, one that was shared by all members of the church establishment. Archbishops Lang and Davidson may have been alarmed at the militancy and impatience of the chaplains at the front, but Bishop Hensley Henson was outspoken in his criticism of the whole movement. In a letter to *The Church Times* he commented on the stress of the Life and Liberty movement on immediate action. He asked:

Is the religious settlement which was slowly hammered into shape in the course of 130 years ..... to be hustled out of existence in a few months, during the desperate distraction of a great war, by a handful of enthusiasts who really have little title beyond their enthusiasm to put to the task? It is unfair to the Church of England. It is outrageously unfair to the English people.<sup>23</sup>

He was also scornful of the role of the chaplains. Writing to Archbishop Davidson in July 17<sup>th</sup> 1917 he referred to the Life and Liberty meeting being addressed by "a returned chaplain in khaki" who assured the audience "That great numbers of officers and men are eagerly longing for the prompt and drastic handling of the Church."<sup>24</sup> On the general theme of the value of the former chaplains to the work of the church, Henson wrote some scathing comments in his New Year letter of 1919 to his diocese of Hereford:

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<sup>22</sup>*The National Mission of Repentance and Hope*, 'A report on the chaplains' replies to the Lord Bishop of Kensington' (London, 1919), p. 21.

<sup>23</sup>*The Church Times*, July 26<sup>th</sup> 1917, cited by Roger Lloyd, *The Church of England*, p. 236.

<sup>24</sup>Thompson, *Bureaucracy and Church Reform*, p. 153.

I have read a great many books by chaplains or groups of chaplains and though some of them have considerable merit. I cannot say that I have found much which seems to assist us in the difficult problems of ecclesiastic reconstruction. Mostly the books have impressed me by their frank ignorance of the ordinary religious condition of the English parishes ..... which is of course explicable enough if one remembers that clergymen were selected for chaplains not on the grounds of knowledge and experience, but because they were young, generous, enthusiastic, adaptable and physically strong.<sup>25</sup>

An article by Clifton Kelway, secretary of the Church Reform League, in *The Church Times* pointed out that these chaplains would soon be returning to their parishes to put their ideas into action:

Although credible prelates like the Bishop of Hereford may resist an attempt on the part of the chaplains to dictate the policy of the church, I should be greatly surprised if those of us who are fighting the Church's battle for a measure of self government do not speedily find ourselves reinforced by thousands of these 'Young, generous, enthusiastic, adaptable and physically strong men', clerical and lay who have already helped save England.<sup>26</sup>

The role of Life and Liberty was underestimated in the opinion of Roger Lloyd. He argued that although the advocates of reform were merely advocating legalising "the long established but voluntary Representative Council,"<sup>27</sup> it was their insistence on the reforms

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<sup>25</sup> *The Times*, 15<sup>th</sup> January 1919, p. 6.

<sup>26</sup> *The Church Times*, July 19<sup>th</sup> 1918, p. 63.

<sup>27</sup> R. Lloyd, *The Church of England*, p. 237.

happening at once that was revolutionary. The refusal of the Life and Liberty members to allow the church hierarchy to wait until after the war was essential to the passing of the Enabling Act, which had become law by the end of 1919 and which gave the church the ability to pass important reforming legislation without having to have each act referred to parliament. A Church Assembly would be set up which had the power to legislate on Church Affairs. Lloyd described the achievement thus: "The Church of England had become a tempered democracy. It had been in fetters and a framework allowing life and liberty to flow had been constructed."<sup>28</sup>

The Enabling Act was passed by the end of 1919 and the Church Assembly met for the first time on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1920. It began its huge task of reorganising the structure and government of the church. Much needed legislation on patronage, clergy pensions and dilapidations, to cite just a few, was now able to be formulated and passed. Councils and conferences regulating diocese, deaneries and parishes. Notably, Parochial Church Councils were set up. With the passing of the Enabling Act and the setting up of the Church Assembly, the Life and Liberty movement set itself new projects including reform of the Prayer Book and supporting moves toward church unity. A meeting of Life and Liberty in July 1923 continued the forward-looking approach by discussing a resolution supporting the development of a revised prayer book. A report in *The Times* described their aims: "They wanted to try a few experiments under authority and an alternative prayer book was the way to do it."<sup>29</sup> In a meeting in October 1926 the chairman, E. S. Woods, spoke of Life and Liberty in the years since the advent of the Church Assembly as having achieved "A steady

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 238.

<sup>29</sup>*The Times*, 3rd July 1923, p. 11.

growth in practical work ..... especially in advising and assisting Parochial Church Councils all over the country in beginning to carry out church reform." At the same meeting, Mervyn Haigh, by now chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, said: "He believed that the Life and Liberty movement was more needed than ever. They had to do much hard thinking and to set before men the great hope and new ideas that lay before them"<sup>30</sup> Percy Dearmer<sup>31</sup> believed that: "The sectarian spirit would pass away and already was much lessened in the nation at large, where the relation between free Anglicans and Free Churchmen were improving every month."<sup>32</sup>

However, major figures in the Life and Liberty movement, such as Dick Sheppard, were soon disillusioned by the result of the Enabling Act, that is, the Church Assembly. Alan Wilkinson considered that Sheppard: "was bitterly disappointed by the actual results of all the enthusiasm and idealism which had gone into the movement."<sup>33</sup> However, he added "The act was a necessary step along the way as the church began to search for the right relationship with an increasingly secular and pluralist society."<sup>34</sup> After William Temple became Bishop of Manchester in 1920 the movement seemed to lose impetus. Alan Wilkinson is of the opinion that the results of the movement were bound to disappoint, as "The issues raised by the war were more theological and ethical than administrative." F. R. Barry, in a pamphlet based on a series of sermons given in Cambridge in 1922, echoed the

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<sup>30</sup>*The Times*, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1926, p. 12

<sup>31</sup>Percy Dearmer was the pre-war incumbent of St Mary's Primrose Hill and wrote the popular *Parson's Hand Book* which outlined his ideas about Anglo Catholic practices in the liturgy, which were nevertheless well inside the rubrics of the Anglican Church. During World War I he served as chaplain to the British Red Cross ambulance unit in Serbia, where his wife died of enteric fever in 1915. In 1916 he worked with the Young Men's Christian Association in France and, in 1916 and 1917, with the Mission of Help in India, Donald Grey, *Percy Dearmer, A Parson's Pilgrimage* (Canterbury 2000), *ODNB*.

<sup>32</sup>*The Times*, 18<sup>th</sup> Oct 1926, p. 11.

<sup>33</sup>Wilkinson, *The Church of England*, p.273.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid*, p. 274.

sense that the administrative reforms of the church had not been enough to revitalise it: “What we need most and need undeniably is liberation of spiritual forces to sweep across our petrified efficiency and awaken it ..... into singing life.”<sup>35</sup> He continued, “We need revival not reformation.”<sup>36</sup>

Despite much evidence that the Life and Liberty movement still considered it had work to do, in December 1926 E. S. Woods announced its dissolution. In doing so he said: “It is not for us to estimate the extent of the service it has been able to render. We believe that though the body dissolve itself the spirit that has animated the movement has so permeated the church that it cannot die.” He continued:

We desire to put on record the happiness of the fellowship with which men and women of widely differing views have worked and prayed together within our movement ..... and have thus promoted, as we hope and believe the cause of unity within the Church of England.<sup>37</sup>

### **The Chaplains’ Fellowship**

On 26<sup>th</sup> July 1918 an article appeared in *The Church Times* about a proposed “Chaplains’ Fellowship.” Its committee included C. S. Woodward, F. B. Macnutt, Guy Rogers, Eric Milner White and E. S. Woods. They were appealing for names and addresses of chaplains who had already returned home: “It has increasingly been felt by many ex temporary Church of England chaplains who have served in the army and navy since the war began that some fellowship be formed in which they may unite to consult and act together when they have

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<sup>35</sup>F. R. Barry, *One Clear Call - An Appeal to the Church of England* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 7.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid, p. 7.

<sup>37</sup>*The Times*, 9<sup>th</sup> December 1926, p. 13.

left the services.”<sup>38</sup> In October another meeting, “long desired”, was organised. Fifty chaplains were present and another 100 had expressed the wish to enrol. Guy Rogers was in the chair. A report in *The Church Times* described the atmosphere: “The fellowship bids to be a very lively body especially when peace reinforces it with the chaplains now serving”. The objects of the fellowship were introduced by F. B. Macnutt and Eric Milner White. The suggested objects were:

1. To conserve and apply the results of our experience on service.
2. To maintain the bond of fellowship which already exists between us.
3. To press for such reforms in the life and work of that church as our common experience has proved to be urgently required.
4. To discover the right lines of immediate action ..... and to follow them without regard to personal cost.

The “lines of action” included support for social reform, but also involved the “cause of self government”, the adaptation of services “to fit our present needs”, the cause of “cooperation and reunion with nonconformists” and the aid of discharged soldiers and sailors. They therefore seem to have corresponded with many of the major preoccupations facing the church in the post-war era.<sup>39</sup>

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 1918 the fellowship met again at St Martin-in-the-Fields. The morning session was devoted to discussions on how to promote church unity and in the afternoon self government for the church was the topic. However, according to the report in *The Church Times* “No hasty or anarchic action was advocated.” Significantly, at this meeting

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<sup>38</sup>*The Church Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> July 1918, p. 63.

<sup>39</sup>*The Church Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> October 1918, p. 259.

it was “regarded as inevitable that the fellowship would as soon as possible make non Church of England chaplains free of its life and comradeship.”<sup>40</sup> In October 1919 *The Church Times* report on a meeting said that the chaplains were already “without any view to religious propaganda” helping the associations of returned soldiers and sailors, implying that evangelising work done would be non denominational. However, the feeling of this was that the fellowship was not to degenerate into a “talking shop.” The report concluded: “If the Padres’ Fellowship finds its corporate voice this defect should be remedied.”<sup>41</sup> *The Church Times* commented that often:

Chaplains and others, dismayed at the apparent indifference of the men to the appeal of the church have evolved schemes for presenting the faith in such a way as to appeal to the ordinary man. Such schemes are often alluring in their simplicity, but a closer examination reveals blemishes.<sup>42</sup>

One of the main preoccupations of the Padres’ Fellowship, and one which was to also cause much controversy in the post-war years, was that of church unity. *The Guardian* reported in May 1920 on the Padres’ Fellowship:

One of its aims is to attempt some constructive contribution to ‘The healing of the divisions in Christendom’, and its members, having had the privilege of being thrown into close touch with the most representative manhood of the empire and with one another in common service, feel that they cannot shirk such a responsibility.

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<sup>40</sup>*The Church Times*, 6<sup>th</sup> December 1918, p. 241.

<sup>41</sup>*The Church Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> October 1919, p. 318.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*

The padres had concluded that if practical steps “approved by authority” were to be taken it would be in the spirit of “friendly personal interchange” enjoyed on active service in the army.<sup>43</sup>

In March 1920 the editorial of *The Church Times* launched an attack on former army chaplains and the Padres’ Fellowship:

The returning army chaplain frequently came back with revolutionary ideas ..... a rebel against what is left of the Sunday proprieties, against the vestiges of clerical dress, against what he called the whole stupid business. He is usually a sacramentalist of some kind but disposed to regard all ministers of religion as ..... holding equally a commission from the Divine King.

The editorial went on to report that members of the fellowship “are in favour of giving liberty to practice within the fellowship, intercommunion in connection with its meetings for worship.” This was criticised as something that went beyond “the advocates of a mere interchange of pulpits.”<sup>44</sup>

Guy Rogers described some of “the new ideas fermenting” among returning chaplains:

To many who had never hesitated to give the Holy Communion under conditions of war to anyone of a good heart who sought for it, it seemed intolerable to return to

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<sup>43</sup>*The Guardian*, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1920, p. 506.

<sup>44</sup>*The Church Times*, 5<sup>th</sup> March 1920, p. 241.



a barbed wire kind of life where Christians could not gather round the one table of their Lord.<sup>45</sup>

Rogers went on to add that the Padres' Fellowship had for a time been in "general sympathy" with the objectives of intercommunion but that B. K. Cunningham "With his immense influence saw to it that sympathy did not go too far". It was Rogers' opinion that the fellowship gradually lost momentum. This meant that "One possible instrument of progress was blunted and finally broken."<sup>46</sup> References to the fellowship are certainly few and far between in the church press after the early 1920s.

### **Church Reunion**

Church Reunion had become a topical and controversial topic by 1920. Charlotte Methuen has explained how the impetus towards unity arose out of a sense that the Paris Peace Conference was flawed and that as bishops West, Woods and Linton Smith put it "It was becoming more and more apparent that any true internationalism must have a spiritual, that is, a Christian foundation".<sup>47</sup> Missionaries and mission churches abroad also added to the pressure, concerned that "Denominational division rooted in the processes of European history could be damaging for the gospel when it was preached in Africa, or India or the East."<sup>48</sup> An example of this had been the attempts of Anglican and Nonconformist churches in East Africa to come to the basis of an agreement on union. Conferences at Kikuyu, in Kenya, in 1911 and then in 1913, had not reached an agreement, but at the conference in

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<sup>45</sup>T.G. Rogers, *A Rebel at Heart* (London, 1956), p. 130.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>47</sup>F. Woods, F. Weston and M. Linton Smith, 'Lambeth and Reunion, An Interpretation of the Mind of the Lambeth Conference of 1920', cited by Charlotte Methuen(ed.), 'Lambeth1920:The Appeal to all Christian People. An Account by G.K.A.Bell and the Redactions of the Appeal in *From the Reformation To The Permissive Society*(Woodbridge, 2010), p. 524.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 524.

1913 an understanding permitting a certain amount of intercommunion in special circumstances had been reached, and the Bishop of Mombassa had celebrated communion at a joint service in the Presbyterian church at Kikuyu. This had resulted in Frank Weston, Bishop of Zanzibar, denouncing this action as heretical. Roger Lloyd commented that this issue “involved the whole Anglican communion in bitter controversy, which only the opening of the First World War stilled”.<sup>49</sup>

At the beginning of 1920 a group of Anglican and Free Church ministers met in Oxford at a nonconformist college, (Mansfield College<sup>50</sup>) to discuss church unity. They produced the “Mansfield Resolution”. The resolution stated:

The denominations to which we severally belong are equally, as corporate groups, within the church of Christ. We believe that that all dealings between them should be conducted on the basis of mutual recognition which is fundamental to any approach towards the realisation of the reunited church for which we long and labour to pray.

It called for “interchange of pulpits”, “mutual admission to the Lord’s Table, subject to authority,” and “acceptance by ministers of authorisation as shall enable them to minister freely in the churches of other denominations.”<sup>51</sup> The resolution was signed, among others by no less than nine former Anglican army chaplains: Harry Blackburne, Pat McCormick, J. V. Macmillan, F. B. Macnutt, Charles Raven, Guy Rogers, Dick Sheppard, E. S. Woods and C. S. Woodward.

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<sup>49</sup>Roger Lloyd, *The Church of England*, p. 434.

<sup>50</sup>Mansfield College was in 1886 the first Non Conformist College to open in Oxford. It achieved full college status in 1995 by Royal Charter.

<sup>51</sup>*The Guardian*, 27<sup>th</sup> February 1920, p. 218.

In April 1920 Neville Talbot weighed into the debate on unity with his book *Thoughts on Unity*. Talbot had been one of the first Anglicans of a high church persuasion to be active in the Student Christian Movement before the war and in his preface acknowledged the impact the ecumenical nature of the movement had had on him. He showed how the war had increased the urgency for worldwide reunion: "If the war has done one thing, it has driven home on the common consciousness the sense that the world is one."<sup>52</sup> A review of the book in *The Guardian* described how Talbot stressed the need for episcopacy: "For all the scattered churches he sees one bond of unity-'episcopacy'",<sup>53</sup> and quoted from the book: "I am sure that those who have repudiated episcopacy will not and cannot return to it as an exclusive channel of grace: will they return to it and accept it as an organ of the unity of the one church of Christ?"<sup>54</sup> Talbot looked at the question of unity from a more global aspect than many of his contemporaries, but saw the role of the Church of England at home and abroad as vital to the progress of unity:

The position of the Church of England is remarkable. It holds within itself two traditions, catholic and evangelical. Its strength lies in the combination of a mutually contributing influence in the practical working of the church and its thought. It contains men who are both priestly and prophetic.<sup>55</sup>

Talbot agreed with the principle of interchange of pulpits, on the basis that "The churches have precious things to give to each other",<sup>56</sup> but thought it would work much better on special occasions rather than as guests in each other's churches. He commented

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<sup>52</sup>N. Talbot, *Thoughts on Unity* (London, 1920), p. 1.

<sup>53</sup>*The Guardian*, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1920, p. 431.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup>Talbot, *Thoughts on Unity*, p. 65.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 113.

on the possibility that the right place to start intercommunion was at ecumenical conferences and when members of different denomination were working together in united service.<sup>57</sup> In the last pages of the book he referred to the war as a factor which had emphasised evil and therefore should give impetus to efforts at unity:

The violence of war seems to have reinforced the idolatry of force ..... all the more therefore do we hope that it shall be given to the church of Christ to be saved from blindness and hardness of heart to know the things which lead to peace.<sup>58</sup>

The interest and expectation that the forthcoming Lambeth Conference engendered can be seen in a letter published in *The Times* by Dick Sheppard on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1920, calling for “Authoritative guidance on what surely are the most urgent problems that now confront the catholic church.” He explained:

We desire now, for a variety of reasons, the chief of which is that what we have learned during the war of the mind of our master, to receive as communicants at the altar in our churches all lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ who are able to say ‘Lord I believe help thou my unbelief’. Further, we desire that those clergy who are of our mind should not be regarded as disloyal to their own church or to their belief on the subject of episcopacy if they accept from time to time, the invitations of Free Church ministers to receive communion in their churches.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., pp. 121-122.

<sup>59</sup>*The Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> June 1920, p. 12.

The opinions of discussion and controversy over reunion both at home and abroad in the 1920s and 1930s need to be seen in the context of the Lambeth Conference of 1920. Unity was a major theme of the conference and the committee discussing it produced the *Appeal to All Christian People* which provided the backdrop to considerations of unity in the following decade. Charlotte Methuen, in her introduction to G. K. Bell's account of the conference, has said of it: "Looking back on the Lambeth Conference of 1920 most participants and observers agreed that the *Appeal to All Christian People* was its most significant result." On the 30<sup>th</sup> July the report of the Committee on Reunion, containing the substance of the *Appeal to all Christian People*, was put to the whole conference and despite Archbishop Lang's worries was accepted wholeheartedly.<sup>60</sup> Although Randall Davidson felt that uncertainty about the necessity for non-Episcopalian ministers to be ordained might cause difficulties in the Anglican Church, he was on the whole satisfied with the results. By 1923 "A whole series of discussions between Anglicans and non-Episcopalian churches all over the world had begun and were proceeding in an atmosphere of cordiality and friendship."<sup>61</sup> However, by the Lambeth Conference of 1930, not much more had been achieved, the main stumbling block being Episcopal and non Episcopal orders.

A letter to *The Church Times* signed in March 1930 by, among others, Raven, Woods, Rogers and Woodward, explained how the original conception of an apostolic succession had developed as a way of promoting doctrinal unity:

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<sup>60</sup>Charlotte Methuen, (ed.), *Lambeth 1920: The Appeal to All Christian People*, p. 524.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 411.

The Anglican view of orders since the Reformation has not been bound in theory or practice to such an idea of validity as denies to those not episcopally [sic] ordained a true ministry of word and sacrament.<sup>62</sup>

This seemed to imply that the writers of the letter were willing to accept non-Episcopal orders as valid. F. R. Barry in *One Clear Call*, written in 1922, asked that Christians put aside their differences in a “New truce of God” in which they were not asked to “Sink our differences, but may be fairly ordered to transcend them, in a common endeavour of discipleship.”<sup>63</sup> E. S. Woods, writing in 1926, shared the concern over the question of ordained ministry: “The negotiations have reached what for the time being seems to be an insuperable barrier in the question of the Christian ministry.”<sup>64</sup> He also considered that one of the problems was a lack of enthusiasm of the “rank and file” of various religious denominations who lack “momentum and drive”. He reached the conclusion that “When the churches really want to unite, questions of faith and order will suddenly cease to be as intractable as they are now.”<sup>65</sup> He also, personally, wanted nothing less than “organic union”.<sup>66</sup>

During the interwar years Guy Rogers became a leading advocate of church unity and intercommunion. These were to be topics on which he was vocal in meetings and in the press during the 1920s and 1930s. In his autobiography, *Rebel at Heart*, he went into some detail on intercommunion:

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<sup>62</sup>*The Church Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> March 1930, p. 15.

<sup>63</sup>Barry, *One Clear Call* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 15.

<sup>64</sup>E. S. Woods, *Getting Ready for Reunion* (Cambridge, 1926), p. 12.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

In relation to the immediate access of all God's people to the Holy Communion, approaching Him through Christ. I have had what I can only call 'a revelation'.

Christians should come together to the Lord's Table as members of one church and no individual church has the right to set up barriers to prevent them. There is one Lord and one Holy Table; not a number of different tables nor a number of Lords of separate churches. To refuse intercommunion is to live in sin. It is not a coping-stone of a church to be organically united a millennium hence, but a stepping stone today to a deeper experience of fellowship and prayer.<sup>67</sup>

Rogers was protected by the controversial Bishop of Birmingham, Ernest Barnes, who had Protestant views on the sacraments and modernist ideas. Rogers described how Barnes was prepared to give him leeway to promote "causes already dear to me, such as intercommunion with free churches, the ministry of the laity, and the application of Christian principles to social and international life."<sup>68</sup>

Rogers believed that one of the main results of the ICF crusade in Birmingham was to show the virtue of churches working together to the people of the city: "The moral effect of a United Church constantly striving to come into being, acting as if it existed wherever and whenever possible, would gradually force the solution of the traditional barriers that which keep us apart."<sup>69</sup> Writing to *The Times* in March 1931 he defended what he called "The great act of witness to the necessity and value of Home Reunion."<sup>70</sup> He had evidently been criticised for allowing intercommunion and stated "When Christian fellowship has reached

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<sup>67</sup>Rogers, *Rebel at Heart*, p. 152.

<sup>68</sup>Rogers, *Rebel at Heart*, p. 211.

<sup>69</sup>T. G. Rogers, *Church and People* (London, 1931), p. 64.

<sup>70</sup>*The Times*, 18<sup>th</sup> March 1931, p. 12.

the stage that desire for sacramental fellowship is insistent and sincere, to refuse to give expression of it seems to us to be a refusal of to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.” In a chapter in *The Church in the Twentieth Century* published in 1936, Rogers summed up his opinions on unity and intercommunion. He reminded his readers that the Lambeth Conference of 1920 had suggested that full intercommunion was inconsistent with the “present will and intention of Christians to perpetuate separately organised churches.”<sup>71</sup> However, a statement of the Lambeth Committee of Anglicans and Free Churchmen, set up after the conference, and on which both the Archbishops sat, had affirmed the conviction that: “non Episcopal ministers are real ministers of Christ’s word and sacraments in the universal church.”<sup>72</sup> Writing in his book *The Church and the People* in 1930, he said that, for himself: “an unbroken succession of bishops neither adds nor diminishes my confidence in my own ministry.” He believed that it was that “the official leaders of the church might reasonably be expected to inaugurate a forward move and to give guidance to pioneers.” He looked forward to the day when there was a world church: “Something larger than Anglicanism and other than Rome, as we know it at the present”.<sup>73</sup>

Another priest who was pushing the boundaries on intercommunion was Dick Sheppard. *The Church Times*, in an editorial criticising Sheppard’s book *The Impatience of a Parson*<sup>74</sup>, said:

If Mr Sheppard has his way he would turn the Church of England into another protestant sect without creeds and apparently without sacraments. He definitely

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<sup>71</sup>Harvey, G. L. H. (ed.), *The Church in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1936), p. 162.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>73</sup>Rogers, *Church and People*, p. 8.

<sup>74</sup>H. R. L. Sheppard, *The Impatience of a Parson: A Plea for the Recovery of Vital Christianity*(London, 1927).



repudiates the doctrine of baptismal regeneration and the doctrine of apostolic succession..... Sheppard pleads that the next Archbishop of Canterbury be a reformer, but it is a destroyer not a reformer that he really demands.<sup>75</sup>

In an interview given in October 1926, reported by *The Church Times*, Sheppard said that St Martin's stood for "diffused rather than sectional Christianity" and that he would not refuse Holy Communion to non-conformists. However, in the same article, on the occasion of him leaving St Martin's, *The Church Times* concluded:

There is nothing of the protestant in Mr Sheppard. That he has disregarded many of the rules and safeguards by which the holy church ..... has hedged around the sacraments is not due to his undervaluing the importance of holy things, but to the intense love of souls that had moved him to bid all and sundry to enter and share the feast.<sup>76</sup>

Charles Raven, also writing a chapter in *The Church in the Twentieth Century* in 1936, considered the problem of the interchange of pulpits. In his chapter 'Intercommunion', he felt that the war had given great opportunities for better interdenominational relationships and was disappointed that the Lambeth Conference had not resulted in any great changes: "The sequel was disappointing. Organised and influential opposition to any advance began to make itself felt."<sup>77</sup> However the sanctioning of the interchange of pulpits and the growing practice of inviting preachers of other denominations had "revealed to congregations how much in common the various churches possess." He recommended the spread of

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<sup>75</sup>*The Church Times*, 21<sup>st</sup> October 1927, p. 296.

<sup>76</sup>*The Church Times*, 1st October 1926, p.357.

<sup>77</sup>Harvey, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, p. 195.

collaboration between various denominations in the field of rapidly changing theological understanding and that this cooperation should “touch the mass of church people.”<sup>78</sup> He supported this argument by commenting: “The divisions between the reformed churches are mostly concerned with matters of little interest to the laity.” He continued “Those who accept the new outlook find themselves drawn into a real unity with those in other churches who share their convictions, a way unaffected by church order or other superficial divergences.”<sup>79</sup>

We have seen how Raven’s theology predisposed him to the concept of church unity. Dillistone commented on his attitude in the twenties and thirties. “No one had been more eager to break down the barriers that divided Christendom. He preached in churches of other communions in Britain and America when such action lacked official approval. He strongly advocated the united communion as a means towards achieving unity.”<sup>80</sup>

In 1927 the World Conference on Faith and Order took place in Lausanne. The Anglican Church sent a delegation which included E. S. Woods. Any resolutions of the conference were not to be considered binding on the Anglican Church. E. S. Woods was one of the thirty five delegates chosen to make up a continuation committee to continue the work of organising for church unity after the conference. The long term results of the conference which inspired what has been called an “ecumenical theological conversation” which according to a speaker at the 2002 World conference on Faith and

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

<sup>79</sup> C. Raven, ‘Intercommunion’ in Harvey (ed.), *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, p. 194.

<sup>80</sup> F. W. Dillistone, *Charles Raven, Naturalist, Historian, Theologian* (London, 1975), p. 276.

Order: “provided building blocks on which the churches have been able to build new relationships.”<sup>81</sup>

In 1932, a conference took place between representatives of the Church of Scotland and the Church of England on unity. The Anglican representatives included the former chaplains E. G. Selwyn, Dean of Winchester, R. G. Parsons, Bishop of Southwark, Oliver Quick and J.W. Hunkin.<sup>82</sup> It was agreed that the statement of the 1920 Lambeth Conference be used as a starting point to their discussions and their aim was to look for common ground in their beliefs. The meeting was reconvened in May 1933, and reports given to the Church of Scotland assembly and to the Archbishop of Canterbury. In May of that year an organisation called “Friends of Reunion” was launched from the headquarters of the ICF. It was “A representative group of leaders of the churches “who had plans for “a popular movement.”<sup>83</sup> The council of members for this new non-denominational group to discuss unity included Selwyn, Quick, Haigh, Woods, Rogers, Raven and Parsons.

## Services

As we have seen in Chapter One, the experiences of trench warfare challenged the chaplains’ ideas and preconceptions of Anglican worship. Priests who insisted on fasting communion at home realised the impracticality of this concept in the changing conditions that obtained at the front.<sup>84</sup> Clergy of a lower church inclination who abhorred the practice of reservation realised its value in administering Holy Communion in difficult and dangerous positions. Those who disapproved of decorations saw the values of some candles and

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<sup>81</sup>Mary Tanner, speaking at 75th Anniversary of Faith & Order, Lausanne, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2002. [www.oikoumene.org/en/who.../faith-and-order/history](http://www.oikoumene.org/en/who.../faith-and-order/history). (Accessed May 2012).

<sup>82</sup>J. W. Hunkin, TCF 1915-1919, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory*(1940), p. 1366.

<sup>83</sup>*The Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> May 1933, p. 20.

<sup>84</sup>H. Blackburne, *This also happened on the Western Front: The Padre’s Story* (London, 1932), p.16.

flowers in brightening up a barn or dug out for a service. There seemed to be a consensus of opinion among Anglican chaplains that Holy Communion was the service that meant most to the troops as they prepared for battle and faced the loss of comrades.<sup>85</sup> Robert Keable commented on the way that controversies over the way services were conducted at home seemed irrelevant at the front:

We have long since largely scrapped the Prayer Book and a great deal of traditional ritual in France. The official parade service has secured at a blow all that Prayer Book reform has been fighting for and no one dreams of sticking to the Athanasian creed..... Kikuyu happens every week in France somewhere..... People in England are prepared to act as if they lived in a century in which people attached importance to these things.<sup>86</sup>

Many chaplains began to concentrate more on voluntary services rather than on the compulsory parade services which were resented by many soldiers. Informal services held in barns and dugouts became an increasing part of a chaplain's work. Eric Milner White described his feelings, "an immense spontaneous amicable anarchy has sprung up and this has been the Church in the Furnace."<sup>87</sup> The difficulty that the chaplains faced in providing suitable and appropriate services at the front was that matins and evensong were the only forms of service well known to the congregations at these informal services. The chaplains condensed the main elements of the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the confession around the singing of hymns, which Milner White found were particularly useful: "Singing

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<sup>85</sup>The Revd Wyteland in Birmingham University, Church Missionary Society Archives, XACC/18/Z/1, Julian Bickersteth, *The Bickersteth Diaries* (London, 1995) p. 82, H. Spooner Papers IWM (1/51/94).

<sup>86</sup>R. Keable, *Standing By: Wartime reflections in France and Flanders* (London, 1919), p. 42.

<sup>87</sup>E. Milner White, 'Worship and Services', in F.B. Macnutt (ed.), *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 175.

has a worth impossible to exaggerate ..... careful watching has convinced me that a hymn mediates to an Englishman another country ..... it is his chosen sacrament of approach to God.”<sup>88</sup>

Some chaplains who had come from industrial parishes were well aware of the limited appeal of the Anglican Church and its services to the majority of the population, but to many the depth of ignorance about God and religion that they found among the officers and men at the front came as a shock. We have seen how the report, *The Army and Religion* thoroughly examined the state of religion and the army and found it wanting. Much of the blame was placed on the failings of organised religion in Britain before the war and some ideas given about the solutions after the war.<sup>89</sup>

In their contributions to *The Church in the Furnace*, Eric Milner White and C. S. Woodward dealt with services, their role at the front and suggestions for improvements post-war. Milner White stressed that the nature of providing services in all types of condition in the war had given chaplains “new ideas and ideals as to the scope and wealth of public devotion.”<sup>90</sup> He warned that changes were inevitable “when those who for three years have almost forgotten the ordered progress of the Prayer Book return to their altars.”<sup>91</sup> He commented on the need to abbreviate and change Matins and Evensong to suit local conditions but stressed that they had remained distinctly faithful to the Church of England template, based on the Confession, the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed. He called for

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<sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>89</sup>D. Cairns (ed.), *The Army and Religion* (London 1919), Chapter Five.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

“more and wider schemes of devotion that shall have a place in the Prayer Book.”<sup>92</sup> On the subject of the funeral service, he commented on the vast variety of the committals performed by different chaplains in difficult circumstances and appealed that these variations and changes should be incorporated. Considering the service of Holy Communion, he reported changes that had evolved in the length and structure of the service, and also talked about the experiments with non-fasting communion and the use of reservation. Significantly, he mentioned the effect this might have on “the controversies of three generations”, but stressed that “they do not cause one breath of controversy at the front.”<sup>93</sup> Throughout his essay, Milner White constantly referred to the circumstances at the front that had led to his conclusion and ended with a plea for forgiveness from the church for times when “in the pitifulness of our impotence as priests we have turned in France to blame her or improve her ways as those that know the spirit better.”<sup>94</sup>

In his essay on *Worship and Services*, C. Salisbury Woodward set out to add the voice of “average men and women”<sup>95</sup> to the debate which had been taking place among “experts” about the services of the church. He made the point “We are far too ready to ignore the uncomfortable fact that of late years churchgoing ..... has steadily declined almost in proportion as services have been multiplied and elaborated.”<sup>96</sup> He made the suggestion that many services were too difficult and complicated to a new church goer, and that the church should provide a variety of services based on the Sunday services of the church. Like Milner White, he criticised the forms of matins and evensong, in particular the

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<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., p. 210.

<sup>95</sup>C. Salisbury Woodward, ‘Worship and Services’, in Macnutt (ed.), *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 215.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

general nature of intercessions and the inaccessibility of the psalms. He recommended the development of a “simpler and more elastic form of service for the time when the men come home.”<sup>97</sup>

One of the results of the National Mission had been the setting up of the Archbishops’ Committees to examine the role of the church in various respects. On the committee looking at worship chaplains were represented by being invited to attach a report to the findings. The chaplains involved were Neville Talbot, F. B. Macnutt and H. Southwell. They had also canvassed the views of a “considerable number of chaplains who have, we believe a right to speak owing to experience.”<sup>98</sup> The views of the chaplains were that there should be changes to the services of the church in the light of their experiences of taking services at the front. They called for “bold and wise experiment.” They explained that they did not want to do away with the Prayer Book services as there were both priests and laymen who “are deeply attached to the Prayer Book.” They echoed the ideas of Milner White in suggesting that the psalms and lessons needed to be modified and the lectionary chosen carefully. Morning and evening prayer, matins and evensong, were described as being like “cakes which are too rich, indigestible and even repellent”,<sup>99</sup> and ideas for extending what was described as “a narrow range of method” were given. The experience and disappointment of the chaplains concerning the relative unpopularity of Holy Communion at the front led them to suggest changes here also: “All chaplains will return from the front anxious to make this service the main, corporate, family, congregational act

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<sup>97</sup>Ibid., p. 223.

<sup>98</sup>Appendix to The Archbishops’ Second Committee of Enquiry, *The Worship of the Church* (London, 1918), p. 33.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

of worship and fellowship.” Other suggestions included the abolition of matins and the regular circulation of prayers and thanksgivings dealing with current affairs by the bishop. More contemporary relevance would, they felt, ameliorate the fact that they had found “striking evidence that many men feel that the prayer book as at present used is remote from common life.”<sup>100</sup>

Writing in 1922 F. R. Barry criticised the fact that many religious people kept outside institutional religion as they could not find adequate expression of their religious needs in the services: “The whole atmosphere is charged with unreality, people pass by and look elsewhere. Much of our worship is so restrained as to be almost a barren formality. It lacks colour and spontaneity; ..... Our worship, like the life of the church tends to be something merely institutional.”<sup>101</sup> Harry Blackburne had much to say in his book *This Also Happened on the Western Front* about how the attitudes of the chaplain to service had to adapt to wartime conditions. After leaving full time chaplaincy and becoming a parish priest in Ashford in Kent, he seemed to have kept up this flexibility and maintained a middle of the road kind of churchmanship. Speaking on the particular problems of country parishes at a meeting of Church Congress in 1927, Blackburne said:

Our object should be to make services helpful to those who come to them and not just satisfactory to ourselves. In the parish of which I am speaking we aim at making our service English and not continental in character. .... We venture to hope that those who love the church Eucharist and value the statement of penance are as well thought of as those who prefer matins and plain

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<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>101</sup> Barry, *One Clear Call*, p. 5.



celebrations of the Holy Communion. Many would call us wishy-washy simply because we aim at being comprehensive. It is because of this that we welcome the new Prayer Book.<sup>102</sup>

Former chaplains had been determined to make a difference to the way that services were taken and saw this as a way to rectify the drift away from church attendance to a more “diffusive Christianity.” Men of varied churchmanship were all agreed that the inclusion of up to date language and experimentation in services were essential to the encouragement of new congregations and the deepening of faith in existing ones. They were to have opinions on the new revised Prayer Book which, as we shall see, raised more issues than simply the wording of the services.

### **Chaplains and the Prayer Book Controversy**

The revision of the liturgy of the Church of England had been on the agenda before the war. The Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline had reported in 1906, recommending changes aiming to accommodate the development of Anglo - Catholic and ritualist practices. The war had both delayed revision and complicated the issues surrounding it. The rise of ritualism, including the formation of the English Church Union in 1860, had resulted in reaction in the form of the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874, which allowed for prosecutions of ritualists in the church courts.<sup>103</sup> The Royal Commission of 1906 had taken into account the desire of many priests to have a more high church approach to the liturgy

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<sup>102</sup> *The Church Times*, 28<sup>th</sup> October 1927, p. 387.

<sup>103</sup> J. Maiden, *National Religion and the Prayer Book Controversy, 1927-1928* (Boydell Press, 2009), p. 4.

but also considered what Maiden has described as the “ritualistic lawlessness that affected the church as the Anglo Catholic movement rose to prominence.”<sup>104</sup>

The war had brought key issues to the foreground, as we have seen how the sacrament was reserved increasingly for practical purposes. In 1919 Archbishop Davidson sanctioned the use of the reserved sacrament for the use of administration to the sick only. Another aspect of the changes which could be attributed to war was the sense of increasing resentment, at the front and at home, of the role of parliament acting as what Maiden called “The lay synod of the church”, resulting in the development of Life and Liberty. This attitude was shared by liberal evangelicals and English Catholics who together made up the “centre–high consensus” who were in the mainstream of Anglican thought in the 1920s and who were epitomised by William Temple.<sup>105</sup>

The aims of Prayer Book revision were to “Widen the latitude of acceptable practices and set in stone the limits of Anglican ritual.”<sup>106</sup> Anglo - Catholicism had been increasing in influence in the years since the Royal Commission and the bishops were concerned that ritualistic practices were taking hold and would be beyond their power to control. However, the proposals came under criticism from the evangelical wing of the church as being too catholic, from the catholic wing for not going far enough in sanctioning ritualist practices , and also from those clergy and laymen who saw the revision as taking the church too far away from the idea of a Protestant church bound to national identity. Maiden described how this issue was bound to be problematic: “This ‘national’ dimension to the revision

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<sup>104</sup>ibid., p. 11.

<sup>105</sup>ibid.

<sup>106</sup>ibid., p. 12.

controversy would feature widely in the rhetoric and polemic of the Protestant campaign against the bishops' book."<sup>107</sup>

Some of the chaplains had a wider view of church services than just the communion service and their proposals dealt with the larger question of making the liturgy of the church accessible to more people. The matter of Prayer Book revision was discussed at the sixth anniversary meeting of Life and Liberty in July 1923. Studdert Kennedy explained that the movement "asked that the prayer book should be Christian in the fullest sense of the word. All their teaching about God would fall on deaf ears, while the Prayer Book contained unchristian ideas". He criticised the services of baptism, marriage and burial of the dead on the grounds that they were unintelligible to ordinary people and considered that "the whole practice of baptism was as rotten as it could be."<sup>108</sup>

Percy Dearmer had been involved in discussions about the nature of the services of the Anglican Church for many years before the war. He had written *The Parson's Handbook* in 1899, which had given advice on the use of vestments, incense and Church furnishings. His biographer considered that *The Parson's Handbook* was Dearmer's attempt to remedy what he saw as the "the lamentable confusion, lawlessness and vulgarity that are conspicuous in the church at this present time."<sup>109</sup> In 1904 he was appointed to the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline.

In 1923 a proposal for a new prayer book to work alongside the 1662 one started to be discussed in Church Assembly. A group of youngish clergy, most of whom had seen war

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>108</sup> *The Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 1923, p.11.

<sup>109</sup> D. Gray, *Percy Dearmer, A Parson's Pilgrimage* (Canterbury, 2000), p. 43.

service, produced an alternative prayer book. Donald Grey stated that the book, called “The Grey Book” (to distinguish it from other alternatives, namely the green and orange books), was mainly the work of F. R. Barry, Percy Dearmer and R. G. Parsons.<sup>110</sup> Barry remembers it as involving also Dick Sheppard, Mervyn Haigh and Leslie Hunter. He described it as “A liberal proposal for a new Prayer Book”.<sup>111</sup> William Temple wrote the foreword and described the compilers as “drawn from all parties of the church.”<sup>112</sup> Barry’s biographer, West, commented that the final version showed “The mark of Russell’s [Barry’s] hand throughout.”<sup>113</sup> West was also of the opinion that it was Barry’s experience of devising suitable services among the troops in Egypt and France during the war that had stimulated his interest in Prayer Book revision. The group concentrated on improving the intelligibility of the lectionary and weeding out archaic expressions. The marriage service was modified with expressions such as “followers of holy and godly matrons” removed along with the requirement of the bride to “obey”.<sup>114</sup> The Baptism service was a cause of concern to the group as they realised that this was the service where non church goers were most likely to come into contact with the liturgy of the church. They proposed replacing “born in sin”, and substituted it for the statement; “It is plain that human nature as we see it ourselves and in the whole race of mankind is not what God our father intends it to be.”<sup>115</sup> Tom Pym, also a member of the Grey Book group, was concerned with the reform of the occasional offices and thought that: “People who never entered a church except for christenings, weddings

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<sup>110</sup>D. Gray, *Earth and Altar: The Evolution of the Parish Communion in the Church of England to 1945*. (Canterbury, 1986), p. 55.

<sup>111</sup>F. R. Barry, *Period of My Life* (London, 1970), p. 86.

<sup>112</sup> William Temple in the foreword to *The Grey Book*, cited by D. Gray, *Earth and Altar*, p. 55.

<sup>113</sup>F. West, *F. R. B.: Portrait of Bishop Russell Barry* (1980), p. 34.

<sup>114</sup>*ibid*, p.35.

<sup>115</sup>*ibid*.

and funerals, should at those important times be met with language which would enter their hearts because it was simple and intelligible to them.”<sup>116</sup>

In the Church Assembly meeting in 1923, R. G. Parsons made a statement about the Grey Book: “those responsible for the Grey Book had endeavoured to construct an order of the liturgy which would conserve things beloved by both Catholics and Evangelicals.”<sup>117</sup> In October 1923 members of the group that supported the Grey Book wrote to *The Times* to publicise it and commend it to “members of the Church of England as a whole.” They went on to describe it as:

Loyal to the doctrines of the Church of England. We consider that in many important particulars a revision of the church services on the lines indicated in it would make them more real and intelligible and so help many people to discover the value of public worship.<sup>118</sup>

This letter was signed, among others, by ex-chaplains Harry Blackburne, B. K. Cunningham, J. V. Macmillan, Charles Raven, Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy and Guy Rogers. Guy Rogers and R. G. Parsons were on the consultative committee of the House of Clergy of the Church Assembly and Parsons was lobbying for the inclusion of the ideas put forward in the Grey Book.

Guy Rogers described how he had started off an “ardent” supporter of the revised Prayer Book, believing that here was “much in our way of thinking about God which was imperfectly expressed in 1662.” He became disenchanted with the proposals when he

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<sup>116</sup>D. Pym, *Tom Pym A Portrait* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 60.

<sup>117</sup>*The Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1923, p.19.

<sup>118</sup>*The Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> October 1923, p. 8.

found out how little change could be expected in the Baptismal service: “The task became more and more wearisome as the years went by and it became evident that the need to keep the balance of doctrine ‘fairly’ as between Catholic and Protestant elements was distorting and disturbing all our business.”<sup>119</sup> The matter that most disturbed Rogers was the perpetual reservation of the sacrament, not for the purpose of communicating the sick, but in an ambury or tabernacle for the purpose of adoration. In the Church Assembly meeting in February 1927 he spoke out against continuous reservation. Although wanting the sacred elements taken to the sick with as little delay as possible he did not want the elements used in worship. Despite having voted in the end for the Deposited Book, he was relieved when it was rejected by Parliament. He remembered that, according to his wife he, “danced about in my underclothes with relief or joy.”<sup>120</sup> When the Church Assembly was making revisions to the deposited book to represent to Parliament in February 1928 he again spoke out against continuous reservation.

When the Revised Prayer Book was ready to go to Parliament, the Grey Book group issued a statement which expressed support for the final version or Deposited Book, especially the alternative order for the Holy Communion service. When the Deposited Prayer Book was rejected by the House of Commons on 18<sup>th</sup> December 1927, F. R. Barry and others, including Tubby Clayton, Pat McCormick, Tom Pym, E. S. Woods and Studdert Kennedy, wrote to *The Times* in indignation: “We are certain that many of those who voted in the majority in the House of Commons on Thursday night will awake to the fact that what they

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<sup>119</sup>Rogers, *Rebel at Heart*, p. 160.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

have achieved is a setback for the cause of true religion.”<sup>121</sup> When the second attempt was being made to get the slightly altered book through Parliament in June 1928 the former chaplains who had supported the Grey Book made an appeal to the readers of *The Times* based strongly on their war- time experience. After having pointed out that the shortage of ordinands was not, as the Home Secretary believed, due to a rise in Anglo Catholicism, but by the fact that 5,000 graves contained the bodies of English ordinands, they went on to dismiss the controversy of reservation, claiming that reservation was carried out naturally on the battle field and never gave offence. The letter made a plea on behalf of “those who fought and fell in the BEF ..... they would say “that active service sifts out ruthlessly the essential issues from the secondary ..... they would urge us not to weaken the Christian cause by perpetuating controversy on matters of secondary importance.”<sup>122</sup>

The Grey Book and its compilers did not appear to have a marked effect on the course of Prayer Book revision, but its existence does shed some light on the effort of former chaplains to make sense of their experiences in the war to inform their ideas on the services of the church in the 1920s. Their concerns about the intelligibility of the services to ordinary people had an echo of their concerns about both the future and the nature of the church in the war era expressed during and just after the war. The revised Prayer Book, despite having been passed by the Church Assembly with a majority was twice defeated in the House of Commons , by a combination of evangelical feeling that it compromised the protestant tradition too much, a high Anglican party feeling that it did not go far enough to condone

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<sup>121</sup>*The Times*, 20<sup>th</sup> December 1927, p. 15.

<sup>122</sup>*The Times*, 13th June 1928, p. 17.

Anglo Catholic practices and a feeling in conservative circles that it compromised the national and established nature of the Church of England.

## **Conclusion**

In their eyes and those of contemporary observers, army chaplains had returned from the war with an expertise in dealing with the problems of encouraging men touched with “diffusive Christianity” into the full life of the church. We have seen that they had clear opinions on the ways in which the church had to change, and that these opinions influenced leaders of change such as William Temple. The objections that chaplains like Tom Pym, Ben O’Rourke and F. R. Barry had to the way in which the Church of England was managed bore fruit in the independence gained by the Enabling Act of 1919, even though this was in some ways a disappointment to them.

The Chaplains’ Fellowship provided a forum for chaplains adjusting to peace time ministry, and their meetings produced some interesting suggestions about the role of the church in society and the role of such a fellowship in attaining these goals. However, under peace time conditions, and possibly hostility from other clergy who could see it as an exclusive organisation, it faded away, with some chaplains who were serious about its principles attaching themselves as chaplains to Toc H and becoming involved in the Industrial Christian Fellowship. The Fellowship’s interdenominational nature, however, and its stress on continuing the freedom of action on unity found in the trenches, gave impetus to the movement for unity in the church.

Historians have differed in their judgement on partisan splits in the Church of England in the interwar years. Callum Brown painted a picture in which “Splits between



evangelicals, ritualists and liberals became severe.”<sup>123</sup> Roger Lloyd sees these arguments dying down after the controversy about the Revised Prayer Book:

The last really discreditable outbreak of such sectarian strife was on the occasions of the debating of the Revised Prayer Book in 1928. It was most violent while it lasted, but it subsided with remarkable speed and it is doubtful whether we shall see any revival of it.<sup>124</sup>

We have seen how the chaplains came from all parties, and how partisan feeling had been lessened by their experiences in war. During the Prayer Book controversy, and with the exception of Chavasse, they managed to focus on the liturgical changes they were advocating and not become too embroiled in controversy of a party nature.

Many of the former chaplains had clear views on the necessity for church unity and did much to encourage this process. This was an aspect of inter-war religious life which was clearly a result of the chaplains' experiences in taking services in wartime, as was their insistence on supporting moves towards unity, both within the Anglican Church and with Non Conformists. In this respect they did become controversial, with men such as Rogers, Talbot, Barry and Sheppard challenging boundaries on intercommunion, preaching and joint services. They would not accept that issues that had seemed simple in the trenches could cause so much division in the years to follow. However, by their words and actions they made a clear contribution to interdenominational unity in this era.

An aspect of the former chaplains' contribution to the church which can be directly attributed to their war service was their reforming attitude towards the services of the church. During the war they had many opportunities to reflect on the relevance of the liturgy

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<sup>123</sup>Brown, *Religion and Society*, p. 50.

<sup>124</sup>Lloyd, *The Church of England*, p. 280.

of the Church of England to men in time of war and had resorted to adapting the service as best they could, using what Milner White called “mangled matins” as an example of this improvisation. We have seen how they contributed to war and post-war reports on services and how they continued to push for reform and experimentation in their individual ministries. Although Donald Grey in his study of the genesis of the family communion movement does not directly attribute it to the attitude of the chaplains to services of Holy Communion, their actions and ideas on the subject clearly formed one of the strands leading to the modern concept of family communion.

## Chapter Six: Controversies in Wider Society

The question of divorce was one which was increasingly on the public agenda in the 1920s. It also became a focus of feminist pressure due to the inequality of the grounds for divorce as applied to men and women. In the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 men were allowed to divorce their wives on grounds of adultery, but wives who wanted a divorce had to cite another reason in addition to adultery. A bill introduced as a private members bill in 1927 to enable a woman to obtain a divorce on the grounds of adultery alone was passed without serious opposition. However, it was still only possible to obtain a divorce by proving adultery and this led to countless cases of people perjuring themselves in court by arranging false proof of adultery in order to expedite a divorce. The law therefore condoned and encouraged immorality. In the Convocation of Canterbury of 1931 the point was made by Dr Donaldson that: "The present position of the state law was practically an encouragement to deception."<sup>1</sup>

The position of the Church of England was that people who had been divorced could not be remarried in church while the former spouse was still alive. The resolution of the Lambeth Conference of 1930 as reported in *The Times* had recommended that: "The marriage of one whose former partner is still living should not be celebrated according to the rights of the church, making no distinction between innocent and guilty parties." However, *The Times* report added: "This year's conference has struck a new note by further suggesting that the church is bound to concern itself with the moral welfare of the guilty in

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<sup>1</sup>*The Times*, 5<sup>th</sup> June 1931, p. 11.

place of merely regarding them as outside the pale.”<sup>2</sup> The resolution also provided for the bishops’ discretion to be used in deciding whether to admit divorced people to communion. Although this was the official line of the Church of England there was controversy, with modernist churchmen like Hastings Rashdall and Bishop E. Barnes of Birmingham calling for a more lenient and understanding approach. Mainstream Anglican policy was, however, firm on the remarriage of divorced people, in many cases forbidding them to receive Holy Communion.

Guy Rogers served on the Archbishops’ Commission on Marriage and Divorce which reported in 1935 and described how, as usual, he signed the minority report along with Bishop Barnes. It argued that in some circumstances divorcees should be admitted to Holy Communion and stated: “Admission to communion is a confirmation of need of moral help, not a certificate of moral excellence.”<sup>3</sup> In his book *The Church and the People*, he wrote at some length about how marriages could be saved by the transforming power of prayer, but also spoke of “marriages which had been ‘deseccrated’ by such events as cruelty, desertion, unfaithfulness and venereal disease.”<sup>4</sup> He stated that: “I have no doubt that there is in extreme cases a necessity for divorce, and I have no feeling of disloyalty to the teaching of Jesus in thinking so.”<sup>5</sup>

He sympathised with the efforts of the Church of England to “maintain the standard of marriage as set by our Lord”, but did not find them “wisely directed”. He stressed that

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<sup>2</sup>*The Times*, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1930, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup>John Barnes, *Ahead of his Time - Bishop Barnes of Birmingham* (London, 1979), p. 327.

<sup>4</sup>T. G. Rogers, *The Church and the People: Problems of Reunion, Sex and Marriage, Women’s Ministry, etc.* (London, 1931), p. 153.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 154.

Jesus was a “saviour and friend of sinners”, rather than a rigid law giver. He asked several questions:

Is a second marriage, while one of the partners is still living, never to be sanctioned by the church, or is it all things considered in some cases the best way out of the catastrophe? Is a first marriage indissoluble from a Christian point of view? If not, can there be a blessing on a second after the dissolution of the first, out of the reservoirs of divine love and mercy and compassion?<sup>6</sup>

Rogers considered that the parish priest had the right to use his discretion, and related how he had “several times celebrated such marriages. Not out of pity or of friendship alone, but because I felt that in doing so I was acting in the spirit of Christ.” He added “some of them are the happiest marriages I know.”<sup>7</sup> Rogers also advocated the admittance of divorced persons to communion: “Presumably the divorced person comes, as we all ought to do, in a spirit of repentance and faith ..... who are we to cut off others from possible sources of blessing?”<sup>8</sup>

F. R. Barry, writing in 1931 in *The Relevance of Christianity*, also condemned the necessity to commit perjury or adultery to end a marriage: “On no grounds can it be held that this situation is morally healthy in any society.”<sup>9</sup> Although acknowledging that marriage should be lifelong and indissoluble he added: “We must recognize that there are bound to be cases where a marriage proves morally unworkable.”<sup>10</sup> He went on:

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 155.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>9</sup>F. R. Barry, *The Relevance of Christianity* (London, 1932), p. 223.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 235.

There yet remain the 'quite exceptional circumstances'. If despite all faith, hope and love, the marriage proves to be morally unendurable or even destructive of spiritual health, or if it has ceased to have any moral content (as through unrepentant infidelity), then I cannot believe the Christian church will really be serving the cause Christian marriage by a rigorist ..... attitude.<sup>11</sup>

He was against excommunication of divorced persons who remarried, denying that they were "living in sin" and said therefore, if the church recognised the remarriage by admitting the parties to communion, there seemed no logical justification for refusing its blessing to the wedding ceremony. He completed his section on the question of divorce by asserting: "The essential interest of the Christian ethic is not to prevent people from getting unmarried but to help them to get married in the best way and to make the most they can out of marriage."<sup>12</sup>

Both Rogers and Barry along with Linton Smith encouraged marriage preparation classes. Rogers stressed that the sense of the vocation of marriage should be emphasised. He acknowledged the need for teaching the "physical facts and social obligations" of marriage but also thought that here was "the constant need for the deepening of the sense of vocation and of presenting marriage as a new field for service, a new state full of the most glorious possibilities into which God is leading his young friends."<sup>13</sup> Another strong advocate of marriage preparation was Tom Pym. He had attacked the absence of such preparation strongly. In August 1931 he gave a paper to the annual meeting of the British Medical

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<sup>11</sup>ibid p. 241.

<sup>13</sup>Rogers, *Church and People*, p. 140.

Association, entitled: "The need of education in questions of sex", and two similar talks to a diocesan synod caused much consternation among the clergy. The bishop of the diocese "felt that the plain outspokenness [of the talk], though it appealed to and helped some, upset others."<sup>14</sup> According to Dora Pym, Tom Pym felt that the consideration of questions about divorce was not useful unless "a picture of a Christian home, which included every feature of marriage plainly expressed, was given by the clergy with the same thoroughness with which candidates were prepared for Confirmation."<sup>15</sup> He wrote a letter to *The Times* in December 1934, urging the "proper education and preparation of people before they are married."<sup>16</sup> He reminded the congregation that four years previously the Lambeth Conference had emphasised this need, and continued:

Yet the clergy of the Anglican church who have to deal with so many at the time of their weddings, have no instruction or training whatever in the material which they should offer as a preparation ..... marriage remains the only sacrament for which people are unprepared."<sup>17</sup> He brought together his ideas on showing a positive slant on preparing for marriage in his book published in 1938, *Sex and Sense*.<sup>18</sup>

Kenneth Kirk, who as we have seen, had become a leading moral theologian, held opposing views on the sanctity of marriage and dissolution of marriage vows. Speaking in a lecture at Oxford in October 1935 he talked of the sanctity of marriage as a vocation:

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<sup>14</sup>D. Pym, *Tom Pym, A Portrait* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 90.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>16</sup>*The Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> December, 1934.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>T.W. Pym, *Sex and Sense* (London, 1938).

If marriage is rightly thought of as a 'vocation to an allegiance', then the vows should hold for the two persons concerned the force of an unconditional promise. Even though the person to which the promise was made proffered to give a release from it this in fact did not in itself constitute a release.<sup>19</sup>

He spoke in the newly revived Church Congress in 1935 on 'The New Morality' and stated that "The new morality was, in the realm of sex, very much like the old immorality under a new disguise." He commented on how psychology had stressed the importance of happiness, leading to "liberty of sex experiment among the unmarried and almost complete liberty of divorce among the married." He went on to explain that:

The short cut to a perfect morality by way of the principle of material happiness is a disastrous one ..... in a very short time were given to the new morality by the whole of society, without any of those restraints which traditional Christian thinking would lay upon it, it would prove ..... a disastrous failure.<sup>20</sup>

Although mainstream Anglican opinion was against divorce it was realised that these beliefs contrasted with the changing morals of British society, and at the Canterbury Convocation in 1936 a resolution accepted the fact that: "the Christian standard may not always be possible in a state that comprises all sorts of people, including many who do not accept the Christian way", and that therefore the Convocation should support some demands in the change of the divorce laws.<sup>21</sup> According to Machin, many leading Anglicans were prepared to go further and consider altering the church's teaching on marriage.

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<sup>19</sup>*The Church Times*, 20<sup>th</sup> September 1935, p. 309.

<sup>20</sup>*The Church Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> October 1935, p. 382.

<sup>21</sup>Canterbury Convocation 1936, (CCC i, 2, pp. 243, 246-7), cited by G. I. T. Machin in *Church and Social issues in Twentieth Century Britain*, p. 101.



Speaking in this debate R. G. Parsons, former chaplain and Bishop of Southwark from 1936, spoke in support of the motion that “It is the sacred responsibility laid upon the Church of England to enact such discipline of its own in regard to marriage as may time to time appear most salutary and efficacious.”<sup>22</sup> Parsons’ opinion was that “there were circumstances in which its [marriage’s] dissolution might be recognised by the church at any rate to the extent of admitting, if the church thought fit, to its communion people who had contracted a second union during the lifetime of the former partner.”

The question of contraception was another aspect where the traditional teaching of the church was at variance with developments in society. Throughout the inter-war years the question was controversial in society generally, with pioneering advocates of contraception like Marie Stopes often in conflict with those who worried about the prospect of a population fall and those who advocated the encouragement of smaller families in the working class and larger families in the middle and upper classes. Eugenics enthusiasts looked to birth control to stem what Overy calls “the potential biological crisis” which “was a central element in the morbid culture of the post war years.”<sup>23</sup> Eugenics extremists discussed solutions including compulsory sterilisation of the unfit. The Dean of St Paul’s, Ralph Inge, speaking to the Royal Institution in May 1931, wanted an ideal British population of only twenty million, all “certificated of bodily and mental fitness.”<sup>24</sup>

The main-stream Anglican opinion was again quite clear, that sexual intercourse without the intention to procreate was contrary to the will of God. P. T. R. Kirk writing in

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<sup>22</sup>G. I. T. Machin, ‘Marriage and the Churches in the 1930s: Royal Abdication and Divorce Reform 1936-37’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 42 (1991), p. 70.

<sup>23</sup>R. Overy, *The Morbid Age: Britain and the Crisis of Civilisation 1919–1939* (London, 2009), p. 100.

<sup>24</sup>Speech reported in *Nature*, 6<sup>th</sup> June 1931, cited by Overy, *Ibid.*, p. 106.

1931, although admitting to the fact that family limitation would give children more chance to have a healthy upbringing, advocated primarily abstinence as a way to achieve this, considering that after a while, in a marriage, “the comradeship of man and wife has become so fine an experience that love can continue to grow without further sexual intercourse.”<sup>25</sup> However, in 1930 the Lambeth Conference for the first time admitted to some exceptions. *The Times* reported in its round up of the conference news: “The outstanding fact remains that for the first time the practice of birth control in certain circumstances is allowed by the Lambeth Conference.”<sup>26</sup> F. R. Barry argued that undue limitation of families involved “grave moral symptoms,” being especially scathing of motives to do with “needlessly high” standards of living and “social snobbery”. His opinion was that “From the Christian standpoint a human baby is of more value than a Baby Austin.” However he also considered that “The procreation of children is bearable only as the crown and delight of joy” and asked “shall we fill the world with unwanted babies?”<sup>27</sup> He was sympathetic to the needs of the modern young mothers not to be trapped into years of child bearing and suggested that if a woman’s full-time child bearing and nurturing years could be limited to ten years, then “it seems therefore to be undesirable that a woman who has her own profession should abandon it on marriage.”<sup>28</sup> He thought that abstention was not necessarily the answer, causing tension and unhappiness, and that in the right circumstances “to brand the recourse to contraceptives as morally reprehensible ..... might seem to betoken a lack of moral realism.” In his opinion the counter arguments to contraception were: “A rationalisation of repugnance ..... rather than morally impressive reasons”.

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<sup>25</sup>P. T. R. Kirk, *The Movement Christwards* (London, 1931), p. 72.

<sup>26</sup>*The Times*, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1930, p. 13.

<sup>27</sup>Barry, *Relevance of Christianity*, p. 227.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 228.

In his advocacy of contraception as in some cases morally right, rather than an unfortunate necessity, Barry went beyond the contemporary thinking on contraception as expressed in Convocation and the church press.

A *Church Times* report in January 1935 criticised the decision of Birmingham Council to open a birth control clinic. It praised the efforts of some local Anglican and Roman Catholic clergy to prevent this, and then added, "The Bishop of Birmingham supported by Canon Guy Rogers had previously been in the field, urging the establishment of a clinic."<sup>29</sup> In May 1935, *The Church Times* contained a long article by the Bishop of Ely condemning the use of contraception and forecasting disastrous population fall.<sup>30</sup> It is clear that former chaplains were prepared to speak out on this controversial matter, not always in agreement with each other but showing the interest of the church on a moral issue, debates on which had reached their climax in the inter-war years.

### **Religious Broadcasting**

The British Broadcasting Company was founded in 1922, and was given its royal charter, becoming the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 1926, under the chairmanship of John Reith. Its remit then as now was public service broadcasting, with an obligation to educate, inform and entertain. The corporation had a monopoly and decided what was fit for the British public to hear. Although Reith was a strong Scottish Presbyterian and wanted the BBC to be involved in religious broadcasting it was not until the middle 1920s that this began. Catriona Noonan has explained the slow start:

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<sup>29</sup>*The Church Times*, 18<sup>th</sup> January 1935, p. 67.

<sup>30</sup>*The Church Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1935, p. 531.

Despite Reith's own conviction, religion was not initially seen as key to the BBC's output. When religion was acknowledged, it was seen as primarily recreational with little concerted effort made to formalise output. Slowly, teaching became part of the objective, with conversion and evangelism tied to this objective. This reticence can be attributed to the fact that few believed the BBC could bolster the place of Christianity in British culture. Furthermore, the recruitment and development needed to begin such a process of spiritual engagement was beyond the resources of the corporation at the time. Therefore, it was not until the mid 1920s that the strategic place of religion in radio was re-examined.<sup>31</sup>

Radio audiences grew rapidly, reaching over 9 million by 1939.<sup>32</sup> It was not a medium the churches could afford to ignore.

The broadcasting of religious services was controversial on several counts. The churches were afraid that it would lead to loss of congregations. They also questioned the suitability of radio as a secondary medium, where people could move about and perform other tasks. There was concern that an unsuitable atmosphere would prevail in the home of the listeners when the programme was being broadcast:

Therefore, the churches had to accept that the benefit and support to religious adherents would be greatly outweighed by the occasions a broadcast was heard in a public house or when someone kept their hat on!<sup>33</sup>

The first religious broadcast was transmitted in 1922 from the aerial works at Blackheath, to a radius of 100 miles. Alexander Fleming, of St Columba's, Port Street,

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<sup>31</sup>Catriona Noonan, "The Production of Religious Broadcasting: The Case of the BBC", Glasgow University PhD thesis (2008), p. 55.

<sup>32</sup>A. Briggs, *The history of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom, Vol. 1* (London, 1961), p. 82.

<sup>33</sup>Noonan, *Religious Broadcasting*, p. 56.

initiated the Sunday evening religious address which took place in the interval of the Sunday evening symphony concert.<sup>34</sup> Reith thought that former army padres were suited to this platform, and well known figures such as P. B. Clayton and Studdert Kennedy were featured in these concert interval addresses. K. M. Wolfe, in his study of religious broadcasting, commented that: "Many speakers had a reputation from the First World War ..... they had been tested amid bombs."<sup>35</sup>

An advisory committee, "The Sunday Committee" was set up in May 1923 under Cyril Foster Garbett. C. S. Woodward was included and Dick Sheppard was asked by Sir John Reith to be on this committee. After returning to St Martin-in-the-Fields following a spell as a chaplain to an Australian hospital on the Western Front, Sheppard had built up the church to become a popular and controversial symbol of Christianity in London. It is not surprising that he should have been one of the first priests to welcome and encourage the new medium. According to his biographer, Ellis Roberts, Sheppard was not convinced at first of the advisability of allowing the evening service from St Martin's to be broadcast. He wrote to both St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey to suggest that the service be broadcast from one of these well known centres of worship. R. J. Northcott,<sup>36</sup> sometime curate of St Martin's, remembered that this suggestion was "treated as being almost blasphemous."<sup>37</sup> When St Paul's and Westminster Abbey refused he went ahead and the first broadcast service from a place of worship was broadcast on the feast of the Epiphany 1924. Ellis

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<sup>34</sup>K. M. Wolfe, *The Churches and the British Broadcasting Corporation 1922-1956: The Politics of Broadcast Religion* (London, 1984), p. 5.

<sup>35</sup>Wolfe, *The Churches and the BBC*, p. 7.

<sup>36</sup>R. J. Northcott, TCF 1917-1920, curate of St Martin-in-the - Fields 1936-1938, *Crockford's Clerical Directory*(1940), p. 990.

<sup>37</sup>R. J. Northcott, *Dick Sheppard and St Martin's* (London, 1937), p. 6.

Roberts commented on the appropriateness of this first service being taken by Sheppard from St Martin's:

Nothing could have been more appropriate than St Martin's should have been the first Church and Dick Sheppard the first priest to use the radio for religion. St Martin's under his leadership stood for service to sick in mind and body ..... a flaming desire to leave the well fed sheep in the fold and go out after the lost and strayed.<sup>38</sup>

Part of Sheppard's motivation lay in the concern over what may have filled the airways instead. He wrote in *The Guardian*:

I admit I took the plunge with great trepidation, but if we had not started it the evening might have just been given over to secular entertainments and it seemed just one of those things ..... that the church could claim and use to the utmost. I wonder how far it is realised that the gospel is brought to the homes of millions who would otherwise not hear it, and that it is an unmixed blessing to thousands who are bedridden or invalids, and to whom the sound of public prayers and the hymns they remember and love are looked forward to with joy from week to week.<sup>39</sup>

Another biographer of Sheppard, Scott, described how, "On the last Sunday of 1923, Dick kept his congregation behind after the evening service and rehearsed them."<sup>40</sup>

Technically, the first service went well, Reith commenting: "From what came to our room

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<sup>38</sup>R. Ellis Roberts, *H. R. L. Sheppard, Life and Letters* (London, 1942), p. 112.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>40</sup>C. Scott, *Dick Sheppard, A Biography* (London 1979), p. 130.

that night, no one would have realised that this was a first and rather startling experiment.”<sup>41</sup> The first words announcing the service were spoken by Dick Sheppard:

It is our singular privilege tonight and in future on the second Sunday in each month to be allowed to say prayers, to sing hymns and to preach Christ in the presence of any of you who are willing to listen in. We count it a great happiness.<sup>42</sup>

Wolfe is of the opinion that the 6<sup>th</sup> January 1924, the date of the first service from St Martin’s marked “the real beginning of religious broadcasting.”<sup>43</sup> The service at 8.15 pm from St Martin’s became a monthly occasion. At the first regular service Sheppard explained his policy of “Arranging the service so that it was acceptable to Free Churchmen as much as Anglicans, and also possible to be understood by those who did not go to church.”<sup>44</sup> Nonconformist ministers were asked to preach on a regular basis to give an ecumenical dimension to the broadcasts.<sup>45</sup> After the first broadcast Sheppard received a thousand letters,<sup>46</sup> which gave some idea of the varied places and situations in which the broadcast had been received. A woman in Compton fixed a loudspeaker outside her house so that the rest of the village could hear it, and men in Lewisham joined in with the hymns in the pub and then stayed to discuss the sermon.<sup>47</sup> Pat McCormick explained the technique of broadcasting: “You must never read or preach your broadcast sermon, but just talk it, visualising, if you can, the fireplaces with listeners sitting round in twos or threes, although you may have two thousand people before you in church.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>42</sup>A. H. Grey, F. A. Iremonger et al., *St Martin-in-the-Fields calling, Broadcast Addresses* (London, 1932), p. 14.

<sup>43</sup>Wolfe, *The Churches and the BBC*, p. 9.

<sup>44</sup>Northcott, *Dick Sheppard*, p. ix.

<sup>45</sup>Ellis Roberts, *H. R. L. Sheppard*, p. 113.

<sup>46</sup>Scott, *Dick Sheppard*, p. 130.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>48</sup>*St Martin in-the Fields calling*, p. 9.

In the *BBC Handbook* in 1929, Sheppard explained further the motivation behind religious broadcasting:

A lack of interest in churches and church affairs may be perfectly compatible with a genuine and sincere enthusiasm for Christianity: It is hoped that religious broadcasting has an opportunity which probably none of us yet realises.<sup>49</sup>

However, the enthusiasm shown by listeners was not matched by the church and clergy as a whole. Another early broadcaster, W. H. Elliot, considered that it was due to the persistence of John Reith that religious broadcasting got off the ground.

The church was dead against it. A resolution came before Convocation calling for its prohibition. Dick and I tucked our toes in and said that whatever the church might say or do we would go on. However, it did not come to that, mostly, I believe, because Reith was such a rock that nobody could move him.<sup>50</sup>

The initial doubts and arguments are shown in two letters to *The Times* in April 1926. There is a letter of complaint from the Revd R. C. Griffith about a service broadcast from Norwich Cathedral taking place on Sunday evening at normal service time: "A Cathedral nave service when broadcast at the same hour as the parish churches must of necessity exist at their expense." He continued with the second regularly rehearsed objection to religious broadcasting: "The broadcasting of such a service leads to encourage gross idleness on the part of able bodied people content to sit at home and make no effort to attend in person an act of worship."<sup>51</sup> The position of the BBC was defended<sup>51</sup> by a letter from J. C. Stobart. He pointed out the difficulties of a coherent policy: "it is not an easy question, nor are the clergy

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<sup>49</sup>*BBC Handbook 1929*, p. 208.

<sup>50</sup>Scott, *Dick Sheppard*, p. 129.

<sup>51</sup>*The Times* 9<sup>th</sup> April 1926, p. 17.



unanimous.” He explained that the majority of the services broadcast took place outside service times, but that it was also necessary occasionally to broadcast service in real time so that the listener could experience being part of an actual service. He moved on to the crux of the matter:

Is the wireless service to be regarded as a formidable competitor to the actual service in the church, rather than as a powerful ally? Finally, is it not advisable to take the largest and broadest views in regard to a new medium which is bound to effect changes in the habits and outlook of rising generations?<sup>52</sup>

The first ‘Daily Service’ was broadcast from Savoy House on Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1928. Former chaplain H. J. Johnson conducted a simple service accompanied by hymns sung by the BBC Singers. 7,000 letters of appreciation for the fifteen minute service were received within a few weeks of its launch,<sup>53</sup> and it still continues today. The success of this tentative step into daily religious broadcasting showed the appetite for such broadcasting by the public. The proportion of radio time devoted to religious output also increased. In 1927 2.25 hours of religious broadcasting per week contrasted with 16.4 hours devoted to dance music. By 1930 there were 5.2 hours of religious broadcasting compared to 11.48 hours devoted to dance music.<sup>54</sup>

By 1931 religious broadcasting had become more accepted by the church. Convocation met in January 1931 and heard the report of the committee on “The religious value of broadcast services.” A vote of gratitude was suggested for the BBC . Former chaplains, Guy Rogers, Pat McCormick and E. G. Selwyn had been appointed to this

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<sup>52</sup>*The Times*, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1926, p. 15.

<sup>53</sup>Daily service website: [www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/features/daily-service/history/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/features/daily-service/history/), (accessed 2/2/2011).

<sup>54</sup>Asa Briggs, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom: Volume IV: Sound and Vision* (London, 1978), p. 82.

committee. The committee reported that in its considered judgment, "The effect has been exceedingly valuable ..... it had recalled to the acknowledgement of God many thousands who had been out of touch with sacred things." However, the benefits of religious broadcasting were not evident to all, as the committee added: "It wished that far more clergy would realise that broadcasting has come to stay and is one of the most potent factors in the nation's life."<sup>55</sup> Acclaim was not universal. Arthur Kearney, former navy and army chaplain, reckoned that "Wireless services give inoculation of the mildest form of Christianity yet discovered."<sup>56</sup> E. G. Selwyn, although admitting that "There is no question of competition between the BBC and the church " went on to suggest that the broadcast services of the church "were in danger of creating a passive type of worshipper, who obviously grasped only a small part of what true worship meant."<sup>57</sup>

An article in *The Times* reporting the convocation meeting congratulated the BBC on avoiding the dangers of doctrinal controversies, providing "Impartially for various denominations and for various shades of opinion." The article asked that it might consider more variety in their choice of preachers: "The type of sermon euphemistically described as 'breezy' probably does appeal to a large section of the public ..... yet it is apt to occur too often." What invalids value, it continues, "Is the quiet devotional type of address with some real thought in it."<sup>58</sup>

In July 1931 the Bishop of Rochester, Linton Smith, invited another former chaplain to his Diocesan Conference. H. J. Johnson was a curate of St Martin-in-the-Fields and had been involved in the broadcasting from that parish. The topic of the conference was "The effects

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<sup>55</sup>*The Times*, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1931, p. 19.

<sup>56</sup>G. I. T. Machin in *Church and Social issues in Twentieth Century Britain* (Oxford, 1998), p. 83.

<sup>57</sup>*The Times*, 14<sup>th</sup> February 1914, p. 16.

<sup>58</sup>*The Times*, 24<sup>th</sup> January 1931, p. 13.

of broadcasting on religious life.” Johnson bemoaned the lack of initiative on the church’s behalf: “In regard to the church services broadcast, all the initiative has come from the BBC and not the Church of England.” The report of the conference in *The Times* goes on, “He could not imagine why the Anglican authorities did not set aside their best brains to study the new media.”<sup>59</sup>

Significantly, former chaplains were well represented in the clergy that did take advantage of the new medium. John Reith asked C. S. Woodward to be responsible for coordinating services for children and to develop a style of service which involved children. Woodward started broadcasting childrens’ services from his London parish and by 1929 a children’s church service was broadcast on the first Sunday of each month. Percy Dearmer conducted services in Broadcasting House studio, bringing a group of children with him who asked questions which he answered. He designed the services with suitable hymns which could be learned and sung by children at home.

C. S. Woodward continued to preach on air throughout the 1920s and 1930s as Bishop of Bristol. In July 1935, the Bristol diocesan branch of the Church of England Men’s Society was discussing “Religion and the Radio” under his chairmanship .He asserted that the religious activity of the BBC showed a noble record. He admitted that in a small parish on a wet day religious wireless services served as a temptation to stay home but “on balance - that there were tens of thousands of people who would not, and many who could not, go to church, who had the advantage of broadcast service.” He did concede that listening to a service from an armchair demanded far less from a man than church attendance. He advocated fewer broadcast services from churches and more studio services with sermons.

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<sup>59</sup>*The Times*, 10<sup>th</sup> July 1931, p. 12.

In subsequent discussions the delegates agreed that “religion was helped rather than hindered by wireless”.<sup>60</sup> E. S. Woods, similarly, was regularly found in the radio schedules. From his church in Croydon, the first morning service, a Harvest celebration, was broadcast in October 1935. Wolfe commented that Croydon became “a sort of morning St Martin’s.”<sup>61</sup>

When Pat McCormick became the incumbent of St Martin’s in 1927, he continued the tradition of broadcast services from the church. He seems to have been a popular radio personality, with a natural and sincere manner. He was particularly adept at radio appeals for the St Martin’s Christmas charities, as the first year he did this he received double the amount that Dick Sheppard had received the previous year. In the preface to his book of Lenten talks, published in 1930, McCormick admitted that they are very much based on his broadcasts. He asked his readers to forgive him;

If they read very much the same thing as they have heard; but I cannot do otherwise as my whole soul is burning with the desire to present the good news of Jesus Christ to the man in the street in a way that he can understand; and one fact emerges from my vast correspondence seems to be that they do understand.<sup>62</sup>

In a letter to *The Times* in 1933 he had some suggestions to make in light of the proposed talks which were to take place twice a month on “God and the world through Christian eyes”. He emphasised some points which “seem vital to the value of these addresses”. Firstly, he advised the speakers to speak simply and to avoid using theological terms without defining them. He added, “The failure of an opportunity of this kind will be appalling if it arises through neglecting this fundamental fact in broadcasting.” Secondly, he suggested

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<sup>60</sup>*The Church Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1935, P. 735.

<sup>61</sup>K. M. Wolfe *The Churches and the BBC*, p. 81.

<sup>62</sup>P. McCormick, *Be of Good Cheer* (London, 1934) p. x.

that the people who listened to the broadcast get together in groups to discuss it with the aid of the printed version in *The Listener*. He spoke about the vast numbers of people listening who were interested in religion but did not know what Christianity was about. He hoped that the talks would encourage them to “make an effort to learn what it means”. This, he hoped, would work against the secularism in the works of such writers as George Bernard Shaw. He saw these discussions as an opportunity to “discuss problems frankly even if it only came to agreeing to differ on the individual interpretation of events.”<sup>63</sup> McCormick was conscious that the success of religious broadcasting would only come to fruition if the men and women encouraged to go to church by broadcasts found a welcome in their parish churches: In his talk ‘The value of broadcasting’<sup>64</sup> stressed, “It depends on whether they are going to welcome and make a home for - yes and adjust their services to suit - the ordinary men and women who are brought to a new vision of the religion of Jesus Christ.” He continued “A dead church, a pharisaic congregation, a minister not abounding in humanity nor a lifeless service will stultify the work which broadcasting can accomplish.” He also placed the responsibility on the listener to act: “If religious broadcasting is going to have its proper value for you, and for the world, you must not think that you can follow Christ by merely listening.”

The predominance of St Martin-in-the-Fields was sometimes resented by those of different religious standpoints within the Church of England. A comment in ‘Journalists Jottings’ in *The Church Times* in May 1935 hinted at this: “They have quaint ideas at

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<sup>63</sup> *The Times*, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1933, p. 8.

<sup>64</sup> P. McCormick, *Be of Good Cheer*, p. 22.

broadcasting house. Until recently they were persuaded that St Martin-in-the-Fields was the Church of England.”<sup>65</sup>

Despite the initial opposition and scepticism of some clergy, and fears of the possible competition posed by religious broadcasting, the whole concept proved popular with radio audiences. In the 1930s the BBC was broadcasting regular services on Sunday, talks for children, the Daily Service and the epilogue. It was perhaps unfortunate that the growing popularity of religious broadcasting coincided with a decline in actual attendance. Wolfe suggested that this suggested “Something wrong.”<sup>66</sup> Former chaplains were perhaps in a better position to realise what was needed to appeal to an ‘unchurched’ audience and seized the opportunity of the new medium to extend the means of catering to diffusive Christianity in the country as a whole.

### **Cinema.**

The growth of cinema also exercised the opinions of the church in the interwar years. Cinema attendance had grown during the 1920s and expanded with the coming of sound in 1929. By 1939 cinema attendances had reached 1.5 million, representing attendance at least once a week by 40% of the population.<sup>67</sup>

In the 1920s, the effect of cinema on young people had been investigated by an inquiry inaugurated by the National Council on Public Morals, under the presidency of the Bishop of Birmingham. A subcommittee of psychologists produced a draft report which considered that cinematic role models encouraged “fantasy day dreams and yearning to a

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<sup>65</sup>*The Church Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> March 1935, p. 838.

<sup>66</sup>K. M. Wolfe, *The Churches and the BBC*, p. 19.

<sup>67</sup>Machin, *Church and Social Issues*, p. 76.

degree ..... that was unwholesome.”<sup>68</sup> The church was not alone in its apprehension about cinema. Overy says “The idea that films were likely to promote sexual licence remained a persistent concern of the respectable middle classes.”<sup>69</sup> Machin described the reasons for the urgency shown by the church in attempting to come to terms with this new cultural development: “The churches were deeply interested in the cinema and its moral and cultural effects, for reasons which comprised the question of Sunday opening; the treatment of sacred subjects on film; the use of [the medium] for spreading a religious message; and the impact of film on the general moral health of society.”<sup>70</sup>

Guy Rogers was able to say by 1930 that: “There is now little opposition to the theatre or cinema as such”,<sup>71</sup> that it was the “tendencies in the modern use of leisure which the church must deplore.” By this he was referring to the Sunday opening of cinemas which had been spreading, albeit illegally, in the late 1920s. In July 1932 a bill was passed allowing for the opening of cinemas on Sundays, leaving local councils to decide whether they would allow films on Sunday or not, but there were wide regional differences as a result of this. London cinemas led the way, but there were fewer in Scotland and Wales.<sup>72</sup> In his chapter on Christian witness in *The Church and the People* Rogers argued that the most difficult witness required of Christians was in relation to the use of leisure and the question of Sunday observance. He was anxious that people should not have to work on Sunday to provide leisure for others: “The labour involved in the further expansion of trading on

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<sup>68</sup>Overy, *The Morbid Age*, p. 152.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 152.

<sup>70</sup>Machin, *Church and Social Issues*, p. 76.

<sup>71</sup>T.G. Rogers, *The Church and the People: Problems of Reunion, Sex and Marriage, Women's Ministry, Etc.* (London, 1931) p. 193.

<sup>72</sup>Machin, *Church and Social Issues*, p. 57.

Sunday, became important factors in deciding the social utility of the purpose.”<sup>73</sup> He went on to explain that it was the commercial basis that he was particularly objecting to and advocated voluntary and free entertainment, with church halls and other public buildings being made available for young people to meet on Sunday evenings.

E. S. Woods, acting on his conviction that Sunday cinema should be managed and not banned, worked closely with other religious leaders and members of the local council to formulate the ‘Croydon Scheme’. This allowed for a committee to vet the films proposed for Sunday night viewing. It also ensured that the rights of the employees involved to a day off would be respected. It was agreed that a satisfactory arrangement would be made for a percentage of the profits made to be given to charity. He justified this in a film shown in Croydon featuring himself arguing the case in a “talkie”: “I am honestly convinced that such a use of a picture house on a Sunday is not at variance with the Christian view of the Christian use of Sunday.”<sup>74</sup> Speaking at a lunch of the Sunday Films Association, of which he was chairman, he put forward his ideal for Sunday cinema: “Films shown should be of a classical character, dealing with historical romances, such as Disraeli, travel, science, sport and natural study.” He assured his audience that there was “an ample supply of the better stuff and that there was a public for it.”<sup>75</sup>

E. S. Woods saw that it was likely that Sunday opening of cinemas would continue and moved a resolution in the 1933 Convocation of Canterbury: “That this house is of the opinion that the church should approve the opening of cinemas on Sunday evenings provided ..... the pictures to be shown should be of a wholesome character.” He went on to

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<sup>73</sup>Rogers, *Church and People*, p. 197.

<sup>74</sup>*The Times*, 14<sup>th</sup> November 1932, p. 9.

<sup>75</sup>*The Times*, 18<sup>th</sup> November 1932, p. 12.



say that the church should admit that Sunday was “not an unsuitable day for some form of recreation” and that Sunday cinema went some way to solve the problem of catering for young people who had nowhere to go, with the proviso that it was “decent and wholesome”. He realised that “There are occasions when the church must set itself against the world but this is not one of them.”<sup>76</sup> The Archbishop of Canterbury had taken a rather ambivalent line in supporting the original bill and his remarks had been taken in some quarters as support for Sunday cinema. He explained in Convocation that his principle had been as to ask “whether it is in the ultimate interests of religion that they should attempt to say ‘if you won’t go to church on Sundays we will prevent you from going anywhere else.’” The idea that this meant he was giving the lead to Sunday opening was wrong: “Nothing could be further from the truth.”<sup>77</sup> R. G. Parsons proposed that “the church should issue as soon as possible, with real authority, something quite plain, brief and unmistakeable which guided them on an effectual use of Sunday, which on the one hand would not be too sabbatarian, nor on the other, merely secular.”<sup>78</sup> Guy Rogers had a slightly more pessimistic outlook on Sunday cinema after his struggles in court with the cinema proprietors over what was suitable for showing on a Sunday:

The most flagrant breach of the agreement concerned the promise that was given by the trade in open court that they would exhibit only ‘healthy and edifying films’ on Sunday. It was my painful duty to appear before the magistrates to give an account of the films shown, which were regarded by the trade as such. Generally

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<sup>76</sup>*The Times*, 25<sup>th</sup> January 1934, p. 15.

<sup>77</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*

speaking, I am afraid promises given to secure an opening or a footing in the desired locality are apt to be forgotten when the purpose has been achieved.<sup>79</sup>

In the late 1930s E. S. Woods expanded his idea that the cinema should not be fought but used by being an active tool in the work of the church. In July 1935 he became the chairman of an executive committee set up by the Church Assembly whose remit was “exploring the possibilities of utilising the cinematograph for purpose of religion, which, the report said, “has become a matter of some urgency.” The Cinema Christian Council was formed, and in a report in *The Times* in March 1936 its aims were stated: “The council considered that the need for the production of films with a religious purpose is increasingly urgent and efforts must be made, if possible on a large scale to produce them.”<sup>80</sup> In a letter to *The Times* in April 1937 Woods extolled the virtues of film and the importance of being involved in new technology: “Cinema is one of the most potent factors in influencing the lives of our people and especially the younger generation”. He continued “The writer of religious scenarios is free to write directly for the screen, he is unhampered by Hollywood traditions. The church and her worldwide organisation are established for distribution and it may be that a vast audience awaits the coming of such a moving religious picture gallery.”<sup>81</sup> The pragmatic attitude of E. S. Woods echoed this and his efforts to embrace the cinema and use it to advantage seemed successful. Machin summed up the attitude of the churches to the cinema in the immediate pre-war era: “By the end of the thirties the churches had little reason to think that the British cinema was a menace to morality and domestic stability.”<sup>82</sup>

## Conclusion

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<sup>79</sup>T. G. Rogers, *Rebel at Heart*, p. 218.

<sup>80</sup>*The Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1936, p. 17.

<sup>81</sup>*The Times*, 28<sup>th</sup> April 1937, p. 17.

<sup>82</sup>Machin, *Church and Social Issues* p. 81.

The subjects of marriage, divorce, sex and contraception were ones in which several former chaplains were in disagreement with mainstream opinion. The advocacy of divorce and remarriage in certain circumstances went directly against the teaching of the Anglican Church. This liberalism, however, was tempered by the strong emphasis of men like Pym, Barry and Rogers on marriage preparation and sex education. These are topics which at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are still causing controversy and discussion. The contribution to the debate in the inter-war years by former chaplains added significant arguments and also emphasises their willingness to hold and promulgate controversial views.

Despite an initially unsure attitude from the Anglican churches we have seen how former chaplains such as Pat McCormick and Dick Sheppard took the lead, often facing opposition from the church establishment and how other chaplains were to be frequently found on the schedules of *The Radio Times* and *The Times*. This commitment stemmed from a desire to bring God to as many different people as possible, surely an attitude formed in the difficult conditions of the trenches. Radio seems to have been the perfect opportunity for men who had complained about the limited nature of church services and the need to widen the appeal of the gospel .

The essentially pragmatic attitude of the Anglican Church to developments in the cinema was a result of the attitudes of former chaplains such as E. S. Woods and R. G. Parsons, who not only realised that outright opposition would be counterproductive, but also did much to ensure the church used the new technology to its advantage.

The changing nature of both church and society in the 1920s had necessitated the involvement of the church in controversies of a secular nature which nevertheless had a bearing on the life of the church. Former chaplains, using their wartime experiences of the

irrelevance of the church in everyday matters of concern to the average soldier, seemed to have sensed that entering the fray in such controversies would emphasise the relevance of the church in society. Their opinions and actions were such that they moved the Anglican Church forward throughout an era of rapid change.

## Chapter Seven: Remembrance and Pacifism.

The motto of the British Legion “Honour the living, serve the dead”,<sup>1</sup> summed up the feeling that the commemoration of the fallen should include measures to redeem the lives lost in battle with actions which would improve British society in the post-war world. Although the British Legion and the established church were to clash in the details of commemorative occasions,<sup>2</sup> the returning chaplains, in particular, were very aware of the need to reshape society radically if the sacrifices of the war were to have meaning. The idea that national life should be so ordered that war would never happen again was to inform the development of the pacifism, largely led by former chaplains, which was to emerge in the 1930s.

Bob Bushaway has described the themes of remembrance which were present in the inter-war years as having a clear effect on the way that post-war society in Britain developed. He is of the opinion that the rituals of remembrance “resulted in a denial of any political critique of the Great War or of post-war society”<sup>3</sup> and that “The rituals of remembrance in Britain, language, liturgy, hymnody, landscape ..... were created consciously for political reasons at a precise point in time.”<sup>4</sup> Although the established church, including former chaplains, was to play a large part in the development of consolatory ritual, many chaplains regarded remembrance as a way to make sense of the deaths of so many by improving social, economic and political conditions in post-war Britain.

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<sup>1</sup>Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 263.

<sup>2</sup>A. Wilkinson, *The Church of England in the First World War* (London, 1996), pp. 299-300. Wilkinson considers that in the attempts of the clergy in the inter-war years taking remembrance services to tone down the heroic and patriotic imagery were resented by the members of the British Legion.

<sup>3</sup>B. Bushaway, ‘Name upon Name’ in R. Porter (ed.), *Myths of the English* (London, 1993), p. 137.

<sup>4</sup>B. Bushaway, ‘The Obligation of Remembrance or the Remembrance of Obligation: Society and the Memory of World War’, in Peter Liddle, John Bourne, Ian Whitehead, (eds.) *The Great World War 1914-1945: Lightning Strikes Twice Vol. 1* (London, 2001), p. 490.

Patrick Porter, in his essay 'Beyond Comfort: German and English Military Chaplains and the Memory of the Great War' has made a strong case that in the eyes of former chaplains the purpose of remembrance was to "Inculcate dissatisfaction, guilt and discomfort."<sup>5</sup> This was to encourage and mobilise efforts to transform society as a means of honouring the dead. He also made the point that "former chaplains played a significant role in defining the memory of the Great War."<sup>6</sup> This chapter will look at the ways in which the wartime experience of former chaplains had an effect on their ideas of remembrance, to what extent they were able to be a part of national commemoration, and how during the course of the inter-war years some became prominent in the peace movement while others accepted the inevitability and the justice of another war.

The influence of the wartime experience of chaplains on the process of remembrance must be understood on several levels. The need to remember the dead resulted in their practical actions in keeping records of graves and writing letters to next of kin, but another longer term response to the horrors of war was shown by their determination to honour the dead by continuing to work for a just and fair society. Porter describes this as part of their anxiety to "realise the mission and complete the sacrifices of the dead."<sup>7</sup> Chaplains were, particularly in the earlier, more mobile stages of the war, before the Grave Registration Commission became active, the people who marked graves and kept map references of where soldiers had been buried. Their lists and records were invaluable to the work of the Imperial, later, Commonwealth, War Graves Commission when it was established in 1917.

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<sup>5</sup>P. Porter, 'Beyond Comfort: German and English Military Chaplains and the Memory of the Great War' in *Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 29, no. 3, October 2005, p. 258.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

Douglas Winnifrith, attached to the 14<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance went, in a lull in battle on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 1914, to find bodies and bury them:

We decided to go over the battlefield in different directions to bury any dead that we could find, irrespective of religious denomination. Whenever we found a fallen comrade we bore his body to the corner of a field to secure it ..... and there dug a shallow grave.<sup>8</sup>

They marked the graves with a rough cross and kept a record of the names of the men they had buried. The war diary of the 14<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance mentioned that on the 10<sup>th</sup> September three officers and thirty eight other ranks were found dead by the chaplains and buried.<sup>9</sup> Harry Blackburne also kept careful records of those he buried, with map references.<sup>10</sup> David Railton wrote after the war about the role of chaplains in identifying the graves of the dead and of trying to be of comfort to the families at home:

Every padre serving with the infantry brigade was bombarded after each publication of casualties with the request, 'where-exactly where did you lay to rest the body of my son? Can you give me any information?' To all these questions we were allowed to send map reference only. Oh, those letters of broken relatives and friends.<sup>11</sup>

Bob Bushaway has described the growing importance of individual memorialisation, the detailed recording of names on rolls of service and then on rolls of honour.<sup>12</sup> This was

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<sup>8</sup>D. Winnifrith, *The Church in the Fighting Line* (London, 1915), p. 70.

<sup>9</sup>TNA, WO 95/1540, 14<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance War Diary.

<sup>10</sup>H. Blackburne, *This also happened on the Western Front: The Padre's story* (London, 1932), p. 5.

<sup>11</sup>D. Railton, *Our Empire*, Vol. 11, no 8, 1931, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup>Bushaway, 'Name upon Name' pp. 139-140.

important to the families of the citizen armies and to the towns and regions who had provided these armies. Lloyd George realised that: "The people of this country will take an intimate personal interest in its fate of a kind which they have never displayed before in our military expeditions."<sup>13</sup> The work of the chaplains in helping to realise and record this response to individual loss was a significant contribution to the consolatory nature of remembrance.

The experiences of other wartime chaplains also made them consider the meaning of war and how they could redeem the lives of those lost in practical ways. Tom Pym, writing in 1917, was thinking of the post-war situation and hoped that the idealism of the soldiers would not be wasted:

Many of those who gave their lives for England gave them not for the England of 1913 or 1914, but for England as she might be, as one day she shall please God become. For that ideal they have gladly died. In that hope and faith those of us who have survived must live and work. Their sacrifice must be made worthwhile.<sup>14</sup>

Pym preached at a memorial service for former Trinity College, Cambridge men who had died in the conflict, in the college chapel on the 2nd November 1919. He related how his determination to honour the dead was engendered by his conversation with a dying soldier:

We cannot accept and try to profit by the sacrifice of the men who gave all for us and just go on living our lives simply for ourselves. We should be disloyal: I myself would be disloyal to a soldier who on a day near Christmas 1915 lay dying. He asked me if I

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<sup>13</sup>David Lloyd George, *The War Memoirs of David Lloyd George* (London, 1938), cited by Bushaway, *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>14</sup>T. W. Pym and G. Gordon, *Papers from Picardy, by Two Chaplains* (London, 1917), p. 56.



thought his pain was doing any good, and if when he was gone ..... there would ever come a time when men would not have to die as he was dying: I pledged him my own word and told him I was sure that those for whom he died would try and make the world a better place.<sup>15</sup>

A. E. Wilkinson, chaplain to the “Cast Iron Sixth” London Rifles, speaking to the Stock Exchange Battalion at an Armistice Day service in 1928, told the men to “Recapture the spirit of service and self sacrifice which was so manifest during the days of the war and to apply it to present day problems by devoting our lives to service.”<sup>16</sup> Former chaplains’ attitudes to remembrance were therefore affected by their experiences. Many of them expressed the hope “that war would purge, renew and redeem society.”<sup>17</sup>

During the war the belief had emerged that the sacrifices of the fallen could be compared with Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. This belief was not an accepted part of Christian theology. Walter Carey, a former naval chaplain, explained that the sacrifice of soldiers was not comparable with the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross: “Let the church preach sacrifice at all sorts of services, but let her ..... keep the holy sacrifice as her central mystery and glory.”<sup>18</sup> Adrian Gregory has coined the phrase “patri-passionism”<sup>19</sup> to describe what he calls the ideas prevalent at that time of “the redemption of the world by the blood of

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<sup>15</sup>Dora Pym, *Tom Pym, A Portrait* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 72.

<sup>16</sup>M. Connelly, *The Great War, Memory and Ritual: Commemoration in the City and East London, 1916-1939* (London, 2001), p. 173.

<sup>17</sup>P. Porter, ‘New Jerusalems: Sacrifice and Redemption in the War Experiences of English and German Military Chaplains’, in Pierre Purseigle (ed.), *Warfare and Belligerence, Perspectives in First World War Studies* (London, 2006), p. 103.

<sup>18</sup>W. Carey, *Sacrifice and Some of its Difficulties* (London, 1918), p. 69.

<sup>19</sup>Not to be confused with Patripassianism, a first century heresy which claimed God was passible and capable of suffering.

soldiers.”<sup>20</sup> The logical conclusion to this idea was that personal salvation could be acquired by death on the battlefield. Horatio Bottomley<sup>21</sup> publicised the idea that soldiers were in no need of repentance.<sup>22</sup> Gregory implies that the idea of what he calls “secularised redemption” gained credence with Church of England priests.<sup>23</sup> The idea that personal salvation resulted from sacrificial death in battle did not fit in with evangelical opinion, but was widely accepted as part of the consolatory ideas current in wartime. However as Bushaway explains, it “could not actually stand close theological scrutiny.”<sup>24</sup>

Former chaplains were therefore reluctant to accept fully the role of remembrance as one of “collective healing”, and the ceremonies of remembrance as commemorating sacrifice in a just cause, as they did not want the sentiments to numb the impetus to create a better world. Notwithstanding this reluctance, they were often involved in these ceremonies. At a local level they often took the lead in decisions and plans for local memorials and commemorations.<sup>25</sup> It is questionable whether this was because of the implicit acceptance of religious aspects of remembrance or the fact that they were leading members of the community and would have been expected to take the lead. What Mark Connelly described as the “language of consolation and hope” that the churches provided made it seem natural that they would have a role in the way communities remembered their dead. Connelly also contends that Anglican clergy in the East End allowed the sacrifice of the soldiers to be linked with that of Christ:

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<sup>20</sup>A. Gregory, *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 156.

<sup>21</sup>Horatio Bottomley, founder of *John Bull*, a patriotic and jingoistic magazine, journalist, financier and M.P.

<sup>22</sup>A. Wilkinson, *The Church of England in the First World War* (London, 1978), p. 184.

<sup>23</sup>A. Gregory, *The Silence of Memory, Armistice Day 1919-1946* (London, 1994), p. 187.

<sup>24</sup>Bushaway, ‘Name Upon Name’, p. 159.

<sup>25</sup>A. King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The symbolism and Politics of Remembrance* (Oxford, 1998), p. 30.

Comfort came through an element that only the church could provide: namely that each dead man had achieved paradise: Anglican clergy tended to go one step further and openly associate their sacrifice with the sufferings of Christ, a trait very rarely seen in nonconformist churches.<sup>26</sup>

S. F. Leighton Green was the president of the local branch of the British Legion at Mundesley, Norfolk, and on his death in 1929 members of the legion kept a watch over his coffin. He also kept close links with the 4<sup>th</sup> London Regiment, whose chaplain he had been in France.<sup>27</sup> Harry Blackburne was chairman of the British Legion at his parish at Ashford, and every year took the memorial service at the centre of town in addition to having a service in the parish church which was always full.<sup>28</sup> On Armistice Sunday 1919 the Comrades of the Great War<sup>29</sup> marched to the Cenotaph in the afternoon and were addressed by the Chaplain General, Bishop Taylor Smith.<sup>30</sup> On the wider front former chaplains, particularly those who were regular peace time chaplains were prominent in the unveiling of memorials and monuments in Britain and France.<sup>31</sup> One of the last, at Thiepval on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 1932, was attended by Bishop H. K. Southwell, former Assistant Chaplain General to the Fourth Army.

The most well known example of how a former chaplain had an effect on national remembrance of the war was the role played by David Railton, chaplain in France from 1916 to 1918, in the chain of events leading to the Unknown Warrior being brought to his resting

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<sup>26</sup>M. Connelly, *The Great War, Memory and Ritual*, p. 57.

<sup>27</sup>S. J. Maclaren (ed.), *Somewhere in Flanders: Letters of a Norfolk Padre in the Great War* (Fakenham, 2005), p. 5 and p. 40.

<sup>28</sup>H. Blackburne, *Trooper to Dean* (London, 1955) p. 67.

<sup>29</sup>*Comrades of The Great War* was one of the original four ex-service associations that amalgamated on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May 1921 to form the British Legion.

<sup>30</sup>*The Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1919, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup>Scrapbook of press clippings kept by Rev. Dr. A. C. E. Jarvis during his time as Chaplain General c. 1930s, RACHD Archives, Ampport House.

place in Westminster Abbey in November 1921. Railton, who won the Military Cross and was mentioned in despatches, was moved particularly by the grave of a soldier bearing the inscription: "An Unknown Soldier" on the Somme in 1916. The idea that had come to him then, "Let this body - this symbol of him - be carried reverently across the sea to his native land", had grown in his mind until August 1920, when he wrote to the Dean of Westminster, Hubert Ryle. He explained his idea of a burial of an unknown soldier in the Abbey, and offered his flag used for use in the service. Ryle was enthusiastic about the idea and pressed for it as his own. Despite some initial doubts from the King, Lloyd George, being aware of the overwhelming reaction to the temporary Cenotaph at the victory parade in August 1919 and on Armistice Day in November 1919, saw the idea as a focus for public mourning and a possible distraction from post-war political agitation. The tomb did have a great resonance with the British public and thousands filed past to pay their respects in the seven days that the grave was left open. On the first day alone, 40,000 mourners passed the tomb.<sup>32</sup> Every bereaved person and family now had a grave to represent their missing son or husband. Railton's experiences in the war had brought home to him the needs of the families of the missing and those buried abroad to have a national symbol of remembrance, grief and mourning, but in the midst of war he had been thinking that remembrance involved practical action in peace time. On 9<sup>th</sup> January 1917 he wrote: "If God spares me I shall spend half my life in getting their rights for the men who fought out here."<sup>33</sup>

In his work on the various ways in which the East End communities of London set about memorialisation, Mark Connelly has described the clear role that the Anglican clergy

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<sup>32</sup>N. Hanson, *The Unknown Soldier* (London, 2007), pp. 472-474.

<sup>33</sup>IWM 80 /22/1, The papers of David Railton, p. 24.

performed in the 1920s and 1930s in Armistice Day celebrations and in organising the building of memorials, both in public places and in churches. Among these were several former chaplains. Guy Rogers was reported in *The Stratford Express* when he took Armistice Day services in the parish of West Ham. He was also invited to share in services of dedication in Nonconformist churches. When attending a service at Stratford Presbyterian church he stressed their “common churchmanship”, explaining that “they did not talk of Church of England dead or Presbyterian dead, but Christian dead.”<sup>34</sup> In Poplar and Stepney the Old Comrades Association of the 17<sup>th</sup> London Regiment had their annual services conducted by their chaplain G. H. Lancaster, and he was joined in 1924 by C. C. T. Wood<sup>35</sup>, also a former chaplain of the 47<sup>th</sup> (London) Division.

Former chaplains were understandably a popular choice to take part in Armistice Day services as they could use their wartime experiences to make links with their congregation, both ex-servicemen and the bereaved, but they also used their sermons at Armistice Day to question the post-war status quo. Rogers told his congregation:

They remembered that day many were living in affluence and wealth while numbers of those who had guarded the wealth of the country during the war were still living in poverty..... They remembered that day the failure to seize the opportunity that was given to the men who died, of remaking the world.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>M. Connelly *The Great War*, p. 67.

<sup>35</sup>C. C. T. Wood, BEF 1914-1918, MC 1916, Chaplain to the Forces, (T.A.) from 1914, Vicar of St Saviours Croydon 1922-1930, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.1495.

<sup>36</sup>M. Connelly, *The Great War*, p. 171.

Former chaplain Mervyn Evers,<sup>37</sup> also in 1923, addressed the local Territorial Army regiment in West Ham. He spoke of his experience on the Western Front but also criticised the current situation: “Who, in 1918, when the war was over, would have thought that five years later they would have the problem of unemployment on a gigantic scale?”<sup>38</sup> This remark, which linked commemoration with the need to improve social and industrial conditions, was a typical theme of many former chaplains.

Reading accounts of the ceremonies at the Cenotaph in the early twenties it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the role of the church representatives, and the religious content of the proceedings, played a minor part in comparison to the civic and military roles. In some ways the state had hijacked some of the rituals of religion to create rituals of remembrance, and the resulting ceremonies were “religious occasions in form only.”<sup>39</sup> However, *The Times* in an editorial on November 1923, urged that the government reconsider its decision not to have a service at the Cenotaph because Armistice Day fell on a Sunday and considered that:

It has become part of the expected order of things, and as long as there is an established church which represents, however imperfectly the whole people, it will be prudent of authority to follow the precedent ..... laid down for maintaining intact year by year a religious ceremony which more comprehensively than any other consecrates for thousands a national day of the most solemn remembrance.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> M. S. Evers, TCF 1914-1918, MC 1916, bar 1917, curate of West Ham 1923-1924, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p. 431.

<sup>38</sup> M. Connelly, *The Great War*, citing the *Stratford Express*, p. 171

<sup>39</sup> B. Bushaway, 'Name upon Name', p. 159.

<sup>40</sup> *The Times*, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1923, p. 13.

According to Lutyens, the architect of the Cenotaph, there was consternation in the church establishment at its design: "There was some horror in church circles. What! a pagan monument in the midst of Whitehall?"<sup>41</sup> It is Gavin Stamp's opinion that it was the architecture of the Cenotaph which influenced the largely secular commemorative symbolism of the Imperial War Graves Commission.<sup>42</sup> The decision not to allow a cross as a headstone was bitterly opposed by some of the bereaved. Florence Cecil, wife of the Bishop of Exeter, wrote "It is only in the hope of the cross that most of us are able to carry on - to deny us the emblem of that strength and hope adds heavily to the burden of our sorrows."<sup>43</sup> Neville Talbot, on a Toc H pilgrimage to Poperinge and Ypres in May 1930, saw the Menin Gate for the first time and was disappointed: "There was no touch of Christian symbolism on it."<sup>44</sup>

It can be seen that the views of former chaplains and to some extent the church establishment clashed with some contemporary ideas of the role of remembrance as a comforting and unifying set of actions which honoured the sacrifice of the dead and justified their death in terms of national and religious significance. As Porter contends: "implicit in the message of healing is the assurance that the ordeal is over and the price worth paying."<sup>45</sup> It was the aim of the chaplains to continue the redemptive sacrifices of the war by ensuring that the fight for a fair and just society continued. Christopher Chavasse, in his parish of St George's, Barrow-in-Furness, often returned to the linked themes of remembrance and building for the future in his letters to his parishioners in the parish

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<sup>41</sup>Gavin Stamp, *The Memorial to the Missing of the Somme* (London, 2007) p. 43.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>44</sup>Neville Talbot's account of the pilgrimage of padres to Talbot House April 27<sup>th</sup> May 1st 1930. Nottinghamshire Record Office DD 1332 /198, p. 10.

<sup>45</sup>Porter, 'Beyond Comfort', p. 289.

magazine. Writing in November 1920, he commented on the irony of Armistice- tide services taking place under the shadow of the miners' strike:

Where is the brotherhood of the six years of agony? ..... the world can quite easily recuperate after the war, if we all work in our brotherhood. Instead the grim spectre of unemployment will stalk our towns. Meanwhile it is for us to refrain from all recrimination and bitterness ..... for such cause wounds that are long in healing.<sup>46</sup>

In 1920 Chavasse inaugurated a war memorial fund that had two aims, one a practical one, to refurbish the parish hall to be a centre for a men's institute, and the other to build a memorial chapel in St George's Church. As we have seen, Chavasse was concerned with industrial justice and the social gospel and often, in his vicar's letter, linked hopes for the future with the suffering of the war. It was his experience of war at a personal level as chaplain which gave meaning and weight to the ideas he encouraged his parishioners to adopt. A. R. Browne-Wilkinson M C,<sup>47</sup> a former chaplain, was appointed to Daybrook Parish, Nottingham in 1919 and in the inter-war years often spoke about the effects of the war and the need for positive modes of remembrance. He encouraged his parishioners to "Remember the hundreds and thousands of our gallant dead, and that we cannot discharge our duty to them by erecting memorials of brick and stone, the only memorial worthy of them is the building up of that new order in the world for which they died."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>*St George's Parish Magazine*, February 1921, Barrow- in -Furness Record Office, BPR11/PM/2.

<sup>47</sup>A. R. Browne-Wilkinson TCF 1918-1919, MC 1918, mentioned in despatches 1918, *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1940), p.172.

<sup>48</sup>*St George's Parish Magazine*, February 1921, Barrow- in -Furness Record Office, BPR11/PM/2.



We have seen in Chapter Three how a creative tension developed between the desire of Toc H to honour the elder brethren, recapturing what was splendid about Talbot House, and to move forward as an active force for good which would suit the needs of the post-war world. The comment made in an article 'Our Room on Earth' in 1923, shows how intermingled the remembrance of the lost and hope for the future were in Clayton's mind:

To the survivors, half ashamed, the deepest of all war debts is from the living to the dead. We can only pay by being and doing what they would wish. With this aim in view we, of Toc H, began to build a new society of serving brethren.<sup>49</sup>

The work of Toc H in the inter-war years was led and supported by many former chaplains among the padres who served Toc H. In 1930 there were seventeen paid association chaplains, with Pat Leonard as the administrative padre, seventy honorary association padres of whom at least twenty seven were former Anglican army chaplains,<sup>50</sup> and sixteen overseas padres<sup>51</sup> who served as branch and area chaplains, keeping up the "Ceremony of Light" which, as we have seen, perpetuated the memory of those who had fallen. The example of Toc H supports Porter's theory that the attitude of former chaplains to remembrance was one of reformation rather than remembrance and comfort, and aimed to "mobilize rather than console".<sup>52</sup> It is also perhaps an example of Jay Winter's theory of "fictive kin" - groups of men and women responsible for individual memorials or acts of

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<sup>49</sup>*The Times*, 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1923, P. 13.

<sup>50</sup> *Crockfords Clerical Directory*(1940).

<sup>51</sup> *Toc H Journal*, Annual Report, 1930.

<sup>52</sup> P. Porter, 'Beyond Comfort', p. 258.

remembrance whose bonds endured long after the unveiling of a memorial or the setting up of an act of remembrance.<sup>53</sup>

The concept of pilgrimages to the Great War battlefields emerged soon after the war and has been closely linked by historians such as Alex King to a kind of “battlefield tourism” that developed as sites became more accessible and visitors catered for. David Lloyd has described the pilgrimages undertaken by Toc H as being indicative of the “the close link between religious belief and the organisation of battlefield pilgrimages.”<sup>54</sup> The Toc H Journal in January 1932 reminded its members that every “movement with a religious basis has found inspiration in pilgrimage.”<sup>55</sup> Toc H was involved with the league of St Barnabus, an organisation set up to help relatives of the fallen to visit the battlefields. In 1923 the Revd. R. H. Royle representing Toc H, took part in a ceremony at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery which was accompanied by the choir of All Hallows.<sup>56</sup> In 1920 Tubby took a small party of friends to visit the battlegrounds of the Ypres Salient, at a time when, the countryside had not been restored to any great extent and battlefield debris was still to be seen in the fields. As a result of this visit Toc H published *The Pilgrim’s Guide to the Ypres Salient*.<sup>57</sup> It considered that such a guide would be needed by pilgrims “revisiting the scene of *Tales of Talbot House*.”<sup>58</sup> A review of the book in *The Times* described it as “An accurate and comprehensive practical handbook for visitors to the graves and battlefields, with several

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<sup>53</sup>Jay Winter, *Remembering War* (Yale, 2006).

<sup>54</sup>D. Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism, Pilgrimage and the Commemoration of the Great War in Britain, Australia and Canada* (Oxford, 1998) p. 146.

<sup>55</sup>Toc H Journal, January 1932, p. xiii, cited by David Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, p. 147.

<sup>56</sup>Order of Service, Palm Sunday, 1923, Toc H Archives, University of Birmingham Special Collections .

<sup>57</sup>*The Pilgrim’s Guide to the Ypres Salient* was published by Herbert Reiachin 1920. It is now unavailable.

<sup>58</sup>B. Baron, *The Birth of Movement* (London, 1952) p. 41.

useful maps.”<sup>59</sup> Before Toc H acquired Talbot House again in 1929, the owner of the house did not allow groups to visit until 1926, when small groups were permitted to see the Upper Room, now partly returned to its role as a hop loft. Jock Gillespie, one of the pilgrims, described the experience:

Finally it was our turn to go upstairs. As we mounted the narrow stair way we met the first party coming down and we saw by their faces that they had not only seen, but also understood their vision. We all instinctively knelt as we entered for we knew the ground whereon we stood was holy.<sup>60</sup>

In 1929 Lord Wakefield bought Talbot House for Toc H and it has remained a place of pilgrimage and refreshment for all those who want to remember the men who died on the Ypres Salient and to recapture the spirit of the wartime Talbot House. It was not meant only as a shrine of remembrance but also as a place where new generations of pilgrims and Toc H members could learn about the war and ,in learning, remember. Alec Paterson stated in 1933:

We have to go back to our beginnings to understand our growth and see our objective. The lad who was a baby in the war gains more by going to the old house and imagining the refreshment of the tired soldier than by listening to many poor reminiscences of mine or any other. The old house is more than a place of sentiment - it is a fact of history.<sup>61</sup>

Neville Talbot wrote a long and moving account of the pilgrimages of wartime padres to Poperinge and Ypres in 1930. He recounted how the padres present were:

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<sup>59</sup>*The Times* 29<sup>th</sup> June 1920, p. 19.

<sup>60</sup>T. Lever, *Clayton of Toc H* (London, 1971), p. 147.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 151.

Full of the sense that they could not either take in or begin to express more than a fragment of the meaning which brought them together- to stand in the Upper Room or at the vast cemetery of Tyne Cot was to feel afresh how things are too deep for expression.”<sup>62</sup>

Talbot described how, after initial consternation and resentment that the house had changed, the party went up to the partially restored Upper Room and knelt in prayer, each chaplain in turn being inspired to pray spontaneously. Talbot remembered “all this was truly and very tremendous.”<sup>63</sup>

Another aspect of Tubby Clayton’s Role in remembrance was his attitude to the crop of war books (which has been described as “the war books boom”), a spate of books about the war published from 1929 into the early 1930s. Authors such as Ford Maddox Ford, Erich Maria Remarque, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves and Vera Brittain all shared elements of what Samuel Haynes has called a “common language “which included:

The idealism betrayed, the early high mindedness turned ..... to bitterness and cynicism; the growing feeling among soldiers of alienation from the people at home for whom they were fighting ..... a bitter conviction that the men in the trenches fought for no cause, in a war that could not be stopped.<sup>64</sup>

In 1929 Tubby Clayton published *Plain Tales from Flanders*. A review in *The Times* considered that the book was an antidote to those war books “In which all the horrors and brutalities are treated with a sort of gruesome pleasure.” The reviewer realised that not all men were

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<sup>62</sup>Talbot, Nottinghamshire County Records, DD1332/198, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>64</sup>S. Haynes, *A War Imagined, The First World War and English Culture* (London, 1990), p. 439.

of the calibre of some of the characters described by Tubby but also that it was not true to say that “The mud of warfare could not be washed away from the souls of those who were slimed with it.”<sup>65</sup> He quoted a passage to show Tubby’s opinion of the men: “It was not in hate but in love, that your son, your brother, your father went about his duty in Flanders. It was love with him all the way: love that led him there for your sake.” In a speech to the schools section of Toc H in 1930 Tubby was pressing for a schools’ pilgrimage to the Ypres Salient in order to counteract, in the minds of young people, the impression of war given by recent war books. He said that the deliberate and dignified reticence with which men fought and suffered and died in the Great War had been betrayed by practically every publisher in the land. He was concerned that young people would become influenced by “this curiously perverted form of peace propaganda”. He thought that the pilgrimage was necessary, in that “the stains had got to be taken off the war memorial.”<sup>66</sup> In a sermon preached at St Mary’s, Oxford on Armistice Day 1928 he had warned against taking the “blotterature” of the war period too seriously. “We who know these men also know that that blotterature is not true.”<sup>67</sup> Having given several examples of the spirit of unselfish sacrifice from his wartime experiences, Tubby returned to his familiar theme of the burden being passed on to the youth of a new generation. He imagined the advice of the dead:

Do not imagine that an age of supreme sacrifice can well be followed by an age of supreme self indulgence. Your age, which has entered into an inheritance which we purchased, will not lack its sufficiency of ambitious and successful men. Let some of you be ambitious and successful in a deeper direction. Be ambitious to serve the

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<sup>65</sup>*The Times*, 8<sup>th</sup> October 1929, p. 22.

<sup>66</sup>*The Times*, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1930, p. 7.

<sup>67</sup>P. B. Clayton, *Plain Tales from Flanders* (London, 1929), p. 155.

cause of Christ with every silent power in you. Be ambitious to devote your lives to the spreading of a new spirit between man and man.<sup>68</sup>

As we have seen, many chaplains maintained close links with their ex-comrades and some were involved in commemorating the fallen by writing regimental and unit histories. E. C. Crosse wrote a history of the Seventh Division, *The Defeat of Austria as seen by the Seventh Division*. Canon Coop, who served as the senior chaplain to the 55<sup>th</sup> Division in France from 1915-1918 wrote the authorised history of the division, *The Story of the 55<sup>th</sup> (West Lancashire) Division* in 1919. He also was very involved in the attempts to place a cockade with the arms of the division, the Lancashire Rose, on the grave of every fallen soldier belonging to the division. In a letter to General Jeudwine<sup>69</sup> in October 1919 he recounted his efforts on a recent trip to the battlefields of France to place new cockades on recently made graves and to replace some that had been stolen on others:

I have just got back home after our tour to mark the remainder of our graves. ....We did not find as many of our graves as we had hoped. The number of 'Unknown British Soldiers' was appalling.<sup>70</sup>

Coop was upset because many of the graves had been concentrated in large cemeteries and "Our dead were not where we had expected to find them". However he was glad to report that "The cockades put up in February show no signs at all of deterioration."<sup>71</sup> It should be stressed that Liverpool was a much divided city in sectarian terms and that the Lancashire Rose was an all-inclusive local emblem that would have included all of the 55<sup>th</sup> Division's

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>69</sup>General H. S. Jeudwine commanded the 55<sup>th</sup> Division from January 1916 to the end of the war. I W M 72/82/1. The H. S. Jeudwine Papers

<sup>70</sup>The H. S. Jeudwine Papers I W M 72/82/1.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

soldiers in a non-sectarian commemorative unity. Coop's attitude to the dead was one of remembering the role played by individuals in the war. This echoed the concern felt by many former chaplains about the importance of this aspect of remembrance.

The role of former army chaplains in remembrance seems to have been ambivalent and multi-faceted. On the one hand they stood apart from aiding and abetting the constructed view of remembrance as being one of social cohesion and collective recognition of sacrifice, but on the other hand were also prominent in services and rituals designed to promote an acceptance of the post-war status quo. Their focus was on the building of a new society, but they also saw a role in involving the church in acts of collective remembrance and pilgrimage. It is clear that many of them felt a deep sense of loyalty to old comrades and former regiments and felt keenly the loss of the "elder brethren". Their experiences, as we have seen in previous chapters, inclined them to look for reform in church and state and it was in this way that the idea of the redemptive nature of the sacrifice of war was worked out.

### **Former Chaplains and Pacifism**

The role that former chaplains played in the pacifist movement in the interwar years differed as attitudes changed from the emphasis on the League of Nations and collective security of the 1920s, through the anti-war period of the late 1920s and early 1930s to the international crises of the later thirties. Michael Snape has argued that "The radicalising effect of the First World War ..... propelled a vocal element of former chaplains into the interwar peace movement"<sup>72</sup>, whereas Martin Ceadel, though admitting that the war did have an effect on

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<sup>72</sup>M. F. Snape, *The Royal Army Chaplains' Department, 1796-1953: Clergy under Fire* (London, 2007), p. 274.

the development of pacifism, says that “seeds sown in the war in Dick Sheppard, Charles Raven and Vera Brittain were slow to develop.”<sup>73</sup>

Their view of the war as sacrificial prevented most of the chaplains from joining in the widespread denigration of war in the late 1920s and early 1930s as exemplified by the war book boom. To have seen the war as something futile and to be regretted would have lessened the impetus towards creating a new world as a redemption of the sacrifices made by the combatants. In speeches of ex-chaplains the emphasis was on the future. More typical, as we have seen, was the association of former chaplains with the idea of the continued remembrance of the sacrifices made in war and the need to keep them in mind whilst focusing on the maintenance of peace and social developments as, exemplified by Tubby Clayton’s “Living Memorial” of Toc H. Faith in the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations focused on the expectation that there would be no more war and in the real possibilities of international arbitration and multi-lateral disarmament, whereas the pacifism that emerged in the 1930s was to challenge the concept of collective security and be of a pacifist rather than a pacificistic nature.<sup>74</sup> Martin Ceadel, in his study of interwar pacifism, has said of the late 1920s anti-war feeling, “The brand of pacifism which emerged from this anti-war feeling was internationalism.”<sup>75</sup>

However, some of the chaplains were expressing anti-war, if not pacifist sentiments quite soon after the war. Neville Talbot presided over a meeting at the corn exchange in London in 1919. The resolution passed was that the peace treaty terms offered “No

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<sup>73</sup>M. Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain, 1914-1945: The Defining of a Faith* (Oxford, 1980), p. 59.

<sup>74</sup>Pacifism - war is always wrong and should never be resorted to. Pacificism - war is wrong but is sometimes necessary; its prevention should be an overriding political priority, Ceadel, *Ibid.*, p. 3., A. J.P. Taylor, *The Trouble Makers* (London, 1957), p. 51.

<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 62.



guarantee of a lasting peace". He asked "were they not tired to death of the barrenness and feebleness of hatred, fear and stupidity?"<sup>76</sup> Likewise, Studdert Kennedy started to repudiate some of his more bellicose war writings and he was a speaker in the 'No More War' demonstration in Hyde Park in July 1923. A resolution was carried at this meeting declaring that "the time had come for the peoples to insist upon universal disarmament and a whole hearted and organised cooperation of the peoples working through a perfected and all inclusive League of Nations."<sup>77</sup> In *Lies*, published in 1919, he admitted that "If war is good then I am morally mad and I know of no difference between good and evil"<sup>78</sup>, and "If war is to go on forever, then I am in the dark, and I can find no meaning and no God in history, at least no God that I can love or respect."<sup>79</sup> Gerald Studdert Kennedy said of Studdert Kennedy:

His anti war speeches seem to have been unforgettable, but their emotional violence must be seen in relation not only to his experience of the horrors of war, but also in revulsion against his own involvement in the military process. During the war he had been a highly effective preacher who had gone further than some in translating Haig's expressed wishes into combative incitement.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>A. Wilkinson, *The Church Of England and the First World War* (London, 1978), p. 265.

<sup>77</sup>*The Times*, 30<sup>th</sup> July 1923, p. 12.

<sup>78</sup>G. A. Studdert Kennedy *Lies!* (London, 1919), p. 162.

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>80</sup>Gerald Studdert Kennedy, *Dog-collar Democracy: The Industrial Christian Fellowship, 1919-1929* (London, 1982), p.58.

F. R. Barry, writing in 1931, also expressed regrets about the role of the church in the war. “The Christian church has not yet recovered from its humiliating surrender in blessing the arms of all the late belligerents.”<sup>81</sup>

A Resolution of COPEC in 1923 had resolved that: “All war is contrary to the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ.” This robust approach caused some consternation, with Raven and Temple having to write to *The Times* to explain the stance of the conference. William Temple explained: “The important part; however is that the conference made it quite clear that in adopting this resolution it was not committing itself to pacifism.”<sup>82</sup> Later, Raven believed that COPEC had been equivocal about pacifism because the time was not ripe for its discussion too soon after war.<sup>83</sup>

In August 1928 Pat McCormick preached at St Martin-in-the-Fields, where he was then incumbent, on the General Treaty for the Renunciation of War, or the Kellogg-Briand Pact, which had been signed on 27<sup>th</sup> August. The pact, between the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Japan and Germany prohibited war as “An instrument of national policy” except in matters of self-defence. McCormick said: “For ten years we had been making efforts - to win the peace which we talked about at the armistice. At last we see the dawning of a new day, to some extent worthy ..... of those millions of lives laid down in the war.” He continued, stating that the signing of the pact was only a beginning, but now it was an international crime to resort to war to settle a dispute. He looked to a “spiritual

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<sup>81</sup>F. R. Barry, *The Relevance of Christianity* (London, 1933) p. 275.

<sup>82</sup>*The Times*, 16<sup>th</sup> April 1924, p. 10.

<sup>83</sup>Charles Raven, *War and Christianity* (London, 1938), p. 18.

community of nations” and ended by saying, “with God all things are possible.”<sup>84</sup> Raven also considered that the pact had changed the situation:

Until 1928 it needed some courage to denounce war from a public platform, and with the exception of the Society of Friends no Christian church had expressed any strong sense of its devotion. The autumn saw a definite change.<sup>85</sup>

A resolution of the Council of Christian Churches on Social Issues, meeting in January 1930, welcomed the Kellogg - Briand Pact and in point four of its resolution called on the:

Respective authorities of all Christian communities to declare in unmistakable terms that they will not countenance any war, or encourage their countrymen to serve in any war, with regard to which the government of the country had refused an offer to submit to pacific methods of settlement.<sup>86</sup>

This was signed by former chaplains Raven, Pym, Rogers and Southwell among others and it showed that mainstream Christian opinion was still pacifist rather than pacifist. It also showed a continued faith in collective security and international arbitration. It was this faith in collective action and the policing potential of the League of Nations that was the default opinion of the Church of England and Martin Ceadel in his study of pacifism stressed that that mainstream position of the Church of England was to support the League.<sup>87</sup>

In 1931, F. R. Barry wrote at some length in *The Relevance of Christianity* on the Christian attitude to war and disarmament:

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<sup>84</sup>*The Times*, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1928, p. 14.

<sup>85</sup>Charles Raven, *Is War Obsolete?* (London, 1935), pp. 22-23.

<sup>86</sup>*The Times*, 1<sup>st</sup> January 1930, p. 9.

<sup>87</sup>M. Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain*, p. 182.

Deeper than all temporary experiments for assisting economic recovery is emancipation of nation states from the ruinous wastage of competing armaments. Education, housing, public health and all that most vital concerns of Christian citizenship are sacrificed to the blood lust of Moloch.<sup>88</sup>

He then went on to predict that: “The time may come when Christian citizens must choose between their Christianity and their political allegiance. In any future war it will be the duty of Christians to refuse to support or cooperate with their government.”<sup>89</sup> When Hitler occupied the Rhineland in 1936, Barry said to Viscount Davidson, a member of Baldwin’s government: “If you allow our people to be involved once again in the Franco-German quarrel, you cannot justify it to God or man.”<sup>90</sup> Although Barry later recanted his pacifism, his attitude in 1936 exemplified the thoughts of those clergy whom he later described as “living in a fool’s paradise”. He considered that in the years leading up to Munich most of the former chaplains were pacifists.<sup>91</sup>

Neville Talbot, in an article in *The Natal Mercury*, at Christmas 1931 was pessimistic about the way in which the new decade had opened:

The peace of the world is war-haunted; and fear is widespread ..... for the things that are coming on the earth. The cynic may well ask whether any of the visions seen in the lurid glare of the World War have been translated into reality: whether any of the lessons taught by Armageddon have been taken to heart.

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<sup>88</sup>F. R. Barry, *The relevance of Christianity* (London, 1933) pp. 271-272.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 276.

<sup>90</sup>F. R. Barry, *Period of my Life* (London, 1970), p. 127.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

He criticised spending on arms by all the great powers, while the world was slipping into “An unparalleled world crisis.” The Wall Street Crash had been the catalyst of a world economic depression which was destabilising some European countries, particularly those like Germany whose economy depended on American financing. He was critical of the effects of the Treaty of Versailles: “What a different peace it would have been could the peacemakers have joined in the Lord’s Prayer and acted upon it.”<sup>92</sup> However, he placed some faith in the forthcoming Disarmament Conference which was due to take place in February 1932. Talbot’s attitude to pacifism remained ambivalent throughout the 1930s. He used the example of the parable of the Good Samaritan to ask what “our lord would have done if he had been passing the man on the road to Jericho.”<sup>93</sup> In 1939 he could say that he “had not yet made up his mind whether to accept or reject the pacifist conception of total renunciation of war” and continued: “It is becoming increasingly difficult to conceive of real followers of Christ raining bombs on women and Children.”<sup>94</sup> However, on the outbreak of war he supported the conflict.

### **Charles Raven and Dick Sheppard**

The international events of the early 1930s, (Japan’s action in Manchuria 1931, Mussolini’s invasion of Abyssinia in 1935, Hitler’s move into the Rhineland 1936, and the Spanish Civil War in 1936) saw the growth of both secular and Christian pacifist movements. Two former Anglican army chaplains were to be prominent in these pacifist developments.

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<sup>92</sup>*The Natal Mercury*, Christmas 1931, press cuttings in the papers of Neville Talbot, Nottinghamshire County Record Office, DD 1332/76.

<sup>93</sup>F. Brabant, *Neville Talbot*, p. 130.

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 131.

During the Great War Raven served with the 1<sup>st</sup> Berkshire Regiment and saw action, which according to his biographer, F.W Dillistone, had a profound effect on him. Dillistone described an experience that Raven had of God's presence on one occasion in the trenches when he was very afraid: "For the next nine months He was never absent ..... It was He that was with me when I was blown up by a shell, and gassed and sniped at, with me in hours of bombardment and the daily walk with death."<sup>95</sup> While at the front Raven wrote, "Pacifists and ..... C O s [conscientious objectors] may talk about the sanctity of human brotherhood, we out here have discovered something of its reality."<sup>96</sup> The discussions on war and pacifism at COPEC caused him to consider pacifism seriously, and after having become a pacifist in 1930, he felt that the topic was an ideal follow up to COPEC: "If a single issue was to be chosen, only the cause of peace was large enough and exciting enough to be a worthy expression of our studies."<sup>97</sup> Significantly, almost 100 members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation had attended COPEC in some capacity.<sup>98</sup>

Charles Raven was convinced by pacifism after the "Christ for Peace campaign" in 1929. He committed himself to pacifism in 1930 and "never wavered"<sup>99</sup>. He joined the Fellowship of Reconciliation in 1931 and in 1932 became its president. According to Dillistone : "To the fellowship, Raven brought prestige, a reputation for strong, even arrogant leadership and above all else, an outstanding intellect. A brilliant academic, he nevertheless had the gift of making theology acceptable to the man in the street."<sup>100</sup> On 10<sup>th</sup> May 1932 Raven signed a letter as part of a protest against the progress of the Disaffection

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<sup>95</sup>F. W. Dillistone, *Charles Raven, Naturalist, Theologian, Historian* (London, 1975), p. 85.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., P. 86.

<sup>97</sup>Raven, *Is War Obsolete?* pp. 22-23.

<sup>98</sup>Jill Wallis, *Valiant for Peace: History of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1914-89* (London, 1991), p. 54.

<sup>99</sup>Dillistone, *Charles Raven*, p. 211.

<sup>100</sup>Wallis, *Valiant for peace*, p.93.

Bill. The 1934 Incitement to Disaffection Act made it an offence to seduce a serviceman from his “duty or his allegiance”, thus expanding the ambit of the law.<sup>101</sup> The act was widely criticized as being an unnecessary restriction on freedom of speech.<sup>102</sup> Lord Ponsonby attacked it in the House of Lords: “We foresee that in times of panic, or should the cloud of war appear on the horizon, this measure will be used for the suppression of what has been hitherto considered perfectly legitimate opinion.”<sup>103</sup> Two years after accepting the post of chairman of the Fellowship of Reconciliation Raven was admitting that “all was far from well”<sup>104</sup> in the fellowship. This must be seen in the context of disillusion about the Lambeth resolution,<sup>105</sup> the failure of the Simon Commission on India,<sup>106</sup> and the breakup of the disarmament conference in Geneva in 1934<sup>107</sup>. Raven became involved in preparing for the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work which was a follow up to the Sweden conference organised by Nathan Söderblom<sup>108</sup> in 1923. Bell gave a taste of its remit in a letter to *The Times* on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1932: “We are studying what church life in the modern

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<sup>101</sup>Select Committee on Religious offences in England and Wales, First Report, 2003, [www.parliament .uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

<sup>102</sup>The 1934 Act eventually produced the only occasion on which the higher courts have had to pronounce on this form of legislation, (*R V Arrowsmith* [1975] QB 678), Select Committee on Religious offences in England and Wales, First Report, 2003, [www.parliament .uk](http://www.parliament .uk).

<sup>103</sup>*House of Lords Debate 13 November 1934, vol. 94 cc379-91(Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede speaking)*, [www.parliament .uk](http://www.parliament .uk).

<sup>104</sup>Letter from Raven to FOR executive, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1934 cited in Wallis, *Valiant for Peace*, p. 77.

<sup>105</sup>Although the Lambeth Conference resolutions on ‘The Life and Witness of the Christian Community - Peace and War’ affirmed ‘That war as a method of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ’(Resolution25), it was ambivalent about pacifism. ‘The Conference holds that the Christian Church in every nation should refuse to countenance any war in regard to which the government of its own country has not declared its willingness to submit the matter in dispute to arbitration or conciliation’(resolution27). <http://www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/1930/1930-27.cfm>.

<sup>106</sup>The Simon Commission went to India in 1928 to review the Government of India Act 1919. Its report in 1930 was widely criticised. <http://www8.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/makingbritain/content/simon-report>.

<sup>107</sup>The progress of the Geneva Peace Conference was halted by the withdrawal of Japan from the League of Nations in March 1933 and the withdrawal of Germany in October 1933. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/naval-arms-control-1932.htm>.

<sup>108</sup>Nathan Söderblom, Archbishop of Uppsala from 1914 Strong advocate of intercommunion between the Swedish Church and the Church of England. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1930 for his work for church unity and world peace. [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1930/soderblom-bio.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1930/soderblom-bio.html).

world ought to mean ..... we are cooperating with other international organisations in insisting that it will be a scandal to the conscience of mankind if the disarmament conference was without effective results.”<sup>109</sup>

Raven was initially influenced by pacifist ideas. In an article in *Reconciliation* in January 1934, he shocked other pacifists by saying: “mere abstention will not suffice to make war impossible.”<sup>110</sup> He thus supported the League of Nations Union and said: “While refusing to submit our own consciences to the dictates of political common sense or to make the church an appendage of the League of Nations, it ought to be possible for Christians to acquiesce in the internationalism of armed force while advocating and developing another way of reconciliation.”<sup>111</sup> Raven’s ideas on pacifism were those of a liberal theologian and he seemed to have based his attitude to pacifism on his ideas of the natural sciences and his concept of a ‘new reformation’ (see Chapter Four). In line with his naturalist interests Raven saw: “that pacifism was thus a natural adaptation to ensure human survival in an era of total war, as well as a step nearer the Christian religious ideal.”<sup>112</sup> In 1935 Raven gave the Halley Stewart lectures on the question of *Is War Obsolete?* Dillistone argued that “Through these lectures Raven cleared his mind, worked out an impressive apologia on behalf of pacifism and at least indirectly issued a challenge to his fellow Christians to enlist in the same crusade.”<sup>113</sup> It was at this stage that he embraced a purely pacifist attitude towards war.

Raven considered that it “was not until Armistice-tide 1928 that a change of attitude towards the discussion of war became obvious”, and that in the next few years “a deeply felt

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<sup>109</sup> *The Times*, 25<sup>th</sup> August 1932, p. 6.

<sup>110</sup> M. Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain*, p. 159.

<sup>111</sup> F. W. Dillistone, *Charles Raven*, p. 219.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>113</sup> F. W. Dillistone, *Charles Raven*, p. 219.



wave of pacifism spread over the country.”<sup>114</sup> He continued: “The problem of war is the dominant moral and religious issue of the day. Both its character and its urgency make it essential for the churches to face it.”<sup>115</sup> He concluded: “War is evil and for the Christian a flat denial of his faith.”<sup>116</sup>

Raven’s pacifism seemed to grow originally from his experience of war, but was informed by COPEC and his ideas on a ‘New Reformation.’ It was theologically based but also owed much to his ideas on evolution. Edward Madigan is of the opinion that Raven joined the FOR “Perhaps because it was the most overtly Christian and the one most interested in discovering a theological basis for defending the absolute rejection of war.”<sup>117</sup> Raven felt that in the later 1930s the threat of war gave the church a definite cause, “A concrete situation”<sup>118</sup> on which “Christians would be constrained to stand and deliver an unequivocal reply”.<sup>119</sup> He was possibly glad to find a cause which might prove more durable than that of COPEC.

Although Dick Sheppard was an undoubtedly major influence on the development of pacifism through his leadership of the Peace Pledge Union in the interwar years, the extent to which his pacifism was influenced by his brief time as chaplain to an Australian hospital on the Western Front is open to question. Although his experience was brief, and was never meant to be protracted, as he had just been appointed vicar of St Martin - in- the - Fields, he seem to have exhausted himself by working long hours and becoming very emotionally

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<sup>114</sup> *ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>115</sup> *ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>116</sup> *ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>117</sup> E Madigan, *Faith Under Fire, Anglican Army Chaplains and the Great War* (New York, 2001), p. 236.

<sup>118</sup> C. Raven, *War and the Christian* (London, 1938), p. 13.

<sup>119</sup> *ibid.*, p. 43.

involved with his pastoral duties.<sup>120</sup> He returned in a state of collapse and concentrated on his work at St Martin's, where his open house policy in his use of the church and crypt in wartime London contained a strong element of identification with the troops as he provided place for rest and comfort as troops moved to and from the front.

In *We say No, A Plain Man's Guide to Pacifism* written in 1935, Sheppard recounted the experience of talking to a dying man in the trenches, and the effect this had on him:

In September 1914 I knelt by a dying soldier. I had just arrived in France. He was the first soldier I saw die. As I bent to catch his painfully spoken words, I discovered he had little need of my ministry, he was thinking of a life that was still unborn. His wife was expecting a baby about Christmas. He died thanking God, that if the child was a boy, he would never have to go through the hell of war. That man believed that what he had been told, that he was fighting in the war to end war ..... those sons are of military age now.<sup>121</sup>

However, according to Maude Royden, close friend and fellow peace campaigner, during the war he had no doubts as to its legitimacy:

I asked him whether he had ever felt any questions about the righteousness of the war at that time, and he told me he had not. Many army chaplains had, and many soldiers who were not chaplains. Dick assured me, that astonishingly as it may seem he had no doubts at all: War seemed to him to be then absolutely necessary and

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<sup>120</sup>R. Ellis Roberts, *H. R. L. Sheppard, Life and Letters* (London, 1942), p.84.

<sup>121</sup>H. R. L. Sheppard, *We Say No, A Plain man's Guide to Pacifism* (London, 1935), p. 1.

therefore right, even though he, as a Christian priest, must not take a sword in his hand.<sup>122</sup>

The first manifestation of ideas which were perhaps part of his move towards pacifism came at Armistice Day, 1925. Sheppard had, with many others, become appalled with the elements of celebration on Armistice Sunday, and particularly objected to an Armistice Day ball at the Albert Hall. At short notice, he managed to get the ball cancelled and took a brief service in the Albert Hall himself. William Paxton, National President of the Brotherhood Movement, remembered: "He organised a religious service in the Albert Hall and in the presence of thousands of people, he pleaded for a fresh dedication to the cause of peace."<sup>123</sup>

In the 1920s and early 1930s, Sheppard had obtained a reputation as an anti-church establishment figure, who as we have seen in Chapter Four, often clashed with the church authorities on issues such as unity and intercommunion. In 1927 he published *The Impatience of a Parson* which contained criticism of the established church, but also more than a hint of his growing commitment to pacifism: "War cannot be reconciled with Christianity: there is no such thing as a Christian war."<sup>124</sup> In a letter to Laurence Houseman on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1927 he said, "I shall be obliged to identify myself with your pacifism." On 4<sup>th</sup> February he continued, "I am a pacifist now .... I cannot but identify myself with pacifism, for I am a pacifist and not prepared to pretend I am anything else." It is clear that he still had to

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<sup>122</sup>Maude Royden, 'Dick Sheppard, Peace Maker' in William Paxton (ed.), *Dick Sheppard, An Apostle of Brotherhood* (London, 1938), p. 75.

<sup>123</sup>William Paxton, 'Dick Sheppard, National President of the Brotherhood Movement' in Paxton *An apostle of Brotherhood*, p. 12.

<sup>124</sup>H. R. L. Sheppard, *The Impatience of a Parson* (London, 1927), p. 57.

work his ideas out: “Of course I am still in a haze about what is right and wrong, as far as the state goes. Surely the state must protect its citizens?”<sup>125</sup>

In 1932 he became involved in a scheme, with Maude Royden, to create a “Peace Army” which would travel to Manchuria and physically interpose itself between the Japanese army and the Chinese people. A letter to the press in February 1932 elicited 800 volunteers, but the scheme was still born, partially because of Foreign Office disapproval and partially because the situation in Manchuria improved. Sheppard tried to get Lloyd George interested in the ideas and this, in the opinion of Martin Ceadel, gave an insight into the way he perceived the idea of pacifism: “An attempt which demonstrated how far Sheppard saw the peace question in terms of mobilizing men of good will behind an inspiring leader, rather than in terms of defining a specific pacifist policy which could be applied to the international situation.”

Sheppard continued to work out his pacifist beliefs, culminating in the publication of *We Say No* in 1935. On the 16<sup>th</sup> October 1934 he wrote an open letter to the press in which in 500 words he justified his reasons for writing, which Ceadel summarised as: “The urgency of the international situation, the increasing tendency to violence exemplified by the fascist and communist movements and his belief that the average man was seeking an alternative policy.”<sup>126</sup> Sheppard stated that many people were convinced that war was “Not only a denial of Christianity, but a crime against humanity.”<sup>127</sup> He offered the opportunity for men in agreement with him to write a postcard using the words of what became the famous

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<sup>125</sup> Laurence Houseman, *What can we believe? : Letters Exchanged Between Dick Sheppard and L. H. Housman* (London, 1939) pp.81-82.

<sup>126</sup> Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain*, p. 177.

<sup>127</sup> *The Manchester Guardian*, 16<sup>th</sup> October 1934, p. 20

“peace pledge”: “We renounce war and never again, directly or indirectly will we support or sanction another.”<sup>128</sup> The response was enormous, with a total of 50,000 postcards received in response to his appeal.

Sheppard did not follow up this initiative until 4<sup>th</sup> July 1935, probably as a response to the growing Abyssinian crisis. He held a meeting of signatories of the Peace Pledge at the Albert Hall who were addressed by Sheppard, Edmund Blunden, Siegfried Sassoon, General Frank Crozier and Maude Royden. After this meeting the Sheppard Peace Movement was launched, soon to be renamed the Peace Pledge Union. Its launch attracted some influential sponsors from a variety of Christian, secular, cultural and political circles. The events of 1935 and 1936 increased public sympathy for the pacifist cause at the same time as the League of Nations looked ever less credible as a means of avoiding war.

In October 1937 Sheppard’s policy of creating the Peace Pledge Union as a heterogeneous organisation containing all strands of pacifism was vindicated by his victory in Glasgow University’s Rectorial election as a purely pacifist candidate. The leading article in *The Student Pacifist* (the paper for his campaign), speaking of the Peace Pledge said:

This was no crank idea foisted on an unthinking public by wealth and privilege. It was a logical sequel to the fact that over all the land, thinking men and women were despairing of the prevailing panaceas for the prevention of war and were turning to pacifism as a personal philosophy and national policy.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> *The Student Pacifist*, 12<sup>th</sup> October 1937, MS. 3744. Lambeth Palace Library.

A few days after this victory Sheppard was dead, his compulsive overworking and his asthma contributing to a fatal heart attack.

There is no doubt about the contribution of Dick Sheppard to the peace movement between the wars and his undoubted skilled leadership of the Peace Pledge Union. Although the growth of the movement owed much to his leadership, the headline in *The Peace News* on his death was "The movement will stand without me"<sup>130</sup> and it is perhaps a tribute to his leadership that it did. The comment from the Peace Pledge Union was that: "While the peace Pledge Union throughout its membership is overwhelmed by grief at the news of its founder's death, the work which Dr Sheppard began and which he died for, will go forward with redoubled vigour and fulfilment."<sup>131</sup>

Notwithstanding his stature and reputation as a pacifist leader in this era, there are still some questions to be asked about Sheppard in terms of his motivation and his use of his war-time experiences as a means to enhance his credentials in the peace movement. Ceadel is sceptical of Sheppard's motivation. Commenting on Sheppard's acceptance of a Canonry at St Paul's in September 1934 he said: "It is tempting, therefore to see his simultaneous decision to renew his pacifist stand as in some way a compensation for accepting a conventional preferment."<sup>132</sup> A more charitable interpretation could be that his health had improved due to a new breathing machine obtained in late 1933 and was therefore able to give more attention to both his new post and renewed peace campaigning. Fast moving international events had evidently caused him to strengthen the ideas he had expressed since 1927 into an absolutist pacifism which demanded action.

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<sup>130</sup> *The Peace News*, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1937, MS. 3744, Lambeth Palace Library

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 6<sup>th</sup> November 1937.

<sup>132</sup> Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain*, p. 176.

Sheppard had been moved by his experiences in the war, and it is possible that his short time in France had indeed influenced him as much as longer spells experienced by less intense and healthier chaplains. There exists, however a distinct impression that he, or others, exaggerated his war service in order to give his pacifism more credibility. Entries in *Crockford's Clerical Directory* have him described as "Temporary Chaplain to the Forces", whereas he was never in fact attached to the Chaplains' Department.<sup>133</sup> His close friend Maude Royden had an impression that his war record was more wide ranging than it actually was. In her tribute to him in 1938 she said of him:

Ultimately at one with the men of his regiment, he went over the top with them again and again, but always weapon less, unarmed. It was prophetic of the position he was to take up later but now no longer an individual who, because he happened to be an ordained priest must not fight. He was to convince us ordinary men and women who were not priests, but Christian all the same, that war was not possible for us either.<sup>134</sup>

This shows not only a lack of understanding of the role of a chaplain but a determination to link his pacifism with his war experiences. Michael Snape has cited evidence to show that some of his followers were convinced that he had been awarded a Military Cross.<sup>135</sup> It must be remembered that Sheppard was a major and well loved celebrity in his lifetime and that a certain amount of hyperbole and rumour would have surrounded his life and actions.

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<sup>133</sup> *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1937), p. 1202, cited by M. F. Snape, 'Church of England Army Chaplains in the First World War: Goodbye to "Goodbye to All That"' in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 62, no. 2, April 2011, p. 338.

<sup>134</sup> Maude Roydon, 'Dick Sheppard, Peacemaker', p. 76.

<sup>135</sup> L. Smith, *Pacifists in action: The experience of the Friends Ambulance Unit in the Second World War*, (York, 1998) p. 15, cited by M .F. Snape, 'Church of England Army Chaplains in the First World War: Goodbye to "Goodbye to All That"', p. 338.

However, there seems to be little evidence that he corrected these exaggerated accounts of his war service. He was held in very high esteem by a number of high profile former chaplains including Harry Blackburne, Pat McCormick and Tom Pym, Blackburne addressing him in letters as "Beloved Dick".<sup>136</sup> It is unlikely that this should have been so if it was felt that he was unduly capitalising on his war experience. It is significant in examining the role of chaplains in post-war society that it was felt to be so important that a priest with a high public profile in the peace movement should be shown as having been at the front during the Great War and endured its rigours with the men he was now asking to renounce war.

Sheppard's pacifism was always of a more emotional type than that of an academic like Raven. He was sometimes equivocal about whether absolute pacifism would be sustainable in war. Ceadel thinks that a number of PPU members came to believe that Sheppard would have abandoned or modified his pacifism in 1939 or 1940, basing their ideas on his ambivalence on a number of issues expressed in *We Say No* and "his belief about the Great War that the self-sacrifice of the soldiery was greater than that of the conscientious objector."<sup>137</sup> William Paxton remembered, "On one occasion I heard someone condemning a friend of ours who had 'ratted' on the pacifist question. 'Go easy. Old man', said Dick. 'When the guns begin to fire who can say how many of us will fail?'"<sup>138</sup> His death removed the future dilemma but it is possible that as his pacifism was an emotional pacifism, at war it could have been an emotional patriotism.

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<sup>136</sup> Letter from H. Blackburne to Dick Sheppard, MS 3744 p. 11, Lambeth Palace Library

<sup>137</sup> M. Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain*, p. 247.

<sup>138</sup> William Paxton, 'Dick Sheppard, National President', p. 12.



Sheppard's role in Christian pacifism was considered by Charles Raven to have been important to the church as a whole. Writing to Archbishop Lang after Sheppard's death he emphasised the importance of appointing a Christian leader for the PPU.

Dick Sheppard held together a very influential group of people and many of them formerly critical of and even hostile to Christianity. His influence changed their attitude ..... but many of them are still only sympathetic and will easily slip back into estrangement.

The letter goes on, "This would not matter so much for the peace movement. There are other specifically Christian peace societies, but it would matter for the church, for the PPU is proving a very effective evangelistic agency."<sup>139</sup>

It is clear then that Sheppard played an important role in the development of the pacifist movement and was an undoubted motivator of the PPU during the interwar years. It is less clear to what extent this pacifism was informed by his war service and to what extent this was exaggerated to enhance his standing in the movement. Martin Ceadel and Edward Madigan have both quoted Baldwin's famous dictum that "the bomber will always get through" to suggest that it was in fact the fear of a new war rather than memories of an old one which motivated the peace movement and its famous figures such as Raven and Sheppard. However, we have seen how the ideas of war and remembrance, with open regret leading to open pacifism played a large part in the psyches of former chaplains and it is not too much to assume that Sheppard's undeniably heavy workload in the cause of pacifism owed much to his brief experience as a chaplain in the Great War.

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<sup>139</sup> Letter from Charles Raven to Archbishop Lang, 17<sup>th</sup> November 1937, Archbishop Lang Papers Vol. 393. Lambeth Palace Library.

## Conclusion

Chaplains returning from the Great War were determined that part of the redemption of sacrifice was to be that there would be no more war. In this their ideology was part of the general feeling that the war had been “The war to end all wars”. They played their part in the national rituals of remembrance which have been considered, as we have seen, by some historians, to have been mechanisms to promote social cohesion and acceptance of the existing social order. However, their combination of remembrance of the dead with change for the future, as epitomised by Toc H as a ‘living memorial’, prevented them from being merely the official functionaries of a state- inspired semi-religious commemoration. The fact that it was important for leaders of the peace movements to emphasise strongly their credentials as former chaplains to enhance their influence shows how much influence the Great War had on the thinking of many sections of society. It was more credible to decry a future war if one had been shown to have fully appreciated the horrors of the last one.

The majority of views held concerning war and peace in the Anglican church in the 1930s were to support the efforts of the League of Nations and the national government to keep peace, but there was a growing awareness, especially after the Munich Crisis, that this support did not preclude the idea that Britain, as part of the League of Nations and as a major European power, should play a part in defeating the expansion of Fascism. Former chaplains like Barry, although joining in the general relief at Munich, soon changed from a pacifist position to that of support for war, even castigating themselves for having supported pacifism:

I must admit with shame that after Munich I shared in the popular hysteria. Only slowly and painfully did I realise the wickedness of Nazism and fascism and the moral duty of saving the Western World from being enslaved to their obscene domination.<sup>140</sup>

The different attitudes taken by former chaplains in the face of another war show the different ways in which their experiences in the Great War had effected their thinking during the brief period of the inter war years. Men who had worked out a definite theological and intellectual rationale for their absolute pacifism, such as Charles Raven, remained convinced of the need to avoid war, but for many former chaplains, their horror of war, and consequent pacifistic thinking, was replaced by the need to support another, very different war against fascism.

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<sup>140</sup> F. R. Barry, *Period of my Life*, p. 128.

## Conclusion

The interwar years were a time of change and adjustment for Britain, in which the nation grappled with the effects of a world war while at the same time experiencing continuities from the pre-war economy and Victorian and Edwardian social attitudes. The immediate and longer term effects of total war, in which civilians as well as the armed forces had played a vital part, dominated politics, industry and society, while the rituals of remembrance were a reminder of the enormous personal and corporate cost of war, which encouraged a new sense of engagement in the post-war world.

Chapter One explains how, against this background, the Anglican Church, particularly the chaplains returning from war, struggled to emerge from the disappointment of the failure of the conditions of total war to produce a religious revival and the realisation that the Christianity of the troops was, when it existed, of a far more diffusive nature than had been thought. It was certainly not strong enough to bring the men who had served in the army to regular attendance at church on their return. Revisionist historians have questioned the concept of the First World War as distinct watershed in British society, so in this chapter pre-war influences in terms of their backgrounds and previous careers have been assessed, together with an overview of the strength of the Anglican Church at the beginning of the war. It was found that the church in 1914 was overcoming some of the problems of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and was optimistic about further progress. The pre-war experiences of those who came forward as chaplains were diverse and as a group they were not inexperienced. However, there is a large body of evidence to show that to a great extent their lives and opinions were altered by the experience of war. Chapter One described how the chaplains'

experiences and the issues they brought up affected their ideas of their role in the post war world. They had experienced the opportunity to work in cooperation with chaplains of other denominations and they had ministered to men of every background. They had occasion to grapple with difficulties in their own faith and to question preconceived theological tenets and church party affiliations. Their awareness of the diffusive Christianity prevalent in the trenches had given them fresh ideas for harnessing the increased religious awareness of men who were returning by fresh approaches to the liturgy of the church and the role of the church in social and industrial issues. Most importantly that had experienced freedom from restraints imposed by the structure and discipline of the Anglican Church at home. This allowed them to develop a flexible attitude which was to be reflected in their post- war ministries.

The chaplains were very conscious about the way in which their work in the war would have an effect on their post-war ministries and produced collectively a large body of work in which they articulated this awareness. Although as individuals they wrote about inspiring occasions and services at the front, and their post-war accounts of their time at war are in the main positive, collectively they were very conscious of the failure of the Anglican Church to have an obvious effect on the majority of the troops. This realisation informed their views and actions in their post-war careers in a number of ways. One of the early indicators that they were to have a significant effect on the organisation and administration of the post-war Anglican Church was shown in the rebellious attitude of some chaplains whilst the war was still continuing, towards the institutions, procedures and services of the church. A symptom of this attitude was seen in the 'Plus and Minus' scheme discussed by some senior chaplains in the spring of 1918. This and other expressions of discontent with

the government of the church led serving chaplains to be prominent in the Life and Liberty Movement which was to be instrumental in the genesis of the Enabling Bill, passed in 1919.

The economic effect of the war, linked to the continued decline of Britain's staple industries, coal, steel and textiles, resulted in economic hardship, unemployment and consequent industrial strife throughout the inter-war years. The slump which followed the brief post-war boom brought into focus the economic difficulties which were to continue in some parts of Britain throughout the inter-war years. Chapter Two examined how many of the former chaplains worked towards both amelioration of the conditions caused by unemployment and solutions to its root causes. The work of C O P E C has been seen as being too idealistic and not producing enough practical applications, but there is no doubt that the principles of the main reports of C O P E C were ones which were to reappear in the foundations of social reform in the years leading up to the Beveridge Report and the formation of a National Health Service. C O P E C was the idea of William Temple but he was ably assisted by former chaplains. Temple had been close to several prominent chaplains such as Pym, Raven, Blackburne and Talbot during the war and immediately after it. Some of his initiatives, such as the Life and Liberty Movement, were inspired or certainly encouraged by the opinions of serving chaplains.

Individual former Anglican chaplains such as Bishop Timothy Rees, John Groser and Tom Pym became prominent in working for a just industrial society. A great deal was achieved by the work of the Industrial Christian Fellowship (ICF), which, although not overtly political, was involved in many of the issues involved in industrial relations during the 1920s and 1930s. As well as organising crusades in many deprived areas which concerned

themselves with the material as well as the spiritual plight of the local population, they campaigned for changes in government policy which would be to the benefit of the poorly paid and unemployed. Their chief missionary, Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy, as well as participating in crusades, spoke on all kinds of public platforms expounding the Christian response to the problems of industry and society. P. T. R. Kirk, the ICF leader, became involved in an interdenominational group attempting to mediate in the General Strike. Gerald Studdert Kennedy has shown how the ICF received much support from parishes where the priest was a former chaplain. A significant number of former chaplains were also on its committee. Through its contacts with both influential figures in industry and with unions through the Brotherhood, the ICF was able to play a significant role in the industrial and economic affairs in the inter-war period. The ICF has continued to flourish into the 21st century, providing funds for research on industrial relations and its publications giving advice on modern industrial dilemmas. Although the ICF is not an Anglican Institution Chapter Two explains how many of its main supporters were influential figures in the Anglican Church. These included former chaplains who also had a high profile in Anglican Church government and were instrumental in encouraging debate in Convocation and Church Assembly on social and industrial issues. They were instrumental in creating a climate of opinion within the Anglican Church more in tune with the social and Industrial issues of the inter-war years.

Chapter Three investigates the work of the Toc H movement which can be seen as complementary to the work of the ICF. It was founded by P. B. 'Tubby' Clayton, and aimed at a better and more equal society by encouraging men of all classes to be united in the service of their fellow men as a memorial to the men who had fallen in the war. The difference in Toc H's attitude was that its emphasis was on fellowship in service, its members drawn from

all walks of life, being organised by the 'jobmaster' to provide service according to their talents. The organisation, although Anglican in origin, was interdenominational and spread to become a worldwide movement which has provided service and fellowship to generations. It was active during the Second World War, and like the ICF still exists today.

The record of former chaplains in their efforts to engage with social and industrial problems during the interwar years is impressive. Behind the larger than life figures of Studdert Kennedy and 'Tubby' Clayton were the priests who took part in committees and debates at parochial, diocesan and national level, who arranged crusades, spoke out in the local and national press on industrial matters and preached in market squares alongside communists. The Anglican Church had a history of social action stretching back into the nineteenth century, but the circumstances of the interwar years demanded an immediate and articulate response from it which was present in no small measure due to the efforts of former chaplains.

Chapter Four examines the role of former chaplains in training of the clergy, in developments in academic theology and in the support of Christian-based educational institutions. The awareness of a distance between some chaplains and the ordinary soldier prompted some of the senior and more perceptive and experienced chaplains such as Neville Talbot to question the way in which ordinands were prepared for their ministry in universities and theological colleges before war. The reactions of some ill-prepared and inexperienced Anglican chaplains to conditions at the front prompted some criticism. It was the development of the necessary training in pastoral work and an awareness of the new discipline of psychology, to combat this criticism, which caused a sea change in post-war



ordination training. The Test School at Knutsford contributed to the widening class composition of the Anglican clergy by ensuring that ordinary, perhaps hitherto poorly educated, ex-servicemen had the chance to catch up on their educational qualifications in an atmosphere far removed from the traditional theological college. It was the vision of chaplains such as P. B. Clayton and F. R. Barry, who had been debating the nature of the Anglican ministry as part of their response to war, that ensured the success of this venture, which laid the ground for a much broader selection of candidates for ordination as the twentieth century progressed. The development of the concept of a more professional priesthood for the Church of England can be said to be one of the results of the insights of some Anglican chaplains as a result of their wartime experiences. This chapter also examined the way in which former chaplains contributed to the development of continued theological debate within the church and grappled with new disciplines such as moral theology and psychology, examining the way in which new ideas and research into the functioning of the human mind had relevance for the way in which to live a Christian life.

Chapter Five examines the way in which the inter-war years saw challenges and changes to the institutional structure of the Anglican Church, for example, the Enabling Act which resulted in parochial changes such as Parochial Church Councils and wider changes such as the creation of new dioceses. There was controversy over proposed changes to the Prayer Book and widely differing opinions on moves toward unity with other churches. Former chaplains, who had already been instrumental in the Life and Liberty Movement, were involved from early war days in moves toward unity. Neville Talbot, as we have seen, wrote about unity in several books and was present at the Lambeth Conference discussions in 1920 which resulted in the important Lambeth resolution on unity, "An Appeal to all

Christian People". Nine former chaplains took part in the Mansfield Conference in 1920 which produced a resolution advocating exchange of pulpits with other Christian denominations and also promoting joint communion services. Other chaplains were prominent in discussion on unity with the Church of Scotland in 1932 and 1933, and also in the wider orbit of international unity between churches, in the Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order in 1927. Chaplains such as Guy Rogers, who was a leading advocate and indeed practitioner of intercommunion, explained that the motivation for many chaplains in their support for church unity was a desire to recapture the spirit of unity and interdenominationalism that had prevailed in the trenches. The cause of church unity did not develop much further in the interwar years than the Lambeth resolution of 1920, one of the main problems being the validity of non-Episcopal orders. However, throughout this period, former chaplains and those who had experienced ministering at war, such as Dick Sheppard, kept the topic alive and went much further than some of their colleagues in acting against church policy on unity and intercommunion.

Chaplains ministering congregations at the front had often been highly critical of the services of the church, seeing them as arcane and irrelevant to the spiritual needs of the ordinary soldier. They were vociferous in their comments in several wartime reports that services should be revised if the church was to attract worshippers in the post-war world. A major controversy which engulfed the Anglican Church in the 1920s was that of the proposals to revise the Book of Common Prayer. After several years of heated discussion at the Church Assembly, a proposal was put forward to Parliament in December 1927 and was rejected. A revised proposal was rejected in February 1928. Former chaplains had been active in proposals to revise the Prayer Book, mainly cooperating on a proposal called the

'Grey Book', which incorporated their ideas of lectionary revision and changes to the communion service. Although the Grey Book proposals did not have a large effect on the eventual revised proposal which went to Parliament in 1928, most of the former chaplains involved supported the revision and, as we have seen, were consciously aware that their opinions had been formed to a large extent by their wartime experiences. Their emphasis on the importance of Holy Communion was to be instrumental in encouraging developments leading to the Parish Communion movement later in the century.

Chapter Six examines the way in which, in addition to being involved in controversies concerning the life of the church, former chaplains were also involved in some more wide-ranging controversies of the interwar years. The mainstream of Anglican opinion was firmly against the remarriage of divorced people and of admitting them to Holy Communion. By 1936 however, Convocation at Canterbury acknowledged that the attitude of the church was out of line with changing social mores and there was a role for the church in supporting limited demands for reform in the divorce laws. Former chaplains were prominent in pressing for a more compassionate attitude from the church on remarriage and consequent admission to Holy Communion. Rogers freely admitted to performing marriages where one of the partners had been divorced. Rogers, Pym and Linton Smith were firmly in favour of adequate marriage preparation, thus dealing with the causes rather than the consequences of marriage breakdown. Among former chaplains, Kenneth Kirk was a dissenting voice, arguing for the sanctity of marriage and the safeguarding of moral standards. Another controversy in which some former chaplains were to be involved, that of the use of contraception, also showed the necessity to think beyond narrow theological or doctrinal restraints. Again, former chaplains were arguing against the mainstream of Anglican opinion

refuting the idea that contraception was wrong in all cases. In their advocacy of the use of contraception in certain circumstances, Barry and Rogers went far beyond the exceptions allowed by the Lambeth Conference in 1930. The question of remarriage in church after divorce still causes controversy in today's church, the use of contraception less so, but it can be seen that former chaplains were in the vanguard of change in these matters and that their arguments, based on the compassion of God rather than on theological arguments could have been influenced by their experiences in the war, when often the necessity to show the love of God was more important than points of church doctrine or morality.

The development of radio broadcasting and the cinema into mass media in the interwar years posed further challenges to the church. There was concern that listening to the radio on Sunday would detract from church attendance and that the content of films shown in the cinemas would undermine the moral standards of the nation. Former chaplains proved adept at seizing the opportunities posed by the new media by encouraging the development of broadcast church services against some stiff opposition from laymen and clergy and the efforts of Dick Sheppard and Pat McCormick made St Martin-in-the-Fields synonymous with the success of early broadcasting on the B B C. Less successfully, attempts were made to harness the power of the cinema to promote Christianity. The pragmatic attitude of E. S. Woods and others to cinema-going encouraged local councils to cooperate with the local churches in discussions about timing and content of cinema showings. It can be seen in Chapters Five and Six that former chaplains were involved in many of the controversies of the Anglican Church in the interwar years. Although they did not always speak with one voice they were active in words and deeds in pursuing their objectives. Their concern with issues of unity with other churches and the liturgy of the church can be seen to

be clearly linked to their war service. They were evidently prepared to challenge mainstream opinion in the established church. Their speeches, books and actions can be said to have led the way in dealing with some of the more controversial issues both internally and in wider society that the church had to tackle in this era and to have established a groundwork which the church would find helpful in the rest of the twentieth century.

Chapter Seven concentrates on the attitude of former chaplains to remembrance which led some to adopt a pacifist position. They were much in demand to help form and consolidate rituals of remembrance in the post-war years. However, their emphasis was mostly on the concept of redemptive sacrifice and the necessity to reshape society in the name of those who had died. A clear example of this was the 'Living Memorial' of Toc H. They also had to combat attempts to make remembrance a secular function as epitomised by the non-religious symbolism of the Cenotaph and the refusal of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to allow crosses as headstones. A former chaplain, David Railton was, however, successful in being instrumental in the burial of the Unknown Warrior at Westminster Abbey which gave families of the soldiers without a known grave a place to mourn. This grave remains a major focus for remembrance. An important legacy of the participation of former chaplains in rituals of remembrance is the continuation of the Anglican Church's involvement today. Even in a secular society the example of the chaplains' participation in remembrance after the Great War remains. While representatives of all major religions are invited to participate in national and local ceremonies, it is mainly in the buildings and under the auspices of the Anglican Church that such ceremonies take place.

The role that former chaplains played in the pacifist movement in the interwar years differed as circumstances changed during the interwar years, from the emphasis on the League of Nations and collective security of the twenties, through the anti-war period of the late twenties and early thirties to the international crises of the later nineteen thirties . Many former chaplains such as Neville Talbot and Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy spoke with an anti-war voice in the years immediately after the war but generally the pacifism shown by former chaplains was linked to support of collective security and the League of Nations union. Charles Raven and Dick Sheppard made an undeniable and major contribution to the organisation of the pacifist cause with their work with the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Peace Pledge Union respectively. These organisations are flourishing today and are further instances of institutions formed by or supported by former Anglican chaplains which continue to have an effect on twenty first century society in that they provide a structure for pacifist action and forums for pacifist debate.

The emphasis on ideas of chaplains returning from the Great War was on reformation rather than remembrance, although they did play their part in the rituals of remembrance and pilgrimage that took place in the inter-war years. The emphasis of their views and action in these years was on renewal of the Anglican Church and its place and purpose in the t post-war world. They contributed to this renewal directly by their involvement in changes to the institutional organisation of the church, their advancement of the cause of church unity and intercommunion, their contribution to new training methods for ordinands and their advocacy of a revised liturgy for the church. Indirectly they placed the Anglican church at the centre of important institutions such as Toc H and the Industrial Christian Fellowship .Their work attempting to improve social and industrial conditions, to

developments in education, in responding to moral and technical developments in the 1920s and 1930s and in rationalising the implications of further war, were all informed by their war-time experiences, whether implicitly or explicitly. Their common experiences of war had given them a characteristic pragmatism and made them adaptive to change. Post-war these aspects of their characters informed their actions to a significant extent. The causes they espoused were ones which echoed down the twentieth century and are still relevant today.

The work and influence of the former Anglican chaplains has to be considered as part of the wider development of the Anglican Church in the interwar years. Current scholarship on the development of the church in the era has considered some former chaplains as prominent individuals in the church and has pointed to the significance of their war service, but has not considered them as a group who together greatly enhanced the internal development of the church as well as encouraging its engagement with problems in society. Although they were not the only Anglican voices to be concerned with these reforms, in proportion to their numbers they achieved prominence in many institutions of the church and society, from Bishop's Palace and Convocation to crusade meetings and picket lines. Much of the evidence for the arguments of this thesis has been taken from careers of former chaplains who expressed their ideas in books, articles, and debates, and whose contributions to the post-war church can be clearly analysed. Future research on the subject will need to concentrate on examining more deeply the contribution of individual ex-chaplains at parochial, diocesan and national level. However, in the absence of detailed research from local archives on more obscure returning chaplains in their parishes, it is possible to assert that much of what we know about specific chaplains was echoed in the

lives and work of many of the priests whose ministries had been changed by their experiences in war.

The inter-war years have been described as “the long peace”. As the former chaplains were coming to terms with the way in which the Great War had affected their lives and ministries the threat of the next war loomed. In the twenty years after their wartime chaplaincies, former chaplains had gone some way to fulfilling the hopes and aspirations articulated on their return from the front and could claim to have contributed greatly to both developments in the Anglican Church and in wider society.



## **Appendix : Chaplains mentioned in text**

**F. R. Barry**, TCF 1915-1919 (DSO 1916). Deputy Assistant Chaplain General, Head of Knutsford Ordination Test School 1919-1923. King's College London 1923-1927. Vicar of St Mary's University Church 1927-1933. Canon of Westminster 1933-1941. Bishop of Southwell from 1941.

**Julian Bickersteth**, T C F 1915-1919 (mentioned in despatches 1917, M.C 1918). Head teacher, St Peter's Adelaide 1920-1933. Headmaster Felsted School from 1933.

**H.W. Blackburne**, CF 1903-1924 (MC 1914, DSO 1917). Vicar of Ashford 1924- 1931. Canon of St George's Windsor 1931-1934. Dean of Bristol from 1934.

**R.H.V. Burne**, TCF 1917-1918. Tutor at Knutsford Ordination Test School 1919-23. Principal 1923-1937. Canon of Chester Cathedral from 1933.

**Walter Carey**, TCRN 1914-1919. Bishop of Bloemfontein from 1921.

**C. M. Chavasse**, TCF 1914-1918 (M C 1917, Croix de Guerre, 1918). Vicar of St George's Barrow - in - Furness 1919-1922. Rector of St Aldate's Church Oxford 1922-1928. Master of St Peter's Hall Oxford 1929-1939. Bishop of Rochester from 1939.

**J. F. Clayton**, TCF 1916-1919 (MC 1918) .Tutor at Knutsford Ordination School 1919-1920. Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop of Durham 1921-1926. Lecturer at Sarum Theological College 1926-1929. Warden of St Nicholas's Hall, Bristol 1929-1933. Ripon Hall 1935-1939. Prebendary of Hereford Cathedral from 1937.

**P. B. Clayton**. TCF 1915-1919 (MC 1917). Founder of Toc H Movement, Vicar of All Hallows, London, from 1922.

**E. C. Crosse**, TCF 1915-1918 (MC and DSO 1917). Headmaster, Christ's College New Zealand 1921-1930. Headmaster, Ardingly College from 1933.

**Herbert Fleming**, TCF 1914-19. First Hon. Administrative Padre to Toc H.

**A. R. Goodwin**, TCF 1918-1919. Part time chaplain to Toc H in the inter - war years.

**John Groser**, TCF 1916-1919(mentioned in despatches 1917). Curate, Lostwithiel 1920-1922. Curate, St Michael's Bromley by Bow 1922-1928. Vicar of Christ Church Watney St, from 1929.

**Bishop L. H. Gwynne**, Bishop of Diocese of Khartoum (Sudan) 1908. TCF 1914-1919. Deputy Chaplain General in France 1915-1919. Returned to Sudan to resume his post in 1919.

**Mervyn Haigh**, TCF 1916-1919 (mentioned in despatches 1918 .) Tutor at Knutsford Ordination Test School 1919-1924. Principal Secretary to Archbishop of Canterbury 1924-1931. Bishop of Coventry from 1931.

**W. T. Havard**, TCF 19115-1919( mentioned in despatches 1916, DSO 1917.) Chaplain Jesus College, Oxford 1919-1921. Vicar of St Paul-at-Hook 1922-1924 .

**A. C. E. Jarvis**, Assistant chaplain EEF 15-1916. Principal Chaplain ,Mesopotamia, 1916-1919. Chaplain General to the Forces 1925-1931.

**Robert Keable** Chaplain to the South African Labour Corps, serving mainly at Le Havre. Resigned and left the Anglican Ministry 1919.

**Bernard Keymer**, TCF 1916-1918, chaplain in RAF 1918.

**Kenneth Escott Kirk**, TCF 1914-1919. Regius Professor of Moral Theology, University of Oxford 1933. Bishop of Oxford from 1937.

**P. T. R. Kirk**, TCF 1915-1918. General Director of the Industrial Christian Fellowship from 1919

**M. P. G. Leonard**, TCF 1914-1918, (DSO 1916). Chaplain Cheltenham College 1919-1922. Chaplain to Toc H Manchester 1922-1929. Toc H Admin HQ 1929-1931. Curate of All Hallows, London 1931-1936. Rector of Bishop's Hatsfield from 1936.

**M. Linton Smith** TCF 1915-1917 ( DSO 1917) . Suffragan Bishop of Warrington 1918, Translated to Hereford 1920, Translated to Rochester 1930-1939.

**Geoffrey Lunt** TCF 1917-1919. Vicar of All Souls' Northampton 1919-1926. Archdeacon in Egypt and sub-dean of All Saints Cathedral , Cairo 1926-1928. Vicar of St Mary's Portsea 1928-1934. Bishop of Ripon from 1934.

**W.P.G. McCormick**, TCF 1914-1919 (D.S.O. 1917). Vicar and Rural Dean of Croydon 1919-1927. Vicar of St Martin- in -the-fields from 1927.

**J.V. Macmillan**, TCF 1915-16, 1917-19. Vicar of Kew 1916-1921. Archdeacon of Maidstone and Canon of Canterbury Cathedral 1921-1934. Suffragan Bishop of Dover from 1927.

**F. B. Macnutt**, Canon of Southwark Cathedral, served as Temporary Chaplain to the Forces (TCF) 1915-1918, becoming senior chaplain. Vicar of St Martin's Leicester 1918-1938. Canon of Canterbury Cathedral from 1938

**E. Milner-White** TCF 1914-1918, (DSO 1918). Dean and Fellow, King's College, Cambridge 1918-1941. Dean of York from 1941.

**R.H. Moberly**, TCF 1917-1919. Curate of Benoni, Transvaal 1914-1925. Principal of Bishop's College, Chesunt 1925-1936. Bishop of Stepney form 1936.

**R.G. Parsons**, TCF 1916-1917. Vicar of Poyton 1916-1919. Rector of Birch in Rushholme 191-1931. Suffragan Bishop of Middleton 1927. Bishop of Southwark from 1932.

**Tom Pym** TCF 1914-1919 ( DSO 1917). Assistant Chaplain General 1918. Warden of Camberwell House Settlement 1919. Canon Missioner to the Diocese of Southwark 1925-1929. Canon of Bristol Cathedral 1929 -1932. Fellow and Chaplain of Balliol College Oxford 1932-1938.

**Oliver Quick**, TCF 1917-1918. Canon of Carlisle Cathedral and examining chaplain to the Bishop of Newcastle 1923-1930. Canon of St Paul's Cathedral 1930-1934. Professor of Divinity, Durham Cathedral 1934-1939. Regius Professor of Divinity University of Oxford from 1939.

**David Railton**, TCF 1911-1919. Vicar of St John the Baptist , Margate 1920- 1925. Curate of Christ Church Westminster 1925-1927. Vicar of St James, Bolton 1927-1931. Vicar of Shalford 1931-1935. Rector of St Nicholas Liverpool from 1935.

**Charles Raven**, TCF 1917-1918. Dean and fellow of Emmanuel College Cambridge 1909-1920. Rector of Blechingley 1920-1924. Canon of Liverpool Cathedral -1924-1932. Regius professor of Divinity, University of Cambridge from 1932.

**Timothy Rees**, TCF 1916-1919, Community of the Resurrection, Bishop of Llandaff 1931-1939.

**T. Guy Rogers**, TCF 1915-1916, MC 1916. Vicar of West Ham 1917-1925. Rector of St Martin's Birmingham from 1925.

**A. C. Rose**, TCRN 1914-1919. Warden of Bishop's Hostel Lincoln 1921-1927. Vicar of Brighton with West Bletchington 1927-1934. Suffragan Bishop of Dover from 1935.

**H. F. Sawbridge**, TCF 1915-1919 ( MC 1916). Lecturer Knutsford Ordination Test School 1919-1922. Chaplain to Toc H 1922- 1931.

**E.G. Selwyn**, TCF 1918-1919, Rector of Red Hill 1919-1931. Dean of Winchester from 1931.

**H. R. L. Sheppard** , Chaplain to an Australian field hospital 1914. Founder of the Peace Pledge Union 1927. Vicar of St Martin- in- the- fields 1914- 1926. Dean of Canterbury Cathedral 1929-1931. Dean of St Pauls 1934-1937.

**B. F. Simpson** TCF 1916-1918 (MC 1918). Rector and Rural Dean of Stepney 1920-1926. Vicar of St Peter, Cranley Gardens 1926-1932. Suffragan Bishop of Kensington from 1932.

**H. K. Southwell** TCF , Provost of Lancing 1902-1937, Bishop of Lewes 1920-1927.

**G. A. Studdert Kennedy**, TCF 1914-1918 ( MC 1916). Vicar of St Paul's Worcester 1914-1921. Vicar of St Edmund's London from 1921. Chief Missioner for the Industrial Christian Fellowship from 1921.

**Edward Keble Talbot**, TCF 1914-1920, Superior of the Community of the Resurrection from 1922.

**Neville Talbot** TCF 1914-1919 ( M C 1915). Senior chaplain Fifth Division 1915. Senior Anglican chaplain of XIV corps 1916 and Assistant Chaplain General to Fifth Army 1916. Bishop of Pretoria 1920- 1934. Vicar of St Mary's Nottingham and assistant bishop of Southwell from 1934.

**A. R. Browne Wilkinson** TCF 1918-1919. Priest in Charge of St Paul's Daybrook, 1919-1924. Diocesan missionary Southwark diocese 1920-1926. Principal St Christopher's College, Blackheath 1926-1931. Vicar of Bedale 1931-1938. Canon of Chichester Cathedral from 1938.

**A. E. Wilkinson**, C.F (TA) 1913-1918 (Mentioned in despatches 1918). Vicar of St James, Croydon, 1919-1931. Vicar of Merstham from 1931.

**E.S. Woods**, TCF 1914-1919, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge 1918-1927. Vicar of Croydon 1927-1937. Bishop of Croydon 1930-1937. Bishop of Lichfield from 1937.

**C. S. Woodward**, TCF 1916-1917( MC 1916). Vicar of St Peter's Cranley Gardens 1918-1926. Canon of Westminster 1926-1933. Bishop of Bristol from 1933.

**H. E .Wynn**, TCF 1914-1919, Dean of Pembroke College Cambridge 1920-1936, Tutor from 1936.



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