

' NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
A HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IDEA '



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## ABSTRACT

This thesis traces the development of the idea of non-stipendiary ministry (NSM) in the Church of England from 1833, when it was first mooted by Thomas Arnold, to the present day. Four phases of development are identified and examined: first, the nineteenth century, when proposals to open the diaconate to men in secular employment were under discussion; second, the period leading up to the major discussion of the idea at the Lambeth Conference of 1930; third, the period leading up to the institutional establishment of 'Auxiliary Pastoral Ministry' in 1970; and fourth, the subsequent period of growth and development of NSM in practice. The method adopted is to analyse relevant debates in Convocation, Church Assembly and General Synod, together with relevant published material; new unpublished material from archives in Brisbane Diocese, Church House, Westminster, Lambeth Palace, and Selly Oak Library, as well as from the private papers of Roland Allen, is presented and analysed; the influence of developments in Anglican Churches overseas, of the World Council of Churches and of the French Worker-Priest Movement is assessed; the influence of certain key figures is examined, including that of Thomas Arnold, Walter Hook, William Hale, William Bright, Herbert Kelly, Roland Allen, F.R. Barry, Mervyn Stockwood, John Robinson, Lesslie Newbigin and E.R. Wickham. Factors influencing the development of the idea at each successive phase are identified, the most salient of which are: pressure for each local community to be self-sufficient in ministry, for the Church to offer ministry in a style and expression congruent with working-class culture, for the removal of the divide between clergy and laity, for the Church to offer meaningful witness in 'the world of work', and for supplementary ordained assistance for the diminishing numbers of stipendiary clergy. But throughout the period examined, constant restraints are shown to have been operating, restricting the smooth development of the idea. Chief amongst these are the protective reactions of the clerical profession and the over-riding influence of the parochial system. Finally, particular structural factors inhibiting the development of ministry in secular employment are identified.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Anglican Consultative Council
ACCM	Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry
AP	Roland Allen's papers
APM	Auxiliary Parochial/Pastoral Ministry
BCC	British Council of Churches
<u>Bris</u>	Brisbane Diocesan Archives
CACTM	Central Advisory Council of Training for the Ministry
CCC	<u>Chronicle of the Convocation of Canterbury</u>
<u>CHA</u>	Church House Archives, Westminster
CMS	Church Missionary Society
DNB	<u>Dictionary of National Biography</u>
DPA	Archbishop Davidson's Papers - Australia
FTA	Frontier Trust Archives
GME	General Ministerial Examination
GOE	General Ordination Examination
<u>Lam</u>	Lambeth Palace Library
LC	Lambeth Conference
LNSM	Local Non-Stipendiary Ministry
LOM	Local Ordained Ministry
MSE	Ministry in Secular Employment
NSM	Non-Stipendiary Ministry
POT	Post-Ordination Training
<u>SO</u>	Selly Oak Colleges Library, Birmingham
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
TLS	<u>Times Literary Supplement</u>
TP	Archbishop Tait's Papers
USPG	United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
<u>USPG</u>	USPG Archives
WCC	World Council of Churches
YJC	<u>York Journal of Convocation</u>



## INTRODUCTION

For centuries the ordained ministry of the Church of England has been commonly regarded not only as a sacred office, but as an occupation which properly consumes the minister's whole attention. To enable him to concentrate on his ministerial tasks, the institutional church has usually provided a house and a stipend, or allowance, so that his physical needs were provided for. By the late 19th century parochial ministry in particular had come to be regarded as a full-time occupation, and, as Anthony Russell has amply demonstrated, the clergy of the Church of England had generally taken on most of the characteristics of a professional body (Russell 1980).

This traditional pattern of a full-time paid ministry was broken in 1970 when the Church of England officially took non-stipendiary ministry (NSM) into its institutional structures. That is to say, from that date it became possible for bishops to ordain and license deacons and priests who lived in their own houses, and whose livelihood was gained from secular occupations (or sometimes from a retirement pension), and who would not be devoting the whole of their time and attention to church ministry.

This amounts to an institutional change of major proportions. So much so that Russell has claimed that NSM is 'a re-interpretation of the whole nature of ministry' (ibid., p. 287). This thesis will trace the steps by which this change came about, and will analyse the process by which an idea slowly gained currency and eventually hardened into a concept capable of being manifested 'on the ground'. Broadly speaking, the idea first surfaced in the mid-19th century. Twice (in the 1880s and in 1930) the idea emerged into the bright light of public debate, but each time it turned out to be still-born. In 1970, however, a live birth occurred as non-stipendiary ministry formally came into existence. Nevertheless, subsequent experience seems to be showing that this form of ministry is not flourishing in the way that its original progenitors had hoped. This study attempts to explain why the the idea 'came to term' at three different periods, why the live birth occurred when it did, and why subsequently it is has failed to thrive.



## i) Sources and Methods

What kind of source material is available for this task? Broadly speaking, there are five categories of data:-

a) transcripts of the proceedings of such bodies as Convocation, Church Assembly, General Synod and the Lambeth Conferences on occasions when NSM was under discussion;

b) minutes and working-party papers and reports of ACCM (the Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry), which is charged with monitoring and regulating the development of non-stipendiary ministry;

c) published works about patterns of ministry;

d) papers deposited in the archives of Church House, the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (including Roland Allen's papers), Lambeth Palace Library, and Selly Oak Library;

e) miscellaneous material illustrating the contemporary milieu in which the Church of England's thinking about ministry has taken place; this milieu consists of evidence both external to the Church (eg. regarding the population explosion) and internal to it (eg. publications reflecting growing interest in a theology of the laity).

The tracing of this history forms the central part of the thesis. Its narration will be interspersed with critical comment, though as far as possible without interrupting the flow of the account. A final chapter will discuss the interrelation of elements which appear to have controlled the development of NSM.

## ii) Period Treated

The period of time under discussion begins in 1833, the year when Thomas Arnold published his formative Principles of Church Reform (in which the initial proposals about secularly employed clergy appeared), and continues to 1987, a year in which Revised Regulations for Non-Stipendiary Ministry were officially published by the bishops (thus bringing to an end 17 years of experiment). In order to place the whole study in context, discussion is also offered of some foundation documents



of Ecclesia Anglicana as they effect the clergy. Elsewhere I have treated of the question of 'non-stipendiary' ministry in the practice of the early Church (Vaughan 1986b); but the early history of the subject does not occur in this study, except in so far as the rediscovery of this material influenced thinking within the Church of England about its own ministry.

### iii) Salient Issues

There are six issues which appear to weave their way through the account. Each thread represents a pressure for structural change within the deployment of the Church of England's clergy. They are:-

(i) pressure for each local community to be self-sufficient in ministry and sacraments ( - an idea particularly associated with the name of Roland Allen);

(ii) pressure for the church to offer ministry in a style and expression congruent with working-class culture ( - from those aware of the Church of England's failure to engage with the mushrooming populations of the new manufacturing towns in the 19th century, and with inner urban problems in the 20th century);

(iii) pressure for the removal of the divide between clergy and laity ( - from those seeking to develop the witness and mission of the whole laos, the People of God);

(iv) pressure for the church to offer meaningful witness in 'the world of work' ( - from those aware of the a-religious ethos of secular culture within the institutions of English society, particularly during the 20th century);

(v) pressure for the maintenance of the status of the clergy as a profession ( - from the clergy themselves);

(vi) pressure for the maintenance of the parochial system ( - from clergy and laity alike, who commonly held it to be 'the backbone of the Church of England').

Those who espoused each of these six issues have sometimes combined forces in a manner which has fostered the development of NSM. At other times the interests of one or other group seem to have been threatened by NSM. So there is a sense in which by tracing the history of NSM we are tracing the history of six ideas which have a kind of 'family resemblance': each of the above groups of people had an 'idea'



that some form of non-professional ministry would help fulfil their objective. In 1970 these clusters of ideas hardened into the specific 'concept' of NSM, and were instantiated by particular forms of regulations and licences. But subsequent to the establishment of NSM, some of the original exponents have become disenchanted. For example, non-stipendiary ministers developing a ministry in the work-place (cf. (iv) above) can be seen as irrelevant to the needs of those concerned with maintaining the parochial system (cf.(v) above). It is the interweaving of these six threads - sometimes combining, sometimes separating - which have<sup>5</sup> produced the various design crises within the history of NSM, and which accounts for continued confusion in patterns of ministry.

#### iv) Nomenclature

A word needs to be said about choice of nomenclature. The term 'non-stipendiary ministry' only came into the official terminology of the Church of England in about 1977. Prior to that, other terms were used: 'voluntary clergy', 'auxiliary priests', 'honorary ministers', 'worker priests' and 'priest-workers'. In Anglican churches abroad such terms as 'tent-making ministers', 'dual-role priests' and 'self-supporting priests' have or are being used. It seems appropriate to discuss early material in its own terms, and generally to reserve the term 'non-stipendiary ministry' for the pattern of ministry that has developed in the Church of England within the last decade. In common parlance this ministry is frequently referred to by its initials - NSM.

More recently, however, sub-categories within the general category of NSM have come into use. Thus non-stipendiary ministers who are exercising a 'ministry in secular employment' (MSE) have attempted to define their distinctive pattern of ministry by using this self-descriptive terminology as a means of distinguishing themselves from non-stipendiary clergy in retirement, whose ministry is purely parochial. Also 'local non-stipendiary ministry' (LNSM), otherwise called 'local ordained ministry', has come to be a special category of NSM, with distinctive styles of selection, training and licensing.



## v) Dominant Model

The sheer multiplicity of terms coined in itself indicates a recurrent problem revealed by this history. It does not seem to be possible for the Church of England to define (or encourage) new developments in patterns of ordained ministry, except in relation to parochial ministry. The tendency is to see new developments as over against, or in some senses deviations from, traditional parochial ministry. So at least one of the terms coined ('auxiliary') has a pejorative tone to it, while the currently accepted term ('non-stipendiary') only succeeds in defining by negation.

This problem may be seen in relation to the way in which 'priesthood' is commonly spoken of in the Church of England. There is in effect only one model of priesthood available - that of the Parish Priest. So much so that it is almost as if parochial duties and pastoral functions are assumed to encompass the distinctive nature of priesthood. Thus, when selectors are testing the vocation of would-be ordinands, a question which is inevitably at the back of their minds is 'Can I see this person as my Parish Priest?'. There have, it is true, always been school-master priests in the Church of England. But this pattern of ministry scarcely differs from that of the Parish Priest: pastoral and spiritual concern for the flock (whether pupils of parishioners) <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ common to both.

By contrast, Roman Catholic Christians have more easily been able to think of priesthood independently of parochial pastoral functions, because a second and no less dominant model of priesthood is available to them: priesthood in the religious orders. So the Roman Catholic tradition finds no difficulty in acknowledging priesthood in an enclosed contemplative like Thomas Merton, or in an active apostolate in the world like that of Teilhard de Chardin. Neither served a parish nor was under the jurisdiction of a diocesan bishop; but both were recognisably priests.

It can thus readily be seen that the Church of England, having only a single model for its priesthood, is inclined to be dominated in all its thinking about ministry by the parochial system. The parochial system, its survival and well-being, therefore tends to be the controlling influence in all aspects of institutional change within the Church of England. One might have supposed that at times of institutional change controlling influences might be such factors as doctrine, or the requirements of



mission, or even the expressed vocation of a significant group of church members. But this seems not to be the case. For a predominant theme within this thesis is the way in which developments and changes of pattern within the ordained ministry have been controlled by the perceived needs of the parochial system.

Alongside the needs of the parochial system stand the needs of the professional clergy, whose personal welfare is bound up symbiotically with the health of the parishes which they (in present-day terms) are paid to run, or (in the terms of an earlier generation) the parishes endowed with benefice income and other temporal rights of the incumbent. It is these clergy who have to a large extent controlled the discussion of the idea of NSM. Certainly they have, through their representatives in Convocation, Church Assembly and General Synod, exercised control of the terms under which NSM has been established.

As the following history will amply illustrate, a constant element in developments has been the tendency of the parochial clergy to protect their own interests in much the same way as any other professional body threatened with the rise of a new sub-profession. Thus, for example, there has been recurring concern to maintain high educational standards for admission, to have adequate means of censuring unprofessional conduct, or to ensure the good reputation of the profession in public esteem. None of this is to be wondered at, in view of the fact that the clergy of the Church of England were, during the nineteenth century, undergoing a major metamorphosis: from being part of the gentry class at the commencement of the century, by its end they had become a profession akin to other secular professions - complete with controlled entry qualifications, training and validating institutions (the theological colleges), professional meetings (rural deanery chapters), codes of good practice, professional journals and even professional clubs. This slow but steady development has been carefully charted by Russell (1980). The opposition to deacons in secular employment recounted in the next chapter can be seen as all of a piece with this overall consolidation of a profession.

However, Russell also suggests that in recent times the clerical profession has steadily fallen out of step with other secular professions, to the extent that it is now questionable how far it should continue to be regarded as a profession. For instance, now that the State has taken



over many of the former roles of the clergy (eg. in education and social work), and now that 'lay ministry' is being widely fostered, it is far from clear what is the special professional service which the clergy have to offer to society. Russell maintains that despite these changes present-day parochial clergy continue to regard themselves as belonging to a profession. In the history which follows, a great deal of evidence accumulates to bear out this contention: constantly the parochial clergy may be seen reacting defensively to any developments of NSM which appear to threaten their own professional status. NSM has consistently been treated as an object of suspicion by the parochial clergy, and has only succeeded in becoming established in so far as these suspicions have been allayed. As a result, NSM has tended to develop most readily in so far as it has served to support the parochial clergy and the parochial system. But in so far as NSM has a potential for ministry outside the parochial system, relatively little has developed because of the constant control exercised through the ecclesiastical structures by the parochial clergy.

#### vi) Purpose of Research

The motivation for undertaking this study was, in the first place, a personal one: since 1973 I have been involved in the training of non-stipendiary ministers. Initially there was almost no literature readily available to guide a theological tutor engaged in such training, nor indeed to guide the ordinands themselves. How were we to understand the possibilities (and limitations) of NSM if we did not understand (or even know about) the crises and struggles that led up to its introduction in 1970? Or, going further back in time, what precedents were there in the Church's earlier traditions for such a pattern of ministry? More particularly, looking forwards, how might NSM ordinands be prepared for the likely misunderstandings ahead of them? My observation had shown that non-stipendiary ministers setting out with a clear vision of their potential non-parochial ministry very quickly became frustrated through misunderstandings within their home church or with fellow (stipendiary) clergy. This had happened so persistently that I began to wonder whether there was some inherent confusion within the conceptual structure of NSM, which on the face of it appeared such a reasonable idea. Would an exploration of the 'genealogy' of the concept brought to birth in 1970 reveal any explanation of the phenomenon of recurrent misunderstandings?



Many of these questions are educational ones (and are not handled in this thesis). But it seemed probable that they could only be satisfactorily answered if a prior task had been undertaken: laying out as systematically as possible how we have arrived at the present state of affairs regarding NSM. So I set about the process of constructing the history of NSM in the Church of England - a task which has never before been undertaken in detail or at length.

## CHAPTER I

### LEGAL CONSTRAINTS AND EARLY CHALLENGES

#### 1. LEGAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE SECULAR EMPLOYMENT OF THE CLERGY

Historically, there have been three kinds of authority which have controlled or limited the secular employment of Anglican clergy: statute law, canon law, and the Ordinal<sup>1</sup>. It will be helpful at the outset to lay out the stipulations of each of these authorities, for their influence upon the development of non-stipendiary ministry has been very considerable, and they will thus be constantly referred to throughout this study. The second half of the chapter describes how in the nineteenth century the value of these constraints began to be questioned, and how attempts to break free from them were unsuccessful.

##### i) Statute Law

In 1529, Parliament passed an Act (21 Hen.VIII, cap.13), the primary concern of which was to restrict clergy from holding several benefices in plurality, and so to reduce the problem of non-residence. For present purposes, however, the significance of this Act lies in several of its subsidiary clauses which sought to restrict clerical participation in commercial activities. It could scarcely have been foreseen at the time how far these restrictions would influence the ethos of the Anglican clergy for centuries to come.

The clauses in question stipulate that -

no spiritual Persons, secular or regular, of what Degree soever he or they be, shall from henceforth take to ferm to himself... any Manors, Lands, Tenements... upon Pain of forfeit Ten Pounds for every Month that he shall occupy such Ferm. (clause I)

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<sup>1</sup>Previous discussions include Allen 1930, pp. 285-290, Convocation of Canterbury 1955, and Every 1960.



No spiritual Person... shall from henceforth... bargain and buy to sell again for any Lucre, Gain or Profit, in any Markets, Fairs, or other Places, any manner of Cattle, Corn, Lead, Tin, Hides, Leather, Tallow, Fish, Wool, Wood, or any manner of Victuals or Merchandise, what kind soever they be of, upon Pain to Forfeit Treble the Value of every Thing... bargained and bought to sell again. (clause V)

The Act, however, specifically allows sale and purchase of goods -

to the only Intent and Purpose at the buying thereof to be employed and put in and about his necessary Apparel of his own House, or his Person and servants, or in... the only occupying, manuring or Tillage of his own glebe or demesne Lands annexed to his Church, or for the necessary expenses of his Household-keeping. (clause VI)

Nevertheless, the Act does allow that -

a spiritual Person... not having sufficient glebe or demesne Lands... for the only Expenses of their Households... may take to ferm other Lands and buy and sell Corn and Cattle. (clause VIII)

This Act was one of the first passed by the Reformation Parliament after Wolsey's fall. It was a part of King Henry's strategy to use Parliament to restrict the power of the Church, and was in fact the first Act of Parliament to interfere with Church affairs. The bill proposing it originated from the (predominantly Lutheran) Commons, who stood to gain much if excess Church lands were sold off (as certain clauses of the Act anticipated). It was vigorously opposed in the Lords in a notable speech by Bishop Fisher of Rochester who expressed suspicion that these 'curious petitions from the commons [had] no other intent or purpose but to bring the clergy in contempt with the laity, that they may seize their patrimony'. This rash outburst earned him the severest of rebukes from the King who advised him 'to use his words more temperately another time'. Opposition within Parliament was thereafter silenced (Cobbett 1806, Vol. I, pp. 502-3; Dixon 1895, Vol. I, pp. 1-22).

The overt purpose of this Act was to make the clergy attend to their spiritual duties, and to reform clerical abuses such as non-residence. But the Act seems also to have had the intention of creating (or maintaining) a distinct class of person with special roles in society, as the Preface to the Act explicitly states:

For the more quiet and virtuous Increase and Maintenance of divine Services, the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, with godly and good Example given, the better discharge of Curates, the maintenance of Hospitality, the Relief of poor People, the Increase of Devotion, and the good opinion of the Lay-fee towards spiritual Persons.



Much of this may refer to monastic clergy (the Act pre-dates the Dissolution), but 'Curates' are specifically within the purview of the Act as well.

Thus the effect of the Act of 1529 was to permit clergy to provide a living for themselves by farming their glebe lands (and other land, where the glebe produced insufficient income). They were, however, prohibited from trading. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the Act says nothing to prevent clergy obtaining income through such occupations as teaching.

This Henrician Act remained in force for three centuries; it was repealed and replaced by another Act in 1817 (57 Geo.III, cap.99), which in turn was repealed and replaced by the Pluralities Act of 1838 (1 & 2 Vic., cap.106). The latter made the law conform more closely to the model of the Victorian parson. It was primarily concerned to control the manner in which benefices could be held in plurality, and thereby touched on the issue of clerical income. Sections 28-31 dealt with gainful occupations of the clergy. The regulations may be summarised as follows:

a) A clergyman cannot buy or sell cattle, corn or farming articles in a market or fair.

b) Subject to rule (a), he can buy and sell cattle, corn and farming articles necessary for use in connection with lands which he is allowed to farm.

c) He is allowed to farm up to 80 acres without permission; but he needs the permission of the bishop to farm more than 80 acres, which permission cannot be given for more than seven years at a time. Penalty for farming more than authorised area - £2 per acre per annum.

d) He can be a manager, director, partner or shareholder in a benefit society or fire or life assurance society.

e) Subject to rule (d) he cannot be a director or managing partner of any association or partnership for the carrying on of any trade or dealing for gain or profit or for the dealing in any goods, wares or merchandise, nor can he carry on any such trade or dealing in person.

f) Subject to rule (e) he can be interested in any such trade of dealing, if either

(i) it is carried on by more than six partners; or

(ii) it has devolved on him by will or settlement or under an intestacy or bankruptcy.



g) He can buy what he wants for his home, and if having bought something for his home he then finds that he does not want it, he can sell it at a profit.

h) He can keep a school or be a tutor and buy what he wants for the purpose.

i) He can sell books to a bookseller or publisher.

j) Subject to the preceding rules he cannot engage in or carry on any trade or dealing for gain or profit or deal in any goods, wares or merchandise.

k) The penalties for illegal trading are as follows:

(i) 1st offence - suspension for not more than a year;

(ii) 2nd offence - suspension for indefinite period;

(iii) 3rd offence - deprivation.

Suspension involves loss of benefice income.

(Convocation of Canterbury 1955)

The Victorian Act closed a loophole in the Henrician Act: the amount of additional land a clergyman might farm was specified (80 acres), and a limit (7 years) was put on the bishop's authority to permit exception. The Victorian Act is careful to safeguard the public appearance of the social status of clergy: while in certain circumstances he is permitted to buy and sell property, he may not do so 'in person in any Market Fair or public Sale'. The Act did, however, open up an important field of gainful employment: it specifically permitted 'keeping a School or Seminary or acting as a Schoolmaster or Tutor or Instructor, or being in any Manner concerned or engaged in giving Instruction or Education for Profit or Reward' (section 30). This merely regularised much existing practice: clergy had frequently kept school as a means of augmenting very low benefice (or curacy) incomes. In this respect the Pluralities Act helped to cure a very real disease. But for our present purposes, its chief significance lies in the fact that the long-standing association of clergy with the teaching profession was here for the first time acknowledged in statute law.

The Pluralities Act remained in force until 1964, and, as this study demonstrates, it exercised a powerful restraint even upon the very desire to explore alternative patterns of ministry. The legal restriction upon clerical occupations was finally removed by The Clergy (Ordination and Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 1964, section 11, which permitted a Minister to engage in trades or occupations other than those allowed by the Pluralities Act, 'provided that he holds a licence so to do from the Bishop' (Halsbury 1969, pp. 414-5).



## ii) Canon Law

The Canons of 1603/4 (Canons 1920) effectively form the 'Constitution' of the Church of England. While 'the whole subject of gainful occupation of the clergy is only very slightly treated, and upon the broadest lines' (Convocation of Canterbury 1959,p. 1), several of the Canons contain phrases or notions which on the surface appear to militate against the legal development of NSM.

Thus, Canon 75 ('Sober Conversation required of Ministers') stipulates that 'No Ecclesiastical Person shall at any time resort to any taverns or ale-houses, neither shall they board or lodge in any such places'. Furthermore, they shall not give themselves 'to any base or servile labour, or to drinking or to riot...!.

Canon 76 states: 'No man being admitted a Deacon or Minister shall thenceforth voluntarily relinquish the same, not afterward use himself in the course of his life as a layman, upon pain of excommunication'.

Canon 74 ('Decency of Apparel enjoined in Ministers') attempted to legislate on clerical dress both in public ('in their journeys Cloaks with sleeves... without guards, welts, long buttons or cuts') and in private (no 'wrought Night-cap, but plain Night-caps of black silk, satin or velvet') -the general style to be 'for decency, gravity and order'. While the intention of this Canon may have been a Puritan desire to avoid clerical ostentation, the effect was that the clergy were required to be visibly distinct from other people.

Canon 33 ('The Titles of such as are to be made Ministers') controlled the entry point to Holy Orders. Bishops were not permitted to ordain anyone 'who had not first some certain place where he might use his function'. This was exemplified as meaning someone who certified admission to a post in a parish or collegiate church, cathedral or university college.



The Canons acknowledged the association of the clergy with the teaching profession long before the statute law in 1838. The 1603 Canons specifically allow a Curate to teach 'for the better increase of his living'. All teachers had to be licensed by the bishop (Canon 77), and the bishop was under instructions 'that a licence to teach the youth of the parish where he serveth be granted to none... but only the said Curate' (Canon 78).

These Canons remained in force until 1964, when Canon C28 ('Of the Occupation of Ministers'), deliberately echoing the Clergy (Ordination and Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 1964, allowed a Minister to engage in trade or other occupation provided he had a licence to this effect from his bishop (Convocation 1969). As we shall see, the 17th century Canons consistently exercised a powerful inhibition against the development of non-stipendiary ministry.

### iii) The Ordinal

All Priests ordained into the Church of England between 1550 and 1979 were admitted to their office in the words of the Ordinal (The Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, according to the Order of the Church of England, first published in 1550, and only very slightly modified in 1552 and 1662). The service for the ordination of Priests contains a lengthy 'charge' by the bishop to the candidates, which includes the following words:

Ye ought to forsake and set aside (as much as you may) all worldly cares and studies. We have good hope ... that you have clearly determined ... to give yourselves wholly to this office ... so that ... you will apply yourselves wholly to this one thing, and draw all your cares and studies this way'.

This wording, which so clearly implies the 'forsaking' of worldly occupations at ordination to the Priesthood, remained the only legally available form of words by which a man could be ordained Priest until 1979. In that year the Ordinal of the Alternative Service Book 1980 was available for use. The new Ordinal's corresponding paragraph in the bishop's charge retains the phrase 'give yourself wholly', but widens its context to the general service of God, in such a way that the charge now applies equally to traditional parochial ministry, or to other non-parochial ministry:



Give yourselves wholly to his [God's] service and devote to him your best powers of mind and spirit, so that... you may grow up into his [Christ's] likeness, and sanctify the lives of all with whom you have to do' (Alternative Service Book 1980, 357).

It is noteworthy that the sense of separation into a distinct caste is greatly reduced in the wording of the new Ordinal.

#### iv) Implications

How did these three authorities, statute law, canon law and the Ordinal, <sup>2</sup>effect the development of non-stipendiary ministry? It seems, to anticipate the evidence which lies ahead, that they were a serious hindrance both to creative thinking on the subject, and to action. Indeed it could be said that they were **designed** to be such a hindrance!

For example, in 1930, Roland Allen (see below II.4.v) felt obliged to devote considerable space to countering clerical objections to the notion of 'Voluntary Clergy'. He cites eight commonly held objections. Of these, three centre directly upon statute and canon law and the Ordinal - it was objected that all three would have to be altered to make voluntary clergy a reality. Allen attempted to show that while all three posed difficulties, they were not objections to the principle of voluntary clergy (Allen 1930, pp. 285-290).

At a practical level too, the fear of sanctions inhibited bishops from experiment. Thus for example, when an English priest who had worked on the shop-floor of an engineering firm during the second world war wanted to publish an account of his experience in 1951, he had to do so anonymously, for fear of implicating bishops and other clergy who had encouraged the experiment (Anon. 1951).

It is not surprising, therefore, that in the event of non-stipendiary ministry being actually established, all three constraining authorities were in fact emended.

To summarise, until the mid-20th century, statute and canon law and the Ordinal severely limited the possibility of an English bishop ordaining someone in secular employment:



- statute law forbade a cleric to trade and imposed penalties for infringement;
- canon law required him to dress and behave distinctly from the rest of society;
- the Ordinal (the very rite of admission to Priest's Orders) implied that the ordinand was separating himself from worldly occupations.

However, there is one great and long-standing exception: it has always been lawful for clergy to engage in teaching in schools, colleges and universities, and to earn their living thereby. For instance, Canon 33 of 1603 specifically allows that a person's tenure of a fellowship in an Oxford or Cambridge college is sufficient title for a bishop to ordain the man. This exception made for the teaching profession is of great importance, for it can readily be argued that the establishment of non-stipendiary ministry is but an extension of this ancient precedent to a wider spectrum of employment.

## 2. THE CONSTRAINTS IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Although the greater part of this thesis concerns developments in the 19th and 20th centuries, it will be helpful at this point to offer a brief survey of the maintenance of the clergy during the previous three centuries.

### i) The Cure of Souls

From the beginning, the commonly held understanding in the Church of England was that when a minister accepted a benefice and was appointed to the 'cure of souls', he was expected to devote his whole attention to this task. For proper fulfilment of this task the minister was expected to withdraw from worldly occupations and pleasures, and to separate himself from the mass of humanity, so that he could be a visible example to them of a godly life. The parson was even given visibility by his very dress, which was distinctive. In a real sense the parochial clergy were a caste within society.



All of this is vividly illustrated by the case of George Herbert (1593-1633), and in particular by the choice of detail offered by Isaak Walton (1593-1683) in his celebrated Life of Mr. George Herbert, first published in 1670. It seems clear that Walton intended not only to present Herbert as a saintly figure, but also as a model of what the country parson of the Established Church ought to be. So it is hardly accidental that Walton tells how on being offered the living of Bemerton, Herbert, then in Deacon's orders, hesitated -

the apprehension of the last great Account that he was to make for the Cure of so many Souls, made him fast and pray often, and consider, for not less than a month: in which time he had some resolutions to decline both the Priesthood, and that Living (Walton 1670, p. 287).

In the event, Herbert was <sup>e</sup>persuaded to accept the living, and on being so convinced,

a Taylor was sent for to come speedily ... to take measure, and make him Canonical Cloaths, against next day: which the Taylor did; and Mr. Herbert being so habited, went with his presentation to ... the Bishop of Salisbury, and he gave him institution immediately ... and he was also the same day ... inducted into the ... Parsonage of Bemerton (Walton 1670, p. 288).

Previously, though in Deacon's orders and (perhaps because of ill-health) an absentee Prebend of a church in Lincoln diocese, Herbert had worn 'his sword and silk Cloaths'. Now, as Rector of Bemerton, habited in his canonical coat, he returned home and saluted his wife with these curious words:

You are now a Minister's Wife, and must now so far forget your father's house, as not to claim a precedence of any of your Parishioners; for ... a Priest's Wife can challenge no precedence or place, but that which she purchases by her obliging humility (Walton 1670, p. 291).

In other words, Mrs. Herbert too is removed from the usual distinctions of rank within society.

Through each of these selected incidents, Walton seems to be expressing how Herbert was experiencing what we might call a 'rite of passage', which transferred him from the status of nobleman to that of parson. What is intriguing is that the actual rite which served this purpose is not, as one might expect, ordination as a Priest (he was not priested until the following Embertide), but his institution and induction to the benefice, suitably attired in the appropriate clothes.



Walton's interpretation is far from being an imposition upon his subject. Herbert himself wrote an exhaustive manual for parochial clergy which lays out his own perception of the roles a pastor needs to adopt for the cure of souls. Priest to the Temple; or, The Country Parson, His Character and Rule of Holy Life, (written in 1632 and first printed posthumously in 1652) was composed in the first place as a private exercise, as Herbert says in his preface to the Reader 'that I may have a mark to aim at'. The extent to which Herbert perceived the Parson's roles as embracing the totality of life may be seen from some of the chapter heads. Apart from discussing the expected clerical roles of preaching, praying, visiting etc., there are chapters on The Parson in his House, The Parson in Journey, The Parson in Mirth, the Parson's Library, etc. The gist of each chapter is that with whatever situations life confronts the parson, he will always use the occasion as a means to instruct people by word and example in the ways of God. Beyond doubt, the cure of souls occupies the whole of the parson's life.

This book has had a continuous (if at times patchy) influence in setting the Church of England's model of ministry. A rough survey of the British Library Catalogue's entries of British editions of Herbert's Priest to the Temple reveals that it went through 3 editions in the 17th century, 1 in the 18th century (1701), at least 29 in the 19th century (mostly in its latter half), and at least 13 in the present century. If published editions are an indication of a book's popularity and influence, then it is plain that Herbert's Priest to the Temple was well read in his own century, sunk to obscurity in the next, and revived with great force from the 1840s onwards. It is not insignificant that this revival corresponds with the very period when the ministry was openly evolving into a profession (in the sociological sense).

## ii) Clerical Poverty and Secular Occupations

The life and writings of George Herbert may have offered a paradigm showing the cure of souls to be a full-time occupation, but in practice this ideal was often unattainable. For the simple reason that the benefice income of many livings was quite insufficient to live off, and thus many poor clergy were driven to supplement their clerical income with 'by-employments'.



At an early stage Archbishop Parker seems to have recognised these realities, for in 1564 he required anyone appointed to an ecclesiastical office to declare 'I shall not openly intermeddle with any artificers occupations, as covetously to seek a gayne thereby, having an ecclesiastical lyvinge to the somme of 20 nobles [about £6] or above by yeare' (Every 1960, p. 38). Parker seems to have been acknowledging the inevitability of some clergy engaging in by-employments, but sought to contain this 'undesirable' phenomenon. Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, conscientious bishops likewise sought to restrain by-employments; but many, aware that there was no other solution to the problem of clerical poverty, turned a blind eye.

Although Herbert did not seem to allow his ideal parson to spend any time farming his glebe, it is clear that a great many 16th and 17th clergy did farm their own glebe lands, and so became largely self-sufficient in material needs. Thus country clergy, though perhaps better educated than their village neighbours, had a life style not greatly different, farming small-holdings like their peasant parishioners. The following examples, taken from some recent studies of the economic state of the clergy, illustrate these points.

Most clerical farms, for instance, were under 30 acres in size. Local details help one to sense the character of such a clerical farm. The Terrier (inventory) for Drayton Bassett (Staffordshire) in 1613 records the fact that the benefice property included -

besides the dwelling house a corn barn, a hay barn, a bakehouse and kitchen, a garden, an orchard, a croft enclosure, and over four acres of meadow divided into five plots (the largest being two acres in area), and several strips scattered over four common fields (O'Day 1979, p. 182).

The diary of Ralph Josselin, vicar of Earls Colne (Essex) from 1641-83 reveal him to have been -

a farmer who rented and leased land, worked ten to twenty acres of it himself, and bought and sold at markets and fairs. Josselin was also a lifelong schoolmaster... about half his income was derived from sources other than his ecclesiastical living. Yet none of this detracts from Josselin's professional dedication, which had deep roots (Collinson 1982, p. 102).

Clergy of this kind in many respects identified with their people through their agricultural pursuits. There was much of the yeoman in them.



Whereas small scale farming was always an acceptable occupation, other by-employments were frowned upon, especially by Puritans who (conveniently for us) listed in 'Surveys of the Ministry' the (too Puritan) scandalous ways in which some resourceful but poverty-stricken clergy augmented their livings. It seems that those hastily ordained as mature adults in Elizabeth's reign often continued as 'men of occupation'. The surveys identify thirty-four trades, including those of girthmaker, harper, sow-gelder, any number of tailors and weavers, as well as physicians, surveyors, livestock dealers, and even several 'jesters' (Collinson 1982, p. 101).

In towns, poor livings were often augmented by incumbents becoming teachers or money-lenders on the side (Cross 1981; Holderness 1981). But the undertaking of menial work was seen as particularly undesirable, as in the case of the vicar of Liddington (Rutland) who in 1634 was stated as having for many years

busied himself in sordid employments, and served a thatcher for straw, and helped the thatcher to sow his house, and thereby acquired a good skill in that faculty... to the...disgrace of his priestly function.

Sheer poverty seems to have been the reason in this case (Hill 1956, pp. 216-7).

Not all Puritans, however, were against clergy in secular employment. An humble supplication addressed to Queen Elizabeth in 1584 made the following poetic suggestion:

The bishops forthwith ask, what shall our curates do,  
Or what allowance shall they have to live upon?  
We say we think it best that out of hand they go  
To their old trades or learn some occupation.

(The Seconde Parte of a Register, i.268,  
cited in Hill 1956, p. 219)

This was also the opinion of John Milton (1608-74) who wrote a treatise on The Likeliest Means to remove Hirelings out of the Church (1659). He admired the Waldensian tradition of poor preachers bred up in trades, physic or surgery so as not to burden the church -

But our ministers think scorn to use a trade, and count it the reproach of this age, that tradesmen preach the gospel. It were to be wished they were all tradesmen; they would not then so many of them, for want of another trade, make a trade of their preaching.  
(Milton 1659, pp. 98-9).



Milton's opinion was quickly drowned with the Restoration, but his insight about the effects of making a 'trade' of preaching remains a trenchant one.

With the establishment of Queen Anne's Bounty (1704) and the augmentation of the poorer livings, clerical poverty was somewhat alleviated in the 18th century, especially towards its close when the agricultural revolution resulted in increased income from tithes, and from substantial increases in land-holdings (and thus rents) arising from the Enclosure Acts. However, this did not apply to the new breed of perpetual curates, nor in some small out-of-the-way parishes where clergy were still compelled by circumstances to augment their income through manual work.

One such was Robert Walker (1709-1802), curate of Seathwaite, Cumberland, for sixty-six years. He caught the imagination of Wordsworth as being a man whose life-style confirmed his gospel teaching, which (Wordsworth tacitly implies) was unusual in a clergyman. Walker is the 'Gospel Teacher ... whose good works formed an endless retinue ... such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew' in Wordsworth's sonnet 'Seathwaite Chapel' (Sonnet XVIII in the River Duddon series, composed about 1820).

To this sonnet Wordsworth appends thirteen pages of biographical notes, which he himself had carefully researched and documented (Selincourt 1954, pp. 510-23). From these notes it appears that Walker became curate of the hamlet where he was born, with an initial income of only £5 p.a. (later £17). He made ends meet by keeping a few sheep, farming 3 acres of land, and by spinning and weaving wool. An astonished visitor to Walker's home in 1754 described him thus:

I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people, dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a checked shirt, a leathern strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great wooden-soled shoes plated with iron to preserve them (what we call clogs in these parts)... [His children were] spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lay it, by sixteen or thirty-two pounds' weight, upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles, will carry it to the market, even in the depth of winter.

(ibid., pp. 511 and 516)



The clothing worn by his family was 'comely and decent, but as simple as their diet; the homespun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands'. On weekdays he taught the village children (for no charge) in the church:

His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion table was his desk; and ... the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel, while the children were repeating their lessons by his side... He also assisted his neighbours in haymaking and shearing their flocks, in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous.

(ibid., pp. 515 and 516)

To these documented details, Wordsworth adds an insightful comment of his own:

While his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done unto - that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labours by recollections in the minds of his congregation, that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes. (ibid., p. 518)

Thus, in the life style of Robert Walker, Wordsworth seems to have stumbled upon a fine example of the pastoral value of clergy identifying with their people through their labours - a discovery currently being made by many non-stipendiary ministers. But the case was sufficiently rare ~~as~~ to attract idealised poetic attention.

In fact, throughout the 19th century, the development of the ministry was predominantly in an opposite direction. Clerical poverty diminished, as witness the rebuilding of so many village vicarages in the early part of the century. Esther de Waal has noted -

By the end of the nineteenth century the chances were that the average Anglican country parson was better housed, fed and educated than his eighteenth-century predecessor; that his church was cleaner and his services more cheerful; that he commanded the respect of his neighbours; that he subscribed to at least one church periodical; that he regularly attended his diocesan conference; that he talked a great deal more about his job with his colleagues. In other words, he was fast becoming a professional man.

(de Waal 1979, pp. 169-70)

The process by which the clergy became professionalized in the 19th century has been exhaustively analysed in Russell 1980 (cf. Introduction).



### iii) The Attitude of Scholars

Thus, given the legally enshrined constraints on clergy occupations, the model of ministry propounded by the Ordinal and by such Anglican divines as Herbert, together with the 19th century expression of this model (resulting in the drift towards professionalization), there was inherently very little likelihood of the alternative pattern of a self-supporting clergy gaining much acceptance - even if the idea ever crossed people's minds. So ingrained was the notion of the cure of souls being a full-time occupation, that even scholars who were well aware of other patterns of ministry at earlier stages of church history never seem to have questioned the pattern currently surrounding them in England.

For example, Richard Hooker (c.1554-1600), in Book V of his treatise Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (1597), struggles with the Puritan accusation that too many clergy were unlearned, and incapable of 'rightly dividing the word of God' in a teaching role. He answers that an army of twelve thousand learned men would not suffice 'to furnish all places of cure in this realm', and that only a quarter of the livings with cure were 'able to yield sufficient maintenance for learned men'. This leads him to ask:

Is it not plain that unless the greater part of the people should be left utterly without the public use and exercise of religion there is no remedy but to take into ecclesiastical order a number of men meanly qualified in respect of learning? (5.81.5)

It does not occur to him to solve the problem by considering whether certain learned men of independent means might not be invited to receive ordination and the cure of souls in their own neighbourhoods.

Still less would Hooker have countenanced the amelioration of clerical poverty by manual work. For when he does discuss St Paul's precedent for working with his own hands (5.81.8), Hooker seems to regard the apostolic practice as a temporary relaxation of a 'law of nature' expressed in Aristotle's precept, 'Let no husbandman nor no handicraftsman be a priest, [for] it importuneth greatly the good of all men that God be revered'<sup>1</sup>. Hooker considers that for the honour of God, 'it standeth not that they which are publicly employed in his service should live of base or manuary trades'. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that

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<sup>1</sup>Outē geōrgon outē banauson hierea katastateon. hupo gar tōn politōn prepei timasthai tous theous. (Aristotle, Politics, VII.9)



Hooker is so concerned to justify the existing institution of the cure of souls that even scripture is not able to question it - so powerful is the long-established parochial system in shaping his mind-set.

But Church history could be used to good effect by the Caroline divines in countering Presbyterian views, as may be seen, for example, in the treatise of Archbishop William Laud (1573-1645), An Answer to the Lord Say's Speech against the Bishops, published while he was a prisoner in the Tower. Briefly, the circumstances were these. Early in 1641 the strongly Presbyterian Commons of the Long Parliament introduced a Bill 'to restrain bishops and others in holy orders to intermeddle in secular affairs'. Basically, it was designed to exclude bishops from the House of Lords. When the Bill reached the Lords, it was strongly defended by Lord Say and Sele (whose speech was published), and rather inadequately attacked by the bishop of Lincoln (Cobbett 1807, Vol. 2, pp. 794-814; Shaw 1900, Vol. 1, pp. 60-5). Laud undertook a lengthy written refutation of Say's position.

As part of his argument, Laud assembles the historical evidence of Councils and patristic writings which show that 'a bishop or other clergyman may lawfully meddle in some temporal affairs, always providing that he "entangle"<sup>1</sup> not himself with them' (Laud 1641, p. 181). The evidence presented is comprehensive. He supplements a discussion of his chaplain Jeremy Taylor (1613-67) (Taylor 1642) with additional texts from the Councils of Sardis, Carthage I and Elberis (Elvira), and shows the closest acquaintance with the historical data. What is intriguing is that a good deal of the evidence cited (especially by Taylor) refers equally to Priests and Deacons as to Bishops. (It is, in fact, the very same evidence which in the 20th century would be used as historical support for NSM!) But 17th century divines were faced with conserving the traditional patterns of English church life. They were confronted with enough challenges as it was. Little wonder they failed to notice that church history added a further challenge to assumptions about the cure of souls.

Another important and slightly later example of a scholar whose enquiry was constrained by a thought world formed by the English parochial system is Joseph Bingham (1668-1723). Between 1708 and 1722 Bingham published his monumental work Origines Ecclesiasticae - an

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<sup>1</sup>Referring to 2 Timothy 2:4.



account of the antiquities of the Christian church, in which every conceivable aspect of the institutional church, its customs, practices and regulations are laid out methodically from the evidence of original sources. So thoroughly and exhaustively was this done, that J.H.Overton considered 'he would be a bold man who should attempt again to go over the ground so completely traversed' (DNB, Vol 2, p. 511). In fact, Bingham's Antiquities remained the standard textbook on early church practice throughout the 19th century, and still today is referred to with respect by contemporary historians.

Book VI of the Antiquities is 'An account of several laws and rules, relating to the employment, life and conversation of the primitive clergy'. Within this book, chapter 4 discusses in detail the imperial legislation, canons of church councils and other patristic texts which allow or constrain clergy employments. Bingham concludes that 'it was lawful...to spend their leisure hours upon any manual trade or calling' (6.4.13). None of the sources, however, actually speaks of these as leisure activities. On the contrary, the craftwork, farming or trade seem to have been integral parts of the vocations of the individuals concerned (Vaughan 1986b). So Bingham's interpretative gloss about 'leisure hours', (from one who is normally a very exact scholar,) seems to arise from presuppositions formed by English parochial ministry.

Again, when discussing how clerici were exempted from the lustral tax (a tax on small traders) in the 4th and 5th centuries, Bingham presumes that these laws referred only to those in minor orders (acolytes, exorcists, etc.). However, the generic Greek term klerikos can mean any ordained person below the rank of bishop, and at certain times definitely includes priests and deacons (as Bingham himself acknowledges in 1.5.7). Once again, it seems that Bingham's implicit assumptions inhibited him from entertaining the idea that 4th century clergy who kept market stalls could have been priests. (His interpretation was subsequently to be quite influential in the 19th century debate about non-stipendiary ministry, and was accepted, for example, by Bright (Bright 1894<sup>a</sup>, p. 270).)

This 'blindspot' of Bingham's is all the more significant when it is realised that he was not simply interested in history for its own sake. He was quite willing to encourage the contemporary Church of England to reflect on its practice in the light of the data from the early Church, so much so that at the conclusion of Book VI Bingham actually offers an



'Address to the Clergy of the present Church'. Amongst his practical suggestions were that chorepiscopi might be reintroduced to help in over-large dioceses, that clergy should not go to law in a secular court, that training for the ministry should include personal formation under guidance as well as intellectual arguments at universities, and that ordinands should be personally known or personally certified to the ordaining bishop. Each of these suggestions spoke to 18th century church problems. Discontent with the benefice system as such, however, was not an 18th century concern. And so the evidence for alternative patterns of clerical sustenance, although presented, was passed over.

#### iv) Summary

To summarise, from the 16th to the mid-19th century in England, it was almost universally assumed that appointment to the cure of souls was a full-time occupation; Puritan objections had no lasting effect; where clerical poverty led to by-employments, this was generally seen as undesirable; and scholars who knew of other patterns of sustenance in the primitive church never applied this knowledge to their contemporary English church. The propriety of the parochial system and the benefice, together with the notion of the cure of souls as a full-time occupation, remained unarticulated and unchallenged assumptions throughout the period. Behind these assumptions lay a general acceptance of the fact that the clergy of the Church of England were predominantly an educated and gentleman class, and that it was appropriate for them to be so.

### 3. EARLY CHALLENGES TO THE TRADITIONAL CONSTRAINTS ON SECULAR EMPLOYMENT OF THE CLERGY

#### i) Dr. Thomas Arnold

The earliest challenge to traditional constraints on the secular employment of the clergy came from Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), headmaster of Rugby. Arnold is, of course, chiefly famous for his writings on educational and social issues. But he was also deeply concerned with the application of Christian faith to all aspects of the



nation's life (as his sermons and newspaper correspondence indicate). Not least, he was concerned that the Church of England (of which he was an ordained minister) was failing at a structural level to play its part in a rapidly changing society.

There was indeed plenty of evidence that the Church of England was showing itself incapable of adapting its diocesan and parochial boundaries to match the changing demography of urban life, and incapable of adapting its liturgy beyond the legal constraints (which required that only the rites of the Book of Common Prayer be used in parish churches).

This situation presented the Church of England, in Arnold's view, with a missionary challenge: 'When we consider the utter inadequacy of the Establishment, as it now stands, to meet the wants of the great manufacturing towns and districts, it may be said that in those portions of the kingdom our business is not so much to reform the Church, as to create one' (Stanley 1845, p. 337).

When therefore, after the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, there was widespread fear that a more radical parliament might press for the dis-establishment of the Church of England, Arnold was one among many in the Church who gratuitously offered advice to Lord Grey's Commission on Church Reform - through a pamphlet entitled Principles of Church Reform (1833). In it Arnold outlined a plan for a National Church, embracing Dissenters. But a basically friendly review in The Times (26 Jan 1833, p. 2e) declared the plan 'impracticable' since the voices of Dissent were crying for freedom from the Establishment, not for incorporation into it. The review, however, concluded: 'The whole pamphlet deserves to be perused for the good sense of many of its remarks ... but we have great doubts whether it will at present gain a single influential proselyte or inspire a single legislative Church Reformer'. Dean Stanley, Arnold's biographer, remarked with hindsight that many of the points made in the pamphlet (including the 'revival of an inferior order of ministers'), 'being then proposed nearly for the first time, have since received the sanction of a large part of public opinion, if not of public practice' (Stanley 1904, p. 289).

What exactly were Arnold's proposals for the revival of an inferior order of ministers ? Basically his suggestion arose out of a concern over the restricted social range of the Church's ministers:



the Church is like an army destitute of non-commissioned officers, and therefore incapable of acting with sufficient effect, through this defect in its organisation... As all classes of society require the services of the ministers of religion, the ministry should contain persons taken from all. (Arnold 1833, pp. 117-8)

He therefore proposed an order of ministers chosen from the poorer classes of society, countering criticism regarding their lack of education, by saying:

it [is not] intended that an uneducated man should in any case be the principal minister in a parish, as that would undo one of the chief benefits, so far as moral and social improvement is concerned, of a national establishment. But there is enormous advantage in giving all ranks of society their share in the administration of the Church: they would think that they had an interest in a system which provided a place for them as well as for the rich. (ibid., p. 119)

There can be no doubt that the effective working-class leadership currently being offered amongst some Dissenters provided Arnold with a vision of what was possible: in the National Church he envisaged, this expansion of the ministry could be a special contribution from Dissent.

Some years later, when all hope of his visionary National Church had evaporated, Arnold continued to explore ways in which the ministry of his own Church could be strengthened with a body of 'NCOs'. In May 1841, he published a brief pamphlet entitled Order of Deacons, calling for 'the repeal of all laws, canons or customs which prevent a deacon from following a secular calling'. He had already begun to develop his ideas about this in a letter to A.P. Stanley (27 Feb 1839), and a sermon in Rugby parish church in December 1839; by May 1840 he was considering a petition to parliamentarians (Stanley 1904, pp. 559-60).

Although Arnold was confining his remarks to the Third Order (Deacons), it is astonishing to see how his prophetic mind, in the space of a very few pages, touched on a rich variety of arguments which advocates for non-stipendiary ministry were later to reiterate and develop. His supporting lines of argument included the following nine points:

- i) the shortage of clergy would be alleviated, especially in industrial towns;



ii) the false division between clergy and laity would be bridged - 'the confusion of confining the term Church to the clergy would be greatly dispelled: inasmuch as there would be not only members but even ministers of the Church who did not belong to the clergy considered as a profession' (Arnold 1841a, p. 428);

iii) the spectrum of social class represented in the clergy would be widened - 'the ministry of the Church would thus be safely and most beneficially open to persons of an inferior rank and fortune, who cannot afford the expense of a University education, and have no prospects of entering the ministry as a profession, but who may have gifts which enable them to serve the Church effectually, and who may naturally and lawfully wish not to let these gifts lie idle' (ibid.);

iv) the concept of shared ministry within a team would grow - 'in all spiritual functions [the deacons] would be under the direction and control of the presbyters of their respective parishes; but in temporal matters, such as the management and distribution of funds for charitable purposes...they would form a council, of which the presbyter would be the head, and to which all such matters might be entrusted' (ibid. p. 427);

v) standards of academic preparation for ordination would have to be altered - 'the examination previous to ordination might be modified at the discretion of the bishops' (ibid. p. 429);

vi) bishops could control standards of preaching by restricting licenses to preach - 'according to the present form of ordaining deacons, no deacon is authorised to preach, except he obtain the bishop's license to do so. This provision might be enforced, and the license to preach given only to such deacons as the bishop should judge expedient, and might be granted only durante bene placito' (ibid. p. 428);

vii) the cost of providing for an increased clergy would be removed - a Parliamentary grant of £400,000 a year for new clergymen was about to be proposed, 'but surely [this] end would be better answered, and at no expense, by reviving the order of deacons' (Stanley 1904, pp. 559f.);



viii) the world of business would be sanctified - deacons would enable us 'to see that union of the Christian ministry with the common business of life which would be such a benefit both to the clergy and to the laity'. They would exhibit 'the peculiar character of Christianity, that of sanctifying the business of this world by doing everything in the name of the Lord Jesus' (Stanley 1904, p. 560 and Arnold 1841b, p. 502);

ix) no change in principle was involved, only alteration to custom - 'the Ordination Service might remain just as it is...it is only an alteration in certain customs which have long prevailed, but which have really no authority' (Arnold 1842, p. 415).

It is significant that the primary motivation behind Arnold's proposed innovation was identical to that of the later advocates of non-stipendiary ministry: an awareness of lost missionary opportunity. As a recent commentator notes, 'Arnold's thinking about the diaconate began in the missionary and pastoral needs of the new industrial areas... He used his discussion about deacons to provoke imaginative thought on the Christian missionary problem in an industrial society' (Jackson & Rogan 1962, pp. 45 and 49). (As we shall see, the development of non-stipendiary ministry has in the same way raised a host of fundamental questions about the nature and mission of the Church.)

Arnold's radical proposal for the development of an order of working (-class) deacons was not based simply on pragmatic grounds (alleviation of manpower shortage and cost). The proposal stems from theological perceptions. Two themes in particular stand out in his writings on church reform.

First, he was committed to the idea of a Christian society in which the Church had the duty to respond to every social issue, challenging the structures of society as much as the morals of individuals. He was firmly opposed to any distinction between sacred and secular -

what are all our business and our studies but profane, if not done in Christ's name? and what are our acts of religion but the extremest folly and falsehood, if they are not made to act upon our common life? Every act of a Christian is at once secular and sacred'.

(Stanley 1845, p. 474).



His second guiding theological principle was that the Church was more than the clergy -

The very word Church has lost its proper meaning, and is constantly used to express only the clerical members of it. The worst consequence of this... is the unchristian distinction thus created between the clergy and the laity, to the equal injury of both.

(Arnold 1833, p. 121).

He was committed to having the laity play a greater part in clerical appointments and in the government of the Church (for instance by advocating an annual 'general assembly' of the people and clergy of each diocese under the presidency of the bishop).

We may thus interpret his call for working deacons as an attempt to find an outward structural expression of these two theological ideas.

It is of course very significant that Arnold did not propose any relaxation of canons or laws governing the order of presbyters (priests). He did not wish to disturb the nature of the professional parochial ministry: as an educator he saw the need for each parish to have a well-educated, full-time, stipendiary priest capable of offering sound teaching. Arnold's deacons were to work 'under' such a priest. But because they would be allowed to follow secular callings, 'a link would be formed between the clergy and the laity by the existence of an order partaking of the character of both' (Arnold 1841, p. 428). What he meant by the last phrase is not explained.

It seems likely, however, that in Arnold's mind what made a man 'clergy' as distinct from 'laity' was not so much his ordination as his set-apartness from society - as expressed through full-time (church) work and a stipend. He briefly elaborated this notion in a letter to Stanley in which he supposed that according to Canon Law 'a Deacon... is half a Layman, and could return at any time to a lay condition altogether'. Thus, the secular occupation seems to be the mark of a layman. But he then confusedly counters this idea with the remark that, on the evidence of St Paul's tentmaking, 'no one is so mad as to maintain that a minister abstaining from all secular callings is a matter of necessity' (Stanley 1904, p. 503).



We can see now that there was a large measure of confusion in Arnold's thinking. It was inherently unlikely that his working deacons could ever be seen as belonging to the clerical profession, so how could they then become a 'link', partaking of the character of both clergy and laity ? One way might have been to stress the sacramental nature of their ordination; but with his distaste for 'the priestcraft system', Arnold did not attempt to develop this line of thought.

Arnold was never himself involved in working-class urban ministry. His role was rather that of a prophet - perceiving the coming crisis, expressing the facts, exploring the options. He wrote from an uninvolved distance, and not always with clarity. He failed in his lifetime to convince his contemporaries, and his plans for Church reform were dismissed as impracticable. But 'impracticable ideas which become sensible over the next hundred years come only to the minds of great men' (Chadwick 1966, p. 46).

## ii) Archdeacon Hale

So far no systematic historical or theological justification had been offered for the proposed deacons in secular employment. To this very task William Hale Hale (1795-1870) set his mind. As a Prebend of St Paul's Cathedral London, and Archdeacon of London<sup>1</sup>, Hale was a senior ecclesiastic and well respected for his published antiquarian researches <sup>2</sup>. He took advantage of the opportunities afforded to him as Archdeacon in devoting several of his annual Visitation Charges<sup>3</sup> to matters broadly concerning the extension of the ministry. A little earlier (1850), he had begun disseminating his ideas through a published essay written out of conviction that 'the time was come for opening the subject to public discussion', for his own experience proved 'that the number of those of every shade of feeling, who are praying for the extension of the Diaconate, or the revival in the Church of some lower order of Ministry, is by no means inconsiderable' (Hale 1850, pp. 35-6).

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<sup>1</sup>From 1842.

<sup>2</sup>For details see DNB, Vol. VIII, p. 910.

<sup>3</sup>1852, 1853, 1856 and 1864.



The Charges developed the ideas of his earlier essay. Although originally delivered to the clergy of London diocese, they were subsequently printed and widely circulated throughout the Church of England. Thus, over a period of years he systematically argued for making the ordained Ministry of the Church of England more flexible, by the revival or extension of the Orders of Deacon and Sub-deacon, and by the creation of the office of Suffragan Bishop. By 1864 proposals to establish an office of Lay Reader were before the Church, but Hale argued against its introduction, preferring (as we shall see) that spiritual functions be reserved for those in 'Orders'.

All of this was happening during the very years that Convocation was being revived after a long period of dormancy. The extraordinary story of how the Church of England suddenly became aware that it actually possessed a constitutional means to reform its own affairs through the ancient (though extremely cumbersome) institution of Convocation need not be repeated here<sup>1</sup>. Suffice it to say that in 1851 the Convocation of Canterbury for the first time since 1717 transacted a piece of business that was more than perfunctory and formal; that in 1855 it petitioned leave of the Crown to make a Canon (permission was refused); and that in 1860 the first new Canon was promulged. It is clear that Hale (himself a member of Convocation) considered that there was a practical possibility of structural reform and development through Convocation, and was using his Visitation Charges to float ideas, with the hope of building up public pressure for developments of new patterns of ministry to meet the needs of the increasing population.

What case did Hale make? He tells us that the primary problem was 'the inability of the Parish Priest to discharge properly the cure of souls committed to his charge', either because of the density of the population (in cities) or its scattered nature (in hamlets). The matter had first come to his attention with regard to farming settlements in Australia. He had suggested to Bishop Broughton, the first bishop of Sydney, in the 'early part' of his episcopate<sup>2</sup> that 'some of the local magistrates and chief owners of property might act as Deacons', and so be authorised to conduct divine worship at weekly assemblies of isolated communities. The bishop thought it was a good idea, but it seems no action ensued (Hale 1864, pp. 109f).

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<sup>1</sup>See Chadwick 1966, Part I, pp. 309-324.

<sup>2</sup>Broughton was Bishop of Australia from 1836, and of Sydney 1847-54.



Hale based his proposals upon distinctions between the offices of Deacon and Priest as defined in the Ordinal of the Church of England. The respective duties are spelled out in the formal questions asked of ordinands, and especially in the lengthy charge given to Priests (but not to Deacons). Hale concluded that 'the cure of souls' is limited by the terms of the Ordination Service to the Priest alone, whilst a share in the performance of duties... is allowed to the Deacon'. Moreover, Hale's interpretation of the texts was that 'the Deacon is permitted to perform the ordinary duties of life, but the Presbyter bids adieu to worldly employments, and makes the duties of the Ministry his all-absorbing thought and care' (Hale 1850, pp. 17 and 15).

On the basis of this distinction, found in the received texts (if not in common practice), Hale justifies his proposal for the extension of the diaconate. The need for such an extension was already shown by the fact that the Bishops had already seen fit 'to sanction an order of men heretofore unknown in our communion, under the title of Scripture Readers'. He doubted whether the Bishops had the right to create such an 'order', and considered that the work done by Scripture Readers more appropriately fell within the Ordinal's definitions of the Deacons' duties. He was of the opinion that 'amongst the laity... there would be found many members of our Church engaged in professions or offices, and even of independent fortune, who would be willing, if permitted to do so, to devote much of their time to the fulfilment of those duties which now belong to the Deacon's office'. More concisely, these duties might consist of assembling 'the poor in some humble oratory or upper chamber of the factory<sup>1</sup>... set apart for worship', of catechising the youth, visiting cottages of the poor, and on Sundays conducting divine worship outside churches: 'The Gospel must be preached in courts, and alleys, and factories, or the church bell will sound in vain. For this duty the Order of Deacons appears to be most fitting' (ibid., pp. 30, 31/2 and 29).

Then a very surprising thing happens. At this point in his argument, Hale wavers. One would have expected the essay to conclude with a resounding clarion call for action in favour of non-stipendiary deacons. But in fact the trumpet sounds an uncertain note: at the last

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<sup>1</sup>He refers to the Greek word hyperōon used in Acts 1.13 !



moment Hale backs away from the logical conclusion to his arguments. It is the realities of public opinion and the legal obstacles which make him hesitate:

The idea of admitting to the Deacon's office persons who should not be required to relinquish their secular calling is hardly likely in this age to be entertained; and there may be legal and canonical impediments, as well as prejudices of society, which it is difficult to overcome; but none of these difficulties stand in the way of admitting to the lower order of the Ministry, the Sub-diaconate or Readership, persons, whose means of support may be derived from trades or other similar occupations (ibid., p. 33).

Why did Hale wa~~v~~er? It seems he was acknowledging public opinion about the class and education of person who could be accepted into Holy Orders. Into his proposed extended diaconate (an Holy Order) he was prepared to admit people engaged in professions, holding public offices or of independent means. However, the Sub-diaconate (a distinctly lay order) was to be filled with people whose livelihood was derived from 'trades or other similar occupations'. Truly an impressive example of Victorian class discrimination ! But class was not the only problem. There was the impediment of the law. Pragmatically, the proposal to revive the Sub-diaconate (an ancient order of the early church) had more chance of success:

There may be fewer legal difficulties to overcome in introducing what is new, or what has simply fallen into desuetude, than there may be in altering what is settled by law, and sanctioned by usage.  
(Hale 1852, p. 18).

Thus there may have been a more realistic hope of extending the ministry through revival of ancient orders<sup>1</sup> by promulgating new Canons in Convocation; alteration to the diaconate, by contrast, would involve repeal of statute law through Parliament - a much more daunting prospect.

In the light of subsequent history, the question of the revival of the Sub-diaconate may be seen as a huge digression. It consumed much energy in Convocation, but no action ever ensued. The matter is relevant, however, to discussion of non-stipendiary ministry because of the light it throws upon attitudes of the time to the active ministry of lay people in the Church.

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<sup>1</sup>The evidence for the historical antiquity and traditional value of these orders is laid out in Hale 1853.



Hale was fully convinced of the clergy's need of assistance in the immense pastoral task confronting them, and that this assistance could be offered by the 'Lay Agency', the phrase then used (Hale 1864, p. 112). The question was how the lay assistance was to be ordered. Hale considered that 'assistance to the Ministry is a Spiritual function', giving efficiency to the Priestly office as defined in the Ordinal. As such, it was an extension of the ordained Priesthood. He feared, therefore, that the category of Scripture Reader recently approved by the Bishops would bring the Priesthood into disrepute, partly because they were poorly educated, and partly because of 'the want of due authority' - and, by implication, an accountability structure was lacking (p. 113). He was apprehensive that entrusting such duties as house to house visiting to Scripture Readers or to Laymen generally 'had the effect of diminishing the importance of the Parish Priest in the eyes of the people' (p. 116).

What was needed was the creation of an office of some 'dignity', subordinate to that of the Deacon, in much the same way as the office of Deacon is subordinate to that of the Priest (assisting in some, but not all, of the tasks of the superior office). Hale was certain that admission to the new office (whether termed Sub-deacon or Reader) should be by public service of authorisation in church, and to this end he prepared draft outlines of admission liturgy and of regulations governing the order (Hale 1853, pp. 29-31). In particular, he was clear that the Church (through Convocation) needed to define 'the learned qualifications, station in life and age' for admission; whether or not they were to be required to give up their secular occupations; whether service was to be perpetual or to a fixed age; what proofs of doctrine and knowledge should be required; and what form of public 'ordination' should be used (Hale 1864, p. 120).

In short, Hale was deeply concerned lest the status of the profession of the parochial clergy might be called in question. If there was to be extension of the ministry, it must be through a sub-profession, complete with recognised controls for admission and of good practice - even to the extent of insisting that 'his sermons must be either written, or so delivered from memory, that he may be able to give an account of his doctrine' (Hale 1853, p. 31) ! If such a ministry can properly be called lay ministry at all, it was certainly to be exercised only with the strictest clerical control.



### iii) Dean Hook

Within a year of the publication of Hale's essay, a parish priest intimately involved with ministry to working-class culture in a northern city took hold of the idea of working deacons, and developed it further. Walter Farquhar Hook (1798-1875) became Vicar of Leeds in 1837. He is chiefly remembered for having evolved a strikingly successful strategy for developing the parochial system within a rapidly expanding manufacturing town, and for his scheme for national (primary) education. He worked untiringly to combat exploitation of the working-class in Leeds. On his arrival, he found the entire town (population 123,393 in 1831) within one single parish, served by 18 clergy from the parish church and 17 chapels-of-ease. There were 3 schools. On his departure to the Deanery of Chichester in 1859, he left Leeds with 36 churches, 29 parsonage houses and 30 schools. 'He found [Leeds] a stronghold of dissent, he left it a stronghold of the church' (DNB, Vol. 10, pp. 1171-2).

Hook's biographer offers us a significant piece of information regarding a particular stage of Hook's urban strategy. A committee of the Ruri-decanal Chapter of Leeds was appointed in September 1851, with the Vicar as chairman, 'to consider the best means of reclaiming the lost portion of the population'. It issued a report on October 20th which 'is remarkable for suggestions which were then regarded as startlingly novel, but which have since been very commonly put into practice with most beneficial results' (Stephens 1878, Vol. 2, pp. 308-9).

The report was printed the next year for public consumption (Hook 1852), and a copy survives in the British Library<sup>1</sup>. Amongst the report's suggestions for 'reclaiming the lost portion of the population' were: multiplication of services in church; short services adapted to children; Holy Communion at a greater variety of hours; services and preaching in the open air; an authorised hymn-book; **extension of the diaconate**; promotion of popular education through schools, reading rooms and libraries.

It is intriguing to find the extension of the diaconate in such company. The Leeds committee was convinced that the latent possibilities of the diaconate (as enshrined in the Ordinal and as

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<sup>1</sup>A fact which has (to the best of my knowledge) gone unnoticed in any discussion of the history of secularly employed deacons.



expounded by Hale) were a providential gift to the predicament of urban ministry, for the extension of the diaconate 'would not be an alteration to the fundamental principles of our ecclesiastical polity nor any deviation from the laws of our Church'. The committee accordingly set about describing how such an extension might be regulated:

- i) great care would be needed 'to ascertain the qualifications of candidates';
- ii) they should be over 30 years of age and married;
- iii) they should be of 'independent circumstances' or able to show that for the previous three years they had supported their families 'by their professional exertions';
- iv) they should not be novices, but 'proved in the trial of life';
- v) they should not proceed to the priesthood unless they had (a) been deacon for at least 3 years, (b) attained 'the present standard of competency in learning', (c) attested their sincerity 'by the sacrifice of their temporal vocations'.

(Hook 1852, pp. 18-19)

Thus at every point Hook's committee was consolidating Hale's desire to keep the diaconate in professional hands, and to regulate it like any other profession. Moreover, the predominant concern throughout was 'the right organization and spiritual well-being of a parish' (p. 8). A major strategy in such organization was 'to relieve the clergy in Priests' Orders from the greater part of their "serving at tables", and thus set them more at liberty for their proper and necessary duties' (p. 31). Once again, the role and dignity of the Parish Priest was seen as of paramount importance, to be protected at all costs.

There is no surviving evidence as to how these ideas were received in Leeds<sup>1</sup>. But it is indisputable that the views of this persuasive and influential man will have been well known within Ripon diocese. It therefore comes as no surprise to discover that when in 1881 the issue of the diaconate once more surfaced as an issue for ecclesial discussion through a petition to the Convocation of York, the initiating source was Ripon Diocesan Conference, and the proposer of the petition was none

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<sup>1</sup>Leeds Ruri-decanal records do not survive from before 1870.



other than the former secretary of Hook's Chapter Committee, now a Canon of Ripon!<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, when the Convocation of York subsequently produced a report on the subject, Hook is cited in it in extenso.

#### iv) Convocation

In a short time the ideas propagated by Hale and Hook had generated sufficient interest to arise within the business of Convocation. A committee was appointed to consider whether the distinction between the orders of Priest and Deacon might be marked by an extension of the diaconate and whether the order of Reader should be revived. Its report (Convocation of Canterbury 1859) was tabled in 1859 and came up for detailed discussion in 1862.

The report was not in favour of any extension to the class of persons admitted to the diaconate, and preferred to recommend the revival of the ancient order of Readers in such a way that it could 'include persons of all ranks and classes of society', who were at liberty to resign their commission from the bishop at any time. The report listed three 'serious obstacles' in the way of extending the diaconate:

- i) the 'indelible character' of the diaconate conflicted with the possibility that those so ordained might only give 'the service of a time, but not the service of a life;
- ii) extension was only possible if 'the amount of literary qualification' for admission were relaxed, thus producing the problem of two different admission standards for the same order;
- iii) statute law precluded clergy from sitting on juries or in Parliament, and from engaging in trade.

In other words, extension was seen by the report as threatening the status and admission requirements of the clerical profession, and so was to be resisted.

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Jackson 1812-1902, Incumbent of St James, Leeds, 1846-1902; Canon of Ripon, 1875.



When the report came up for discussion, these alleged obstacles were staunchly challenged by two members, the Revd. H. Mackenzie<sup>1</sup> and Canon Browne<sup>2</sup>. They moved an amendment declaring that the diaconate 'might be beneficially thrown open to a class of men of proved and earnest piety, zeal and discretion, not hitherto ordained in the Church of England ...of a lower standard of classical attainments than those required from students of our Universities'. The amendment also proposed the elevation of the standard of examination for the order of Priest, lest 'the Church [be] injured by an influx of unlearned men into her ministry'. The amendment provoked only one other speech in favour and nine against, and was withdrawn. But the sentiments revealed in the lengthy debate are worth noting, for they illustrate well the prevailing ethos of the clerical profession, and how it might best serve the mass of the nation.

Both sides in the debate were agreed the order of Priests should not be disturbed by any relaxation in its admission requirements. Both seemed content that the order of Priests was filled only by the educated gentry class, and both acknowledged the need for some kind of office to assist parish priests bridge the social gap with the poorer classes. The division of opinion was over whether the bridging office should be inside or outside Holy Orders.

Mackenzie and Browne argued that it should be inside, since 'the Church of England, by her conventionality ... is the only Church in Christendom that receives only gentlemen into holy orders' (CCC, 1862, pp. 947-8). 'It is impossible for a Church that uses only the energies of the upper grades of society to retain the whole of the nation within its bosom' (p. 949). 'We want a lower order of ministers who would be living amongst the middle and lower classes of society, and who would have

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Mackenzie: ordained 1834; Vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, London, 1848-55; and Vicar of Tydd St. Mary, Lincs., at the time. He subsequently became the first bishop suffragan of Nottingham, 1870-77. In 1845 he had published a sermon preached at a Visitation, entitled The fuller restoration of the Diaconate, a means of strengthening the Church. He was an innovator, becoming known as 'the father of mission houses', having in about 1857 built the first 'mission church' in his 12-mile long South Lincolnshire parish (Chadwick 1970, p. 163).

<sup>2</sup>Edward Harold Browne (1811-1891): ordained 1836; Canon of Exeter Cathedral, 1849; Norrisian Professor of Divinity, University of Cambridge, 1854; later in 1862 he presented a paper to the Second Church Congress, entitled 'The Extension of the Ministry'. Subsequently he was Bishop of Ely, 1864; Bishop of Winchester, 1873-91. He was the first bishop outside London to start training laymen for church work (in Ely diocese in 1872 -Chadwick 1970, p. 164).



that influence over them which can only be exercised by a person in holy orders' (p. 951). Mackenzie made much of the need for the clergy to have 'sympathy' with the lower classes. He seems to have empathised with clergy who he describes as 'fastidious' and 'easily offended' on visiting poor homes, and confessed 'When I myself have visited three or four such cases in succession, I am exhausted and have not the physical energy to go further!' What was wanted was 'men who, with a horny hand, and under the rough exterior, possess tender hearts...to visit the houses of working men, and share a constant sympathy with their common life' (p. 947).

Against this, it was argued that many clergy did successfully relate to the poor, and that 'people of the lower class are very sensible indeed of that delicacy of character which belongs to a gentleman, and that a gentleman would have more influence over them' (p. 957); 'this was not the time to do anything that would degrade the clergy in the eyes of the people' (p. 960). The best way forward was 'by aiding those who are willing, in a subordinate [lay] position, to engage in the work of the Church' (p. 953) - in other words, to offer the opportunity to exercise pastoral functions without offering clerical status.

But in the end it was pragmatic factors which decided the question. Although Mackenzie had drawn the analogy with merchant firms and the legal profession (where those aspiring to high position at first work alongside those who will always remain clerks), it was generally felt intolerable to have a single order of Deacon with two separate functions (one preparing for Priesthood, the other not) (p. 952); jealousy would be engendered within the order (p. 954); and the whole proposal seemed 'to be speculating on some alteration of the law which it is doubtful if we should get it' (p. 928).

So in the end, a proposal went forward (moved by Archdeacon Hale) for the establishment of an order 'supplemental to the Diaconate, [whose] duties shall be so declared as to invite persons of all ranks and classes' (p. 940). This was the constitutional step which resulted in the licensing of the Church of England's first Lay Reader in 1866. The fight to keep Holy Orders the preserve of the clerical profession had been won for the time being.



## v) Lambeth Conference and the West Indies

It has already been noted that the initial impetus for considering secular employment of the clergy has consistently been a concern for the mission of the Church, and that Hale first discussed the question in relation to Australia. It is not surprising, therefore, that the first attempt by any Anglican Church to act upon the idea was made outside England, and in response to missionary needs. The attempt produced widespread discussion, and resulted in the ordination of at least two priests into what we today would call non-stipendiary ministry.

It has long been known that the Lambeth Conference of 1878 discussed two questions submitted by the West Indian bishops for the judgement of the Lambeth fathers:

- The desirableness, or otherwise, of permitting Deacons to engage in such secular callings as are not inconsistent with the due and edifying discharge of sacred functions.
  - What modifications, if any, should be allowed as regards the intellectual qualifications and tests to be required of, and imposed on, such laymen as desire to become Deacons without relinquishing their secular vocation.
- (Davidson 1920, p. 96)

The Committee which considered the matter declined to give judgment, and reported, 'The question submitted respecting the peculiar circumstances of the West Indies Diaconate appear ... to be such as can be adequately decided only by Diocesan or Provincial Synods'. In the light of the discussions which had already taken place in England, this non-committal response is understandable.

But what were the 'peculiar circumstances' of the West Indies ? Research in the archives of Lambeth Palace Library and of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG) reveals the following picture.

A certain Hugh Croskerry, M.R.C.S. (Ireland), a government doctor at Kingston, Jamaica, was ordained Deacon on 17th September 1871 by the Bishop of Kingston, Reginald Courtenay. After his ordination, he continued to receive a government salary, and to attend to his medical duties of 'visiting the Police, the Coolies (whether on the estate or in hospital) and the paupers, within a certain district' (Lam: TP 1872, 186.208-9)<sup>1</sup>. This ordination had been planned very deliberately by the

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Courtenay to Archbishop Tait, dated 22 May 1872.



bishop, and had the unanimous agreement of the diocesan synod, thirteen of whose clergy signed letters testimonial for Croskerry (Synod of Jamaica 1871, p. 95). The bishop preached a lengthy sermon on the occasion, which he later had printed in 11 pages of small type (Courtenay 1871). In the sermon he justified his action, showing it to be in accordance with both Canons and Scripture, and called for others to follow Croskerry's example. He justified his action from the Canons on the ground that Canon 78 (allowing a Curate to teach 'for the increase of his living') showed that Canon 76 ('no man being a deacon...shall afterwards use himself in the course of his life as a layman') was not absolute.

The following summer, Courtenay ordained Croskerry a Priest, having first obtained a majority agreement of the diocesan synod, and written twice to Archbishop Tait of Canterbury, asking his opinion (Lam: TP 1872, 186.244-6). What (or whether) Tait replied is unknown, since the Lambeth archives from this period do not contain copies of letters sent. The Jamaica synod was obviously concerned to receive approval for its decision from Canterbury, for in September 1872 Courtenay again wrote to Tait to 'invite Your Grace's expression of opinion at the express desire of many members of our late synod in which there was much discussion of the subject' (ibid., 186.249-52).

On his ordination, Hugh Croskerry was licensed as curate to the elderly Rector of Clarendon (his own father-in-law), but **received no stipend**. He wrote an article entitled A Plea for a Medical Priesthood, and (as Courtenay reports to Tait) clung to -

the principle that - most especially in a country like this, where the ministry will be but slenderly endowed -it is particularly appropriate and fitting that persons who can support themselves without becoming a burden on the scanty funds of the church, and can yet devote a large portion of their time and strength to the service of Christ in his church, ought to do so. He desires to see our church, at all events in the Colonies, largely recruited thus, and most especially by medical men. (ibid.)

Later, Croskerry appears to have moved to British Guiana, where he was stationed at Corentyn River in 1884. He died in 1886 at Skeldon (Pascoe 1901, p. 889).

He seems to have been an effective advertisement for non-stipendiary ministry, for the Conference of West Indian Bishops meeting in 1873 to draft a constitution for the new Province of the West



Indies included the following resolution -

Resolution IX - The admission to holy orders of a person who intends to continue partially occupied with some secular pursuit must be left to the discretion of each individual Bishop; but it is the opinion of this Conference that the practice of the Medical Profession is particularly compatible with ministration to sick souls, and with the discharge of the Office of a Deacon or Priest. In all cases, except in extreme urgency, such persons should act only in subordination to the Priest-in-charge of the Parish or District.

(Conference of West Indian Bishops 1873)

The diocese of Jamaica followed up this resolution by formulating (in 1874) two articles in its new Canon XIV ('Of Candidates for Holy Orders') as follows -

Article 6 - The members of the Medical Profession in this Island shall be counted as Canonically competent to pursue their Medical Profession after Ordination, in the same way as it is recognised that a Curate may become a teacher of youth 'for the better increase of his living'...

Article 7 - It is not expedient, at any rate for the present, to admit as Canonically competent to perform their secular callings after Ordination, any persons other than medical men and persons engaged in work of instruction... <sup>1</sup>

It seems that the originator of the question posed to the Lambeth Conference of 1878 was the bishop of Barbados. The Lambeth archives contain a brief note about a question submitted by him: 'The Diaconate, how far reducible to a semi-lay order of ministry strongly or sharply differenced from the Priesthood' (Lam: LC 11, p. 210). The question was debated on 11 July 1878 (Lam: LC 14, p. 103), but no record was kept of the content of the debate. Immediately afterwards, taking advantage of the local discretion allowed by the Lambeth Conference, the diocese of the Windward Islands (Barbados) drew up a Canon which permitted Deacons to continue in secular employment (though this permission was not extended to the Priesthood, as in Jamaica). The wording makes the Diaconate markedly distinct -

No Deacon in this Diocese shall be required as a condition of admission to that order to relinquish any secular vocation which may be compatible with the due discharge of his duties as a Deacon, or which is not compatible with the gravity of that sacred order; nor shall he be required to assume habitually during his Diaconate the customary attire of a clergyman, except when performing Ministerial functions; nor shall it be customary in this Diocese to assume the usual clerical designation of Reverend, which shall be confined wholly to the higher order of the Sacred Ministry.

(Canons of the Windward Islands 1879)

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<sup>1</sup>A copy of these Canons is preserved in USPG archives (West Indies 1884).



The hopes contained within these Canons, however, do not appear to have found any lasting acceptance. For by 1883 the Provincial Synod passed a resolution on 'Deacons Pursuing Secular Callings', effectively rescinding earlier developments -

That with the knowledge the Bishops possess of the special circumstances of the West Indies, they do not think it advisable that any secular calling be pursued after Ordination, except the work of education. They recognise, however, to the full, the importance of medical knowledge in missionary work, and also the probability that there may be instances in which the ordinary work of the Physician and a Clergyman may be usefully combined'.

(Provincial Synod of the West Indies 1883)

The very drafting itself betrays how the residual vision of pioneers was being overcome by the superior forces of traditionalists. It cannot be without significance that both Jamaica and Barbados had just received new bishops (in 1880 and 1882 respectively). The latter's experience prior to his consecration had simply been that of an English parish priest in Suffolk villages<sup>1</sup>.

By 1892 the idea was completely dead. The Barbados Kalendar for that year shows that Deacons were made exactly as in England, after the usual Deacons' examinations, and that a plentiful supply of ordinands was coming from Codrington College, Barbados.

What factors influenced the development and ultimate collapse of this incipient non-stipendiary ministry ? There seem to have been six:

- i) there was an awareness of lost pastoral opportunity, and no sign that it could be met within the traditional pattern of ministry;
- ii) trusted leaders (Courtenay and Croskerry) were personally prepared to experiment;
- iii) their action, once seen in practice, found widespread approval;
- iv) by happy coincidence, the Provincial Constitution was concurrently in process of drafting, and the opportunity was taken to allow for the non-stipendiary experiment;
- v) the new development was seen as an extension of a principle already allowed by ancient Canons, and was thus easily justified as a change of custom but not of principle;

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert Bree, Rector of Brampton 1870-82. Brampton was a small village in Suffolk with a population of 298 (Crockford 1892).



vi) the development collapsed after a change of episcopal leadership and when the sense of crisis and missed opportunity was evaporating, because of an increased flow of ordinands for the traditional ministry.

It is significant that though this experiment was happening far from English soil, it was made with constant reference to England. The approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury was sought at each step, and the issues raised found their way onto the Lambeth Conference agenda. It is a recurring feature of this study that decisions precipitated by missionary situations abroad provoke discussion within England; and that developments which would be hard to introduce within England are encouraged by Englishmen abroad (the West Indian bishops were, of course, all Englishmen). In this way the overseas situation was treated as a kind of laboratory for experiment by the Church of England.

#### vi) The Evidence of Church Historians

If developing patterns of church organization overseas helped to provide English churchmen with evidence of alternative ways of maintaining its clergy, the same may be said of the academic labours of church historians. For during the late 19th century, information about the structure of the church's ministry in the early centuries began to be more readily available to ordinary churchmen. The impetus for detailed study of the early church came through the Tractarian Movement, with its desire to look behind the Reformation origins of the Church of England, and to rediscover the ancient traditions of the post-apostolic and patristic periods. As a result, works began to be published in English discussing the manner in which the early church was financed and its clergy paid. These works later became material that was 'quarried', once the idea of non-stipendiary ministry was under active consideration.

Chief amongst these works was Hatch's Bampton Lectures for 1880, entitled The Organization of the Early Christian Churches<sup>1</sup>. Just how warily the professional historian had to tread at that time when discussing

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<sup>1</sup>Edwin Hatch (1835-1889): vice-principal of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, 1867; Reader in Ecclesiastical History at Oxford, 1884. 'He laboured strenuously, and for the most part alone, to place theology in Oxford on a really systematic and scientific basis' - DNB, Vol. 9, p. 150.



matters of theological import, is illustrated by the fact that Hatch had to devote the whole of his first lecture, some 25 pages, to discussing his methodology, and to answering the objection that the phenomena of ecclesiastical history were 'in reality commensurable' with the phenomena of civil history ! Contrary to commonly believed tenets, Hatch demonstrated that the structure of the church has evolved gradually, and had (especially in pre-Constantinian times) been very different from anything in our present experience.

In one notable paragraph he summarises the evidence of patristic literature on the payment of clergy. It is worth quoting here, since the patristic evidence is in a sense the preface to the history of non-stipendiary ministry and Hatch's summary is as good as any:

The funds of the primitive communities had consisted entirely of voluntary offerings. Of these offerings those officers whose circumstances required it were entitled to a share. They received such a share only on the grounds of their poverty. They were, so far, in the position of the widows and orphans and helpless poor. Like soldiers in the Roman army, or like slaves in a Roman household, they were entitled to a monthly allowance. The amount of that allowance was variable. When the Montanists proposed to pay their clergy a fixed salary the proposal was condemned as a heretical innovation, alien to Catholic practise. Those who could supplemented their allowances by farming or by trade. There was no sense of incongruity in their doing so. The Apostolic Constitutions repeat with emphasis the apostolic injunction, 'If any would not work, neither should he eat'. There is no early trace of the later idea that buying and selling, handicraft and farming, were in themselves inconsistent with the office of a Christian minister. The bishops and presbyters of those early days kept banks, practised medicine, wrought as silversmiths, tended sheep, or sold their goods in open market... They were men of the world taking part in the ordinary business of life. The point about which the Christian communities were anxious was, not that their officers should cease to trade, but that, in this as in other respects, they should be ensamples to the flock. The chief existing enactments of early local councils on the point are that bishops are not to huckster their goods from market to market, nor are they to use their position to buy cheaper and sell dearer than other people.

(Hatch 1881, pp. 150-2)

These lectures provoked a heated controversy<sup>1</sup>, and were reprinted several times, with the result that a wide spectrum of clergy and churchmen became aware of the fact that the practice of the Church of England was widely at variance with that of the earlier church.

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<sup>1</sup>Hatch had claimed that the origins of episcopacy lay with the financial administrators, episkopoi, of Greek religious associations.



Another major source of information on the pay structure of the early ministry came through publication in English translation of Karl Joseph Hefele's History of the Christian Councils from the Original Documents. The first five volumes appeared between 1871 and 1896. Since many Canons of the early Councils - notably Canon III of the Council of Chalcedon (471 AD) - sought to regulate clerical involvement in secular affairs, they illustrate the developing financial provision for the clergy, and their interpretation became material evidence in the on-going discussion of the secular employment of English clergy.

For instance, Canon III of the Council of Chalcedon contains a phrase which was open to misinterpretation. It says: 'No bishop, cleric or monk shall hire goods... or epeisagein heauton kosmikais dioikēsesi' - which has sometimes been inadequately translated 'occupy himself in worldly engagements'<sup>1</sup>, a rendering which seems to debar clergy from **all** secular employment. However, in a careful study of other contemporary data, Bright<sup>2</sup> showed that the Canon was referring specifically to the management of property and was -

not to be construed as forbidding clerics to work at trades either (1) when the Church funds were insufficient to maintain them, or (2) in order to have more to bestow in alms, or (3) as an example of industry or humility... It was not the mere fact of secular employment, but secularity of motive and of tone, that was condemned.  
(Bright 1882, pp. 137-8).

As a result of such academic studies, when it came to the point that the exponents of non-stipendiary ministry needed to justify their claims on the grounds of returning to early church practice, the historical foundation was ready to hand. So, for example, Roland Allen's lengthy Appendix to The Case for Voluntary Clergy (cf. II.4.v below), entitled 'The Maintenance of the Clergy in the Early Ages of the Church', is in large measure an expansion of a footnote in Hatch<sup>3</sup> giving a string of patristic references, together with judicious selections from Bright<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>For example, Percival's translation in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, XIV.269.

<sup>2</sup>William Bright (1824-1901), Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford from 1868.

<sup>3</sup>Hatch 1881, p. 151, n. 23.

<sup>4</sup>Bright 1882, pp. 131-8.



A number of more recent studies have carried the discussion further (Ream 1956, Every 1960, Vischer 1965 and Vaughan 1986b), but the fundamental historical evidence which provides ancient precedent for non-stipendiary ministry was laid out in the last two decades of the 19th century.

## vii) Still-Birth

The idea of an extension to the diaconate had already been conceived; during the 1880s it grew and became a matter of public discussion all over the country in Diocesan Conferences, reports to both Convocations, and even a Private Member's Bill in Parliament. By the end of the decade, however, it became apparent that the idea was still-born, and no action ensued. This is what happened.

### a) Discussion of Extension to the Diaconate, 1879-84

In 1879 the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury appointed a Committee to explore once again the extension to the diaconate. The Committee, composed of influential figures (including 2 deans and 4 archdeacons) presented a report in favour of extension, utilising all the arguments put forward by Mackenzie and Browne in 1862. Since then, the national population had continued to grow relentlessly in urban areas; 16 million people now lived in the 3,000 town parishes, which were endowed with only £750,000 p.a., as against a mere 7 million people who lived in 10,000 rural parishes, endowed with £2,500,000 p.a. Thus, even if more vocations to the ministry were forthcoming for the urban areas, there was no means to pay such additional clergy. The Committee therefore proposed that the examination for the diaconate be of 'a somewhat more comprehensive character... so as to allow intellectual ability, capacity for usefulness and moral and religious qualifications to be accepted... as a set-off against deficiency in scholarship'. Moreover, with the approval of the bishop, 'it should be lawful for the Deacon to follow certain secular avocations for the support of himself and his family' (Convocation of Canterbury 1879).



This approach began to be echoed all over the country. The Ripon Diocesan Conference of 1880 approved a petition to the Convocation of York to explore an extension of the diaconate (Guardian, 13 Oct 1880). The next year the Convocation of York received the petition and set up a Joint Committee<sup>1</sup>, which duly reported in 1882. The Committee, chaired by the bishop of Manchester, adopted as its own all the arguments put forward for extending the diaconate by Hook and Hale (several paragraphs of their works are quoted in full). The report argued that the money required to pay the necessary number of new incumbents (calculated at £2.28 million) could never be obtained. Hope of additional assistant curates failed on the same financial count. Employment of lay people was no solution, since (according to existing usage) unordained persons were incompetent to conduct Divine Service in church. The Committee therefore concluded that extension to the diaconate was the only viable solution to urban church needs. It also noted that there was no legal barrier to the ordination of persons not engaged in trade, such as 'physicians, barristers, military and naval officers, persons in the Civil Service, country gentlemen, schoolmasters and persons out of business' (Convocation of York 1882).

Meanwhile pressure was continuing to build up at the local level through discussions at Diocesan Conferences. By 1882, all but three dioceses were holding an annual Diocesan Conference (Chadwick 1970, p. 360). The Conferences had no legislative powers, but were a valuable organ for expressing and discussing issues of common concern. Their most significant feature was the presence of lay representatives from each parish alongside the clergy. Through the Diocesan Conferences, the laity for the first time had the chance to have a say in Church affairs.

It has already been noted that the York report resulted from discussion at such a Conference (Ripon). Similar resolutions began to be passed in diocese of the Southern Province, including Exeter, Rochester, Winchester and St. Albans. The latter is particularly well documented. In 1881, John Irvine<sup>2</sup>, the Rural Dean of Colchester, succeeded in moving a resolution to revive the diaconate as a Permanent Order open to 'persons pursuing an honest Secular Calling'. The resolution was seconded by a

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<sup>1</sup>i.e. a joint committee of both Houses of Convocation, composed of both bishops and other clergy.

<sup>2</sup>John W. Irvine, ordained 1864, Rector of St. Mary-at-the-Walls, Colchester, from 1870, Rural Dean from 1880.



layman (Baron Dimsdale), and carried by a large majority of clergy and laity. Irvine had his paper published the following year. In it he reiterated ideas from Hale and Arnold, supplied early historical data from Bingham, referred to the support of Harold Browne (now a bishop), noted that a new Canon of the Canadian Church (1880) stated that 'A Deacon need not surrender his worldly calling', and publicised the fact that Archdeacon Hale had documentary evidence that potential candidates for such a ministry actually existed<sup>1</sup> (Irvine 1882). All told, Irvine's paper effectively demonstrated the breadth of current support for an extended diaconate.

Pressure from such regional discussions at diocesan level led naturally to further discussion at the level of Convocation. But at this point structural factors intervened to frustrate action. Not only did the Northern Convocation's initiative fail to win the agreement of a Joint Committee of the Southern Convocation, but the two Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury found themselves passing mutually contradictory resolutions. It was therefore clear to all that 'the Church of England' was not of one mind about extending the diaconate. The story of the confusion is as follows.

A Joint Committee of both Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury on Readers and the Diaconate was appointed in 1882, and reported in 1884 (Report No: 161). The Report came out firmly in support of the establishment of an Order of Readers (for which it produced regulations), and decisively against the extension of the diaconate (and sub-diaconate), on the grounds that the objectives aimed at by extending the diaconate would be sufficiently and perhaps better attained by establishing two distinct classes of Readers with different licences: Assistant Readers to conduct worship in unconsecrated buildings, and Readers authorised to lead worship in consecrated buildings<sup>2</sup>. Implicitly, the Committee was thus wishing to keep lay assistance outside Holy Orders, and to maintaining a social class distinction within the new (lay) order. The Committee had met with its opposite number in the Convocation of York, but 'were not able to come to an agreement'.

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<sup>1</sup>Hale had 'left behind over one hundred letters, many of them from persons apparently the very cream of the men whom we long to draw into the Church's service'.

<sup>2</sup>i.e. churches.



When, however, this report was discussed in the Upper House (15 Feb 1884), a resolution with contrary effect was unanimously agreed: that it was expedient to ordain to the Office of Deacon 'men who possessed other means of living' provided they were examined according to the Preface to the Ordinal, and provided they were not admitted to the Priesthood without (a) passing all examination normally required for that office, and (b) had for the four previous years 'devoted their whole time to spiritual labours'. Strong speeches in favour of this proposal were made by Winchester (E.H.Browne) and Exeter (Frederick Temple). The motion deliberately refrained from suggesting alteration to Statute Law; it was intended to encourage development of the diaconate within the constraints of the existing Pluralities Act, by ordaining men of private means (or from the professions). If this development proved successful, Winchester and Exeter hoped that at a later stage action might be taken through Parliament to emend the Pluralities Act and to admit those 'in trade'. But this latter idea formed no part of their resolution. Gloucester and Bristol (C.J.Ellicott), while in favour of the stated resolution, was adamant against alteration to the Pluralities Act on these grounds:

You are simply reversing the law and principle of the Church; you are simply superadding the spiritual to the secular: whereas the Church, both in its opening and concluding prayer in the [ordination] service, seems to imply a devotion to spiritual work that hardly admits of any secular employment at all.

This statement powerfully exemplifies the distinctions being made by opponants of extension to the ministry. Browne's resolution was accepted by the Convocation of York two months later. Thus the bishops of the Church of England had committed themselves to extension of the diaconate, but only in general terms and **within** the constraints of Statute Law.

#### b) A Parliamentary Bill and Reaction to it, 1886-8

At this point laity intervened. A 'House of Laity' of the Convocation of Canterbury met for the first time in 1886, though without any powers to discuss matters of faith and doctrine. It was somewhat unrepresentative (Chadwick 1970, p. 364). At its second session (9 Feb 1887) Mr Sydney Gedge<sup>1</sup> successfully moved a motion 'That in the opinion

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<sup>1</sup>Sydney Gedge (1829-1923), solicitor; MP (Con.) for Stockport 1886-92, for Walsall 1895-1900; Governor of Ridley Hall and Wycliffe Hall (Theological Colleges); Vice-President of Church Missionary Society;



of this House, it is desirable that the legislative enactments which now prevent a Deacon from engaging in secular employments be repealed or greatly modified'. Gedge was an MP, and a few days earlier (31 Jan 1887) had obtained the first reading of his Deacons (Church of England) Bill, which sought to repeal parts of the Pluralities Act in so far as it applied to Deacons<sup>2</sup>. The Bill, however, failed to obtain a second reading, was constantly deferred through 1888 and 1889, and was eventually withdrawn (3 July 1889).

Nevertheless, the very fact that it actually lay before Parliament meant that an urgency was added to debates within the Church. The issue came up in at least six Diocesan Conferences<sup>3</sup> during 1887/8, but only one (Ely) was in favour of Gedge's Bill. Typical objections were that 'the status of the diaconate, as a holy order, would be materially lowered if those ordained were allowed to engage in secular pursuits'. Surprisingly, this statement is from Winchester, where it seems Browne had failed to carry his Diocesan Conference with him.

Convocation was obliged to react to Gedge's Bill. The public wanted to know what the bishops thought of it. The Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury responded by appointing yet another committee, which reported to it on May 11, 1887 (CCC, pp. 118-9). The report was unable to recommend 'any relaxation of the existing laws'; although pastoral need for more clergy was admitted as great, the situation did not justify 'departure from existing disciplinary practice'. Central to the report's argument was a broad distinction -

between allowing or encouraging clergymen to assist in maintaining themselves by secular labour as St. Paul did, and admitting to the sacred ministry men already devoted to secular occupations and purposing to continue in their callings.

The report concluded that the bishops should stand by the proposals made in 1884 to extend the diaconate only as far as the law allowed. A lengthy and erudite debate ensued, which reveals interesting perceptions of the nature of ordained ministry.

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Licensed Reader in the dioceses of London and Southwark (Who Was Who, Vol. 2).

<sup>2</sup>1 & 2 Vict. chap. 106, sections 28, 29, 31. The Bill also sought to repeal part of the law prohibiting deacons from sitting in Parliament (41 Geo. III, chap. 63).

<sup>3</sup>London, Norwich, Rochester, Winchester, Ely, and Oxford.



Winchester (Browne) reiterated his conviction of the need to enlist in the lower orders of ministry 'persons who are not dependent on the "clerical profession"... for sustenance' (p. 120). He was also convinced that such a change should not take place unless there was clear historical precedent. But this precedent could be found, he argued, in the Apostolic Canons, the Fourth Council of Carthage and elsewhere. So 'there is nothing in the history of the early Church to preclude us from making [such] a Canon ... if we thought it expedient' (p. 122).

Oxford (J.F. Mackarness) had some sceptical remarks to make about clerical status. He wanted evidence as to how laymen would 'accept the position of Clergymen engaged in secular life... Perhaps they would not like to look up to him as a Clergyman on Sundays... There was a difference of tone in the life at present of Clergymen and laymen... Certain pursuits in which laymen indulge...would be rather indecorous for Clergymen to engage in'. Then there was the problem of taking disciplinary action (for instance in the case of fraud). Moreover, some people would use the diaconate 'as a means of giving themselves some little status and authority in the world'.

However, the final word was had by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Benson) who questioned whether Winchester's wider proposal would in fact be a 'restoration' or 'revival' of ancient custom. He produced from Cyprian, Jerome and other early councils counter examples to Winchester's, and concluded that what Gedge's Bill sought to establish was 'an unknown order of Clergy, unknown to our own Church, unknown to the primitive Church' (p. 129). He could not believe that 'these mixtae personae would carry social or moral weight with either rich or poor'. Being both clerical and lay, they were neither one nor the other (p. 131).

So the bishops came out against Gedge's Bill - to the approval of the Spectator, which considered that 'a diaconate that was immersed in business would bring a great many more scandals on the Church than lay help' (Spectator, 14 May 1887, p. 643).

Only three of the four Houses of Convocation had declared themselves in favour of an extension of the diaconate in the terms of the 1884 report. It remained to discover the opinion of the Lower House of Canterbury. To this end a certain Canon Twells introduced a resolution in similar terms to the Lower House of Canterbury on July 8, 1887.



Twells was a country parson, and (to judge from a memoir of him (Ingram 1901)) a person of no particular distinction beyond being a well-respected preacher and a hymn writer<sup>1</sup>. 'Both in Peterborough Diocesan Conference and elsewhere he had for long earnestly advocated the Extension of the Diaconate' (ibid., p. 74). His proposed resolution would have permitted the ordination as Deacon of 'men possessing other means of living, who are willing to aid the Clergy gratuitously' (CCC, 1887, p. 286). The phraseology was deliberately vague and ambiguous. Twells considered such men might include the squirarchy and retired professional or military men, as well as practising private schoolmasters, barristers, physicians (and probably also solicitors and surgeons).

At the resumed debate of February 28, 1888, this approach came under intense fire from several directions in a scholarly and incisive dissertation by Canon Bright<sup>2</sup>. The detailed rationale of Bright's criticisms will be examined later. Here it is simply noted that Bright proposed an amendment which merely welcomed 'the accession of qualified persons possessed of independent means' who would offer themselves for full-time work as Deacons. Twells could only weakly respond by urging the House to follow the lead of the other three Houses of Convocation, lest they be out of accord with their 'spiritual fathers', who had twice in the space of a few years approved such a resolution. His appeal failed to win approval, and Bright's amendment was accepted as the substantive motion and duly passed.

So the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury refused to admit to the diaconate anyone who was not willing to devote his whole time and energy to 'spiritual work'. A structural dead-lock resulted, with the Lower House of Canterbury effectively vetoing the resolutions of the Upper House and of both Houses of the Convocation of York. There was no constitutional way out of the dead-lock. Consequently the issue of secular employment of deacons just evaporated into thin air, and no lasting practical action ensued.

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Twells (1823-1900), ordained 1849; Master of St. Andrew's School, Wells, 1854-6, and of Godolphin School, Hammersmith, 1856-70; Rector of Waltham-on-the-Wolds (Leics.), 1871-90; Hon. Canon of Peterborough, 1884; Proctor in Convocation for Peterborough diocese 1884-95. He was chairman of a Convocation committee on Hymnals in 1891/2, wrote the hymn 'At even ere the sun was set', and was on the committee for the Appendix of Hymns Ancient and Modern. Source: Ingram 1901.

<sup>2</sup>William Bright, Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford.



### c) Deacons Ordained after the Resolution of 1884

On a small scale, however, a few employed deacons had been ordained under the terms of the 1884 resolution. It is impossible to discover how many, because of the way in which ordination records are kept - a deacon ordained on these terms would be indistinguishable in the records from other deacons. But there is one case of a named individual whose clerical career can be followed.

A certain George Harwood (1845-1912), a graduate of London University and chairman of Richard Harwood & Son Ltd., cotton spinners of Bolton, was ordained deacon in 1886 by the bishop of Manchester, and licensed as Curate of St. Anne's from 1886 to 1889. Thereafter he held no ecclesiastical post. He is cited in 1887 as 'preaching to large congregations of men of business... he wore the dress of a laymen, and did not take the title of a clergyman' (Anon. 1888, p. 312). Reading between the lines of this report and other scant biographical information, it would appear that a bishop who was personally committed to the idea of secularly employed deacons (Manchester was chairman of the Northern Convocation's Joint Committee) took advantage of the latitude allowed by the bishops' resolution of 1884, and ordained a respected professional man who was a graduate in mid-life (Harwood was aged 41 at the time and had passed the Oxford and Cambridge Examination for Ordination). He was also an articulate churchman deeply concerned (as his writings indicate<sup>1</sup>) about the relationship between Christian faith and public life. The bishop licensed him to a city centre church adjacent to the Royal Exchange, where the deacon had an effective preaching ministry, while largely retaining his 'lay' status, and continuing to live in his own house in Bolton. It seems, however, that this role was not sustainable in the long term. In 1892 Harwood availed himself of the Clerical Disabilities Act (1870), and so returned, in the eyes of the Law, to lay status. He seems however to have redirected his Christian social concern by entering Parliament in 1895 as MP (Liberal) for Bolton. Thus the unfortunate history of this individual deacon seems to be indicative of the abortive nature of the whole experiment.

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<sup>1</sup>Amongst his publications are The Coming Democracy (London, 1882) and Christianity and Common Sense (London, 1904) - a series of public lectures delivered in the Central Hall Manchester.



#### d) Professor Bright's Arguments

Why was the pressure against such ordinations so strong? And what were the articulated reasons of the opposition? Answers may be found in the person of Canon Bright, and in the arguments he expounded both in print and in Convocation. William Bright (1824-1901) was Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford from 1868 to his death, and a Canon of Christ Church Cathedral. He was a specialist in the history of the early Church as well as being a liturgist and a poet. Several of his books became standard textbooks for Anglican ordinands<sup>1</sup>, though he remains best known for his eucharistic hymns<sup>2</sup>. In his personal outlook he was (according to the sermon at his funeral) 'devotedly loyal to Catholic truth'. In 1878 he was elected to represent Christ Church Cathedral Chapter in Convocation, where (according to a fellow proctor) he 'speedily became a power, and made a deep and permanent impression' (Medd 1903, p. xlviii). An appreciation written after his death noted that 'in Convocation he held a unique position, as at once a brilliant speaker, and exact thinker, and probably the most learned man in the whole assembly - at least in the Lower House' (Dr. Sanday, quoted in Medd 1903, p. xxxviii). That is precisely the impression to be gained from Bright's contributions in Convocation opposing the introduction of secularly employed deacons - to which we now turn.

Bright had been a member of the Joint Committee of both Houses of Convocation on Readers and the Diaconate (1884), which had come out in favour of Readers and against any extension to the diaconate - a position which exactly echoes Bright's own. Subsequently when the debate on Twells' resolution (July 1887) was adjourned, Bright took advantage of the delay, and published an exhaustive study of the issue in the Church Quarterly Review (Anon. 1888). As was the custom of that journal at the time, the article was unsigned; but he subsequently printed an abridged version of it amongst a collection of essays (Bright 1894 a & b). The opportunity of a 32-page journal article to make his case far exceeded the space he could have taken within a spoken debate. He seized it with both hands.

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<sup>1</sup>For example, A History of the Church, from the Edict of Milan, AD 313, to the Council of Chalcedon, AD 451 (Oxford, 1860, 5th edition 1888) and Chapters in Early English Church History (Oxford, 1878, 3rd edition 1897).

<sup>2</sup>For example, 'And now, O Father, mindful of the love', and 'Once, only once, and once for all'.



Bright begins by describing the probable shape of things if Gedge's Bill were passed. First of all he reviews the likely outcome in what we might call functional terms. The new deacons would during weekdays only 'devote their leisure time ... to work properly clerical and ministerial':

He would wear clerical attire on Sunday; would officiate in church as the vicar's assistant; he would baptize in the vicar's absence... he would take part, above all, in the administration of the Holy Eucharist. On Monday he would resume lay dress; he would be in all men's eyes what he was before his ordination; he would see his patients, advise his clients, or, it may be, attend to his customers; this ordinary routine of honourable secular work would necessarily be continued until the Saturday evening, with the exception of such occasional interludes of spiritual ministration as would be consistent with the demands of the profession or trade by which he would have to live and make his money. (Anon. 1888, p. 295)

But would this actually be a restoration, a return to antiquity, as was asserted? Bright argued that it would not. Surveying in great detail first the Pauline letters, then the Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Fathers, and finally the pronouncements of Councils, he concludes that the time spent on church work was always greater than that spent on manual work; that in every precedent 'trade was supplementary to the orders, and not the orders supplementary to the trade' (p. 308); that any trade was really a 'by-work' (Greek: parergon) as distinct from the ergon of a bishop or cleric. By contrast 'the parergon of a deacon under the new scheme would be his clerical ministration' (p. 309) - a complete inversion of the ancient priority.

Modern scholarship would not assess the evidence so simply. So far from 'the Apostle's labour [being] altogether subordinate to his apostolic duties', as Bright asserted (p. 296), current interpretation sees the manual labour as an integral part of Paul's apostolic consciousness (Hock 1980). Neither does the later historical evidence all point one way. There is plenty of evidence of a continuing (minority) tradition which perceived 'self-support' as a necessity if spiritual integrity was to be preserved (Vaughan 1986b). It seems therefore that Bright's handling of historical precedents was influenced by 19th century assumptions about the clerical profession, particularly with regard to his perception of the use of time. In every profession, a man is expected to devote himself solely to the required professional tasks during the 'working day'. But in earlier ages time was not so rigidly divided between working and leisure time.



Bright's second line of attack was one of principle - 'the doctrine, so to speak, of Holy Orders' (p. 310). He could not accept Arnold's remark about 'that pestilent distinction between clergy and laity'. With Bright's Catholic theology, one would not expect him to. What is quite remarkable, however, is that Bright does not then proceed to lay out the foundation of a theology of Holy Orders. Instead he justifies the distinction on moral grounds. He quotes with approbation the Church newspaper, the Guardian (May 4, 1887), which spoke of 'the immense importance of maintaining in people's minds the conception of a distinct clerical character'. This was a safeguard to the Church in that 'it has kept us, even in very lax days, a visibly higher standard of life and morality among the clergy than among the laity'. The very title and dress of clergy were 'visible signs of reality' (p. 311). This was why he was so opposed to Harwood's lay stance: 'Would not persons who had received the sacred chalice from a new assistant minister on a Sunday sustain a sort of shock when on Monday he was found ready to cash their cheque over his bank counter, or take their fee for his opinion on their "case" ?' (p. 312).

Bright then proceeds to list a series of anxieties: would not employed deacons 'in effect degrade the presbyterate also?' (p. 311); might not young ordinands be inclined to disregard 'the counsels of true clerical experience as to the need of maintaining a spiritual tone?' (p. 313); might not a working deacon come to ordination 'with lay habits long formed, and with so much the less of aptitude for imbibing the clerical spirit and for learning clerical duty?' (p. 314); how would discipline be applied to a popular deacon of middle-age and local influence if an in-coming rector found his presence uncongenial? (p. 316). Bright assumed throughout that the status of the professional clergyman must be maintained, and never even argues for it.

He was aware of the potentially false antithesis between 'sacred' and 'secular', and acknowledges that 'all honest work is indeed, in some sense, holy' (p. 315). But he nevertheless insists that

there are diversities of spiritual operation, involving degrees of spiritual intensity. Weekday work, though a man should do it 'in the Name of the Lord Jesus', and offer it up consciously to be blessed and prospered, is not as sacred as the act of saying one's prayers, of reading God's Word, or still more, of receiving His Sacraments; and in that sense, and on that ground, the work of a lay profession may be called 'secular', as distinct from the service of 'the kingdom which is not of this world', without the slightest disparagement of



its proper dignity, or of its entire consistency with the highest forms of Christian excellence... The attempt to treat all things as equally sacred may result in treating all things as equally secular.

(Anon. 1888, p. 316)

Once again, to the modern ear, the above arguments are singularly unconvincing. They do not actually expound a 'doctrine' in any theological sense; but taken together, they do present a very forceful exegesis of the **sociological** 'doctrine' of professionalism. The maintenance of public esteem, moral rectitude, corporate ethos and disciplinary practice are all (unconsciously) touched upon !

These, then are the arguments and sentiments which finally defeated half a century's pressure for extension of the ministry to employed men. Respect for the scholarship and character of the chief opponants (Bright and Benson) seem also to have been influential.

#### SUMMARY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING DISCUSSION 1833-88

This chapter concludes with a summary of the factors which seem to have been active within the history documented here.

##### conceptual assumptions

To begin with, we may note a number of underlying assumptions throughout the period. The Victorians were so uninhibited about their social assumptions that they were not afraid to articulate attitudes which today could not be publicly uttered without giving offence.

Thus, through all the publications and speeches there runs a happy acceptance of the class structure of English society. Moreover, there seems also to be present a tacit assumption that the distinctions between high and low, rich and poor, were divinely ordained, as the contemporary (1848) hymn had it -



The rich man in his castle,  
 The poor man at his gate'  
 God made them, high or lowly,  
 And ordered their estate.<sup>1</sup>

The immediate problem was how to offer the Church's ministry to the lower classes. Everyone was agreed that commissioned leaders from the lower classes would be the best communicators with their own kind. The issue at stake was whether such commissioning should be offered through ordination into Holy Orders (as a deacon) or whether another lay order should be created (reader or subdeacon). Opinions about this differed according to perceptions of Holy Orders. Radicals like Arnold wanted to break down the clergy/laity divide, and so favoured commissioning through a revived diaconate. But clergy like Bright, deeply influenced by the tractarian movement's 'high' view of ordained ministry, wanted to preserve all Holy Orders in the traditional mould. Everyone, however, seems to have been agreed that it was appropriate that the presbyterate should continue to be drawn only from the privileged educated class; even Arnold did not question this - else how would the teaching role of the ministry be fulfilled?

A second common assumption was that society's activities are divided into two categories: sacred and secular. Radicals like Arnold wanted to break down this conceptual division, sanctifying ordinary work through the presence of secularly employed clergy. But such a vision seems to have been generally uncommon. The tendency seems rather to have been to emphasize the value to society of a class of people deliberately set apart for sacred functions, and leavening the lump of the secular majority with their high 'moral tone'. To such a viewpoint, the idea of an ordained deacon working in secular employment was a contradiction in terms.

A third assumption, a corollary of the previous point, was that the membership of the Church of England was quite appropriately divided into clergy and laity. Only radicals like Arnold questioned the propriety of this assumption. True, the establishment of Diocesan Conferences and the House of Laity brought well-placed laymen into the counsels of the Church, and the development of the offices of Scripture Reader, Lay Reader and Deaconess brought laity into pastoral work. But it can

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<sup>1</sup>From the hymn 'All things bright and beautiful' by Miss Humphreys (later Mrs. C.F.Alexander), first published in Hymns for Little Children (1848) - cf. Frost 1962.



scarcely be claimed that any 'theology of the laity' undergirded these developments. Rather, the articulated motives are purely pragmatic: the pastoral task facing the clergy in the manufacturing towns was clearly beyond their strength. The pastoral task could only be fulfilled through harnessing the 'Lay Agency'. But the actual work permitted to these newly established orders was limited to visiting people in their homes, Sunday school work, and the conduct of non-Prayer Book services outside parish churches. Thus the special roles of the presbyterate in public preaching from the pulpit, in the conduct of Divine Service within the parish church, and in the celebration of the sacraments, were left intact.

This leads naturally to the fourth universally held assumption - that the cure of souls committed to parish priests was a full-time occupation. As we have noted, not even Arnold wanted to interfere with the traditional status of the presbyterate. Thus, throughout the debates, we see evidence of concern lest the professional status of parish priests might be eroded. For instance, all parties were agreed that the academic and educational standards for entry to the priesthood should not be lowered; there was widespread acceptance that it was proper for the priesthood to be limited to those from the educated classes; there is fear lest the professional image of the parochial clergy be lowered in public esteem - a working diaconate would tend to 'degrade' the presbyterate in the eyes of the people; there was fear that professional sanctions could not be brought to bear upon reprobate working deacons. Moreover, where a few secularly employed people do become ordained (eg. Croskerry, Harwood), they appear to be university graduates either in a sister profession (medicine) or with private income (as mill owner). They therefore conform very closely to the traditional professional model of ministry.

### structural factors

Structural change cannot take place within an institution unless that institution possesses mechanisms for re-evaluation and constitutional reform. In the case of the Church of England, during the 18th and early 19th centuries, that mechanism was Parliament. However, the likelihood of Parliament accepting changes to the diaconate were, throughout the period, perceived as minimal (rightly, as the fate of Gedge's bill proved).



Thus the sanctions of the Pluralities Act lurked like a spectre behind all the discussions of the period, and acted as a disincentive to taking the radical case seriously.

When, however, Convocation was revived, the Church once again possessed an instrument for internal reform (but within the constraints of statute law). It was, in fact, the revived existence of Convocation that prompted Hale to make his case. And in the event, it was Convocation which opened the way for an experiment of limited scale in 1884. But this new-found instrument proved to be very cumbersome. It was, in a sense, a creature with four heads: and its four mouths could not be co-ordinated to make mutually coherent utterances. In the end, contradictory voices prevented any word of command to the Church being ~~made~~ <sup>given</sup> at all.

The establishment of Diocesan Conferences and of annual Church Congresses was also an influential factor. Through public discussion in these forums, a wide variety of new ideas were given the opportunity of an airing, and the clerical strangle-hold on the circulation of ideas was loosened.

A structural factor of a different kind was operating in the West Indies experiment. It was a matter of happy coincidence that the constitution of the new Province was being drawn up at precisely the moment when extension of ordination to secularly employed men was under consideration. The opportunity to include an appropriate canon within the draft constitution was thus readily available. The usual institutional inertia to undertake constitutional reform had thus already been overcome. (Interestingly, the very same dynamic was later to repeat itself in England in the mid-20th century - see below III.4.i.)

### motivations

The motivations for change were both theoretical (theological) and pragmatic. Every time the case for a working diaconate was made (Arnold, Hale, Courtenay, etc.), the primary reason given is the missionary challenge facing the Church. The Church was required by its gospel charter to preach and minister pastoral care to all the people amongst whom it was set. For this task, more clergy were needed. But the



motivation for proposing a working diaconate was largely pragmatic and financial: unless the required extra workforce could finance itself, the Church would continue to lack the manpower it needed for its missionary task. Financial necessity thus fostered creative thinking, which in turn produced new solutions to pastoral problems. But the new solution was generally seen as something imposed by unfortunate financial constraints. As a result, it tended to be seen as a second-best option, and never seems to have been considered as something theologically desirable in its own right.

### the role of historical scholarship

Creative thinking usually arises by viewing a problem from a new or different perspective. Sometimes the 'new' perspective may in fact be an older, long-discarded, perspective. In other words, knowledge of historical tradition may be an important factor in producing creative solutions to problems, especially in a church closely aware of 'tradition'. This at any rate seems to have been what happened in the discussion about sustenance of the clergy. The fact that historians like Bingham and Hatch had made knowledge of early church patterns of ministry readily accessible was a significant factor in the 19th century debate. The historical evidence, however, was ambiguous: claims and counter-claims were both based upon the same early texts (though, as we have seen, some interpretations were unconsciously influenced by 19th century assumptions). Nevertheless, historical scholarship was a significant aspect of the debate: each side was keen to show that its position could be justified by historical precedent.

### confusion of objective

As the case for extension of the diaconate was enunciated, two variant versions emerged. One version (the version which succeeded in getting the bishops' approval in 1884) sought to extend the diaconate to men who would work full-time for the church, but without a stipend since they had private means. The second version sought to extend the diaconate to men who were in secular employment, and who could only give a portion of their time to church work (thus not conforming to the professional model of the parochial minister).



These two objectives were not always clearly differentiated in the printed speeches and pamphlets. As a result, some confusion must have been present in the minds of the hearers. Those who held a 'high' view of the ministry and who valued the separation of sacred from secular will have been able to accept the first version, but not the second. But fear of the consequences of the second version may have prevented such people from considering extension to the diaconate seriously at all.

### personalities

Institutional changes only come about through the advocacy of particular personalities. The character and standing of these individuals inevitably influences the fate of the cases they make. Initial advocacy of change requires a prophet, and the 19th century discussion of extending the diaconate certainly had its prophetic figure in Arnold, a visionary and a theoretician. His vision was rejected in his own day; but because of his reputation in other fields, he was in later days quoted and listened to with respect. Then there were pioneer administrators (Hook, Hale, Courtenay), whose commitment to and achievements for the Church were well known. Therefore their opinions and chosen solutions were given much weight.

Finally, the offices held by some exponents lent decisive weight to their opinions. Bright's acute mind and attractive life would have won him a hearing anywhere. But when a Regius Professor of History speaks in Convocation, he is listened to with added attention. By contrast, his adversary, Twells, lacked any comparable qualities of mind or status. But most particularly, it was the fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury (Benson), also sided with Bright, which closed down further discussion of extension to the diaconate. As we shall see from later episodes, if the Archbishop of Canterbury formally declares his opinion, it has a decisive effect upon the outcome of an issue.



## CHAPTER II

### PRESSURE FOR NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTRY IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

After Convocation's firm rejection of the attempt to permit secular employment of deacons in 1888, public discussion of the idea of non-stipendiary ministry ceased for a generation. When it next surfaced, thirty years later, the context of discussion was different. The focus was now not on deacons, but upon the priesthood. And the original impetus for discussion came not from England, but from abroad. The centre of interest was on local indigenous ministry within small Christian communities. This chapter tells how the idea of local ministry was developed by two Anglican prophetic figures - Herbert Kelly and Roland Allen - and how the Church of England initially responded.

#### 1. HERBERT KELLY'S IDEA OF LOCAL MINISTRY

We have already seen how the lack of finance was hindering the establishment of an adequate ministry in 'missionary dioceses' such as the West Indies, and how attempts were made to ordain men who would provide an income for themselves from their secular employment. The aim of this attempt seems to have been merely to reproduce the English parochial structure, but to staff it more cheaply.

A much more revolutionary model of ministry was, however, to develop in the mind of Fr. Herbert Kelly (1860-1950), founder of the Society of the Sacred Mission and of the theological College at Kelham. His ideas appeared in print through three short articles published in England (Kelly 1916a, 1916b, 1929), and Japan (Kelly 1917). But he also propagated them through his teaching of church history to many



generations of ordinands and ubiquitous appearances as a conference speaker. Being greatly appreciated as a radical thinker about the Church's mission, his ideas were listened to with respect.

Significantly, it was the experience of living in an overseas church which prompted him to write on local ministry. After his resignation as Director of the Kelham Community, Kelly went to Japan, where he was Professor at the Central Theological College, Tokyo, from 1913 to 1919. He arrived in a church which at that very time was in process of forming itself into an Anglican province, with traditional diocesan structures. Kelly fed into the discussions an alternative model of institutional structure, based upon his great knowledge of early church history. He states the contrast between the alternative models thus:

If the primitive system did, in fact, within the first or at latest the second generation, provide every Church with a ministry for its spontaneous life, while our own system shows little sign of producing any such result even now in the third generation, the obvious inference would be that our system is unpracticable, and we ought to ask how the primitive system came to succeed so much better... Our system involves a double task: first we have to provide a ministry for the Church, then the Church has to provide for the ministry. The primitive system began quite differently. The congregation looked to no one to provide its ministry; it was a Church and it provided its own ministry. Of course it was necessary that the bishop should be consecrated by surrounding bishops, who therefore consent to the appointment, but even in the fourth century the Councils strictly forbid any man to be made a bishop or presbyter in any Church except his own. (Kelly 1916b, pp. 429-30)

Building upon this early church model, Kelly envisaged a mixed ministry of professional and non-professional clergy. In towns and cities he presumed that professional ministry would continue, though not on a parochial basis. Instead, each congregation in a city would consider itself part of the Church of that city, so its ministers would not 'run' parishes independently, but would operate as a team under the bishop's leadership - as in late Roman cities.

In the countryside, by contrast, he expected local villagers to be ordained priest, men in middle life who would already have an established livelihood. He did not expect these men to be capable of preaching, nor to be so thoroughly trained as the professional clergy. The teaching ministry would be supplied from outside the village, perhaps on a ruri-decanal basis. Such a pattern draws on the pattern of village ministry



in the early church. Here is his vision of the process by which such a village ministry might emerge:

We have first to secure that each convert shall understand that he is baptised, not to the enjoyment of a personal privilege, but to share in a common life and a common redemption. He is to become one of a family, whose members are all mutually responsible to one another in God's sight. As a family, they meet on Sunday for family worship. They offer their Psalms, read together the Scriptures and such instruction as the missionary can supply, discussing their meaning under the leadership of the oldest and most trusted among them. At times, when the missionary is able to come over and celebrate for them, they can ask him for further guidance on points which have perplexed them.. Troubles among themselves, quarrels, lapses from Christian conduct - they themselves will, in the first instance, deal with fraternally.

In a few years, say three, or at the most, five, when the zeal of the little congregation is assured, and the earnestness and simplicity of its leader have been proved to the bishop's satisfaction, the congregation must consider whether it is prepared to accept its leader definitely as its pastor for life, and he, whether he is willing to take the responsibility in the same way. If so, the bishop will ordain him priest, and our little congregation has become a true Church, with its own ministry, competent under the bishop to feed God's children with the Bread of Life.

This village-farmer priest is, of course, not competent to 'build' a church by his personality, ability, and devotion in the way an English vicar is supposed to do, but then no one is, for the whole supposition is disastrously false to fact as well as principle. He is the father of a family. Of course, being a priest he is a priest of the Catholic Church, but this does not mean that he is free to accept a 'call' wherever sufficient inducement offers. He is ordained to his own people. (Kelly 1916b, pp. 435-6)

Kelly was, of course, speaking out of the experience of the Japanese situation. He was not so foolish as to suppose that the pattern of professional ministry could be easily altered. It is all the more astonishing, therefore, that immediately after publication of his ideas in 1916, the Church Times chose to print a full-page leading article entitled 'An Unprofessional Ministry', based upon Kelly's ideas, and attempting to explore them in an English perspective.

The article looks for clarification of certain issues (what would become of the Diaconate in such a scheme? how does it differ from congregationalism?). But on the whole the leader writer welcomed Kelly's 'bold leadership', and perceived Kelly's model as a possible solution to 'the urgent necessities of the Anglican communion [which] cry aloud for some big change in the pastoral system of the Church', arising from 'the



extraordinary shortage of ordination candidates which will long outlast the conclusion of peace'. However, the article astutely notes the greatest impediment to such an innovation - the current tradition of the laity's dependence on its clergy:

We are still a long way from that recovery of Christian principles ... which would make it possible to start parishioners 'on their own', under the doctrinal and disciplinary leadership of a local farmer or tradesmen for whose soundness and instructedness in the Faith there would be an effective guarantee. (Church Times 1916).

Early on in his stay in Japan, Kelly had read Roland Allen's formative book Missionary Methods - St Paul's or Ours ? (1912) (see II.2 below)<sup>1</sup>. This seems to have started him thinking about the vitality of the local church. Kelly, however, preferred to illustrate the principles of the argument from church history, rather than from the New Testament, as Allen did. Commenting upon Allen's approach, he says:

The first part of S.Paul's methods (mainly on the shortness of his stay) did not seem to be convincing. One could follow the question very much better by reference to the early Church - of sixth to fourth centuries - than by reference to S.Paul. That early Church was in a missionary condition ... and two centuries make a broad stage where one can study things in a normal way. What seemed to me the most vital part of Allen's book was the later chapters on the independent vitality of the local church; his later books on the unpaid ministry miss the real point at issue.

(Letter to an unnamed South African bishop, dated 10 April 1929).

However, as history was subsequently to demonstrate, it was Allen who became the effective prophet of non-stipendiary ministry, and to his writings and influence we now turn.

## 2. ROLAND ALLEN AND 'VOLUNTARY CLERGY'

It is difficult to exaggerate the influence of Roland Allen (1868-1947). Not only did he write extensively, but throughout the latter part of his life he acted as an animateur, badgering bishops, addressing

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<sup>1</sup>In a letter from Kelham, dated 10 April 1929, Kelly says to a South African bishop, 'His book (S. Paul's Methods and Ours) was put before me by Bp. Cecil [Boutflower] in 1914'. I am indebted to Vincent Strudwick of Oxford for drawing my attention to this correspondence in the Kelham archives.



synods, corresponding in the press. The extent of his influence upon his contemporaries may be judged from the way in which his name and his ideas are constantly referred to in official reports, and in the proceedings of debates of Lambeth Conferences, Convocations and Church Assembly.

### i) Early Experiences

Accounts of Allen's life have appeared in two books containing collections of writings by and about him<sup>1</sup>. He was ordained priest in 1893. Two years later he went abroad as an SPG missionary to North China. His experience of trying to found a new church there convinced him that only a limited role should be allowed to expatriate missionaries, and that responsibility for leadership should be committed to the local church at an early stage. For its day, this was radical thinking indeed. His annual report for 1902 to mission headquarters in London shows why his thinking was developing in this direction:

The continued presence of a foreigner seems to me to produce an evil effect. The native genius is cramped by his presence, and cannot work with him. The Christians tend to sit still and let him do everything for them, denying all responsibility... I should feel disposed to group all foreigners together in one place to avoid having them reside in more places than can be helped. A visit of 2 or 3 months stirs up the Church. Long continued residence stifles it.  
(USPG: Africa & Asia, Vol II, 1902).

When the Anglican church in China proposed to establish a new bishopric of Shantung, Allen took the opportunity to expound in more depth his ideas on local leadership. In two articles entitled A Church Policy for North China (published in the Church of England weekly, The Guardian, in the summer of 1902), he enunciated the principle 'that healthy growth depends upon free exercise of the functions [of ministry] at the earliest stages'. The following description of how this principle might work out in practice is quite extraordinarily like Kelly's description of emerging local ministry (though Kelly appears to have been unaware of these articles written fourteen years beforehand):-

So soon as a few Chinese in any place were baptized, the foreigner would ask himself, 'What can these people do for themselves?' and the answer would be, 'Everything except the exercise of priestly functions'. They can meet for prayer, they can procure a teacher for their children if they wish to do so (with a little pecuniary help,

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<sup>1</sup>Paton 1960b, pp. ix-xvi, and Paton 1968, pp. 13-24.



perhaps); they can invite others to join them on the basis upon which they were admitted to the Church (Creeds, Sacraments, Orders); they can meet to discuss any little question of local custom, and decide what they ought to do in the light of their conscience and the Bible; they can propagate the faith, they can, so soon as they wish, set apart a place for worship, or build one. All that they need is teaching and the administration of the Holy Sacraments. Therefore the missionary will teach, administer, and advise. For the rest they must do what they can. The foreigner will perhaps help them, but he will not do it for them.

As they grow in numbers and experience they will want more; they will present a man for ordination, they will begin to enlarge and improve upon their earlier efforts at the formation of a Prayer-book, they will compare their own with the translations of the Western and Eastern books, they will perhaps print a book after it has received the approval of the bishop. When there are two or three such communities they will not act separately, but will be able to meet together either as a whole or by delegates, and can then decide common matters in common council; local matters they would decide as of old in their local council. When they reach a stage at which they could offer a suitable man to the bishop for ordination to the priesthood, they would be locally complete and the foreigner would then retire to another field, only returning to visit the station as frequently as possible. (Paton 1968, p. 51)

Here was the seed of an idea - a Christian community 'locally complete' - which was later to flower in Allen's full-blown notion of 'voluntary clergy'. Although he does not in this article speak of an unpaid and unprofessional clergy, Allen was later to perceive that such a pattern of ministry was the only model by which the Sacrament might be regularly available to small widely scattered groups of Christians.

Allen was invalided home in 1903, and for the next few years was Rector of Chalfont St Peter, Buckinghamshire. In 1907 he resigned over the issue of baptismal rigourism, and never again held an ecclesiastical post. In a sense he became a non-stipendiary minister, devoting himself to writing and to propagating his radical ideas about the mission and ministry of the Church. He offered the Church a prophetic ministry, and like many an Old Testament prophet found himself obliged not only to speak his message, but to be a living sign of it. He speaks of this experience in a moving passage written years later:

For many years now I have tried to live as nearly the life of a voluntary priest as a man may who was not ordained as a voluntary cleric, and that experience has helped me to understand the inwardness of the thing, and to see through many difficulties which to those who have not had that experience seem alarming.

(Allen 1930, p. 8)



## ii) Publication of Missionary Methods (1912)

Allen made a lasting name for himself in 1912 with the publication of Missionary Methods - St. Paul's or Ours ?. As the title implies, the book was primarily a challenge to the contemporary missionary strategy. Basing his arguments upon the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline epistles, Allen analysed the reasons why Paul succeeded in founding autonomous churches in such a short space of time.

In chapter 9, he discusses Paul's strategy in 'Training for Baptism and Ordination'. Although the chapter does not discuss 'voluntary clergy' by name, it contains ideas that Allen was subsequently to develop at book length. He demonstrates that in each church Paul allowed the local community to have a say in the appointment of elders:

St Paul ordained as elders members of the church to which they belonged. He did not establish a provincial school to which all candidates for ordination must go, and from which they might be sent to minister to congregations in any part of the province, at the bidding of a central committee or at his own. The elders were really of the church to which they ministered. They were at home. They were known to the members of their flock. If they received any pecuniary support, they received it from men who supported them because they felt the need of their undivided and uninterrupted care. Thus the bond between the elders and the church to which they ministered was extremely close. (Allen 1960, p. 100)

He enunciates four further Pauline principles. First, the elders so appointed were not young in age, but men of weight and reputation. Secondly, they were not necessarily highly educated. Thirdly, they exercised sacramental functions: 'when a church was equipped with elders, it possessed not merely leaders, but men properly appointed to see that the Sacraments, without which it would have been starved in its spiritual life and crippled in its work of expansion, were duly performed'. Fourthly, Paul 'was not content with ordaining one elder for each church. In every place he ordained several' (ibid., pp. 103-4).

Allen contrasts this picture with contemporary practice, where he saw disregard for Pauline principles resulting in communities deprived of the sacraments, teachers out of touch with their people, natural elders suppressed, and natural prophets silenced.



The book was published by Robert Scott (London) as part of that publisher's 'Library of Historic Theology' series<sup>1</sup>. Of the many volumes in that series, Allen's is the only one which has proved of lasting interest, as is demonstrated by its printing history. The book was reprinted in no fewer than five English editions (some in several impressions, the most recent being in 1968)<sup>2</sup>. The early editions carried a commendatory Introduction by the Bishop of Madras, Henry Whitehead, and the publisher's blurb described it as 'the most discussed Missionary Book of the day'.

With this book Allen secured a name for himself, not least in his uncompromising appeal to first principles - not expediency - in deciding strategy, and in the strikingly argued style of his presentation. A reviewer of the first edition commented on the 'almost dictatorial vigour' with which Allen challenged his contemporaries. 'The book is a challenge, a severely and strongly-worded criticism, and we trust that its tone and the criticism which it will in many points naturally and ... rightly evoke may not hinder the fulfilment of the writer's desire' (anonymous book review in Church Quarterly Review, Vol. 75, pp. 216-20). As we shall see, this was a perceptive comment: Allen was later to show marked intolerance of the compromises in principle made by those charged with governing church affairs.

But there is a more fundamental critique to be offered of Allen's position: his simple appeal to scriptural principle is open to question, for he failed to pay attention to the factors which may have assisted the expansion of the church in post-biblical history. Two famous historians of mission remained unconvinced by Allen. Max Warren<sup>3</sup> confessed:

I have never been able to join in the chorus of praise of Allen's writings. Much that he wrote out of such passionate conviction was

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<sup>1</sup>The series aimed 'at presenting a general survey of the present position of thought and knowledge in various branches of the wide field which is included in the study of divinity' (General Editor's Preface to the first edition).

<sup>2</sup>The details are: First edition 1912 (second impression 1913); second edition 1927 (second impression 1930); third edition 1954; fourth edition 1956; fifth edition 1960 (second impression 1962, third impression 1968). American editions: First edition 1956, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans; second edition 1959, Chicago, Moody Press; third edition 1962, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans.

<sup>3</sup>Max Alexander Cunningham Warren (1904-77): Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge, 1936-42; General Secretary, Church Missionary Society, 1942-63; Sub-Dean, Westminster Abbey, 1963-73.



a true analysis of a failure going back 1600 years. But he didn't give much help as to what to do about it!!

(Letter to D.M.Paton, dated 24 Sep 1968 - SO: FTA, 'Roland Allen - New Book Corresp.')

In the light of Allen's disinterest in exploring such issues as the structural problems of training voluntary clergy, this seems a fair judgment. A slightly different angle of criticism was taken by Latourette who argued that it was inadvisable 'to draw lessons from any one period of the spread of the Faith and to apply them dogmatically to the current situation' (Latourette 1953, p. 143). Each period of expansion produced its own distinct methods, which have to be judged on their merits.

### iii) Publication of Voluntary Clergy (1923)

During the war years, Allen was busy with pastoral work - a naval chaplaincy, YMCA work in Rouen, and teaching in Worcester. But from 1920 onwards, he was living at Amenbury, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, in a house and with an allowance apparently provided for him by Sidney Clark through the Survey Trust (Survey Application Trust, from 1924) (Paton 1968, p. 21)<sup>1</sup>. The story of Allen's association with this Trust, which was established to research the growth of the church in the missionary territories of the globe and to foster the practical application of the principles enunciated by Allen in Missionary Methods, has been told by Sir Kenneth Grubb (ibid., pp. 61-84). Suffice it to say here that Allen used the uncommon security and freedom of this position to write, research and travel extensively in support of the idea of 'voluntary clergy'. Had it not been for his presence and availability through these unusual circumstances, it is highly unlikely that the notion of 'voluntary clergy' would have received the public attention that it did, nor that it would ever have featured upon the Lambeth Conference agenda of 1930.

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<sup>1</sup>A letter from Mrs. Allen in 1928 confirms this assessment of Allen's financial position: '...Now do you think that the time has come for us to do without the £200 a year which our good Mr. Clark arranged when he urged so strongly upon us that it was my husband's duty to devote himself entirely to the study of Foreign Mission. He came and told me that he had persuaded him to accept this... Then you know it was Mr Clark who found the house for us within easy reach of London. It would have been much harder to grapple with educational expenses [of their children] without that addition to our income'. (Letter, Mrs. Allen to T. Cochrane, 30 Dec 1928, - SO: FTA, Cockrane/Allen Correspondence.)



The original vision of 'voluntary clergy' had come to him through experience of the church overseas. Not surprisingly, therefore, Allen's first published development of his ideas concerned the problem of providing clergy for the church abroad. The cessation of hostilities found him once again campaigning against current missionary strategy. He seized the opportunity offered by an invitation to preach the Ramsden Sermon before the University of Oxford on Whitsunday 1919 to decry the extent to which contemporary writing on the Holy Spirit failed to give attention to the 'missionary activity' of the Spirit. The substance of this sermon was published as an article (Allen 1919a), and offers Allen's first exposition of the need for bishops to ordain voluntary clergy.

The context of his thinking was a broad one - a concern to free the newly founded churches overseas from domination by Western missionaries by allowing them to grow and develop in their own cultural way under inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This freedom could only be offered if bishops were prepared to break with custom, trust the Holy Spirit, and ordain indigenous local clergy (who in most cases would continue to work for their daily bread and without payment by the church). He lamented the fact that even when an enlightened bishop, such as Bishop Norris of North China, had identified a potential presbyter within a particular isolated, priestless, congregation, he hesitated to ordain this man, because he thought it would be a 'new departure' (ibid., p. 6). Allen expressed the naive hope that some bishop would 'settle the question' by following the example of the early church.

Allen's belief that a single example could 'settle the question' is remarkable. It was based upon a simple trust that the Holy Spirit would inevitably justify such obedience to scriptural principle, through the blessings of growth that would follow. Reliance upon the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit is the constant basis of his subsequent writings on missionary strategy.

Likewise, Allen argued, obedience to the same principle could also resolve problems confronting the the church in developing a pastoral strategy amongst white settlers in the Dominions (Allen 1922a). The context was one of massive emigration from England in the immediate post-war period. (In 1921, 50,000 ex-servicemen were granted free passage to the Dominions, and the Empire Settlement Act 1922 provided for assisted emigration of between 60,000 and 80,000 people a year.) Allen



called on the Church to evolve a strategy for providing a sacramental ministry to these people, many of whom were settling in remote areas of Australia and Canada: 'it is absolutely impossible that we should send clergy from home in anything like sufficient numbers to supply the need'. There was only one alternative - 'the admission of voluntary clergy'.

He acknowledged that this 'would affect very seriously our conception of the relation of the clergy to the laity, and would run counter to our inherited preconceptions and prejudices'. For instance, such a policy would require the ordination of a very large number of 'voluntary clergy', which would 'alter at once the relation between the laity and the clergy by the mere fact that the familiar proportions would be upset'. Moreover, the education, class and age of such clergy would differ from that customarily expected. In each case, Allen argued, that would be for the better, because the current clerical 'caste' would thereby be helped towards extinction. As we shall see, Allen had identified with great accuracy his likely allies and opponents: for the idea of 'voluntary clergy' tended to polarise those who favoured retention of a clerical status and those who emphasised the role of the laity in the world.

If the case for the admission of 'voluntary clergy' overseas was glaringly obvious, signs were not lacking that the ministry at home could be assisted by the same means. For Church leaders were greatly worried by the dramatic drop in the numbers of men being ordained during and after the 1914-18 War. The statistics are as follows:

Numbers of Deacons Ordained Annually

1914	:	610	1918	:	114
1915	:	453	1919	:	161
1916	:	330	1920	:	258
1917	:	167	1921	:	346

Roger Lloyd has noted how in the period 1919-1930 complaints about the shortage of ordination candidates was 'more widespread than ever before', and how the editor of Crockfords' Directory returned to this theme every year (Lloyd 1966, p. 337). All this anxiety provided Allen with an ideal opening.



He began by ventilating the principles of 'voluntary clergy' in the press, including letters to the Church Times (Nov 14, 1919) and to the Daily Telegraph (July 12, 1922), and quickly discovered that the idea produced widespread response:

As a result of a few letters written to newspapers, I have received communications from over a hundred men, and am persuaded that there is at this moment a great volume of spiritual power running to waste. There are large numbers of men at this moment who know and acknowledge a Divine call to serve God in the ministry of the Church; but they do not know, and do not acknowledge, a vocation to join the class of paid professional clergy.

(Allen 1922b, pp. 317-8).

As already indicated, most previous discussion had focussed on the value of 'voluntary clergy' overseas. Now, having convinced himself that vocations for this kind of ministry existed within England itself, Allen began slowly to assemble the case for 'voluntary clergy' at home. His first detailed exposition was published in an 8-page article in The Interpreter, a church monthly magazine (Allen 1922b).

In this article, Allen began by highlighting the growth in national population, the simultaneous decline in numbers of clergy, and the absurdity of the common expectation of overseas bishops that their clergy should be recruited in such circumstances from England. Lay Readers or permanent deacons were no assistance towards the primary pastoral problem of making the Sacrament available. 'The only alternative seems to be the ordination of men engaged in professions and business who would serve as priests for love of God and be entirely independent of their clerical work for their living'.

Allen went on to develop two major arguments in favour of such ordinations. Both were matters of principle, and counterbalanced objections that expediency alone was promoting the idea. First, the spiritual motive behind ordained ministry is obscured by the fact that 'priestly work is always bound up with the earning of a stipend'. People would respond more readily to ministry based plainly on 'love for souls' than to the 'ministrations of a man whom they even suspect of being influenced by any other motive'. He added:

We need today a kind of counter-poverty in clergy; not the poverty which says, I will abandon all means of livelihood in order to minister to my fellows, but the kind of poverty which says, I will



not receive anything from my fellows for ministering to them in spiritual things'.

(Allen 1922b, p. 315).

Allen's second principle echoes one of the 19th century concerns - 'voluntary clergy' could help bridge 'the great gulf between the paid professional clergy and the great mass of the people'. He argued,

That this gulf may be crossed it seems to be essential that the clergy should be the first to cross it, not that they should be of the world, but that they should be in the world. They must live as men among men. They must bring their religion into the daily life of men. They must share the toils and labours and common hopes and fears of those whom they would draw to Christ and His Church. They must work beside men in the office and at the bench. They must come into contact with them as men who share the common life.

(Allen 1922b, p. 316).

This is the first time that 'the world of work' featured in discussion of non-stipendiary priesthood. It was however to become increasingly prominent at later stages, especially at the hands of F.R. Barry, and after the influence of the French worker priest movement. Strangely, it is not a theme to which Allen himself returned in his later development of the case for 'voluntary clergy'.

Allen had to counter the argument that ordained men engaged in ordinary trades 'would necessarily be part-time priests'. He did so by stressing the 'being' rather than the 'doing' nature of priesthood (an element which was to feature in all later discussion of work-focused non-stipendiary ministry) -

...by that word part-time men mean that they would be priests when they were in Church, and laymen when they were out of it. A priest can never be anything but a priest. There should be no obstacle in the exhortation in the ordinal to priests to apply themselves wholly to this one thing and to draw all their cares and studies this way. Every act of life ought to be an act worthy of a priest of God, and if men engaged in professions and trades were ordained... and carried on their trade or profession as men who were called with a holy calling; they would not only get into real vital touch with men who now cannot understand what it means to be a priest; but they would learn and teach us a new conception of the relation of religion to daily life. Men who knew that they ministered about holy things, as well as those who did not, would come into contact with them in the ordinary intercourse of daily work and business, and they would observe them; and they would find that these men had ideals and hopes, and spiritual powers which many would envy. They could not escape from the influence of the Christian Faith by staying away from Church. They would find that the Christian religion, as represented by its ministers, was in their



midst, and they would get new ideas about the meaning of the religious life. (Allen 1922b, p. 316).

Finally, Allen hinted at certain conclusions that followed from his principles. He acknowledged that 'the Church needs and should support a certain number of men who can give all their time to the care of parishes and to study, and such men should not be engaged in business'. But different educational qualifications would have to be demanded of 'voluntary clergy': 'We should have to revise our Bishops' examinations'. It was, however, a severe weakness to his case that neither here nor anywhere else did he indicate in what ways training might have to be modified.

In most of his discussions, Allen seems to have been assuming that 'voluntary clergy' would be recruited from among professional and business classes of society. But within this article (in an all too brief paragraph), he holds out a vision of what might be gained if 'voluntary clergy' were ordained from all classes of British society. This, he hoped, might overcome the gulf between the clergy and the working classes -

Men often urge that the paid professional clergy should be recruited from all classes; but by joining the profession as it now exists, men cease to belong to the class from which they were drawn, and that gulf between the clergy and the great mass of men ... remains.  
(Allen 1922b, p. 317)

Although this issue had been prominent in the 19th century discussion of working deacons, and was to surface again half a century afterwards in relation to local non-stipendiary ministry, Allen did not develop it any further as an aspect of his case for 'voluntary clergy'.

Thus, in the space of a few pages, Allen had enunciated the issues involved non-stipendiary ministry - all of them issues which are still under discussion today.

A journal article, however, would not be enough to convince the world. And so he persuaded Dr W.K.Lowther Clarke, Editorial Secretary of SPCK, to publish a small book developing these ideas. Voluntary Clergy duly appeared in 1923. Its six chapters provided fuel for world-wide discussion of 'voluntary clergy' over the next seven years. Accordingly, it will be in place to summarise the book's contents.



Referring to the current dearth of candidates for the professional ministry, Allen suggested 'that by God's Providence this dearth...has come upon us in order that we may learn that this type [of professional ministry] is not the only type, and so gain a new and deeper sense of the meaning of Divine vocation' (Allen 1923, p. 2). The three succeeding chapters critically enumerated ways in which Divine vocation was falsely restricted by contemporary traditions.

First, it was restricted to the young and inexperienced:

Can anyone possibly imagine that Divine vocation to the ministry is really restricted, as it is restricted in our experience, or rather by our methods, to the young ? Men are not converted only in youth. God calls men by His Grace to serve Him when they are older. Can it be that He never calls them to serve in the ministry of His Church ? The idea would seem almost absurd unless we were accustomed to think of ordination in connection with young men only. (p.9)

Such practice, Allen argued, found support neither in scripture nor in the tradition of the early church.

Secondly, Divine vocation was 'restricted by our conviction that it comes only to those who are prepared to pass an examination of a very narrow and peculiar type' (p. 13), in which verbal memory and knowledge of antique languages played a prominent part. Such admission requirements did not of themselves secure either a learned or a spiritual clergy; but they did secure the exclusion of many experienced and spiritual Christian leaders.

Thirdly, Divine vocation was restricted because (apart from schoolmasters) 'no man is ordained who is not prepared to make his clerical profession his means of livelihood' (p. 26). One could therefore be forgiven for concluding that 'the call of God to minister and the call of the profession are identical, convertible terms. And yet, and this is a very odd thing, nobody really believes that' (p. 28).

Allen demanded that his readers face these awkward facts:

Can it be that we are really restricting the Divine grace and binding it in shackles of our creation ? Can it be that in the Divine Providence the supply of men for ordination is falling short of our needs to force us to open our eyes, and to see that the Call of God is not bound by our rules ? (p. 42).



In chapter 4, he outlined the apostolic requirements for ordination, basing his discussion upon the qualities listed in I Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9 (passages which specify certain necessary personal and social virtues, and certain characteristics of home life and public reputation). The chapter is an elaboration of principles first expounded in Missionary Methods (see above II.2.ii), and contrasted these principles with contemporary practice. The chief contrast was that contemporary custom recruited young men, unmarried and inexperienced in the world, but with a high level of formal education; whereas the Apostle recruited mature married men, who were well respected by their communities and who were already shown to be tried and tested as leaders and teachers.

Chapter 5 enumerated the absurdities produced by current tradition. The church cannot do its work because of insufficiency of clergy. Therefore parishes have grown to huge size, where the itinerant priest is a remote institution. 'We abandon the Apostolic conception of ministry; and we find that we have abandoned with it the Apostolic conception of the Church'. In place of an ordained ministry,

we establish a system of lay readers where there used to be ministers of the Sacraments: we establish a system of services from which the Sacraments are tacitly excluded. We say, No one must misunderstand us: we are not belittling the Sacraments. It is easily said; but the noise made by our acts is so loud that it drowns our words. (p. 72).

In a final chapter, Allen offers a definition of 'voluntary clergy' and answers two common misconceptions:

By Voluntary Clergy I mean men in Full Orders, exercising their ministry but not dependent upon it for their livelihood. I mean men with the qualifications laid down by the Apostle, but not necessarily those added by us. It is such men that I think we ought to ordain. We ought to ordain these men not because there is a dearth of candidates for ordination of the type to which we are accustomed, but because it is in itself right and wise to do so... I have rested my argument for Voluntary Clergy not upon the dearth, but upon Divine Truth. (pp. 73-4).

Allen hoped, however, that the dearth would arouse compassion for the starving:

Nothing short of that Divine compassion and the conviction of the rightness of the Apostolic order can enable us to face the difficulties which lie before those who would attempt to break through the barriers which habit and tradition, and the inertia and indifference which follow a habit of blind obedience to a tradition, put in our way. (p. 84).



Finally, he handled two misconceptions: that 'voluntary clergy' would undermine the position of the stipendiary clergy, and that they 'would be only half-time clergy'. He countered that stipendiary clergy would continue to be necessary, and that 'there is no such thing as secular business for Christian men' (p. 84). On the contrary, 'the existence of voluntary clergy might restore to us the Christian conception of life' (p 87).

It is worth noting what was said in contemporary reviews of the book. The Times Literary Supplement was prepared to devote two inches of column space to it, commenting non-committally (and somewhat missing the point), 'the dearth of candidates for ordination inspired this plea for a revision of "our conception of Divine vocation"... The little book ... contains much thoughtful argument in support of its contention' (26 July 1923).

Theology, on the other hand, printed a large-scale review by Alfred D. Kelly SSM, brother of Herbert Kelly (A.D.Kelly 1923). His response was typical of much subsequent conservative reaction: Allen's overstatements are picked up; any inconsistency in Allen's logic is pounced upon; difficulties of various kinds are enumerated. But Allen's principles are neither seriously acknowledged nor discussed. Kelly writes as one defending the status quo, particularly the current pattern of training for the ministry (which of course he was involved in at Kelham). He is not prepared to explore the new insights that the idea of 'voluntary clergy' might bring to the understanding of ministry.

An anonymous review in the Church Times (August 10, 1923) was similarly defensive. While acknowledging that Allen 'presents so strong a case that we begin to wonder why so simple a remedy is not enthusiastically adopted', the writer asked 'Can there be any disadvantage which outweighs all the advantages?'. He proceeded to name several. Just as bad money drives out good, so 'voluntary clergy would drive out professional clergy... The cheapness of "voluntary" clergy would be so strong an attraction in many parishes that stipendiary clergy would tend to be unemployed'. As in Theology, the reviewer refused to give weight to Allen's principles, preferring above all to preserve the status of the professional clergy, especially with regard to their training. He refused to contemplate a situation where 'voluntary clergy' might become the norm



and stipendiary clergy the exception; however, if a minimum age of fifty was required for 'voluntary clergy', then 'Mr Allen's plan might at least be partially adopted, while safeguarding the position of the stipendiary clergy'. This review is thus a remarkable example of how the vested interests of the parochial clergy were presumed to be paramount: Allen's principles were left intact but ignored, and 'voluntary clergy' are dismissed with innuendo as 'half-timers' and 'amateurs'.

#### iv) Correspondent and 'Animateur' (1920-1927)

Allen's papers fill seven boxes, deposited in the archives of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG), London. From these papers it is possible to reconstruct in great detail the part he played in raising international awareness of 'voluntary clergy'. It became apparent that he was in correspondence with a wide circle of overseas bishops and other influential church leaders. He acted as a kind of 'clearing house' for information about 'voluntary clergy': he used the correspondence columns of the church press to bring actual cases of ordination of 'voluntary clergy' in the United States, and the resolutions of South African diocesan synods, before public attention in England. He challenged overseas bishops who published appeals for clergy from England, and corresponded at great length with individuals who raised questions or problems about 'voluntary clergy'. He sent complementary copies of Voluntary Clergy to bishops, hoping to persuade them to take action and ordain 'voluntary clergy'.

A little of this material has been published by David Paton (Paton 1968), including 17 letters to and from Allen on various aspects of 'voluntary clergy', part of a diary (for a week in December 1927) when Allen visited Dornakal in South India, and a series of 27 letters to and from the bishop of Assam (George Hubback)<sup>1</sup>.

From the extensive surviving archive material, it is possible to analyse what kind of support existed amongst church leaders for Allen's ideas. Extant responses to his gift of Voluntary Clergy indicate support

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<sup>1</sup>George Clay Hubback, Bishop of Assam, 1925-45; Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India, 1945-50.



from the bishops of Pretoria<sup>1</sup>, Gibraltar<sup>2</sup> and Southampton<sup>3</sup>. More influential, perhaps, was the support of two aged but highly respected scholars - Canon J.M.Wilson<sup>4</sup> of Worcester and Eugene Stock<sup>5</sup> of the Church Missionary Society.

Cecil Boutflower, bishop of Southampton (who had been Kelly's bishop in Tokyo and had first introduced him to Allen's writings), on the basis of his Japanese experience, was in two minds about Allen's book. He replied:

You know how I began to act on this line in Japan... But I have a pretty good notion that [the case for 'voluntary clergy'] is against us in history. (USPG: AP, 7.M.104)

Wilson, by contrast, was well persuaded, replying 'your position and argument seem prima facie unanswerable'. He enlisted the support of his fellow Canon, Dr T.A.Lacey (of whom more below). Stock, however, while favourable, was (like Max Warren) disappointed that Allen had not worked out more precise implications from his principles:

I do think you have hit the nail on the head, in theory at all events. It is not easy to see the possible remedy, and I was hoping for more suggestions at the end than you gave us. (USPG: AP, 7.M.109).

Strangely, despite this warning, Allen continued to concern himself only with principles, which is why bishops (ever with an eye for the politics of the practical) were frequently in a quandary - convinced of the reasonableness of Allen's arguments, but unable to see a way to act upon them.

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<sup>1</sup>Neville Talbot: Bishop of Pretoria, 1920-33.

<sup>2</sup>J.H.Greig: Bishop of Gibraltar, 1921-7.

<sup>3</sup>Cecil Henry Boutflower (1863-1942): Archdeacon of Furness, 1901-5; Bishop of Dorking, 1905-9; Bishop of South Tokyo, 1909-21; Bishop of Southampton, 1921-33.

<sup>4</sup>James Maurice Wilson (1836-1931): mathematics master at Rugby, 1859-79; Headmaster of Clifton, 1879-90; Archdeacon of Rochdale, 1890-1905; Hulsean Lecturer, 1898-9; Canon of Worcester, 1905-26. Under Frederick Temple at Rugby, he developed the teaching of science and astronomy; he was a colleague of T.H.Huxley on a national commission for the teaching of science in schools, and in 1921 was President of the Mathematical Association. His 'omnivorous curiosity and swift powers of mastering the essentials of a problem' kept him active in posts of responsibility until his ninetieth year. (DNB, 1931-1940).

<sup>5</sup>Eugene Stock (1836-1928): layman; Secretary of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), 1873-1906; member of Church Assembly till 1925; author of History of the Church Missionary Society (four volumes), 1897-1916.



Allen's early and somewhat naive vision of how change would actually be brought about is expressed in a letter to the Bishop of Gibraltar:

In my thinking, it seems that nothing short of a miracle could enable such a change to be made in the face of a tradition so strong. Personally I believe it will first be made by an individual - one man who, persuaded that it is wrong to deprive those who would use Christ's Sacraments of them, acts alone and then defends his action as St Paul defended his. "I am a Bishop ... to feed the flock of Christ: I decline to starve my children. Those who will use Christ's grace in my diocese shall have it. It is for you who disagree with me to defend your tradition. I obey Christ who gave the command". What Lambeth Conference could excommunicate such a man ?  
(USPG: AP, 7.M.106).

Carried away with himself as a latter-day Athanasius contra mundum, he adds, 'On that question, my Lord, I would be prepared to stand alone against the world; and I should not be alone'.

It would be untrue, however, to suggest that Allen was unaware of the political need to secure the support of influential leaders, and to lobby them for his case. His progress in this endeavour between 1921 and 1926 may be seen in the long list of his correspondents<sup>1</sup>. During these six years, the following had indicated their general conviction of the rightness of Allen's case: in Canada, the bishops of Kootenay, Saskatchewan, Brandon and Archdeacon J.C.Davidson of Toronto; in South Africa, the bishops of Bloemfontein, Pretoria, Johannesburg and St John's; elsewhere, the bishops of Uganda, Lagos, Dornakal, Bombay and Oregon; in England, the bishops of Chichester (W.O.Burrows, Allen's former Principal at the Leeds Clergy Training School) and of Gloucester (A.C.Headlam), Canon T.A.Lacey of Worcester, Charles Williams of Oxford University Press, Lowther Clark, editorial secretary of SPCK, and others. It is noteworthy that the majority of the overseas bishops mentioned are from the white Dominions.

But during the same period, he also corresponded with a number of missionary leaders whom he failed to win over, including W.T.Williams of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi, and G.E.Tilsley of the Luanza Mission in Elizabethville, Belgian Congo. He also wrote to Bishop Steward of Melanesia and Bishop Motodo of Tokyo, challenging them to drop their appeals for clergy to go from England to staff these overseas dioceses. He was in confrontation, moreover, with the Methodist Episcopal Church

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<sup>1</sup>The sources for what follows are letters in Box 6 of the Allen Papers.



in Japan, one of whose leaders (the Revd. Dr. Spenser of Kumamoto) had written an article opposing the notion of 'voluntary clergy'.

It so happened that in 1923 the first non-stipendiary minister was ordained in the Episcopal Church in the United States. Allen was naturally delighted to discover that a member church of the Anglican Communion had actually begun to use 'voluntary clergy'. So having made detailed enquiries of the two cases, he set about publicising the facts in England through a letter to the Church Times (7 September 1923). It transpires that the Revd. van Tassel Sutphen, an author and editor who was library adviser to Harpers (the publishing house), had been ordained to the priesthood on 7 July 1923 in Newark, N.J., under special dispensation allowed by the Canons<sup>1</sup>. Allen informed his readers that Sutphen was a businessman of mature years, who would maintain his connection with Harper Bros. He concluded triumphantly, 'There are then at this moment voluntary Clergy in existence within the Anglican Communion who have been definitely ordained as such'. A little later (1925) Allen was in personal correspondence with a second American priest ordained under this Canon, the Revd. Ralfe Davies, an actor.

As his crusade developed, Allen realised that the overseas bishops were unlikely to act alone on their own authority, and that they were looking for a lead from England. His experience of overseas leaders is succinctly put in a letter of 1925 to Lacey:

I want to beg you to consider the difficulty of bishops abroad agreeing on this point. Many, most of them are wedded to the stipendiary system and the ordination of young men who can be trained in Theological College. They are accustomed to that type of cleric; they are afraid of any change; and not a single man of note, or of weight as a scholar or as a statesman had spoken on the side of voluntary clergy. In Canada they said to me, "In England you have plenty of men of education and social position, such as we have not got here: why do you not set us an example; for you are short of clergy in England ?".

The Bishops need a leader and the very few who see that the stipendiary system cannot supply their needs are up against this dead opposition on the part of their brethren. When, then, the opposition can appeal to the silence of all the learned and influential men in England, to the attitude of the Archbishop's Committee<sup>2</sup>, and have

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<sup>1</sup>The Canon concerned was Canon 2.V [iv], which permitted a bishop to ordain to the priesthood a man who had attained the age of 32 and had 'shown such proficiency in business or professional life as gives promise of usefulness in the ministry'.

<sup>2</sup>Viz. Archbishops' Committee 1925, see below II.3.iii.



the whole weight of tradition and custom on their side, those who are for reform have a hard task...

I do not think that you can quite realise what immense difference it would make, if one scholar was definitely to urge the reasonableness and propriety of ordaining voluntary clergy. It would bring the whole question out into the open, and cause it to be treated seriously by men who now simply let it pass by: it would put into the hands of men who are struggling to provide for their people an argument of great power.

Therefore, I beg you to come to their aid.

(USPG: AP, 6.K.47).

Lacey<sup>1</sup>, a distinguished Anglo-Catholic scholar, would have been a formidable ally. He did in fact give 'voluntary clergy' his public support, but not until 1929, when he contributed to a symposium of articles published just before the Lambeth Conference (Lacey 1929).

Perhaps Allen's most significant episcopal ally in England was A.C.Headlam, bishop of Gloucester and former Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford<sup>2</sup>. Allen had met him in Canada in 1925, where Headlam had apparently confided his belief that the Canadian bishops should ordain voluntary clergy<sup>3</sup>. Allen appears to have tried to get Headlam to make a public statement, but the latter was not to be drawn, and encouraged Allen to make a reasoned statement about the lamentable effect of the Archbishops' Western Canada Fund (which Allen subsequently did). Headlam adds, however, a tactful word of warning to Allen, based no doubt upon his own experience of being at the receiving end of Allen's thrusts:

I quite agree with your main principles though they are a little difficult to carry out. There is no reason at all why you should not put forward your criticisms and make your suggestions, even though they are unpalatable to some of the bishops. It has only struck me that perhaps you sometimes do it in a way which may cause a certain amount of unnecessary irritation. A strong reasoned

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas Alexander Lacey (1853-1931): Canon of Worcester, 1918-31; the principle defendant of the validity of Anglican Orders during the Vatican enquiry of 1896 which resulted in Apostolicae Curae. He was 'one of the most accomplished Latinists of his time', joint editor of the English Hymnal, a member of the editorial staff of the Church Times, and Proctor in Convocation, 1922-29. (DNB, 1931-40, p. 519).

<sup>2</sup>Arthur Cayley Headlam (1862-1947): Principal of King's College, London, 1903; Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford 1918; Bishop of Gloucester 1923-45. (DNB 1941-50, pp. 369-71).

<sup>3</sup>Letter from Allen to Lacey, 11 Aug 1925: 'I saw the Bishop of Gloucester in Canada when he was preaching before the General Synod at London, Ont. I spoke to him, and he said exactly what you said, "I cannot think why they do not do this [viz. ordain voluntary clergy]"; but he said it to me privately, not to them publicly'. (USPG: AP, 6.K.47).



statement is more effective in the long run than anything else.  
(USPG: AP, 6.K.48).

From what has been said already, it will be plain that Allen had built up a considerable circle of correspondents, particularly in Canada and South Africa. He was sufficiently encouraged by the response in these territories to his ideas that he determined to visit them, to see for himself the nature of the task of ministry there, and to urge these churches to adopt the principle of voluntary clergy as a solution to their problems. The scattered white settlers of the Anglican 'parishes' in these countries clearly could not hope to be served by resident stipendiary clergy, and so, by common consent, presented the most likely ground for the first establishment of voluntary clergy. So he visited Canada in 1924, and South Africa in 1926. The following year he received an invitation from his old friend Bishop Azariah of Dornakal in India to speak at a diocesan clergy school. He accepted the invitation with delight, and took the opportunity to extend his experience with a visit to Assam. (Over a number of years he had had a protracted correspondence with the bishop of Assam, George Hubback.)

What happened during these visits ? How did people respond to Allen ? What did Allen do with these experiences ? To these questions we now turn.

Early in 1924 Allen had published a long article in the Church Times (6 March 1924) on the potential value of voluntary clergy among white settler communities of the Dominions. Later that year he spent several months in Canada. It seemed a propitious moment, for in that very year the Canadian House of Bishops had appointed a committee to report to them on voluntary clergy. One of Allen's main concerns was to research the local effect of the Archbishops' Western Canada Fund (AWCF). In 1910 the Archbishops of Canterbury and York had launched a great appeal to the Church of England on behalf of the settlers in the prairie provinces of Western Canada. The Church of England was challenged to send out men and money. The appeal was to last for ten years only, after which the fund would close. Altogether 138 workers were sent out and £ 180,000 collected (Allen 1930, p. 189). Despite this effort, the Western Canadian dioceses were far from self-supporting by 1920.



Allen considered that the failure of this strategy should be recognised. It had failed because it was based upon false principles; in particular, because the autonomy of local Christian groups had not been encouraged. He was convinced that the acceptance of the principles of voluntary clergy could provide the necessary ordained ministry for the small groups of Christians scattered over vast tracts of land. So, using diocesan statistics and the evidence of local parish magazines, he showed that the primary reasons for failure were: constant re-posting of the few clergy, the impractical distances clergy were expected to travel, the resulting irregularity of Sunday services, dis-spirited congregations, and the heavy burden upon a small membership of paying the stipends and expenses of full-time clergy. The statistics from the dioceses of Edmonton, Calgary and Qu'Appelle were depressing: when AWCF closed, 168 sites had been purchased with AWCF money for new churches, but only 70 churches had actually been erected, and a meagre 7 individuals were in training for Holy Orders (ibid., p. 193).

Allen published his findings, together with his proposed solutions, in a long letter to the Church Times (5 Dec 1924), and in a series of articles in The Canadian Churchman during 1925. In reworked form, these articles became the core of his book Voluntary Clergy Overseas (1928). But it seems that Allen failed to win acceptance for his ideas from the Canadian bishops. There is no further correspondence with them to be found amongst his papers, and the Canadian bishops did not speak prominently in favour of voluntary clergy when it came to the 1930 Lambeth Conference debate on the subject. A non-episcopal correspondent from Edmonton wrote in 1928:

I am more than ever convinced that you are on the right track, but I'm afraid that I am no less convinced that you will never convince the BISHOPS !  
(USPG: AP, 6.K.112).

Why were the bishops so unconvinced ? Reports of public discussion of voluntary clergy in the Canadian General Synod spoke of 'strong opposition based mainly on negative answers to the question "Do the people favour and will they accept the ministrations of Voluntary Clergy ?" ' (Lambeth Conference 1930b, p. 17). This observation is amplified by the bishop of Fredericton (J.A.Richardson) in a letter to Allen confirming that the obstruction to the development of voluntary clergy lay not so much with the bishops personally (Richardson himself was well persuaded of Allen's principles), but with the people:



It is undoubtedly a fact that in the average community, not only is it very difficult to find men willing to accept Holy Orders and work as voluntary clergy, but it is also very difficult to find any considerable number of laymen, ready to welcome the ministrations of 'one of themselves'. (Paton 1968, pp. 96f).

If Canada produced lean results for his labours, Allen's experience in South Africa was much more promising. Indeed he himself was directly instrumental in securing synodical debate and resolutions favourable to voluntary clergy within several South African dioceses.

Neville Talbot, bishop of Pretoria since 1920 (and a close friend of Herbert Kelly) had been in correspondence with Allen as early as 1922. In 1925 he wrote to Allen requesting advice on voluntary clergy. Allen responded with a 9-page memo (about 3,000 words in his neat hand), itemising the points to be made in presenting the case for voluntary clergy (USPG: AP, 6.K.62). This response had its effect upon the bishop, for the following year the issue of voluntary clergy was debated in Pretoria Diocesan Synod. Because of this expressed interest, Allen made plans to visit South Africa from May to November 1926, and was invited by Talbot to address the Synod on the day of the voluntary clergy debate, 27 October 1926<sup>1</sup>. The manuscript draft of what he said on that occasion survives amongst his papers (USPG: AP, 3.30).

It is a remarkable document, containing first thoughts scored through, until the final version emerged. Allen seems to have felt that the invitation was a God-given opportunity, and to have hoped that the Synod's decision would mark a watershed in Anglican church history. He apologised for having written out his whole speech 'because I wish to avoid the danger of being led by the fervour of the moment into saying a single word that I have not meditated and prayed over'. He was as diplomatic in tone as his uncompromising appeal to biblical principle could allow:

At the outset I beg you to remember that I am not here to set forth any original ideas of my own. I simply appeal from a modern tradition to the teaching and practice of Christ and His Apostles. If then you criticise what I say, pray remember that you are not criticising me unless you can show that I misrepresent the teaching of Christ and His Apostles: if you criticise what I say whilst you admit that I am speaking truly of Christ and His Apostles, than you are criticising not me but them. If you say that times have changed and that their teaching is out of date, then, I beseech you, think

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. letters to Hubback mentioning this invitation in Paton 1968, pp. 125 and 142-3.



that the application of principles may change as years pass, but that principles do not change, and I am going to confine myself closely to principles tonight. (ibid.)

He goes on to state succinctly the fundamental issue at stake:

I am not concerned with the relative value of stipendiary and voluntary clergy, where it is merely a question of choice between the two. It is about the establishment of the Church that I am concerned; and in many places today the choice is not between voluntary clergy and stipendiary clergy, but between voluntary clergy and none. I deal with voluntary clergy simply because I do not see how we can establish the Church without voluntary clergy. My real subject is therefore not voluntary clergy, but the establishment of the Church.<sup>1</sup> (ibid.)

The speech ended with an impassioned plea for repentance, strangely reminiscent of an Old Testament prophet uncompromising announcing the word of the Lord:

My Lord Bishop, my brethren of the clergy and of the laity, I have done. We are now met before the judgment seat of Christ, in the presence of the Holy Ghost our teacher and sanctifier. Solemnly here I beg you to repent: (1) You are preaching and practicing and by connivance and toleration accepting a denial of Christ's Gospel of "Rise up and walk in the grace and power of the Lord", by teaching men to wait till you can do something for them yourselves. (2) You are starving the children of God committed to your care, leaving them a defenceless prey to charlatans and quacks. (3) You are subordinating Christ's commands, Christ's Sacraments, to money, in that you say we must have money before we can constitute the Church. Again I say, solemnly in the name of Christ I beseech you to repent... Repent now, and amend your practice today. Souls are perishing while you debate. In the name of Christ. Amen. (ibid.)

The speech had its effect, though the resulting resolution passed by the Synod lacked any teeth. It urged the bishop to appoint a committee to consider the subject of voluntary clergy in relation to the diocese. But by 1930 no action had taken place (Lambeth Conference 1930b).

However, within a couple of years, similar debates were taking place at synod level in the dioceses of Bloemfontein, Natal and Capetown. Allen kept in close touch with supporters of motions pressing for the introduction of voluntary clergy. R.C.Streeter (lay representative for Bloemfontein Cathedral) who proposed the motion in his own diocese sent Allen press cuttings of reports of the synod discussion in the local

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<sup>1</sup>The manuscript (USPG: AP, 3.30) is an introduction and conclusion to the address only. A space is left at this point where Allen read out a paper. Unfortunately the manuscript does not indicate which paper, beyond saying that 'it was published in an English newspaper a year or two ago'. Quite possibly he used the text of his lengthy article in the Church Times (6 March 1924) on the value of voluntary clergy for settler groups.



church and secular press (USPG: AP, 6.K.82, 98 and 130). Streeter's motion was lost by a small majority. The Synod was apparently swayed by the bishop (W.J.Carey) who reported that the Episcopal Synod felt there was a canonical difficulty to the ordination of men engaged in trade. 'The bishop added that there was a great danger, especially amongst the Natives, that people would covet the position of being a voluntary priest in order to get the kudos. But on the whole he viewed the scheme with sympathy' (The Friend, 12 June 1928).

Later in the same year (1928), a motion was introduced to the Natal Diocesan Synod by another of Allen's correspondents, G.Hibbert-Ware. His motion was -

...carefully worded to guard against the matter being put on the shelf; it was therefore not ... to ask the Bishop to take the matter into consideration, but to recommend to groups of churchmen everywhere, if they found they were not getting the Sacrament every Sunday and wished to get It, to make a practical suggestion [by naming a suitable local ordinand] and petitioning the Bishop to put it into effect. I said I should like to hear of dozens of petitions going to the Bishop on these lines. (USPG: AP, 6.K.128A).

But despite this motion and a lengthy article written for the Natal diocesan newspaper, The Churchman (November 1928), there is no sign that any such petitions were forthcoming.

In Capetown diocese, by contrast, there was an episcopal initiative. The Coadjutor Bishop (J.O.Nash)<sup>1</sup> proposed a motion in October 1928,

That this Synod commends to the South African Bishops the further study of the principle of ordaining suitable men engaged in various occupations as unpaid clergy to supplement the regular clergy and to minister to small congregations. (Lambeth Conference 1930b, p.17).

The resolution was passed by a small majority of the clergy and almost unanimously by the laity. This resolution undoubtedly gave an impetus to the discussions of the Bishops' Synod held in Johannesburg a month later, when the bishops passed a resolution authorising each bishop in the Province of South Africa to ordain 'two voluntary priests during the next five years as an experiment' (Lambeth Conference 1930b, p. 17). Thus the intention was that this new departure should be deliberately experimental and small scale, and should be closely monitored. Whether in fact any men were so ordained is unclear. But the fact that a

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<sup>1</sup>Nash was subsequently to speak at the Lambeth Conference (see below II.5).



decision had been made to allow experiment in South Africa brought added pressure to bear on the Lambeth Conference discussions of 1930.

In many respects, this South African episode was the most successful piece of action undertaken by Allen. He provided the initial provocation, and closely supported subsequent initiators. His writing were much quoted in the discussions. He personally wooed over at least three bishops, who became convinced that they should act (cf. Paton 1968, p. 142). As a result, the bishops gave each other mutual permission to ordain voluntary clergy within the Province of South Africa.

Nevertheless, no positive development of voluntary clergy ensued. Why? Two related factors seem to have inhibited things. First, the opposition of many of the clergy (as reflected in synod voting), and secondly, the failure of congregations to come forward with actual ordinands. The bishop of Grahamstown (F.R.Phelps)<sup>1</sup>, who was himself fully convinced of the need for voluntary clergy, highlighted the latter problem in letters to Allen. Writing in 1930, he said,

The thing that most troubles me and drives me to penitence for the Church in my diocese... is that I have not got any laymen whom I could ordain as voluntary clergy. If I had I would act.

(USPG: AP, 6.L.88).

He acknowledged Allen's principle of involving 'the action of the local church in putting forward and recommending the man'. But added, 'This of course makes the bringing in of the idea somewhat difficult' (USPG: AP, 6.L.98).

Allen never seemed to 'hear' what was being said to him in remarks like these. Firmly convinced of the truth of his basic principles, he was likewise convinced that latent vocations existed. As already noted, what was needed, in Allen's opinion, was action by some bishops. Then people could watch voluntary clergy as work, and everyone would learn from the experience of their ministry, rather than merely discussing an abstract idea. (As we shall see, this was also a view held by Archbishop Ramsey a generation later.)

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<sup>1</sup>Phelps was subsequently to be a significant figure at the Lambeth Conference (see below II.5).



Having spent half of 1926 in South Africa, Allen then arranged to spend three months in India, specifically in two dioceses whose bishops had shown a willingness to explore with their people whether voluntary clergy might be appropriate in their local contexts. So from December 1927 to February 1928, Allen was visiting the dioceses of Dornakal and Assam.

Dornakal showed many signs of being fertile ground for voluntary clergy. There had been phenomenal growth of Christianity amongst the Telegu villages under the charismatic leadership of V.S.Azariah<sup>1</sup>. He had so effectively spear-headed evangelism of the area with the help of indigenous leadership that the whole region was carved out of Madras diocese, and Azariah consecrated India's first indigenous bishop in 1912. Azariah was effectively practising the principles laid out by Allen in Missionary Methods (1912), and Allen had cited in extenso the example of Azariah in the final chapter of his book Educational Principles and Missionary Methods (1919)<sup>2</sup>. As early as 1923, Azariah had informed Allen how the Indian bishops had accepted the idea of voluntary deacons, while he himself was in favour of voluntary priests (USPG: AP, 6.K.12).

Allen was thus delighted to be invited by Azariah to address the Dornakal Diocesan Clergy School in 1927. He kept a diary (USPG: AP, 7.N) which records the topics he presented each day of that week (5 to 10 Dec 1927) and the people's reactions to his challenges<sup>3</sup>. His talks provoked much discussion, and the bishop told Allen at the end of the week that

he had spoken to the clergy some months ago about voluntary clergy and they were all against it; now they are nearly all for it in some form. (Paton 1968, p. 117).

Whatever action or lack of action followed on Allen's visit, he himself clearly benefitted personally from discussions with Bishop Azariah.

The succeeding visit to Assam was a stormy one. Allen had been in regular correspondence since June 1925 with George Hubback, who had just the previous year been consecrated bishop of Assam. The Anglican church in Assam consisted of native villagers and white tea-planters

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<sup>1</sup>Vedanayakam Samuel Azariah (1874-1945): ordained 1909; first bishop of Dornakal, 1912-45.

<sup>2</sup>Reprinted in Allen 1960, pp. 131-33.

<sup>3</sup>The first 18 of the diary's 85 pages have been published in Paton 1968, pp. 106-119.



scattered over a vast region with very poor communications and only a handful of clergy (11 native pastors and 4 English chaplains to minister to 8,000 Anglican members in 1930<sup>1</sup>).

The bishop had indicated his agreement in principle on voluntary clergy (though he had also stated that he was only prepared to act after consultation with his people). So there were signs that voluntary clergy might be established in the diocese. During his stay, Allen travelled widely in the diocese, speaking to individuals who might become local ordained priests. He apparently found three such men in one place, and expected the bishop forthwith to ordain them. This the bishop refused to do, scarcely knowing the individuals concerned (Paton 1968, p. 155). So Allen left Assam, parting coldly with the bishop, though the breach was later restored. But no voluntary clergy were ordained there as a result of his visit.

The correspondence with Hubback does however reflect very clearly the kind of way in which Allen developed his ideas in relation to practical problems posed by bishops in the field, and how a bishop was challenged to go a step further in his thinking. For instance, Allen developed at length an answer to Hubback's objection that voluntary clergy in Assam would be liable to be moved by secular employers, and perhaps later to return to England (ibid., pp. 137-40). In the end, however, the bishop settled on a policy of paid indigenous leadership (with Indian clergy partly supporting themselves by farming church land). But he would like to have seen a lead given from England:

I am entirely in favour of voluntary clergy at home. If such were appointed at home, I should see more hope of carrying out a like method out here. (Paton 1968, p.163).

#### v) Publication of Voluntary Clergy Overseas (1928)

On his return from Assam, Allen set about reflecting on his overseas experiences. He reworked material published two years previously in the Canadian Churchman, illustrating principles enunciated there from the wider perspectives of Africa and India. The resulting book, entitled Voluntary Clergy Overseas, abounds with examples of attitudes and situations which Allen had encountered on his travels. Despite its general title, the book largely confines itself to discussing the

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<sup>1</sup>Figures derived from Crockford's Clerical Directory 1930, pp. 1879f.



needs of the white settler communities abroad. Through its 140 pages, Allen demonstrates the futility of bishops' appeals for clergy and money from England; the false domination of the stipendiary system, resulting in resident ministry being available only in large centres of population (where there was money to pay them); the unreasonable demands placed upon clergy to travel huge distances to outlying areas for occasional services; the absurdity of lay readers being virtually in pastoral charge of congregations, but forbidden to celebrate the sacraments. To the objection that untrained voluntary clergy might offer inadequate teaching, he retorted that the situation could not be worse than at present - 'the people would not get less teaching than they do now' !

In many respects, however, the most substantial contribution of the book lay in its Appendix - an essay entitled 'The Maintenance of the Ministry in the Early Ages of the Church'. Allen had published this two years earlier in World Dominion (Allen 1926), but now it was offered to a wider readership. This essay was the first attempt to draw together all the available historical evidence on the subject of clergy and secular employment in the early church. To a large extent, it stands today as a foundation study of the subject.

But to his disappointment, Allen was unable to find a publisher for the book. SPCK had made a loss on his earlier (1923) volume, and still had 60 copies which were offered to Allen for £4 (USPG: AP, 6.K.80). So he was obliged to print his new book at his own expense (though SPCK were willing to advertise it on their lists and with their imprint) (USPG: AP.5.K.132).

To judge from his papers, Allen sent complementary copies of the book to a wide circle of bishops and church leaders in England and abroad. Between August and December 1928, he received no fewer than 25 letters of thanks from recipients, many commenting at length. His files contain letters from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the bishops of Bradford, Lichfield, Oxford, Crediton, Middleton and Southampton, and from Bishop Whitehead (formerly of Madras, and now in retirement in England). From abroad came letters from Kilmore (Ireland), Newfoundland, Fredricton, Ontario, San Joaquin (California), San Francisco, Natal, Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Wellington and Nelson (New Zealand). Several times bishops comment how grateful they are to



see the case for voluntary clergy set out, and how they considered it helpful preparation for the forthcoming Lambeth Conference agenda.

It is particularly interesting to discover from his reply the attitude that Randall Davidson took to voluntary clergy. (Although he was not Archbishop of Canterbury in 1930, Davidson handled all the preparation for the Lambeth Conference, including preparation of the agenda.) He told Allen,

I always find what you have written to be interesting, although I am not always in full agreement with you. I shall read your book with care.  
(USPG: AP, 6.K.93).

Several of the English bishops seem to have been persuaded of the value of voluntary clergy abroad, but were more cautious about their value at home. This attitude is typically expressed by the Bishop of Oxford (T.B.Strong), who wanted to insist on England's need for a professional clergy:

I think there is something to be said for your plan in really remote parts, but I certainly think it would be disastrous if it were extended beyond such places. What we want, I think, much more than anything else is a clergy who are really experts in their business. I am sure this cannot be combined with a regular secular life.  
(USPG: AP, 6.K.97).

The Church of England Newspaper (28 Sept 1928) published a very favourable review of Allen's book by Bishop Henry Whitehead (who had written an Introduction to the 1912 edition of Missionary Methods). He regretted the fact that the book was only published for private circulation 'as it deals with a matter that is of primary importance to the Church and ought to be widely read and carefully studied'. But apart from this notice, Allen did not succeed in having the book reviewed in any church newspaper or journal of significance. The Spectator, however, was bold enough to remark:

Some of his readers will wonder whether the time is not coming for a similar reversion to primitive practice here in England.  
(Quoted in Allen 1930, p. 277)

It will be clear from what is said above that the publication of Voluntary Clergy Overseas, just two years before the Lambeth Conference, coupled with the fact that it was read by many bishops, directly influenced the deliberations of that Conference. However, an unfortunate and unintended consequence of the circulation of this book



was that many English people got the impression that voluntary clergy was an expedient to meet the needs of scattered white communities abroad. They did not make the connection with the needs of the home church, since Allen did not make any such connection in this book (though he had frequently done so in other writings).

So Allen therefore attempted to correct the balance with the publication in 1930 of The Case for Voluntary Clergy. But this appeared only four months before the Lambeth Conference, and with many weightier items on their agenda, it must be open to question whether many of the bishops had read the more recent book. The close association in people's minds between voluntary clergy and the overseas situation must therefore in large measure account for the dismissive response of the final Lambeth resolution.

But before we proceed to discuss the Lambeth Conference's handling of the issue of voluntary clergy, it is necessary to examine the process by which the institutional church discussed the idea, and thus the means by which it found its way onto the Lambeth Conference agenda.

### 3. THE CHURCH RESPONDS

During the decade 1919-29, a variety of institutional responses were made through Synods, Diocesan Conferences, and officially commissioned reports at national level. In every case the 'presenting problem' was anxiety about the shortage of clergy. Not unnaturally, Roland Allen's ideas about voluntary clergy were fed into these discussions.

#### i) Southwark Diocese (1919)

The discussion started in Southwark diocese, where the issue of secularly employed deacons was reopened in Southwark diocese - a portent of things to come a generation later! The Diocesan Conference had appointed a committee to consider the restoration of the permanent diaconate. It reported in 1919 with a recommendation,

That this Conference would welcome the formal and canonical restoration of the permanent diaconate, and the recognition of the



principle that a deacon is not precluded from engaging in business or professional work.

The report<sup>1</sup> envisaged an alteration to the Pluralities Act, and addressed itself to the need for a changed pattern of training for such ministry. This is the first time any reference had ever been made to the training needs of a new-style ministry (a topic that Allen never ventured into):

Most candidates would not be able to turn aside from their business or profession for this purpose [i.e. training], and it would seem desirable to arrange for three or four separate weeks of training spread over the period of a year... with supervision and guidance in the intervals between the weeks.

In listing the advantages of such an extension to the diaconate, the report re-enters territory explored in the nineteenth century:

The priest is commonly looked upon as belonging largely to another world which knows little of the temptations and stresses of ordinary life. The deacon on the other hand would belong to both worlds and would thus be able to bridge the gulf. The combination of spiritual and secular work undertaken by deacons would tend to leaven the former as well as familiarise the laity with the latter.

Although the committee's terms of reference prohibited it from discussing the priesthood, it is clear that some adventurous thinking was in the air regarding ministry and secular employment, theological training and the clergy/laity divide.

## ii) London Diocese (1921)

A year or so later, the London Diocesan Conference received a report on the same topic (London Diocese ?1921)<sup>2</sup>. The recommendation of this report was:

That the Conference should ask for a re-examination by proper authority of the grounds, theological and practical, on which men in Holy Orders are at present debarred from the exercise of a secular calling. (ibid. p. 10)

To judge from the careful wording of this recommendation (not confined to the diaconate), it seems that the Committee wished eventually to see the development of priests in secular employment: it considered that a

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<sup>1</sup>The printed report, running to 10 pages, is preserved in Lambeth Palace Library attached to a letter from the Archdeacon of Maidstone to M.G.Haig, dated 3 December 1925 (Lam. DPA).

<sup>2</sup>A copy is preserved in Lambeth Palace Library (Lam. DPA), accompanying the Southwark report (see previous footnote). The report seems to date from 1920 or 1921.



loosening of the regulations governing deacons would be a first experimental step in this direction, which 'could more easily be abandoned than if it were applied simultaneously to both Orders' (p. 9).

No action, of course, resulted from these resolutions, since Diocesan Conferences had no executive authority. But these reports and resolutions offer an accurate reflection of the currents of thought at the time. At least in metropolitan dioceses there was a willingness to consider revolutionary changes to the structures of ministry in the church.

The motivation behind such adventurous thinking is powerfully expressed in a Memorandum by the Revd G. Vernon Smith<sup>1</sup>, attached to the London report, entitled The Inadequacy of the Existing Ministry to Meet the Conditions of Modern Industrial Life. Smith states that the desire for a permanent diaconate -

springs from a conviction that there must be some kind of development in the Ministry which will make for the better evangelism of the people... An industrial ministry consisting of men drawn from the ranks of the wage-earners, trained as clergymen, and after ordination continuing their secular work might do much to win the people for Christ and to remove the prejudice against existing ministry.  
(London Diocese ?1921, Memorandum E)

In saying this, Smith was reiterating the more radical of the nineteenth century proposals for including working class men within the ordained ministry.

All this is evidence of a ground-swell of opinion favourable to change in the pattern of ordained ministry, which Allen was able to harness in 1923 with the publication of Voluntary Clergy. The major contribution of this book, seen in context, was to demonstrate the irrelevance of a voluntary diaconate, and the need to press for a voluntary priesthood.

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<sup>1</sup>Guy Vernon Smith (1880-1957): resident chaplain to the Bishop of London, 1911-18; Rector of Hackney 1919-25; Archdeacon of Colombo, 1925-9; Bishop Suffragan of Wilsden 1929-40; Bishop of Leicester, 1940-53.



### iii) Archbishops' Committee Report (1925)

Two years later, the institutional church addressed itself to the issue of priests in secular employment for the first time, if only in an appendix! The Archbishops of Canterbury and York had in 1924 appointed a committee 'to consider and report on the general question of supply of candidates for Holy Orders, and to formulate any recommendations for the consideration of the Bishops'. They presented their report (Archbishops' Committee 1925) in the following year. It contained the first formal Church of England discussion of voluntary clergy. In a brief paragraph the Committee state that they had -

considered very carefully the arguments for and against the institution of an order of clergy who should be allowed to continue to exercise their lay callings after Ordination. These arguments are set out in Appendix III... Some members of the Committee were strongly attracted to the proposal.

(Archbishops' Committee 1925, p. 27).

The chairman of the Committee was the bishop of Chichester (W.O.Burrows), who had earlier been in correspondence with Allen (USPG: AP, 6.K.54).

In the appendix under consideration, the Committee offered an extended treatment of Allen's ideas, but only after stating their firm 'conviction that the normal rule for the Church of England should always be an adequately trained professional clergy'. Voluntary clergy were only considered because of their potential 'to lighten the burden which rest upon the parochial clergy' (Archbishops' Committee 1925, p. 36).

After summarising Allen's case for voluntary clergy, they stressed how 'the scheme is fraught with difficulties'. Three in particular are highlighted. First, 'it would involve alterations to the Ordinal, in Canon Law and in the law of the land and would violate the customs of the Church down the centuries'. Secondly, there might arise 'occasions on which a man's professional duty would be in conflict with his duty as a priest'. Thirdly, having lived in a locality for a number of years, voluntary clergy 'would not find it easy to work under a new incumbent'. The Report, feebly, did not attempt to weigh these difficulties against the advantages of having voluntary clergy. It commented how 'several men of the type under consideration have been ordained in recent years after retirement', and (despite the inconsistency with their third difficulty),



ventured to express the hope 'that the Bishops will continue and extend this practice when suitable cases present themselves'.

All three of these difficulties have substance. The first was to be overcome by legislation. The other two are still with us. But they are difficulties and not objections in principle, as Allen was at pains afterwards to emphasise in a lengthy Appendix of his own (Allen 1930, pp. 277-96).

The Report also contained a further piece of adventurous thinking - one of the earliest attempts to explore the shape of a pattern of theological training for mature students with dependents and who had already embarked upon a secular career. The Committee prophetically recognised the advantage of such a part-time training scheme: it 'would reveal many suitable candidates...engaged in other work' (Archbishops' Committee 1925, p. 26). Four possible 'Schemes of Home Training' were surveyed:

- i) correspondence courses leading to matriculation;
- ii) a course of 'Home Preparation' used by the Church Missionary Society for training candidate missionaries aged between 17 and 30;
- iii) the 'Church Tutorial Classes' started by Bishop Gore in association with the WEA;
- iv) a scheme proposed by Canon H.A.Wilson<sup>1</sup> in the Church Assembly<sup>2</sup> whereby local groups of mature students would study under the supervision of local clergy.

(Thirty-five years were to elapse before the monopoly of the residential theological colleges was to be broken, with the establishment of the Southwark Ordination Course in 1960, along lines remarkably similar to (iii).)

#### iv) World Call (1926/7)

Not all official Church thinking was as open to Allen's ideas. For example, the Missionary Council of the newly formed Church Assembly made its first task the publication of a series of reports entitled The World Call to the Church, designed to lay before the English people the

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Albert Wilson (1876-1961): Rector of Cheltenham, 1916-28; Bishop of Chelmsford, 1929-50.

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings, Vol. 5, pp. 30-33.



missionary needs (in personnel and money) of the various areas of the globe. While these 'Calls' did valuable work in mapping out the unfinished task of mission then before the church, the strategy proposed paid no respect to the principle of local autonomous leadership. For instance, the first four 'Calls' (published in 1926) asked for £250,000 of new money and 700 new missionary recruits. The fifth one, published in 1927, was entitled The Call to Our People Overseas (i.e. white settlers), and continued in the same vein, challenging English clergy to go abroad.

Allen instantly set about demonstrating the absurdity of this strategy at a time of contracting manpower at home:

It is an indisputable fact that, unless we ordain 10,000 new clergy for service at home in the next ten years, we shall be worse off at the end of that period than we are today... In opposition to all that, I suggest that if we could accept Apostolic guidance, and ordain voluntary clergy, we could meet the whole need everywhere, at home and abroad; and that what is necessary is a complete change of outlook and method. (Allen 1928, p. vii).

To this end, he published Voluntary Clergy Overseas (1928) - in large measure a refutation of the strategy recommended in the 'World Call'.

With such confused attitudes prevailing in official Church reports in England, it is unlikely that the issue of voluntary clergy would ever have reached the Lambeth Conference agenda were it not for pressure from abroad. How did this pressure arise? To this question we now turn.

#### 4. AGENDA FOR THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE

All papers relating to Lambeth Conferences are deposited in the archives of Lambeth Palace Library. Papers relevant to this study include transcripts of the 1930 Conference proceedings, committee minutes, preparatory correspondence and minutes of the (English) Bishops' Meetings. Research into this material reveals the following sequence of events concerning the issue of voluntary clergy.



### i) An Australian Enquiry

The process of discussion was started by a letter from the Archbishop of Brisbane, Gerald Sharp<sup>1</sup>, to Archbishop Davidson. Like the West Indian correspondence of the previous century, Sharp's letter indicates that shortage of clergy was a primary motivation for considering voluntary clergy; but he was equally concerned to receive approval from Canterbury for any new departures.

Because of its subsequent effect, it is worth quoting this letter in full:-

Bishopsbourne  
Brisbane  
October 3rd, 1925

My dear Lord Archbishop of Canterbury,

At our diocesan Synod held last June, one of our most intellectual clergymen moved, and another seconded, the following resolution:- "That in view of the alarming shortage of Clergy in the Diocese, this Synod respectfully asks the Archbishop to consider the advisability of ordaining Priests and Deacons from among worthy and religious men who already follow secular avocations".

It aroused so great an interest that it was withdrawn after a vote being taken upon it on this understanding:

(1) that it should be brought up again as a principle subject of debate at the next Synod in June 1926.

(2) that I should endeavour to find out the opinion of the other Bishops in Australia and of Your Grace upon this matter.

I am of the opinion that the contemplated step should be taken by a regional church as a whole, and not by one particular Province thereof. The opinions of the Australian Bishops that I have so far received are against the principle rather than in favour of it. May I ask Your Grace to tell me whether or no you see any objection to it in principle.

Those who spoke in favour of it were moved to do so by the fact that there are some parishes in this diocese of very large area, with fifteen or even twenty centres at which services are held, and only one parish priest. They seem to feel that the difficulty of giving Holy Communion in such cases was so great as to justify the taking of a step such as the proposal contemplated. The Proposer contemplated the "secular avocations" being continued after ordination.

I remain, Your Grace, with very deep respect

Yours sincerely,

Gerald

Archbishop of Brisbane

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<sup>1</sup>Gerald Sharp (1865-1933): Vicar of Whitkirk, Yorks., 1898-1910; Bishop of New Guinea, 1910-21; Archbishop of Brisbane, 1921-33.



In reply, Davidson said he would lay the matter before a committee of Convocation or Church Assembly, which he (mistakenly) said were currently discussing the issue<sup>1</sup>. Subsequent enquiries by Davidson's chaplain, M.G.Haigh, revealed that the matter was not before any committee, but had only been discussed in Roland Allen's book and the reports cited above. In December 1925, Haigh was writing:

I think the whole question... will have to be faced afresh, and I expect it will probably be put on the Agenda for the Lambeth Conference of 1930. This at any rate would give the whole subject a fresh start and lift it out of the rut it seems to have got into. Meanwhile I will see that it is not forgotten at the next Meeting of Bishops.<sup>2</sup>

The Brisbane letter was accordingly discussed at the Bishops' Meeting on 20th January 1926. Four comments recorded in the Minutes of that discussion reveal the divided opinion amongst English bishops:

Bp. Chichester [W.O.Burrows] mentioned that the Committee on the Supply of Candidates for Holy Orders had interviewed Mr. Roland Allen on this subject and had not been convinced as to the wisdom of this suggestion.

Bp. Durham [H.H.Henson] commented on the urgency of the question and thought that if individual Bishops were not to be allowed to try experiments the Lambeth Conference should certainly deal with this subject.

Bp. Gloucester [A.C.Headlam] from his experience in Canada rather thought that experiment might be allowed.

Bp. Salisbury [St.G.C.A.Donaldson] thought it very difficult to get the right sort of man in this way in just the areas where their help was most needed.

(Lam: BM 8 f. 80)

After this meeting, Davidson wrote to Sharp giving his considered opinion about the matter:

Everyone agrees as to the importance of the subject in different parts of the world, and it is I think quite possible that a large number of bishops may be found who would wish to reconsider our existing laws, ecclesiastical and civil, on the subject and make it practicable for men to be ordained deacon and priest while continuing to carry on their lay professions. Such a change however would be of a far-reaching sort, and it is impossible that any one Province of our Communion make such a change without affecting the position of the question in every Province whether in England, Australia, South Africa or America... I do not want to say that in the terribly difficult conditions of prairie life in Australia or Canada

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<sup>1</sup>Lam: DPA, letter, Davidson to Sharp, 16 Nov 1925.

<sup>2</sup>Lam: DPA, letter, Haigh to Archdeacon of Maidstone, 4 Dec 1925.



it would necessarily be wrong in itself to ordain men under such rules as you adumbrate. I think, however, that it is unquestionable that such a change ought not to be made in any Province of our Communion without the fullest exchange of opinions from other Provinces, and the question is so large a one that I believe the English Bishops to be quite right in thinking that its discussion ought in the first place to be taken at a Lambeth Conference... In writing all this I am expressing what were the general sentiments of the whole 'English' Episcopate when assembled at a Private Meeting a few days ago.<sup>1</sup>

We may digress here to note that the bishop of Salisbury (Donaldson) was an English bishop who had given considerable thought to the matter. He had been bishop of Brisbane 1904-1921, and was glad to act as a mouthpiece of English attitudes to his successor in Brisbane. In two letters (which survive in Brisbane Diocesan Archives) he describes what may be taken to reflect the confused (though not antagonistic) state of thinking amongst English church leaders:

As to your question about business men being ordained to administer the Sacrament whilst continuing their secular avocations, I remember Father Kelly broached the subject when he visited Brisbane years ago. There is nothing against it in principle, but it would introduce a new type of Minister altogether. It would also involve some grave risks. For instance the Laymen in Priests Orders would be in a very independent position and discipline might be hard to maintain; and again the extraordinary cheapness of such ministrations might produce a tendency in the parishioners to prefer men who can keep themselves and tend to make the untrained Lay Priests oust trained professional Priests. These dangers could all be safeguarded I daresay, but they do add great weight to my conviction that however much the matter is ventilated, actual steps ought not to be taken except in a regional Church as a whole. The Province of Queensland would, I imagine, be far too small an area for the introduction of so big a change.<sup>2</sup>

It would be setting up a new type of Priesthood, and a type, I am inclined to think, not contemplated in our Ordinal. The very essence of Priesthood is its pastoral nature, but the ordained Priest who follows secular avocations would be merely an officiating minister. I do not say that there may not be justification for this new departure, but it would be a new departure and the Church ought to make it with its eyes open.

I think there are many people in England who would welcome it and would ask why in the developments of the future we should not thus develop the Priesthood with varied functions or at least a Priesthood of two classes - the officiating and the pastoral. Moreover, it might be said that men in Priest's Orders following secular pursuits would form a link between Clergy and the laity and so bridge the gulf which seems to yawn too widely in our days.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lam: DPA, letter, Davidson to Sharp, 28 Jan 1926.

<sup>2</sup>Brisb: letter, Donaldson to Sharp, 13 Aug 1925.

<sup>3</sup>Brisb: letter, Donaldson to Sharp, 17 Nov 1925.



Donaldson's extraordinary phrase 'Lay Priests' seems to illustrate his apparent unease over the threat to the 'professional priests'; but he has to admit that there is nothing against the idea in principle, and, more positively, that such a development of the Priesthood would help to bridge the gulf between clergy and laity. This is a good summary of the state of thinking in the England of 1925.

To return to Sharp's correspondence with Davidson. He replied to Davidson's letter promising not to ordain any voluntary clergy yet, reiterating that he had only raised the question 'because after the last Brisbane Diocesan Synod I felt it to be my plain duty to ask the opinion of Your Grace' and that he himself did not regard the idea with favour<sup>1</sup>. Ironically, therefore, the very source that had succeeded in having the matter included on the Lambeth Conference agenda was not going to be its champion in Conference discussion!

What was the situation which so strangely compelled a reluctant Archbishop to raise so formally a question about which he himself was so unconvinced? Research in the archives of Brisbane Diocese reveals the following answer<sup>2</sup>.

The motion already referred to was moved in Brisbane Diocesan Synod on 19 June 1925. The proposer was the Revd. W.P.F. Morris<sup>3</sup>, Headmaster of the Church of England Grammar School in Brisbane since 1912. This, then, is the man who (no doubt unintentionally) succeeded in securing discussion of voluntary clergy in the central structures of the Anglican Communion. If the theological college where he was trained (Ridley Hall, Cambridge) is a fair criterion of his churchmanship, Morris was an Evangelical, and thus somewhat out of step with the predominantly Catholic tradition of Brisbane diocese. But it seems that his intellectual abilities and the respected position he held in the community secured him a hearing.

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<sup>1</sup>Lam: DPA, letter, Sharp to Davidson, 10 Mar 1926.

<sup>2</sup>I am indebted to Chancellor John Nurser of Lincoln, Dr George Shaw of Queensland University and Mrs Patricia Ramsay, Brisbane Diocesan Archivist, each of whom helped to put me on the trail of the documentary data, upon which the following discussion is based.

<sup>3</sup>William Percy French Morris (1878-1960): Founder and first Headmaster, Church of England Grammar School, Brisbane, 1912-46.



The 'alarming shortage of clergy' which Morris' motion referred to had already been a major topic of the Archbishop's address to the Synod: the population of the diocese was growing fast; the 115 clergymen were inadequate in number; one parish (Nambour - no doubt an extreme case) had a population of 13,000, 23 worship centres and only one priest 'attempting the superhuman task of coping with all this work'; the archbishop was considering lowering the standard of education of ordinands, since he was unwilling to sentence so many people to deprivation of the sacraments (Brisbane 1925, pp, 21-4). It seems that Morris' motion may have been a response aimed at maintaining the educational standard of the clergy, while widening the potential catchment area for ordinands to include mature men in secular avocations. As a teacher, the proposer himself embodied his proposal. Its appeal was thus obvious.

As he had undertaken, Archbishop Sharp corresponded not only with Canterbury, but also with each of the Australian bishops. Their replies form an interesting little archive - and, as it transpires, a synopsis of arguments to be heard in succeeding decades.

Sharp's question of enquiry was framed around the pastoral need of regular provision of services and sacraments:

Would you favour the idea of 'worthy and religious men' being Ordained and continuing to follow their secular avocations, in order that services may be conducted and Sacraments administered in places where, on account of the greatness of the distances and the fewness of the men, services are now conducted and Sacraments administered infrequently?

Of fifteen extant replies, only one (Bendigo) offered clear approval, four others qualified approval, and the rest varying shades of opposition. Two bishops express knowledge of Roland Allen's arguments.

Many of the opposition arguments stem from fear of erosion of the professional status of the ordained clergy: 'the principle involved might abolish the professional Minister almost entirely, except perhaps certain expert Preaching and Teaching orders'<sup>1</sup>; one spoke in terms of 'the ordination of laymen to give the sacraments'<sup>2</sup>; 'the Order [of Priests] would be lowered in the opinion of others'<sup>3</sup>; 'if their [educational] standard

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<sup>1</sup>Brisb: letter, Armidale to Brisbane, 11 Sep 1925.

<sup>2</sup>Brisb: letter, Bunbury to Brisbane, 17 May 1926.

<sup>3</sup>Brisb: letter, Western Australia to Brisbane, 17 Oct 1925.



is a lower one...some men would use this as a back door into the Ministry - and then later seek to get a higher status'<sup>1</sup>; 'sacrifice of worldly position and gains would no longer be required...nothing but a "whole-time" and adequately trained Ministry can undertake the teaching of our people'<sup>2</sup>; 'the Ordinal very clearly implies that the Priesthood absorbs the whole man, all his time and thoughts and studies'<sup>3</sup>; the effective answer to the clergy shortage would be 'the giving of steady encouragement to the boys in our Church schools and in our parishes ... to seek the Priesthood as a calling of the highest usefulness and honour and as of supreme necessity to human society'. The Bishop of Melbourne declared himself 'very keen on the matter' in so far as it related to the diaconate: he was about to ordain a Lay Reader as permanent deacon who would 'also sell tea and coffee during the week...he will not wear his clericals except on sacred duty'; but it was 'not yet desirable to contemplate this for the priesthood... In view of the teaching and sacramental function, I think that men in priest's Orders ought not to have secular avocations. Something must suffer if they desire to do both'<sup>4</sup>.

In view of his future blocking role at the Lambeth Conference of 1930, it is interesting to note that the Bishop of Bathurst expressed his disapproval in a simple three sentence letter, concluding

I believe that with courage and faith we should be able to meet our needs in the way in which the Catholic church has met them in past ages by providing ministers of the Word and Sacrament wholly devoted to their sacred calling.

(Brisb: letter, Bathurst to Brisbane, 25 Sep 1925)

His belief, unsupported by any argument, was to be a significant factor in the Lambeth Conference debate (see below II.5). Apart from the Archbishop of Brisbane, he was the only Australian bishop who spoke in that debate - a debate originally requested from Australia - and he was unashamedly against any break with tradition.

Before we turn to the actual course of discussion at the Lambeth Conference, we need to consider several factors which heightened the pressure for the introduction of voluntary clergy just before the Conference took place.

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<sup>1</sup>Brisb: letter, Grafton to Brisbane, 18 Sep 1925.

<sup>2</sup>Brisb: letter, Kalgoorie to Brisbane, 22 Sep 1925.

<sup>3</sup>Brisb: letter, North Queensland to Brisbane, Feb 1926.

<sup>4</sup>Brisb: letter, Melbourne to Brisbane, 14 Sep 1925.



## ii) Church Assembly

On the home front, voices were being raised in the Church Assembly for an authoritative consideration of voluntary clergy. A pressure group calling itself 'The Provisional Committee for Voluntary Clergy' was formed on 1st May 1928 (Lambeth Conference 1930b, p. 15). It presented a 'Memorial' to the members of the Church Assembly, laying out in a brief space the benefits of voluntary clergy in rural and urban England<sup>1</sup>, as argued by Allen in 1922. The result was that when in the summer of 1929 the Church Assembly appointed a Commission to report on the staffing of parishes, the Commission was requested to consider, amongst other factors, the contribution which might be made by voluntary clergy<sup>2</sup>.

Amongst Allen's papers is an intriguing letter (USPG: AP, 6.K.98), written just before that Church Assembly session. It gives a list of dignatories who had signified their sympathy with voluntary clergy in an unofficial straw-poll organised by the Provisional Committee. The list is as follows:-

### Bishops:

Winchester [Woods] and Salisbury [Donaldson] - guardedly sympathetic  
Ripon [Burroughs] and Bp. designate Chichester [Bell] - a good deal in sympathy with

Hereford [Smith] and Bradford [Perowne] - definitely in favour

Plymouth [Masterman], Bps. Landen and Price - replied favourably

9 Deans [named]

19 Archdeacons [named]

50 Other Proctors in Convocation

83 Lay Members of Church Assembly

This amounts to a substantial minority of the Assembly - 14% of the diocesan bishops, 25% of the clergy and 24% of the laity - prepared to declare themselves generally in favour of voluntary clergy.

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<sup>1</sup>Part of the text of the 'Memorial' is quoted in Lambeth Conference 1930b, p.7.

<sup>2</sup>The Commission's report is discussed below (II.6.ii).



### iii) Lambeth Conference 'Memorandum'

Perhaps the most impressive piece of institutional church response came in the form of a preliminary 'Memorandum' prepared for the Lambeth bishops by the Secretariat of the Missionary Council of the Church Assembly, and at the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury (Lambeth Conference 1930b). It appears to have been written by Canon A.W.Davies<sup>1</sup>, General Secretary of the Missionary Council, and by his assistant Ruth Rouse. They consulted Allen closely in the course of its preparation, as Miss Rouse acknowledged, 'The memo is entirely due to your help - your books especially the new one [Allen 1930], your letter and hints'. The compilers were personally convinced -

that there is practically nothing to be said against Voluntary Clergy, and that your book is quite unanswerable; however as in duty bound, we have tried to put the other side for what it is worth... We have tried to put the thing in the way which is most likely to awaken sympathetic consideration, and not seem to be presenting only one side of the case. (USPG: AP, 6.L.77).

In a masterly fashion, the Memorandum's 18 pages lay out the state of the discussion of voluntary clergy. After a definition of what was meant by 'Voluntary Clergy', the Memorandum lists the factors demanding consideration of the issue - notably the situation created by the failure of the Church to respond to the World Call:

This failure drives us to seek for reasons. Is it due merely to the worldliness and disobedience of the Church? Or, may it not be an indication to us that our methods are wrong or incomplete? (Lambeth Conference 1930b, p.2)

The Memorandum then deals with arguments for and against, handling in question and answer form 14 common objections. Useful appendices cite a full bibliography of the subject, and a survey of resolutions passed (and actions taken) by various synods in England, the Dominions and elsewhere. At every turn, the influence of the mind and pen of Roland Allen are evident. The Memorandum leads steadily towards its final 'Tentative Conclusions':

1. The evidence in favour of Voluntary Clergy would seem sufficiently strong to justify serious experiment with the system, to see whether it does not provide a remedy for the church-less

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<sup>1</sup>Arthur Whitcliffe Davies: CMS missionary in Agra, India, 1908-29; Principal, St John's College, Agra, 1913-28; Vice-Chancellor, Agra University, 1927-9; Assistant Secretary, Church Assembly Missionary Council, 1929; General Secretary, 1930-35; Dean of Worcester, 1934-49.



condition of many of our fellow Christians and the impasse created by the shortage of Stipendiary Clergy.

2. The conditions of serious experiment would seem to include that the system be tried:-

(i) in areas where the Bishops and Synods have declared themselves in favour of the experiment.

(ii) on a sufficiently large scale and for a sufficiently long time to make a judgment on the results possible. The experiment of ordaining two Voluntary Clergymen within five years as suggested in South Africa may not provide sufficient evidence to justify drawing conclusions.

(iii) not on so large a scale as suddenly to throw the existing system out of gear.

(Lambeth Conference 1930b, pp. 12-13).

Thus, the bishops meeting for the Conference in 1930 were confronted with a preparatory paper which concisely marshalled all available evidence and arguments, and which concluded by recommending 'serious experiment' with voluntary clergy. There was every reason, therefore, to hope that the Lambeth Conference would produce a positive response.

#### iv) Theological Comment

A further indication of the mood of the moment may be gained by examining the astonishing flood of articles on voluntary clergy which appeared in theological journals in 1929 and 1930, together with extensive reviews given to Allen's Case for Voluntary Clergy (1930).

The ideas propounded in Allen's Voluntary Clergy Overseas (1928) must have been published at an opportune moment, for they provoked no fewer than ten articles in journals the following year (1929). For Sir Henry Lunn<sup>1</sup>, editor of Review of the Churches, the experience of reading Allen was something of an ecstatic revelation:

Since I became editor of the REVIEW in 1891, I have read no book which has seemed to me to contain a more important message for every branch of the Christian church than this book... When I read it ... I felt greatly tempted to leap up in the spirit of Archimedes and go to my dictaphone saying "Eureka", for it seemed to me to

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<sup>1</sup>Sir Henry Simpson Lunn (1859-1939): a Methodist minister; founded Review of the Churches (1891), devoted to the cause of reunion. (DNB 1931-40, p. 550).



provide an answer to the insistant question that is facing ... all Churchmen in all lands to a greater or lesser degree - Whence is to come the supply of ordinands to carry on the work of the Church?  
(Lunn 1929, p. 168).

Accordingly, in the April and July issues of his journal he ran a series of six articles on 'Unpaid Clergy' and the 'Shortage of Clergy'. Five of the six offered critiques of Allen's ideas from differing perspectives. Lunn's own article outlined Allen's case and illustrated it with experiences of his own from Virginia (USA), New Zealand and English Methodism.

It was followed by a supportive article by C.H.Boutflower (Bishop of Southampton), who had been Bishop of South Tokyo, 1909-1921. He affirmed Allen's stance on the basis of his Japanese experiences, and attempted to answer certain common objections to voluntary clergy. He did, however, highlight the problem of discovering suitable candidates for ordination to this ministry: he had tried to establish the idea in his Japanese diocese, but had only succeeded in finding one suitable man (a retired doctor), who unfortunately died before his ordination. He also raised the significant question: how far <sup>could</sup> ~~can~~ the clock be put back and a New Testament model of ministry regained? Boutflower hoped that the whole matter would be discussed at the forthcoming Lambeth Conference, and ventured to anticipate that 'a decade hence we should, please God, be able to weigh on experience what at present must be chiefly debated in theory' (Boutflower 1929, p. 184). (Ironically, we are only now - half a century later - in a position to weigh that evidence.)

In a third article, Canon T.A.Lacey relayed the extraordinary fact (unearthed from his library shelves) that the ancient Syrian Orthodox Church maintains a tradition of unpaid priests in villages:

From the beginning it has been the custom that the priests should be chosen from among the people by the people; - citizens, or villagers of some instruction, men of repute, married, already advanced in years, who have bred up their children, and govern well their own households. The Syrian priest is not burdensome to the people, because he has his own house, his own property, his own children, who provide for him in old age, being either cultivators of the land or artisans.  
(Lacey 1929, p. 186)

The lack of ability to preach is not considered an impediment, 'since it is not everyone that has the gift of eloquence, whereas everyone can perform Divine offices; since for this there is needed only faith, purity of life,



and use'. The Syrian Church thus seemed to illustrate Allen's principles, and to give them ancient sanction<sup>1</sup>.

In the following issue of Review of the Churches, Dr W.F.France<sup>2</sup> (who had worked in Tokyo and knew the situation described by Boutflower) raised some cautious, though not antagonistic, questions which he thought Allen had not considered. Among them was the issue of the relationship between the ordination of a voluntary priest and the licence to officiate in his locality: if he moves from that locality and his licence is revoked, what does that imply about his priesthood? France asked for further study of this issue (France 1929). (Half a century later, the question is still being asked in regard to Local Ordained Ministry - and is still unresolved.)

Herbert Kelly rounded off the series with an article (Kelly 1929) largely reiterating his earlier insistence that the notion of local autonomy and indigenous voluntary clergy is better illustrated from church history than from the New Testament. He was supportive of Allen<sup>3</sup> in insisting that the plea for voluntary clergy was not a palliative to the shortage of clergy, and that if introduced it would help counteract the worst effects of 'professionalism' amongst the clergy.

In the same year, H.E.Fitzherbert<sup>4</sup>, a correspondent of Allen's, wrote an article for the Modern Churchman (Fitzherbert 1929b), largely regurgitating Allen and Boutflower. Elsewhere Fitzherbert explored the particular role that voluntary clergy could play in English village parishes (Fitzherbert 1929a). He developed a prophetic vision of teams consisting of voluntary clergy (in each village), deaconesses and lay workers under

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<sup>1</sup>Lacey himself had no direct knowledge of the Syrian Church. He was citing a report made by a Russian traveller in 1850, which appeared in English translation by G.Williams in the latter's edition of J.M.Neale's unfinished History of the Holy Eastern Church, The Patriarchate of Antioch, published in 1873.

<sup>2</sup>Walter Frederick France (1887-1963): SPG Missionary in Japan, 1909-25; Overseas Secretary, SPG, 1928-45; Warden, St Augustine's College Canterbury, 1945-52.

<sup>3</sup>The Lambeth 'Memorandum' (Lambeth Conference 1930b) says that France's and Kelly's articles 'are in the main unfavourable to voluntary clergy'. This is not the case. Neither writer is asking questions in an antagonistic fashion, but with the hope that the discussion of voluntary clergy may be carried a stage further.

<sup>4</sup>Henry Edward Fitzherbert (1882-1958): Rural Dean of Higham Ferrers II deanery (Derbyshire), 1919; of Repton Deanery, 1932; Archdeacon of Derby, 1943-52.



the leadership of a stipendiary priest: the latter would have a special ministry of teaching, but the voluntary clergy would enable regular sacramental services to be held in village churches at convenient hours (a model of ministry extraordinarily close to that propounded half a century later by John Tiller (1983)).

Allen himself contributed an article to Theology based on his experiences of taking services for English churchpeople in remote places abroad. The article (Allen 1929) stresses his long-standing conviction that, since the Holy Communion is the service which expresses the life of the Church as a living society, it should be regularly and frequently available at hours to suit the people (not at the convenience of an itinerant stipendiary priest). This can only be achieved through voluntary local clergy.

Finally, F.L.Norris<sup>1</sup>, bishop in North China and a long acquaintance of Allen's, wrote an extended reflection in the Church Quarterly Review (Norris 1929). Drawing upon his experiences in China, he raised a number of interesting questions to help carry the discussion forward. One question in particular is worth noting. Norris related how he had found two or three among his English residents 'who might well have been "voluntary clergy" if the ordination of such laymen were the accepted practice of the Church'. He believed, however, that without that condition being met, 'it would have been a great mistake...to propose to ordain them'. Norris seems to be touching upon the prior necessity of mounting a programme of re-education of the Church based upon a clear episcopal strategy for ministry:

What is wanted is a known readiness on the part of the Episcopate to consider the question, and - released by that knowledge - a demand that it be considered, made by Christian men and women who value their privileges as members of the Church, and who will no longer keep silence when they find themselves deprived of those privileges.  
(Norris 1929, p.138)

This kind of remark was a challenge to the bishops shortly to assemble at Lambeth. (In passing, it may be noted that Norris had perceptively anticipated a problem which later became reality: uncertainty about non-stipendiary ministry in the 1970s was in part due to the lack of a united episcopal strategy for pastoral care; no lay education programme

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<sup>1</sup>Francis Lushington Norris (1864-1945): SPG Missionary in Peking, 1889; Bishop of North China, 1914-40.



was mounted concurrently with the introduction of non-stipendiary ministry.)

On the negative side, Dr J.D.Mullins<sup>1</sup> published a brief article in the evangelical journal Churchman (Mullins 1929). From his long-standing experience of the Colonial and Continental Church Society, he sought to justify the policy of the Society in encouraging young English ordinands to settle in Western Canada or Australia and to do their ordination training in their new homeland. He criticised the idea of voluntary clergy, justifying his remarks with examples from abroad: such clergy were not in a position to provide the necessary evangelistic and teaching ministry; suitable candidates were unlikely to come forward; settlers do not like to receive the ministrations of 'neighbours'.

Taken as a group, these ten articles suggest an expectant mood in the England of 1929. Scholars, overseas leaders, an English bishop, enthusiasts - all were prepared to contribute from a wide range of experience to carry forward the vision of one man, Roland Allen, until it became a living reality.

#### v) Publication of The Case for Voluntary Clergy (1930)

Predictably, Allen was in critical correspondence with Boutflower and the editor of the Church Quarterly Review within days of the publication of their articles<sup>2</sup>. It seems that this correspondence spurred him into a major public response in book form, for he had completed the typescript of his definitive book on voluntary clergy by 30th July, 1929. Apparently he had persuaded Douglas Jerrold of Eyre & Spottiswoode to publish it, after confiding in him that 'if anyone had told me ten years ago that the idea which I propounded would have made the advance which it has made in that time, I should have been astonished' (USPG: AP, L.81). Allen's papers contain a letter from him suggesting an edition of between 1000 and 3000 copies (USPG: AP, L.74). But what size of edition was eventually printed does not appear from the surviving papers

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Dennis Mullins: Secretary, Colonial & Continental Church Society, 1902-25.

<sup>2</sup>Boutflower to Allen, USPG: AP L 63, 65, 66, 69, 71; Allen to Boutflower, USPG: AP L 64 and 70; Allen to Maynard-Smith (editor of Church Quarterly Review), USPG: AP L 67. All were written within the space of four weeks in April and May 1929.



of either Allen or the publisher. The work finally appeared in early 1930, under the title The Case for Voluntary Clergy. It is long out of print, and now a rarity.

In it, Allen brought together all his writings on the topic, duly edited and up-dated. The book is divided into four parts. Part I is basically the ideas contained in Voluntary Clergy (1923) reworked to include critical comments upon the Archbishops' Committee's Report on Supply of Candidates (1925) and the Fifth World Call. Part II is a reprint of Voluntary Clergy Overseas (1928), with an extra chapter containing his article in Theology (1929). Part III contained three chapters on voluntary clergy in the Mission Field - new material, but building upon his extensive writings over the years on the need for a revised strategy of mission, allowing indigenous patterns of leadership to arise. Part IV contains three entirely new chapters on voluntary clergy at home. In these he argues that all the recent proposals for dealing with the shortage of clergy in England (recruitment of ordinands, union of parishes, redistribution of clergy to the more heavily populated areas, etc) were merely palliatives. 'Only the advocates of voluntary clergy offer a complete solution', he claimed. The book concludes with two Appendices: a reprint of his essay on 'The Maintenance of the Clergy in the Early Church', and twenty pages dealing with 'Clerical Objections' to voluntary clergy, in which he replies to the criticisms we have discussed above.

Allen insisted that fundamentally the book (despite its title) was not about the clergy, but about the Church. He made plain at the outset that his intention was not to propose an expedient to deal with the shortage of clergy. His purpose was to insist upon the principles underlying leadership in the Church, which (if heeded) would permit the true nature of the Church to emerge. Two quotations powerfully make the point:

This book might almost be called a dissertation upon two texts: Ye make the word of God of none effect by your tradition, and The Church is divided into two bodies, one offering, the other accepting Christian privileges<sup>1</sup>. (Allen 1930, p. 7)

My contention in this book is that the tradition which we hold, forbidding the ordination of men engaged in earning their own livelihood by what we call secular occupations, makes void the work

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<sup>1</sup>The first quotation is from Mark 7:13; the second from a letter of Mandell Creighton (bishop of London) to Dr Cobb, dated 15 August 1899, quoted in Mrs [Louise] Creighton, Life and Letters of Mandell Creighton, London, Longmans, Green & Co (1904), Vol. II, p. 375.



of Christ and is opposed to His mind when He instituted the Sacraments for His people. It is also opposed to the conception of the Church which the Apostles received from Him, and to the practice by which St. Paul, of whose work God has given us the fullest account, established the Churches. The stipendiary system grew up in settled Churches and is only suitable for some settled Churches at some periods: for expansion, for the establishment of new Churches, it is the greatest possible hindrance. It binds the Church in chains and has compelled us to adopt practices which contradict the very idea of the Church.

(Allen 1930, p. 23)

Yet despite the clarity of Allen's language, his case was not heard in this way - as he himself was sadly to acknowledge after the disappointment of the Lambeth Conference resolution.

The book was greeted by extensive coverage in reviews. Indeed, the very length of the Times Literary Supplement review significantly demonstrated the shift of interest given to the subject of voluntary clergy: 18 column inches in 1930, compared with 2 column inches in 1923<sup>1</sup>.

The Church Times printed a lengthy, but sceptical, unsigned review, defending the status quo in the following terms:

We are grateful to him [Allen] for his diagnosis of the weakness of the Church, but we are dubious of the panacea, and the extreme vehemence with which he advocates it accentuates the doubt... The ills are patent, the remedy is an unknown quantity... This is not a matter in which Anglicanism can afford to act as if it were the whole Church Catholic, and it is simply common sense to take account of the wisdom and experience of the rest of Western Christendom... It is to be feared that Mr Allen's policy, while professing to spiritualise secular vocations, would, in the world we now live in, degrade the priestly character to the level of secular life.  
(Church Times, 4 Apr 1930, p. 428)

These remarks produced a pungent rejoinder the next week from Allen's correspondent Geoffrey Warwick (1 Apr 1930, p. 450).

A review of a very different character appeared in a lengthy article in The Guardian (Barry 1930). It was written by the man who in many respects was to inherit Allen's mantle and to carry his prophetic

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<sup>1</sup>TLS, 12 June 1930, p. 488. The unsigned review completely missed Allen's concern for the nature of the Church, and recommended it as 'an admirable text-book of study for the Church Assembly Commission on Staffing Parishes'.



vision on into the next generation - F.R.Barry<sup>1</sup>, at that time Vicar of the University Church, Oxford. In the article we are given the first inklings of ideas Barry was to develop in his later writings, and to act upon when once he was elevated to the episcopate. It is therefore worth pausing briefly to notice how he expressed himself at this early stage of his thinking.

Voluntary clergy had become for Barry 'that obstinate ghost which I cannot lay', because he perceived that the issue 'cuts right into our whole concept of Christian life and the meaning of the Church; that is, in the end, of the Incarnation'. The recent ordination to the stipendiary ministry of some London businessmen (prepared by a scheme of evening classes) prompted Barry to ask,

Why, when you have men who are self-supporting, should the funds of the Church be straightened even more to provide them with an unnecessary starving? Why, more urgently, should they be withdrawn from the very sphere where they are most competent to give Christian leadership and service? (ibid.)

In the light of the growing breach between clergy and laity, Barry pressed the Church to ask itself,

Is it certain that the "historic ministry" must involve a "clerical profession"?... Is the notion of a clerical caste, of men who specialise in religion, really compatible with Christian life? (ibid.)

His remarks were greeted by a deafening silence, as a dismayed correspondent to The Guardian pointed out a month later<sup>2</sup>.

A short review in Theology (Brade 1930) acknowledged that 'no well-grounded objections in principle can be urged against Mr Allen's contention'. But the reviewer gave much weight to the likely opposition from committed churchpeople:

It would... require a very considerable change both of heart and habit in the members of an average congregation to accept quite readily as a pastor on Sundays one whom they knew during the rest of the week as possibly a commercial rival or with whom they had ordinary professional dealings.

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<sup>1</sup>Frank Russell Barry (1890-1976): Fellow, Oriel College, Oxford, 1913-19; Principal, Knutsford Ordination Test. Sch., 1919-23; Professor of New Testament Exegesis, Kings College, London, 1923-27; Vicar, University Church, Oxford, 1927-33; Canon of Westminster, 1933-41; Bishop of Southwell, 1941-63.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from E.F.E.Wigram, Guardian, 9 May 1930, p. 373.



Readers of the Church Quarterly Review, by contrast, were treated to a large-scale recapitulation of the book by the Archdeacon of Worcester<sup>1</sup>, who spoke from experience of pastoral reorganization in a rural archdeaconry:

The presence of a voluntary priest or priests in every village would make the grouping of parishes on a well considered scheme, under a fully trained priest or college of priests, not only possible, but profitable. (Peile 1930, p.340)

But, like Allen, he believed that voluntary clergy would only become generally accepted once they were seen in action in one diocese:

What is to be desired is that one Bishop should take his courage in his hands and try it in his diocese, bearing always in mind Mr Allen's distinction between difficulties and objections... The last thing one would desire for Mr Allen's plan is that it should be brought up at the Lambeth Conference, sympathetically discussed, and shelved for another ten years. (ibid.)

Ironically, that is precisely what happened.

## 5. PROCEEDINGS OF THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE 1930

The Conference of 308 bishops of the Anglican Communion met for 5 weeks during July and August 1930. The Conference members were divided into six committees, each dealing with a separate major subject area, the fifth of which was 'The Ministry of the Church'<sup>2</sup>.

At an opening plenary session on 11th July, the issue of voluntary clergy was aired by several bishops. Madras<sup>3</sup> opened the discussion by saying there were certain places (for instance Dornakal) where the ordination of voluntary clergy 'would be a good thing'. But, he added

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<sup>1</sup>James Hamilton Francis Peile (1863-1940): Fellow, University College, Oxford, 1900-07; Bampton Lecturer, 1907; Vicar of All Saints, Ennismore Gardens, Knightsbridge, 1907-10; Archdeacon of Warwick, 1910-20; Archdeacon of Worcester, 1921-38.

<sup>2</sup>Areas dealt with by the other committees were: I - The Christian Doctrine of God; II - The Life & Witness of the Christian Community (notable for dealing with birth-control); III - The Unity of the Church (notable for dealing with the South Indian Scheme and the Orthodox Church); IV - The Anglican Communion; VI - Youth.

<sup>3</sup>Harry Mansfield Waller: CMS missionary, Allahabad, etc., 1897-1913; Bishop of Tinnevely & Madura, 1915-23; of Madras, 1923-42.



cautiously, 'it will never be a substitute for the ordained ministry [sic] ... it is a temporary thing to meet a temporary need' (Lam: LC 146, f. 403). Delaware said the American Church was discussing the subject in a Commission on Ministry. Gloucester (Headlam) clearly stated that he favoured voluntary clergy to supply the Sacrament in parishes with many centres of population.

It was left to Bishop Nash<sup>1</sup> (Coadjutor Bishop of Capetown) to offer the major introduction to the idea of voluntary clergy (*ibid.*, ff. 444-7). He hoped that the admirable statement of the case for and against in the Memorandum (Lambeth Conference 1930b) would be widely circulated; he referred to Bishop Norris' article (Norris 1929), and to the Capetown Synod's resolution of 1928. In his opinion the major problems were of finding suitable candidates, the reluctance of the laity to receive the ministrations of voluntary clergy, and the fear that once people were used to being served without expense they might become less willing to pay stipendiary clergy.

Johannesburg<sup>2</sup> said he had voted against the 1928 Capetown motion because an ignorant (untrained) clergy would be unacceptable to native people, and because of the problem of 'dual control' (civil servants and mining employees were frequently moved by their employers) (Lam: 146, f.457). Southampton (Boutflower) referred to his own article (Boutflower 1929), and stressed that extension of the diaconate was no help when the crying need was for the Sacrament (Lam: LC 146, f. 458). However, the Archbishop of York (William Temple) stated that he was in favour of the 'non-professional deacon' (*ibid.* f. 464).

Thus, (despite all Allen's warnings) in the opening speeches no one spoke of principles, only of expedients and problems. There was no comment from Canada, and the South African voice was divided.

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<sup>1</sup>James Okey Nash: Master of Pusey House, Oxford, 1889-92; Vicar of Radley, 1895-98; Headmaster, St John's College, Johannesburg, 1906-17; Coadjutor Bishop of Capetown, 1917-30.

<sup>2</sup>Arthur Baillie Lumsdaine Karney: Chaplain, Missions to Seamen, 1897-1914; Diocesan Missioner, Oxford, 1919-22; Bishop of Johannesburg, 1922-34.



The Conference then broke into separate committee groups. Committee V elected Grahamstown<sup>1</sup> its chairman, and Sherbourne<sup>2</sup> its secretary, and decided to work in two sub-committees. Sub-committee I was to deal with 'The Supply and Training of Candidates and Voluntary Clergy' with Manchester<sup>3</sup> as its chairman and Sherbourne as secretary. Thus, by the very structure of the Conference the case for voluntary clergy was unlikely to be heard in its own right, but only as an adjunct of the problem of the supply of ordinands.

Sub-committee I discussed voluntary clergy on 16th July, and produced a brief draft report. The Minutes state:

The Chairman then introduced the subject of voluntary clergy. A general discussion followed in which most of the bishops present took part, including the Bishop of Ottawa from Subcommittee II. Finally the following resolution was passed with two dissentients.

'This Conference is of the opinion that (speaking generally)<sup>4</sup>, lack of agreement both as to principle and practice is such that it could not contemplate a widespread adoption of the proposal, but that, while declaring that ordination to the priesthood involves full and life-long service not to be made subservient to any other interests, it sees no insuperable objection, where the need is great, to the occasional ordination (in regional churches) under proper safeguards of such voluntary candidates as have a clear vocation to the ministry.'

The Archbishop of Brisbane then suggested certain safeguards which it was resolved should be incorporated in the draft report...

(Lam: LC 164, pp. 106-7)

In subsequent committee discussion, slight alteration to the final wording of the resolution did nothing to alter the general dismissive tone of what

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<sup>1</sup>Francis Robinson Phelps: Rector of Thorpe-Episcopi, Norfolk, 1896-1909; Warden, St Peter's Home, Grahamstown, 1909-14; Bishop of Grahamstown, 1915-31; Archbishop of Capetown, 1931-38. He was a close friend of Allen's, very favourably inclined to voluntary clergy, and corresponded carefully with Allen after the Conference.

<sup>2</sup>Gerald Burton Allen, bishop of Sherbourne, 1928-36.

<sup>3</sup>Frederick Sumpter Guy Warman (1872-1953): Principal, St Aidan's College, Birkenhead, 1907-16; Vicar of Bradford, 1916-19; Bishop of Truro, 1919-23; of Chelmsford, 1923-29; of Manchester, 1929-47.

<sup>4</sup>The phrases in parentheses have pencilled brackets around them in the MS, and appear to have been omitted from the first draft at a later stage.



was to become Resolution 65 of the Conference<sup>1</sup>. It was carried by 32 votes to 6 in full committee<sup>2</sup>.

The accompanying Committee Report is a thorough and full one. It summarised the now familiar arguments for and against voluntary clergy. Two points about training and about safeguard are of interest to us. First, it was assumed that voluntary clergy would be untrained:

These men, though men of education, could receive little or no special training and might tend to become priests who merely celebrated sacraments, unable to minister to sick souls, to build up the faithful. (Lambeth Conference 1930a, p. 176)

Secondly, a series of 'safeguards' are listed: the bishop must take the first step in assuring himself of the man's worth, character and intelligence and that the man is called of God, and is acceptable to the local stipendiary clergy and people (both before ordination, and after a move from one place to another). 'Even then... the number thus ordained should at first be few, that we may know by experience whether it is God's will that thus the flock of Christ be helped'.

It was thus presumed that voluntary clergy would be inferior to stipendiary clergy both in learning and in authority: such was the predominance of the traditional pattern of theological college education and of parochial ministry in the minds of the bishops. It should further be noted that no mention is made at all of the principles about local church autonomy which underlay Allen's exposition of the case for voluntary clergy, nor is there any discussion of the positive value of a clergy engaged with the local 'world of work'.

The committee's report and resolution came before the full Conference on Monday 28th July. There was a long debate over the voluntary clergy resolution, which now fills 14 pages of typed transcript (Lam: LC 147, ff. 107-120). Manchester, as chairman of the sub-committee, introduced the subject at length. He began by dealing with the problem of nomenclature (which has continuously dogged discussion of NSM). He explained that the term 'Voluntary' Clergy -

...seems to have been coined by Mr. Roland Allen, who has written a large book on the subject, and we thought we had better refer to the name he has given in our resolution, but we venture to put the

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<sup>1</sup>Lambeth Conference 1930a, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of Full Committee on Wed 23 July, Resolution VI (Lam: LC 164).



word "Voluntary" in inverted commas thereby showing that it is simply a quotation and that we do not adopt it, because of course all clergy are voluntary, and in the last line of the Resolution we have tried to give another name to this class of people... The best we could do is the title contained in the last two words "auxiliary priests".  
(Lam: LC 147 f. 107)

Manchester then proceeded to reveal the personal dynamics which had shaped the generally reluctant tone of the resolution. It appears there had been an unresolved disagreement of principle within the committee:

To some, to two members of my sub-committee, it appeared contrary to fundamental principle; it was urged that the priesthood demands the whole of life, and that therefore it is impossible; and when you are dealing with people who hold principles that are as definite as that, it is of course useless to suggest arguments in favour of expediency. To some it appeared contrary to long sustained tradition.  
(Lam: LC 147, f. 108)

Manchester himself was clearly in favourable to Allen's idea of voluntary clergy, and had worked hard to press it upon the committee:

As Chairman of the Sub-Committee, I tried to get St Paul in; I tried to get one or two other people beside St Paul in, but I failed, and I stand before you as a confessed failure. I still think that the fact ... that St Paul earned his bread as a tent-maker is some sort of precedent... [but] the most I could get out of my Committee was the very unsatisfactory sentence "whatever may have been the case in the apostolic age". I hope you will pity the sorrows of a poor Chairman. ...We at long last ventured to set before you a Resolution which we hope does not go further than that the Conference may be inclined to go.  
(Lam: LC 147, ff. 108-9).

There followed five fairly insignificant speeches. Bishop Wyld<sup>1</sup> (Coadjutor of Bathurst) admitted to being 'one of the two obstinate people on the Sub-committee of Committee V who held out against the introduction of voluntary clergy or auxiliary priests at all'. But in the course of a long and rambling speech, he failed to enunciate any objection in principle.

Tinnevelly<sup>2</sup> sought unsuccessfully to soften the Resolution's phrase 'sees no insuperable objection' by omitting 'insuperable'. Bloemfontein<sup>3</sup>, referring to the South African bishops' provincial permission for him to ordain two voluntary clergy, said:

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<sup>1</sup>Arnold Lomas Wyld: Vicar of Bethnel Green, 1912-21; Principal of the Brotherhood of the Good Shepherd, 1923-28; Bishop Coadjutor of Bathurst, 1927-37; Bishop of Bathurst, 1937-59.

<sup>2</sup>Frederick James Western: Missionary, Cambridge University Mission to Delhi, 1904-29; Bishop of Tinnevelly, 1929-39.

<sup>3</sup>Walter Julius Carey: Librarian, Pusey House, Oxford, 1908-17; Warden, Lincoln Theological College, 1919-21; Bishop of Bloemfontein, 1929-39.



I have not ordained anybody, though that is two years ago, because I find there are more difficulties than any of us anticipated. We knew that there were a great many, but the greatest obstacle so far has been the unwillingness of the laity to accept such auxiliary priests. That is very striking: they prefer a whole-time man. Not only that, but my native clergy also object to this, because they are so fully imbued with the idea that in teaching the native people the Christian Religion we should only use those who are in the fullest sense trained. (Lam: LC 147, f. 115)

Nevertheless, he himself thought 'that what the Committee has proposed here is exactly what people like myself want... This thing [is] exactly what we feel in South Africa, and therefore I hope it will not lightly be turned down'. Exeter<sup>1</sup> saw no danger in a ministry of Sacrament alone, which voluntary clergy could supply even if they were not trained to teach:

The two functions of a priest, that of the pulpit and that of the altar, require very different training, and it might be possible sometimes to accept a man for the altar whom you could not accept for the pulpit. (Lam: LC 147 f. 116)

Finally, Bishop Nash made a plea for the guarded permission of the Resolution, and assumed that it would lead to a ten year experimental period.

The evidence of these records seems to demonstrate that a very small conservative minority succeeded in so muzzling a general desire for granting permission that the resultant resolution (which actually allowed the development of voluntary clergy) appeared strongly to discourage it! The final phrasing - 'The Conference ... cannot recommend a widespread adoption of the proposal' (Lambeth Conference 1930, p. 60) - effectively sounded the death-knell on voluntary clergy for the next twenty years.

## 6. THE AFTERMATH

### i) Review Comments

Reviews and comments upon Resolution 65 of the Lambeth Conference made a number of perceptive points. In September 1930.

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<sup>1</sup>Lord William Rupert Ernest Gascoyne Cecil (1863-1936): Rector of Bp. Hatfield, 1888-1916; Bishop of Exeter, 1916-36.



Winnington-Ingram<sup>1</sup> (Bishop of London) published his personal reflections upon the Conference (Winnington-Ingram 1930). He says that the idea of Auxiliary Priests 'was very fully discussed', but noted an inherent problem in dealing with a world-wide communion: 'steps which might be helpful in prairie districts ... would be unnecessary, or even harmful, in England' (p. 136). As we shall see, this was undoubtedly his own opinion of voluntary clergy. He proceeded to identify two 'strong fears expressed by many of the Bishops'.

First, that 'such a system would make it far harder for them to raise money for "a whole-time man" '; and secondly, that 'these men, who... are only to receive a very moderate training, may drift away from where they are now [viz. in the Dominions], and find themselves back in the home country - and expect to be given work, for which they are not really fitted' (p. 137).

Though unacknowledged, these fears arise directly from a desire to protect the vested interests of the professional clergy - a point that Allen was later to emphasise most forcefully.

A month later, B.K.Cunningham<sup>2</sup> wrote an extended review of the work of Committee V, without making any comment whatsoever on the voluntary clergy proposals - perhaps because he considered them irrelevant to England. But in discussing the section on 'The Supply and Training of Men for Holy Orders', he commented:

We are left ... to conclude that the Committee had grounds to believe that the tide has turned and there will be a steady and marked increase in numbers of ordination candidates in the near future; were it not so, they would surely have dealt more heroically than is the case in their Report with the question of 'Voluntary Clergy' and the ministry of women. (Cunningham 1930, p. 229)

This comment is of singular importance, for it provides contemporary evidence that the anxiety over shortage of ordinands was abating. Decreased anxiety resulted in decreased motivation for considering voluntary clergy seriously. The statistics do in fact show that in 1930 more deacons were ordained in England (503 men) than in any year since 1914. As this history unfolds, it will become apparent that there is a

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<sup>1</sup>Arthur Foley Winnington-Ingram (1858-1946): Head of Oxford House, Bethnel Green, 1888-97; Bishop of Stepney, 1897-1901; Bishop of London, 1901-39.

<sup>2</sup>Bertram Keir Cunningham (1871-1944): Principal of Westcott House, Cambridge, 1919-44.



direct relationship between the degree of anxiety about replenishment of the professional clergy and the degree of attention paid to the notion of NSM.

## ii) Publication of Church Assembly Report on Staffing of Parishes (1930)

In the autumn of 1930, the Commission set up by the Church Assembly the previous year (cf. II.4.ii) used the Lambeth Conference resolution as the basis of a specific proposal for ministry in England. For a brief moment it seemed as though Allen's ideas might catch fire. The substance of the Report of the Commission on Staffing of Parishes published in October 1930 (Church Assembly 1930) was to recommend the strategic placing of available manpower: structures were to be developed to redeploy clergy from sparsely populated rural areas to understaffed parishes in urban areas. One thousand parishes with populations under 500 were to cease to be held as single cures. In view of the likely effect upon a large number of rural parishes deprived of accustomed ministrations, it is not surprising that the Commission was keen to take advantage of Resolution 65, and stated that it was of the opinion 'that this policy should be tried in England, especially in areas where more than one parish is served by the same vicar'. The Commission accordingly expressed the hope that

the Convocations will approve of the bishops ordaining in the next ten years a limited number of men of worth, character and intelligence, who are engaged in appropriate occupations and are desirous of giving their help as priests in the Church. We recommend that these should usually be men who have resided for many years in the same place and who are not likely to move elsewhere. We think that these men, during the experimental period, should be ordained especially to help in those churches where it has been found necessary to reduce the number of ordinary services.  
(Church Assembly 1930, p. 37)

The Commission recognised that changes in the law and revision of the Ordinal would be necessary. It did not, however, discuss what pattern of training these men should undertake.

It is worth noting in passing that The Case for Voluntary Clergy directly influenced the Commission. Although it is not mentioned specifically in the printed report, the Bishop of Buckingham, a member of



the Commission, wrote to Allen: 'We discussed your Book very fully on the Staffing Commission'<sup>1</sup>.

The Commission had deliberately delayed its report until after the Lambeth Conference, so as to take account of any Lambeth resolutions. Five of the Commission's eight bishops, including the chairman (Cyril Garbett of Southwark), had sat on the Lambeth Committee V and were thus very familiar with the Conference's discussions<sup>2</sup>.

On publication of the Commission's report, the Times (15 Jan 1931, p. 13d) devoted a leading article to its discussion, in view of the implications for the life of the nation. The leader could scarcely credit the Commissioners' judgment in using the Lambeth Resolution 65 as a basis for its proposals on voluntary clergy. The Lambeth Resolution (it was assumed) had been intended for exceptional circumstances in missionary dioceses, and therefore 'the Commissioners are hardly entitled to cite such a sanction as though it were approval for the use of the scheme in England'. The leader-writer generously presumed that the Commissioners had intended their suggestion 'as a temporary expedient only ... and that "voluntary clergy" will disappear when regular clergy are again forthcoming in sufficient numbers'. The analogy of seeing stipendiary clergy as 'regulars' was ominous. If such a dismissive attitude to voluntary clergy were widespread, there was little prospect of the report's recommendations being heeded. Such indeed proved to be the case.

The report was given an extended debate in the Church Assembly in February 1931 (Proceedings, Vol. 12, pp. 74-97 and 103-20). The general tenor of the debate offers a significant reflection of the way in which the institutional church has usually been incapable of treating the notion of voluntary clergy as an idea worthy of consideration in its own right. The Bishop of Southwark opened the debate with a long speech setting out the findings and recommendations of the report: the number of parochial clergy (16,076), their average age (50.5 years), their unequal geographical distribution, the shortage of clergy in the new towns, the need for union of small benefices and redistribution of their clergy. He

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<sup>1</sup>USPG: AP, 6.L.91, letter, Buckingham to Allen, 10 Sep 1930.

<sup>2</sup>The Commission's membership included the Bishops of Southwark (chairman), Wakefield, Buckingham, Middleton and Stepney (all of whom had been on Committee V at Lambeth), plus the Bishops of Exeter, Rochester and Croydon, 5 archdeacons, 8 other clergy and 7 laity.



left it to 'others to deal with the ... section of the Report which dealt with supplementary help' (p. 81). As it turned out, all interest in the ensuing debate focussed on recruiting, financing and appointing full-time parochial clergy, and nobody mentioned voluntary clergy apart from one layman<sup>1</sup>, who spoke against the idea by listing a number of (familiar) difficulties (pp. 89-90).

Such an outcome might seem surprising in view of the great length of the debate (running to 39 pages of printed proceedings) and of the positive approach to voluntary clergy in the report. Moreover, many bishops and other dignitaries, whom we know to have been personally favourable to voluntary clergy, must have been present in the Assembly. But they spoke not a word on the subject. So it would seem that anxiety to conserve traditional structures with minimum disturbance stifled radical thinking about this pattern of ministry.

The report was duly 'referred to the Diocesan Conferences for consideration' and the bishops were asked to 'write a Pastoral Letter to be read at one of the Ember seasons in 1931, stating the present position as to the supply of clergy, and calling upon Clergy and Laity to pray, work, and give for an increase in the Ministry' (p. 116). Thus the opportunity for widespread discussion of voluntary clergy faded into oblivion.

### iii) Convocation Report (1932)

However, it was left to the Convocation of Canterbury to deliver the death blow to the idea of voluntary clergy. Ironically, the blow was delivered not so much by deliberate intent, but by default through the lack of a clear process of decision-making. Two factors in particular conspired to prevent positive acceptance of the idea: first, the cumbersome structure of the Convocations (meeting in two separate provinces, each with two separate houses), and secondly, the fact that the issue of voluntary clergy was not considered in its own right, but as an adjunct of other concerns. The chain of events which led to its perinatal death were as follows.

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<sup>1</sup>Mr Albert Mitchell (London).



By 1929, the time was ripe for the two Convocations to appoint a Joint Committee in an attempt to overcome an impasse which had been reached on proposals to establish a Permanent Diaconate. This subject had been before each Convocation several times since 1920. The proposal was to ordain men in secular avocations to Deacon's Orders so that they could help in the administration of the chalice at Holy Communion. The four houses, meeting separately, had made decisions on the matter which were at variance with each other<sup>1</sup>. By 1929, the two archbishops had set in motion a procedure for appointing a Joint Committee of both Convocations to consider the Permanent Diaconate afresh. In the course of the Upper House's debate (CCC 1929, pp. 106-9) approving this action, the Bishop of Truro (W.H.Frere) commented that 'the whole matter has been revived by the appeal to what were called "voluntary clergy" ' (p. 107). While the Bishop of Winchester (F.T.Woods) agreed that 'the "voluntary clergy" movement ... was very much alive in certain parts of the Church just then' (p. 108), and considered that as this issue was coming before the Lambeth Conference, it would be of immense use to the Conference if voluntary clergy could be carefully considered beforehand.

Thus it came about that the original brief to discuss the Permanent Diaconate was widened to include discussion of voluntary clergy as well. A strong committee was appointed under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Southwark (C. Garbett) who was personally in favour of a permanent diaconate (p. 107), and correspondingly disinterested in voluntary clergy.

So far from informing the Lambeth discussions, the Committee did not produce its report until January 1932. It contained four brief recommendations: I - on 'voluntary clergy'; II - on ordination of retired

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<sup>1</sup>The history of this tortuous discussion is as follows. In February 1920, a Joint Committee was appointed to consider the Permanent Diaconate; it reported in favour, in February 1921; however, in debate, three of the four houses were persuaded that a revival of the medieval order of sub-deacon would be a better way of handling the problem of administering the chalice, though the Upper House of York did not agree; in July 1921, another Joint Committee was appointed to report more fully on the subdiaconate; by September 1924 it reported in favour of a revival of the subdiaconate, which proposal was rejected by the Upper House of York; a further attempt at discussion in February 1926 adjourned without agreement. In July 1928, the Convocation of Canterbury requested their Archbishop to confer personally with the Archbishop of York with a view to setting up another Joint Committee on the Permanent Diaconate.



men; III - on the permanent diaconate; IV - on licensing laymen to administer the chalice. The Committee reported:

We are unable to recommend, in normal cases, the ordination of men to the priesthood unless they can give their whole time to ministerial work. (Convocation of Canterbury 1932, p. 2)

The Committee acknowledged the traditional exceptions of those combining priesthood with teaching or authorship of books, and was of the opinion that -

this principle might be extended by Canon so that the Bishops, at their discretion, could ordain, in particular cases, men of other avocations, e.g. members of the medical profession... We believe that such cases as we have in mind ... would in practice prove to be few. (p. 2)

The Committee echoed the sentiments of the Lambeth resolutions that there was 'no insuperable objection in principle' to the ordination of voluntary clergy, but felt that in England there were 'many practical difficulties'. They particularly stressed the principle expressed in the Lambeth Report and in the ordination vows that 'ordination to the priesthood involves full and life-long service, not to be made subservient to any other interests'. Consequently the ordination of older men who had retired from secular occupations was indeed permissible and desirable:

A few such men have already been ordained, and we believe that many more might be so ordained with advantage to the Church, especially until the present shortage has been made up. (p.2)

The Report also included two appendices on the implications of statute and canon law. Despite evidence that Roland Allen had produced to the contrary, both appendices expressed the view that major legal obstacles currently prohibited the establishment of voluntary clergy. Regarding statute law, Chancellor E.W.Hansell stated that while he did not think any statutory provision would prevent or invalidate the ordination of a man engaged in secular work, yet

the prohibitions and restrictions as to trading and farming contained in the Pluralities Act of 1838 ... would in my opinion require repeal or amendment. (p. 6)

The canon law tradition was treated by three committee members, including the Warden of Keble College and the Principal of Pusey House. They rehearsed the rulings of the Canons of Chalcedon (451 AD), and Canon 75 (of 1603), current Roman and Orthodox practice, and comments by William Bright, the Church historian. They acknowledged that all these



interpreted the Canons 'not as a prohibition of work, but as a safeguard against covetousness' (p. 5). Nevertheless, they gave weight to precedent of practice and to the wording of the Ordinal:

for [voluntary clergy] to give their weekdays to business and their Sundays or leisure to the Sacred Ministry seems to be clean contrary not only to all known precedent, but to the requirements of the Ordinal which merely reaffirm it, viz., that a priest has 'to give himself wholly to this office ... and apply himself to this one thing'.  
(p. 5)

The inclusion of such material in the appendices to the Joint Committee's Report is striking confirmation of the point made earlier in this study: that the threefold constraints of statute law, canon law and the ordinal were felt to be powerful restraints, and they restricted the likelihood of adventurous or innovatory thinking. This was to emerge even more clearly in the debate which discussed the report. To this debate we now turn.

The report came before the Lower House of Canterbury on 22 January 1932 (CCC 1932, pp. 176-7), and the resolutions that the report be received and the Committee continued were accepted without debate. The report was presented by Canon G.W.Briggs<sup>1</sup>, who in the course of his speech emphasised two concerns of the Committee which do not emerge from the report itself. First, he stressed that although the Committee did not regard trade itself as being necessarily inconsistent with the priesthood, nevertheless -

it was felt that the priesthood should be the first and main occupation of the parish priest.

Two significant and questionable assumptions, which have haunted all subsequent discussion of NSM, lie hidden within this simple remark. He might have been asked 'in what sense is priesthood an **occupation?**', and 'why is the **parish** priest to be regarded as the controlling model of priesthood?'. But it seems that at the time nobody saw the point of such questions.

Secondly, Canon Briggs revealed the concern of the stipendiary clergy that their rights of preferment might be interfered with by the admission to Orders of senior retired laymen:

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<sup>1</sup>George Wallace Briggs: Chaplain RN, 1902-09; Vicar of St Andrew Norwich, 1090-18; Rector of Loughborough, 1918; Canon of Leicester, 1927.



That might put the parish priest who was senior on service, though not in age, in a very unfair position, because the other man by reason of his pension or the competence he had earned would be able to accept some post in the Church which was hardly open to the former. All the Committee agree that everything should be done to avoid those dangers. (p. 177)

As will become apparent below, suspicion of new entry-points to Orders, and fear of disruption of clerical career and pay structures continued to surface as 'problems' in introducing NSM.

The Upper House of Canterbury considered the report on 1st and 2nd July 1932 (CCC 1932, pp. 223-31 and 262ff), debating it in more detail. The opening session was entirely taken up with exchange of views about the Permanent Diaconate and lay administration of the chalice, in the course of which the Bishop of London (Winnington-Ingram) made a celebrated remark. He told how during the exigencies of war conditions he had tried to persuade a London parish to allow three of its laymen to administer the chalice; he was violently opposed by the laity of the parish -

because they felt a man who did that might be in opposition to them on the following Monday ... the laity did not want to see somebody in that position on Sunday when they were going to do business with them on Monday. (p. 226)

The remark was originally made about lay administration of the Sacrament, but it has subsequently been oft-quoted as enshrining a 'problem' for NSM, and well illustrates the emotional power of the received understanding of sacraments and ministry to brand innovation as unacceptable.

When, however, it came to the substantive motion asking for a change in Canon Law, so that bishops at their discretion could ordain men 'engaged in other avocations', bishop after bishop cited problems he foresaw if the motion were passed. In several cases, the 'problem' cited was effectively the perceived threat to the stipendiary clergy. For instance:

[A newly appointed incumbent] might refuse to accept his services. He would remain on the ground and might gather round him a certain set of followers ... and might lead to grave divisions in the parish. (Bishop of Lincoln; p. 267)

Another highlighted the importance of dress 'because it marked the separation of avocations'. He asked incredulously:



[What would be] the estimate of the priesthood in the eyes of the laity, if a man were a priest, and possibly wore clerical clothes on Sunday, and the clothes of his ordinary avocation on weekdays?

(Bishop of Bath & Wells; p.268)

Another feared that allowing the proposed discretion to bishops would lead to a 'lowering of the standard of the ministry, which seemed to him the one thing they had to maintain, if they were ever to get an adequate supply of suitable men' (Bishop of St Albans; p. 269). Archbishop Lang expressed fear that the priesthood might become subservient to other interests. Referring to the proposal for priest-doctors, he betrayed a solely functional understanding of priesthood in saying:

I think the man himself would find it very difficult to distinguish what he was doing as a priest and what he was doing as a doctor.  
(p. 272)

However, two powerful speeches by the bishops of Birmingham (Barnes)<sup>1</sup> and Truro (Frere)<sup>2</sup> enunciated for the first time arguments for the possibility of exercising priestly ministry through apparently 'secular' work, and criteria for testing vocations to such ministry in individual cases. Barnes argued:

In the past, it has been customary for men to be ordained who were engaged in, and obtained their income from, what was increasingly regarded as the secular occupation of teaching. With the growing complexity of their civilization, there were other occupations arising which might well be regarded as analogous to teaching. It might well be that a man's real interests were not in the ecclesiastical realm, or in parochial organisation, but in some particular social activity ... it could be commended as an extension of an old tradition suitable to modern developments within their civilization.  
(p. 268)

Frere developed Barnes' point: in the questions put to ordinands in the Ordinal, the Church already possessed a criterion for deciding whether to ordain a man in secular employment. The ancient precedent of ordaining teachers provided the clue. He asked:

What was the reason why ... English law recognised education and literary work? it was because it was distinctly pastoral in character. The questions of the Ordinal were easily answered ... because in all educational work there was essentially a pastoral character, which was of the essence of the priesthood.  
(p. 270)

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<sup>1</sup>Ernest William Barnes (1874-1953): Master of the Temple 1915-19; Canon of Westminster 1918-24; Bishop of Birmingham 1924-53.

<sup>2</sup>Walter Howard Frere (1863-1938): Superior, Community of the Resurrection 1902-13 and 1916-22; Bishop of Truro 1923-35.



He proceeded to explore what this principle might mean in relation to the ordination of certain other categories of people whom the report had considered eligible for ordination without any change in the law - 'organists, vergers, men in ecclesiastical secretariats and similar minor clerics', all of whom were already in the employment of the Church. The example of organists seemed 'very suggestive':

What they were most familiar with was the case of a man who was a priest and became an organist; but there were also continually arising cases where the organist wished to be a priest and continue to be an organist. Again, the same test could be applied there fairly easily: Did he mean to make it his pastoral work? If so, the priesthood was open to him. If it was merely in his view a musical profession, then it was not. (p. 271)

(We may note in passing that Frere had touched on two issues which were later to be of increasing significance: first, the irrationality of church practice in permitting a priest to enter secular professions, while at the same time refusing entry to the priesthood to men in secular professions; and secondly, the recognition that a pastoral (and thus priestly) stance might be present within 'secular' employment. Nevertheless, at the time, Frere's ideas could scarcely have been perceived as live options, since there was then no regular way in which a man could train for the ministry without forsaking his job to enter a residential theological college. Thirty years later, the irrationality of the situation described by Frere had become much more obvious, and was a factor contributing to the pressure for the establishment of NSM.)

However, a leaden hand was smartly laid on Frere's creative thinking by Archbishop Lang, who highlighted the pragmatics of the situation: first, that while churchpeople abroad may be deprived of the sacrament for shortage of priests (a primary argument for voluntary clergy), 'there is no such position in this country'; and, secondly, that changes in canon and statute law ('a most difficult process') would be required. Accordingly he asked:

Is it worth while to embark upon sanctioning a principle of this kind, which could not be carried out without these very fundamental changes, and that in a matter which admittedly is not not urgent, and would only apply to a few quite exceptional cases? (p. 272)



After a long speech in this vein, he stated that he personally would not be able to vote for the resolution. The resolution was promptly put, and lost. This decisive vote of bishops in the Convocation of Canterbury effectively buried any hope of active revival of pressure for voluntary clergy for a generation.

In considering this outcome, it is important to note that the recent *débâcle* of Parliamentary defeat of the Prayer Book Revision Measure (1928) had reinforced in everyone's consciousness just how difficult a process changes in statute law might be. Lang clearly had no wish to confront Parliament again over a matter that seemed to him a minor one.

There is evidence too that a factor contributing towards the rejection of the report's resolution on voluntary clergy was the confused dynamics of the leadership in the debate. It was known that the chairman of the Joint Committee (Garbett) was luke-warm towards the idea. He was absent from Convocation that day, so the report was introduced by another Committee member, Bishop Mosley of Southwell. Mosley did his best to present the views of the Committee objectively, but not with much personal enthusiasm<sup>1</sup>. By contrast, when the corresponding debate was held in the Convocation of York (YJC 1932, pp. 10-19), the report was presented by Bishop Warman of Manchester, who as well as being on the Joint Committee had been chairman of the Lambeth Conference committee on voluntary clergy, and was known to be personally in favour of the idea. He made a strong speech supporting the report's resolution on voluntary clergy; there was no further debate; and the House approved that the Committee should 'go forward'. The Canterbury rejection, however, effectively vetoed any such outcome.

#### iv) Allen's Response

No sooner was the Lambeth Report published than Roland Allen was in correspondence with the Bishop of Manchester, as co-chairman of the Joint Committee of Convocation (USPG: AP 6.L.92, 93, 96 and 97). He was dismayed to hear that some legal opinion considered that there

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<sup>1</sup>When Resolution II of the report came under attack, Mosley responded: 'speaking personally, not on behalf of the Committee, he had no wish to press the Resolution at all' ! (p. 276.)



were legal obstacles to the ordination of voluntary clergy in England, not only because this seemed to set aside his own discussion of the legal position<sup>1</sup>, but also because it seemed to him that the bishops were abdicating their authority to lawyers and committees. His lengthy epistles, however, did nothing more than irritate the bishop.

Then, to his surprise and delight, Allen was invited the following year by the editor of The Church Overseas to write a response to the Lambeth resolution on voluntary clergy (Allen 1931). He seized the opportunity to give an acute and damning analysis of the bishops' report. He was filled with horror that the bishops could write of 'hundreds of thousands [of churchpeople overseas] almost entirely cut off from the ministry of the sacraments', and that they could do so 'without one word of sorrow, or compassion, or regret or penitence'. How was it, he asked, that they could have 'pointed a way to amendment and then urged that we should not follow it wholeheartedly'?

He answered his question with two reasons (reasons which remain to this day explanations of why NSM has not been wholeheartedly adopted in England). The first reason was that voluntary clergy were perceived as a threat to the clerical profession, and the second that discussions were not controlled by any generally accepted principle about the nature of the local church. We may allow Allen to speak in his own voice. The bishops were distracted from the vision of pastoral needs by another vision:

Their eyes were withdrawn to the position of the clerical order. They could not see the scattered multitude, could only feel compassion for it, so far as that other consideration allowed.

The idea presented by the resolution ... is the idea of a number of men who by serving as voluntary clergy may add a sort of auxiliary force to the present body of clergy. Any voluntary clergy who may be ordained are imagined as recruits auxiliary to that body. Inevitably attention is fixed not upon the needs of the flock but upon the individuals who are to be admitted to that distinct professional order; and the first thought that arises is a fear lest the admission of voluntary clergy in any large numbers may affect the position and standard of the professional order. Thinking of voluntary clergy as auxiliary priests ... as if all that was needed was to supply assistance for a 'clergyman in charge' ... they naturally begin to talk first of 'safeguards' against something which is not specified but may be imagined.

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<sup>1</sup>Allen had given extended discussion of the opinion of Chancellor P.V.Smith in an Appendix to his book (Allen 1930, pp. 289-90).



Now we who in the past have advocated the ordination of voluntary clergy have been looking at the whole matter from the other point of view. We have not been looking at the profession so much as at the local Church. We have been thinking, not of individual recruits to the clerical order, but of the body to be established... From the point of view of the resolution and the report everything depends upon finding what the bishop may deem a 'suitable' man; from our point of view everything depends upon finding, or creating, a suitable group - that is, a group of Christians. From the point of view of the resolution and the report the Christian group must be sacrificed if the 'suitable' individual is not at once apparent; from our point of view the Christian group must never be so sacrificed.

(Allen 1931, pp. 146-7)

Allen then proceeded to berate the bishops for daring to 'experiment' on a small scale for a limited period. 'Christians cannot try that sort of experiment with God', he claimed. Pragmatically anyway, such experiment would be inconclusive:

Would the apparent success of A. and B. at Y. and Z, or the apparent failure of C. and D. at X. and W., prove anything at all about the possible failure or success of voluntary clergy at P. and M. ?

(ibid., pp. 149-50)

In conclusion, Allen analysed with great perspicacity the factors governing the bishops' decision-making:

Where in all this do we find reasons why the apostolic practice should not be followed widely, if followed at all? The objections are set down, but they are all set aside. The committee having reviewed them says that 'there is no valid objection', and the conference as a whole declares that it 'sees no insuperable objection'. What the conference has done is to set the objections on one side and then to glance back at them and so far to defer to them as to call them reasons for running uncertainly. The reason for that is unquestionably the power of tradition, and the ingrained habit of thinking not of the establishment of the Church but of the clergy as a class apart, and of ordination not as the establishment of the Church but as the admission of selected individuals to membership of a professional order. When men so think there is no room for compassion for multitudes scattered as sheep having no shepherd. (Allen 1931, p. 153)

It is difficult to gainsay this analysis of the Lambeth Conference, and the course of the subsequent discussion of the issue at Church Assembly and Convocations seems to indicate that similar processes were operating in these bodies too.



## 7. SUMMARY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING DISCUSSION TO 1932

In concluding this chapter, the factors which have emerged so far which either assisted or hindered the development of NSM may be summarized.

### manpower shortage

The period immediately after the First World War was one of great alarm for leaders of the Church of England. The dramatic drop in the number of ordinands, with consequent overall decrease in the number of clergy, together with the practice of uniting rural benefices to meet the short-fall in clergy were all factors which compelled the Church to examine its staffing pattern. Roland Allen specifically proposed voluntary clergy as a means of responding creatively to these problems, and these problems correspondingly helped to gain him a hearing.

On the other hand, the very same problems militated against the acceptance of the idea of voluntary clergy, which was seen as yet another factor threatening the traditional role and authority of the stipendiary parish priest. When, therefore, the number of ordinands did begin to rise satisfactorily (by 1930), there was a natural tendency for all thought of introducing voluntary clergy to be left aside. Allen's strategy in presenting voluntary clergy as a solution to decreasing clergy numbers was thus in the long run counter-productive: the fundamental rationale of voluntary clergy - arising from a theological concept of a local church with its own local ministry - went unconsidered.

### professional defensiveness

Despite the fact that a number of significant individuals were personally convinced of the propriety and value of voluntary clergy, when it came to public debate, scarcely any of them would voice their opinion.

It seems that a strong pressure was present on such occasions to preserve the status of the professional clergy: most of the talk was of 'safeguards'. Even when a published report (Church Assembly 1930) proposed some modest use of the Lambeth Conference permission, this



issue was ignored in debate, and derided in the press. The laity too seem to have had a comparable disinclination to respond to the idea of voluntary clergy: a number of bishops bear witness that they were unable to find secularly employed laity willing to offer for ordination. All this amounts to extensive evidence of the power of the clerical profession to protect its own status and class, and of the laity passively to collude in the process.

### prophetic vision

Without the prophetic vision of Roland Allen (and behind him of Herbert Kelly), it is unlikely that the idea of voluntary clergy could have made any headway at all. The Church of England's traditional commitment to a parochial system run by professional clergy was inherently opposed to an idea so radical as that of a local church with local ministry. The situation required a prophet capable of proclaiming an unpopular message, and of keeping it before the community's consciousness. Allen was able to fulfil just such a role because he was marginal to the institutional church and not dependent upon it for his livelihood and career.

However, prophets on their own do not produce reformation unless (to continue the Old Testament analogy) rulers are prepared to act upon the prophetic message. There is no evidence that the bishops of the Church of England at that time were personally committed to introducing voluntary clergy to England, although a number of them were intellectually in sympathy with the idea. The very wording of the Lambeth resolution - 'no fundamental objection' - although permissive, was essentially negative.

### experience of the overseas church

The experience of Anglican bishops overseas clearly demonstrated the impossibility of duplicating the English parochial ministry abroad. Allen himself made the deprivation of British settlers in the Dominions a prime motivation for introducing voluntary clergy. Nevertheless, overseas bishops were not prepared to act independently of the mother church,



while the mother church insisted that no such deprivation existed in England. Hence the impasse, where neither group of bishops was prepared to act decisively.

Once again Allen's strategy was counter-productive: it made it too easy for English bishops paternalistically to dismiss voluntary clergy as suitable for the exigencies of an overseas situation, but unnecessary or unworthy of the home church. Not enough was done to work out the implications of the idea for the English situation: for instance, there was never any adequate discussion of the pattern of training that voluntary clergy might receive.

#### awareness of tradition

Increasing knowledge about the structure and strategy of the church's ministry in the New Testament period and in the early centuries made English church leaders aware that their contemporary status quo had no primitive precedent. While this awareness made people willing to give the idea of voluntary clergy a hearing, there was a historical awareness of another kind which tended to confirm the status quo. The legal obstacles posed by ancient statute and canon law proved the ultimate barrier to a changed pattern of ministry. For the decision-making processes necessary to effect any change of the law were felt at the time to be so cumbersome as to defy any attempted modification of the law.

#### Lambeth Conference discussion

The fact that <sup>the</sup> issue of voluntary clergy reached the agenda of a Lambeth Conference gave it great prominence, and brought it to the attention of the world-wide church. History seems to show that once a matter has been discussed at a Lambeth Conference, its discussion is likely to be resumed at a later Conference. This is precisely what happened in this case, though the resumption was delayed until 1958. Thus, although the immediate outcome of the 1930 discussion was meagre, the ultimate significance of that discussion was considerable.



publications

The fact that the idea of voluntary clergy was treated at book length by Roland Allen, and that it also featured in official church reports, gave the idea not only wide dissemination, but also the authority of the printed word. Allen's books were frequently referred to by other writers, and in public debate were assumed to be well known. The church press and theological journals also provided a forum for an exchange of views on the subject. But in the end, it was the fact that Allen had produced a major book on voluntary clergy which ensured that his ideas were perpetuated beyond the initial period of rejection in 1930-32. The rediscovery and reprinting of this book was to be a significant factor in the second stage of the history of NSM.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE ACCEPTANCE OF NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTRY

This chapter recounts how, after Convocation's rejection of the idea, further public discussion of voluntary clergy evaporated. With one notable exception, there was to be no more significant discussion of the issue until after the Second World War. Then the momentum picked up again: Convocation revised the constraining canons, amidst much talk of worker priests; local initiatives in training and ordaining men who remained in secular employment took place; the Lambeth Conference's attitude grew more favourable. Eventually, in 1969, a careful plan was put to the Church Assembly, and was accepted. The following year the bishops agreed regulations governing NSM, and from that point onwards NSM was a reality in the Church of England. This chapter, then, describes the process by which the idea of NSM 'came to term' for a third time, and how a live birth resulted.

#### 1. A PERIOD OF DORMANCY

It is worth pausing briefly to notice the extraordinary silence that fell upon the subject after all the expectant exchanges of 1929-30. Allen himself was shattered by the rejection. He wrote to a friend:

I have done so much wandering like a lost dog, thrusting myself upon people, that I have grown to shrink from it more and more<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>Allen to Bp. Sanford of San Joaquin, letter, 26 Aug 1930 (USPG: AP, 6.L.85).



He was now of retiring age, and moved to Kenya to be near his son. He clearly had hoped that the Kenyan situation might be ripe for the introduction of voluntary clergy. He spoke and wrote in the local press about the issue there, but fell out of favour with the Bishop of Mombasa over an article he had published, and thereafter moved more and more into his own thought world.

The article in question, entitled 'The Priesthood of the Church', was his swan-song (Allen 1933). It condemned the folly of current missionary strategy in attempting to establish vast 'parishes' run by tiny numbers of clergy, and advocated yet again that the eucharist must be at the centre of the corporate life of every local Christian community, whether or not a stipendiary priest was available:

Today Christians need to be told repeatedly and authoritatively that where the ordained cleric is not, Christ is still with them, and that Christ is the Priest, and that Christ will not reject their Eucharist. Where Christians are there is the Church, and where Christ is there is the Priest. So the great song of Redemption, the witness of the Church, might fill the world ... and we should escape from the slavery of Mammon and legal tradition into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. (Allen 1933, pp. 243-4)

These were the last words Allen was to publish on the subject. They produced no response whatever - so far had he moved in his thinking from current orthopraxy. (Half a century was to pass before Anglicans were seriously to engage with the issue of local church and ministry.) Allen did in fact continue to write on the subject - the typescripts survive amongst his papers. But no one would publish them<sup>1</sup>. He lived on to a good age, dying in Kenya in 1947 - like Jeremiah in Egypt, a prophet apparently disregarded to the end.

The subject of voluntary clergy did, however, briefly appear in the preface to the 1934 edition of Crockford's Clerical Directory. These prefaces, though provocatively expressed, may be regarded as a good reflection of much contemporary influential opinion. Year after year at this period, the editor discussed the state of the clergy. Yet this is his only reference to voluntary clergy, and it is utterly dismissive. He had been addressed by 'a correspondent' (was it Allen?) asserting that 'there

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<sup>1</sup>Amongst Allen's papers is a collection of "rejected articles", including one entitled 'The Supply of Clergy after the War' (1943), and the type-script of a 7-chapter book entitled The Ministry of Expansion, The Priesthood of the Laity. The latter is a discussion of the centrality of the Eucharist, and criticises Moberley's and Gore's concepts of the role of ordained clergy. (USPG: AP, 3.)



are plenty of good men ready now to make a start if the call of God were made clear to them seriously and by the proper authorities'. This assertion was countered in the full tradition of editorial sarcasm, as having -

all the vagueness which often characterizes advice tendered by those who will not have to put it into practice themselves ... the number of such men who would be forthcoming is negligible, and they do not exist in the places where they might be of most use. We believe that the ranks of male Sunday-School Teachers are not overcrowded in most large industrial parishes. (Crockford 1947, p. 144)

It would thus appear that the tide rising in favour of voluntary clergy in 1929 had suddenly turned, and five years later the water was scarcely in sight.

## 2. F.R.BARRY

The single and exceptional voice that broke the silence on voluntary clergy during these years was that of F.R.Barry. We have already noticed his supportive review of Allen's Case for Voluntary Clergy (see above II.4.v). Now a Canon of Westminster and an acknowledged prophet in the Church of England, Barry was invited to deliver the Moorhouse Lectures in Melbourne, Australia, in 1934. He took the opportunity to follow up his earlier work on Christian ethics in contemporary society (The Relevance of Christianity, 1931) with a discussion of the role of the institutional church in society. In a final lecture, he developed his ideas about the necessity of an ordained presence within the world of secular work. The lectures were published in 1935 under the title The Relevance of the Church (Barry 1935), and provoked widespread discussion in England<sup>1</sup>

This was the earliest systematic attempt to offer a rationale for a work-focussed non-stipendiary ministry, and indeed the phrase 'non-stipendiary' seems to have been coined by Barry, and used for the first time in this book<sup>2</sup>. Barry's starting point was an exposition of what

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<sup>1</sup>The book was reprinted at least twice, and Scribners produced an American edition in 1936. Charles Smyth gave it a laudatory review in Theology, Vol. 31, pp. 238-40.

<sup>2</sup>On page 213, he refers to 'these "non-stipendiary" ministers'.



today we might call 'incarnational theology':

The secular tasks of the world are integral elements in the life of the Church, and involved in the service of its altars. Else holiness is a word with no meaning... The family, the professions and Council Chambers, the technical skill on which modern life depends, are not merely fields for experiment in which to test out loyalty to the Church. They are themselves the material of Churchmanship. That is to say, it is not merely a question of carrying religion out into life amid the temptations of the world. It is a question of doing the world's work and responding to its opportunities with insight cleansed and motive directed by the grace of God through Jesus Christ.  
(Barry 1935, pp. 192-3)

Starting from this basis, Barry then attempted to re-present the case for voluntary clergy, 'not on grounds of expediency but of ultimate Christian and sacramental principal (p. 208). He believed that the downfall of the proposals made to the Lambeth Conference came about because the case had been presented 'chiefly in terms of an impoverished expedient to remedy the shortage of ordained men'. The traditional system of paid professional ministry, he claimed, was designed -

to safeguard the 'sacred calling' of the ordained minister against the contamination of worldliness. But that was false both in principle and in practice... Can we not conceive an ordained Ministry other than that of Rectors and Curates? (pp. 209-10)

There was a great danger of ministry becoming the preserve of a clerical caste concerned narrowly with ecclesial affairs, with a consequent 'disasterous rift between religion and the life of the world' (p. 212).

It was his desire to avoid precisely such a disaster that led Barry to fasten onto the value of ordained voluntary clergy:

What is really important about this suggestion is not the alleviation which it might offer to the problem of staffing the parishes... It is rather that it would help to exhibit in a truly sacramental expression the essential principle of the Christian Ministry. It would demonstrate that the Ministry of the Church is potentially exercised by all its members. It would make it clear that the ordained Ministry is sustained by, as it is meant to 'perfect', that essential priesthood of all believers which embraces every legitimate vocation. It would thus help to save Christianity from becoming a caricature of itself as something that people do after working hours.  
(pp. 212-3)

Barry called for a 'controlled experiment', which if successful, might be extended. He envisaged a situation where eventually 'large business houses could ... be provided with their own Minister, who was in fact one of their own staff (p. 215). Although he does not develop the point, Barry seems to have supposed that such a person might act as chaplain to



his own firm, thus making the parameters of the firm the sphere of his ministry in the same way that the parish was the sphere of the traditional professional clergy. However, he foresaw that such a non-stipendiary minister would exercise a ministry not only from the Church to the world, but also from the world of work to the church congregation:

The real strength of the case is one of principle. It is the desire to exhibit the Ministry as the consecration and focus of the ministry of the whole Christian body in the normal activities of life... What would it not mean to the Christian Group if the ministrant of God's gift for the sanctification of its Christian ministry were one who was actually sharing in the tasks and temptations of 'secular' daily life, and were looked up to as its natural leader in the life of Christian citizenship and service? Nor can one think of any experiment which, while preserving the Christian emphasis on the 'given-ness' of the means of Grace, as symbolised in a duly ordained Ministry, would do so much to safeguard the Church against the dominance of the clerical mind. It would help very effectively to demonstrate the sacramental character of the Church and the priestly vocation of the Christian life. It is on these essentially catholic grounds that the suggestion ought to be brought forward... The suggestion violates no catholic principle: it involves merely a change in accepted custom and a partial reversion to apostolic practice. (pp. 214-5)

Moreover, the ordination of men with mature experience of the world, Barry claimed, would both widen the basis of the ordained ministry, and 'would evoke from unordained members - through the Bridge-Ministry of the non-stipendiaries - new gifts of pastoral and prophetic ministry for the "edifying" of the whole Body' (p. 216). Barry did not speculate how this might happen in practice. (In later years, an opposite claim would be made: it was to be a constant cry raised against the idea of NSM that it devalued the ministry of the laity - cf. IV.3 below.)

Although The Relevance of the Church was widely discussed at the time, this part of the book produced no public response at all, for (as already indicated) the idea of voluntary clergy was considered for practical reasons to be a non-starter. Nevertheless, with hindsight it can be seen that Barry had deftly put his finger upon an issue which was to consume the attention of the post-war church: the inability of the professional clergy to communicate with working (especially industrial) life. In the future, NSM was often to be considered a 'bridge ministry', as Barry was the first to perceive. A quarter of a century later, Barry (now holding episcopal rank) was to be one of the principal figures who acted as midwives at the birth of NSM. Although the church's approach to industrial life was by that time somewhat different in ethos (through



the development of the Industrial Mission movement), the theological rationale justifying work-focussed ordained ministry did not significantly evolve beyond that proposed by Barry in 1935.

### 3. MINISTRY AND INDUSTRY

#### i) Church Assembly Report (1945)

There was no further discussion of NSM until after the War. The War itself enabled the Church to recognise just how wide a rift had opened between church and people. War service had brought together a cross-section of British society between the ages, roughly, of 18 and 40 years, and the evidence of service chaplains testified 'with one voice to the wholesale drift from organised religion' (Church Assembly 1945, p. 3). An informed estimate at the time (1945) suggested that 45% to 50% of the population were 'indifferent to religion', while 10% to 20% were 'hostile' (p. 3, n. 2)<sup>1</sup>. Against this background, the Church Assembly (June 1943) requested the Archbishops to set up a Commission 'to survey the whole problem of modern evangelism' and to report on the organization and methods by which the spiritual needs of the non-worshipping population could be most effectively met. A Commission was duly appointed, and included amongst its 50 members the Rev. A. Mervyn Stockwood<sup>2</sup> (then Vicar of St Matthew, Moorfields, Bristol). Its report, Towards the Conversion of England was presented in 1945.

This report included an 'Appended Note on Priests in Industry' (pp. 64-5), prepared by a sub-committee with a brief 'to consider how the Church is to make contact with the industrial community, with special reference to the possibility of men exercising their priesthood in industry'. Under its chairman, Mervyn Stockwood, the sub-committee made two adventurous recommendations:

1. In some circumstances, a parish priest should be allowed to take a job in industry for a shorter or longer period.

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<sup>1</sup>The figures quoted were extracted from Christian News Letter, 10 Feb 1943, and Supplement 172 on Religion and the People.

<sup>2</sup>Arthur Mervyn Stockwood (1913- ): Vicar of St Matthew's, Moorfields, Bristol, 1941-55; Vicar of Great St Mary's, Cambridge, 1955-59; Bishop of Southwark, 1959-80.



2. In exceptional circumstances, an industrial worker should be ordained as a deacon or a priest, to remain in industry and exercise his ministry as an industrial worker. (ibid.)

Thus a two-way flow was envisaged: ordained priests might become manual workers, and manual workers might become priests.

In the first case, the church would benefit by a number of its clergy coming to understand the working population better, and hopefully workers' popular prejudices might be broken down by finding themselves alongside a priest 'who was sharing the difficulties, problems and frustrations of their lives'. This first proposal did not greatly interfere with the traditional concept of ordained ministry, in that the priests concerned would all be well-educated ex-parochial clergy. They were, in effect, extending the parochial system into industry.

The second case, however, was much more radical in that it envisaged working-class priests, who would have neither the theological training nor the parochial pastoral experience currently assumed as the norm of ordained ministry. Neither would such men volunteer in the traditional pattern. They would arise within cells of Christian workers:

These cells will normally be led by laymen; but in some instances a number of allied groups may wish to submit to the Bishop the name of one of their members for ordination. It would be the duty of such a priest in industry to act as the authoritative representative of the Church in factory life, and to determine and correlate strategy. He would use his lunch hours for propaganda work and instruction, and would visit his fellow workers after factory hours. He would take a prominent part in trade union and municipal affairs. In some cases it might be practicable for him to be licensed to a city church and to use it as a centre for instruction and worship. It was agreed that the educational requirements of such a priest would be different from those of the parish priest, and it should be left to the discretion of the Bishop to decide the nature and length of the training. (ibid., p. 65)

It is worth noting that although this recommendation sounds so radical and novel, it actually assumes that the style and content of the ordained workers' ministry is to be modelled almost exactly upon that of the traditional professional clergy. Moreover there is no consideration of whether factory life could tolerate such a ministry!

In the event, the Commission as a whole put its faith in the priesthood of the laity, and in parochial clergy who might be appointed



'Factory Chaplains'. For, it was claimed, the sub-committee's recommendation raised 'so many problems that we do not feel competent to pronounce upon it' (p. 62). In view of this attitude, the Church Assembly itself was not prepared to sponsor action along the lines of the second recommendation.

## ii) Early Experience of Priests in Industry

It is important to stress that the ideas put forward in the 'Appended Note' were not simply hypothetical. There were by 1945 some English priests who had direct experience of factory life. E.R. Wickham (later bishop of Middleton), for instance, was from 1941 to 1944 Chaplain to an Ordnance Factory at Swynnerton; and the sub-committee heard evidence from the Rev. E. Stopford, 'a priest working in industry'<sup>1</sup>.

But there were also a few priests who had deliberately decided to earn their living as factory manual workers. One such was Hugh E.J. Lister<sup>2</sup>, who graduated from Cambridge with an engineering degree in 1922. After a period working with the Great Western Railway (Engineering Section), he was ordained (1929), serving two curacies. Thereafter he did not hold an ecclesiastical appointment, but devoted himself to Trade Union and WEA work amongst the factory workers of Hackney Wick. He deliberately lived at his own expense in this poor area of London. He considered this identification with the working-class to be part of his priestly vocation, and maintained a 'non-stipendiary' attachment to the local Mission Church throughout the period. During the War he insisted on serving as a combatant, and was killed in 1944. A biography appeared shortly afterwards (Cameron 1946)<sup>3</sup>, to be followed by an article in Theology comparing Lister to the Abbé Godin (Phillips 1947). Thus written testimony to this Anglican priest's actual life appeared at the very moment that the notion of priests in industry was prominently under discussion.

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<sup>1</sup>He is described thus in the 'Appended Note'. However, Crockfords Clerical Directory lists the Rev. Eric Stopford as Rector of St Mark's, Newton Heath, Manchester, between 1939 and 1946. Presumably, therefore, he was not an industrial worker, but a local incumbent acting as a 'Factory Chaplain'.

<sup>2</sup>Hugh Evelyn Jackson Lister: Curate, All Saints, Poplar, 1929-31; St. George's, Bloomsbury, 1931-2; St. Mary of Eton, Hackney Wick from 1935.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Lloyd 1950, pp. 222-4.



Another such priest was Michael Gedge, who between 1931 and 1943 was Chaplain to the Charterhouse Mission in Bermondsey. For two years during the War he worked in an engineering factory, with the consent of his bishop. In 1951 he published an autobiographical account of his industrial experiences, under the title Priest-Workman in England: A Study in Life (Anon. 1951). The book is an extremely personal document, and had to be published anonymously (because SPCK feared libel action on account of some of the personal incidents recited in it). Gedge did not attempt to justify his actions theologically from Christian tradition, but recounted experiences and then reflected upon them pastorally. Fundamentally Gedge wanted to discover the answer to a pastoral question:

How is it that ... our most faithful Christians so often frankly admit ... that one cannot be a real Christian at work?

(Anon. 1951, p. xiii)

He hoped for developments similar to those described in the 'Appended Note on Priests in Industry' (see III.3.i above): Christian workers should band together in cells; some might be ordained to the permanent diaconate (after training through evening classes) (p. 182); a few might later be ordained priest (after further training) (p. 183); both lay workers and ordained workers should form themselves into an Order for mutual support (pp. 184-5); they should live in the factory neighbourhood, in working-class dwellings; the clergy could be unpaid curates at the local parish church. As we shall see, all of these ideas were later to be explored further by others.

Unknown to Gedge at the time, French priests had been driven to take similar action. Most famous of them was Fr. Henri Perrin SJ (1914-54), who had voluntarily joined French workers conscripted by the occupying power into German industry. It was the only way the conscripts could receive the ministrations of a priest. After the War, a number of young French priests were inspired by this vision of working priests, and took this as a model for evangelizing the French industrial population.

The experiment attracted keen interest in England. An article appeared in January 1947 recounting the French experiment for Anglican readership (Belgion 1947), and before long English translations of works produced within the French worker-priest movement itself began to appear



(primarily intended for English Roman Catholic readership). The first to be published was Perrin's Priest-Workman in Germany (1947), after which Gedge chose the title of his own book.<sup>1</sup> During the years up to 1954, (when the Vatican clipped the wings of the worker-priest movement,) a number of Church of England priests visited France to see for themselves how this pattern of ministry operated. There was widespread agreement that the English working class was not so separated from and antagonistic to the Church as its French counterpart, and that therefore the French experiment could not (and need not) be imitated in England.

But it is difficult to exaggerate the inspiration for experimentation with ministry which was received from France - and that from a church which attached such a high sacramental value to priesthood. One English observer, David Edwards<sup>2</sup>, considered it -

the most courageous and extensive experiment undertaken by any Christian Church anywhere to bridge the gulf fixed since the nineteenth century between organized religion and the working classes.  
(Edwards 1961, p. 5)

And as editor of the SCM Press, he set about publishing a discussion of the French worker-priest movement at a time (1961) when NSM was actively under consideration in the Church of England. The existence of this book alone is evidence enough of the influence and inspiration of the French experiment leading to growing pressure for the establishment of NSM within the Church of England.

On a very small scale there did come into existence a self-conscious, but little publicised, group of Anglican priests who deliberately entered manual work in industry. They called themselves 'The Worker Church Group'. By 1965, there were six priests and a number of laity in the Group - the longest serving worker amongst them having begun work in a Kent coal-mine in 1951<sup>3</sup>. We shall consider the rationale

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<sup>1</sup>Two other books which proved influential in England were Maisie Ward's France Pagan? The Ministry of the Abbé Godin (1949) (which included an edited translation of La France, Pays de Mission? by H. Godin and Y. Daniel), and G. Michonneau's Revolution in a City Parish (1949).

<sup>2</sup>David Lawrence Edwards (1929- ): Secretary SCM, 1955-8; Editor, SCM Press, 1959-66; Dean, Kings College, Cambridge, 1966-70; Canon, Westminster Abbey, 1970-78; Dean of Norwich, 1978-83; Provost of Southwark, 1983- .

<sup>3</sup>Rowe 1965, Appendix B.



of this Group at a later stage (III.7.iv below). It will be interesting to ask at that point why the vision of this Group was confined to so very few priests in England.

In passing, it may be noted that in the period around 1950 considerable disenchantment with the parochial system as an adequate agency of Christian ministry was being voiced in certain quarters, only to be countered by strong and authoritative re-statements of the need for a revitalised parochial ministry. Thus, for example, a protracted correspondence in The Times<sup>1</sup> included a letter from a radically minded priest<sup>2</sup> claiming:

what we need in this new situation is a large company of priests working in the professions, industry and trade, re-establishing living contact between the Church and those social contexts in which men find and follow their interests and develop their characteristic points of view. The ideal of this new system should be to see at least one priest member in each unitary functional group, just as the old parochial system aimed at providing at least one priest member for each local village group. (Times, 30 June 1950, p. 7d)

The issue provoked such a head of steam that a subsequent leading article (18 July) found it necessary to re-state the basis of the territorial (parochial) system. Shortly afterwards, a bishop published what amounted to a manifesto for the revitalisation of the parish (de Blank 1954), though he was prepared to allow that 'the day is bound to come when there will be both a professional ... and a non-professional ministry'; but rather than sending priests into industry on the French pattern, he was in favour of doing it the other way round: 'Why not ordain workers who have proved themselves as Christians in their daily work?' (ibid., pp. 174-6). Such a book, though allowing for alternative patterns of ministry, nevertheless presented a firm belief in the value of the parochial system.

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<sup>1</sup>Times, 30 June 1950, p. 7d; 11 July, p. 5g; 8 July, p. 5e; 18 July, p. 7e. The writer of the second letter was Jack Strong (later a member of the Worker Church Group). The original correspondence sprang from controversy over the legal disability preventing the Rev. J.G. MacManaway, duly elected as an Ulster MP, from taking his seat in Westminster.

<sup>2</sup>Julian Victor Langmead Casserley (1909- ): Rector of L. Easton, 1938-41; Vicar of Oxhey, 1941-5; Watchet, 1945-9; Rector of Mamhead, 1949-52; Professor of Theology, General Theological Seminary, New York, 1952-9; Professor of Philosophical Theology, Seabury Western Seminary, 1959-74.



### iii) Theological Discussion 1950-55

During the years 1950-55, the journal Theology published a number of articles which illustrate changing attitudes to the secular employment of the clergy. These provide a kind of 'backdrop' to the Church of England's official thinking, which eventually crystallised in a Convocation Report on 'gainful secular occupation' of the clergy (Convocation of Canterbury 1955) to be discussed below (III.4.i). The 'backdrop' sketched the outlines of the areas within which subsequent discussion was to take place.

Not surprisingly, in the years after the second World War, there was anxiety over the great drop in numbers of ordinands - just as there had been after World War I. In fact the growth rate in ordinations during the six years after each War was remarkably similar: 114 to 463 (1918-23) compared with 159 to 419 (1945-50)<sup>1</sup>. The anxiety focussed upon the fact that even after six years the figures were greatly below the pre-War levels of 610 (1914) and 589 (1939), thus making any talk of the church regaining its pre-War staffing level seem utterly unrealistic. Just as Roland Allen had found opportunity in this anxiety to centre attention on his 'solution' of voluntary clergy, so too after World War II the shortage of clergy became a spur to critical examination of the traditional full-time professional model of ministry.

The opening speech of the drama came from a former General Secretary of CACTM, John Phillips<sup>2</sup>, in an article (Phillips 1950a) commending a plan to make Trinity Sunday 1950 a day of prayer and almsgiving for ordination training, and urging headmasters and others to lay the claims of ordination before every schoolboy. In passing, he mentioned a current proposal that 'barristers, solicitors, etc.', might be ordained 'and minister as part-time men at weekends'. But he dismissed the suggestion, insisting that there could be -

no solution apart from the provision of sufficient full-time priests. It is the pastoral ministry of the Church which is so lacking today.  
(ibid., p. 244)

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<sup>1</sup>These figures are quoted from Church Statistics 1962, p. 38, Table 36.

<sup>2</sup>John Henry Lawrence Phillips (1910- ): Rector of Farnley, 1938-45; Director of Service Ordinand Candidates, 1945-8; General Secretary, CACTM, 1948-9; Archdeacon of Nottingham, 1949-60; Bishop of Portsmouth, 1960-75.



The attitude of this article was promptly challenged by D.L. Edwards who in correspondence (Edwards 1950) referred to the motives of French priest-workmen in attempting to bridge the gap between clergy and people; he also noted the impediments which the current CACTM selection system put in the way of candidates from English working-class backgrounds. In a rejoinder, Phillips agreed that -

if part-time priests are to be admitted, then of course working-class priests must be an essential part... The Church ... has to decide whether a division of this kind i.e. full-time and part-time within the priesthood is desirable. (Phillips 1950b, p. 345)

It is significant that Phillips chose to describe such a development not as an extension of the priesthood, but as a 'division' within it.

This correspondence in turn prompted Owen Chadwick<sup>1</sup> to write an extended article entitled 'Tent-makers' (Chadwick 1951), analysing the motives of the different advocates of 'part-time' clergy and the corresponding variety of proposals. With remarkable acumen, this article pinpoints issues which subsequently became matters of considerable controversy. Because Chadwick's analysis has, in the light of subsequent history, proved to be very perceptive, it is worth laying out his discussion in detail.

Chadwick suggested (p. 43) that there were four varieties of motive in proposals for 'part-time' clergy:

- i) the **parochial** motive - to provide enough clergy to remedy current shortage;
- ii) the **economic** motive - the church would be unable to pay an adequate staff, 'therefore we must return to tent-making';
- iii) the **evangelistic** motive - the professional independence of the clergy must be broken down to open new doors for evangelism;
- iv) the **industrial** motive - a variety of (iii), 'powerfully influenced by the work of Godin and Michonneau in France, or by Perrin's Priest-Workmen in Germany.

Chadwick claimed that it was important to distinguish between the problem of the delapidation of the parochial system and the problem of

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<sup>1</sup>William Owen Chadwick (1916- ): Dean, Trinity College, Cambridge, 1949-56; Master, Selwyn College, Cambridge, 1956-83; Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History, 1958-68; Regius Professor of Modern History, 1968-83; President British Academy, 1981- .



the priesthood in industrial society:

The two problems must be treated in different ways. And it is possible that the Church could attempt at present to supply an answer to only one of them. It would be possible for the Church to inaugurate a ministry, intended to assist the parish priests, without touching even the fringes of the industrial communities. And conversely it would be possible for the Church to embark upon an assault upon industrial society, without thereby giving more than a minimal assistance in the maintenance of the parishes. (p. 44)

Subsequent history has demonstrated the astonishing accuracy of these distinctions. Ever conscious of its parochial system, the Church of England has concentrated on making good this particular delapidation, and has shown small ability to handle the issue of priesthood in industry.

Chadwick proceeded to comment on the various proposed remedies. Much of his analysis later found its way into the report on a revised Canon (see III.4.i below) .

He dismissed the proposed use of the diaconate as a supplementary ministry:

The reason for making our supplementary clergy deacons instead of priests can almost be reduced to this: we must ensure that the supplementary clergy are never able to forget that they are supplementary: and this negative reason is not good enough. (p. 46)

Regarding ordination of secularly employed people to the priesthood for the purpose of assisting the parish priest in his normal duties, Chadwick considered that if the traditional pattern of requiring men to train at a theological college was adhered to, then only middle-class professional men were likely to volunteer, since they were also well accustomed to handling abstract ideas. He defended potential ordinands in secular employment against the charge of lacking the renunciation demanded of priestly vocation:

It is easy to exaggerate the difference between the renunciation demanded from the whole-time priest and the renunciation demanded of the priest in secular occupation. We can imagine circumstances in which the priest in secular occupation needed a more resolute renunciation. To be responsible for carrying the Gospel into a man's working community demands both self-sacrifice and responsibility. (p. 48)



Moreover, pastoral responsibilities at work would open up:

While the full-time vicar has pastoral opportunities far beyond those open to the priest in a profession, the priest in the profession has pastoral opportunities which are not normally open to the incumbent whose work lies apart from the ordinary working purpose of the community. (ibid.)

The extent to which these (at the time) hypothetical descriptions correspond to the actual praxis of NSM three decades later is astonishing (cf. Vaughan 1986a).

Regarding priesthood in industry, Chadwick foresaw that traditional middle-class priests working in industry could not achieve the desired results. They would lack 'the mentality of the working man'. What was required was that 'industrial society ... like any other mission field, be taught to produce its own priests'. The problems of training a working man while he remained in full-time employment were acknowledged:

The Communists succeed in training working men in leadership by a combination of night classes, week-end courses, and summer camps. Perhaps these are the only methods open to Christians. (p. 49)

Again, the correspondence between Chadwick's vision and the training pattern that actually developed (cf. Hodge 1983a) is remarkable. Chadwick recognised that the training of such priests might not be equivalent to traditional training, yet, by contrast, a very exacting training would be set before them:

They will undergo the strain of adding to some very tiring manual labour a certain amount of equally exhausting intellectual labour. The people who have experimented with this kind of combination, priesthood and manual labour, assert that the "wear and tear" is severe - upon the physical, intellectual and spiritual energy. Men could stand up to this kind of strain only if they possessed a profound personal discipline and an adequate theological background. Yet we are proposing to subject to this strain men who are going to receive a training in prayer and theology which is still uncertain but which can scarcely be as profound as those of the average middle-class theological student. (ibid.)

As it transpired, the standard of part-time training programmes was to be comparable to that of the traditional colleges; but Chadwick's perception of the likely strain upon part-time students was acute.

Finally, Chadwick dared to imagine 'the ministry of the Church in 1970'. His vision, which has only partially come true, may be quoted in full:



There would be a large number of whole-time clergy, bishops, archdeacons, men given canonries for the purpose of research and scholarship, rectors of parishes. But the parish would be a larger area: and from the incumbent would be demanded a higher standard of teaching: he would have necessarily to be responsible for the training and pastoral welfare of the other priests working in the parish. These whole-time priests would still run into thousands, but they would be sufficiently few for the Church to ensure that they were relieved from the fear of poverty and that they were able to give their whole attention to being full-time. Within the parishes, varying according to the circumstances of the parish, would be a number of priests gainfully employed in whole-time secular occupations. In most parishes these would still be drawn from the graduate class in the population. In industrial parishes a wholly different type of priest would be working in the mills. These supplementary clergy would all be under the direction and supervision of the rectors of the parishes or of a team specially appointed by the bishops for this duty of supervision. There could be interchange according to need and vocation between the whole-time and the supplementary . (p. 50)

It is worth noticing where and why this vision was or was not fulfilled. Chadwick was over optimistic in estimating the time-scale: it took all of twenty years even to initiate NSM officially. Yet, even after thirty years, most parishes do not have the services of one non-stipendiary minister, let alone 'a number of priests gainfully employed'. Chadwick had failed to pay attention to the legal obstacles surrounding the introduction of NSM. Moreover he did not realise that the control he was offering to incumbents would tend to constrain the development of NSM (see IV.5 below). But he was right in supposing that the Church would not do anything to undermine the authority of incumbents, and that recruits to this pattern of ministry would be generally from the professional classes, and that there would be interchange between stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministry. However, nothing of significance has developed of his vision for industrial parishes, because of the Church's insistence upon a unitary standard of training for the priesthood.

The following year (1952) Theology carried an article by J.A.T. Robinson<sup>1</sup>, then Dean of Clare College, Cambridge, questioning the appropriateness of the style of training and curriculum currently offered at theological colleges. The article is significant, for it contains embryonic ideas which Robinson was later to put into effect as Bishop of Woolwich and chairman of the Southwark Ordination Course. Robinson argued that the traditional colleges were training for an inappropriate

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<sup>1</sup>John Arthur Thomas Robinson (1919-83): Dean, Clare College, Cambridge, 1951-59; Bishop of Woolwich, 1959-69; Dean, Trinity College, Cambridge, 1969-83.



pattern of leadership. The real leadership of the nation had passed from the 'economically independent' to the managerial class. He considered that the leadership style of the full-time clergy of the future would correspondingly be more akin to that of 'welfare officers, personnel managers, employment officers, children's officers, almoners, education officers, youth organizers, probation officers, etc.' Accordingly, they needed a training curriculum akin to that of the the Institute of Personnel Management. The point that directly concerns the present study is that Robinson recognised that -

the identification of the ministry with the clerical profession will have to go... The coming pattern of ... ministry is bound to be largely non-professional, in the sense that its priesthood will consist in great proportion of men working in secular jobs at every level, both manual and administrative. The co-ordination and direction of these men must remain the responsibility of the full-time priest ... whose organizational unit ... would be bound to be considerably larger than the traditional English parish. The relatively small highly-trained leadership would primarily be engaged in leading their regiment from behind - supplying a directive, inspiration, and ammunition to those who had some real chance of breaking through the front line because they were actually living in it. Though working priests would take their proper part in the corporate Sunday worship of the parish community, their prime day-to-day responsibility would be their "house-church" in the street-block, the factory, the office, or the school, where they were living or working. Their centre of reference would not be directly to the parish church (as with the present lay-reader) so much as to the hive of Christian existence within which, pastorally and sacramentally, they would, as it were, act as the queen bee in a way that an unordained man never could. (Robinson 1952, pp. 203-4)

Thus Robinson, like Chadwick, expected the non-professional ministry to grow to a large size, outnumbering the full-time clergy, though being co-ordinated by them. This seems to have been a common vision during the 1950s and 1960s. But though new patterns of ministry might be envisaged and encouraged, the expectation was that the status and power of the professional clergy would still predominate, despite their reduced numbers. Even amongst radical thinkers, the presumption was that in a modified form the parochial system would survive much as before.

Inevitably, conservatives, wishing to maintain the traditional priestly ministry intact, offered variant visions of how to handle pastoral necessities by other means. For instance, the Principal of the Queen's



College, Birmingham, - J.O.Cobham<sup>1</sup> - published a further response to Phillips challenge by commending a tent-making ministry of Readers and Deacons:

The solution that I would venture to commend is one of maintaining the priesthood as a full-time ministry requiring a thorough training and preparation, and at the same time greatly expanding both the readership and the diaconate as part-time ministries in the Church of God...

What I am picturing in every parish church is a Eucharist that would remarkably resemble that described by Justin. It is the incumbent who would be president... There would be two, three - perhaps six or seven - deacons who would administer communion and perform the duties of churchwarden, vergers, sidesmen and the like. And there would be two or three readers. Outside the church building they could exercise some pastoral care in the neighbourhood of their homes.  
(Cobham 1953, pp. 128-130)

The attitude of this article neatly illustrates the variety of motives discussed by Chadwick. Cobham's motive was simply the 'pastoral', while Chadwick and Robinson were inspired by 'evangelistic' and 'industrial' motives.

A year later, F.B.Welbourn<sup>2</sup> published a brief but provocative article entitled 'Massing Priests'. He intended it as a positive contribution to 'the irrepressible demand for an amateur priesthood' (Welbourn 1954, p. 161), and refuted the usual derogatory sense in which his title phrase is usually employed. He argued that if the functions of an Anglican parson were analysed, they fell into five categories: preacher, teacher, pastor, administrator and celebrant. Although all these functions were usually exercised by a single 'general practitioner' figure, he suggested that there was no reason in principle why these functions should not be exercised by individuals ordained to 'specialist practice'. In which case, it would be appropriate to ordain a man simply to the office of President. Welbourn's argument went as follows:

The function of celebrating the Eucharist belongs to the office of President (and not vice versa); and presidents are chosen not by training in colleges but by proved worth. They must be as capable of guiding the affairs of the congregation as a chairman of local government is capable in his own sphere. Normally the office could be expected to be offered to men who, while outstanding in their profession, had shown themselves also to be men of humility and good churchmanship: and to have the qualities of voice and

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<sup>1</sup>John Oldcastle Cobham: Principal, Queen's College, Birmingham, 1934-53; Archdeacon of Durham, 1953-69.

<sup>2</sup>Frederick Burkewood Welbourn (1912- ): Chaplain, Makerere College, Kampala, 1946-55; Warden Mitchell Hall, Makerere University College, 1955-64; Lecturer, University of Bristol, 1966-78.



imagination necessary (after the minimum of training) to leaders of worship. It would be in essence (and not by mere expediency) a spare-time, non-stipendiary, office... Ordination would be specifically to the Presidency, and only when he had the necessary qualifications would the President be licensed also to engage in theological or pastoral activity. (ibid., pp. 162-3)

The advantage of such a development would be that the president's standing in the world of work outside the church building would be reflected in the congregation's worship, and vice versa:

The presidents would be massing priests - but with this significant difference that, through their own secular occupation and through their presidency, in the full sense, of the congregation outside as well as within their church building, the mass would be seen as the activity of the whole Church, the essential focus of the total offering of the Church's life. (ibid., p. 163)

Welbourn was thus (probably unconsciously) echoing Barry's perception that the firmest rationale for non-stipendiary ministry rested upon an understanding of 'the Ministry as the consecration and focus of the ministry of the whole Christian body in the normal activities of life' (Barry 1935, p. 214) (see III.2 above).

The correspondence which ensued in Theology on the one hand accused Welbourn of 'congregationalism'<sup>1</sup>, and on the other hand commended him for reopening Roland Allen's case for voluntary clergy:

Mr Welbourn's article breaks silence on these things that has lasted too long, and reopens a question to which it is high time a positive answer is found.<sup>2</sup>

Unenthusiastic echoes of this kind of thinking found their way cursorily into a CACTM report to Church Assembly on recruitment for the Ministry, entitled 'Supply of Fit Persons':

It may be that some kind of subsidiary Ministry - a territorial force, as it were, behind and supporting the regular whole-timers - needs to be considered far more seriously.

(Church Assembly 1954, p. 4)

However, this brief reference was made only to highlight the urgency of a higher priority:

But we must not allow ourselves to be diverted by such possibilities from the immediate and essential need to recruit enough men to supply the whole-time ministry. (ibid., p. 5)

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Williams, Theology, Vol. 57, pp. 304-5.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from James Collins, Theology, Vol. 57, p. 386.



Indeed, when introducing the debate in Church Assembly, Bishop Barry relegated such ideas to the status of 'long distance questions' which must not deflect attention from the pressing task of securing men for 'the normal, regular, whole-time parochial Ministry' (Proceedings, 1954, p. 58). One layman (W.H.Saumarez Smith) vainly pleaded that this was 'something which ought to be considered now' (p. 64), but was greeted with the response that there was 'no call for panic' (p. 66)!

In passing, it is worth noticing Barry's apparently ambivalent attitude to what he preferred to term 'Supplementary Ministry'. While he was well able to argue the case for it when writing in a speculative vein (eg. Barry 1935, 1958), when speaking as the Chairman of a CACTM committee<sup>1</sup> in a debate about recruitment for the ministry, he conformed to the dominant viewpoint, uttering the strongest of statements about the normative nature of parochial ministry. No doubt the pragmatics of church politics required such a stance. So this incident seems to be a good example of how the demands of the parochial system tend to drown pleas for alternative patterns of ministry, even for a man of such intellect and personality as Barry.

Finally, two articles by Michael Jackson<sup>2</sup>, writing from experience of the Sheffield Industrial Mission, made a strong and clear case for a 'non-professional ministry'. He argued that the industrial nature of contemporary English society required a missionary strategy of the Church **in the place of work**. While the Christian witness of laymen at work was critical, the presence amongst them of a non-professional ordained minister would promote the sense that such witness was not merely individual (and potentially sectarian), but part of the witness of the whole Body:

Today it is impossible for the Church to serve the nation adequately through the parishes. The Church must find other ways of 'being parochial' ... towards the dominating institutions of national life and therefore, especially, towards industry. These new 'parishes' must be linked with the whole body of the Church. One way is through ordination. An ordained man is a link vertically with his bishop and a link horizontally with his fellow clergy and the rest of the Church. Groups of laymen soon become sectarian; a properly constituted Church order is at least a help towards catholicity.

(Jackson 1955, pp. 260-1)

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<sup>1</sup>Barry had been Chairman of the Recruiting Committee since the War.

<sup>2</sup>Michael James Jackson (1925- ): Industrial Chaplain, Sheffield, 1955-9; Senior Industrial Chaplain, Sheffield, 1959-69; Vicar, St George's Doncaster, 1969-73; Vicar of Nottingham, 1973- .



Such a man would not primarily be a 'helper-out in parishes', for -

his concern is his place of work and organizations connected with it like trade unions, professional associations, and political parties... He must help men to grapple with the difficult problems, technical and human, of industry itself and with the more general problem of an industrial society. (ibid., p. 259 and p. 258)

In a second, rather fuller article, Michael Jackson with Stanley Booth-Clibborn<sup>1</sup> elaborated in more detail their vision of how such a non-professional ministry might operate in relation to existing church structures. They repeated (with acknowledgement) the case made by Roland Allen, up-dating it in the light of pressure from industrial society, increased sacramental life of the Church, and the need for pastoral reorganization in urban parishes. They repeated many of Allen's answers to objections, and added one of their own: they freely acknowledged that there would arise 'a problem of jurisdiction' over the pastoral activities of non-professional ministers - 'for instance men in a certain works may prefer to bring their children for baptism to an ordained minister working there rather than to their parish priest'. Jackson and Booth-Clibborn suggested that the church already possessed a model for handling such a situation:

The traditional Anglican conception of the established Church ministering to the whole nation, which lies at the heart of parochial policy, and which is also recognised by the provision of chaplaincies (eg. Armed Forces, prisons, hospitals, etc.), should be carried over into a field where so many members of our society spend so much of their lives. (Booth-Clibborn & Jackson 1955, p. 371)

They anticipated the anxieties of traditional theological colleges with assuaging arguments: full-time clergy would be needed as much as ever, especially in a teaching role; high quality training in colleges for professional men would thus be essential; the introduction of non-professional ordained ministry would not of itself lead to 'the whole salvation of the Church of England'. Nevertheless they agreed with earlier articles that 'it is highly questionable whether colleges as at present constituted are a necessary preliminary to the ordination' of non-professional ministers: 'something more on the lines of regular "night-school" over a long period with week-end courses would seem to be more appropriate' (ibid., p. 372).

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<sup>1</sup>Stanley Eric Francis Booth-Clibborn (1924- ): Curate, Attercliffe, Sheffield, 1954-56; missionary in Kenya, 1956-67; Vicar, Great St Mary's Cambridge, 1970-78; Bishop of Manchester, 1979- .



We may note in passing that correspondence arising from these articles once again expressed the fear that the introduction of non-professional ministry 'might involve ... a form of congregationalism'<sup>1</sup>. That is to say, the relationship of such ministry to episcopal and diocesan structures seemed unclear, and therefore a cause for anxiety. Though not articulated as such, the anxiety seems to have been over the issue of <sup>professional</sup> control.

Both these articles by Jackson were written in 1955, at a time when he himself was working as an industrial employee, exploring in a personal capacity the very non-professional ministry which he was writing about. Through his experience, and that of other associated with him, important decisions about the subsequent pattern of industrial mission in England were shortly afterwards to be made; they effectively closed the door to further thought of ordination of industrial workers. It is therefore instructive to take note of Jackson's story, and of the influences working upon him<sup>2</sup>.

While still an undergraduate at Cambridge, he visited France (1949), met worker priests in Paris and obtained much of the Abbé Godin's literature. He was a close friend of Martyn Grubb, who as an ordinand had spent a vacation working on the railways at Bristol, and from 1951 was to become a priest-workman in Southall, and later a member of the Worker Church Group (see III.7.iv below). The pair of them invited Bishop Leslie Hunter of Sheffield to address a meeting of undergraduate ordinands in Cambridge on the subject of the Church and Industry. Encouraged by the result, Hunter organized a conference for ordinands in Sheffield during July 1950. Ministry to the working-class was the major focus of interest at the conference. That summer Jackson graduated, and spent the next twelve months working on the shop floor of two Sheffield factories.

Then, after two years ordination training in a theological college, he returned to Sheffield at the invitation of Bishop Hunter, who had offered to ordain deacons to work in industry. Jackson was the only ordinand to take up the episcopal offer. For a year he worked in the

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<sup>1</sup>John L.Badger, Theology, Vol. 58, pp. 468-9.

<sup>2</sup>I am grateful to Canon Michael Jackson, Vicar of Nottingham, for the personal information contained in the following paragraphs; he gave it to me in an interview on 24th June 1981.



electrical melting shop of Firth Browns, establishing himself on the shop-floor. The following year (1955), the shop steward (Ernie Phillips) told the bishop it was time he ordained Jackson. After consultation with management, Jackson was duly ordained deacon by Bishop Hunter at Trinity 1955. For the next three and a half years he worked as a non-stipendiary deacon in the same job, being concurrently licensed as curate of Tinsley (Sheffield).

Thus, it was in the year of his ordination as deacon that Jackson wrote for Theology. In writing about non-professional ministry, he was therefore writing about his hopes for his own experimental ministry under the aegis of Bishop Hunter. With this in mind, Jackson's comments about the distinction between the ministry of an industrial chaplain and that of a non-professional ministers is all the more revealing:

As against the extensive ministry of the industrial chaplain he exercises an intensive ministry in depth at his place of work, living alongside men and continually in touch with many of those who slip through the wide-meshed net of the industrial chaplains... It remains to be discovered by experiment whether ordination of men at work may not advance a new quality of Christian living and a new form of Christian association, appropriate to and with roots in industry, a 'light-bearing community', in Abbé Godin's phrase, within the natural community of industry. (Jackson 1955, p. 259)

But by 1957, Jackson had drawn unfavourable conclusions from his experiment as an ordained worker. He withdrew from his engineering employment, and was ordained priest, convinced that an ordained presence as a worker was not to be the way forward for the Church of England. He gives two reasons why he reached this conclusion. First, his presence created difficulties for management (who had been consulted all along): the ordained man tended to be seen as on the side of the workers, thus 'sanctifying' that side - and indirectly 'de-sanctifying' the management side. Secondly, ordination did not appear to make much difference to his position, except in the negative way that he tended to be regarded as the 'official Christian', and an excuse for other workers not to take up their Christian responsibilities.



The conclusions drawn from this experience had a far-reaching effect.<sup>1</sup> For E.R.Wickham, the Diocesan Missioner to Industry in Sheffield, was heavily influenced by it when producing a report which was to become the blue-print for Industrial Mission in the Church of England. To this report we now turn.

#### iv) Social and Industrial Council Discussion 1950-59

During the 1950s, a variety of conflicting ideas were discussed in central church councils as to what strategy the Church of England should adopt in relation to industry: should it encourage trained priests to seek waged employment, or ordain factory workers, or appoint specialist Industrial Chaplains, or depend upon parish priests (perhaps with a heightened awareness of issues in the industrial world) ? Opinions ebbed and flowed, as the following account shows; but in the end it was Wickham's position which won the day in 1959.

The Church Assembly had in 1950 set up a Social and Industrial Commission (later renamed the Social and Industrial Council), with Leslie Hunter, Bishop of Sheffield, as its chairman. A very early item on its agenda was to consider how it would 'examine and report on the recent extra parochial experiments on the Continent' (Standing Committee Minute, 17 Jan 1950). Shortly afterwards (1952) it was invited by the chairman of CACTM (Bishop Bradfield) to express an opinion on:

First, the provision of Factory Chaplains, and second, the question as to whether it might not be desirable in certain cases, for men already in industry, and remaining there, to be ordained, so that, so to speak, they exercise their priesthood not only at the altar and in church, but also at the factory bench.

(CH: SIC/C/Letter dated 6 Nov 1952)

The Council replied negatively to both ideas, considering that if suitable training in industrial experience and awareness of industrial society were offered to the theological college ordinands<sup>2</sup>, then the need for factory chaplains would evaporate and 'it should always be possible to find suitable men for any kind of parish'. The Council seems to have been confident that parochial clergy themselves could be chaplains to

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<sup>1</sup>Michael Atkinson holds the same opinion about the key significance of conclusions arrived at from Jackson's experiences (Atkinson 1985, pp. 165-6).

<sup>2</sup>cf. Hunter's initiatives in Sheffield.



factories in their own parishes. On this basis, the Council 'also felt that the question of men already in industry being ordained while remaining in industrial employment should not arise' (ibid., letter from Bishop Hunter to the Chairman of CACTM, 2 Dec 1952).

However, a little later, in the same year as Michael Jackson's articles (1955), the pendulum seems to have swung in the opposite direction. In preparing a report for the Church Assembly on Moral Re-Armament (CA 1129), the Council recommended:

We strongly support the growing volume of opinion which holds that the Church should recognise the necessity of a supplementary, non-parochial ministry to meet the demands and opportunities presented by the field of industry.

(Church Assembly 1955, p. 46)

Nevertheless, by 1959, opinion had shifted again. In that year a working party of the Council presented to the Church Assembly the highly influential report mentioned above, The Task of the Church in Relation to Industry (CA 1288). The secretary of this working party was E.R.Wickham. The report was accepted by the Church Assembly and became the blue-print for the establishment of Industrial Mission in England. What is extraordinary is that from beginning to end, the report was utterly silent about worker priests (whether French or English), despite purporting to offer a survey and appraisal of 'the Present State of the Church's Work in Industry'. In view of the fact that (on a small scale) some priests were continuing to work in industry, it seems a high handed approach to have excluded their experience altogether. Hunter may have sensed this, for in introducing the Report to Church Assembly (July 1959), he slipped in the following sentence:

It must be a layman's movement, but also with a place for the priest-workman and the workman-priest, for the whole-time padres and the parish clergy part-time - a total ministry of the whole Church for the whole of Industry.

(Proceedings, 1959, pp. 231-2)

But only a single speaker, Sir Kenneth Grubb (whose son Martyn was a priest-workman) referred in debate to French and English worker-priests (ibid., pp. 237-8).

All in all, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that during the 1950s, at least in the circle where church strategy in relation to industry was being determined, power and influence lay with those who emphasised the critical role of the laity, supported by a professional clergy (whether



incumbents or the new breed of full-time industrial chaplains). However, as will emerge from what follows, in CACTM circles (where the view of the world of work was not confined to industry) there was more willingness to envisage a role for a non-professional ministry, particularly under the chairmanship of Bishop Harold Bradfield<sup>1</sup>.

It seems therefore that in two of the central councils of the Church of England, markedly divergent views of a non-professional ministry existed. This state of affairs must have served as a check to any radical and forthright experimentation in developing any pattern of non-professional ministry.

#### 4. REVISION OF CANON LAW

##### i) Initial Stages

Mention was made in the first chapter (I.1.ii) of the powerful restraining effect exercised upon the development of NSM by the Canons dealing with gainful employment of the clergy. The history of how these Canons were modified illustrates how certain clergy with prophetic vision were able to seize the opportunity of a general re-writing of the Church of England's constitution to ensure that the revised regulations did not merely reinforce the status quo, but were flexible enough to permit the development of new patterns of ministry.

Widespread dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of antique Canons led to the setting up of the Archbishops' Commission on Canon Law in 1939, with a mandate to revise the Canons of 1603/4. The Commission's report (Archbishops' Commission 1947) included a draft Canon entitled 'Of the Manner of Life of Ministers' - Canon 83. This draft Canon repeated the attitudes to gainful employment of the Pluralities Act of 1838, and forbade clergy 'to engage in or carry on any trade or dealing for gain or

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<sup>1</sup>This may be deduced from the evidence of documents associated with his name - for example, Convocation of Canterbury (1955) and Bradfield (1959). No doubt because of his position as chairman of CACTM, Bradfield was appointed chairman of the Canon Law Revision Committee (see III.4 below), and was invited to write preparatory papers on the ministry for the Lambeth Conference of 1958.



profit ... except on such terms and conditions as are permitted by the statute law' (ibid., p. 174). The conservative nature of this draft is scarcely surprising in view of the fact that the Commission had been working prior to the radical thinking engendered by the French worker-priest movement<sup>1</sup>.

However, by the time Canon 83 came up for discussion in Convocation, five years had passed - years which had witnessed the radical suggestions discussed in the previous section. These ideas had so penetrated the minds of members of Convocation that, rather than tinker with the draft wording, they set up a Joint Committee to examine 'what changes are desirable and practicable in the law relating to the pursuit by a clergyman of a gainful secular occupation' (CCC, 1952, p. 26). We may note, in passing, that in his speech proposing the appointment of a Joint Committee, the Bishop of Winchester stated how 'the issue of supplementing the whole-time professional ministry by a ministry which remained in the working world was a very real issue ... in the minds of many church people just now' (ibid.). We may also note that the said bishop was none other than Mervyn Haigh, who 27 years previous had participated in bringing the issue before the Lambeth Conference (see II.4.i above).

## ii) Convocation Report on Canon 83 (1955)

A Committee was duly appointed under the chairmanship of Bishop Harold Bradfield<sup>2</sup> (chairman of CACTM), and included amongst its members Canon A.M. Stockwood. Its report was published three years later (Convocation of Canterbury 1955). Since this is the first official document of the Church of England to discuss NSM in depth, each of its five sections will be briefly summarized.

### 1. Reasons for revision of the law

The report began by summarizing four distinct reasons why 'there should be some extension of opportunity for the clergy to undertake

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<sup>1</sup>Although published in 1947, the chairman's forward was signed in May 1946, that is, before publication in English of any of the French experience.

<sup>2</sup>Harold William Bradfield (1898-1960): Archdeacon of Croydon, 1942-46; Bishop of Bath & Wells, 1946-60; Chairman of CACTM, 1950-60.



secular occupations':

- i) some clergy were currently engaged in secular occupations to augment meagre incomes;
- ii) declining numbers of clergy necessitated a supplementary parochial ministry;
- iii) men already in positions of pastoral responsibility in the secular world could be more effective if ordained;
- iv) the need to 'bridge the gap dividing ... those who work in industry from the faith and worship of the Church'.

The influence of Chadwick's analysis of motives (cf. III.3.iii above) is instantly apparent.

## 2. Parochial clergy and secular occupations

Pragmatic discussion of traditions enshrined in the Ordinal and in Canon law led the report to recommend -

the provision of a flexible Canon ... which will readily adapt itself to the changing needs and conditions of succeeding generations, and which would not exclude any development along the line of a supplementary ministry. (p.8)

The recommended means by which such flexibility was to be obtained was to give completely new and wide powers of discretion to the ordaining bishops. The report's proposed Canon read:

No Minister holding ecclesiastical office shall continue to engage in trade or any other occupation for profit or salary, without first informing his Bishop and obtaining his consent. (ibid.)

## 3. A supplementary parochial ministry

In view of the increased number of regular communicants at 'Parish Communion', the amalgamation of rural parishes, and the unending demands of pastoral visiting, and the preparation of confirmands, a supplementary parochial ministry was desirable. But any such ministry should not be solely liturgical: pastoral, evangelistic and educational needs were high, and in any case 'the liturgical side of the Church's life must never be divorced from the pastoral' (p. 9). But the report was very cautious as to how the church should proceed. It recommended that candidates for any supplementary ministry should at first be ordained to the diaconate only, without any guarantee of ordination to priesthood. Selection would be by the bishop and his advisors only (not by CACTM); limitation of time would prevent training at theological colleges. None of these men should be ordained priest 'until sufficient time have passed to



allow a judgment to be formed on the working of a permanent diaconate, and on its effect upon the men ordained' (p. 10). Even then, it was recommended that they serve at least five years in the diaconate and undertake further training for the priesthood. It was firmly emphasised that 'any supplementary ministry should be on a non-stipendiary basis', though all expenses would be reimbursed.

#### 4. Ordination of men already in positions of pastoral responsibility

Ordination of doctors, club leaders or welfare officers would not be so much an innovation as an extension of the existing practice of ordaining schoolmasters. Again, bishops would select; but since candidates 'will usually be men of some intellectual attainment', their training should not be of a lower standard than that for parochial ministry. Each diocese should make its own provision for training, assisting men to gain external degrees, supplemented by weekends at theological colleges and attention to pastoralia.

The report was remarkably aware of the need for the church to see any such ministry as distinct from parochial ministry, and consequently of the need for a different authority structure:

Such a priest should not be regarded as an unpaid curate. If he were expected to perform ordinary parochial duties, the purpose of his ministry would be defeated. It is essential that he should be left free to deal pastorally with the people who are already known to him in the course of his secular work ... the incumbent would have no claim upon him. (pp. 13-14)

Therefore, such a priest 'should be directly responsible to the bishop'. He would, of course, serve as an honorary assistant on a parochial staff (and when performing liturgically there would be under the authority of the incumbent), but he would do so primarily 'so that he could benefit from the companionship of his fellow clergy' (p. 13).

#### 5. Ordination of men in industrial occupations

The report considered that men in this category would be few in number and exceptional in character - 'men who have already established for themselves a standing of professional respect as competent workmen or executives' (p. 15).

Once again, the report stresses the need for clarity regarding the relationship of these men to the traditional pattern of ministry:



The tradition of the parochial ministry ... is so ingrained in our history and our thinking that we find it hard to consider alternate possibilities de novo and not as modifications of the existing pattern... But it is, we believe, essential that the character and function of these alternative ministries should be thought out, at the outset, without continual reference to the extent to which they can supplement the work of the parish priest.

(pp. 14-15)

As for training, attendance at theological colleges would be impracticable and even inappropriate. The report envisaged a purpose-built programme of study devised by a sympathetic member of a university social science or economics department, perhaps in collaboration with William Temple College. The content of the course would be widely different from that traditionally taught in theological colleges, because it would be designed to train for a ministry which called for two main qualifications:

i) A competent knowledge of the social and industrial background in its more technical aspects, and also the ways in which these affect and influence men's attitude to their work, and their general cultural, moral and spiritual outlook.

ii) A sound understanding of the Christian Faith with its roots in the Bible and history, and of the way in which this Christian belief in Creation, Redemption and the work of the Holy Spirit may be understood and related to the assumptions on which our social and industrial life is built. (p. 15)

Although the report is clear that such ministry would not be modelled on the received parochial model, its attempt to spell out in detail what ministry in industry might be is in fact extraordinarily 'parochially' focussed:

It will be an essential aspect of their work to discover ways of bringing a sacramental ministry inside the working life of the shop or factory. They will wish to be attached to a parish church to which they can direct their 'converts'... Their evangelistic and pastoral work lie inside the factory, and in all the consequential human relationships, which will occupy much of their time in the evenings and at weekends. (p. 16)

As for control, the report expressed no clear opinion beyond saying, 'direction of their work should be the direct responsibility of the bishop' (p. 16). Mindful of the history of the French 'Priest-Workman' experiment, the report raised a number of unanswered questions about 'dual control', and potentially 'intolerable conflict of loyalties' which should (in the opinion of the report) be considered by a group representative of



diocesan authorities , parochial clergy, management and Trade Unions. Despite these uncertainties, the report was firmly of the opinion that 'the need for some such experiment is ... urgent' (p. 18).

Before proceeding to discuss the Convocation's reception of this report, we may summarise and comment upon eight characteristics of the report's thinking.

First, there was a clear recommendation to change Canon law - for purely pragmatic reasons: some clergy were already (illegally) supplementing their inadequate incomes with part-time employment, and the opportunity to regularise this practice now lay before the legislators. The opportunity to alter Canon law, however, simultaneously offered a second and much more significant possibility - the removal of the blockage which had decisively prevented any movement in 1932. On this decision to create a flexible Canon rests all the subsequent development of NSM.

Secondly, there was a clear recommendation that ordination to the priesthood should be seen in the traditional inclusive terms - pastoral, evangelistic, sacramental and teaching functions being seen as inseparable. Welbourn's concept of a sacramental specialist was thus tacitly rejected; so too was the non-parochial basis of the French worker-priest movement. This wholistic understanding of ordination, derived from the Ordinal's proclamation of parochial ministry as normative, has remained an unchallenged basic assumption behind most subsequent discussion of NSM.

Thirdly, there was a clear recommendation that no remuneration should be given for services rendered. Expenses must indeed be reimbursed, but the role was seen as a non-stipendiary one. This too has remained an unchallenged assumption in subsequent discussion.

Fourthly, there was a clear recognition that training for any new pattern of ministry would have to be local, the responsibility of the sponsoring diocese, and not that of the traditional colleges. Here was an accurate prediction of training structures that were to develop over the ensuing 20 years.



Fifthly, the report itself was ambivalent about the received parochial model of ministry. On the one hand, it was aware that if any diversification of ministry (particularly in industry) was to take place, those ordained to such ministry would need to be protected from undue parochial expectations, and indeed that different method of training might be appropriate for those entering supplementary ministry, those in positions of pastoral responsibility, and those working in industry, respectively. Yet on the other hand, the report's description of what the latter ministry might be in practice sounds extraordinarily constrained by parochial ways of thinking. There was a hope that 'converts' contacted in industry might be introduced to local churches. But there was no suggestion of ministry to the structures of industry or of society, and no suggestion that the ordained man's daily work might itself be his ministry. Such dominance of the parochial model as the normative model of ministry has remained the major factor inhibiting a creative strategy for NSM.

Sixthly, there was a marked fear of taking precipitate action. 'Experiment' was a word frequently used. There was no talk of acting decisively on the basis of perceived principle (as Roland Allen would have demanded). Everything was perceived pragmatically. This has been a characteristic of all subsequent development of NSM in the Church of England.

Seventhly, there was a marked silence about the kind of local ministry which Kelly and Allen had pleaded for. It is not within the purview of the report at all.

Eighthly, no theological justification of the proposals was offered: only pragmatic, pastoral and legal arguments.

### iii) Convocation's Discussion (1955-56)

The report was received by the Upper House of Convocation in October 1955. The consequent discussion was lengthy, extending over three sessions (Upper House - 13 Oct 1955 and 17 May 1956; Lower House - 16 May 1956 and 9 Oct 1956). The upshot was agreement to draft a flexible Canon along the lines suggested in the report; the proposals about a 'supplementary parochial ministry' were referred back to



the Joint Committee for further clarification; but neither House considered that the time had come to draft regulations governing ordination of those working in positions of pastoral responsibility or in industry<sup>1</sup>. Thus, predictably, action was taken on a resolution perceived as reinforcing the parochial structures of ministry, while more radical suggestions for diversification of ministry (although not dismissed) were allowed to languish.

An analysis of the speeches made at these three sessions shows which factors weighed in favour of a flexible Canon (perceived as strengthening parochial ministry) and which weighed against the creation of an extra-parochial ministry.

In the Upper House, several influential bishops spoke in favour of a supplementary parochial ministry, including Exeter (Mortimer), Ely (Wynn), Rochester (Chevasse) and Canterbury (Fisher). The debate was ably and persuasively introduced by the Committee Chairman (Bradfield). Archbishop Fisher openly declared his own conviction of the need to ordain 'working men in their occupations as part-time priests' rather than as deacons, because of the increased centrality and frequency of Holy Communion in the life of the church (CCC, 1955, p. 351). This issue - fundamentally a parochial one - seems to have been the decisive issue in the debate.

In the Lower House likewise, no serious opposition to supplementary ministry was voiced. Most of the discussion (as in the Upper House) surrounded pragmatic questions concerning the effects of any change on beneficed clergy. However, one notable speech by the Secretary of the Committee, H.S.Hutchinson<sup>2</sup>, outlined a theology to undergird the report. Hutchinson had served for over half his career in industrial parishes and had had some experience as a priest of working in industry himself<sup>3</sup>, and showed himself well acquainted with the thinking of French

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<sup>1</sup>The Lower House was slightly more open to the report's recommendations for an experimental non-professional ministry in industry, which it noted 'with sympathy ... but desires to have fuller evidence before making a final judgment' (resolution passed on 9 Oct 1956).

<sup>2</sup>Henry Sheldon Hutchinson: Curacies in Nottingham, 1925-31; Priest-in-Charge, St Mark, Mansfield, 1931-49; Vicar, Down Ampney, 1949-56; Proctor in Convocation, Gloucester, 1950-59; Vicar, Cranham, 1956-62.

<sup>3</sup>In answer to a challenge from the owner of a factory in the neighbourhood, he had gone to work in the factory as an unskilled labourer on his free days' (ibid., p. 127).



'priest-workmen'. But he considered that -

[their] conception of evangelism ... based upon the assumption that the purpose of evangelism was the salvation of the whole of creation, which was 'groaning and travailing together in pain until now', waiting for 'the manifestation of the Sons of God' ... had not been grasped by the Church of England.

(CCC, 1956, pp. 126-7)

This was the theology underlying the thinking of the report, he claimed, and which was now opening up the opportunity 'for something on "incarnational" lines to take place' (p. 128). It is remarkable that this speech was the only one within the debate to offer any theological justification of the proposals. All other discussion was merely pragmatic.

As for the resolution urging that regulations be drafted for the setting up of a non-parochial ministry (the last two sections of the report), there was widespread hesitation. On the one hand, no bishop who spoke was in principle against the ordination of men in pastoral and industrial jobs; but on the other hand, they expressed the unanimous opinion that the time to draft regulations was not yet ripe. They were, however, keen that any new Canon should allow the bishops discretion to ordain suitable individuals to non-parochial ministries. Once again, we may note that such a move would legalise the status quo - for some experiments were already happening (Bishop Chevasse said he had ordained two practising psychiatrists (p. 96)). However, Archbishop Fisher swayed the House by declaring that he would vote against any resolution to draft regulations. The attitude which won the day was best expressed by Bishop Askwith of Gloucester:

They should not at this stage produce a fully worked-out plan, but simply obtain the power to carry out experiments and see what happened.  
(p. 99)

To judge from their speeches, at least six bishops were in favour of experiment: Bath & Wells (Bradfield), Bristol (Cockin), Canterbury (Fisher), Gloucester (Askwith) and Rochester (Chevasse).

In the Lower House, similar opposition was voiced against the fourth section of the report. As articulated in the speeches, the opposition centred around the assumption that full-time parochial work was the norm of priesthood. One speaker<sup>1</sup> 'could not see how they would have enough time to undertake seriously the duties of priesthood' (p. 269).

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<sup>1</sup>Canon A.P. Shepherd, Archdeacon Emeritus of Dudley.



The same speaker feared that supplementary ministers could be ministering in their work locations without the permission of their local parish priest. The principal of a theological college<sup>1</sup> felt that the Ordinal's wording<sup>2</sup> would exclude most supplementary ministers (pp. 269-70). A prominent evangelical, M.A.P. Wood<sup>3</sup>, produced the sole theological argument against the proposals: anxious not to undervalue the ministry of the laity, he considered that -

the House was in danger of telling ordinary straightforward lay people that the Church did not depend upon them as members of the priesthood of all believers. (p. 270)

Apart from one significant speech, all the Lower House discussion of the final section of the report was hesitant or negative. The single exception was Bernard Pawley<sup>4</sup>, who cited actual experience of two priests in industry known to him - a bank manager and a foreman in a Yorkshire woollen mill:

Both had told him that immediately hands were laid on them and they were given an official position they felt that their pastoral opportunities within their own spheres became greater. Both said that people came to them much more easily and with much less reserve to talk to them about spiritual questions, and both thought that their pastoral efficacy within the industries in which they were working was increased when they were admitted to Holy Orders. (p. 274)

This speech seems to contain the first public testimony to the style of ministry now recognised as readily open to ministers in secular employment (cf. Vaughan 1986a). But no attention was paid to it in subsequent speeches, which were all anxious to preserve the traditional roles of either the beneficed clergy or the laity. Fear was expressed that a supplementary minister with no parochial experience might be presented by a patron to a living (p. 276), or that since they were not 'set apart from the world people would not be able to feel the same towards them as they had a right and a need to feel towards priests of the Church' (p. 280), or that the proposals would produce a split in the priesthood, with 'two kinds of priesthood existing side by side, some

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<sup>1</sup>Canon F.C. Tindall, Principal of Salisbury Theological College.

<sup>2</sup>viz. 'apply yourself wholly to this one thing'.

<sup>3</sup>Maurice Arthur Ponsonby Wood (1916- ): Rector, St Ebbe's Oxford, 1947-52; Vicar of Islington, 1952-61; Principal, Oak Hill Theological College, 1961-71; Bishop of Norwich, 1971-85.

<sup>4</sup>Bernard Clinton Pawley (1911-81): Rector, Elland (Wakefield), 1945-55; Diocesan Secretary, Ely, 1955-59; Vice-Dean, Ely Cathedral, 1959; Chancellor, St Paul's, London, 1970-72; Archdeacon of Canterbury, 1972-81.



priests who were living by the Gospel and other priests who were living by their non-ministerial work' (ibid.). Other speakers denied that the desire to evangelise in the work sphere was a proper reason to ordain workers: evangelism was the task of the laity, and what was needed was an articulate laity well trained by full-time priests.

To summarise: both Houses refused to initiate steps to introduce any work-focussed ordained ministry (whether in the pastoral professions or in industry), whilst at the same time agreeing to introduce a Canon which would provide for supplementary ministry. Theology played very little part in the debate. Most of the discussion concerned protection of the traditional role and status of the beneficed full-time parochial clergyman. The bishops seemed more willing to countenance experiment and change than the clergy of the Lower House. This phenomenon is easily explicable, since it was the role of the latter which appeared to be threatened by the report; the proposals, however, sought to widen the discretionary powers of the bishops.

## 5. DEVELOPMENTS IN ANGLICAN CHURCHES OVERSEAS (1950-60)

The whole discussion of NSM was given a fresh impetus by the Lambeth Conference of 1958. But before considering the Lambeth resolution on 'Supplementary Ministries', it will be instructive to examine the mounting interest in NSM in Anglican churches overseas. For discussion and experience of NSM in the 'younger churches' directly affected thinking in England, not least because the majority of the younger church's leaders during the 1950s were still expatriates, many of them English.

It was precisely this issue which led a young ex-China missionary to rediscover (and later to propagate and re-publish) the ideas of Roland Allen. David Paton<sup>1</sup> along with other missionaries had been expelled from China after the communist revolution in 1950. On being invited to give a

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<sup>1</sup>David MacDonald Paton (1913- ): Chaplain to the Bishop of Fukien, 1947-50; Managing Director and Editor, SCM Press, 1956-59; Secretary, Church Assembly Council for Ecumenical Co-operation, 1959-63; Secretary, Missionary and Ecumenical Council, 1964-69; Rector, St Mary de Crypt, Gloucester, 1969-81.



series of missionary lectures at Trinity College, Dublin<sup>1</sup>, he chose to reflect upon the real meaning of the end of the missionary era in China. Paton was influenced by the International Missionary Council's revival of interest in indigenous leadership (cf. Goodall 1952), and in the course of his analysis, he quoted extensively from Kelly and Allen (Missionary Methods and The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church), commenting:

To Allen's case we can add little save more recent examples of the diseases he diagnosed, at a later stage of their progress.

(Paton 1953, p. 37)

The lectures were published in 1953 under the title Christian Missions and the Judgment of God. This book marks the return of the influence of Roland Allen's ideas, which gained increasing currency thanks to Paton's publicity as successively Managing Director of the SCM Press (1956-59) and Secretary of the Church Assembly Council for Ecumenical Co-operation (later the Missionary and Ecumenical Council) (1959-69). Significantly too, the World Dominion Press had at this very time published new editions of The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church (1949) and Missionary Methods (1953). Thus, at least in missionary circles, a considerable amount of attention was being given to potential new patterns of ministry.

There were signs too that in certain churches abroad such patterns were actually coming into existence. Hong Kong was the first Anglican diocese ~~to~~ to act upon the Lambeth Resolution of 1930. In 1934, Canon XIX(a) Of Ordination in Special Cases was passed by the diocesan synod. It permitted ordination to the diaconate, with subsequent 'advancement' to the priesthood of any man over the age of 32 who had 'adequate means of his own support, and had been assisting without pay in the work of the church for not less than three years'. The first such men were ordained in 1939, and by 1960, thirteen of Hong Kong's thirty priests were non-stipendiary<sup>2</sup>. The educational standing of these men was very high - ten of the thirteen were university graduates<sup>3</sup>. Their bishop emphasised

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<sup>1</sup>The Godfrey Day Memorial Lectures for 1952. The Dublin University Fukien Mission had founded the church in Fukien province, where Paton had been working.

<sup>2</sup>It seems that the first man to be ordained under the new Canon was James Chang Ling Wong, an engineer, who continued to work in Hong Kong's dockyard after his priesting in 1940 (cf. Paton 1968, p. 18, note 2). He subsequently became a bishop, and attended the Lambeth Conference of 1968 (see III.10 below).

<sup>3</sup>This data is culled from R.O.Hall 'What Happens in Hong Kong' in Denniston (1960), pp.60-64, and from Appendix I ('Memorandum on Auxiliary Priests') in Lambeth Conference (1958), pp. 2.108-9.



the value of 'auxiliary clergy': every parish in his diocese had regular and frequent celebrations of the Holy Communion presided over by a priest who either belonged to the congregation or regularly served it; also (because of their educational standards) 'the preaching and teaching ministry of our priests is quite outstanding' (Denniston 1960, p. 64).

Thus the Hong Kong experience demonstrated a successful model of ordained ministry, both paid and unpaid, where the pastoral, sacramental and teaching functions were all held together. News of this experience made an important impact upon the Lambeth Conference of 1958 (as indicated by the fact that a memorandum from the Bishop of Hong Kong was appended to the report of the committee dealing with 'Ministries and Manpower').

During this period, one other Anglican church took the preparatory action of writing a permissive canon into its constitution. Canon VII of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon (cf. Lambeth Conference 1958, pp. 2.109-110) was modelled upon the Hong Kong canon, though in this case a candidate for deacon's orders had to be 39 years of age. Under this canon, the diocese of Nagpur had, by 1956, ordained six priests, including a doctor, a government inspector of education and two schoolmasters. Its bishop, George Sinker, on retirement in England, contributed his experience to the Convocation of Canterbury's debate on Canon 83:

Their work was very much to the advantage of the parishes, and he did not understand the argument that this movement would detract from the work of the parish priest; ... it would buttress it up.  
(CCC, 1956, p. 136)

This incident is a remarkable documented example of the way in which overseas experience of NSM was fed back into the English church's thinking.

Some of the most forward thinking of the period, however, came from the newly formed Church of South India (CSI), inaugurated in 1947 - a church independent of the Anglican Communion, but containing many Anglican members. Very early in its history (1950), that church embarked upon adventurous planning for future patterns of ministry appropriate to the Indian situation. Discussions at synodical level included the question of 'ordination of suitable men as honorary Presbyters' (Ward 1953, p. 81). In order to facilitate discussion of this issue at diocesan level, Bishop



Lesslie Newbigin<sup>1</sup> produced a concise paper outlining the inadequacies of the inherited system of paid ministry, and describing a possible future model of ministry appropriate to village contexts. The model he chose was precisely that of local ministry proposed by Kelly and Allen, though he worked out the practical implications more carefully.

All of this might be dismissed as remote from the English scene, were it not for one fact: English publishing houses deliberately published material about the Indian discussions. Marcus Ward (an English Methodist, and at that time Professor of Theology in the United Theological College at Bangalore) published an account of the first five years of the life of CSI, which included as extensive chapter on current Indian thinking on the ordained ministry (Ward 1953, pp. 77-88); while the British Council of Churches published Bishop Newbigin's discussion paper under the title The Ministry of the Church - Ordained and Unordained, Paid and Unpaid (1953). An editorial foreword to the latter considered that -

Bishop Newbigin's questions are not limited to the Church overseas: they come right home with startling challenge.

(Newbigin 1953, p. 2)

Newbigin was in fact to become one of the greatest exponents of Roland Allen both in print and in practice. In 1959, at the East Asia Christian Conference, he described how he had begun to put Allen's principles into practice in his own diocese of Madura. His lecture, together with others, was published in England the following year. In it he described how there were three strands in the pattern of ministry evolving in Madura: local non-professional ministers, paid professional ministers, and the bishops. His account of how this worked in practice runs as follows:

**A local, non-professional ministry in each village congregation**, able to provide leadership for daily and weekly worship, including the reading and simple exposition of the Scriptures and the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper. In my own diocese, where we are beginning to develop such a ministry, we have said that men to be ordained for this should be over forty years of age, should be supported by the substantially unanimous vote of the congregation which they will serve, and should be accepted by the Diocesan Ministerial Committee, and by the Bishop, after a reasonable period of preparation. Such preparation is not an academic training in an

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<sup>1</sup>James Edward Lesslie Newbigin (1909- ): missionary 1936-46; Bishop of Madura, 1947-59; Associate General Secretary, World Council of Churches, 1959-65; Bishop of Madras, 1965-74; Lecturer, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, 1974-79.



institution, but rather a prolonged apprenticeship under experienced guidance. Such men give their services as volunteers and continue to earn their whole living as farmers, labourers, or in other ways.

A fully trained and paid professional ministry, whose function will be primarily the spiritual nurture of the local village presbyters throughout an area, and the conduct of teaching and preaching missions. The former is a very necessary task if the work of the volunteer village presbyters is to be spiritually fruitful. The latter will be necessary as a supplement to the very simple teaching which such village presbyters can give. The congregations with which I am familiar are generally much more ready to receive Christian preaching and teaching in the form of occasional missions and conventions, than through the medium of the weekly sermon from their local presbyter. I believe that there is need for a peripatetic teaching and preaching ministry by men who have received a thorough training in the usual theological disciplines.

Thirdly, and of course this may occasion controversy, I think that the pattern should include a bishop as father in God for the Church in an area, providing a pastoral and spiritual, not merely organizational and administrative, centre of unity and authority for the life of the church. (Newbigin 1960, p. 31)

A recent study (Wingate 1984), based upon field research into the pastoral effectiveness of Newbigin's strategy, has shown that his initiative has not in the long term borne fruit - for the simple reason that Newbigin himself moved from the diocese, and his successor did not share his vision of a local non-professional ministry. Those few local presbyters whom Newbigin had ordained were thus left unsupported and felt themselves misunderstood and ignored. In the 1950s, however, this could not have been foreseen, and it was Newbigin's own exposition of his initiative which was influential at the time.

Thus, once again, issues raised in the mission-field about inherited pattern of ministry served to spot-light inadequacies in the mother church. Moreover it is clear that a good deal of all the contemporary creative thinking was actually being done within the overseas context. For example, Stephen Neill<sup>1</sup>, in surveying the 'unfinished task' of Christian mission worldwide, considered that the experiments with flexible patterns of ministry in South Indian villages was raising very clearly -

the kind of questions that churches ought to be asking themselves in every frontier situation ... not least ... where the Church finds itself on the fringe of great city populations now almost wholly alienated from Christian faith. (Neill 1957, p. 65)

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen Charles Neill (1900-84): Bishop of Tinnevely, 1939-45; Study Dept., World Council of Churches, 1947-51; General Editor, World Christian Books, 1952-62; Professor of Mission, Hamburg, 1962-68; Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Nairobi, 1969-73.



He went on to cite a western example of such ministry in the person of Dr. William Pollard, simultaneously a presbyter in the Episcopal Church of the United States of America and Executive Director of the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies<sup>1</sup>. As a further example of creative thinking about NSM done in an overseas context we may cite a comprehensive study on the support of the clergy in the first five centuries undertaken by a lecturer at Fourah Bay, Sierra Leone (Ream 1956) - a study of the surviving historical evidence which its author acknowledges as being provoked by the thinking of Newbigin, Ward and the CACTM report Supply of Fit Persons (Church Assembly 1954).

## 6. LAMBETH CONFERENCE 1958

The state of the contemporary climate of thinking about ministry may be precisely gauged from a working paper (LC 1958/16) prepared as preliminary reading for the bishops who were members of the Committee on Ministries and Manpower. It was written by Bishop Bradfield, the chairman of CACTM, and published for general circulation the next year (Bradfield 1959). Bradfield's favourable attitude to experimentation with non-professional patterns of ministry has already been noted (cf. III.4.ii, iii). So it is not surprising to find that he devoted an entire chapter to 'Supplementary Ministry', in which he surveyed the differing views then circulating on this issue.

It seems that the bishops of Bombay, Nagpur and Lahore had each made specific requests that the question of supplementary ministry be considered at the Conference. So Bradfield gave considerable space to recounting Newbigin's initiatives in the dioceses of Madura and Madras (where six village men, duly selected and trained were to be ordained in 1958). He concluded by suggesting that the Conference would be a good opportunity for the bishops to share such small experiences as then existed regarding this pattern of ministry, and posed the question:

Are the risks involved in such an experiment less than those of trying to maintain inflexibly the tradition of the past?

(Bradfield 1959, p. 32)

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<sup>1</sup>The latter has given an autobiographical account of his story (Pollard 1956).



It is thus apparent that under Bradfield's stimulus, the Lambeth Conference of 1958 approached its discussion of supplementary ministry in an adventurous and open frame of mind.

It is unfortunate that the records of the proceedings of the Conference are still under restriction at Lambeth Palace Library. Thus the only evidence available regarding the Conference's deliberations is the official published report (Lambeth Conference 1958), although we may also get a hint of one prominent bishop's contribution through a book which he deliberately published earlier in the same year 'as background material for the man-power committee' (Barry 1958, p. v).

The book in question was Vocation and Ministry by F.R. Barry, then Bishop of Southwell. Writing from experience of having been Chairman of the Recruiting Committee of CACTM since the War, he discussed in a wide historical perspective aspects of vocation, selection, training, the staffing of parishes, etc. It is the final chapter, entitled 'A Supplementary Ministry', which concerns us here. The chapter, over thirty-one rapidly written pages, traces the history of the idea from the earliest centuries to the Canon 83 report, and argues cogently that for both theological and practical reasons the Church of England should accept supplementary ministry into its system. It was the strongest, clearest and most easily available case for NSM. No new facts or arguments are invoked beyond those treated in The Relevance of the Church (1935) (cf. III.2 above). What was new, however, was that the arguments were coming not from an outrageous, marginal prophet. They were coming from a much respected diocesan bishop with long experience of promoting full-time ministry in the church's central councils.

Nor was Barry alone amongst prominent English bishops in pressing for the introduction of supplementary ministry. The Archbishop of York (Michael Ramsey) had taken the opportunity of his Presidential Address to the Convocation of York in January 1958 to declare his personal conviction that the Church of England needed such a ministry. His speech was reported in The Times the next day, under the head-line "'Keeping Door Open" for the Part-time Priest' (Times, 15 Jan 1958, p. 4c).



With such significant episcopal backing, it is rather surprising that the eventual Lambeth Conference resolution on 'The Supplementary Ministry' (resolution 89) is as cautious as it is. The full text is as follows:

The Conference considers that, while the full<sup>y</sup>-trained and full-time priesthood is essential to the continuing life of the Church, there is no theological principle which forbids a suitable man from being ordained priest while continuing in his lay occupation. While calling attention to Resolution 65 of the Lambeth Conference of 1930, the Conference now wishes to go further and to encourage provinces to make provision on these lines in cases where conditions make it desirable. Such provision is not to be regarded as a substitute for the full-time ministry of the Church, but as an addition to it.

(Lambeth Conference 1958, p.1.51)

The resolution's balanced phrases suggest that fear of denigrating the full-time ministry or of discouraging recruitment to it were prominent anxieties in the mind of the drafting committee. The resolution is, however, much more positive than that of 1930: no theological principle forbids supplementary ministry, and provinces are actively encouraged to develop it.

The committee which produced this resolution was chaired by the Bishop of Bath & Wells (Bradfield)<sup>1</sup>. Barry was also amongst the committee's members. Their presence must have meant that the case for supplementary ministry was strongly voiced. But Bishop Hall of Hong Kong was not on this committee (though he sent a memorandum), and the bishops of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon were represented only by the Bishop of Barrackpore. The dioceses of the Church of South India (being no longer in the Anglican Communion) had no voice at all. To judge from the committee's report (ibid., p. 2.107), four chief arguments were put forward in favour of supplementary ministry:

- i) to preserve an adequate ministry of the sacraments;
- ii) to reinforce overworked clergy;
- iii) to bring home the relevance of the Church and its faith to ordinary working life;
- iv) to give expression to the New Testament conception of the ecclesia.

Is it significant that the pragmatic points appear first, and the theological points of principle last? We cannot know the answer until the restriction on the Lambeth archives is lifted.

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<sup>1</sup>Bradfield had been chairman of the Joint Committee of Convocation of Canon 83, and was currently chairman of CACTM.



## 7. GATHERING MOMENTUM (1960-67)

There can be no doubt that, guarded as it was, the Lambeth resolution provided a powerful boost towards the development of NSM, in England. It is hardly a coincidence that a mere two years later (1960) three significant things happened: the first book-length study since Allen's day was published; Allen's own work on voluntary clergy was reprinted; and the Southwark Ordination Course was founded. In the years that followed, there was an increasing amount written about the theory and practice of NSM, particularly about priests in industry and developments overseas. At the same time, the Church of England began actively to prepare to introduce NSM into its system: statute law was changed, and working parties appointed by the House of Bishops started to look at the practicalities involved in establishing a new pattern of ministry. We shall discuss the significance of each of these developments in turn.

### i) Publication of Part Time Priests ?

In direct response to the Lambeth resolution, the Managing Director of the Faith Press, Robin Denniston<sup>1</sup>, marshalled contributions from eighteen churchmen into a collection of essays entitled Part Time Priests?

which aimed to provide 'an elaboration of the Lambeth statement, an attempt to elucidate the presuppositions on which it is based, and a number of interpretations of it' (Denniston 1960, p. 5). The book acted as a highly effective discussion-starter in the Church at large, not least because of the array of episcopal contributors. Barry re-stated the case for supplementary ministry; Bradfield listed 'some difficulties in the way' (Pluralities Act, etc.); the bishops of Michigan and Hong Kong described new patterns of ministry in their respective dioceses; and Archbishop Ramsey stated his conviction that -

the 'part-time priest' will be a part of the movement of enhanced realisation of the 'sacred within the secular'.

(Denniston 1960, p. 25)

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<sup>1</sup>Robin Alastair Denniston (1926- ): Editor at Collins, 1950-59; Managing Director, Faith Press, 1959-60; Editor, Prism, 1959-61; various posts in publishing, 1961-77; Academic Publisher, OUP, 1978- ; ordained (NSM), 1978; Hon. Curate, Clifton-on-Teme, 1978; New and South Hinksey, 1985.



Indeed, the two pages contributed by Ramsey (entitled 'The Next Step') were to prove as significant as any in the book. He issued a clarion call for action -

It remains to remove as soon as is ever possible whatever legal and canonical barriers exist, and for someone to act upon what he believes to be right. (ibid.)

- a veiled word of archiepiscopal encouragement to the bold experiment being initiated that very year in Southwark (see III.7.iii below), and a surprising echo of Roland Allen's own vision of how change would come about through a single bishop acting upon conscientious conviction<sup>1</sup>.

Other essays in the collection aimed to explore lessons from early church history and non-Anglican churches, the legal situation in England, the relevance of Roland Allen (by David Paton), and possible patterns of part-time training.

But perhaps most interesting of all were a cluster of articles on lay ministry, sharply divided by divergent perceptions. Two of them came from writers deeply involved in the secular world of literature and journalism: each considered he had a vocation to Christian ministry through his secular work, but one was ordained and the other not. The polarity expressed in these two autobiographical comments is worth detailed consideration, partly because it is the earliest published account of what later would be termed 'ministry in secular employment', and partly because the tension between their two perspectives has never been satisfactorily resolved within the Church of England.

The literary critic and sculptor, Moelwyn Merchant<sup>2</sup>, then Senior Lecturer in English Literature at Cardiff University, had had twenty years of experience as an ordained man who earned his living as a literary critic in the scholarly world. He perceived himself to be facing

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<sup>1</sup>cf. Allen's letter to the Bishop of Gibraltar (USPG: AP, 7.M.106) cited in II.2.iv above.

<sup>2</sup>William Moelwyn Merchant (1913- ): Lecturer (later Senior Lecturer), University College, Cardiff, 1939-61; Professor of English, Exeter University, 1961-73; ordained deacon 1940; Canon of Salisbury, 1967-73; Vicar of Llanddewi-Brefi, 1974-8. At the time of writing the article discussed here, he had just published Shakespeare and the Artist (1959).



'Janus-like, both ways'<sup>1</sup>. He felt himself to be different from specialist chaplains who offer ministry to a given situation or to a particular set of persons:

The worker-priest, or the academic critic of literature who is also, like myself in priests' orders, is involved in the situation ... he has the unique privilege of participating in the creative and critical dilemmas of his contemporaries... The creative artist and the critic of the arts are both today in positions of especial isolation; in addition to the technical problems of their craft common to all artists in every age and hence the universal concern of the critic, each has also unusually urgent matters of relationship with society to solve. Some of us have the unique privilege of seeing painters, poets and dramatists actually at work; every critic has the intense professional obligation to penetrate the creative process, an obligation and an end very different from (though including) the appreciation and enjoyment experienced by the 'ordinary reader' or observer. To unite this daily professional struggle of comprehension in the arts with the ministry of the altar is to bring two creative processes to fusion, an activity for which one may humbly hope the Body of Christ is the richer. (pp. 97-8)

This remarkable passage is the first written testimony from a priest with a 'work-focussed' ministry to what it **feels** like to play the bridge role of interpreting the world of secular work to the church. Barry had spoken hypothetically of such a role: but here was personal evidence.

By contrast, Nicholas Mosley, a secular author and editor of Prism, was concerned to perceive 'the necessity that the whole of life should be sacramental'. But how should this truth be proclaimed? The church's structures, Mosley claimed, seemed to offer the implicit teaching that the only work which could be totally dedicated to God was that of priests and religious. Having entitled his article 'Whole-time Laymen', he suggested that

the request of laymen that they should be allowed to administer the Sacraments is probably one more attempt, in desperation, to lull their basic anxiety about how their whole lives can be sacramental. And this won't be answered, I think, by just allowing them to perform functions, however central, normally entrusted to priests.  
(p. 113)

Speaking no doubt from personal experience, Mosley eloquently stated the need for a genuine lay spirituality:

There are thousands of jobs nowadays, often in the upper income worlds of business and entertainment, where compromises with mammon are demanded constantly, and the Christian either has to comply or be a failure. I think it is because laymen have hardly begun to face their problems on this sort of level - or else only face them by increasing the stiffness of their doses of Sunday

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<sup>1</sup>The title of his essay in Denniston 1960, pp. 94-8.



religion - that they are suffering from frustration. They are split between loving God and honouring a world that does not love God, and the few who realise this are shown no way out except by the situation (but not the advice) of priests who alone seem to have some chance of integrity. So the way out (for these few) is to try to become more like priests - but not, again, to face the problems of work and society. They want to become part-time priests: but this doesn't touch on the more difficult problem of how to be whole-time Christians. (p. 114)

Denniston, as editor, summed up the nature of the problem:

laymen can, and indeed must, fulfil their priestly function as the Laos, ... to ordain them is simply to write off as failure the realisation of a great ideal. The result will be to widen irreparably, so the argument runs, the gulf between priesthood and laity. (p. 138)

The significance of Part Time Priests ? is that it focussed more plainly than any previous discussion how the growing emphasis on the ministry of the laity tended to militate against calls for NSM:

The distinction within the Church between ordained ministry and the laity lies at the heart of the argument: is a priest a super layman, a layman an inferior priest? Both exercise ministries, but is their difference of function a difference of degree or of kind? (ibid.)

This unanswered question still remains at the root of all current doubts about NSM.

## ii) Reprinting of Allen's Case for Voluntary Clergy (1960)

It is a very rare phenomenon that a book which was a failure in its own generation is republished in the next as timely and opportune. Nevertheless, Roland Allen, anticipating just such an occurrence, had prophesied to his son that his books 'would come into their own about 1968' - the centenary of his birth (Paton 1960b, 2nd edition, p. ix). And that is precisely what happened! David Paton edited an abridged version of The Case for Voluntary Clergy, together with some of Allen's other writings (Paton 1960b). By 1965, the first edition of 3,625 copies was sold out, and a second edition was printed<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>A letter from David Paton to John Allen dated 16 Jan 1962 speaks of 'a total printing of 3625'; another from Sir Kenneth Grubb to David Paton dated 18 Feb 1965 says 'our stocks have dropped to 60 copies. This means we should go ahead with a second edition at once' (SO: FTA).



But this was not all. A few years later, to mark the centenary of Allen's birth, David Paton edited a further collection of Allen's unpublished papers under the title Reform of the Ministry : A study in the Work of Roland Allen (1968). This collection sheds new light on Allen's personality, and included extracts from his extensive correspondence on the subject of voluntary clergy (cf. II.2.iv above)<sup>1</sup>.

The publication of these two books kept Allen's ideas at the forefront of discussion about ministry in the 1960s. He is often referred to in the writings of the period, and his name was on the lips of speakers in Church Assembly debates. How did such a revival of interest in Allen's writings come about? There seem to be three factors involved. In the first place, Allen's significance in missionary circles had never faded; secondly, the ethos of the 1960s enabled people to listen to Allen's ideas with fresh attentiveness; thirdly, money and an organization existed to propagate these ideas. We shall discuss each in turn.

Although Allen's attempt to make a case for voluntary clergy had not succeeded during his lifetime, his other other writings on missionary strategy were kept continuously in print over a period of half a century. By 1960, Missionary Methods (1912) had gone through five editions, and The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church (1927<sup>b</sup>) through four editions<sup>2</sup>. The records show that by 1956, they had sold over 17,030 copies and 8,000 copies respectively<sup>3</sup>. These are large sales for specialist literature.

Meanwhile in America, as early as 1953, a missionary strategist of the Reformed tradition was drawing attention to the contemporary significance of Allen's ideas (Boer 1954), which led to the independent reprinting of Allen's works in America by Eerdmans<sup>4</sup>. In Germany, a

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<sup>1</sup>Three categories of material were included: letters to and from Allen, 1922-30; part of the diary he kept during his visit to South India in 1927; and his correspondence with the Bishop of Assam, 1925-28.

<sup>2</sup>The British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books lists editions of Missionary Methods in 1912, 1927, 1953, 1956 and 1960, and of Spontaneous Expansion of the Church in 1927, 1949, 1956 and 1960.

<sup>3</sup>SO: FTA. There is a note in the Cockrane/Allen correspondence file indicating published numbers as follows:- 'Missionary Methods 1st edit (1912) not known, 2nd edit (1913) not known; Rev. edit (1927) 4,530, 2nd impr (1930) 5,000, 3rd edit (1953) 3,000, 4th edit (1956) 2,500, American edition (1956) 2,000, TOTAL; 17,030. SPONX 1st edit (1927) 2,000, 2nd edit (1949) 3,000, 3rd edit (1956) 3,000, TOTAL: 8,000'.

<sup>4</sup>The National Union Catalog lists early American editions of Missionary Methods in 1913, 1930? and 1959. But in 1962 Eerdmans's of Grand



major study surveying 'where we have got to in "indigenous church principles" ' made a case study of Allen, alongside such other figures as Henry Venn (Beyerhaus and Lefever 1964). Writing to Allen's son John, in 1959, David Paton commented that 'a modest "Ph.D. industry" is growing up, and we ought to provide the basic information'<sup>5</sup>. (Up to this point, biographical data on Allen was virtually non-existent). The above is ample evidence of the continuous and international interest in the person and ideas of Roland Allen.

But what was it about Allen and his writings 'that makes him believable enough to be resurrected in the mid-20th century while he was virtually unheard of in his own time?' That very question was addressed by an American researcher<sup>6</sup> to Sir Kenneth Grubb<sup>7</sup>, who answered in the following perspicacious manner:

By the standards of modern writing Allen is not stylistically a good writer. He is very repetitive and can carry the art of simplification to the point of boredom. I do not therefore think that it is Allen's style that makes his writings believable today. The real answer is that being a true prophet people see that what he foresaw has come about, but he foresaw and stated it so forcibly that it has not been necessary for anyone to say 'I told you so'. His whole approach to the question of church and mission, of the voluntary priesthood, of nationalism and the 'indigenous' principles fits in with the present scene and sometimes for reasons that Allen himself did not fully perceive.

For instance, he presents the 'indigenous' principles almost entirely on the basis of their validity as a necessary deduction from the New Testament, but in the modern world it has come about that they have been enormously enforced by the vigour of modern nationalism. I only add to this brief analysis that the sheer financial needs of the church and mission in a day when much more money is forthcoming, but the expense of everything is so much higher, has faced people from rather materialistic motives to take Allen far more seriously than formerly.

(SO: FTA, correspondence on Ministry of the Spirit, letter dated 30 Dec 1963)

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Rapids published a new edition of both Missionary Methods and The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church, which are currently (1987) still in print. Eerdmans also published an American edition of Ministry of the Spirit in 1962, reprinted 1965.

<sup>5</sup>SO: FTA, SAT blue file, letter of Paton to John Allen, 8 Dec 1959. One such doctoral dissertation is that of Hans Wolfgang Metzner, Roland Allen, sein Leben und Werk (Ruprecht-Karl-Universität, Heidelberg, 1966).

<sup>6</sup>C.M.Kempton Hewitt of the Evangelical Theological Seminary, Naperville, Illinois.

<sup>7</sup>Sir Kenneth George Grubb, KCMG (1900-80): Missionary, 1923-28; Survey Application Trust, 1929-39; President, Church Missionary Society, 1944-69; Church Commissioner, 1948-73; Editor, World Christian Handbook, 1949-69; Chairman, House of Laity (Church Assembly), 1959-70.



Paton, for his part, was prepared to list Allen in the company of F.D.Maurice and H.H.Kelly - 'three writers of earlier generations who seem to a wide and diverse company of Christians to speak prophetically to our own time'. He claimed that the quality which appealed was that -

at bottom ... they all knew doubt, and yet did not tremble overmuch for the Ark of God. In a secular revolutionary age, they were not on the defensive against the attack on religion from without or the erosion of confessional or institutional tradition from within; Maurice and Kelly used 'religion' in a hostile sense; and Allen's life was a long assault on many of 'the traditions of men'. They were not afraid: and they really believed in God.

(Paton 1960a, p. 213)

Theologians of the 1960s were openly acknowledging the break-down of Christendom, and the fact that 'its characteristic structures, among which a professional ministry is prominent, no longer work in a post-Christian secular society'; this explains 'why the "market" for Allen's ideas seems a good bit easier today' (Paton 1960b, p. 23). Allen offered a vision of alternative (and primitive) patterns of ministry, which appealed both to Evangelicals and Catholics within the Church of England: while his concern for the mission and growth of the local church appealed to the former, his insistence on the centrality of the Eucharist attracted the latter. And Allen's resolute appeal to principle was recognised as a valuable irritant, 'raising with ruthless persistence ... precisely those theological issues which are most easily avoided because they call in question current practice' (ibid., p. 43). In all these ways, it appears that the time was ripe for Allen's ideas to bear fruit.

We should not, however, neglect to notice one pragmatic factor in the revival of Allen's writings. There existed a ready-made organization with money to propagate them - in the shape of the Survey Application Trust (SAT). The history of this Trust has been recounted by Sir Kenneth Grubb, who was a trustee from 1954 until the dissolution of the Trust in 1968 (Paton 1968, pp. 61-84 and Grubb 1968)<sup>1</sup>. The Trust Deed of 1927 specified that the trust money was to be used to foster indigenous church communities overseas, and that the Trustees were to be guided by -

the books entitled Missionary Methods St Paul's or Ours ? and The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church by Roland Allen, MA and other literature already published by the Trustees in support of these principles.

(Paton 1968, p. 68)

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<sup>1</sup>A discussion of SAT also appears in Beyerhaus and Lefever (1964) pp. 33-9.



The publishing branch of the Trust was World Dominion Press<sup>1</sup>. It was this Press which kept Allen's writings in print, and which published Ministry of the Spirit (1960). SAT also produced the capital for Lutterworth Press to publish Reform of the Ministry (1968)<sup>2</sup>. A further aspect of SAT's publishing achievement was production of the quarterly journal World Dominion between 1923 and 1958, in which year it merged with Christian News-Letter to form the review Frontier, under the editorship of Sir John Lawrence<sup>3</sup>. Frontier constantly kept Allen's ideas before its readership, not least through full page advertisements of his writings currently in print. Thus through the availability of SAT capital, and through the influence of such prominent churchmen as Sir John Lawrence and Sir Kenneth Grubb, there was ample means of holding Allen's writings before the Church of England.

### iii) The Southwark Ordination Course

September 16th, 1960, is a critical date in the history of NSM. On that day 31 men began to prepare for ordination through a totally new pattern of part-time training: the Southwark Ordination Course (SOC)<sup>4</sup>. This Course was to become the model from which all future developments of part-time training were to evolve; without the existence of SOC and other part-time Courses, there was little prospect of NSM being able to develop at all.

SOC owes its existence to two bishops - Mervyn Stockwood, Bishop of Southwark from 1959 to 1980, and his suffragan John Robinson, Bishop of Woolwich from 1959 to 1969. Stockwood, as diocesan bishop, supplied the vision and the institutional 'permission' which enabled such a radical break with tradition to take place, and was prepared to accept the odium

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<sup>1</sup>A list of over 140 publications of World Dominion Press is contained in Paton (1968) pp. 223-8.

<sup>2</sup>In a letter to Paton dated 23 Feb 1966, referring to the impending publication of Reform of the Ministry, Grubb (speaking as senior trustee of SAT) says, 'I should be prepared to subsidise another publisher fully to do so' (SO: FTA).

<sup>3</sup>Sir John Waldeman Lawrence Bt (1907- ): Press Attaché to the British Embassy in Moscow, 1942-5; Editor, Frontier, 1957-75; Chairman, Keston College, 1969-83, President, 1984- ; Chairman, GB USSR Association, 1970-85; author of many books on Russia.

<sup>4</sup>For the first few months of its existence, the Course was known as the 'Southwark Ordination Training Scheme', but this name was altered in March 1961.



of fellow bishops for his independent action. Robinson, as a scholar-bishop and first chairman of SOC, was a major influence in developing the structure of the new Course. He had already openly questioned the value of much contemporary residential training (Robinson 1952), and now had the opportunity to put his dreams into practice.

True to his natural flamboyant style, Stockwood used the occasion of his first public appearance as bishop to float his radical ideas with maximum publicity - in his Enthronement sermon of 9th May 1959. The sermon, whose text was 'Where there is no vision, the people perish', laid out a five-point programme by which the Church of England might become an instrument for furthering the Kingdom of God. His first point emphasised the value of the parish unit; but his second point qualified this value, and made a radical proposal:

If Christians are to make their contributions by groups, the Church must consider whether the parochial system is adequate for the task... I am convinced that the parochial system has still an important part to play in the evangelism of our country. But I am sure we need some new arrangement alongside it.

From my own experience, I know that it is almost impossible to bridge the gulf between the parochial system and the world in which so many people have to live. That is why I should like to see cautious experiments with a new type of priesthood and a new type of organisation. Is it possible, for instance, that a man who works in industry and is also ordained will be better able to understand the needs and outlook of his associates than one who because of his status as a parochial clergyman is inevitably, to some extent, segregated? And is it possible that for some industrial workers the expression of Christian community may become more meaningful if it is set free from the parochial system?<sup>1</sup>

By the following year (1960), plans to put this vision into practice had been laid before, and accepted by, the Diocesan Conference, and within sixteen months of Stockwood's appointment as bishop, SOC was in existence.

The first intake of students were employed in a wide range of occupations, including a personnel officer, an accountant, a quantity surveyor, an engineer, clerks, managers and directors of many kinds, social workers, teachers, a solicitor, a university lecturer, a student, a medical research assistant and a TV producer. In an article reporting the

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<sup>1</sup>I am grateful to Bishop Stockwood for graciously lending me the text of this sermon from amongst his own papers.



start of the Course, Robinson said he considered the Course would

prove a significant contribution towards taking the lid off the Church's manpower. It has already revealed considerable untapped potential. (Robinson 1960a)

Since SOC was subsequently to become a model for others, its structure needs to be described here. All the students lived in their own homes and remained in their secular employment during the three years of training. In term time they attended evening classes on two days a week in the Cathedral Chapter House. These lectures were held under the auspices of the University of London Department of Extra-Mural Studies; they were open to other members of the public; students were required to submit written work and to sit examinations in Old Testament, New Testament, Christian Doctrine, Church History, Apologetics and Liturgy; successful students were awarded the University of London Diploma in Biblical and Religious Studies. These lectures were supplemented by the staff of SOC, so as to provide the necessary study of specifically Anglican subjects and training in pastoral skills.

In addition to these twice-weekly lectures, SOC students were required to attend seven residential weekends per year, and a fortnight's Summer School, held at a diocesan training centre. These residential periods provided opportunity for more extended communal life and worship, and the handling of pastoral subjects by the SOC staff.

Although regarded with extreme suspicion in some quarters, in others the 'experiment' was followed with keen interest. Thus, for instance, the author of Crockford's Preface for 1961/2 gave a cautious welcome to -

the interesting experiment of a night school for ordinands now being made by the authorities of the Southwark diocese. From what we have heard it is obvious that this new venture has touched a section of the population in secular employment who could not afford to abandon their work for the period of testing needed to determine the reality of a vocation, and it may well prove a means of bringing new classes of ordinands to the Church. (Crockford 1962, p. viii)

This latter hope was to be disappointed, largely on account of the academic standards required by the Course. In fact from the very outset the educational background of SOC students was well above the national average: Robinson had to concede that 75% of the first intake had had some form of secondary education, and 23% were graduates (Robinson



1960<sup>a</sup>). The standards had from the beginning been deliberately set at a level equivalent to those of residential theological colleges - a defensive response provoked by the necessity of having to content with the jibe of being 'second class' training and a 'back-door' entry to the ordained ministry. Stockwood recounts how when he first put his plans to the House of Bishops -

they were not enthusiastically received, least of all by those who had been principals of theological colleges and found it difficult to believe there could be an alternative method of training. The Archbishop was the exception. Geoffrey Fisher gave me guarded support and urged me to go ahead. (Stockwood 1982, p. 106)

In order to counter the allegation that SOC was a 'back-door' entry to ministry, steps had been taken at the outset to have its curriculum approved and regularly inspected by CACTM. A preliminary inspection of 1962, leading to a grant of provisional recognition, was superceded by another in 1965, which concluded:

We are left with a strong impression that the Southwark Ordination Course is making an important contribution to the ministry of the Church and have no doubt that the partial recognition recommended in 1962 should now be rescinded and the Course recognised in the fullest sense.

(Cited in Southwark Ordination Course Ten Year Review<sup>1</sup>, p. 5)

This early recognition by a central church authority encouraged dioceses bordering of Southwark to begin using SOC for their own ordinands within a very short space of time. Thus the student body soon included ordinands from St Albans (1961), Guildford, London and Rochester (1962), Chelmsford (1963), Chichester (1965), and Canterbury (1966) (ibid., p.6). In most cases the ordinand's secular job was in London, and thus within easy reach of Southwark Cathedral.

A further landmark in the recognition of part-time training appeared in 1967, when Frank Hewlett (SOC 1960-63) was instituted to the benefice of St Luke, Walthamstow in the diocese of Chelmsford - the first SOC-trained man to be admitted to a benefice. This was not a chance appointment, for from the beginning SOC had been recognised by CACTM as suitable training for both stipendiary and non-stipendiary

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<sup>1</sup>This unpublished Review was a working party report submitted to the Council of SOC in February 1970.



ministry. 1967 also saw the admission of the first woman student (Dr Una Kroll) who undertook training as a non-stipendiary deaconess through SOC.

Thus by the time that the Welsby report came to be published (1968)(cf. III.9 below), SOC had firmly established itself in the theological training scene in England, and its graduates were to be found throughout the home counties. The ordination of the first SOC deacons took place on 29th September 1963 in Southwark Cathedral, all 14 being from Southwark diocese. But by 1969, a total of 94 clergy had been trained through SOC<sup>1</sup>, 37 of whom were serving as 'Priest-Workers' (ibid.). All told, this amounted to a sizable experience from which the church as a whole could draw lessons with confidence.

### iii) Worker-Priests for England ?

While these practical developments were taking place on the ground, a vigorous debate was taking place in print about the theological validity of what was happening. One focus of attention was the appropriateness of a worker-priest ministry in England.

Mention has already been made (III.3.ii) of the symposium Priests and Workers : An Anglo-French Discussion (Edwards 1961), which contained an important essay by E.R.Wickham justifying the stance of current Industrial Mission policy, and discounting any significant role for priest-workers in British industry. Wickham was at the time Bishop of Middleton, having from 1944-59 been responsible for the establishment of the Sheffield Industrial Mission. It has already been noted that, as a respected authority in the field, Wickham's arguments had a wide influence, and seems to have been an important factor inhibiting the development of work-focussed NSM.

Briefly, the case Wickham made was as follows. He acknowledged that a ministry other than that of the parish priest was necessary. But the French model of worker-priest was not appropriate in England: the English working class was indeed estranged from the church, but it was not anti-clerical like its French counterpart. Therefore, any dramatic

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<sup>1</sup>An additional 7 had received part of their training through SOC.



attempt by priests to identify with the workers by becoming workers themselves was unnecessary, since there had always been a Christian presence within the British workforce. What was needed was mobilisation and reinforcement of this potential 'lay-apostolate', since the significant instrument of the Kingdom of God in each work sector was the layman. Building upon insights from Kraemer's recently published A Theology of the Laity (1958), Wickham claimed that the major reform needed in the life of the church was -

understanding of herself as the laity in the world. And it requires organizational and structural means whereby it can be strengthened and served. Unless and until this happens we shall be continuously tempted to repose our hopes in new forms of ordained ministry. True, we do need some new flexible forms of ministry, but not of the kind that usurp the role or debase the currency of the laity.

(Edwards 1961, p. 144)

In Wickham's opinion, that is precisely what the proposal to ordain workers would do. Such action -

would cut the heads off the very examples of laymen we so desperately need to produce and multiply ... the proposal obscures the role of the laity in the world. (p. 146)

Wickham did, however, see a specific role for priests in Industrial Mission, whose specialised ministries had the task of creating dialogue between the sectors of society. These priests would, in his opinion, avoid the dangers mentioned above, for -

they are catalytic and ancillary to the lay function ... their task is not to produce 'churches' or congregations, but to produce bona fide laymen who are also 'centres of infection, affection and disaffection'. (p. 151)

In contrast to Wickham's position, the symposium Priests and Workers concluded with a brief description of the Worker Church Group by Anne Grubb<sup>1</sup>. At the time, the Group consisted of six priests, their wives and one layman and his wife. All were well-educated people who declared that they were -

committed to the industrial wage-earners of this country by sharing as fully as we can in their life and work, and living on the earnings of our work as they do. (p. 154)

All the men had therefore taken jobs as manual workers in industry. They had chosen this way of life out of conviction that the Gospel had to be lived out in the material terms of money and work; because they wished

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<sup>1</sup>This contribution up-dated an earlier article (Grubb 1960).



to proclaim it 'visibly free of charge' (cf. I Corinthians 9:10); and because they wanted to respond to a modern vocation to poverty - not material poverty, but

the poverty determined by the wage-status itself, the impersonal ... soul-destroying nature of much of the work, insecurity of employment ... educational under-privilege. (p. 155)

Before proceeding further, the history and membership of the Group needs to be described in more detail. Essentially, the Group was an informal circle of people sharing common ideals, who had devoted their lives (and life-styles) to bridging a class barrier. They did not belong to a society, nor did they have any developed formal 'movement'. Structurally, an annual conference formed the focus of the Group. They first met in 1957, and in 1959 produced a 'Statement' for private circulation amongst interested friends, which they subsequently published (Rowe 1965, appendix)<sup>1</sup>. The following biographical details help to fill out the character of the Group<sup>2</sup>.

**Jack Strong**<sup>3</sup> (born 1915, ordained 1938) is the Founder Member of the Group. From 1951 to 1955 he and Michael Gedge<sup>4</sup> were licensed to the parish of Eythorne, Kent, living in the vicarage, but working in the local coal-mine. A contemporary letter from the Archbishop's chaplain reports:

They work as miners and draw miners' pay. The only supplement they get to this is an allowance to cover expenses of their office including the maintenance of the parsonage house. They are on alternative shifts so that whilst one of them is in the mine the other is available in the parish... present indications are that it is working happily though it is too soon for any balanced judgments.

(CHA: SIC/3/8, letter dated 17 May 1952)

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<sup>1</sup>Its title is: 'Statement of a Group of Churchmen, Priests and Lay, who have chosen to be Wage-Workers in Industry as an Expression of their Faith'. *include*

<sup>2</sup>Sources used: Grubb 1960; Edwards 1961, pp. 154-160; Rowe 1965, pp. 77-8; Crockford's Clerical Directory.

<sup>3</sup>Jack Sargent Strong (1915-~~87~~): Curate, Cheam Common, Battersea, Streatham and Deptford, 1938-48; licensed to officiate, Eythorne, 1951-55; Industrial Worker and Founder Member of Worker Church Group, 1951-67; at Christ Church, Luton, 1955-56; Curate-in-charge, Harlington, 1956-62; permission to officiate, dioc. Blackburn, 1962-64; licensed to officiate, dioc. Oxford, 1964-67; Rector, Marsh Baldon & Toot Baldon, 1967-81.

<sup>4</sup>The same individual mentioned in III.3.ii.



Strong has given his own account of the effect of such an arrangement:

After priest and parishioners have scrubbed each other's backs a few times in the communal pithead bath-house things could never be quite the same again. (Strong 1975, p. 34)

Injury, however, prevented him continuing work underground, and the bishop refused to countenance them taking other work which would take them 'outside the parish bounds'. So Strong had to seek a job elsewhere. From 1951 to 1967 he was employed as an industrial worker successively in Luton, Harlington, Blackburn and Oxford, before accepting an Oxfordshire incumbency at the age of 52, whence he retired in 1981. While at Harlington, Beds., (1956-62), Strong was made priest-in-charge of the parish on a nominal stipend of 10 shillings p.a. He lived in the vicarage, but worked 'in a Luton factory checking oil meters, travelling to and from work each day with most of his male parishioners' (Edwards 1961, p. 155). This departure from tradition seems to have provoked disquiet locally, so that in 1960 the bishop called an end to the 'experiment' for undisclosed 'pastoral reasons'. An independent enquirer (Peter Young), who visited Harlington to meet parishioners, concluded that on their evidence Strong was 'without doubt ... a most industrious parish priest'. He found that the only possible grouse was that Strong was unavailable in the daytime (unless he took a cut in his pay packet), and ended the report of his enquiry:

Can it be that by some people it is considered a trifle undignified for a priest to soil his hands in the factory?

(Young 1962, p. 57)

I have been told privately by another member of the Group that the lady of the manor, who was also the patron of the living, brought pressure to bear on the bishop to have Strong removed.

John Rowe<sup>1</sup> (born 1923, ordained 1951) has since 1956 worked in East London as an electrician in Truman's Brewery, living with his family in a council house in Tower Hamlets. He was 'voluntary assistant priest'

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<sup>1</sup>John Goring Rowe (1923- ): Curate, Trumpington, 1951-53; St Paul with St Luke, Bow Common (dioc. London), 1953-83.



licensed to the parish of St Paul, Bow Common from 1956 until 1984, in which year he resigned his licence (though not his Orders)<sup>1</sup>.

Martyn Grubb<sup>2</sup> (born 1929, ordained 1957), son of Sir Kenneth Grubb<sup>3</sup>, worked as a semi-skilled engineer in Southall's biggest factory, the AEC. Writing in 1960, his wife reported:

Martyn has no official obligations to the parish church, but by mutual agreement with the vicar, he preaches and celebrates regularly there; ...he also has a licence to celebrate the sacrament and conduct services in our own home.

(Edwards 1961, p. 156)

Tony Williamson<sup>4</sup> (born 1933, ordained 1960), son of 'Father Joe' Williamson of East London, was ordained without giving up his job as a fork-lift truck driver at Pressed Steel, Cowley. For most of the period he has been an Oxford City Councillor (Labour), serving as Chairman of the Housing Committee for two terms, and as Lord Mayor of the City in 1982. He was elected chairman of the factory branch of the TGWU in 1970. In response to an ACCM questionnaire (1976), he replied:

Most of my time is taken up in a representative capacity, and involves a considerable amount of pastoral work in a non-Church setting.

(CHA: ACCM/WP/NSM/5)

Two other priests were members of the early Group: Tom Quigley<sup>5</sup> (born 1919, ordained 1942), who after a conventional curacy and a term as chaplain in the forces went into factory work in Carlisle and Accrington from 1957 to 1970, and is now in Australia; and Kenneth

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<sup>1</sup>In an unpublished paper entitled 'An Explanation', dated May 1984, Rowe outlines what led him to the conviction that he should resign his license: an admission to himself that the power structure of the institutional Church of England is 'incurable'. He added, 'I need to relieve myself of (as I think) the diverting preoccupation of a minister of the churchly institution ... in order to concentrate as single mindedly as I can on seeking the Gospel'.

<sup>2</sup>Martyn Patrick Grubb (1927- ): Curate, St Peter de Beauvoir Town with Hackney, 1957-59; permission to officiate, dioc. London, 1960-66.

<sup>3</sup>cf. III.7.ii above.

<sup>4</sup>Anthony William Williamson (1933-): Hon. Curate, Cowley (dioc. Oxford) from 1960.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas Molesworth Quigley (1919- ): Curate, St Saviour, Herne Hill, 1942-45; Chaplain to Forces, 1945-58; Curate, Upperby, Carlisle, 1958-62; Accrington (dioc. Blackburn), 1962-70.



Ramsay<sup>1</sup> (born 1918, ordained 1951), who after conventional pastoral work took up an industrial job as an assembly worker in a radio factory in 1961.

It does, however, give a false impression of the Worker Church Group to pick out its priest members - for from the outset it was never primarily concerned with priests taking jobs; the main thrust of the approach was to do with class, and the wives of these priests and other lay people outnumbered the ordained members. Nevertheless, the presence within the Group of conventionally trained priests, who also held licences to officiate in their localities, meant that there seemed to be a chance of theological reflection taking place, which might in due course be fed back to the wider church.

Indeed Anne Grubb had claimed that the Group's work was 'part of the greater work of the whole church' (Grubb 1960, p. 271). However, it was obvious that if the Group was in any sense to be representative of the church, then the church must 'own' it. As one commentator perceptively remarked,

in the long run, these experiments must be supported by something more than the individual conviction of those who are taking part in them; they are part of the ordered life of the Church, and it is for the Church as a whole to scrutinize their implications.

(Symons 1961, p. 47)

To meet this challenge, one of their number published Priests and Workers : A Rejoinder (Rowe 1965) as an apologia for the Worker Church Group, in the hope that it would provide material for the Church's scrutiny.

We shall give some space to discussion of this slim book for two reasons. In the first place, it is written out of the experience of trying to live the Gospel in the world of work. In the course of this experience, certain insights about the relationship between being ordained and being an employed wage-earner emerge. Rowe was expounding these insights with reference to labouring manual jobs, but the principles invoked seem capable of application to a wider spectrum of employment - and to MSE as it has subsequently developed. Secondly, the book is written by a practitioner who has devoted his life to his vision. He is a

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth William Ramsay (1918- ): Curate, St John, Southall, 1952-57; Assistant Chaplain, Lee Abbey, 1957-60; permission to officiate, dioc. Southwark, 1960-69; dioc. Portsmouth, 1969-77; dioc. Salisbury, 1977- .



resident within the working-class, not a passing alien visitor (like so many priests whose works are cited in this thesis<sup>1</sup>). Consequently, the book has an authenticity seldom found elsewhere, and is thus intrinsically worth attention.

Rowe began by denying Wickham's assumption that class cleavage in Britain was disappearing. The cleavage was a structural one, he claimed, imposed by the wage status itself. It was futile to suppose that by talking to workers Industrial Chaplains would bridge the gap:

Two men may talk across class barriers and they may even go together to the altar and experience a oneness in Christ while there. Yet what has by this token been done to break down the objective barrier symbolised by the wage status on the one hand and the stipendiary status on the other? Is it surprising that some conclude that the Gospel points an obvious way? When you have worked a while in a factory and seen the unconscious arrogance of authority, even in good men; when you have experienced the situation of being under command day after day, knowing that it will always be so; when you have clocked your card late and taken a quarter-of-an-hour's pay less, next pay day; when you have seen what that pay means in terms of housing and necessities and comforts, and learned the lessons of overtime; and when you have looked out from the circle of your workmates and seen with their eyes the manner of life of the socially superior, including the clergy, a realisation is surely borne in upon you with unmistakable force. You realise something which you might have known before but have been afraid to admit, that on the side you have relinquished lies privilege and on the side you have accepted resentment. (Rowe 1965, pp. 21-2)

Rowe concluded:

This gulf may only be bridged - in the long run closed - by sharing. For sharing is one of the simplest and yet most characteristic expressions of Christian caring. (p. 21)

He went on to declare the need for -

a representative body of clergy and laity doing this i.e. sharing the wage-earner's status on the Church's behalf, with her sympathy and with the realisation that this action is necessary if the Gospel is to be fully proclaimed in our age. (p. 23)

If the church were unwilling thus to commit itself, it should be asked 'whether or not a deep meaning of the Gospel is being ill served' (p. 26).

Rowe's second chapter handled Wickham's allegation that priests as workers obscured the proper role of the laity. He argued that Wickham's perception of the chaplain's role as an activator or educator of the laity

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<sup>1</sup>An extreme example is John Bickersteth, who launched into print after only a fortnight's work in a factory (Denniston 1960, pp. 121-6).



merely perpetuates the traditional divide between clergy and laity, and (despite Wickham's claim) did small justice to Kraemer's perception of the laity as the whole people of God, clergy and laity together. By contrast, the Worker Church Group saw themselves as 'a movement of worker churchmen, predominantly lay in composition but containing its due proportion of clergy', who recognised that to take up a labouring job was 'a valid and godly vocation' (p. 33).

But why the 'due proportion of clergy'? Rowe is at his most perceptive when responding to this question. The factory worker's situation was of course uppermost in his mind. But in the light of more recent experience of MSE in other work situations, this early statement of the case for ordained ministry at (or through) work may be heard as having a more general relevance.

It was in the context of the mission of all churchmen to share the life of working people, Rowe argued, that such priests may justify their action:

They simply claim their place amidst the laity in this sphere - among those who are already there by natural right, as it were, and those who choose to go there on behalf of the Church. They insist that if the Church is to 'be there' in its sacramental wholeness, the ordained ministry must be there among the laity. They do not in this way arrogate to themselves the 'leadership' of the Church's mission... Priesthood is not leadership. Leadership is a matter of personal gifts and abilities for causing corporate tasks to be performed. Priesthood is firstly concerned not with corporate tasks but with corporate being. It unifies, mediates and represents, among the body of the faithful, and it guards the truth though it is not especially its task to advance it. Why, then, do priests push themselves forward into a 'mission field' where there are few or no self-conscious laity, thus apparently exercising leadership? They can only reply that they are christians too, as well as priests, and they must answer the call to the Church for missionaries when they hear it, not waiting artificially, until there is a proportional body of laity involved before taking the plunge themselves. But this does not make them leaders. It merely places them in the sphere where their priesthood is to be exercised.  
(p. 35)

Priesthood need not, Rowe emphasised, be understood in terms of the leadership roles commonly undertaken by parochial clergy, since -

priests who earn their living as factory workers are not ... primarily undertaking a piece of 'work' for the Church, except in so far as their daily labour, as 'done unto the Lord', is work for the Church. It is not relevant to ask them 'How is the work going?' unless you mean their production figures, on the assembly line. They are, rather, simply being in embryo a slight shift of the Church's attention, a slight adjustment in her centre of gravity... If anyone asks 'How does he (a worker priest) differ from a lay reader ... in



the practical part he plays in the economy of the Church and in the Christian impact on society?'<sup>1</sup> the reply is: very little, if by practical is meant some form of outward action not open to a layman. It is precisely in order to strip himself of the outward, and the worldly, additions to the status of the ministry that a priest becomes a wage worker. He cannot now organise and administer a congregation in the midst of the secular sphere he moves in. He cannot make of religion a thing in itself, with its visible building and its separate activities of worship. He cannot hold a 'living'. (p. 36)

Does a reduced role of this kind mean that such a priest might as well not be ordained at all? On the contrary, Rowe insists, it is precisely his ordination which opens opportunities for truly priestly ministry. For the worker priest -

does not for an instance<sup>t</sup> divest himself of the character conferred upon him at ordination. His word on matters of doctrine and morality are no less the word of a priest. If nothing is to be said about the sacraments, in which he of course continues to play his part among the faithful though not overtly among his unchurched workmates, his part in the 'economy of the Church and in the Christian impact on society' is in terms of his undoubted continuance as a focus of authority. Any who come forward, or are brought forward by the laity, may have confidence in his answers to questions and in his teaching, for he does not lack any grace which any other priest enjoys by virtue of his Order. Is this not a 'practical' role to play? Anyone who knows anything about the distortions and ignorances of unchurched people concerning the faith must appreciate the value of there being knowledgeable and authoritative officers of the Church wherever people are, available for questioning at the very moment when questions come up, or very soon after. Their usefulness would undoubtedly increase if there were more and more active laymen in their workplaces. (pp. 36-7)

Rowe went further and claimed that worker priests were actually doing a service to the church by implicitly asking whether so many of the traditional activities of the parish priest were truly priestly at all:

the worker priests may well ask the professional clergy to explain why they spend so much of their time doing things which laymen do just as well qua laymen. Praying, visiting the sick, running clubs and societies, attending to the fabric of the buildings - these should not be the sole responsibility of the clergy. (pp. 38-9)

Nevertheless, Rowe did not see his ordained ministry as over against that of the parochial clergy. On the contrary, each priest in the Group exercised traditional functions outside the factory. This nurtured him as a priest. Several priests in the Group were licensed to parish churches or

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<sup>1</sup>Cited from Symons 1961, pp. 44-5.



smaller groupings:

In every case ... the worker priest has at least one and sometimes two 'congregations' behind him ... within which his preaching, teaching, counselling, and sacramental functions are exercised. There is no tendency to separate from the body of the Church or to withdraw from the authority of the Bishop. (p. 53)

Though he does not explicitly make the connection, it seems that it was the proper exercise of such pastoral and sacramental ministry among the 'faithful' at home which gave Rowe the right to perceive himself as an authentic priest at work, albeit as yet without sacramental functions in the workplace. Movingly, he reflected:

Meanwhile, though poor evangelist he may be, inhibited as to pastoral care, altarless among those whom he would love most to represent at the altar, yet he is, as a priest, in a special sense representative of the wonderful and sacred Mystery, which is the Church of God, and he stands as a promise to all with eyes to see that the Church, as an organic whole, cares. (p. 51)

It was the conviction of the Worker Church Group that they represented the church. Rowe therefore concluded his book by challenging the church to affirm whether this were so:

Let churchmen now judge what it means for themselves that some few have chosen to express their faith in the way defended here. Let them ask themselves not simply whether these individuals are right to do what they are doing, whether the movement has any future, whether they are merely fulfilling their own inner spiritual needs. Instead, let it be asked, 'What is being said about the Gospel by this venture, and does it mean anything to me?' (p. 63)

But the challenge fell on deaf ears. The sole book review which I have discovered is brief and dismissive<sup>1</sup>. No further written response was forthcoming from any source. Writing a year earlier (1964), Leslie Paul in his extensive study of the deployment of the clergy had referred to 'a small, devoted, selfless band of ... worker-priests in England'. He claimed that this movement 'can be described as an act of moral and social witness by part of the priesthood', which was 'effective ... in enlarging the spiritual and social experience and outreach of the priesthood' (Paul 1964, p.154). This was precisely the kind of comment Rowe hoped to hear. But Paul's perception of the Group was not to be echoed elsewhere, and in the light of the subsequent inattention by the institutional church, the latter statement cannot be said to have been

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<sup>1</sup>As an apologia, this essay would be more convincing if it seemed less free-lance' (J.S.Nurser in Theology, Vol 69 (1966), pp. 230-1).



borne out. A further twelve years were to elapse before an official church report discussed ordained ministry in the workplace (Saumarez Smith 1977).

Nevertheless, despite the lack of response, the members of the Worker Church Group have continued their silent witness over the years. In 1982 the name was changed to 'The Shop Floor Association' with a revised statement of aims<sup>1</sup>; the address list (1982) contained 28 names, including 6 Anglican priests with Grubb, Rowe, Strong and Williamson amongst them.

From the present-day perspective, with two decades of further evolution of NSM to judge by, it is now possible to see that Rowe was struggling to en/unciate a theology of what is now termed 'work-focussed ministry', or 'ministry in secular employment' (MSE). Nothing that he says runs counter to the theology expounded in the symposium presented to General Synod (Baelz & Jacob 1985), nor to the published experiences of more recent ministers in secular employment (eg., Vaughan 1986a). But in 1965, Rowe went unheard. Why?

Answers may be suggested at two levels. First, Rowe was attempting to speak to the church out of his experience of having crossed a class frontier. Enormous human motivation is required to decide to cross such a cultural divide - in this case not merely by seeking manual jobs, but by living in working-class areas of cities, and by rearing families there. It is the rare kind of motivation to be found amongst those few missionaries who are prepared to seek citizenship in the land of their labours, their adopted homeland. Personal commitment of such depth seems unlikely to be found amongst the predominantly married, middle-class clergy of the Church of England. This may also explain why, despite formal expression amongst churchpeople about concern over poverty, the Worker Church Group has remained a tiny circle and has failed to generate any noticeable response from the church it purports to represent.

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<sup>1</sup>The Basis provisionally accepted at the annual meeting of the Association in May 1982 at Ilkley, Yorks., includes the statement: 'our membership broadly consists of men and women who earn their living in manual and clerical jobs of low status, their unemployed and those whose work is the care of children or dependents at home'.



But secondly, it has to be recognised that at a structural level, the Church of England as an institution had no mechanism whereby, in 1965, it could have offered the kind of affirmation Rowe was asking for. Although Rowe was keen to maintain parochial links, the declared thrust of his ministry was in a non-parochial setting. So even if the mechanism for comment were available, the parochially dominated institution would have been disinclined to comment. Such comment as there has been about work-focussed ministry has only been forthcoming in recent years - since NSM has reached significant proportions, and includes a preponderance of professional occupations within its spectrum, more akin to those of the general membership of the Church of England.

#### v) The Ministry - a Profession?

A second focus for reflection was the received model of the clergy as a profession. Was it of the essence of ordained ministry that it be exercised by a professional class within society? Examination of that question repeatedly emerged during the 1960s.

Patrick McLaughlin<sup>1</sup> first introduced the question by making the important distinction between the role of 'priest' and the role of 'clergyman'. He considered that the French worker-priests had discovered a fresh model for ordained ministry which maintained the essence of priesthood, while discarding the professional role of 'clergyman':

Divested not only of the cassock, but also of all the jobs involved in parish work (such as maintaining the church fabric, running the clubs and pious guilds, multiplying Masses and other Offices for a handful of devotees...) they discovered ... the real essence of their task, the basic and inalienable function of the priest: 'to stand before God in the name of the people and to stand before the people in the name of God'. They were free for the first time to discharge the fundamental ministry of reconciliation, undistracted by the manifold calls of secondary and subordinate duties imposed by tradition or convention on clergy. (Edwards 1961, p. 105)

He bemoaned the fact that in England the relative insignificance of religious orders meant that a potential alternative model of non-parochial ministry was denied us, and claimed that a special 'apostolate' to

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<sup>1</sup>Patrick McLaughlin: Vicar, Berden, 1938-43; Priest-in-charge St Thomas, Regent Street, London, 1944-53; Rector, St Anne with St Thomas and St Peter, Soho, 1953-62.



unchurched culture was called for:

The best way of doing this is ... by an act of identification with them in their own culture-patterns, even to the point of sharing the hazards of their lives. This ... is in the first place the task of lay apostles: but if this lay apostolate is to take root and bear fruit, it must be followed by an ordained ministry able to 'make the Church' in any place or culture. (ibid., p. 120)

We have often noted already how such ideas were perceived by parochial clergy as a threat. An interesting documented example of this process may be seen in a protracted discussion in Theology during 1962/3. Victor de Waal<sup>1</sup> in an article entitled 'A Shortage of Vocations ?' (de Waal 1962) questioned the validity of received assumptions about ordained ministry: does vocation depend primarily on an 'inner' call? should recruitment of young men be the norm? need the ministry normally be full-time and paid? He acknowledged that his questions arose directly from reflection upon Roland Allen's recently re-printed Case for Voluntary Clergy. Predictably, this article provoked an emotional repost from a rural bishop (West 1963). The bishop's article is remarkable more for the strength of feeling expressed, rather than for any coherent response to the points made by de Waal.

However, the correspondence elicited the fascinating story of Rupert Bliss<sup>2</sup>, a priest who had during the 1930s and 1940s sought to be ordained while remaining in his profession as an engineer. Although he possessed a theological degree and had undergone theological college training, he experienced 'colossal resistance' to his perception of his vocation:

So long as I remained a professional mechanical scientist, earning my living thereby, and being at no stipendiary charges on the Church as an organization, it would be quite proper for me to conduct matins and evensong (as a lay reader) and preach from the pulpit; but some occult violence would be done to the Nature of Things were I (as a priest) to administer the Sacraments. In other words, so far as I could understand, hands which handled iron and steel, oil and grease, and minds which concentrated on vectors and coefficients of

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<sup>1</sup>Victor Alexander de Waal (1929- ): Chaplain, Ely Theological College, 1956-59; King's College, Cambridge, 1959-63; Nottingham University, 1963-69; Chancellor, Lincoln Cathedral, 1969-76; Dean of Canterbury, 1976-86.

<sup>2</sup>Rupert Geoffrey Bliss (1905- ): ordained 1950 (formerly a lay missionary); Curate, Bromley, 1950-55; Principal, Dunford College, Midhurst, 1955-65; Curate-in-charge, Heyshott, 1965-66; Melton Abbas, 1968-73.



expansion on weekdays were ceremonially unfit to apply themselves to the performance of the Holy Mysteries on Sundays.

(Bliss 1963, p. 112)

Bliss seems to be a further example of an individual with a new vision of exercising ordained ministry, who, like Jack Strong (cf. III.7.iv above), was prevented from exploring it because of pressure arising from expectations of a professional clergyman. There was at the time no category of priesthood under which he might operate (cf. Intro.v).

The above discussions were all based upon theological principles. However, about this time the discipline of sociology began to offer contributions. An early example is the essay entitled 'The Ministry as a Profession: A Sociological Critique' by Justus Freytag (1965). He argued that the very notion of a profession was no longer a satisfactory social form for the Christian ministry. The church's (and consequently the minister's) involvement with society had receded to the point where it was seen as a leisure activity in competition with others in the non-work sector of social life. The paid ministry's influence thus tended to be reduced to gathering and servicing an association (the congregation), with little opportunity to respond to the whole of social reality. Nor was it sufficient to expect the layman to make this response, since his own profession confined his role. In the light of this changed situation, the most positive step for the church to take would be -

to confer the full ministry also on members of the congregation who are engaged in other professions. In this way the image current in society, whereby the office of the ministry and the task of the lay person can be contained in a few fixed functions, would be shattered, and at the same time experience would be gained in seeing how it is possible for a Christian exercising independent responsibility to overstep the bounds of his own professional sphere and enter into a broader public sphere... Without the courage deliberately ... to step out into a new public sphere beyond their profession, neither the minister nor the lay person can do justice to their single common task. (Freytag 1965, pp. 81-2)

This essay seems to be the earliest to advocate on sociological grounds that the church should move towards establishing NSM. As the 1960s progressed, sociological comment on the ministry was to grow, though very little of it was directed at the issue of NSM.



## vi) A World-Wide Phenomenon

We have already noted (III.5) how developments in the overseas churches indirectly influenced the Church of England. This interaction became particularly marked during the 1960s - a decade which experienced an alarming decline in ordinations, with attendant questioning about the traditional pattern of ministry. Was the decline to be seen as final evidence that the traditional structures of ministry were cracking, and that a reconsideration of the conception of ministry as a full-time salaried profession could no longer be avoided? - as John Robinson was suggesting (Robinson 1966). Those who pressed such questions were assisted in their exploration by the sudden flood of new information from overseas. It became apparent that, taking a world-wide perspective, a reservoir of experience of non-professional ministry was beginning to build up.

Whereas in the past such information had tended to filter back to England by word of mouth through expatriate bishops, now systematic studies of particular overseas situations began to appear in print in England. Newbigin's detailed description of strategy for ministry in his South India diocese, published in 1960, has already been noted (cf. III.5 above). That strategy included a local, non-professional ministry in each village congregation.

But an entirely different experience - urban and non-Anglican - was offered by Douglas Webster's Patterns of Part-Time Ministry in some Churches in South America (1964). Webster<sup>1</sup> undertook the study at the personal instigation of Sir Kenneth Grubb, and with the financial assistance of the Survey Application Trust (SAT), which eventually published the work under its own imprint. We have already noted how SAT existed to further the ideas of Roland Allen. Webster, however, did not merely pedal Allen's ideas. He spent six weeks visiting leaders of Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal and Episcopalian churches in Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Chile. What he discovered on the ground did not entirely square with Allen's theory.

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<sup>1</sup>Douglas Webster (1920-85): Home Education Secretary, CMS, 1953-61; Theologian Missioner, CMS, 1961-65; Professor of Mission, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, 1966-69; Residentiary Canon, St Paul's Cathedral, London, 1969-85.



Webster's original attraction to these South American churches had been that many of them had from their inception been led by a 'part-time ministry'. He found, however, that 'almost everywhere this pattern had arisen through economic necessity' (p. 29), and not from any theological conviction - nor even from acquaintance with Allen, whose writings were unknown at that time to any of the churches investigated. Webster noted:

In no single case did the enquiry reveal that part-time ministers were part-time in order to be able to evangelize the secular world more effectively. (p. 33)

On the contrary, he found that most local churches hoped that once they had become well established, they would be able to afford a full-time minister. On the basis of the evidence accumulated, Webster formulated the following tentative conclusion:

When a church is rapidly expanding, at its growth points and in its early stages the part-time ministry must be regarded almost as an imperative; but at the points of consolidation and in the later stages of church-growth, especially with second and third generation Christians, children of converts rather than converts themselves, a teaching ministry becomes an imperative also, and this will usually mean a greater emphasis on trained and full-time pastors. (p. 36)

He did not believe that 'they are growing so fast because they have a part-time ministry, but rather that they have a part-time ministry because they are growing so fast' (p. 45). Webster called for a distinction between concepts of 'ministry' and of 'mission':

The ministry is God's gift to the Church ... and the Church is God's gift to the world, his agent for mission ... mission in the world is normally a lay function. (p. 40)

Webster considered that the South American churches' path to evolution demonstrated the truth of this dictum, and consequently raised questions about any attempt to justify ordained ministry to the world through the secular work of clergy.

With hindsight, a different interpretation may be offered of the phenomena Webster observed. His data may be seen as yet further examples of the power of the traditional model of ministry to dominate people's thinking: poor congregations felt themselves deprived, and wanted as soon as possible to mimic the pattern of their parent churches; the presence of a full-time minister was thus seen as the token of self-sufficiency in the local church. The result was the precise reverse of Allen's concept of local self-sufficiency.



We may note, in passing, that whenever Western strategists or consultants have advised third-world churches that they ought to develop non-professional ordained ministry, the advice has seldom been received or acted upon. For example, two studies of the needs and resources of the churches in East Africa during the 1960s introduced current ideas of alternative models of ministry, and recommended the development of 'tent-making ministry' (Welch 1963 and Miller 1969). But no significant action has ensued, because of the near unanimous opposition by local clergy to an idea which threatened their status. One pastor is quoted as saying: 'Try out this system in Europe first and then bring it here' (Miller 1969, p. 68).

The common prejudice conveyed by this kind of remark was unlikely to be overcome without widespread dissemination of information about the actual experience of alternative patterns of ministry, and without discussion of the issues involved - at a world-wide level. To this very task the World Council of Churches (WCC) addressed itself, so becoming the initiator of a very influential research project conducted during the mid-1960s. The history of the development of this project is as follows.

The Evanston Assembly of the WCC (1954) had authorised the Division of Studies to explore the implications of the ecumenical movement for theological education. Through lack of money, no action was taken immediately, but the matter was kept on the agenda for the New Delhi Assembly (1961). By that time Lesslie Newbigin had become Associate General Secretary of the WCC, and was pressing for wider exploration of the kind of experiment that he had initiated in his own Indian diocese (cf. III.5 above). Accordingly the Central Committee recommended to the New Delhi Assembly that 'a substantial study concerning the training for the ministry in our time' be undertaken. It was further recommended that any such study of theological education had first to focus upon the prior question:

How can the work of ministry be performed and new patterns of ministry be recognised and utilized in the new situation in the modern world? (World Council of Churches 1962, p. 169)



The emphasised words were added at the proposal of J.V.Taylor<sup>1</sup>, then Africa Secretary of the CMS, and it was their addition which ensured that the project devoted attention to non-professional ministry (ibid. p. 170).

Reinforcement of the desire for such a study was provided by the Fourth World Conference on Faith & Order at Montreal (1963). In discussing 'more flexible forms of ministry', the Conference declared the propriety of ordaining a non-professional ministry for village pastorates, or 'in sectors of society which are impentetrable to existing forms of ministry'. Its most radical proposal, reflecting insights from worker priests and anticipating the concept of 'work-focussed ministry', declared:

In a frontier situation, where there is no Christian community among the people, the Church may select a minister and send him into some secular employment so that he becomes a part of the community and within it seeks to witness and to form the community of God's people, the Church.

(Roger & Vischer 1964, p. 68)

A discussion-starter to the international debate that ensued in the mid-1960s was provided by a paper entitled 'A Tent-Making Ministry'<sup>2</sup> (Anon., 1963). This paper was disseminated by the WCC's Theological Education Fund at consultations it sponsored in various countries. In non-technical language the paper laid out the New Testament and early church evidence for the existence of a non-professional or local ministry alongside a stipendiary ministry. It also collated contemporary experience of such ministries in Hong Kong, South India, Latin America and France. It argued that this pattern of ministry was particularly appropriate to a church willing to perceive itself as a 'mobile expedition', rather than as a fixed institution. According to a contemporary comment (World Council of Churches 1965, p. 260), the paper 'excited great interest'; it was reprinted in the International Review of Missions.

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<sup>1</sup>John Vernon Taylor (1914- ): Warden, Bishop Tucker Theological College, Mukono, Uganda, 1945-55; Research Worker, International Missionary Council, 1959-63; Africa Secretary, CMS, 1959-63; General Secretary, 1963-74; Bishop of Winchester, 1974-85; Chairman, Doctrine Commission, 1978-85.

<sup>2</sup>This paper was submitted to the Division of World Mission and Evangelism (DWME) arising from a consultation on 'Patterns of Ministry' held in Arnoldshain, W. Germany, in the summer of 1962. It appears to have been written by Dr Wilfred Scopes (according to Welch 1963, p. 163).



A further boost to more informed discussion was provided by a WCC research pamphlet entitled New Forms of Ministry (Paton 1965), which brought together for the first time a significant collection of scholarly essays exploring non-professional ministry from the perspective of different academic disciplines - New Testament studies (Hanson 1965), church history (Vischer 1965), and sociology (Freytag 1965). A concluding chapter (Porter 1965) collected evidence from an astonishing range of **existing** non-professional ministries in the Orthodox churches, rural Africa, Lusitania, India, Hong Kong, France and USA (Baptist and Episcopalian). Though relatively slight in size, this volume provided the most substantial academic case yet made for non-professional ministry.

The research project got firmly under way in March 1964, when Steven Mackie was appointed its full-time executive secretary for a four-year term. The precise aim and methods of the project (now entitled 'Study on Patterns of Ministry and Theological Education') were approved by the Central Committee at Enugu (Nigeria) in January 1965, and were published in the Ecumenical Review (World Council of Churches 1965). During the years 1965 to 1967 Mackie proceeded to organize a number of international consultations<sup>1</sup>, assembling local experience of alternative patterns of ministry, and inviting theological reflection upon the experience.

One such consultation on non-professional ministry was held at Massy (Paris) on 7th October 1966. It was attended by about a dozen people, including Basil Moss<sup>2</sup> (Chief Secretary, ACCM), Bishop E.R. (Ted) Wickham, and John Rowe from England. Papers presented included reflections upon experiences in East Germany, the Mission de France, and the Reformed Church of France<sup>3</sup>. Through Moss' presence, the thinking of

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<sup>1</sup>Consultations were held in Hong Kong (March 1965); Geneva (September 1965); Massy, France (October 1966); Seoul, Korea (November 1966); Northwood, Middlesex (July 1967). Detailed reports of each of these consultations appeared in the WCC publication Ministry, Vols. I-IV.

<sup>2</sup>Basil Stanley Moss (1918- ): Sub-Warden, Lincoln Theological College, 1946-51; Sen. Tut. St Catherine's, Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, 1951-53; Vicar, St Nathanael w. St Katharine, Bristol, 1953-60; Director of Ordinands, Bristol dioc., 1956-66; Chief Secretary, ACCM, 1966-72; Provost of Birmingham, 1973-85.

<sup>3</sup>The following papers from the Massy Consultation are deposited in the ACCM archives (CHA: ACCM, MWP/1): A. Dumas, 'The Pastoral Ministry considered as a Profession'; Anon., 'New Patterns of Ministry in the German Democratic Republic (DDR)'; R. Pirard, 'Les Prêtres au Travail' (Paris, 1964); 'Part-Time Manual Work', extracted from Lettre aux Communautés de la Mission de France, No:3, 15 June 1966.



this group was fed back directly to the Church of England's 'think-tank' on theological education (viz., ACCM), and to the Welsby working-party on APM (cf. III.9 below).

The Memorandum of this meeting<sup>1</sup> makes interesting reading, not least because it sounds extraordinarily like the present-day situation: the passage of time does not seem to have clarified any of the uncertainties expressed in 1966. Three arguments for non-professional ministry were stated:

i) statistical: non-professionals could supplement the inadequate numbers of professionals. This argument 'was felt to be invalid, though it was agreed that this is the major motive behind the interest of certain churches in the matter'.

ii) strategical: in certain situations a non-professional ministry is necessary for the fulfilment of the church's missionary task. This argument 'was agreed to be valid, and to obtain in many situations in Europe - many participants were principally interested in this question'.

iii) ontological: the **presence** of ordained ministers is a particular milieu is required 'not because of what they can do, but because without them the Church would not be fully present in that situation'.

Ted Wickham said he 'admired', though could not 'accept', this latter argument. Emile Poulat, on the other hand, saw such priests as having a **ministry to the church**, which needed to be converted to a new society and to express the Christian message and sacraments in terms appropriate to this new society. John Rowe emphasised the need for the church to be present amongst the proletariat in the form of poverty. Further questions were raised as to whether these non-professional ministers needed to be ordained, how such ordination would differ from accreditation, and how to define the function of the ordained ministry in

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry and Mission: Memorandum of the Meeting of the Study-Group on Non-Professional Ministry, held at Massy, 7th October 1966' (PM 66:43). A copy is in the ACCM archives (CHA: ACCM, MWP/1).



a way which did not threaten the ministry of the laity. To these fundamental questions no unanimously agreed answers were forthcoming - as is still the case today.

Mackie considered that through these consultations the project had laid out the groundwork -

'the necessary theological and descriptive discussion which can permit the churches seriously to consider the non-professional ministry as a live option'. (Mackie 1966, p. 67)

He went on to note that it was not an option which many churches had taken, simply because the amount of information about these 'experiments' was very limited. In Mackie's opinion, this was 'one of the principle reasons why more had not happened'. What was needed now was further sociological and theological study a posteriori:

on the one hand, a sociological analysis and critique of actual experiments that have taken place, and on the other, an attempt to draw out their theological implications. (ibid.)

The research project concluded by presenting a summary report to the Fourth Assembly of the WCC held at Uppsala in July 1968 (World Council of Churches 1968a, pp. 126-134, reprinted as an appendix in Mackie 1969). This report noted that there was agreement about -

the need for further experiments in new and flexible patterns of ministry adapted to suit situations hitherto unexplored. Further study is required of non-professional or tent-making ministry in the industrial West and in scattered communities in non-Christian lands. (World Council of Churches 1968a, p. 128)

In the event, however, the outcome of the four-year research project was meagre in the extreme. The Uppsala Assembly never really reacted to it, because at no point were the study and its findings actually on the agenda<sup>1</sup>! As a result, the WCC never built upon the findings of the project, and no further international research on non-professional ministry has ever been undertaken.

The lasting memorial of the project therefore remains the publications that arose from it. Apart from those already mentioned, the most readily available was a book-length study by Steven Mackie entitled

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<sup>1</sup>Whereas the summary report appeared in the preparatory workbook for the Assembly, the project was referred to only twice in passing, during the Assembly's actual proceedings (World Council of Churches 1968b, pp. 202 and 370).



Patterns of Ministry (Mackie 1969), which contains a chapter of 'Ministers at Work'. In it Mackie offers five case studies of non-professional ministry in Greece (Orthodox), Canada (United Church of Canada), Kenya (Anglican), Japan (United Church of Christ) and France (Roman Catholic), together with a very readable summary of the theological discussions already referred to.

Why was the outcome of so much work so meagre? Three reasons may be suggested. First, the interest in 'tent-making ministry' was only a minor thrust of a project whose predominant concern was with patterns of theological education (for full-time ministry), rather than with patterns of ministry: only 15% of the summary report is concerned with the latter. Secondly, the pressure to consider tent-making ministry had in large measure come personally from Newbigin<sup>1</sup>, but his commitment to the concept was not widely shared. Thirdly, the mainline Protestant churches (Presbyterian, Lutheran, and to a lesser extent Methodist) tended to look askance at it, and to go all out for a stipendiary ministry wherever possible; whereas those churches which had always depended upon tent-makers went on doing so, but without the capacity or interest to do research into its effectiveness<sup>2</sup>.

Thus once again, we perceive a dynamic where, due to a concern for Christian mission, non-professional ministry succeeded in getting onto the church's central agenda. But once there, it was not considered in its own right, but became subsidiary to other issues (bound up with the full-time ministry). So in the end the dominant pattern of stipendiary ministry succeeded in smothering proper discussion of principles.

## vii) Worker-Priests in France Again

Before we return to the British scene, there is one other development to be noted which encouraged English thinking about non-professional ministry in the late 1960s. The Second Vatican Council's 'decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests' (Presbyterorum Ordinis) was

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<sup>1</sup>In a private communication to me dated 25 April 1984, Steven Mackie says: 'It was Lesslie Newbigin who (a) found cash for the project initially from Canadian churches, (b) persuaded the WCC Executive Committee to combine the two projects viz., research into patterns of ministry and patterns of theological education, and (c) recruited me for the post'.

<sup>2</sup>This last point is the judgment of Steven Mackie (personal communication).



promulgated on 7 December 1965, the day before the Council ended. A single phrase of one of its sentences made an allowance which was to become the gateway to a significant development:

All priests are sent forth as co-workers in the same undertaking, whether they are engaged in parochial or supra-parochial ministry, whether they devote their effort to scientific research or teaching, whether by manual labour they share in the lot of the workers themselves - if there seems to be need for this and competent authority approves. (Abbott 1966, pp. 549-50)

Anticipating this conciliar permission, the Plenary Assembly of the French Episcopate on 25 October 1965 decided that a few teams of worker-priests might be formed alongside the 'Mission Ouvrière' which had been constituted in the 1950s. Priests who were authorised to work might join trade unions, but must not accept office in them. About 50 new worker-priests immediately joined the 40 or so already in action. Numbers rose swiftly, so that by the end of the decade there were well over 200 worker-priests in France alone (Walter 1979, p. 164).

News of these developments quickly circulated in England, through both Roman Catholic and Anglican publications (eg. Walter 1965 and 1968, Foottit 1965 and Fisher 1967)<sup>1</sup> and helped to counteract the prevailing belief that the worker-priest experiment in France had been a 'failure'. All this coincided exactly with the preparation for and introduction of 'supplementary ministry' to the Church of England.

## 8. DELIBERATE INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES

From 1960 onwards, the central authorities of the Church of England took deliberate initiatives with regard to the development of NSM. Motivations were divided: on the one hand there was a prevailing desire in some circles for a diversification of patterns of ministry as recommended both in the 'Paul Report' (Paul 1964, pp. 153-7) and in a

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<sup>1</sup>Coincidentally, works in English about earlier stages of the movement also appeared at this time; for example, Siefer's major survey of the worker-priest movement and its implications for the Christian mission (1964), and Perrin's autobiography (Wall 1965).



BCC report (British Council of Churches 1965, pp. 32-45); on the other hand, there was a desire for central control over any developments, particularly with regard to training standards.

i) CACTM Working Party of Supplementary Ministries (1961)

The issues were first raised by the bishops themselves, prompted by the Lambeth Conference resolution of 1958, and no doubt also by innovations in Southwark. In January 1960, Archbishop Fisher wrote to the Moderator of CACTM, telling him that 'at the recent Bishops' Meeting the matter of part time priests was raised'. He requested advice on who should be selected, what training they should have, and what limitations should be imposed upon them. In response, the Council of CACTM set up a working party, with Bishop John Robinson as its chairman. With his vision and direct experience of the Southwark Ordination Course to hand, it is not surprising that the report presented the following year was both comprehensive in approach and positive in tone. Though never formally published, the Report of Working Party on Supplementary Ministries (1961) became the acknowledged starting point for the Welsby Report (1968) (cf. III.9 below). A copy exists in the ACCM archives (CHA: ACCM, MWP 1/A).

Its fundamental recommendation was for **action**:

The time for talk is over ... our sole recommendation therefore is that progress can now only be made by active experiment... We would urge that Bishops take steps to seek out, train, and in appropriate cases ordain men to such spheres of 'supplementary' ministry as the needs and opportunities of the Church in their dioceses appear to them to demand. (pp. 25-6)

This conclusion was reached after a detailed rehearsal of half a century's discussion of the issues. An analysis of the legal position revealed that, although repeal or modification of statute and canon law might eventually be desirable,

there is nothing in the present law to prevent much of what we have recommended from being put into force forthwith. (p. 17)



Nevertheless, for all its pressure for innovative action, the report tacitly acknowledged the resistant weight of the parochial system, and the fears of the parochial clergy. Anxiety about this resistance produced two lines of defence. First, the report rested its case for diversification upon the received earlier traditions of the Church of England:

Because so many ordained ministers are parish priests, there is a tendency to equate the ministry with the priesthood and the priesthood with the parish priesthood... There is here a double error ... of comparatively recent date... Until quite recently clergymen were found in large numbers outside the stream of parochial life... Nowhere was it thought incongruous for them to study and teach any of the arts or sciences. This attitude is something which we should try to regain... The Church lost something when ordinations came in practice to be regarded as primarily the commissioning of parish priests and when other occupations were thought of as somehow inconsistent with the vocation to the priesthood... It may not be too difficult to accustom ourselves to priests who are doctors, lawyers, farmers, civil servants or musicians, for there is already historical precedent for such cases. But we must now accustom ourselves further to the manager, the worker at the bench, the ship's master, the journalist, the firm's welfare officer, the architect, the artist and many others. (pp. 11 and 15)

Secondly, real fear was expressed about the danger of -

creating a new type of 'second-class ministry', which on the one hand would be regarded as merely supernumery by the professional clergy, and, on the other hand, might stifle the developments of a true ministry of the laity. (p. 26)

This danger was to be avoided through careful control of standards of training. 'Diocesan night classes in theology', such as the experiment already under way in Southwark, should be developed.

Thus, from the outset of the Church of England's official planning for NSM, the anxieties of parochial clergy tended to dominate thinking about training, and the acceptability of the new pattern of ministry. This was further reflected in apprehension concerning transfer from 'supplementary' to 'full-time' ministry. The report wanted to establish a bishop's legal right not to institute anyone 'ill-suited to occupy a benefice'. This result, it suggested, might either be achieved by modification of the law, or by the establishment of 'A Society or Order of Secular Priests'. The latter was an entirely novel concept. If men in supplementary ministry were required to belong to such a society, it was argued, they would be a clearly identifiable category of person, governable by specific legal provisions, 'while leaving unaffected the position of other clerks in Holy Orders'. The report seemed to favour the latter alternative. However, because the necessary safeguards were in fact



subsequently achieved through modification of the law<sup>1</sup>, no such Society has ever come into existence. As a result, a potential benefit has been denied to NSM: a systematically developed support structure appropriate to the special needs of ministers exercising this style of ministry.

With remarkable foresight, the report articulated what those needs might be:

Such priests might benefit from a rule of life, sufficiently flexible to meet many varying circumstances. They will be in need of special guidance and those who counsel them will require to be closely acquainted with their special needs... They will be in need of help of another type. Men who are engaged in more than one occupation are likely to be overworked and will require protection from themselves, if not from others. Such men could be lonely. In some circumstances they might find themselves somewhat withdrawn from secular society and yet not fully within any clerical fraternity.

(p. 20)

How to provide support for this potentially 'marginal' ministry has still not been resolved. For instance, the problem of providing a structure to facilitate articulation and communication of non-stipendiary ministers' special concerns at diocesan and national levels remains today. The report foresaw this problem, and offered its own resolution of it by envisaging a role for an episcopal Visitor:

The Society should probably be in large measure self-governing... It would also require the guidance of a Visitor who would, in some measure, represent all the Bishops to the Society and the Society to the Bishops. For this reason he should himself be a Bishop, and preferably a diocesan Bishop and should be appointed by the two Archbishops.

(p. 21)

All of this sound remarkably like the structure that has developed in France, where an independent, 'non-geographical', episcopal structure governs priests in the Mission de France: they are responsible to their own bishop at Pontigny (a 'prelature nullius dioeceseos') and not to the bishop of the diocese where they may happen to be living. Members of the working party seem to have been aware of the value of this structure in France, and to have hoped that with appropriate modifications something of this kind would be valuable in England. (In passing, it may be noted that by rejecting the idea of an Order of secular Priests, the Church of England has allowed NSM to develop without sharp differentiation from parochial ministry. While this has preserved a unified

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<sup>1</sup>The Benefices Measure (1971) - cf. III.12 below.



ordained ministry, it has meant that the special non-parochial opportunities and concerns of NSM have only been recognised and articulated very slowly.)

## ii) Bishops' Local Initiatives

Curiously, the CACTM working party report (1961) was never published (presumably because it was an internal report to the Bishops' Meeting); portions of it, however, were reproduced in the Paul Report (1964) and in the Welsby Report (1968). Thus for several years, the church as a whole had no opportunity to discuss its ideas, or even become aware of its existence; the possibility of the emergence of a national strategy about NSM was therefore, for the time being, thwarted.

Nevertheless, in line with the report's fundamental recommendation for action, certain individual bishops began to ordain a few men to 'Supplementary Ministry'. Five years later (1966), over 32 men (not including those trained on SOC) had been ordained in 21 dioceses to such a ministry, and a few dioceses had begun to establish courses to train them<sup>1</sup>. Clearly, a significant number of the church's diocesan bishops were determined to press ahead with NSM within their own jurisdiction, despite the lack of a nationally approved policy.

Intriguingly, it is possible with an unusual degree of precision to be aware of the mind of the English episcopate at this time regarding NSM. For in 1966, the Bishop of Ely (as chairman of ACCM's Selection Committee) sent a letter to each bishop enquiring about his attitude to 'supplementary' ministry, and specifically asking three questions:

- a) whether you have ordained to such a limited ministry during the last year or two;
- b) whether you have it in mind to do so in the immediate future;
- c) whether you have any advice to us about the best way ACCM could work with you in such cases.

(CHA: ACCM, MWP 1/B)

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<sup>1</sup>Figures derived from replies to the Bishop of Ely's enquiry (see below) (CHA: ACCM, MWP 1/B).



A great many bishops replied in person. The file containing their letters reveals a very patchy picture nationally. Ten bishops reported that they did not have it mind to ordain men to Supplementary Ministry<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand, several were in the company of the Archbishop of Canterbury (Ramsey) who as yet had none in his diocese, but added: 'I am ready in principle to receive them'.

Three dioceses indicated strong feelings about the need to safeguard benefices from presentation of unsuitable candidates. From Durham (a diocese which did **not** intend to foster supplementary ministry) a letter explained:

the heart of the matter is the legal state of the priest. For so long as every priest is a potential incumbent, bishops are going to be unwilling to ordain any but exceptional men in later life to the priesthood... There is no questioning of their priesthood, only a limiting of the offices to which they can be appointed.

(Archdeacon of Durham, letter dated 30 July 1966)

In Blackburn diocese, which was about to ordain two men, Letters of Orders of supplementary ministers were endorsed as follows:

Memorandum that Mr... is not to undertake a full-time Ministry without first submitting himself to the discipline of the Bishop.

The covering letter added, rather plaintively, 'Unfortunately, such a memorandum had no legal force'. But in Southwark diocese, the bishop (Stockwood) straightforwardly told older candidates:

If they are accepted for ordination, it means no more than that the Bishop will lay hands on them. It does not imply that they will be given a living ... in most cases they must be content to remain as assistant priests. If a man is not prepared for this I cannot accept him.

(Bishop of Southwark, letter dated 1 Aug 1966)

Other dioceses outlined diverse plans. The Bishop of Chichester (Wilson) identified the possibility of a ministry at work in some cases:

One candidate might expect his supplementary ministry to be most effectively discharged through his leisure hours and at the week-ends, his daily occupation continuing to a large extent as before: another might well become a priest primarily towards the environment of his daily work, his week-end ministry being to some extent an 'extra'.

(Bishop of Chichester, letter dated 4 August 1966)

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<sup>1</sup>The bishops concerned were: Lincoln, Norwich, Oxford, Peterborough, St Albans, St Edmundsbury & Ipswich, Salisbury, Durham, Liverpool and Sheffield.



In Portsmouth diocese, a GPO Trade Union Official and a Lloyd's Bank manager had been ordained after correspondence courses with Wolsey Hall, supplemented by retreats. But perhaps the most striking local development of the period was in Gloucester diocese, where a local part-time ordination training course for 'older' men was set up, and over a period of years struggled (in vain) for recognition at national level.

### iii) The Gloucester Theological Course

The history of the Gloucester Theological Course forms an interesting case study of the kinds of issues faced by a local initiative in seeking recognition from ACCM, or, conversely, the kinds of issues facing ACCM in seeking to establish a recognised standard in a largely untried new pattern of training. Research in ACCM's archives (CHA: ACCM/INSP/7) reveals the following story.

In 1963, at the instigation of the Diocesan Director of Ordination Training, Canon Daven-Thomas<sup>1</sup>, plans were discussed for creating a local course of training for potential ordinands over 40 years old. The Bishop<sup>2</sup> gave his encouragement, and in September 1965, the Course opened with 17 students. Just over a year later (January 1967), 9 of them had been ordained deacon: 3 were traditional curates, 3 were 'worker priests' and 3 were in retirement ministry. Fresh students joined the Course each September. But after the initial influx, yearly admissions fell, so that in 1971 there was only a single entrant, and a total student body of 9.

Daven-Thomas built the Course entirely with local resources. It met in church property in Cheltenham; it was staffed by a local group of six lecturers (plus three visiting lecturers) drawn from among academically competent clergy within the diocese; the diocese and Local Education Authority between them assisted with payment of fees. From surviving syllabi and timetables, it is clear that the original intention was to cover the same group of academic and pastoral subjects (including New Testament Greek) as was then currently covered in the residential colleges. The mode of teaching was the formal lecture.

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<sup>1</sup>Dennis Daven-Thomas (1913- ): Vicar, Christ Church, Gloucester, 1946-57; Canon Missioner of Gloucester, 1957-63; Director of Ordination Training, 1957- ; Canon Residentiary of Gloucester Cathedral, 1968- .

<sup>2</sup>Basil Tudor Guy (1910-75): Vicar, Tavistock, 1946-56; Bishop of Bedford, 1957-62; Bishop of Gloucester, 1962-75.



Because the original intention was that the men might be ordained after a single year's training, the initial work-load was huge: 2 hours on 2 evenings a week, plus 21 hours on Saturday mornings, together with 10 residential weekends. However, after a year's experience, the two evenings a week had been reduced to one, and the course was envisaged as lasting 'at least 2 years', to allow more adequate subject coverage.

By 1967, the students were seeking grants from ACCM, so ACCM recognition of the Course was sought. Over the next five years a lengthy correspondence ensued, through which it was quickly agreed that the Course be extended to three years (in line with the well-tried Southwark pattern), and that the General Ordination Examination Essay Scheme be the means of academic assessment. Accordingly, as an early stage, Daven-Thomas was assured:

The Training Committee are ready in principle to grant temporary recognition... Before this step is taken, however, it is felt that there ought to be a supplementary inspection by the Inspection Committee fairly soon, and there would have to be another full inspection when the first batch of 3-year students had all but completed their course.

(ibid., letter of 3 Mar 1968, Skinner to Daven-Thomas)

Accordingly an inspection took place in 1968/9 and offered a generally favourable report:

The Gloucester Theological Course has to our mind fully proved its value as a contribution to theological education and in particular to the training of a supplementary or 'supporting' ministry. It must not be regarded as an easy alternative to a normal course in a theological college, but rather as an attempt to meet a special need in what is still largely an experimental field.

(ibid., Inspection Report 1968/9, p. 21)

On the other hand, the Inspectors noted certain limitations of the Course 'due largely to lack of time'. For instance,

There is a tendency to pump in knowledge without allowing adequate time for digestion. There is insufficient individual tutoring and personal attention.

(ibid., p. 12)

The Inspectors made a number of recommendations, amongst them that

- membership of the Governing Body be extended to include people with specialist educational experience;
- a Deputy Director and secretary be appointed to share the load of oversight and administration;



- the possibility of cooperation with Bristol University's Extra-Mural Department be explored;
- two week's annual residence at St Deiniol's residential library, with guided reading, be obligatory;
- modern psychology and child development be included in the curriculum (perhaps taught by staff from Bristol University's Extra-Mural Department).

In other words, the Inspectors were raising warning signs about issues surrounding educational method, course structure and curriculum. However, when the time came for the full inspection of 1971/2, the Inspectors were 'unable to recommend the Bishops to recognise the Gloucester Theological Course as approved for ordination training'. Their stated reasons concerned the facts that

- with only one entrant that year, there were 'doubts about the future viability of the scheme';
- the Lecturers (all of whom were over 50 years old), while giving sound traditional teaching, had neither experience nor interest in modern teaching methods;
- there was 'over-concern to cover all the ground possible compared to a full-time course';
- there was insufficient attention paid to both the academic and spiritual needs of individual students;
- the course lacked an introduction to modern psychology in general and the nature of human personality;
- there was 'no opportunity for other than liturgical worship'.

The Inspectors' overall perception was that

the training being provided is more for a ministry of 'maintenance': it does not face up to the challenges of the 1970s. We cannot endorse our predecessors' judgment that the course is making a valuable contribution to theological education.

(ibid., Inspection Report 1971, p. 17)

After considering this report, Bishop Guy replied to ACCM in May 1972:

It is not, I think, likely that we shall further pursue the possibility of ACCM recognising the Course, but we shall hope that it will continue to serve the 'useful but limited purpose' of teaching 'sound if traditional' theology to selected older men who will exercise a traditional form of ministry in the Church, and for whom at present no other means of training are available in this part of the country. (ibid., letter of 11 May 1972, Bp. of Gloucester to L. Reading)



This miserable outcome of a local grass-roots initiative serves to highlight several factors which were to become guidelines for the future development of part-time training courses.

First and foremost of the factors was the size of the constituency. The largely rural diocese of Gloucester could not on its own provide sufficient resources of either students or staff: small student numbers threatened continued viability, and the diocesan clergy alone did not have a sufficiently broad span of academic expertise. So for the future, regional groupings of larger population areas were to be encouraged.

Secondly, both ACCM and the Course staff desired high standards: but they differed on the criteria for such standards, and especially in attitudes to curriculum and teaching style. For unaccountable reasons, no use was made of the teaching resource available on the doorstep through Bristol University's Extra-Mural Department. For the future, liason with university extra-mural departments was to be encouraged wherever possible.

Thirdly, ACCM already possessed a viable working model of a part-time course in SOC. It is clear from the correspondence that ACCM was encouraging Gloucester to develop along the lines of the Southwark model in length of course, content of curriculum, teaching style and use of residential periods; however, there is little evidence that the Gloucester staff had acquainted themselves with the Southwark experience. For the future, the SOC model was to continue extra-ordinarily influential.

There was, however, an additional recommendation of the Gloucester Inspectors which foreshadows a controversy which was to be long unresolved. Amongst the categories of ordinands accepted for training in Gloucester were 'those who hope to fulfil their ministry in and through their secular occupation - to be in effect priest-workers'. The Inspectors considered that this category of priest-workers should not be included, since, however defined, it called for a special kind of preparation 'which could not be included on this course'. (As later stages of this history will show, the Church of England corporately was to take a long time in accepting the propriety of such a ministry at all.)



After this excursus into the development and fate of the Gloucester Theological Course, we must now revert to the point at which we left the description of the national scene in the mid-sixties. It was necessary, however, to refer to the Gloucester initiative, for it was this initiative in particular which prompted central church action.

## 9. THE WELSBY REPORT (1968)

We are now in a position to consider A Supplementary Ministry (1968) - the 'Welsby Report' - which may be regarded as the foundation charter for non-stipendiary ministry in the Church of England, since it recommended many features which directly influenced the way in which non-stipendiary ministry subsequently developed. This report was produced by a Working Party of ACCM's Ministry Committee under the chairmanship of Canon Paul Welsby of Rochester<sup>1</sup>, in reponse to a request made in 1966 from the House of Bishops for guidance in regulating and standardising local initiatives. Though merely a committee report in origin, it was subsequently printed and published for general circulation, and became the Church's main publicity document for non-stipendiary ministry for a number of years afterwards.

By 1966 the need for standardisation of selection and training procedures had become urgent, for following on the recommendations of 1961 (see III.8.i above), men had actually been ordained to an auxiliary ministry of some kind in 21 out of 35 dioceses who replied to an enquiry made in that year - a total of over 30 individuals outside Southwark diocese. Accordingly, the Welsby Report began by recognising 'that the supplementary ministry is an accomplished fact'. The further facts that the diocese of Gloucester had already (1965) set up its own training scheme on rather different lines from SOC, and that several other regional training schemes were under active preparation, lent urgency to the need for agreed standards of procedure in selection, training, licencing, etc.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Anthony Welsby (1920- ): Canon Residentiary of Rochester Cathedral, 1966- .



In view of the formative effect of the Welsby Report upon subsequent developments, it will be appropriate to describe its proposals in some detail.

The report began by noting that the working party had been given a deliberately limited brief: it was concerned only with ordination to parochial ministry; it was not to deal with men who might be ordained to non-parochial situations such as chaplaincies or worker-priests. These situations were to be dealt with by other working parties. The reason for this division of tasks and categories seems to have been that the Church Assembly was judged likely to consider favourably the introduction of an auxiliary ministry which aided the parochial ministry. Consensus on whether or how to establish specialised ministries or worker-priests was less predictable. Tactically this proved to be a correct assessment of the situation. But, as it turned out, this means of introducing auxiliary ministry to the Church of England was later to produce severe problems for the subsequent development of non-stipendiary ministry - since the separate report on 'Priests in Secular Employment' was never published (see IV.3 below). Thus, as it transpired, the only rationale of non-stipendiary ministry ever officially offered to the Church was to be found in the Welsby Report's 10-page development of 'underlying principles' - a discussion which was specifically precluded from handling issues concerning ministry at work.

After explaining its brief, the report carefully laid out a series of 'underlying principles', drawing upon biblical, historical and theological data, upon the reports of Lambeth Conferences and the 1961 Working Party (see III.8.i above), and upon experience abroad. Finally, it offered a series of specific recommendations about (a) selection, (b) training, and (c) post-ordination and legal matters. It was in these three areas that the greatest fears had been expressed by sceptics, and the report accordingly sought to allay these fears by offering specific safe-guards, as follows.

#### **i) Selection**

It was anticipated that the kind of candidate for this ministry would be a mature laymen, who had the backing and good opinion of those both in his parish and in his place of work; he would have



demonstrated natural gifts of leadership, be established in his job and normally between 30 and 50 years of age at ordination. Selection would be in three stages: (i) selection for training; (ii) selection for ordination; (iii) selection for sole charge of a parochial living. In proposing such a three-fold procedure, the report was breaking with the long accepted pattern of selection for the stipendiary ministry - namely, a single ACCM selection conference prior to entering upon initial training.

The report stressed that initial selection for training should continue with the same rigour as for stipendiary candidates, though with particular attention in the case of auxiliaries to a candidate's employment situation. The proposed second stage (selection for ordination) would happen half way through training, perhaps at a one-day conference conducted by diocesan authorities, and the third stage prior to being offered an appointment in sole charge. The latter stage would usually be seeking to determine the need (if any for further training of a 'functional' character, though sometimes it might be decided that because of 'a difference of gifts' a particular individual was best suited to an auxiliary or assistant role. At all points the report was at pains to reject 'the idea that auxiliary priests should be regarded as "second best" and that...standards of selection and training should be as careful as for full-time ministry'. (ACCM 1968, pp. 17-21)

## ii) Training

The report offered a series of guidelines (to a large extent based upon the experience of SOC) to stimulate the thinking of the embryonic regional schemes of training. Amongst the points emphasised were that the training should be of the same standard as that currently offered to full-time ordinands:

Because ... we cannot acknowledge a ministry of the Sacraments apart from the ministry of the Word, the training of auxiliary priests would be such that they will need no further ministerial training in order to be qualified (should they wish and if they were deemed suitable) for full-time parochial ministry... The content (as distinct from 'the machinery') of the training should be that of the General Ordination Examination syllabus, but the approach should not be over-academic; much of the theology should be drawn out of the men's past and present experience.



As for the style of such a course -

It must not be just a correspondence course... It must include the pastoral care of the men concerned, training in the devotional life, and the development of verbal (as compared with written) skills, which will normally be provided by group activity and residential courses.

As for the length of the course, and assessment of students' work -

A three-year course should be the norm... We do not think that candidates should normally be required to take examinations, but they should be continually assessed during the training, along the same lines as operate at present ... in many Colleges of Education.

As for organisational structure -

Certain dioceses may be in a position to experiment with schemes, diocesan and/or regional, perhaps on the lines of the Southwark or Gloucester Schemes; but we recommend that dioceses should investigate possibilities of other and different forms of training whenever they can. These schemes should make use of University and other adult education facilities locally whenever this can be done.

Dioceses were thus encouraged to take regional initiatives, and not to copy traditional theological colleges. The various models of courses which eventually evolved (see IV.5.ii below) all derive their rationale from these guidelines. (pp. 21-3)

### iii) Post-Ordination Matters

The report recommended that for the sake of flexibility, an auxiliary priest should normally be licenced to his Rural Dean (thus overcoming any potential problems if his local parish no longer required his services). In addition, 'a senior member of the diocesan staff...should have special oversight of such men', keeping a watchful eye 'for over-work and for problems in his spiritual life'. The report was prepared to envisage a situation where an auxiliary priest might at least for a time 'be obliged to cease to exercise his priestly functions in a parochial situation' (as for instance when his incumbent changed, or when his employment moved him to a new location). (pp. 24-5)

Of particular significance was the recommendation that a change in the law regarding presentation to a benefice would be necessary. As the law then stood, any ordained priest could accept a benefice if offered it, and the bishop could not legally refuse to institute him. The report considered that perhaps a Measure and emendation of Canon law would be



needed, requiring further 'selection' and recommendation before an auxiliary could be appointed to sole charge of a parochial living. (pp. 25-6)

It is thus immediately apparent that the report was attempting to offer safe-guards to the status and rights of the stipendiary parochial clergy at every point where their interests might be threatened by the creation of an auxiliary ministry. Although the report hoped that in certain respects the older moulds for selection and training might be broken or remodelled, when it came to the traditional authority of the stipendiary clergy, this was left entirely intact, and the shape of the proposed auxiliary ministry was moulded around that of the parochial incumbent.

## 10. CORROBORATING EVIDENCE

The year of the Welsby Report (1968) also saw significant discussion of non-stipendiary ministry at a Lambeth Conference and in several publications. Taken together, it seemed to some that non-stipendiary ministry was an idea now ripe for the time.

For example, the Lambeth Conference of 1968 discussed non-stipendiary ministry in a very positive light. Conference Resolution 33 reaffirmed the earlier resolution of 1958 (see III.6 above), and recommended 'a wider and more confident use of this ministry'. The Conference subcommittee on 'voluntary and part-time ministries' had as its vice-chairman the bishop of Taiwan (J.C.L.Wong<sup>1</sup>), who had two decades of experience of being a priest employed as an engineer. English bishops included Gloucester (Guy) and Chelmsford (Tiarks) - both of whom had experience of NSMs in their dioceses.

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<sup>1</sup>James Chang Ling Wong, B.Sc (Mass. Inst. Tech., 1924), was ordained priest in the diocese of Hong Kong in 1940, while continuing to work as an engineer in a dockyard. He was the first priest to be ordained under that church's new Canon XIX(a) (see III.5 above). By 1960, he was superintending engineer for one of Hong Kong's largest wharves (Denniston 1960, 64). He was licenced in various capacities (curate, priest-in-charge) in Hong Kong diocese until 1960, when he was consecrated Assistant Bishop of Borneo. In 1962 he became the (first) bishop of Jesselton in North Borneo, and Bishop of Taiwan in 1965.



For the first time in a Lambeth Conference report, really affirmative statements were made about non-stipendiary ministry:

In order that the Church may be continually renewed for mission...parochial and non-parochial, full- and part-time, stipendiary and honorary clergy are all needed. In this variety of ministry the part-time non-stipendiary priest is in no way inferior to his full-time brother... In some areas the part-time non-stipendiary ministry could become the norm. Such ministry does not contravene any doctrine of the universal Church... From the experience of areas where such ministry has been encouraged there is no evidence that recruitment to the full-time ministry has been adversely affected.

(Lambeth Conference 1968, p. 102)

The subcommittee went on to note five situations where non-stipendiary ministry would be necessary:

- a) Where the existing ministry is unable to provide an adequate service of word, sacrament, and pastoral care to the faithful.
- b) In groups and new communities beyond the reach of present parochial structures.
- c) In order that new work may be started in places and communities at present unevangelized...
- d) In order that the development of team ministries may be strengthened.
- e) Where the financial resources of the Church are insufficient for provision of a full-time ministry.

(ibid., p. 103)

The wording of (b) is somewhat opaque. It would appear to refer amongst other things to ministry at the workplace, but avoids saying so in any specific way - presumably because there was no consensus about the matter within the group.

Building on existing experience, the subcommittee offered several practical guidelines, each in its way supportive. Only experienced Christians, mature in outlook, should be selected, and no urgency or expediency should become an excuse for ordaining them without adequate training. Two important cautions were articulated:

Movement in either direction between the full-time and part-time ministries needs to be carefully regulated, with special attention to the motives for transfer and to the need for any additional training which such transfers may require. Great care must be taken that the demands of the part-time ministry do not interfere with the requirements of a man's secular employment or with the claims of his home and family.

(ibid., p. 103-4)



If these comments from a diverse assembly of bishops appear unusually supportive, much credit must lie in the preparation for their discussion. The President (Archbishop Ramsey), himself an advocate of non-stipendiary ministry, had commissioned a comprehensive collection of background reading, subsequently published as Lambeth Essays on Ministry (1969). Within a small compass, lay ministry, priesthood and ordination, the diaconate and the episcopate are all handled, and within this total perspective appeared a perceptive chapter on 'Voluntary and Part-time Ministries' by Eric James<sup>1</sup>, who had direct experience of fostering Southwark diocese's non-stipendiary ministers, and had also been a member of the Welsby working party.

This essay forms an effective counter to Wickham's view that non-stipendiary ministers would inevitably conflict with the mission of the laity. James argued that a church which takes the laity seriously will provide training for the whole laos; through such training people will perceive what is involved in ministry; it will naturally follow that from time to time a local church will wish to nominate individuals within its number for ordained (but not necessarily professional) ministry. James makes the telling comment:

This pattern of recruitment for the ministry is of course already most clearly evident when the Church fills up the 'higher orders' of the ordained ministry. The Church does not expect someone to volunteer, saying: 'I have had a growing conviction that I must offer myself for the episcopate'. The Church makes known to the person concerned that she judges the man to be the right man for this office and order. (James 1969, p. 58)

In this James was anticipating the idea of a local non-stipendiary ministry which was to develop in the next decade (cf. IV.6).

A further publication was stimulated by the centenary of Roland Allen's birth, which fell in 1968. To mark the occasion, David Paton (then Secretary of the Missionary and Ecumenical Council of the Church Assembly) edited a further collection of Allen's unpublished papers, including a group of letters to and from Allen on the subject of Voluntary Clergy (Paton 1968). Paton opened the book with an editorial appraisal of

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<sup>1</sup>Eric Arthur James (1925- ): Vicar of Camberwell and Warden of Trinity College Cambridge Mission, 1959-64; Director, 'Parish and People', 1964-69; Canon Residentiary, Southwark Cathedral, 1966-73; Canon Residentiary, St Albans Cathedral, 1973-83; Director, Christian Action, 1979- .



Allen's theological perspective, and analysed its relevance to the 1960s. All told, the appearance of this book in the same year as the Welsby Report was timely.

On a much smaller scale, ACCM itself published a 21-page pamphlet entitled A Priest-Worker Ministry. This slight work is significant not so much for what it says, as for what it represents. For it is still the only publication that ACCM has ever produced specifically designed to call forth vocations into a work-focussed ministry. Written by David Wilson, a priest-baker who had trained through SOC, it spoke engagingly from the actual experience of work-focussed ministry.

## 11. THE CHURCH ASSEMBLY DISCUSSION

### i) The Debate

The Church of England finally took NSM into its system as a result of Church Assembly resolutions passed during the February session of 1969. Members of the Assembly had before them a report from ACCM Council entitled Selection and Training for Auxiliary Parochial Ministry (which will be referred to hereafter by its serial number CA 1723). This report brought together for members considerations raised by both the Welsby Report and the recent Lambeth Conference. Its proposals were to be seen as 'part of a process, already being manifested, of making the Church's ministries and structures more varied, flexible and adaptable, and therefore more suited for the times we live in' (Church Assembly 1968, p. 4). The report repeated the recommendations of the Welsby Report, with one significant modification about age.

The Welsby Report had suggested an upper age limit of 60 years. But CA 1723 proposed that the upper age limit at ordination should be 50 years. The intention was to ensure the distinctive character of the proposed auxiliary ministry: it was to be for men 'established in a secular occupation', who were 'not being commissioned as part-time Church officials, but called to the apostolic ministry... They are tent-makers in order that they may fulfil their apostolate; not tent-makers who have a side-line in ordained ministry'. If the Church



wished to ordain retired men, 'this should be clearly distinguished from the ministry we are concerned with here' (ibid., pp. 7-8). Thus the proposals which came to Church Assembly were for a narrowly defined band of ordinand, whose secular employment was a significant factor in his ministry.

The long and thorough debate on CA 1723 was adjourned several times, and spread out over three days (11-13 February): 32 people spoke in the course of it. It is instructive to analyse the points that became issues within the debate, and to compare and contrast them with the earlier debates of 1932 and 1955/6.

Three motions were scheduled to be moved: a) that the Report (CA 1723) be received; b) that ACCM be instructed to implement the Report's recommendations on selection and training; c) that a committee be set up to prepare legislation to ensure that an auxiliary minister could not be automatically presented to a benefice without further scrutiny. Although two significant amendments were proposed in the course of the debate, these three motions were safely and very ably steered through the Assembly by the Chairman of ACCM, the Bishop of Warrington (Laurence Brown)<sup>1</sup>, assisted by the Chairman of the Ministry Committee, the Archdeacon of Swindon (Cyril Bowles)<sup>2</sup>, and the Chairman of the Training Committee, the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich (Leslie Brown).

It quickly became apparent that the House of Bishops had already 'looked at' the proposals, and wished to proceed with them. The proposals were shown to be in line with the thinking of three Lambeth Conferences, the 1932 Commission on Staffing, Roland Allen's Case (from which a lengthy quotation was read), the Paul Report, the WCC discussions, etc. Frequent reference was made to the actual experience of alternative patterns of training gained through the Southwark and Gloucester Courses, with Bishop John Robinson (Chairman of SOC), the Bishop of Gloucester and Canon Daven-Thomas all bearing first-hand testimony. The Bishop of Chester (Ellison) also spoke favourably of his experience of having ordained a civil servant, a dental surgeon and an industrialist (Proceedings, Vol. 49, p. 164). The experience of Hong Kong was also cited by someone who had worked there<sup>3</sup>, who informed the

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<sup>1</sup>He was appointed Bishop of Birmingham later that year.

<sup>2</sup>He was appointed Bishop of Derby later that year.

<sup>3</sup>Canon F.S. Temple.



Assembly that the current Bishop of Taiwan had until his consecration been a superintendant engineer (see III.10 above).

From the outset it was plain that 'we are not initiating a new procedure. Auxiliary ministry is already ... a fact.' This ministry had already been introduced 'sporadically and without generally accepted standards'<sup>1</sup> (p. 114), but it was now proposed 'that such a ministry should be regularised'<sup>2</sup> (p. 111).

Opposition to the proposals focussed around two amendments, each of which is instructive in its own way as marking areas of hesitation over issues which are still largely unresolved.

The first amendment, 'that further consideration of this matter be adjourned until the Assembly has received a report on the nature of ordained ministry itself', was proposed by a Reader, Mr T.L.F.Royle. He considered that the Church's Readers were a much under-used resource for auxiliary ministry, and asked

What ... apart from certain services, is this auxiliary, secularly employed, part-time, unbeneficed priest going to do that readers in particular, and many others in general, are not doing successfully at this moment? (p. 156)

This amendment gained support from others concerned for the ministry of the laity in witness to the world. One speaker<sup>3</sup> asked,

How do we reconcile the need apparently to ordain a man in particular circumstances, when we seem to have done so little to bring out the priestly character of the life and work of the lay people who are the whole time living in and working in these situations to which, in theory, this Report points. (p. 160)

The second amendment was 'that candidates for the auxiliary ministry should be selected and trained largely within the local context. To this end it recommends that the deanery unit could play a very useful part'. Support for this amendment was given by several speakers concerned that the educational standards required for auxiliary ministry

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<sup>1</sup>Archdeacon of Swindon.

<sup>2</sup>Bishop of Warrington.

<sup>3</sup>The Rev. F.P.Coleman.



would exclude all but middle-class professional men. It was proposed by a shift worker from Southwark diocese, Mr M.D.Keulemans, who had earlier spoken critically of SOC as being unsuited to the working man:

If you drag a man away from his work mates and his family, you will have the effect of loosening the ties between him and the community he is to be called upon to serve. If that happens we will have missed a chance once again...I cannot see any signs of the working men trying to get on this Course. (p. 121)

Mr Keulemans was supported by another speaker<sup>1</sup> who was concerned for

the great section of the population which boasts of the name 'working class', who remain as a whole outside all the religious bodies... The auxiliary minister may well have a part to play here. It will be important that we do not take such men and rub off them the very things which belong to them as members of their local cultures... Perhaps those who are still engaged in their ordinary occupation will be able to understand the laity in their work situation in a different way from those who are entirely absorbed full-time in ministry work. (pp. 251-2)

These comments elicited the 'sympathy' of the Chairman of ACCM's Training Committee<sup>2</sup> who acknowledged the difficulty when working class people become lay Christians -

there is a tendency at once to take them out of that milieu and make them something different. This is somehow the effect of the Church of England on people, and this applies even more strongly to anyone who feels called to the ordained ministry. There a danger of producing a uniform clergy acceptable to the middle class.<sup>3</sup> (p. 254)

All these speakers seem to have been expressing the desirability of fostering what was to become known a decade later as Local Non-Stipendiary Ministry (LNSM) (cf. IV.6).

The debate threw up several 'asides' which wisely anticipated problems that were brushed aside at the time, although subsequent experience has shown them to be issues which needed to be confronted.

It took the laity of the Assembly to expose the potential immorality in the Report's thinking about an ordained person being in paid employment. One speaker feared that employers could rightly consider that an ordained employee was there 'under false pretence...using the job to get a salary to provide the Church with cheap priests'<sup>4</sup>, especially as the Report had suggested that 'he must be primarily a priest

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<sup>1</sup>The Rev. E.G.Stride.

<sup>2</sup>The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

<sup>3</sup>Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

<sup>4</sup>Mr D.E. Stocker, Proceedings, p.125



whose...secular work.. enables him to attend to his priestly functions'. 'Is this the right attitude to a man's work?', asked another speaker<sup>1</sup>. 'Is it not deserving of much more loyalty?... I hope ... the importance of his secular job in his total ministry will not be forgotten'.

It would appear that remarks of this kind led to the change of name which was eventually given to this new form of ministry. The 'Auxiliary Parochial Ministry' of the Report gave way to the 'Auxiliary Pastoral Ministry' of the subsequent Bishops' Regulations. Nevertheless, it was to take another decade before the propriety of regarding his job as an aspect of a man's ministry was officially accepted by the Church.

The reason is not hard to find: the deliberately confined brief of the Welsby Working Party - excluding discussion of 'worker priests'. The artificiality of this confined brief was openly acknowledged by Canon Welsby in debate:

We felt that what we were doing was, in a sense, tinkering with a much bigger problem, and we were concerned to draw the attention of the Church to it. The whole nature of the ministry, and of worker priests, the relationship between readers and the supporting ministry, are all matters of questioning upon which the Church should be engaged. Ideally, they should be all tackled together, and one or two of the working party would like to set about doing it. Nevertheless realising...that we do not live in an ideal world, we were convinced that on theological and practical grounds it was a valid step to deal with this particular part of this much bigger exercise. (p. 195)

If the Church had immediately proceeded to deal systematically with 'this much bigger exercise', all might have been well. As things were to turn out, however, no strategy for developing the complementary issues was ever properly explored. The Church had, in effect, fielded a cricket team with bowlers, but no wicket keeper!

## ii) Comparison with Previous Debates

Why was it that the Assembly of 1969 readily agreed to establish a pattern of ministry which had been so resoundingly rejected a generation earlier in 1932 ? What factors influenced the changed attitude of Church

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<sup>1</sup>Lady Alethea Elliot, Proceedings, p.130



leaders ? At least eight factors emerge from what was spoken in debate (quite apart from various unspoken factors, such as the general ethos of 'The Sixties').

i) The barrier which had caused the 1932 resolution to stumble and fall had disappeared: the legal prohibition of gainful employment no longer existed.

ii) Whereas in 1932 the resolution was torpedoed by an archbishop's personal declaration against it, in 1955/6 and 1969 episcopal opinion was articulately in favour.

iii) The discussion of 1932 was hypothetical, and therefore hesitant. But in 1969 discussion was practical and reflected what was already in a small way happening on the ground. The initiative in Southwark diocese and the 'academic respectability' of the SOC pattern of training had for nearly a decade been monitored by the national Church (i.e. by ACCM) - and they had not been found wanting.

iv) We have frequently noted the dominance of the parochial model as the assumed normative model of ordained ministry. Although the 1969 Report envisaged an extension of ordination, everything about the plan was designed to **strengthen the parochial system**. The proposals thus played to the expectations of the dominant model. The very title proposed by the Report for this new ministry was 'Auxiliary **Parochial** Ministry' (APM), and it was perceived as being an assistance to parochial clergy - especially in regard to the increasing demand for celebrations of the Eucharist, which in turn required an increased number of 'celebrants' (a role denied to Readers).

v) Had the proposal appeared to threaten the rights of beneficed clergy, it would have met strong opposition. But in fact the rights of beneficed clergy seemed to be thoroughly safeguarded. Not only were standards of training to be monitored by ACCM (and kept as high as the successful SOC), but there was to be no transfer to stipendiary ministry without further episcopal scrutiny. (In practice, this safeguard turned out to be less than foolproof in preventing 'back door entry' to stipendiary ministry, but the safeguard sounded secure enough at the time of the debate.)



vi) Whereas Lambeth 1930 had been distinctly luke-warm about voluntary clergy, the Conference of 1958 put a different complexion on the issue, and that of 1968 (only six months prior to the Assembly debate) had positively encouraged experiment.

vii) As the Fifties and Sixties went by, the ministry of the laity was increasingly emphasised and featured in both the 1955/6 and 1969 debates. Had APM been seen to be strongly in conflict with the ministry of the laity, it would have been unlikely to have been accepted. However, by maintaining the confined brief that it did, the Report avoided any emphasis on ordained ministry at work. Had it in fact engaged in 'the much bigger exercise' it would almost certainly have run into strong opposition fire. The decision to settle for the confined brief was therefore tactically necessary, and proved successful.

viii) As with the 1955/6 debate, that of 1969 was fundamentally pragmatic in tone. This ministry was **already** happening, and the Assembly was being offered the chance to regulate developments. Of course, it took its chance !

## 12. BISHOPS' REGULATIONS

Arising from the Church Assembly debate, two actions had to take place - first, the production and agreement on working guidelines for those charged with initiating the new form of ministry, and, secondly, legal changes to safeguard presentation to benefices.

The House of Bishops accordingly published in August 1970 The Bishops' Regulations for the Selection and Training of Candidates for the Auxiliary Pastoral Ministry, to be in force for an experimental period of seven years. In fact this document is not (as its title might imply) a collection of mandatory requirements, but a series of guidelines regarding the kinds of questions to be explored at initial ACCM selection conferences, and the nature and style of the academic, spiritual and practical training to be provided. In general, the Regulations closely



follow the approach of CA1723, with the following exceptions:

- i) the name of the ministry is altered to Auxiliary **Pastoral** Ministry (happily keeping the acronymn APM then current);
- ii) no upper age limit is declared;
- iii) while CA1723 had anticipated that details would need to be worked out for its proposed second and third stage selection procedures, no such further details are offered;
- iv) while CA1723 had proposed a distinctive category of ministry for those in secular employment, the document included regulations for the ordination of men over the age of 58 years to a 'Post-retirement Ministry'.

Each of these exceptions, though apparently a matter of small detail, significantly altered the shape (or vision) of the new ministry which had been accepted by the Church Assembly on the basis of CA1723. In each case, the exceptions tended to blunt the sharp distinctive characteristics of the new pattern of ministry, and tended to allow it to conform to existing patterns of stipendiary ministry.

The change of name, for instance, broadened the scope of the new ministry: it could now embrace men with a work-focussed ministry -although no further careful definition of what such a ministry had yet been offered. Again, exclusion of an upper age limit (50 had been recommended by CA1723) meant that men on the verge of retirement could be included within the new pattern of ministry - thus again blunting the vision of a ministry where the 'tentmaking' was an integral part of the apostolate. Similarly, the refusal to specify how a second and third stage of selection might operate, meant that in effect this idea evaporated, leaving selection for APM to follow the same pattern as that long established for stipendiary candidates (though certain additional questions would also be explored regarding employment).

It would seem that the main reason for these modifications was a fear lest narrow regulations might prove discriminatory **against** the new pattern of ministry. But, with hindsight, it can be counter-argued that the lack of specificity failed to offer a necessary protection to APM, which therefore tended to conform to well understood norms of stipendiary parochial ministry.



The same dynamic would seem to have been in operation over changes to legislation. CA1723 had anticipated that a Measure and emendation of the Canons might be necessary to deal specifically with the presentation of APMs to benefices. In the event, however, the matter was dealt with slightly differently - by an addition to Canon C10 ('Of Admission and Institution'). This Canon specifies the grounds upon which a bishop may legally refuse to institute a patron's nominee. A new clause was added to the revised Canons of 1975 as follows:-

A bishop may refuse to admit or institute any priest to a benefice in the case of a presentee who has not previously held a benefice or the office of vicar in a team ministry, on the ground that he has had no experience or less than three years' experience as a full-time assistant curate or curate in charge licensed to a parish.

(Canons 1975, Canon C10 3c.)

The new clause thus permitted refusal to any priest, including a stipendiary priest, who had insufficient experience in the full-time ministry to take sole charge of a parish. The same safeguard had earlier been enshrined in statute law, through Section 1(i) of the Benefices Measure (1971).

Why did this revised Canon and the Bishops' Regulations not treat the new secularly employed priests as a category on their own? It seems there were other anomalies in the same area, and once the decision was taken to initiate new or revised rules, the legislators naturally took the opportunity to 'tidy up' several related issues under a single head. While this was a convenient thing to do from a legislator's point of view, and avoided any accusation of 'unfair discrimination', the structural effect was once again to mask the distinctive ministry of secularly employed priests.

With the publication of the Bishops' Regulations, a watershed in the history of non-stipendiary ministry was reached. No longer was this ministry hypothetical, clandestine or merely expedient. Non-stipendiary ministry was now officially established as a legally allowable and strategically desirable variant within the ordained ministry of the Church of England.

But, as we have seen, even in the very process of legislating for its creation, a number of matters were left ill-defined, and there were signs of a reluctance to acknowledge distinctions within the ordained



ministry. Herein were the germs of confusion, which were later to prevent the newly born creature from thriving. An analysis of this confusion will be one of the tasks of the next chapter.

### 13. SUMMARY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING DEVELOPMENT OF NSM, 1935-1970

To conclude this chapter, there follows a summary of the chief factors which appear to have been influencing the development of NSM during the period 1935-70. Some of these have already been touched upon in relation to the 1969 Church Assembly debate, but others did not emerge there.

#### creation of a flexible canon

There can be no doubt that the decision to revise the canons in such a way as to remove the bar to clergy holding secular employments was the single most influential factor within this period. It lifted discussion of NSM out of the hypothetical into the realms of practical possibility. It can therefore be said that everything hinged upon the wider process of canonical revision already embarked upon in 1939.

#### creation of a model for training

The second most influential factor was the presence on the scene, from 1960, of the Southwark Ordination Course. The actual existence of a pattern of part-time training helped to remove from discussion of NSM the natural anxiety of the unknown. From 1960, a carefully scrutinised model of training began to demonstrate that it was possible to train clergy outside the traditional pattern of theological college without loss of professional competence in ministry.



### concern for the world of work and the mission of the laity

A new factor on the scene from the 1950s onwards was a widespread concern within the Church as to how the Gospel was to be communicated in the secular world, and in particular in the world of work. It gave rise to new thinking about the mission of the laity and the role of the clergy in relation to that mission. Opinions were divided about the clergy role. The division became formalised within the Church's central structures, so that an impasse was reached. This could have proved fatal for the development of NSM were it not for the political astuteness of those presenting the case to the Church Assembly. By focussing on 'auxiliary ministry', a confrontation over the disputed area was avoided. However, as a result of this tactic, the issues surrounding work-focussed ministry remained unclarified.

### anxiety over staffing the parochial system

Shortage of manpower has been a perennial factor in bringing discussion of NSM to the fore. In the 1930s, the number of ordinands rose steadily, so that the original alarm of the 1920s was dissipated, and the pressure for NSM accordingly evaporated. But after World War II, anxiety about manpower revived, with an accompanying readiness to consider alternative patterns of ordained ministry. Moreover, by then a new element on the scene was the growing move towards the Eucharist becoming the central weekly service in a parish, resulting in a demand for more eucharistic presidents. This new problem appeared to be helpfully addressed by proposals for 'auxiliary' ministry.

### evidence from abroad

Evidence from various Churches abroad (France, Hong Kong, India, and other places publicised by the WCC research) acted as spurs to action in England. In a sense, experiments abroad functioned like 'pilot schemes' from which lessons at home could be learned. Most particularly, the change in stance of the Lambeth Conferences meant that the Church of England knew it was not acting alone in establishing NSM, but was responding to a positive suggestion given corporately to the whole Anglican Communion.



### publications

Whereas discussion in the 1950s had been confined to journal articles and Convocation papers, from 1960 onwards there was a considerable build-up of literature which helped make the principles and potential practice of NSM widely known. The clear presentation of 'underlying principles' by the Welsby Report helped the Church of England corporately to 'own' arguments which previously had been propounded by individuals (Roland Allen, F.R. Barry, David Paton).

### personalities

A number of significant Church leaders publicly declared themselves in favour of establishing NSM, including Archbishop Ramsey and bishops Stockwood, Robinson and Barry. The public support of the Archbishop of Canterbury was critical, as was the willingness of Stockwood initially to 'go it alone' in his own diocese. Contrariwise, the negative attitude of Wickham was not uninfluential, considering the respect with which he was held for his pioneer work in Industrial Mission.

### desire for central control

Once individual local initiatives began to emerge, a corresponding desire for control and good order arose. The essential appeal of the Welsby report was that auxiliary ministry was already a fact: what was needed was corporately acceptable standards and guidelines of practice.

### professional defensiveness

The defensive reaction of the clerical profession is everywhere in evidence. The revised Canons and the Ecclesiastical Measure were designed to protect admission to beneficed status; the Welsby report specifically set out to allay professional anxieties about selections and training. Moreover the ~~the~~ presentation of a plan to Church Assembly which excluded reference to ministry in secular employment, and which



contained none of the earlier emphasis upon the need to recruit working-class clergy, meant that the clerical profession felt that much less threatened by the proposals for APM.

parochial system strengthened

Although during the period there was much radical thinking about remoulding the Church's structures for its mission in contemporary society, a recurring concern remained the staffing of the parochial system in the face of increased demands for regular Eucharistic liturgy, and the decreased clerical workforce available. Insofar as APM appeared to be a development which would help maintain the parochial system, it was welcomed.



## CHAPTER IV

### NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTRY IN PRACTICE

This chapter aims to describe both the manner in which non-stipendiary ministry has developed in the Church of England since 1970, and also the manner in which the institution has responded to this development. The evidence lies within (i) the statistics and other data that ACCM keep about ordinands, (ii) various officially commissioned reports and the General Synod discussion of them, and (iii) various articles and books written out of experience of working as a non-stipendiary minister. Each will be considered in turn.

#### 1. THE STATISTICS OF DEVELOPMENT

There is a problem about attempting to discuss the size of the non-stipendiary ministry workforce in the Church of England: the complete statistical data simply does not exist - for the following reason. There are two routes into non-stipendiary ministry: directly through ordination, and through transfer from stipendiary ministry. But whereas ACCM have kept statistics of the former, no centrally available figures exist as to who and how many have left the stipendiary ministry without renouncing their orders. Neither, for that matter, have annual figures of non-stipendiary ministers who die, retire or transfer to stipendiary ministry been compiled until very recently<sup>1</sup>.

It has thus been impossible with any accuracy to determine how many active non-stipendiary ministers there have been at any one time ! This fact in itself is an indicator of how reluctant the structures of the

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<sup>1</sup>It was one of the recommendations of the Hodge Report (1983a) that such statistics should in future be compiled.



institution have been to adapt to the existence of the new pattern of ministry: the Central Stipends Authority could enumerate and list all stipendiary clergy, but there was no central mechanism for collecting equivalent data on non-stipendiary ministers.

The present discussion is thus inevitably limited to the statistics available from ACCM. The annual figures of those men ordained into a specifically non-stipendiary ministry up to 1983 may be extracted from the Hodge Report (Hodge 1983a, p. 7), and up-dated thereafter from ACCM's annual statistics. The figures are as follows:

Ordinations to non-stipendiary ministry of male  
candidates who attended bishops' selection conferences

1971 - 12	1975 - 52	1979 - 103	1983 - 119
1972 - 19	1976 - 76	1980 - 103	1984 - 109
1973 - 22	1977 - 79	1981 - 123	1985 - 102
1974 - 38	1978 - 80	1982 - 112	1986 - 87

In addition, approximately 98 men who did not attend bishops' selection conferences were ordained as non-stipendiary ministers between 1971 and 1981. Prior to 1971 records are incomplete, 'but it may be inferred from data assembled from other sources that approximately 140 men were ordained to non-stipendiary ministry in the period from 1963 (when the first students from the Southwark Ordination Course were ordained) to 1970' (ibid.). Thus up to 1986, approximately 1437 men (and more than 150 women) have been ordained as non-stipendiary ministers in the Church of England.

To be understood in context, these figures need to be compared with the annual figures of those being ordained into stipendiary ministry. As can be seen from Appendix 1, the numbers of those ordained to non-stipendiary ministry rose quickly in the first few years, accounting for 10% of all ordinations in 1975, and 20% in 1976. Thereafter a plateau was reached, maintaining a general level of about 25%.

There has been only one attempt to compute the total number of those ordained as non-stipendiary ministers who have remained active in that ministry. In December 1984, the Church Commissioners sent an enquiry to all the dioceses asking for these figures. The returns gave a total of 985 men and 147 women (deaconesses). These figures may be 'a little too high' because some dioceses inadvertantly included figures of



ex-stipendiary ministers (Hodge 1985). Earlier, Hodge had calculated that up to the end of 1982, 1057 men had been ordained as non-stipendiary ministers, approximately 773 of whom were still active, though 'approximately 284 has either transferred to stipendiary ministry, died, retired or otherwise withdrawn from licensed ministry' (ibid.).

The phenomenon of transfer to stipendiary ministry has been critically analysed by Hodge (1983a, pp. 62-9). On the basis of statistics available from 1970 to June 1982, he discovered that -

- (i) 9% of those selected for non-stipendiary ministry became candidates for stipendiary ministry during training;
- (ii) 10% of those ordained 1971-81 had transferred to stipendiary ministry after variable periods as non-stipendiary ministers.

From this data, he inferred that 'from the experience of the last decade ... another 16 per cent of these candidates are likely to transfer within the next seven years'. He further inferred that overall 'approximately 36 per cent of those aged under 57 when selected for non-stipendiary ministry are likely to transfer to stipendiary ministry either during training or within eight years following ordination' (p. 62).

At a superficial reading, this sounds like a high rate of transfer (one third), and has been widely taken to be a sign of an inherent weakness in the whole conception of non-stipendiary ministry. However, when it is realised that 9% of this figure never even entered non-stipendiary ministry (transferring during training), the resulting figure of a 27% transfer rate looks less dramatic. Moreover, even this figure is a projection, based upon the experience of the very first years of non-stipendiary ministry, when misunderstandings and opposition were at their strongest. But it is not impossible that with the passage of time, the accumulation of experience about non-stipendiary ministry and a more widespread appreciation of its potential value, non-stipendiary ministers will find their pattern of ministry more sustainable, and will therefore not continue to transfer in such numbers. No statistics, however, are yet available to confirm or contradict this prediction.

More significantly, no detailed statistics are available of the flow of traffic in the opposite direction (from stipendiary to non-stipendiary ministry): a highly relevant comparison cannot therefore be made. All that can be said is that the published annual statistics have since 1982 given a figure for the number of stipendiary clergy who have 'ceased to



hold appointments' in the church for reasons other than death, retirement or ill-health. In the years 1982-5 the annual figures in this category were respectively: 205, 190, 214 and 237<sup>1</sup>. These figure will include individuals who have moved to other church employment abroad, but it is likely that the majority will have moved across into secular employment in England, without resigning their Orders. It is thus not impossible that the flow of movement between NSM and SM more or less off-set each other. It is unfortunate that exact statistics of this movement have never been collated. Further research in this area is called for.

The evidence of the statistics, then, suggests that non-stipendiary ministry has developed to the point where it now recruits a significant number of ordinands - one quarter of the annual ordinations. On the other hand, non-stipendiary ministry is not continuing to increase its proportion of ordinands, and there are signs of discontent leading to transfer to stipendiary ministry.

## 2. SIGNS OF DISCONTENT

The statistics of transfer make it imperative to examine the reasons given by non-stipendiary ministers for discontent with their role, and the reasons why some have transferred to stipendiary ministry. Taken together, these reasons help to identify the pressures experienced by non-stipendiary ministers, some of which are personal, though others are structural. The latter seem to stem directly either from structural issues which were not satisfactorily dealt with at earlier stages of the establishment of NSM, or from the continuing pressures of the dominant parochial model of ministry, which have tended to make non-stipendiary ministers conform to the norms of the professional clergy.

There have been a number of attempts to elicit from non-stipendiary ministers their actual experience of the pressures under which their ministry is exercised. Banks (1977), Saumarez Smith (1977), Hodge (1983a) and Vaughan (1986a) each include extensive verbatim quotations from non-stipendiary ministers. When discussing their

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<sup>1</sup>Figures derived from Table 7 (1982) and Table 4 (1983-5) in Church Statistics.



frustrations and difficulties, a consistent pattern emerges from these four enquiries. Each individual complained of one or more of the following problems:-

- i) they had been unable to develop a 'ministry' at the workplace, and felt 'guilty' about this (perhaps because of unrealistic expectations aroused in pre-ordination training);
- ii) the lack of any agreed consensus as to the nature of ministry in secular employment left some non-stipendiary ministers feeling that their ministry lacked any inherent substance in the eyes of the Church;
- iii) in such cases, the actual work of the job itself was not perceived to have any relationship to Christian ministry;
- iv) after ordination, personal fulfilment in pastoral ministry within the parish had gained steadily, often to the point where the job was considered a hinderance to ministry;
- v) some parochial clergy had unrealistically high expectations of the pastoral work-load that could be carried by non-stipendiary ministers, with the result that loyalties were severely stretched, often to the point where a non-stipendiary minister sought to relieve the tension by seeking early retirement from his secular job, so as to concentrate on parochial work;
- vi) by contrast, some incumbents failed to offer non-stipendiary ministers any satisfying parochial work, maybe because the non-stipendiary minister was perceived as a personal threat;
- vii) sly remarks about being a 'second-class priest' tended to make some non-stipendiary ministers abandon their secular work in order to become 'proper' priests in the eyes of stipendiary colleagues;
- viii) suspicion of non-stipendiary ministers having received inadequate training, or having ulterior motives of seeking 'back-door entry' to the priesthood are continually heard from parochial clergy.



Thus, in each case the central cause of discontent was the lack of any public consensus about the nature and value of ministry in secular employment, coupled with the universally strong value placed upon accepted forms of parochial ministry. It is little wonder that many non-stipendiary ministers after a while began to conform to expectations, and sought to transfer to stipendiary ministry.

### 3. THE UNPUBLISHED REPORT PRIESTS IN SECULAR EMPLOYMENT (1972)

Why did public consensus about the nature and value of ministers in secular employment fail to evolve ? An answer may be offered by exploring a structural attempt that was made, and examining why it failed.

It will be recalled that the Welsby working party's report was from the beginning intended to be complemented by that of another working party on priests in secular employment (cf. III.9 above). In the event, that working party was not set up until 1971, the year after the Bishops' Regulations on Auxiliary Pastoral Ministry had been finalised ! Its membership consisted of Victor de Waal<sup>1</sup>, John Montague<sup>2</sup> and the Bishop of Middleton (E.R.Wickham), with Basil Moss<sup>3</sup> as secretary. They produced a report which came to ACCM Council in September 1972. The Council, however, considered that -

it was not yet ready to be published. More factual evidence should be given about what the men were actually doing, their difficulties, and their relations with the local church... A more adequate answer was needed why those concerned should be ordained rather than remain laymen,... different categories of priests in secular employment ought to be more carefully distinguished.

(ACCM Council Minute 1972/42).

A revision of the report was accordingly requested. But the revised report had no better success at ACCM Council, which decided against publication, while at the same time acknowledging that it provided 'a solid

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<sup>1</sup>The same individual mentioned in III.7.v above.

<sup>2</sup>William John Montague (1918- ): Vice-Principal, Bishops College Cheshunt, 1957-61; Canon Missioner, dioc. Wakefield, 1962-74; Vice-Provost, Wakefield Cathedral, 1973-4; Rector, Buckland, dioc. Southwark, 1974-84.

<sup>3</sup>The same individual mentioned in III.7.vi above.



basis for further research into the whole area of priest-workers, research which they strongly recommend be undertaken'. Yet in the event, no such further research was undertaken, largely, it seems, because at that juncture there was a change of Chief Secretary at ACCM, and the incoming secretary (Hugh Melinsky) found a host of more urgent questions waiting to be dealt with. The issue of priests in secular employment was thus left in abeyance for a decade - until publication of the Hodge Report in 1983.

What was it about the report and the issues it raised which made its publication unacceptable? Examination of the draft report<sup>1</sup>, deposited in ACCM Archives, reveals some answers.

First, there was disagreement amongst members of the working party: the strongly expressed views of Wickham were not acceptable to other members, which resulted in Wickham appending a separate 'Endpiece' to the report, which he eventually published separately (Middleton 1974). Secondly, the report uncovered evidence of widespread confusion of thought arising from conflicting perceptions of the mission of the church and the role of the laity in the world. Thirdly, evidence received from 17 priests in secular employment revealed deep disenchantment with traditional parish ministry: several appeared to have no attachment to their local churches, and to be operating without accountability to anyone.

We may examine each of these points further, for in varying measure, each illuminates the structural and theological problems inherent in a work-focused expression of non-stipendiary ministry.

Wickham's earlier preference for industrial chaplaincy rather than worker priests has already been noted (see III.3.ii above). Now, a decade later, he was prepared to concede that non-stipendiary ministers operating (in his phrase) 'from strength' could potentially have a role to play in 'securing and forming a committed and organized movement of Christians in the secular world'. But he deeply opposed any ordination of a priest in secular employment unless he was committed to the mission of the laity in the world. Wickham was, however, sceptical as to whether any but a handful shared such a vision. In his experience, many priests had moved

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<sup>1</sup>CHA: ACCM, MWP 7/12A.



out of parochial ministry 'in weakness', through a crisis of faith, frustration with the church or because of personal problems. Such people could scarcely assist the laity at work to become (in his phrase) 'centres of infection, affection and disaffection'.

Moreover, Wickham saw no signs that the Church or its leaders had asked why it wished to promote priests in secular employment:

'is it simply to secure ancilliary parochial help in the face of shortage,... to prop up traditional Church structures, or is it to authorize them for penetrative ministry in the secular world, with all that that might entail in terms of new expressions of the Christian community and the Church ? ... The real danger is of measures that will continue and strengthen immunization against the one necessary thing - the emergence of a catalytic laity within the structures and institutions of the secular world'.

(Middleton 1974, pp. 38-9).

Wickham's views thus appeared to contradict absolutely the form of ministry already set up by Church Assembly<sup>1</sup>. It seems he was not prepared to modify his statements for the sake of a report complementary to Welsby's. This single-minded tenacity in the end proved a disservice to non-stipendiary ministry, for it prevented publication of a report which might have focused church thinking and moved it towards a consensus.

A second reason why the Report failed to obtain approval for publication was the confusing nature of the concepts to be handled: quite simply, it raised too many awkward questions, which the institutional church at the time was probably incapable of facing. The central issue was over the nature of Christian ministry, since discussion of priests in secular employment turned out to be a catalyst for discussion of all forms of ministry - as the Report remarked, 'To question new forms of ministry is to question all forms of ministry' (para. 11). The working party considered that the idea of priests in secular employment could not be discussed without first gaining clarity of definition of (a) the mission of the church, (b) the role of the laity in mission in the world, (c) the role of the priest. But the working party could not identify any consensus within the church regarding these fundamental issues. What the Report

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<sup>1</sup>Wickham's position was, however, supported by Kathleen Bliss (Crucible, 1974, pp. 89-90). A highly respected and stalwart campaigner for the laity, she had been editor of Christian Newsletter, 1945-9; General Secretary of the Church of England Board of Education, 1958-66; lecturer in Religious Studies, University of Sussex, 1967-72; author of We The People (1963).



did identify, however, was a series of five differing (and sometimes conflicting) concerns motivating current discussion of priests in secular employment:-

- i) a concern for more persons authorised to celebrate Holy Communion, when the number of full-time stipendiary priests is beginning to decline;
- ii) a concern for a more indigenous and less professional leadership of local congregations and Christian groups;
- iii) a concern for a new initiative of mission by the church in non-parochial sectors of modern society;
- iv) a concern to safeguard the maintenance and survival of the existing parochial system by the use of self-supporting clergy;
- v) a concern to safeguard the place in the church's mission of an active and committed Christian laity, and to resist its clericalisation.

These concerns could not be entirely reconciled with each other, and it was to take a further decade before the Church of England was in a position to address itself institutionally to such issues (as, for example, in Tiller 1983).

A third reason why the Report was left unpublished was the nature of its research findings. The result of an enquiry<sup>1</sup> addressed to the dioceses was to show that, in 1972, there were at least 174 diocesan clergy earning their living in secular employment. Of these, 42 were in Southwark diocese, 35 in London, and 19 in Gloucester. As many as ten dioceses had no such clergy at all. Thus the national experience of this pattern of ministry was by 1972 still very small, patchily distributed and,

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<sup>1</sup>The enquiry was addressed to each diocese regarding the number of clergy 'who earn their living in secular employment, and who render part-time service in the Church's public and/or expenses'. Forty-two dioceses replied. Seven of them had less than 10 but more than 5 such clergy; nineteen dioceses had less than 5; and ten dioceses had none. The total declared was 174, a generous allowance for omission and error still leaving a figure of about 200 - a small total compared with over 15,000 full-time clergy. (Para. 8A).



it seems, chiefly emanating from the Southwark and Gloucester Ordination Courses. Ministry in secular employment was thus not a phenomenon of such a size that the church must be compelled to acknowledge it.

Affirmative acknowledgment by the church would in any case have been difficult to obtain, given the attitudes expressed by some of the priests in secular employment. The working party consulted (in writing or by attendance at a consultation or both) 17 priest-workers (presumably a 10% sample), to discover their individual answers to the questions, 'What is the justification of being a priest in relation to the job you do? Why not a Christian layman?'. Astonishingly, ten (58%) answered, 'None: why not?'. The remainder 'saw a useful interaction between the two roles, or held reservations about the priest-layman antithesis; only one expressed justification in terms of 'prophetic' roles. It seems that of the 17, only 3 had been specifically ordained as auxiliary pastoral ministers; the others had apparently moved into secular work from parochial ministry. Of these, 7 'had no connection with a parish church'; 5 of them said they 'found the institutional church "intolerable" or words to that effect' ! So, it would appear, many of those consulted had (in Wickham's terms) moved across to secular work 'in weakness'. This was disturbing evidence to handle, seemingly subversive of the parochial ministry, and lacking in any clear articulation of a positive justification. The decision not to publish was therefore all but inevitable.

But this decision had the unfortunate effect of stifling necessary debate. With hindsight, we can now say that the working party had uncovered responses and attitudes which were to take a further decade to worm their way into the church's general discussion of ministry. But in the mean time priests in secular employment continued to be ordained, but had to operate without the support of any agreed strategy, policy or rationale.

Ironically, the working party did propose a policy and rationale very close to that which was to be accepted a decade later. It declared that ACCM and the General Synod needed to be asking the questions 'Why ought the Church as a matter of policy to have priests in secular employment? Why a priest and not a layman?' In the working party's opinion, only two answers were possible: (i) 'to maintain ... the life of Christian communities in the parishes, and in the sectors of mission which



we call neighbourhood and leisure' [i.e. APM], and (ii) 'as a means of providing, enabling and supporting Christian missionary presence in highly secularised structures'. (para. 57-61.)

The working party identified four specific structures where such presence was needed: the world of work and employment; the world of the underprivileged ("working class"); the world of top decision making (political, commercial and administrative power); sectors of the world of education not open to chaplaincy-type ministry. (para. 54.) They went on to suggest that there might be two models of operating such a ministry, a 'militant' model and a 'contemplative' one. The 'militant' approach, it was claimed, could suit a radically missionary situation, where the priest was called 'so to speak a Word as to elicit a response...to gather a group', amongst whom he would minister the sacraments. By contrast, the 'contemplative' model of presence was one where 'the priest with a group with whom he is identified through his employment searches for meaning in the Gospel, and a way of influencing things. The meaning is found with people, rather than communicated to them from the priest'. By this means the mission of the laity was to be strengthened, not superceded.

Subsequent experience has shown that the 'militant' model is hopelessly inappropriate and ineffective in an employment situation. But in 1972, the church's experience was too small to recognise that the 'contemplative' presence was the only model with a chance of success. Yet even when describing their 'contemplative' model, the working party thought that a 'priestly' ministry of sacraments might arise. These kinds of comment indicate the extent to which the minds of even creative and radical churchmen were dominated by a model of ordained ministry centred on ecclesial sacraments.

Finally, the working party made some perceptive suggestions regarding accountability and support of priests in secular employment. To counter the inevitable structural isolation of such clergy, the Report had three suggestions: (i) that not only should each diocese provide a 'resource point' for the care of priest-workers, but also at 'the centre' there should be one bishop with special responsibility for priest-workers; (ii) that an informal structure of accountability and support be developed through a communications network, regular conferences, consultations, retreats, etc; (iii) that a new spontaneous Order be encouraged to emerge of priests and laity committed to mission in the secular world. The



foresight of these suggestions seems to have been demonstrated by the fact that within a decade there had been developments along all three lines. But, in the absence of an agreed consensus, these developments have tended to be haphazard, informal and from the 'grass-roots'.

#### 4. THE SOUTHWELL REPORT (1973)

The lack of consensus about APM permeated the whole church, including its leadership at the highest level. This fact is vividly confirmed by a file of letters from most of the diocesan bishops in answer to questions sent them by an ACCM working party<sup>1</sup>. In 1972 a letter of enquiry asked each bishop about his use of ordained auxiliary ministry, whether he thought the standards were too high, and how he understood auxiliary ministry in relation to lay ministry. In most cases the bishops replied personally (though in some cases the questions were passed on to an archdeacon or director of ordinands). We are therefore in an unusually good position to get a fair view of the personal opinions of the current episcopate three years after the initiation of the new pattern of auxiliary ministry.

Of the 36 who replied, 11 bishops<sup>2</sup> appeared really keen to develop APM in their dioceses. By contrast 4 dioceses<sup>3</sup> expressed themselves as opposed to its development. One of these was Guildford<sup>4</sup> - which is most surprising in view of that diocese's long association with SOC. (The reason given was that auxiliary pastoral ministers could not say the Daily Office with their Incumbents!) Four bishops<sup>5</sup> were actively fostering ordained ministry in secular employment. But many bishops were only responding hypothetically, for about half of them appear to have had no auxiliary pastoral ministers in their diocese at that time. At least three<sup>6</sup> preferred to foster lay ministry, as distinct from APM. The distribution of these responses does not appear to follow any demographic or

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<sup>1</sup>CHA: ACCM, MWP6-II.

<sup>2</sup>Birmingham, Chester, Derby, Lincoln, Liverpool, Manchester, Norwich, Oxford, Portsmouth, Truro, Winchester.

<sup>3</sup>Guildford, Hereford, Peterborough, Wakefield.

<sup>4</sup>The letter is from the Director of Ordinands, not the bishop personally.

<sup>5</sup>Chester, Lichfield, Liverpool, Oxford.

<sup>6</sup>Carlisle, Coventry, Hereford.



socio-pastoral need. Rather it seems simply to reflect the personal opinions or prejudices of individual bishops, (who, of course, held the power to ordain in their own hands).

The picture derived from these returns is thus very varied. The Report, however, 'laundered' the data to such an extent that the chairman of ACCM (Bishop Leslie Brown) described it as 'a Trade Union document drawn up by people determined to preserve the status quo'<sup>1</sup>. The Report tamely concluded that the Church of England had two important tasks before it: a) to call, equip and use a lay apostolate and lay ministry; and b) to maintain a competent professional ordained ministry (ACCM 1973, p. 21). The Auxiliary Ministry had 'a proper and valuable place within the total ordained ministry' (p. 22). But despite the evidence discussed, the Report volunteered no clear definition of what that place was! Its final words stressed the unity of the priesthood, and the need for a high standard of training (p.25).

The cautiously conservative attitude of the Report was however countered by ACCM Council itself, which, having considered the Report, formally advised the bishops that (i) the current regulations for APM were operating satisfactorily; (ii) they should nominate selectors who appreciated the strains inherent in APM<sup>2</sup>. The latter advice shows ACCM's sensitivity to structural barriers to APM, which may have been operating at the point of selection.

## 5. STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NSM

The lack of a church-wide consensus about NSM has resulted in a series of structural obstacles which impeded the smooth development of NSM since 1970. Justification for this statement may be found from three sources: (a) the annual statistics published by ACCM relating to selection, training and ordinations; (b) published statements about NSM; (c) the data collected by Mark Hodge arising from research into the development of NSM in the period 1971-82 (Hodge 1983a).

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<sup>1</sup>Bp. Leslie Brown, letter to D. Payne, 12 Apl 1973 (CHA: ACCM, MWP6-I).

<sup>2</sup>Some Implications of the Southwell Report on Auxiliary Ministry, ACCM (1973). (CHA: ACCM, MWP6-IV).



A professional researcher, Hodge was commissioned by ACCM to examine how NSM was functioning, with a view to revision of the Bishops' Regulations (1970) (cf. III.12). Through analysis of ACCM records, questionnaires and personal interviews, Hodge assembled a mass of data regarding the selection and training of candidates for NSM, and also about the actual practice of their ministry after ordination. His report constitutes the most thorough analysis of the facts about NSM in the Church of England so far undertaken. For the most part, Hodge presents his material descriptively and without interpretative comment; but some of his data appears to contain evidence of the existence of structural barriers to NSM.

Eight such barriers can be observed.

#### i) Bias at the Point of Selection

As noticed above, ACCM Council appears to have been aware of the likelihood of a structural bias against NSM at the point of selection. But while it remains difficult to demonstrate exactly how such a bias may have been operating in the interviewing processes, it can be conclusively shown that such a bias does exist.

Hodge produced some verbal evidence of confusion amongst selectors, one of whom said:

we felt considerable frustration in trying to determine their suitability [as NSM candidates] because it became very clear that neither we, nor the men, nor their dioceses, all shared precisely the same views or expectations of such a ministry.

(Hodge 1983a, p. 34).

That statement reflects the conditions of 1972, when mismatched expectations were understandable. Has the situation improved since those days? In answer, one can turn to the only objective published data - the statistics published annually by ACCM. They show that the percentage of candidates not recommended for training by selectors for non-stipendiary ministry is consistently higher than the percentage of candidates not recommended for stipendiary ministry. Hodge found that in the decade since 1971, 41.7% of candidates for NSM were not recommended, as against 34.3% of candidates for stipendiary ministry (SM) (p. 34). What is



significant is that with the passage of time, the differential between these two has not narrowed, but rather the reverse. So far from increased experience of NSM leading towards more comparable selection figures, an updating of the figures to 1986 reveals that the differential has widened, with the percentage of candidates not recommended for NSM rising to 44%, but that for SM to only 35.2% ( - for details, see Appendix 2). In other words, the statistics over a 17-year period indicate that a candidate for NSM is 9% more likely to be not recommended than a candidate for SM. It appears, therefore, that the discrepancy between expectations of sponsoring dioceses, candidates and selectors continues. No objective study has been undertaken to discover wherein the discrepancy lies, so only a very general conclusion can be drawn: that there persists a bias (for whatever reason) against candidates for NSM at the point of selection.

## ii) Slow Growth of Training Facilities

Ordinands who continue in secular employment need to be able to train while living at home. It was left to individual dioceses or regional groupings of dioceses to evolve patterns of training to suit local needs. No central funds were available to underwrite new structures. Not surprisingly, therefore, it took a considerable length of time before a complete national network of part-time training courses was finally established in 1979.

Appendix 3 lists the fifteen Courses of the network in chronological order of their development. It is readily apparent that the dioceses in the metropolitan areas of London, Birmingham, and Manchester/Liverpool were quickly served. But it took a lot longer to set up Courses in the extremities of the country (Kent, Cornwall, Cumbria and the North-East in particular). As a result, the development of NSM over the country was inevitably patchy - to the extent that in the years 1971-81 only four dioceses<sup>1</sup> had ordained over 30 non-stipendiary ministers, while ten dioceses<sup>2</sup> had ordained less than 10 non-stipendiary ministers<sup>3</sup>. Consequently, many diocese round the country had only very little

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<sup>1</sup>Chester, London, Oxford, St Albans.

<sup>2</sup>Blackburn, Canterbury, Carlisle, Durham, Manchester, Peterborough, Ripon, St Edmundsbury & Ipswich, Wakefield, Worcester.

<sup>3</sup>Hodge 1983a, Table 2.1.



experience of NSM that they could draw upon, even in the mid-1980s. An extreme case is Carlisle, whose diocesan Course did not produce its first ordinands till 1982.

### iii) Variant Diocesan Policies

But the lack of local training facilities is not the only explanation of the slow development of NSM in some areas. Local diocesan strategy (or the lack of it) has sometimes been a constraint. For example, the personal opinion of the diocesan bishop greatly influenced what did or did not develop. Thus the largest numbers of non-stipendiary ministers were not concentrated in the most heavily populated areas, so much as in dioceses where the bishop was personally keen to foster NSM: Oxford (58) and Chester (48). Correspondingly in a diocese like Peterborough, whose bishop<sup>1</sup> refused to countenance NSM during his term of office, NSM was virtually non-existent until as late as 1984, despite the proximity of several training Courses.

Another significant diocesan variant was the diverse requirements of lower and upper age limits. Hodge found that in the period 1971-81, ages at ordination were:

under 40 years	19.4%
40-59 years	62.1%
over 60 years	18.5%

But the national distribution was very uneven: five dioceses had ordained more than 40% of their non-stipendiary ministers at age 60 or over - 'the result of diocesan selection policies concerning the desirability of older versus younger, or retired versus employed, candidates'. By contrast, nine dioceses 'indicated that younger employed candidates were generally preferred to candidates retired or approaching retirement' (p. 27). The upper age limit in some dioceses was as low as 45 years.

Thus, in a significant number of dioceses, some potential candidates for NSM were likely to be discounted because they were too old or too young, or even because of the bishop's negative attitude to NSM. Whereas, had they happened to have lived in a more 'favourable' diocese, their chances of sponsorship would have been much higher.

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<sup>1</sup>Douglas Russell Feaver (1914- ): bishop of Peterborough, 1972-84.



#### iv) Fixed Standards of Training

Hodge analysed the occupations of 576 pre-retirement non-stipendiary ministers (ibid., Table 2.3). He found that -

the vast majority of non-stipendiary ministers in secular employment have been teachers, members of the professions, managers, administrators and members of other non-manual occupational groups.  
(p. 29)

The largest single group of the sample (38.4%) were employed in education of some kind (50 in higher education, 163 in primary or secondary schools, 8 other). Hodge adds that only 4% come from social class categories III(M), IV and V - categories which comprise 65% of England's male working population. The implicit surprise contained in his statement seems misplaced: for the incidence of vocations to NSM may do no more than mirror the social categories of the male membership of the Church of England.

The standard of training on the Courses was from the beginning set to be equivalent to the standard of the General Ministerial Examination (GME) - the examination taken by candidates for stipendiary ministry. Insistence on this equivalence has always been taken as a means of justifying the claim to the 'unity of the priesthood', and has answered the anxieties of those concerned about the quality of non-stipendiary ministers who transfer to stipendiary ministry. Nevertheless, it seems probable that the known insistence upon this standard has inhibited many less educated candidates from putting themselves forward for selection.

In other words, the decision to stay with a unitary standard of training for both stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy has prevented the fulfilment of the early vision of those who hoped the introduction of NSM would encourage the growth of indigenous working-class leadership (cf.III.4.i above).



## v) Inadequate Preparation

Hodge quotes evidence from a questionnaire survey carried out in 1982 which indicated that only one Course within the training network claimed to train students primarily for 'work-focussed' ministry; four trained primarily for a 'parish-based' ministry, and eight trained equally for work-and parish-based ministry (p. 42). 'All the Courses reported that they make no distinction in the teaching offered to those planning a non-stipendiary or stipendiary ministry' (p. 43).

At first sight, this looks very surprising. But once again, it appears that the inability of the church at large to articulate the nature or even the desirability of ordained ministry in the workplace has affected other organs of the body corporate. In selecting their primary training objectives, the Courses seem merely to have echoed the thinking of the wider church.

But another structural factor also comes into play. Since 1978, the bishops have recognised all the Courses as being acceptable forms of training for stipendiary ministry. As with the tie to GME, this move was in part intended to indicate an equality of status between Courses and the established theological Colleges. But it has proved a mixed blessing. For the presence of stipendiary candidates (together with the large proportion of ordinands about to enter a retirement ministry) has resulted in parish concerns, as much as work concerns, becoming significant themes in the Course curricula. For structural reasons, the Courses have (on the whole) failed to promote a differentiated training for these two distinct foci of ministry.

The outcome has been that many non-stipendiary ministers have not been specifically prepared for ministry in secular employment. It is scarcely surprising, then, if some become disillusioned about ministry at work, and seek to transfer to a clearer role in parochial ministry. Thus a cyclical dynamic which works against a clear development of NSM seems to have been present: the church is corporately unable by consensus to define ministry at work, so the Courses do not clearly proclaim it, so students do not receive a differentiated training, so after ordination almost inevitably tending to conform to long-standing models of parish ministry, thus feeding the continuing unclarity of the church's corporate mind.



## vi) Post-Ordination Training

All Anglican clergy are required to undertake three years of 'post-ordination training' (POT), under the supervision of a diocesan director. Hodge has noted the practical difficulties involved in organizing POT for stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy: the former prefer to hold day-time meetings (in order to be available for evening parochial engagements), while the latter can scarcely absent themselves from employment in working hours (pp. 49-50).

Three patterns of POT have emerged: joint training (23 dioceses), separate training (15 dioceses), and a mixed programme (4 dioceses). Where there is joint training, it is usually taken for granted that non-stipendiary ministers will have difficulty in attending day-time meetings and 'they are not necessarily encouraged to try'. By contrast, in at least one diocese, they are expected to participate 'although this may mean taking time off work to do so'. With both approaches, non-stipendiary ministers are expected to fit into a scheme designed to service stipendiary clergy; inevitably, therefore, the approach and the atmosphere of the training context discriminate against them.

But the problem is not entirely avoided when there is separate training. For although such a structure allows for distinctive training for a distinctive ministry, it tends to encourage 'an unsatisfactory segregation of the two categories of clergy'. Certainly it results in the College-trained stipendiary curates having no opportunity to meet with newly ordained non-stipendiary colleagues; ignorance and suspicion then tend to confirm belief amongst the stipendiaries that NSM is a 'second class' ministry.

And even with a mixed programme the problem is not solved. A director of this style of POT remarked how -

there is a tension between the strong desire of NSMs to be treated on an equality with the stipendiary curates and the fact that the needs of each group are recognisably different.

(Hodge 1983a, p. 50).



Thus it appears that the POT structures, originally set up to service parochial curates, have proved rather inflexible, with the result that non-stipendiary ministers find themselves discriminated against by the system. Accordingly, in order to win recognition by the parochial clergy, they are likely to tend to accommodate themselves to the parochial clergy's way of doing things. And so the distinctive NSM contribution to the total ministry tends to be obscured.

#### vii) Lack of Promotional Material

The publishing of official promotional material aimed at fostering vocations to NSM has been all but non-existent. Only once did ACCM sponsor a vocational booklet: A Priest-Worker Ministry (Wilson 1968) was an attractive ACCM booklet, designed to offer an inside impression of APM, as told autobiographically by a priest-baker in Southwark diocese. But it was allowed to go out of print, and not replaced. NSM is, of course, mentioned in such general literature as ACCM distributes, but only as terse information, and not in a manner which is likely to call forth a vocation in a reader previously unfamiliar with NSM.

The evangelical Church Pastoral Aid Society for a while filled the gap with Called to Auxiliary Ministry (Saville 1973). But this too went out of print, to be replaced by a general book on ministry containing a short chapter on NSM (Wagstaff 1979). The publication of the latter as 'promotional' material is inexplicable: Wagstaff ineptly offered an account of how he had once been an NSM, and why he had transferred to stipendiary ministry. He tells how in order to find time for his parochial work, he had negotiated a day a week off from his managerial job, and how his preparation of sermons while commuting was frustrated by friendly colleagues - 'I even had to change stations, because I knew too many of the commuters at the original one' (ibid., p. 28)! So far from being likely to foster vocations to NSM, such literature merely reinforces stipendiary ministry as the norm.

This was the sum total of published material specifically designed to foster vocations to NSM. If one considers the wider field of books which talk about the Anglican ordained ministry in general, it is apparent that the shape of the parochial ministry has tended to determine the shape of the books. The two books most commonly referred to by those



exploring a vocation to ordination were The Christian Priest Today (Ramsey 1972) and The Office and Work of a Priest (Martineau 1972). In view of their publication date, both only gave passing acknowledgement of the existence of NSM, though Ramsey's brief reference to it was highly affirmative and influential (coming as it did from a deeply respected archbishop). He said he regarded NSM -

not as a modern fad, but as a recovery of something indubitably apostolic and primitive... What we call our 'auxiliaries' today belong most truly to the apostolic foundation, and we may learn from them of that inward meaning of priesthood which we share with them.

(Ramsey 1972, p. 4)

The first book to offer an extended statement about the place of NSM within the total ministry of the Church of England did not appear until 1985 (Browning 1985). The same year saw the publication of the first book-length reflective study on NSM (Baelz and Jacob 1985), which was developed further by Fuller and Vaughan (1986).

An examination of vocational publications thus indicates that NSM was very poorly served with promotional material until as late as 1985.

### viii) Ill-Considered Public Pronouncements

If the church's publications did little to foster NSM in the public awareness, the public utterances of its most reported spokesman, the Archbishop of Canterbury, compounded the matter. Donald Coggan's<sup>1</sup> primacy at Canterbury (1974-1980) covered six very significant years in the growth of NSM; but it also coincided with a dramatic fall off in the numbers of ordinands selected for stipendiary ministry. As Appendix 1 indicates, 1976 saw the lowest figure (254) to be recommended for training for stipendiary ministry since 1947. This was interpreted as symptomatic of a crisis of confidence in the parochial ministry. Coggan made the restoration of confidence in (and the publicising of the need for) the full-time parochial ministry a major objective of his primacy. But in doing so, he did not make balancing statements about vocation to NSM.

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<sup>1</sup>Frederick Donald Coggan (1909- ): Principal, London College of Divinity, 1944-56; Bishop of Bradford, 1956-61; Archbishop of York, 1961-74; Archbishop of Canterbury, 1974-80.



The imbalance emerges starkly from an examination of what was actually said in the course of his campaign, which began with his enthronement sermon at Canterbury in January 1975. He deliberately chose to use this occasion (and the massive publicity it offered through press and TV coverage) to tell the nation of the need for increased vocations to the full-time parochial ministry. In three strikingly worded paragraphs, only two near dismissive sentences touched on 'experiments in forms of ministry' and 'auxiliary clergy':

Let us engage in experiments in forms of ministry. Let us train auxiliary clergy. But let us not delude ourselves into thinking that this will solve our problems. It will not. We must have a steady supply of parish priests who will give themselves wholly to this one thing - the thoughtful ministry of the Word, the awesome ministry of the sacraments, the visiting of the homes of the people, the ceaseless ministry of intercession, the equipping of the laity for their witness... But if that witness is to be intelligent and infectious, it will demand an adequate supply of full-time, well equipped, highly qualified clergy whose primary task will be to train the frontline troops for their warfare.

(Times, 25 Jan 1975, p. 14b).

Spoken on such an occasion, these words assumed great power. Their silence about, for example, the potential of NSM to equip the laity 'for their warfare' is remarkable.

The same imbalanced emphasis was maintained in 1977, when, two years to the day from his enthronement, Coggan signed a personal letter to each incumbent of the Church of England. It formed a foreword to an 8-page glossy leaflet entitled The Ordained Ministry Today and Tomorrow (Coggan 1977). Copies were sent to PCCs. Although the main text of the leaflet did contain a (confused) paragraph on NSM, it was under eight lines long, and was overshadowed by the general tone of the leaflet which emphasised that -

the basic unit of the Church's ministry is the local church, and if it is to be effective it is essential that it should be adequately manned. The residential, stipendiary priest provides the anchor for such ministry. All other forms of ministry (lay, specialist and non-stipendiary priests) complement rather than replace the work of the parish priest.

(Coggan 1977, p. 5).

No acknowledgement was offered of, for example, the potential role of NSM in staffing local churches in sparsely populated areas.



A year later, in a General Synod debate on an ACCM Working Party Report<sup>1</sup>, the Archbishop intervened dramatically. Without reference to the report which Synod was discussing, he gave an extended statement of his hope -

that before this year is much older we shall be able to produce a document with the full authority of the bishops, of ACCM and of the Synod which will be read in every parish church and printed in every parish magazine in which we put out very clearly and as monosyllabically as possible the policy which we wish to pursue in the coming years in regard to ordination.

(Proceedings, Vol. 9(1), p. 339)

He then listed four points that he would like this publicity to contain.

The second was:

I would want to say that we are planning for experimentation in the forms of ministry, that we are behind the APM and so on, but (and I would want this to be underlined if possible in red ink) we have a profound belief and faith in the parochial ministry exercised by men who give themselves wholly to this one thing. (ibid.)

The unbalanced nature of the statement is again apparent. The House of Bishops declined to sanction a magazine article, and instead produced a report (GS 374), toning down Coggan's extreme position by including a resolution welcoming 'the opportunities for more effective pastoral care and for mission offered by the development of a variety of ministries, ordained and lay, stipendiary and voluntary'. It went on to encourage every diocese to be responsible for recruiting, training and developing such forms of ministry. But the bulk of the report's 13 resolutions concentrated on strategy for stipendiary ministry and safeguarding the future of the residential colleges. The Archbishop, in introducing the report, displayed his usual stance: NSM was 'a considerable enrichment' to the total ministry of the church; but the emotional energy of the speech was entirely directed at vocations and training for the full-time ministry.

Such a consistent call for stipendiary candidates from the church's most quoted spokesman did little to foster public confidence in, or vocations to, non-stipendiary ministry at a critical stage in its development. Coggan's near dismissive remarks and ascription of 'experimental' status may, on the contrary, have been dissuasive to some considering NSM.

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<sup>1</sup>Theological Training - A Report by ACCM presenting the Second Report of the Working Party on Courses (GS 359), Feb 1978.



It may be concluded that at various levels - of selection, of initial preparation, of in-service training and of published statements - structures have been operating in a way which discriminates against NSM. They seem to have been operating this way because of a tacit assumption that normative priestly ministry is to be identified with full-time parochial ministry. This norm has not always been consciously acknowledged, but it seems to lie behind talk of 'maintaining standards' and 'the unity of the ordained ministry'.

## 6. GROWTH OF LOCAL ORDAINED MINISTRY (LOM)

In addition to these structural barriers to the development of non-stipendiary ministry, there was present from the beginning an element which can perhaps best be described as an element of structural confusion. It arose over the issue of local ordained ministry.

The Welsby Report's concern to maintain comparable standards of selection and training for both stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy meant that the case originally made by Allen, Kelly and others for ordaining local indigenous leadership for each community was not followed through to its logical conclusion. Welsby chose to operate with a 'politics of the possible' - namely, that the Church Assembly in 1969 was unlikely to accept any proposal which appeared to threaten the standards of the professional ministry. As a result, no consideration was given to the minority pressure for an indigenous working-class clergy.

Nevertheless, this pressure continued to build up during the 1970s, both from deprived urban areas and from the more remote rural areas. It is interesting to follow the growth of this movement, for in many respects it is like an echo of the development of NSM (and the Church's structural response to it) returning a decade later. But in this case the conservative structural response tended to come from those concerned to protect the interests of the newly acknowledged NSM. Indirectly, therefore, the development of LOM sheds light on the perceived status of NSM: there are signs that NSM had by this time become absorbed into the professional structure of the clergy. The relationship between these two developments is highlighted in the following account.



If NSM began because of an episcopally felt need in Southwark diocese, LOM began in similar fashion, just across the river in Stepney, with the full approval of a missionary bishop recently returned from Tanzania (Trevor Huddleston<sup>1</sup>). The animateur was Ted Roberts<sup>2</sup> who for a decade had already struggled with a missionary situation in the East London parishes of St Mark, Victoria Park in Bow, and St James the Less in Bethnel Green.

In 1969, Roberts, aware of the Roland Allen model of indigenous ministry, invited several suitable working-class parishioners to consider training for ordination to local ministry in the parish. Four responded. Their training began in 1970; they went to ACCM selection conferences in 1972, and were ordained deacon the same year and priest in 1974. Their training had a style and standard different from that required for NSM. ACCM watched the development with friendly interest. The distinctive features of this scheme were: ministry being exercised by a team; candidates being called out by the local church rather than by external appointment; a permanently settled rather than occasionally itinerant ministry; a locally based and practical training; a review of ministry at the end of 7 years with no commitment to renewal of licence; the ministry being voluntary rather than paid. Roberts wrote up an account of what was happening in the hope that it would be an effective pilot scheme (Roberts 1972).

But in the event, the scheme did not flourish, and has not been repeated elsewhere, though the four individuals<sup>3</sup> continued to serve beyond the initial 7 year period, and were still listed as 'NSM', resident in those two parishes in 1985<sup>4</sup>. The difficulties appear to have been two-fold: (i) parishioners treated the men in the same way as stipendiaries, and laid unreasonable burdens upon them; for 'when somebody becomes a priest

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<sup>1</sup>Ernest Urban Trevor Huddleston (1913- ): Provincial, Community of the Resurrection, South Africa, 1949-56; Bishop of Masasi, Tanzania, 1960-68; Bishop suffragan of Stepney, 1968-78; Bishop of Mauritius & Archbishop of the Province of the Indian Ocean, 1978-83.

<sup>2</sup>Henry Edward Roberts (1928- ): Vicar, St James the Less, Bethnel Green & St Mark, Victoria Park, 1961-78; Canon Residentiary, Bradford Cathedral, 1978-82; Incumbent, Bermondsey, 1982- .

<sup>3</sup>William Charles Harrap (1932- ); Gordon Sydney Kendall (1941- ); John Thomas Page (1911- ); and Henry Stanley Watson (1936- ).

<sup>4</sup>Crockfords Clerical Directory 1985/6.



there are huge expectations both of churchpeople and of people in the neighbourhood'<sup>1</sup>; (ii) the original visionary authority (Roberts) moved away to other work.

The extent to which the parochial system destructively affected this experiment is noted in an all too little known review of its effectiveness (Shilling & Stokes 1980). On the one hand, too much of the 'time of these local priests had been absorbed in the maintenance of the existing services and pattern of Church life. In the event, they followed the pattern of the traditional type of clergymen' (Shilling & Stokes 1980, pp. 3-4). On the other hand, the style of leadership expected was inappropriate to East London working-class culture (where leadership is corporate rather than individualistic) - as one of them put it -

The model of leadership that we [were] expected to fulfil is the one that other people have been groomed to succeed in, and the one that we have been conditioned to fail in. (ibid., p. 12)

Nevertheless, while it was in progress, attempts were made to deduce some general principles from the Bethnel Green experiment. Two reports began to draw upon its experience, though both were unfortunately written before sufficient time had elapsed for a critical judgement on the experiment to have emerged.

The first was published under the title Local Ministry in Urban and Industrial Areas (Huddleston & Sheppard 1972). It made what may be regarded as the definitive case for ordaining working class non-stipendiary ministers, arguing as follows:

It is hard to see how we can proclaim a belief that indigenous churches can be rooted in working-class areas without some indigenous men being designated as leaders at every level.

(Huddleston & Sheppard 1972, p. 13)

The report argued that 'every level' would include the ordained clergy. Since such a development could be criticised as displacing 'a proper and positive lay Christian presence and activity', the report countered:

A reformed ecclesiology will see that this is a ministry in its own right because it is preparing the way for a lay church structured for mission.

(ibid., p. 12)

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<sup>1</sup>Bishop David Sheppard, speaking of the Bethnel Green experiment in General Synod (1980) - Proceedings, Vol. 11(2), p. 458.



(This brief sentence is significant as one of the earliest acknowledgments in a church report of the special role to be played by a 'work-focussed' non-stipendiary ministry.) The report proceeded to map out the kind of pre-ordination training which would be appropriate for such men, drawing heavily upon the programme operating at Bethnel Green. It concluded by recommending that 'the Bishops should approve experimental, mainly non-residential, training courses for a local ministry in work<sup>-ing</sup> class areas' (p. 22) - a recommendation which provided justification for the ordinations which took place at Bethnel Green two years later. The stature and pastoral experience of the working party's membership (which included bishops Huddleston and Sheppard, Eric James, Ted Roberts and the Principal of SOC), coupled with its clearly reasoned presentation, have meant that the report is in some sense a 'foundation document' for LOM, and is still referred to fifteen years later.

Secondly, an ACCM working party (of which the Bishop of Woolwich, David Sheppard<sup>1</sup>, was a member) laid out the broader principles of LOM in a discussion paper (ACCM 1974) intended for wide consideration. The paper suggested that three kinds of parish would be particularly suitable for local ministry: (i) the remote rural team or group; (ii) the inner city parish; (iii) the 'divided parish', namely large suburban parishes divided between a council-housing area and an owner-occupied area. It envisaged decentralised training schemes, with training spread over as much as five years; selection at national selection conferences, but with at least one selector having 'reliable knowledge of the kind of milieu from which the candidates are coming'. Qualities to be looked for were: that the man's home was used pastorally; that he was open to people and ideas, with some basic theological equipment, not over-assertive, capable of working as a member of a team and of thinking and acting prophetically as well as pastorally (ACCM 1974, p. 13).

All of this was revolutionary thinking (and action) for the Church of England, involving abandonment of the 'sacred cow' of a single standard of training for entry into the priesthood - albeit the proposal was merely contained in discussion papers. However, the very next year the same proposal appeared in a report to General Synod produced by the Faith and

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<sup>1</sup>David Stuart Sheppard (1929- ): Warden, Mayflower Family Centre, Canning Town, 1958-69; Bishop suffragan of Woolwich, 1969-75; Bishop of Liverpool, 1975- .



Order Advisory Group of the Board for Mission and Unity (General Synod 1975b). This group included weighty scholars amongst its membership : the Bishop of Chichester (Eric Kemp<sup>1</sup>), Professors Lampe<sup>2</sup>, Mascall<sup>3</sup> and Macquarrie<sup>4</sup>, and Dr Jim Packer<sup>5</sup>, representing catholic, radical and evangelical viewpoints.

The group was responding to a request from General Synod for -  
 a statement on the theology, sociology and psychology underlying the Church's understanding of ordination, taking account of work already done on the subject by ACCM, other Churches, the BCC and the WCC, and giving particular attention to the widespread desire and need for a local ministry, standards of selection and training for which might be different from those required at present for full-time and auxiliary pastoral ministry<sup>6</sup>.  
 (General Synod 1975b, p. 23.)

The report was also responding to articulated requests (chiefly from evangelicals) that the bishops should license laymen to preside at the eucharist in priestless parishes. This the report refused to countenance. It proposed instead to meet such pastoral exigencies by suggesting that 'the bishop should ordain a local person with the primary duty of presiding over the eucharist' (ibid., p. 20). This in itself was a further break with the Anglican tradition that the ministry of Word and Sacrament belong together and that this truth is expressed by the custom of only ordaining to sacramental ministry men who had the education to minister the Word effectively in public. This significant departure was justified as follows:

To learn the outward form of the the administration of the sacraments is not an arduous or long process... It is the study of scripture and doctrine which takes up time and energy... But to make that a requisite for such an ordination as we are considering is to limit the ministry of the word to one of its forms. A man may be inadequate in the pulpit and yet exercise a real ministry of the

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<sup>1</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp (1915- ): Fellow, Chaplain and Lecturer in Theology, Exeter College Oxford, 1946-69; Bampton Lecturer, 1959-60; Dean of Worcester, 1969-74; Bishop of Chichester, 1974- .

<sup>2</sup>Geoffrey William Hugo Lampe (1912-80): Professor of Theology, Birmingham, 1953-9; Ely Professor of Divinity, Cambridge, 1959-71; Regius Professor of Divinity, 1971-9.

<sup>3</sup>Eric Lionel Mascall (1905- ): Student and Tutor, Christ Church Oxford, 1946-62; Bampton Lecturer, 1956; Professor of Historical Theology, Kings College, London, 1962-73.

<sup>4</sup>John Macquarrie (1919- ): Professor of Systematic Theology, Union Seminary, N.Y., 1962-70; Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Oxford, 1970- .

<sup>5</sup>James Innell Packer (1926- ): Warden, Latimer House, Oxford, 1962-9; Principal, Tyndale Hall, Bristol, 1970-2; Associate Principal, Trinity College, Bristol, 1972-8; Professor of Historical Theology, Regents College, Vancouver, 1978- .

<sup>6</sup>My emphasis.



word in pastoral care, in consolation, encouragement and even in teaching. The kind of natural leader whom we envisage is one who would be able to speak the word, though not necessarily to preach it; and it should perhaps be remembered that Anglican law and practice have always envisaged that some priests might not be able to preach... It will seem to many better to be somewhat flexible about requirements for ordination than to suggest that an episcopal licence can take the place of ordination.

(General Synod 1975b, pp. 21-2)

This report was received (without significant adverse comment<sup>1</sup>) by General Synod in February 1976, and became the theological basis upon which subsequent pragmatic developments were built.

Meanwhile, the pressure point had shifted from inner urban London to rural Lincolnshire, where in June 1975 the Diocesan Synod committed itself to exploring 'the creation of a local ordained ministry' as a stratagem for coping with an agreed policy of reducing the number of stipendiary parish clergy<sup>2</sup>. Careful proposals were worked out, and in June 1978 the Diocesan Synod agreed to initiate LOM in the diocese, 'subject to the agreement of the Archbishop of Canterbury or the House of Bishops', who were also asked 'to declare the diocese of Lincoln an area of ministerial experiment for a period of seven years during which up to thirty men be ordained to the Local Ordained Ministry' (Lincoln Diocese 1977).

The proposals contained attempted reassurances that the status of the stipendiary and auxiliary pastoral ministries would not be threatened: the local minister's sphere of ministry would indeed be local, restricted by the bishop's licence to the parish where he lived; 'he would be regarded as an assistant curate of the Incumbent'; 'Canons or the Bishops' regulations should provide that a priest in the Local Ordained Ministry should not be instituted or licensed as a priest-in-charge' without his suitability and training for full-time ministry being reviewed. However, some months after the Diocesan Synod had given its approval, legal advice was offered to the bishop which challenged the basis of these assurances.

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<sup>1</sup>Canon D.A.Rhymes maintained that lay presidency at the Eucharist in certain circumstances was 'compatible with the truly Catholic theology of ordination, but [was] also made necessary by the likely future shape of the Church' (Proceedings, Vol. 7(2), pp. 669-70). But he was the only person to speak in this vein.

<sup>2</sup>The diocese of Lincoln is notorious as having an abnormally large number of churches to serve a comparatively small and sparsely scattered population. In 1986, 280 clergy and layworkers were serving 358 benefices with 522 parishes and 684 churches (Diocesan Directory, 1987).



The Diocesan Registrar gave his opinion that -

Once a man is ordained he is ordained and I do not think as a matter of law any restrictions could be placed on the exercising of his ministry... I think it would be perfectly valid in law if a Bishop were to institute a local ordained minister to a benefice or re-license him to an area other than his original one... This does seem to put the Local Ordained Minister in much the same position as any other member of the clergy<sup>1</sup>.

It thus appears that any restriction of ministry placed upon a Local Ordained Minister is in the nature of a 'gentleman's agreement' between the candidate and the ordaining bishop, and not something which is legally enforceable. Despite this set-back, the bishop proceeded with a request to the House of Bishops to agree to Lincoln diocese 'making the experiment of Local Ordained Ministry'.

The outcome was very surprising. Whereas the diocese of Lincoln had somewhat hesitantly and after long deliberations through its synodical procedures submitted a very limited and particular request, the House of Bishops, without reference to synodical procedures, decided that the Lincoln scheme should be seen 'not as establishing a new category of ministry (the local ordained ministry) but as being a local form of non-stipendiary ministry'. The House accordingly declared Local Non-Stipendiary Ministry (LNSM) 'an acceptable form of ministry within the general category of the non-stipendiary ministry' (House of Bishops 1979, para. 7-8). This decision meant it was open to any diocese to sponsor candidates for this novel and ill-defined pattern of ministry. By way of initial guidance, the House published three loose guidelines: (i) after securing diocesan sponsorship, candidates should attend national selection conferences, at which 'a diocesan nominee should be allowed to speak to the local situation'; (ii) training should be by means of a scheme approved by ACCM; (iii) the committee of ACCM bishops was requested to keep developments under review (Hodge 1983a, p. 99).

This outcome can only be judged extraordinary. At one stroke the long-standing tradition of a unitary standard for ordination was broken; the Church of England as a whole had made available to it a pattern of local ministry which, as a national church, it had never asked for; the

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<sup>1</sup>Derek Wellman (Lincoln Diocesan Registrar) to the Bishop of Lincoln, letter, 12 January 1979, reprinted as an appendix in House of Bishops (1979).



usual synodical procedures were by-passed, since neither ACCM nor the General Synod had been consulted. The bishops decision was a recipe for the confusion which persisted in the following years.

They tried to put the matter right by presenting a report to the General Synod in July 1980. The report (General Synod 1980b) recapitulated the above developments, and, leaning heavily on the Faith and Order Report (General Synod 1975b), frankly acknowledged that 'many of the questions [raised by LNSM] are still being actively discussed in the church and generally agreed solutions have not yet emerged'. Nevertheless the bishops' decision could be justified on these grounds:

the church's mission must go forward and the ministry of the sacraments must be maintained even in the absence of generally agreed solutions. (General Synod 1980b, p.12)

This sentence seems to reflect the alarm of some bishops that pastoral ministry in some rural areas was on the point of breakdown: urgent remedies were required, which could not await national consensus.

The Synod debate of the report was surprisingly mild, though three points may be highlighted. First, the Archdeacon of West Ham<sup>1</sup> protested that the usual conventions had been breached in this case:

I do not think [the decision to establish LNSM] ought to have come through bishops' regulations issued before this Synod ever had a chance to talk about the matter... In matters of national policy the Synod should have a debate before regulations are issued by the House of Bishops. (Proceedings, Vol. 11(2), p. 452)

Secondly, the Bishop of Liverpool (David Sheppard) explained why despite his desire to see the principle of indigenous ministry acted upon in urban areas, he was being cautious in Liverpool: because of the inconclusive experience of Bethnel Green (see his speech quoted above). Thirdly, the Archdeacon of West Ham regretted that this new pattern of ministry was being established before there had even been any evaluation of NSM, let alone the Bethnel Green experiment.

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<sup>1</sup>Peter Spencer Dawes (1928- ): Tutor, Clifton Theological College, 1960-65; Incumbent of Romford, 1965-80; Member, Standing Committee of General Synod, 1975- ; Archdeacon of West Ham, 1980- .



The latter point was developed forcibly in print by the Dean of Worcester (Tom Baker<sup>1</sup>), who had followed the growth of NSM very closely as chairman of the Inspections Working Party. He considered that 'the recent emergence of the Local Ministry has confused the scene'. He declared he was -

not altogether happy about the Bishops' expressed desire that the Local Ministry should be seen simply as a variation within the general category of NSM. While useful as a means of classification, or an administrative convenience, such a categorisation might have the unhappy result of obscuring the distinctive character of the NSM, as it is developing... Let it not be submerged ... by absorption into the Local Ministry. (Baker 1980, pp. 30-1)

Baker was particularly anxious over Lincoln's decision about standards of training: 'we have here a ministry which is self-confessedly "second-grade" ' (p. 28). The possible implications for NSM were serious:

If ... the Local Ministry becomes established on a wide scale, a new factor may be introduced, namely a fresh grade of ministry which may be trained at a lower level, and may result in a grade of ministry of lower competence in some respects. There may then be some confusion. Where will the NSM stand? In so far as it is non-stipendiary it is bound to be identified, or confused, with the Local Ministry. Yet in respect of its training standards and general competence it is to be equated with the stipendiary ministry.  
(ibid., pp. 28-9).

Unless carefully handled, this potential confusion could, he claimed, lead to an identity crisis for NSM. Unfortunately Baker's perceptive points were only published in a student journal of small circulation<sup>2</sup>, and were probably seen by very few church leaders.

The ACCM staff and committees, however, did what they could to bring order on this confused scene. Charged by the bishops at this time with revising the Regulations for NSM, they took the opportunity to highlight some of the features which distinguished NSM from LNSM. Thus the Hodge Report contained an appendix by the secretary of the Committee for Theological Education (William Jacob) on 'The Development of Local Non-Stipendiary Ministry', which itemised a series of unresolved issues which at that date (1983) still required clarification.

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas George Adames Baker (1920- ): Principal, Wells Theological College, 1960-71; Archdeacon of Bath, 1971-5; Dean of Worcester, 1975- .

<sup>2</sup>The article appeared in Kairos, a journal published by and for theological students.



Despite continued lack of clarity about LNSM, the report that ACCM eventually submitted to General Synod in 1985 (GS 583) contained a recommendation that the development of NSM could best be fostered by reclassifying this pattern of ministry under five headings, one of which was LNSM. This was acknowledged by the chairman of ACCM as a pragmatic response to known initiatives in certain dioceses:

We are ... aware that in one quarter of the dioceses serious consideration is being given to the development of this type of ministry... Our report was an attempt to respond to pressure from the dioceses... The general drift of our proposals is that we should facilitate the desire of those dioceses which wish to promote this type of ministry. (Proceedings, Vol. 16(1), pp. 401-2)

Nevertheless, LNSM was criticised in debate on the grounds that it was divisive of the ordained ministry. One speaker<sup>1</sup> (who also criticised NSM) listed the following inadequacies of the idea:

If we go down this local road to any extent, we will be able to say [of the local non-stipendiary minister] 'He's second class. He didn't have a proper [selection] conference. He hasn't had proper training. He won't necessarily be allowed to function if he moves anywhere else. (ibid., p. 391)

No other voice, however, echoed these sentiments. The general feeling was one of desire not to impede initiatives in any diocese which wished to take them.

But perhaps the most significant mechanism employed to 'put some distance' between NSM and LNSM in the public consciousness was the form in which the revised Regulations were published. Separate booklets were produced: 'Regulations' for NSM (ACCM 1987a), but only 'Guidelines' for LNSM (ACCM 1987b) - since sufficient experience of LNSM had not yet been accumulated for crystalised regulations to be appropriate. The tentative nature of this pattern of ministry was thus officially acknowledged. Moreover, an attempt to safeguard the distinction of ministries was provided in the final guideline about 'Transfer': if a local non-stipendiary minister had been originally selected by diocesan (i.e. local) procedures, then he should be referred to the Candidates Committee of ACCM 'for recommendation about the next steps to be taken'. This wording is vague in the extreme; and, as noted above, no legal constraints could be imposed on transfer. So how the guidelines will work in practice remains to be seen.

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<sup>1</sup>Archdeacon Dawes; see also the wider discussion of this debate below.



From the preceding discussion, it is clear that there existed a dynamic of suspicion towards LNSM in many ways similar to that which greeted APM a decade earlier. Only this time it is NSM that is felt to be under threat. The following six points of similarity between the two periods are apparent: (i) there was frequent anxiety about standards of selection and training; (ii) some (eg. Baker) would have preferred the nomenclature and classification adopted for Local Ministry to have been clearly distinguishable from NSM; (iii) there was anxiety about transfer to SM and NSM; (iv) but, pragmatically, the pastoral needs of Lincolnshire were acknowledged, and a desire not to obstruct local initiatives was present; (v) also a pragmatic acknowledgment that local ministry was effectively already in existence; (vi) a reasoned theological rationale was not lacking. But there is one very important difference between the two periods. No adequate pilot scheme had been run through which the idea of local ministry could be evaluated; this contrasts with the confident way in which proponents of APM could point to both to Southwark's training course and to its worker-priests in 1969.

Overall, this description of the development of LNSM highlights the status of NSM in the early 1980s. In the eyes of at least some observers, NSM had proved its worth as a distinctive ministry, and was regarded as a phenomenon to be protected and preserved.

One must ask, therefore, to what extent LNSM can be shown to have been a genuine threat to the development of NSM. Unfortunately, there is, as yet, little objective data available upon which to make a judgment, since ACCM's statistics for LNSM only exist from 1982 onwards. The available sample is thus still very small and provides insufficient data for reliable analysis. Nevertheless, a few signs of trends may be pointed out, (though they will need verification at a later date when a longer series of statistics is available).

By the end of 1985, 10 dioceses<sup>1</sup> had ordained a total of 20 men to LNSM, and a further 2 dioceses<sup>2</sup> had had candidates recommended at selection conferences. The only LNSM training course to be recognised by ACCM was that in Lincoln diocese. LNSM thus appears to be a small scale movement, especially when compared with the growth of NSM in the

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<sup>1</sup>London, Birmingham, Derby, Gloucester, Guildford, Hereford, Lincoln, Norwich, Ripon, Southwell.

<sup>2</sup>Canterbury and Chester.



equivalent period 1970-75. By the end of the latter period, over 80 men had been ordained to NSM in 34 dioceses; up to 90 candidates were being recommended for training per year; and 8 training courses had been established, covering most regions of the country except the extremities<sup>1</sup>. On the face of it, therefore, LNSM seems to be growing only very slowly, hindered, perhaps, by the lack of training facilities. If, however, recognised training schemes were to be developed, numbers of candidates for LNSM might grow significantly.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, there are signs that self-limiting factors may be present: compared to NSM, LNSM is recruiting older candidates with lower educational background. Comparative analysis of the ages of candidates in the period 1983-6 (see Appendix 4A) indicates that LNSM has a preponderance of older candidates: 31.7% were aged 55-59 (compared with only 14.7% in NSM); and 70.7% were 50 or over (compared with 36.8% in NSM). This may indicate that older men prefer to opt (and are being permitted to opt) for the less demanding and (in some cases) shorter LNSM style of training, because the potential period of ministry before them is relatively short. Some support is lent to this hypothesis by Appendix 4B which indicates that 45.4% of the candidates for LNSM had higher education of some kind (13.6% even had degrees), and so would have been academically capable of training for NSM. These individuals may therefore have been 'syphoned off' from NSM. The remaining 54.5%, however, had no higher education (compared with only 24% of candidates for NSM).

On the other hand, the exceptionally low 'not recommended' figures (see Appendix 2) for LNSM may encourage belief that entry to ordained ministry through the LNSM door is more likely than through NSM. If this belief became widespread, then potential candidates for NSM might well prefer to offer themselves for LNSM.

Taken overall, these statistics would seem to indicate that LNSM may not in reality be a significant threat to NSM. LNSM is attracting a distinct group of recruits: a higher proportion of older men, half of whom have no higher education. But more time will have to elapse and further analysis be conducted before these conjectures can be substantiated.

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<sup>1</sup>Kent, East Anglia, Cornwall, Northumbria and Cumbria.

<sup>2</sup>The statistics in this and the next paragraph are derived from the (unpublished) statistics submitted annually to ACCM Council.



It was noted earlier that the idea of LNSM has been a confusing factor in the general discussion about NSM. But in the light of the above analysis, it appears that the slow development of LNSM into a practical reality may have limited the extent of the confusion. Indeed, it seems that NSM itself, now firmly established and widely acknowledged, may have been an inhibiting factor for LNSM, just as (at an earlier date) desire to protect the status of stipendiary ministry inhibited the establishment of NSM. In other words, factors relating to professional status, and perhaps also to class, seem to have been at work. If this is so, it is an indication that NSM has latterly come to be regarded as a part of the clerical profession - at least in the perception of some of the clerical members of the General Synod.

## 7. STRUCTURAL RESPONSES

It is to the credit of the Church of England that, through the agency of ACCM, the development of NSM has been steadily and carefully monitored. If there was a dearth of published promotional material, this gap was to some extent filled by two descriptive reports specifically commissioned by ACCM from William Saumarez Smith (1977) and Mark Hodge (1983).

The former analysed questionnaire returns from 131 'honorary ministers' (as the author preferred to call them), and informed the revision of the Bishops' Regulations in 1979. Rather different in character, the latter report was the product of two years' work by a paid professional researcher - the first time in its history that ACCM had funded independent research into an aspect of ministry (cf. IV.5 above). As a result of these two reports, more detailed statistical, sociological and anecdotal data is available about non-stipendiary ministers than about any other sector of the contemporary ordained ministry of the Church of England. Both reports were published for general circulation, and they have helped promote informed discussion of non-stipendiary ministry at all levels of church life.



This data in turn informed discussion of the wider issue of what strategy the Church of England should adopt in deploying its ordained ministry - a topic which has consumed much synodical time and energy in the 1980s. Thus the General Synod in November 1980 received a report (General Synod 1980a) which acknowledged NSM as having a significant role in any overall strategy: 'As NSM becomes more absorbed into the bloodstream of the Church there has been an increasing awareness of its value and potential' (p. 21). A widely publicised vision of what this potential might be was offered by John Tiller (1983), who envisaged the dissolution of the parochial and patronage systems over the next forty years. He suggested that the parish system could be replaced by a network of congregations, whose ministry was shared between laity, large numbers of (local) non-stipendiary ministers, and a smaller number of diocesan stipendiary clergy who would travel around offering specialist ministries. The General Synod recommended that Tiller's report become a discussion document, and it was sent down to diocesan and deanery synods with the request that they examine their ministerial needs in the light of it. One of the resolutions passed down from General Synod specifically asked dioceses and deaneries 'to consider whether they welcome the further development of non-stipendiary ministry in its various expressions'.

The church at local level was thus required to consider its attitude to NSM, and so the concept and potential of NSM were brought before large numbers of church members previously uninformed about it. At this proximity to the discussion, however, it is not possible to make any assessment of the outcome of this synodical process of consultation, beyond noting its effect as a publicity device.

What can be asserted is that when a major debate reviewing NSM took place in General Synod in February 1985, Synod members overwhelmingly spoke and voted in favour of adventurous development of NSM. It is worth considering this debate in some detail, because when compared with earlier debates already discussed, certain significant shifts of opinion can be noticed. This debate forms a suitable termination point to the present study, as it may be taken to mark the close of the initial 'experimental' period of NSM's development in the Church of England, and the clear articulation of a plan for consolidation during the next stage of its development.



## 8. GENERAL SYNOD DEBATE (1985)

The debate which took place on 15th February 1985 was the first occasion, since the beginning of synodical government, on which the General Synod had had an opportunity to have a debate on the whole range of non-stipendiary ministry. It was in effect reviewing fifteen years of the Church's experience of this ministry. Synod members had before them three documents: (i) the Hodge Report (Hodge 1983a); (ii) a collection of essays entitled Ministers of the Kingdom (Baelz & Jacob 1985); and (iii) specific recommendations for action, prepared by ACCM (General Synod 1984).

The first of these documents has already been described. The second, edited by the Dean of Durham<sup>1</sup> had been specifically commissioned by ACCM Council to complement the factual and descriptive material of the Hodge Report with theological reflection upon the place of non-stipendiary ministry within the theology of the Church. In particular, the essays paid specific attention to the practice of ministry in secular employment, and offered a theological justification of such ministry. The essays proved very influential in debate, being directly referred to more often than the Hodge Report. The third document laid before the Synod contained two alternative proposals for practical action. Option 1 recommended that the existing Bishops' Regulations should be 'tidied up' in the light of certain anomalies identified by the Hodge Report, but that otherwise non-stipendiary ministry should continue much as before. Option 2, by contrast, made 'much more radical suggestions for the restructuring of the pattern of non-stipendiary ministry [which] might enable it to play a fuller part in the life and mission of the Church'. The primary device recommended for this restructuring was an explicit differentiation between five distinct categories of non-stipendiary ministry, one of which was 'work-focused ministry'.

The Synod voted for Option 2 - an historic decision, embodying for the first time formal acceptance by the Church of the propriety of ordained ministry in secular employment. It was a decision which made good the original ambiguous silence on this topic in 1969. The following

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<sup>1</sup>Peter Richard Baelz (1923- ): Incumbent of Bournville, 1956-60; Dean of Jesus College, Cambridge, 1960-71; Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology, Oxford, 1972-79; Dean of Durham, 1980- .



analysis of the speeches in the debate suggests a widespread shift in the church's perception of non-stipendiary ministry - at least amongst her leaders as represented in Synod.

In all, there were 20 speeches, of which only one was opposed to any development of non-stipendiary ministry, while another had hesitations. Opening the debate, the bishop of Newcastle<sup>1</sup>, as chairman of ACCM Council, noted how discussion of non-stipendiary ministry inevitably introduced exploration of central theological themes: 'the place and importance of ministry in general and of priesthood in particular; the relationship of the Kingdom of God to the Church; deep matters of vocation and authority; and perhaps most of all the means in which the holiness and transcendence of God may be discovered immanent in our midst'. In his opinion, Ministers of the Kingdom was 'a contribution to our thinking not only about non-stipendiary ministry but about ministry in general' (Proceedings, Vol. 16(1), pp. 397-8).

Several speakers affirmed the symbolic and pastoral value of ministry in secular employment. The bishop of Sherborne<sup>2</sup> stressed the need for this category of non-stipendiary ministry to be seen as distinct. Commenting on the inhibiting power of the dominant parochial model of ministry, he said:

Of course the parochial model has predominated; it was virtually the only one known. But if the non-stipendiary ministry is to make its proper contribution to the life, ministry and, above all, mission of the Church...it must be seen as a distinctive ministry, valid in its own right, with its own credentials and its own contribution, and not derivative from other forms of ministry... Non-stipendiaries should be seen less as witnesses of the institutional Church and more as witnesses to the potential kingdom outside the institutional Church. (pp. 381-2)

He considered that the distinctive witness of non-stipendiary ministers was particularly apposite at a time when the Church of England was tending

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<sup>1</sup>Andrew Alexander Kenny Graham (1929- ): Warden of Lincoln Theological College, 1970-77; Suffragan Bishop of Bedford, 1977-81; Bishop of Newcastle, 1981- . Chairman of ACCM Council.

<sup>2</sup>John Dudley Galtrey Kirkham (1935- ): Chaplain to bishop of Norwich, 1967-9; curate, St Martin-in-the-Fields and St Margaret, Westminster, 1970-2; domestic chaplain to archbishop of Canterbury, 1972-6; bishop of Sherborne, 1976- .



to become an associational church. Their distinctiveness lay in the fact that -

Firstly, most of these ministers work in a secular environment in a way in which a parish priest cannot; this means that they can be a sign of the gospel in the working world and can act as a bridge between the world of work and the life of the Church. Secondly, their lifestyle is the same as that of laypeople in the Church. Often parish priests are perceived as different and set apart, but non-stipendiaries shared the same lifestyle, mortgages, employment, unemployment, answerability, fear of redundancy and so on, which no parish priest can. These distinctive traits seem to me to be particularly significant at a time when the Church is in danger of turning towards a more congregational and sectarian ethos, described in the Tiller report as an associational Church. If the Church of England is to remain in any way the Church of the nation, it must be evident in all sections of the life of this nation. (p. 382)

Some sharp examples of what 'witnessing to the Kingdom' might mean were offered by Canon Smith-Cameron<sup>1</sup>:

In County Hall the other day a group of men were discussing the theology of transport. Our large conurbation is suffering from a breakdown in transport. There are some Christian men and women there who are struggling to find their gospel values, kingdom values, about this matter. In Shell the other day I was with a group of men asking questions about multinationals and the ethics concerning that subject. Most of those men, some of whom were readers, did not find that they were given any resources in the structured Church, in the vineyard, in the parish churches which they attended regularly, to confront these problems. In the Department of the Environment the other day I was with a group of women and men who were talking about lead in petrol. They were wondering, in the economic matters affecting this theme, what they as Christians believe and how they work out their thinking and their actions in this matter. (pp. 392-3)

He charged the church with offering very few resources to support non-stipendiary ministers exercising 'extremely difficult ministries in the wilderness, in the world, where the kingdom is what is being responded to, rather than the edification of the beloved community, the Church, [where] the majority of us ... exercise priesthood in the vineyard'. Following this, the Dean of Durham suggested a manner of oversight which might offer structural support:

Might it not be that this group of people could have a bishop who is not necessarily concerned with the parochial and diocesan structures and their upholding, but someone to look after and care for them? (p. 399)

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<sup>1</sup>Ivor Smith-Cameron (1929- ): Chaplain, Imperial College, London, 1958-72; diocesan missionary and canon residentiary, Southwark, 1972- .



A member of the laity (Mrs M.R.Drury) gave an example of the potential value to the laity of non-stipendiary ministry in the wilderness. She instanced the 'hassle' which one minister in secular employment said he experienced through living in the tension between world and church<sup>1</sup>. Though uncomfortable, this hassle could have a positive value if it enabled the minister to empathise with laity caught amidst identical tensions:

If he is brave enough to share his struggle, coping with the tension of priority-setting for himself, he has a unique opportunity to get alongside those who are also struggling and really to understand their problems. (p. 394)

Regarding the strategic pastoral value of non-stipendiary ministers, the Bishop of Gloucester<sup>2</sup> noted that almost 20% of his clergy were non-stipendiary:

In many of our rural areas the withdrawal of non-stipendiary clergy would result in practical breakdown of the bread-and-butter liturgical and pastoral life of parishes... I find it very hard indeed, therefore, in a diocese like ours in which non-stipendiary ministry is now firmly established, and has been over something like 20 years, to regard it as on trial... It really is a sturdy plant, at least in some parts of England. (p. 394)

Such testimony to non-stipendiary ministry's role in maintaining the parochial system will have made it difficult to speak against the set resolution.

Nevertheless, on the contrary side, the Archdeacon of West Ham<sup>3</sup> was critical of non-stipendiary ministry in general. 'We have put up a system which has not worked, in large measure'. He justified this statement by referring to the rate of transfer to stipendiary ministry (a sign the non-stipendiary ministry had 'failed'); its pattern of training broke marriages; work focused ministry was 'like the emperor's clothes'. But such an extreme view was unsupported by any other speaker.

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<sup>1</sup>Citing Vaughan 1985, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup>John Yates (1925- ): Principal, Lichfield Theological College, 1966-72; suffragan bishop of Whitby, 1972-75; Bishop of Gloucester, 1975- .

<sup>3</sup>Peter Spencer Dawes (1928- ): Tutor, Clifton Theological College, 1960-65; incumbent of Romford, 1965-80; Archdeacon of West Ham, 1980- .



However, the Archdeacon of Dudley<sup>1</sup>, a former lay education officer, though not antagonistic, was cautious: there was currently 'an upsurge in laity training of a quite remarkable kind', and he was anxious because -

the growth of these ministries is maximising a view of the personal aspect of ministry which is not as helpful as it should be... As the idea of 'every member' ministry takes hold ... we find ourselves with people thinking very hard ... about the ministry to which they are called but, in some cases, to the point where almost the main reason for being ordained is somehow to maximise one's own calling rather than to be available to the whole Church of God. (pp. 385-6)

Significantly, this was the only speech to express fear of a threat to lay ministry.

In summing up the debate, the bishop of Newcastle, with a touching awareness of earlier struggles, chose to quote from Roland Allen, and urged the synod to receive the report, and by implication to 'welcome non-stipendiary ministry and recognise that its development during the past 20 years has surely passed the test of Gamaliel' (p. 397). This the synod duly did, and went on to instruct ACCM to prepare revised Regulations with differentiated roles for several distinct patterns of non-stipendiary ministry, along the lines of Option 2.

Having analysed the debate, it is instructive to identify its chief features, and to compare them with the 1969 Church Assembly debate. Six prominent features may be noted.

(i) Much of the debate centred around issues concerning ministry in secular employment - the area excluded from discussion in 1969. Most of the comment was affirmative.

(ii) All the discussion was conducted in the absence of non-stipendiary ministers themselves. Although two former non-stipendiary clergy and one layman in training spoke in debate, no actual practitioners of this ministry were able to participate, because there were none within the synod's membership. Nevertheless, the voices of non-stipendiaries spoke by proxy in the verbatim extracts published by Hodge (1983a) and Vaughan (1985).

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<sup>1</sup>Robin Bennett (1934- ): Principal, Aston Training Scheme, 1975-81; Adult Education Officer, General Synod Board of Education, 1982-85; Archdeacon of Dudley, 1985- .



(iii) The publication of Ministers of the Kingdom was felt to have undergirded the concept of non-stipendiary ministry with a coherent theology and to have offered useful examples of its praxis. It was frequently referred to in the debate, and appears to have provided a sense of confidence amongst synod members, one of whom considered it had 'done something to redress the balance against work-based ministry... There has not hitherto been adequate presentation of what it means to exercise a work-based ministry' (pp. 397-8). As a result, many of the anxieties expressed in 1969 did not reappear in the 1985 debate.

(iv) In 1969, an amendment was proposed, designed to emphasise the prior place of lay witness in the world. But the 1985 resolutions were passed without any attempted amendment, because most speakers considered that non-stipendiary ministry was enhancing lay witness in the world.

(v) As in 1969, the synod pragmatically recognised non-stipendiary ministry as a fact on the ground, but happily seized the chance to regulate future developments.

(vi) Personalities in favour of the radical option included three bishops (two of whom were former theological college principals), and a dean who was a former Professor of Pastoral Theology. As in 1969, the evident support of the episcopate was significant.

## 9. CONSOLIDATION

If the 1985 debate in General Synod proved affirmative of NSM, it was because the ground had been well prepared - not only by the ACCM reports and research, but also by a general groundswell, reflected in a variety of material. Four kinds of material seem to have been influential: (i) statements from the Lambeth Conferences, (ii) developments in other churches, (iii) reflection arising from the experiences of non-stipendiary ministers, and (iv) the material and activities of a particular self-conscious group of ministers in secular employment. A summary of this material is in place here.



### i) Lambeth Conference Statements

It has already been noted how the Lambeth Conference of 1968 encouraged 'a wider and more confident use' of NSM. The subject was consequently kept under review, and at the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) which prepared the agenda for the next Conference, the 'Self-Supporting Ministry' (as it was termed) was picked out for significant discussion. The ACC's report (Anglican Consultative Council 1976) cited Anglican experience from such diverse situations as Tanzania, Singapore, Ecuador and the United States (where 'by 1980 20-30 per cent of the priests will be in the self-supporting ministry'). Special attention was given to four issues:

(a) It was 'desirable that self-supporting ministers should always be part of a team' including stipendiary and lay ministers; in any case, 'this should be the normal pattern of the Church's ministry'.

(b) Transfer to stipendiary ministry was to be expected: one such priest had left his secular employment to become an assistant bishop.

(c) The Report was particularly affirmative of the idea of local ministry. The parish priest and local congregation should always be asked to affirm a candidate's vocation, for the following reason:

Experience suggests that if the priest and congregation so present a man to the bishop for training for the self-supporting ministry, he will be suitable to minister to that congregation, whatever his present standard of academic achievement... A self-supporting priest, put forward confidently by a congregation who trusts him, may often be better able to communicate with them than a man with more theological education.

(Anglican Consultative Council 1976, pp. 48-9)

(d) on the other hand, congregational expectations may need to be educated. Some self-supporting ministers will not be able to carry the full load of the stipendiary; while others, such as the hospital administrator who was also an archdeacon, will bring specialist competence to the church.

It is significant that in several of these points (especially (a)), NSM was seen to be a catalyst for thinking about the ministry as a whole.



Building upon these observations, the Lambeth Conference of 1978 paid special attention to the support and accountability required in non-parochial ministry, and had some perceptive things to say about the bishop's role:

The exercise of these ministries seems so far to have been largely concerned with providing, or assisting, what has been the traditional pattern of parochial ministry. There is, however, growing evidence of new patterns of ministry being exercised by self-supporting priests. Among these there are those whose ministry is specifically within the places of their own secular employment... **If the Church is to be open to the world and its needs, such new patterns of ministry are inevitable<sup>1</sup>.** It is important that [they] are related to diocesan life. Where possible they should be part of a team... It is also important to recognise the obligations the self-supporting priest has both to family and employer. To neglect such responsibilities undermines the priest's integrity... It is here that pastoral oversight has to be provided. We see a demanding and vital role for the bishops not only in providing such oversight ... but also in serving as a focus of unity for the several patterns of ordained ministry which may emerge. (Lambeth Conference 1978, p. 80)

This statement constitutes the firmest commitment the bishops at Lambeth had yet made to ministry in secular employment.

The Conference of 1988 will also have NSM on its agenda, since it featured prominently at the preparatory ACC meeting held in Nigeria in 1984 (Anglican Consultative Council 1984). By then the context of discussion had shifted away from the ordained ministry per se to 'Setting Free the Ministry of the People of God'. And non-stipendiary ministry (the nomenclature now adopted by the ACC) was seen as an important agent in this process (Anglican Consultative Council 1984, para. 7.6). Significantly, the person and ideas of Roland Allen became a specific focus for the Section dealing with Ministry: members of the Section read the Roland Allen Reader (Paton & Long 1983) as 'basic resource material', and Allen's central teachings were recited within the Report. All in all, this amounts to the strongest affirmation of Allen's ideas yet to be made by the Anglican Communion as an institution<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>My emphasis.

<sup>2</sup>It seems that Bishop Edmond Browning of Hawaii was a key figure in promoting Allen as a focus for attention. Browning had previously been a prominent participant at a Pacific Basin Conference on Ministry (1983) where Allen's ideas had proved to be catalytic in a meeting of church leaders from Anglican Provinces bordering on the Pacific. A report of this conference was published under the title Setting Free the Ministry of the People of God (Davis 1984).



On the basis of experience in several Provinces, it was possible to list the advantages and disadvantages of NSM. For example, it 'may facilitate the Church to have a ministry of outreach into the business/secular Community', but it could also 'simply extend clericalization'. The issues surrounding LNSM also surfaced:

In some parts of our Communion, distinction has been made between non-stipendiary priests and local priests. This distinction is sometimes blurred, and in some Provinces is firmly resisted. The key distinction between the two types of ministries may lie in the differences in their selection, training and availability.

Thus it seems that the confusion felt over LNSM in England was mirrored in other Anglican Provinces. Likewise, the desire for lay presidency at the Eucharist had also been articulated in other Provinces; but the report firmly recommended 'the ordination of a local priest to meet this need' (ibid., para. 7.7).

Judging from these various documents, it may be said that the Anglican Communion as a whole is currently developing patterns of ministry designed for mission rather than for pastoral maintenance. Diversity of pattern is becoming more and more widely acknowledged; NSM is being seen as a proven and important element of the pattern; and LNSM is increasingly being spoken about, though in a more hesitant tone.

## **ii) Developments in Other Churches**

Throughout the 1980s, similar developments were occurring amongst the Church of England's neighbours. The Church in Wales adopted a policy of deliberately fostering NSM as one means of coping with a dramatic decline in numbers of stipendiary clergy. A report to the Welsh bishops (Church in Wales 1981) recommended not only that non-stipendiaries should sometimes become priests-in-charge of parishes, but also that 'ministry at the workplace' should be encouraged.

To help focus creative thinking about the latter, the report printed a 'check-list' of eight roles which a non-stipendiary might be able to play in the workplace: as an interpreter (of the Church to the world and of the world to the Church); as an informal teacher (in down-to-earth theology and ethics); as a counsellor (with an understanding of problems



born of shared experience); as a confessor (speaking wisely of repentance and forgiveness); as a comforter (to the distressed and bereaved); as a reconciler (between man and God and between different people, whether as individuals or groups); as an intercessor (who prays for all with whom and for whom he works); and as a nucleus (for Christian groups). This was by far the most imaginative presentation of work-focussed ministry yet offered in an official report. The Welsh strategic use of NSM had proceeded to such a degree that by the end of 1985, 8% of the entire parochial clergy of the Church in Wales were non-stipendiary (55 individuals).

In the Scottish Episcopal Church, the place of NSM was even more pronounced. In the ten years 1975-84, more priests were ordained to non-stipendiary than to stipendiary ministry (55 NSM, 44 SM)<sup>1</sup>. This deliberate policy reflects the needs of a Church small in numbers, but widely scattered over the country.

Turning to the Free Churches in England, a similar development in patterns of ministry is apparent. The United Reformed Church adopted 'Auxiliary Ministry' into its system in 1980, and by 1985 had ordained 60 men and women into this ministry<sup>2</sup>. As a matter of policy, wherever possible, they were trained through the existing Anglican part-time Courses. The Baptist Church similarly has accepted 'Supplementary' Ministry. In 1984 there were 61 Supplementary and Supplementary Probationer Baptist Ministers in England<sup>3</sup>. The Methodist Church in 1986 had 135 ministers in the 'Sector Ministry'<sup>4</sup>. That same year the Methodist Conference received a report (Methodist Conference 1986) advocating the establishment of 'Sector Ordained Ministry' as a category of ministry into which people could be directly recruited. This was a significant change for Methodism, which has been unwilling to recruit to anything but the circuit ministry (though after a period on circuit, a minister might request Conference to be allowed to take a secular post and enter 'Sector Ministry').

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<sup>1</sup>I am grateful to the Information Office of the Scottish Episcopal Church for supplying me with these figures.

<sup>2</sup>I am grateful to Roger Scopes for supplying me with these figures from the United Reformed Church's records.

<sup>3</sup>The figures are derived from The Baptist Union Directory for 1986-87, London, The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland (1986).

<sup>4</sup>I am grateful to David Clark for supplying me with these figures from the Methodist Church's records.



It is thus apparent that during the 1980s, the idea of NSM was very much to the fore in the thinking and strategic planning of several of the British churches. While the Church of England was in many respects leading the field, it was none the less reassuring to be aware that other churches were responding to circumstances in a similar way.

It was also reassuring that when the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission produced its agreed statement Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (sometimes called 'the Lima report'), the section on ministry contained a brief paragraph acknowledging that -

Ordained persons may be professional ministers in the sense that they receive their salaries from the church. The church may also ordain people who remain in other occupations or employment.

(World Council of Churches 1982, p. 31)

The Lima Report has been widely taken to indicate the extent of theological convergence in the thinking of all the major church traditions (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Baptist, etc), and so the willingness to include a statement such as this may suggest that NSM is on the way to becoming a global phenomenon. However that may be, the Lima report added further reassurance that the Church of England was not out of step in the matter of NSM.

### iii) Theological Reflection

Quite apart from officially commissioned material (such as Saumarez Smith 1977, Hodge 1983a, Baelz & Jacob 1985), there has since the mid-1970s been a steady flow of articles and books reflecting on the actual experience of NSM. For example, non-stipendiary ministers themselves have contributed four books (Burton 1977, Syms 1979, Hurst 1986, Roose-Evans 1987), and several articles (Gill 1977, Austin 1979, Ranken 1982, Hurst 1987); while those involved in training candidates for NSM have also reflected on the nature of this ministry (Durstun 1974, Mason 1975, Melinsky 1980, Burke 1981, Fuller & Vaughan 1986). LNSM has been the subject of a model case study from the United States (Mathieson 1979) and of two articles (Strudwick 1981 and Wingate 1984). Selections from Roland Allen's writings have been reprinted yet again (Paton & Long 1983). Three of the part-time Courses have taken advantage of 10th anniversary celebrations to publish reflections on the training process as well as on the nature of NSM (Vaughan 1983b, Fuller



1984, Pettifer 1986). There have also been several studies about the place of NSM in the churches of the United States (Illich 1971, Lowery 1973, 1976, Bonn & Doyle 1974, Elliott 1980). A bibliography of the literature on NSM has been published (Vaughan 1987).

It will be in place here briefly to describe the character of this material. (No attempt, however, will be made to evaluate it, since the immediate interest of this chapter is to explore the historical effect of the literature, rather than to debate its relative value theologically.)

The most coherent exposition of a theology to undergird MSE is to be found in an essay by Peter Baelz entitled 'Ministers of the Kingdom' (Baelz 1985). In it he suggests that the Gospel idea of 'the Kingdom of God' may be considered the basis upon which to construct a theology for MSE. Primary assumptions behind a 'kingdom theology' are that (i) it is the whole family of humankind, indeed the whole created order, which is the object of God's continuing creative, redemptive and fulfilling love; (ii) individuals are co-operating with the creative, redemptive and fulfilling will of God, even though they do not recognise the fact; (iii) the Church is that part of the creation where the divine love is recognised, acknowledged, celebrated and proclaimed; (iv) that living as a Christian in the world is primarily about being - being a sign of the new creation. An important implication follows:

In a theology of the kingdom the Church's concern cannot be restricted to the ecclesiastical, or even to the religious, if for no other reason than that God's own presence and power are not restricted to the ecclesiastical and the religious. (ibid., p. 36)

Thus, in as far as the special character of the Church will be represented in its ordained ministry, we should expect it in some way or other 'to carry the marks of ... a celebration of the mystery of God's presence in creation, redemption and fulfilment, and a patient service of the needs of the world' (p. 37). Baelz argues that this is precisely the contribution brought to the Church's ministry by MSE. In which case the typical role of a minister in secular employment will be to witness to God, not by verbal or other propaganda, but (in the words of Cardinal Suhard) by keeping the mystery of God present to men. 'This means so to live that one's life would be inexplicable if God did not exist'<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>From the last of the Cardinal's Lenten Pastorals (1949) in E.C.Suhard (1955), The Church Today, Chicago, Fides Publishers, 1955.



The literature has explored the ways in which this witness may manifest itself in practice in the world of work. Not only do opportunities for pastoral ministry to individuals abound (cf. Vaughan 1986a), but there also exists the possibility of celebrating 'secular sacraments'. Michael Austin has proposed that -

the sacraments of the secular life are celebrated wherever reconciliation is actively and deliberately sought, wherever injustice is resisted, wherever encouragement is offered, wherever the lowest place is taken.  
(Fuller & Vaughan 1986, p. 114)

It can be the special task of ministers in secular employment to watch out for such moments at work where the 'hidden Christ' of 'common grace' is daily revealed, though usually unrecognised and uncelebrated. In any case, some work roles have a 'priestly' quality to them, since they actually require the employee to be active in negotiation, mediation or reconciliation.

The simple fact of the existence of this sizable body of literature is significant. Its existence helped to stimulate practitioners of NSM in their work, and also to heighten the awareness of church officers charged with training, directing and deploying non-stipendiary ministers.

#### iv) Growth of a 'Professional Association'

In 1982 a non-stipendiary minister named Michael Ranken<sup>1</sup> floated the idea of establishing a 'Newsletter among Ministers-at-Work'. The response was immediate, and by 1986 (November) the Distribution List included 422 names, of whom 209 appeared to be active 'ministers in secular employment'. This was the nomenclature adopted by the group to distinguish themselves from non-stipendiary ministers who had retired from secular employment and were working in a purely parochial ministry. This 'grass-roots' initiative has greatly strengthened the identity of those non-stipendiary ministers who regard themselves as having a work focus as well as a parish focus to their ministry. The initiative has resulted in the creation of something approaching a 'professional association', complete with a quarterly newsletter, a bi-annual national conference and a steering committee. The Archbishop of Canterbury has even nominated

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<sup>1</sup>Michael David Ranken (1928- ): ordained 1979; NSM at St Martin, Epsom.



a bishop (Kenneth Woolcombe<sup>1</sup>) to offer informal episcopal liason between the group and the House of Bishops in matters concerning NSM. The group has also been consulted by ACCM over the drafting of revised Regulations for NSM. Its very existence, and the roles it has been playing, appear to be yet further signs that NSM now has a self-conscious and self-confident identity in the Church of England.

These four categories of material have all helped to consolidate the status of NSM in the 1980s, and undoubtedly help to account for the very positive reception given to NSM in the General Synod debate of 1985.

## 10. REVISED REGULATIONS FOR NSM (1987)

The substantive recommendation of that debate was that ACCM was asked to prepare a revision of the Regulations governing NSM. These were duly published in 1987 (ACCM 1987a), and represent the final stage of the history here described.

Significant features of the revision were: (i) clear recognition that 'those in secular employment whose chief area of ministry is in the context of their employment, commonly called "Ministers in Secular Employment"' formed one of the two main categories of NSM; (ii) NSM covers men and women, including priests, deacons, accredited lay workers, and those in the deaconess order, who hold a Licence from their diocesan Bishop; (iii) every bishop was required to appoint an 'Officer for Non-Stipendiary Ministry'; (iv) a licence should not be granted before a 'Job Description' had been drawn up and agreed by the non-stipendiary minister, the incumbent and the bishop's officer; (v) clear procedures for transfer from and to NSM were laid out; (vi) LNSM was dealt with in guidelines published quite separately (ACCM 1987b).

In various ways these regulations were designed to provide support and encouragement to NSM, rather than to constrain it. Thus (i) made good the omission of the original regulations; (iii) provided a mechanism

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth John Woolcombe (1924- ): Principal, Edinburgh Theol. Coll., 1963-71; Bishop of Oxford, 1971-78; Assistant Bishop of London, 1978-81; Canon Residentiary, St Paul's London, 1981- .



of support from and accountability to the diocesan staff; (iv) provided a mechanism for reducing mismatched expectations; and (vi) identified a known area of confusion, and distanced it from NSM.

The publication of these Regulations marks the close of the experimental period of the development of NSM in the Church of England.

## 11. SUMMARY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING DEVELOPMENT 1970-87

Compared to the summaries offered in earlier chapters, it is much more difficult cogently to sum up the factors effecting NSM in the period 1970-87, not only because of chronological proximity, but also because of my personal involvement with developments during this period. Nevertheless, from my present vantage point, the main factors seem to be the following.

### inhibiting power of parochial model

The single most influential factor seems to have been the needs of the parochial system. Where NSM has been seen to support the parochial system, it has flourished. But this has resulted in a sense of frustration amongst those with a personal vision of non-parochial patterns of ministry, and a tendency for such individuals to transfer from NSM to stipendiary ministry. Similar structural biases against NSM have shown themselves at many different levels of the diocesan and national Church.

### professional pressures

The interests of the clerical profession have constantly constrained radical development of NSM. Where the role of the parochial clergy seems to have been threatened, such clergy have made life difficult for non-stipendiary ministers. But the maintenance of selection procedures and training standards for NSM at a level comparable to that for SM has meant that latterly professional pressures have been a constraint, not so much upon NSM, as upon LNSM (where these measures of comparability have been abandoned).



lack of clarity about MSE

The failure of the Church to produce an agreed rationale or strategic use for MSE has inhibited the growth of this aspect of NSM. But the publication of Ministers of the Kingdom (1985) and the revised Regulations (1987) may, at a late date, have filled this vacuum.

publications

In the early period, the lack of officially sponsored material about NSM in general led to widespread misunderstandings about its nature and purpose. The more recent spate of publications and official reports have helped forward churchpeople's knowledge, with corresponding growth of appreciation of NSM.

action / reflection model

It seems that the Church, perhaps unconsciously, has operated with an action / reflection model of doing its theology. Thus, it may not have been possible to write or publicise much about NSM in the early stages. It appears that it may have been necessary for actual experience of this new pattern of ministry to accumulate over a decade or so before theological reflection upon it became possible.

creation of LNSM

The existence of LNSM on the scene from 1980 is a completely new factor. It is too early to analyse its effect upon the development of NSM. Its creation seems to have depended upon changed perceptions about the viability of the small congregation, and perhaps upon a panic reaction to the perceived immanent collapse of the parochial system in the most remote rural parts of England.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to trace in detail the stages by which the idea of NSM was planted in the corporate consciousness of the Church of England, and how a variety of individuals and groups developed the idea so that it might become an actuality within the structures of the church. The thesis has also attempted to review how NSM has fared since its institutional acceptance.

I am aware that many kinds of questions could be asked of the material assembled here. For example, it could be examined by sociologists interested in the effects of class in the professions, or by social psychologists studying the effects of conformity, or by anyone concerned with aspects of institutional change. In particular, theologians could find much here to explore regarding implicit assumptions about priesthood in the Church of England, and church historians could make comparisons with other developments in patterns of ministry (for instance, in the growth of women's ministry).

Nevertheless, I am going to limit myself to commentary upon the data in the following way: the task of this concluding chapter is to try to explain why the history of NSM has taken the shape that it has, and to offer some tentative remarks about the likely future of this pattern of ministry within the Church of England.

We may begin by asking why an idea which was firmly rejected in 1888, and again in the 1930s, achieved acceptance in 1969.



## 1. FACTORS FACILITATING THE BIRTH OF NSM

### i) Six Prominent Pressures

In the Introduction, it was pointed out that throughout the discussion of NSM, six distinct pressures seem to have been present in one form or another. They were:-

(i) pressure for each local community to be self-sufficient in ministry and sacraments;

(ii) pressure for the church to offer ministry in a style and expression acceptable to working-class culture;

(iii) pressure for the removal of the divide between clergy and laity;

(iv) pressure for the church to offer meaningful witness in 'the world of work';

(v) pressure for the maintenance of the status of the clergy as a profession;

(vi) pressure for the maintenance of the parochial system.

This being so, it may be asked whether the extent to which the idea of NSM succeeded or failed to gain acceptance depended on the extent to which these pressures joined forces or opposed each other. If it can be shown that a convergence of pressures occurred in 1969 which was not present at earlier times, then the convergence would (on the face of it) appear to explain the 'live birth' of 1969.

However, a review of the data laid out in the preceding chapters (as summarised, for instance, in the final section of each chapter) indicates that the evidence does not seem to be susceptible to such a simple analysis. For example, there is no sign that the Church Assembly in 1969 was swayed by a marked increase from pressures (i), (ii), or (iii); while (iv) was specifically excluded from the discussion. The only pressures that are constant in all periods are (v) and (vi). One is compelled to ask, therefore, what it is about pressures (v) and (vi) which worked **against** NSM in the earlier periods, but **for** it in 1969. We may treat each of these pressures separately.



It would seem that pressure to maintain the professional status of the clergy (pressure (v) ) did not really shift in 1969, since in debate NSM continued to be regarded as a potential threat to the profession. However, the acceptability of the Welsby report rested on the fact that it proposed safeguards to the professional clergy at every point which seemed to threaten their status. Thus, the proposed selection procedures for NSM were more rigorous than for stipendiary ministry, presentation to benefices was protected, and there was even the possibility that an NSM might 'cease to exercise his priestly functions' if there was a change of incumbent in a parish (cf. III.9 above). Subsequent legislation and Regulations followed this path, fencing NSM around with 'safeguards' to satisfy the professional clergy. Anthony Russell (1980) has suggested that in insisting on these safeguards, the stipendiary clergy were effectively treating NSM as a 'sub-profession'; like other parent professional bodies, they were demanding similar standards with regard to entry qualifications, for fear that the public image of their profession might be tarnished by the rise of an inadequately monitored sub-profession (Russell 1980, pp. 257 and 286). On this analysis, there is no great change from earlier attitudes of professional suspicion. All that had happened in 1969 was that a sufficient array of safeguards appeared to have been offered to allay the suspicion.

When, however, we turn to the pressure to maintain the parochial system (pressure (vi) ), a shift of perception is noticeable. Throughout the period under discussion, there had been anxiety about staffing the parishes. This anxiety may be seen as a constant factor. What shifted was the perception of the extent to which NSM might meet the staffing needs of parishes.

In the nineteenth century, NSM was generally seen as unnecessary, since it was considered that a professional class of clergy could still man the parishes and provide adequate liturgical ministrations - given the assistance of suitably qualified and authorised Lay Readers. Likewise, in the 1930s it was considered possible to adjust the parochial system to a declining number of clergy by uniting the benefices of small rural parishes, and moving more clergy from country to town. Again, NSM was generally seen as unnecessary. But by the 1960s, the parochial clergy, even further declined in total numbers, were being stretched to the limit.

The small benefices had by this time been united. Moreover, the rise in



popularity of a weekly eucharist made liturgical demands which could not be met by Readers. Here and there voices could be heard proclaiming that the parochial system was fast becoming unworkable.

That was the view taken by the Paul Report (1965) when it recommended abolition of the patronage and benefice system, to be replaced by a system where clergy were 'on the strength' of a diocese, and available to be deployed in a variety of new ways - for instance in teams. Predictably, pressure from the professional interests of the clergy succeeded in preventing any move to abolish patronage or benefice. But the subsequent passing of the Pastoral Measure (1968) did open the way for new patterns of team and group ministry, without gratuitously challenging that bastion of professional privilege, the parson's freehold. However, once it became accepted that a 'collaborative' style of ministry exercised in teams was both desirable and legally possible, it was but a small step to acknowledge that 'auxiliary priests' might have a role within a team relationship, helping to bear some of the weight of the liturgical demands upon an over-stretched parochial clergy.

It can thus be argued that a primary controlling factor in the history we have been studying is the parochial system. During the 1960s it suddenly became apparent that NSM might be one agency (among others) through which the survival of the parochial system might be assured. Provided, therefore that the professional clergy's status could be duly safeguarded, it was clearly in the interests of the same clergy to have 'auxiliary' assistance, if the structure served by their profession - and providing it with its raison d'être - was not to collapse.

The operation of this dynamic may be seen even more clearly a decade later, when NSM was extended by the additional category of LNSM in 1980 (cf. IV.6 above). The extraordinary nature of the decision to initiate LNSM has already been noted. If one asks, why, at a stroke, the Church of England abandoned its long-defended insistence on a unitary standard of selection and training for all forms of ordained ministry, there can be only one answer: because of the overriding demands of the parochial system.

The data bears out this assertion. Lincoln diocese was frankly admitting that the parochial system was on the point of collapse in that region of rural England, and was therefore requesting permission to



experiment in ministry. But the other bishops, it seems, were unwilling to allow Lincoln an 'advantage' denied to themselves, and thus the House of Bishops gave a **general** permission for the development of LNSM in any diocese. It may not be a coincidence that the body which unilaterally abandoned the ancient clerical defences of standards for selection and training was composed only of bishops. For it is the bishops who are primarily charged with ensuring that vacant parishes are filled. That their decision was not countermanded by the subsequent General Synod (despite expression of disquiet over the propriety of the bishops' procedure) may be accounted for by a widespread acceptance of the gravity of the situation. The bishops' decision was seen as a not unreasonable action to meet a serious emergency: the immanent collapse of the parochial system in certain parts of the countryside.

It may thus be inferred that for the sake of this 'greater good' - of rescuing the structure which the clerical profession was designed to serve - the clergy in Synod were willing to forego the protection of their long-fought for entrance standards. All of this would seem to be evidence for arguing that the fundamental factor controlling the development of NSM was the welfare of the parochial system. This was quite overtly the case at the establishment of LNSM in 1980. It would seem also to have been the controlling factor at the establishment of NSM in 1969, though the issue was not articulated in quite such a self-aware manner then.

Nevertheless, if the welfare of the parochial system was a constant and controlling factor in the development of NSM, there were other confounding variables, notably structural, cultural and theological factors. In what follows, each will be considered in turn.

## **ii) Structural Factors**

First it needs to be recognised that Church of England possesses no **single** source of authority: authority is dispersed somewhat ambiguously between Parliament, the bishops in Convocation, and the representatives of church membership in Church Assembly or General Synod - not to mention the de-centralised authority of each bishop and beneficed incumbent. During the period under discussion, the church's structures changed very considerably, first with the revival of Convocation as a



vehicle for reform independent of Parliament, and then with the development of structures where the voice of the laity could be heard (in Church Congress and Diocesan Conferences). Later, the Enabling Act (1919) brought the Church Assembly into existence as a legislative forum where bishops, clergy and laity together might prepare measures to present to Parliament. But the Assembly operated alongside the ancient Convocations, which retained their traditional powers. Furthermore, once established, the Church Assembly (and its successor the General Synod) set up boards to discuss and determine policy, resulting in a tendency towards centralised authority, which conflicted absolutely with the ancient rights of a bishop as the final authority within his diocese. The scope for structural confusion was thus very considerable indeed.

This history has frequently had cause to note how the uncertain location of authority within the Church of England blocked or frustrated attempts to develop NSM. Thus, in the nineteenth century, the bishops in Convocation (1887) easily put paid to a Parliamentary bill (the Deacons (Church of England) Bill), and a single House of Clergy in Convocation was effectively able to veto (1888) the considered decision of the bishops of the church. More than anything else, it was the cumbersome structures of Convocation which really prevented any hope of constructive discussion of NSM in the nineteenth century. By the 1930s, things had not greatly changed, as instanced by the impasse reached when a report of a Church Assembly Commission (1930) arrived at conclusions irreconcilable with those of a Joint Committee of Convocation (1932). We have seen too how different boards of the Church Assembly were, during the 1950s, pursuing policies which were mutually irreconcilable (III.3.iii above).

It may thus be said that, during the early period, the dispersed source of authority within the church was a strong structural factor militating against the development of a consensus about NSM. However, this did not always work to the disadvantage of NSM. For it was the acknowledged independence of the authority of the bishop within his diocese which enabled the critical pilot scheme to be established in Southwark diocese (1960) at the personal behest of its bishop.

By the time the Welsby report (1968) was being discussed, a number of structural factors were working together in favour of NSM. To begin with, the Church Assembly was operating as the central forum for church legislative business: Convocation (though still in existence) was no



longer functioning as an authority 'over against' the Assembly. And within the Assembly's own bodies, the conflict between the policies of the Social and Industrial Council and of ACCM was neutralised by the limited brief of the Welsby working party (excluding consideration of priests in secular employment). Moreover, by 1968, the Southwark initiative was no longer seen as a violation of traditional norms, but as a valuable resource which neighbouring dioceses were drawing upon.

A further structural factor influencing the development of NSM may be described by the word 'focus'. For instance, in the nineteenth century, the cause of NSM was hindered by the fact that the idea of NSM was seldom discussed in its own right, but only in association with other proposals such as the establishment of an order of Lay Readers or of Subdeacons. As a result, the discussion of NSM became dissipated. Much the same is true of the 1930s where proposals for NSM were but a small part of a much broader series of proposals designed to meet the staffing crisis by rationalising the deployment of parochial clergy and by recruiting greater numbers into full-time ministry. Likewise, the WCC research project had a double brief, with the major emphasis upon theological education (cf. Mackie 1969).

By contrast, in 1969 Church Assembly had before it a single-focus proposal, backed up with a report which concentrated solely on NSM. Thus there was structurally no possibility of the discussion being dissipated amongst other issues.

We may conclude that the evidence suggests that structural factors were significant confounding variables affecting the fate of NSM. In the early period, the dispersed sources of authority within the Church of England invariably frustrated the development of any consensus. But by 1968/9, a number of structural factors had combined forces to assist the birth of NSM.

### iii) Cultural Factors

In exploring why NSM came to birth when it did, one is bound to pay attention to the fact that it happened in 'The Sixties' - a decade marked out by many commentators as a period of short but unusual



openness to radical change. Adrian Hastings, in a study analysing the interaction of political, cultural, theological and ecclesial developments of this decade, has remarked:

The social, intellectual, religious crisis of the 1960s was specific to no one particular religious tradition, not to any one part of the world. More widely still, it was not even a specifically religious crisis, it was rather one of the total culture, affecting many secular institutions in a way comparable to its effect on the churches. It was a crisis of the relevance (or capability for sheer survival) of long-standing patterns of thought and institution of all sorts in a time of intense, and rather self-conscious, modernization.

(Hastings 1986, pp. 580-1)

Elements in the 'crisis' of structure included such diverse developments as the transformation of the British Empire into the Commonwealth, the creation of eleven new universities, and the legalization of abortion (1968). Literature too played a decisive role in changing people's patterns of thought. For instance, both inside and outside church circles, the publication of such works as Teilhard's Phenomenon of Man (1959), the New English Bible (1961), and Robinson's Honest to God (1963), each provoked large-scale shifts in attitude to received notions of religion. Hastings considered that the 'quickly shifting, volatile, often flabby thought' of the period must not be allowed to conceal 'the major, deeper changes going on beneath, nor the capacity of the time to give rise and credence to new movements of originality and vigour, if often in contradiction with one another' (p. 582).

Amongst these changes were the beginnings of radical revision of the Church of England's liturgy, reorganization of the parochial system through the Pastoral Measure (1968), preparation for reunion with the Methodist Church, and a widespread recognition of the secular dimension of the Church's mission (typified in the success of Christian Aid). 'English religion of the mid-sixties', Hastings observed, 'was being pushed rather fast in quite a number of directions... proposals and pilot schemes were jostling each other on every side' (p. 544).

Given this context, it is not surprising that radical notions of worker-priests or part-time patterns of ordination training succeeded in being put into practice in the very decade when so many other structures of church and state were being remoulded. But Hastings also notes that by the end of the sixties, the earlier mood of excitement and elation began to give way to disillusion. It so happens that the year of the Welsby Report (1968) saw the Paris riots, the assassination of both Martin



Luther King and Robert Kennedy, and the extinction of the Dubcek experiment in Czechoslovakia. By the end of the decade 'it was becoming increasingly clear that the churches had set their faces against any real "radical change" of almost any sort' (p. 548).

Hastings was referring to the failure of the Anglican Methodist reunion scheme (1969) and the disintegration of such movements as Parish and People, the ~~the~~ Student Christian Movement and publications like New Christian. But his analysis could equally account for the emasculated version of NSM introduced through the Welsby Report. Sensing the likely opposition to any radical form of NSM, the report steered clear of controversy and offered the Church Assembly a scheme for 'auxiliary' ministers to help staff the parishes. As we have noted, the report on the more radical option of 'Ministers in Secular Employment' was never published. This failure to proceed with the development of NSM in a radical way seems all of a piece with the general 'loss of nerve' within the church at large regarding, for instance, denominational reunion.

We may conclude that it is unlikely to be a coincidence that the birth of NSM took place in 'the sixties' - the very decade which saw a most dramatic remoulding of the structures of many institutions. NSM may be seen as one amongst several developments within the Church of England's pattern of ministry as it responded to its cultural context.

#### iv) Theological Factors

Of the many theological developments taking place within the period under consideration, there appear to be three prominent theological factors which shifted in such a way as to ease the birth of NSM in the 1960s: changing ways of looking at ordination, at the laity, and at the eucharist.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the influence of tractarian theology was everywhere making its presence apparent. It is not at all surprising, therefore, to find that the chief spokesman against NSM in the councils of the Church was William Bright, an Oxford professor of deep anglo-catholic convictions. The tractarian position emphasised the sacred character of the ordained ministry, and tended to



express this by encouraging forms of dress, behaviour and ritual which visibly marked clergy as separated from secular society. To tractarians, the idea of ordaining someone whose means of livelihood kept him immersed in secular affairs appeared preposterous. The idea conflicted absolutely with their perception that ordination marked a man out as a sacred symbol separated from the secular world. Thus, in an age which saw the consistent growth of tractarian influence, there was little likelihood of the idea of NSM being widely acceptable.

By contrast, there was a shift of perception in the later periods. The shift was caused by increased realisation of the extent of the missionary task confronting the Church. Army chaplains in particular, through direct contact with soldiers in the trenches, were quickly made aware of the huge chasm of credibility and comprehension that by 1918 existed between the Church and the mass of the nation's population. It is scarcely a coincidence that the prophetic voice which in the 1930s spoke of the dangers of a 'clerical caste', and proclaimed the need for clergy themselves to be a 'bridge' between the Church and the world of work, was that of F.R. Barry, a former army chaplain. His insistence on viewing the ordained ministry in relation to incarnational theology contrasted sharply with the earlier tractarian position. If he won few converts at first, the national situation after the Second World War simply strengthened his case. Before long, experiments with worker-priests were being conducted in France by a church whose high doctrine of priesthood was never in dispute, and individual Anglican priests (like Michael Gedge, Jack Strong and John Rowe) were pioneering similar experiments in England.

While the action of such priests never gained a consensus approval in the Church of England, and while such vocations have never been deliberately elicited, the very existence of these worker-priests marks the extreme end of a newly developing polarity: one pole considering the primary function of the ordained ministry within the Church to be that of (pastoral) maintenance, the other that of mission.

In so far as the balance of theological opinion within the church was moving towards 'mission', the potential role for NSM was proportionately increased. Certainly by the 1950s there was sufficient willingness to consider this end of the polarity for a 'flexible canon' to be drafted on clerical employment. If no consensus regarding the



appropriateness of having priests in secular employment emerged during the 1960s, it is nevertheless evident that a significant minority of the church's leaders during that decade did share Mervyn Stockwood's vision of 'a new type of priesthood' not bound to the parochial system (cf. III.7.iii above). While the Welsby report's recommendations did not go as far as they would have wished, these people certainly supported the Welsby proposals as a first step in a desired direction. Serious consideration of ministry in secular employment, however, had to wait until the 1980s.

We may thus say that the shift in consensus towards acceptance of NSM is closely related to a shift in the theological understanding of ordained ministry. The earlier period tended to be world-denying and to emphasise the separation of the ordained ministry from secular affairs, while the later position tended to be world-affirming and to emphasise the identification of the ordained ministry with the rest of humankind through the natural intercourse afforded by employment.

But the dialectic between these two poles of opinion was continually confused by a second theological factor - a changing understanding of the laity. In the light of contemporary emphasis upon a 'theology of the laity', it is important to recognise that theological reflection about the laity is a relatively recent concern. The first book-length study on the subject only appeared in 1958 (Kraemer), while the first book ever to study the **history** of the laity appeared in 1963 (Neill). A clutch of significant studies followed in the next two years - for example, K. Bliss 1963, Robinson et al., 1963, Gibbs & Morton 1964, and the Vatican Council decree Apostolicam Actuositatem (Abbott 1965, pp. 489-521). The 'sixties' was a period of intense discussion about the mission of the laity and the relationship of the ordained clergy to it. As we have seen (III.3.iii above), this did not always work to the benefit of NSM, especially in the exposition offered by Wickham. Nevertheless, on the model propounded by others, it was seen to be extremely appropriate that some ordained clergy should be identified with the Christian laity through their daily work by being present alongside them in their mission to the world.

Those who espoused the latter view hoped to take advantage of the Welsby proposals (since some of the 'auxiliaries' would be in employment), while those who followed Wickham's line did not feel that the role of the laity was unduly weakened by the Welsby proposals (since the focus of



'auxiliary' ministry was to be in the parish). Thus, for distinctly different reasons, the Welsby proposals were given a smooth ride by both the opposing schools of thought! However, the lack of any widespread consensus view about the role of the clergy in relation to the mission of the laity in the world contributed greatly to the failure of the church to act decisively in establishing MSE.

A third theological factor facilitating the birth of NSM concerned a shift in the perception of the eucharist. Until the 1930s, the Sunday liturgy in most English parish churches centred around the services of Morning and Evening Prayer. By the late 1960s, however, the focus had shifted, and the norm for the majority of parishes had become the eucharist, under the general influence of what is commonly called 'the liturgical movement', which was happening in many churches in Britain and beyond. Some landmarks in the development of this movement within the Church of England may be charted, and their dates noted in relation to the history of NSM.

In his book Liturgy and Society (1935), Gabriel Hebert demonstrated how the eucharist may be seen as the centre of power from which the social order may be redeemed. Two years later he edited a series of essays entitled The Parish Communion (1937), laying out the evidence that in the early Church the central act of worship was the eucharist. There followed Gregory Dix's formative study The Shape of the Liturgy (1945), which over-night transformed liturgiology 'from a remote and academic branch of scholarship into a study whose immediate relevance became evident to multitudes of parish priests' (Welsby 1984, p. 68). The ideas behind such scholarship were subsequently harnessed by the 'Parish and People Movement', founded in 1949 to propagate liturgical renewal focussed in the eucharist<sup>1</sup>. During the 1950s creative initiatives happening in situations as diverse as a working-class parish in Leeds and a college chapel in Cambridge explored how eucharistic worship might become the focus of community life<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>cf. Peter J. Jagger, History of the Parish and People Movement, Leighton Buzzard, Faith Press (1978).

<sup>2</sup>cf. E. Southcott, The Parish Comes Alive, London, A.R. Mowbray & Co (1956), on house communions in Halton, Leeds; and J.A.T. Robinson, Liturgy Coming to Life, London, A.R. Mowbray & Co (1960), on the Clare College rite produced in 1954.



All of this produced repercussions which, by the late 1960s, had created an ambience which favoured the development of NSM in two ways. In the first place, the affairs of this world, including the processes of economic production, were recognised as being at the centre of the most sacred act of Christian worship. The elements of bread and wine were seen as the products of human labour, and dramatically presented at the altar in the (revived) offertory procession. The symbolism of this action tended to break down received ideas about the division between sacred and secular, and did so through the powerful medium of community ritual. In the light of such eucharistic theology, it was not difficult to argue the appropriateness of a situation where the hands which consecrated the sacred elements had also taken some part in the workaday world of commerce and industry in which the bread and wine had been produced. The theology undergirding the new pattern of eucharistic worship thus also confirmed the new pattern of non-stipendiary ministry.

The second way in which the liturgical movement favoured the development of NSM was a purely pragmatic one: increased frequency of celebrations of the sacrament required an increased number of celebrants. It was claimed that 'auxiliary' ministry could supply this need, and at no financial cost. As we have noted in earlier discussion, the need for increased availability of the sacrament was consistently and overtly claimed as a chief reason for developing NSM.

However, here again the new prominence offered to the ministry of the laity has been a confusing factor. It was argued, notably by evangelicals, that since the fundamental ministry of Christ was committed to the whole people (laos) of God, and not to a priestly caste separate from the laity, then there was no theological necessity for an ordained minister to preside at the eucharist. It followed (the argument ran) that although presbyteral presidency at the eucharist was clearly a matter of good order to be practised wherever possible, in priestless communities the sacrament might still be celebrated with a lay person presiding. This line of thought militates against the claim made in the previous paragraph, and, if rigourously pressed, would have rendered the development of NSM unnecessary.



But it was a line of thought which could never have gained consensus agreement in the Church of England, as the Faith and Order Advisory Group immediately recognised (General Synod 1975b). More hope of consensus lay in proposing the ordination to presbyteral orders of suitable local leaders in priestless communities. This was just the recommendation which the Group did make, and so laid the foundation of a theological justification of LNSM. Thus, the pressure for lay presidency has in the end affected NSM positively. Although this line of thought tended to threaten NSM with obsolescence, the process of pressing it on the church ironically led to the extension of NSM by the additional category of LNSM.

We may conclude that, over the period under consideration, shifts occurred in theological emphases which generally tended to make the idea of NSM more acceptable. In particular, the centrality of a 'theology of the laity' in any ecclesiology came to be increasingly recognised. With this came a recognition of the laity's vocation to mission in the world. Throughout this study we have noted that awareness of lost opportunity for mission was a major motivation for proposing NSM (cf. Thomas Arnold, Roland Allen, F.R. Barry, etc.). It was therefore inherently likely that as concern for the mission of the Church in the world came increasingly to the centre of the stage, so too NSM would gain increasing acceptance as one agency (amongst many) which might foster that mission.

Thus shifts of theological concern in the 1950s and 1960s created a milieu in which the idea of NSM was given a ready welcome, and so was the more easily able to come to birth.

## 2. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE GROWTH OF NSM SINCE 1970

The data laid out in chapter IV seems to suggest that after its birth in 1969, NSM failed to thrive in the way that its original progenitors had hoped and expected. The data also contained some signs which might indicate that the situation was improving during the 1980s. A number of factors which appear to have been imposing constraints on



the growth of NSM are described in chapter IV. It remains, however, to comment briefly why these factors operated with the power that they did. That is the task of the present section.

### i) Pressure to Conform

Mark Hodge's research (Hodge 1983a) has alerted us to the phenomenon of transfer from NSM to stipendiary parochial ministry. Critics of NSM constantly refer to this phenomenon as evidence of an inherent weakness in the conception of NSM. However, attention needs to be paid to the social context within which individual non-stipendiary ministers decide to transfer. It is possible that the discipline of social psychology may offer a model to explain what has been going on. For example, conformity theory, which was formulated after a series of controlled experiments, claims to have isolated factors which may compel an individual to modify their behaviour in the light of the expectations of others<sup>1</sup>. This theory appears to have considerable power to explain real life situations, as well as the results obtained under controlled conditions in a psychology laboratory. Given the dominance of the parochial system and of the clerical profession, it might therefore be argued that conformity theory offers a model for understanding what has been going on in the observable phenomenon of transfer from NSM to stipendiary ministry. More generally, it may offer a way of understanding why NSM as a whole has failed to thrive, despite the passage of time, the build up of experience, and the establishment of supportive structures. Further work needs to be done in this area.

In part, the failure to thrive must be related to the Church of England's failure to define sharp objectives or agree strategies for ministry, and then recruit workers accordingly. It therefore needs to be observed that the very nomenclature 'non-stipendiary ministry' defines this pattern of ministry by negative distinction - by what it is not. As a result, the phrase 'non-stipendiary' has about it a tone which is liable to elicit disapproval, since it suggests a deviation from an accepted norm. It is therefore implicit in its very definition that entrants to a ministry so entitled would be likely to be a minority of the church's ordinands. But quite apart from nomenclature, interview evidence cited above (IV.2)

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<sup>1</sup>A general review of conformity theory may be found in Aronson (1984), chap. 2.



makes it clear that many non-stipendiary ministers feel themselves under some sort of disapproval from the majority of the church's clergy, who happen to be stipendiary. This being so, it is quite inevitable that transfer to the dominant ministry should occur.

A further complicating factor has frequently been noted in chapter IV: the lack of any accepted understanding of the practice of MSE. As a result, it has been difficult for ministers in secular employment to know how to play their role, in the absence of adequate role-models. The search for suitable role-models at work has often been in vain. It has therefore been natural to resort to the most familiar model - that of the parochial clergy. This may explain why some ministers in secular employment have attempted to transpose the parochial model to the work situation - often with dire results if this has included a liturgical element. The power of the parochial ministry to be a role model at work may also account for the high reportage of pastoral roles such as counsellor (cf. Vaughan 1986a), and the relatively low incidence of the adoption of prophetic roles in relation to structural issues at work. Jill Robson has suggested that pressure to conform to the requirements of an employer severely limits the likelihood of a minister in secular employment being able to challenge 'the assumptions and the structures on which their job depends. It is... a courageous combustion engineer working in military aero-engines who even considers the claims of pacifism' (Robson 1986, p. 85).

For all of these reasons, it has been difficult for MSE to establish itself as an authentic pattern of ministry.

## ii) Discomfort of the Role

If, for structural reasons, there appear to be few pacifist aeronautical engineers, similar structural factors may account for the fact that only a minority of non-stipendiary ministers see themselves as having a work-focussed ministry. For ministers in secular employment find themselves non-normative in two situations: in the job situation (the domain of the laity) they are ordained; while in the parish situation they are ordained, but working in a 'lay' job (not in the parish). It is inherently <sup>likely</sup> that this 'double bind' will produce strains in the self-perception of individual ministers in secular employment, who may then seek to



reduce the tension by simplifying their life-style. Inevitably there will be a tendency to reduce discomfort by unifying work and ministry; this tendency will be reinforced by the pressure to conform to the dominant pattern of parochial ministry, and transfer to stipendiary ministry may well result. But even if transfer does not ensue, and the role in secular employment is maintained, a sense of discomfort will almost inevitably continue - as one practitioner vividly expressed it:

Being a priest at work is like having one foot on a punt and another on the landing stage: precarious and sometimes difficult to keep one's balance!  
(Vaughan 1986a, p. 48)

It is important to pay attention to the inherent discomfort of the position of a minister in secular employment, for it seems to be an element in explaining why MSE has failed to thrive. The theory of cognitive dissonance, first propounded by Leon Festinger, may offer a way of exploring response to such discomfort<sup>1</sup>. Cognitive dissonance has been described as 'a state of tension that occurs whenever an individual simultaneously holds two cognitions (ideas, attitude, beliefs, opinions) that are psychologically inconsistent... Because the occurrence of cognitive dissonance is unpleasant, people are motivated to reduce it' (Aronson 1984, p. 116). Further work needs to be done to explore the extent to which individual ministers in secular employment may experience cognitive dissonance arising from their non-normative roles as 'layman' on the parish staff, and 'clergyman' in the workplace. It is not impossible that they may seek to reduce the dissonance by playing down the 'work' aspect of ministry, and by emphasising the 'parish' aspects. This may explain why, when operating in the parish (for example in the contents of their sermons), ministers in secular employment do not usually appear to give any significant profile to their ministry at work. Thus teaching opportunities to foster understanding of Christian witness in the world of work (by both laity and minister in secular employment) are lost. It may be that the sheer discomfort of the role inhibits ministers in secular employment from acknowledging work-related ministry and from articulating its issues, even though they may resist pressure to transfer to stipendiary ministry.

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<sup>1</sup>Leon Festinger (1957), A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance. London, Tavistock. A general review of the theory may be found in Aronson (1984), chap. 4.



The discomfort of the role has also been emphasised by a significant point made from the different perspective of social anthropology. Douglas Davies has observed how the process of training for the ministry may be seen as a rite of passage, where the ordinand is first separated from his church (through the process of selection), then enters a state of liminality (through the process of training), and finally is reincorporated into the community, but in a new status (through ordination). But in the case of MSE, he points out, the third stage of the rite is not entirely clear, in so far as the ordained minister retains a 'lay' occupation. Davies therefore asks the question whether MSE 'constitutes an institutionalized liminality, vis-à-vis both the religious realm of the church and the secular realm of employment. The ordinand may become permanently marginal to both, which can be a most creative position if the strain can be maintained' (Davies 1983, p. 70. My emphasis.).

Davies suggests that one means by which the strain might be maintained would be the creation of a special order to which such clergy would be admitted: this could be a more supportive arrangement than licensing them to parishes. The wisdom of this suggestion would seem to be borne out by the accumulated experience of the French church, where priests working in secular jobs belong either to the Mission de France or to the Collectif des Prêtres-Ouvriers<sup>1</sup>. But whereas at several points in the history of NSM the idea of a special order was mooted, no official action has ever been taken to bring such an order into existence. While the growth of a 'professional association' (cf. IV.9.iv) may offer a means of mutual exchange between members, it can do nothing to offer distinctive status to ministers in secular employment.

Thus, it seems likely that the failure to establish an order something along the French lines may be a further factor accounting for the failure of MSE to thrive.

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<sup>1</sup>Priests of the Mission de France are not incardinated in the diocese where they may be working, but are under the authority of their own bishop at Pontigny. Diocesan priests who, with the permission of their bishops become worker-priests, each belong to an équipe within the Collectif des Prêtres-Ouvriers, which offers mutual support. Through these structures, the priests are both integrated into the national pattern of episcopal oversight, and yet are free from local or diocesan domination. (cf. Vaughan 1986b, pp. 181-3).



### iii) Professional Acceptance

There are, however, some signs that acceptance of NSM by the clerical profession may have grown during the 1980s. For instance, in the discussion about LNSM, a number of comments seemed to want to distance NSM from LNSM; there was some fear that LNSM might diminish the status of NSM; LNSM was seen as a potential threat to NSM in much the same way that (at an earlier stage) NSM had seemed a threat to the professional stipendiary ministry. These kinds of comments indicate a shift in attitude: concern to protect the clerical profession seems to be focussing upon anxiety about LNSM, and NSM is seen as a feature to be protected. To this extent, NSM seems to have gained professional acceptance, resulting in the interests of non-stipendiary ministers being protected by the clerical profession through the synodical structures.

Why should this shift have taken place? The answer seems to lie in the fact that LNSM is indeed a radical challenge to the clerical profession: for instance, its entrance qualifications are different (with local selection), training standards are lower (with no requirement to pass GME), and the revolutionary hope of recruiting working-class people to LNSM has been clearly articulated. By contrast, the entrance qualifications and training standards for NSM have remained comparable with those for professional stipendiary ministry for a decade and a half, and (as Hodge has shown) the majority of recruits to NSM have been middle-class professional people. Therefore, in so far as the dynamics of a profession continue to operate, they will tend to discriminate strongly against LNSM, but to have less cause to discriminate against NSM.

In summary, there are recent signs that in some respects NSM has become absorbed into the clerical profession. The reproach of being 'second class' is now more easily thrown at local non-stipendiary ministers, with consequent relief of opprobrium for clergy in NSM.



### 3. PROSPECT FOR NSM

At each turn of the history recounted in this thesis, it has become clear that development of NSM has been constrained by the vested interest of the professional stipendiary clergy, and, more particularly, by the requirements of the parochial system. It seems probable, therefore, that so long as the parochial system survives further developments of NSM will continue to reflect the needs of the parochial system. For example, if there is an up-turn in the number of recruits to stipendiary ministry, the church at large may well pay less attention to NSM, because its immediate usefulness in staffing parishes will be less necessary. If, on the other hand, total numbers of stipendiary clergy continue to drop, or the church's finances are insufficient to pay all the current stipendiary ministers, then utilization of non-stipendiary ministers may come to be regarded as an expedient fall-back position.

In neither case does it appear likely that NSM will be fostered as a matter of **theological principle**. For this history has consistently demonstrated that the decision making processes of the Church of England are not governed by theological principles so much as by pragmatics. Whether tacit or overt, the determining issue in discussion of ministry is invariably, 'how far will this proposal help to maintain the parochial system?'.

Finally, one may ask what place MSE may have within the future ministry of the Church of England. It seems likely that its future will be closely bound up with parish-focussed NSM, since in the first place it grew as an unintended consequence of the introduction of APM regulations. Much will depend upon how far the recent Bishops' Regulations (1987) succeed in offering a structure which frees MSE from pressure to conform to the dominant pattern of parochial ministry. Much may also depend upon the extent to which equipping the laity for mission in the world (as distinct from ministry in the church) becomes a primary objective of the future church. If this were to happen, then ministers in secular employment could have a critical role as trainers with direct experience of the task, and as exemplars themselves.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Annual Ordinations of Male Deacons and Percentage  
Entering NSM, 1971-86

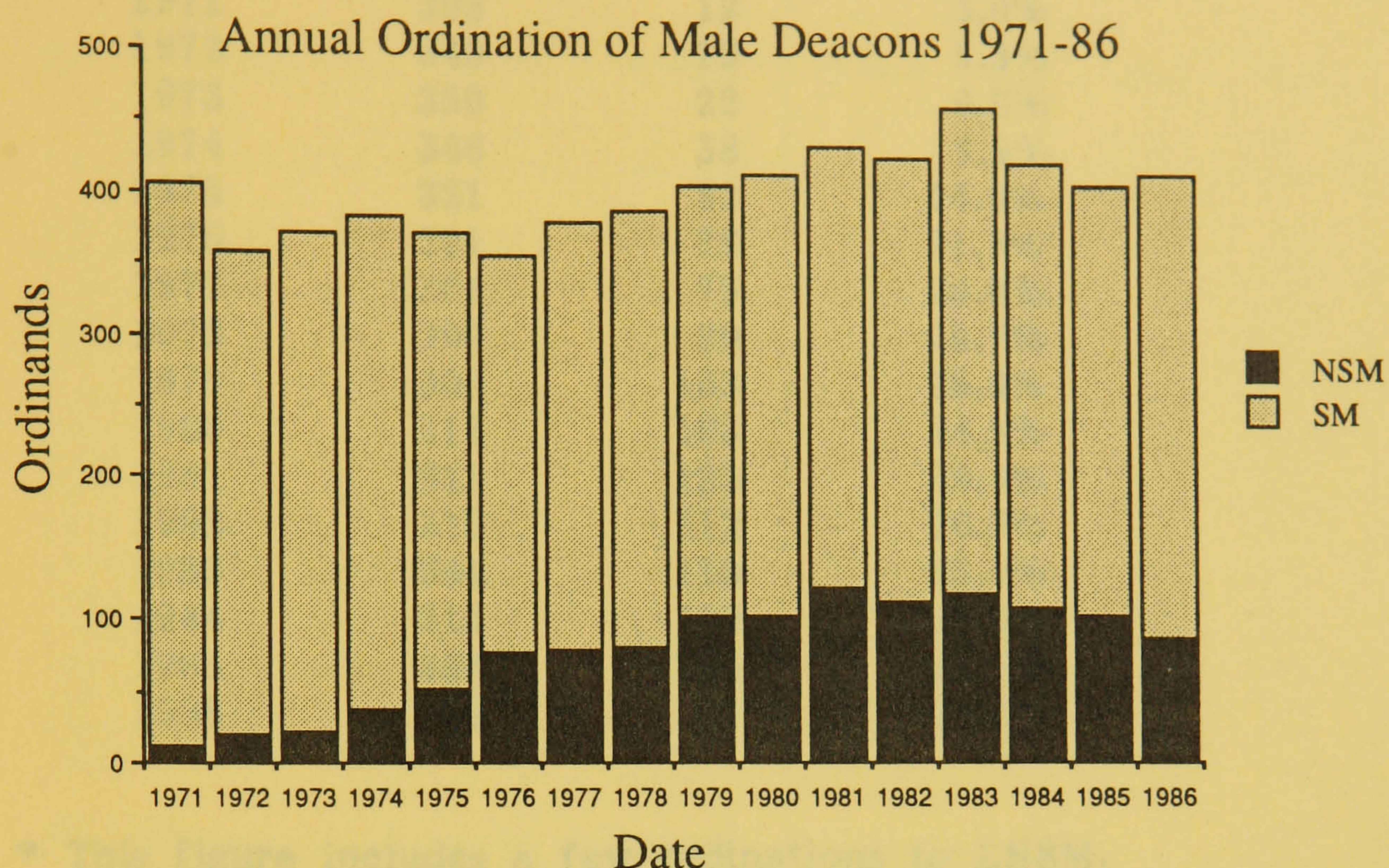
Appendix 2: Recommended and Not-Recommended Candidates for  
Stipendiary and Non-Stipendiary Ministry Compared

Appendix 3: Courses Recognised by ACCM

Appendix 4: Age and Higher Education of NSM and LNSM  
Recommended Candidates, 1983-6



# APPENDIX 1



Discussion: (i) NSM grew slowly at first, when training facilities were not yet conveniently spread over the whole country (cf. Appendix 3).

(ii) By 1974 almost 10% of all ordination were to NSM. By 1976 the proportion had risen to over 20%. This proportion has been maintained or exceeded ever since.

(iii) A peak was reached in 1981, perhaps representing the fact that these ordinands began their training in 1978 - the first year in which the training network was available to every diocese, bar Carlisle (cf. Appendix 3). The figure for 1981 may thus be abnormally swollen by the number of ordinands who had been waiting for training to start in their region.

(iv) During the seven year period 1979-85 NSM ordinations held to a plateau of over 100 (annual mean: 110). But in 1986 the figure dropped to the level of 1978.

(v) In the decade 1977-86 almost one in four of all ordinations were to NSM - 24.5%.

Note: The precise statistics upon which this histogram are based may be found on the next page.



ANNUAL ORDINATIONS OF MALE DEACONS  
SHOWING PERCENTAGE ENTERING NSM

<u>Year</u>	<u>SM</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>NSM</u> <sup>2</sup>	<u>NSM % of Total</u>
1971	393	12	3.0%
1972	340	19	5.3%
1973	350	22	6.0%
1974	346	38	9.9%
1975	321	52	14.0%
1976	281	76	21.3%
1977	301	79	20.8%
1978	307	80	20.7%
1979	303	103	25.4%
1980	311	103	24.9%
1981	311	123	28.3%
1982	313	112	26.3%
1983	341	119	25.9%
1984	313	109	25.8%
1985	304	102	25.1%
1986	326	87*	21.1%

\* This figure includes a few ordinations to LNSM.

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<sup>1</sup>Figures in this column are taken from the Annual Statistics published by ACCM.

<sup>2</sup>Figures in this column represent only those candidates entering NSM who attended Bishops' Selection Conferences. Those entering LNSM are excluded. Hodge (1983a, p. 7) reckons that in the period 1971-81 a further 98 men were ordained to NSM who had not attended Bishops' Selection Conferences; but he gives no indication of their years of ordination. The numbers of men actually ordained to NSM are thus higher than the figures given in this column.



## APPENDIX 2

Recommended and Not-Recommended Candidates  
for Stipendiary and Non-Stipendiary Ministry Compared<sup>1</sup>

Stipendiary Candidates					Non-Stipendiary Candidates			
Year	Total	Rec	N/R	% N/R	% N/R	N/R	Rec	Total
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
1970	613	386	227	37.0%	37.0%	10	17	27
1971	547	366	181	33.1%	47.5%	28	31	59
1972	509	334	175	34.4%	36.4%	43	75	118
1973	479	277	202	42.2%	49.6%	63	64	127
1974	508	340	168	33.1%	46.6%	61	70	131
1975	536	348	188	35.1%	39.6%	59	90	149
1976	417	254	163	39.1%	42.4%	75	102	177
1977	488	349	139	28.5%	41.1%	76	109	185
1978	525	376	149	28.4%	37.3%	75	126	201
1979	567	375	192	33.9%	39.5%	79	121	200
1980	605	404	201	33.2%	39.8%	80	121	201
1981	566	361	205	36.2%	38.8%	73	115	188
1982	541	350	191	35.3%	42.0%	79	109	188
1983	537	303	234	43.6%	50.6%	82	80	162
1984	506	306	200	39.5%	50.3%	87	86	173
1985	514	347	167	32.5%	58.6%	92	63	157
1986	560	364	196	35.0%	51.8%	84	78	162
1970/86	9018		3178	35.2%	44.0%	1146		2605
					L N S M			
1982					-	-	1	1
1983					30.0%	3	7	10
1984					33.3%	3	6	9
1985					4.8%	1	20	21
1986					12.5%	1	7	8
1982/86					16.3%	8		49

**Note:** Columns b and g summate numbers of 'recommended' and 'conditionally recommended' candidates. Columns c and f summate numbers of 'not recommended', 'not yet recommended' and 'no decision' candidates. Columns a and h are 'total attendances'.

**Discussion:** (i) Numbers in column c never exceed those in column b; whereas those in column f exceed those in column g three times (1984, 1985, and 1986).

(ii) Apart from the first year (1970), percentages in column e are consistently higher than those in column d.

(iii) When the total of column c is expressed as a % of the total of column a and the total of column f is expressed as a % of the total of column h, then it can be shown that 35.2% of SM and 44% of NSM candidates were not recommended over the period 1970-86.

(iv) It may thus be said that a candidate seeking selection for NSM is 9% more likely to be not recommended than a candidate for SM.

<sup>1</sup>Source: Derived from the annual statistics submitted to ACCM Council.



(v) The data relating to LNSM is too limited to draw secure conclusions in any detail. But a general observation may be made: the 'not recommended' rate appears to be substantially lower than for SM or NSM.

Year of First Intake	Name of Course	Locations, etc., of Courses	Number of Candidates
1970	Northern Ordination Course	Chester, Durham, Leeds, Manchester, Southampton	115
1971	Northern Ordination Course	Durham, Exeter, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Warwick, Windsor, Winchester, York	141
1972	West Midlands Ministerial Training Course	Birmingham, Coventry, Lichfield, Worcester	30
1973	Oxford Theology NSM Course	Oxford	42
1974	Ox. NSM NSM Course	Chelmsford, London, St Albans	32
1975	East Midlands Ministry Training Course	Derby, Lincoln, Nottingham, Leicester	31
1976	Southern Theology Ministerial Training Scheme	Aldershot, Bath, Birmingham, Exeter, Worcester, Winchester	112
1977	Bristol & Gloucester School for Ministry	Bristol, Gloucester	40
1978	North-East Ordination Course	Durham, Newcastle, Ripon, York	22
1979	St Albans Theology Ministerial Training Scheme	London, Oxford, St Albans	22
1980	Canterbury School of Ministry	Canterbury, Rochester	25
1981	East Angles Ministerial Course	Norwich, Ipswich, St Edmundsbury & Bury	22
1982	Exeter/Theology NSM Scheme	Exeter, Truro	25
1983	Carlisle Theology Training Institute	Carlisle	25

H.A. number of men ordained into NSM. Figures supplied by Rev. John Rogers  
in a private communication.



APPENDIX 3Courses Recognised by ACCM

Date of first intake	Name of Course	Dioceses principally served	Number ordained 1972-83 <sup>1</sup>
1960	Southwark Ordination Course	Chelmsford, Guildford London, Rochester, Southwark	110
1970	Northern Ordination Course <sup>2</sup>	Blackburn, Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield / Bradford, Ripon, Wakefield, York <sup>3</sup>	102
1971	West Midlands Ministerial Training Course	Birmingham, Coventry Lichfield, Worcester	90
1972	Oxford Diocesan NSM Course	Oxford	62
	Oak Hill NSM Course	Chelmsford, London St Albans	52
1973	East Midlands Ministry Training Course <sup>4</sup>	Derby, Lincoln, Southwell / Leicester <sup>5</sup>	31
1974	Southern Dioceses Ministerial Training Scheme	Bath & Wells, Portsmouth <sup>6</sup> , Salisbury Winchester, Chichester <sup>7</sup>	112
1975	Bristol & Gloucester School for Ministry <sup>8</sup>	Bristol, Gloucester Hereford	23
1976	North-East Ordination Course	Durham, Newcastle, Ripon, York	22
	St Alban's Diocese Ministerial Training Scheme	London, Oxford St Alban's	38
1977	Canterbury School of Ministry	Canterbury, Rochester	16
	East Anglian Ministerial Course	Ely, Norwich, St Edmundsbury & Ipswich	31
1978	Exeter/Truro NSM Scheme	Exeter <sup>9</sup> , Truro	13
1979	Carlisle Diocese Training Institute	Carlisle	3

<sup>1</sup>i.e. number of men ordained into NSM. Figures supplied by Dr. Mark Hodge in a private communication.



APPENDIX 4

- <sup>2</sup>Formerly North-West Ordination Course.
- <sup>3</sup>The last four dioceses from 1973.
- <sup>4</sup>Formerly East Midlands Joint Ordination Training Scheme.
- <sup>5</sup>Leicester from 1982.
- <sup>6</sup>From 1976.
- <sup>7</sup>From 1978.
- <sup>8</sup>Since 1981, two separate Courses.
- <sup>9</sup>Exeter shared in the Southern Dioceses Scheme, 1975-8.

20-24	22	15.7%	20	1
25-29	27	17.4%	25	2
30-34	31	17.1%	26	5
35-39	33	17.7%	28.2%	5
40-44	34	18.0%	31.4%	13
45-49	34	18.7%	31.7%	14
50-54	17	9.3%	11.8%	2
55+	1	0.3%		
Total	138			37

Higher Education of Religious Order Candidates  
in the Years 1982-84

	N S M		L N S M	
qualification	no.	% of tot	% of tot	no.
univ. degree	140	31.0%	31.6%	8
professional qualif.	123	27.2%	31.8%	14
teaching or other beyond A level				
no higher education	57	24.0%	34.5%	24
Total	320			34

- (i) Candidates for NSM are fairly evenly distributed through the age range 33-39; but candidates for LNSM are clustered in the age range 36-41.
- (ii) Candidates ages 30 and over accounted for 31.8% for NSM, vs 31.7% for LNSM.
- (iii) 34.5% of the candidates for LNSM had no higher education, compared to 24.0% of candidates for NSM.

However, figures for both tables are derived from questionnaire material submitted annually to ACCM Council.



APPENDIX 4<sup>1</sup>Age of Recommended Candidates  
in the Years 1983-86

age	N S M		L N S M	
	no:	% of tot	% of tot	no:
30-34	32	10.7%	2.4%	1
35-39	52	17.4%	7.3%	3
40-44	51	17.1%	7.4%	3
45-49	53	17.7%	12.2%	5
50-54	48	16.0%	24.4%	10
55-59	44	14.7%	31.7%	13
60-64	17	5.7%	14.6%	6
65+	1	0.3%	-	-
Total	<u>299</u>			<u>41</u>

Higher Education of Recommended Candidates  
in the Years 1983-86

qualification	N S M		L N S M	
	no:	% of tot	% of tot	no:
univ. degree	149	41.2%	13.6%	6
professional qualif- ication or other beyond A level	126	34.8%	31.8%	14
no higher education	87	24.0%	54.5%	24
Total	<u>362</u>			<u>44</u>

Discussion: (i) Candidates for NSM are fairly evenly distributed through the age range 35-59; but candidates for LNSM are bunched in the age range 50-64.

(ii) Candidates aged 50 and over accounted for 36.8% for NSM, but 70.7% for LNSM.

(iii) 54.5% of the candidates for LNSM had no higher education, compared to 24.0% of candidates for NSM.

<sup>1</sup>Source: Figures for both tables are derived from unpublished statistics submitted annually to ACCM Council.



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