Chapter 1
The Anglican concept of Churchmanship

Prologue

A distinguished journalist, John Whale, who died in June 2008, was wont to describe Anglicanism as "the most grown up expression of Christianity". He knew what he was talking about. What led him to that flattering conclusion was undoubtedly his view from the editorial chair of the *Church Times*. This gave him a unique insight into the extraordinary breadth, height, depth and maturity of Anglican diversity, comprehensiveness and mutual tolerance, unparalleled in any other branch of the Christian Church.

That precious, easygoing tolerance, that civilised agreement to differ on so many vital issues, which so impressed Whale (himself born into a contrasting form of ecclesiastical anarchy, his father's Congregationalism), has worn extremely thin of late, transforming the Church of England and the Anglican Communion worldwide from the appearance of a (more or less) civilised ecclesiastical debating society, into something more like a theatre of war, leading many staunch Anglicans to, or even over, the brink of despair. That, at any rate, is one way of looking at our present situation.

It is not, however, the view taken in this book. Its author claims to be as staunch an Anglican as any, though remaining far from uncritical. Born, baptised, confirmed and brought up in the C. of E., serving in its regular ordained parochial ministry for upwards of sixty years and firmly expecting to end his days in its communion and fellowship, he offers a broader, longer term and in some ways a more hopeful, positive and optimistic perspective, though only too aware of its limitations.

As he sees it, far and away the *most distinctive* feature of present day Anglicanism is what until very recently was universally

known as CHURCHMANSHIP. If you come to think about it, this word, concept or thing is quite extraordinarily difficult accurately, succinctly and precisely to define – and even harder to replace with something better! In recent years journalists and others have sought to avoid ambiguities and complexities associated with the word "churchmanship", by substituting for it the word "tradition" – as when we often read nowadays of "the evangelical, or catholic, or liberal tradition". This is singularly unsatisfactory. Tradition and churchmanship are not the same thing. This becomes obvious when confronted with such nonsense as "the traditionalist tradition". So, whether we like it or not, we are stuck with churchmanship and must make the best sense of it we can.

Therefore, unappealing as (in cold blood) it may sound, this book consists very largely of an in depth, no holds barred exploration of this vital, unavoidable and irreplaceable, uniquely and distinctively Anglican concept or thing, *and* of the four separate and distinct manifestations into which it has very naturally fallen in the course of Anglican history. These coincide with the four dimensions and spatial directions within which we all live, move and have our being, viz. up, down, backwards and forwards, and sideways, or North, South, East and West. This is a central contention of this book, which stands or falls by it. Diagramatically it can best be expressed, very simply, by a perfect cross within a circle; the main lines of the cross, longitude and latitude, intersecting at the central point, the Cross. (Those who desire a scriptural warrant for everything are referred to Revelation chapter 21, verses 13 and 16).

The author stubbornly believes that this proposed exploration will prove surprisingly rewarding. We should eventually arrive, though some of the journey will inevitably prove hard, rough and tough, at a true, clear and reasonably succinct and precise definition of that notoriously slippery and elusive concept, word and thing. The route to that goal will lead us through a detailed examination, in four successive chapters following this one, of each in turn of the four basic dimensions into which churchmanship will be seen to fall.

This will be followed by a positive and constructive analysis of the whole thing, showing how each of the four dimensions is essential to the fullness of Christian faith and practice, how not just one or two in isolation but *all four*, each in its basic essentials, are *interdependent*, *interlocking*, and *necessary* to the *fullness* of catholic/universal Christian Truth, Faith and Practice.

For that reason I have ventured to dub not only Chapter 6, but the whole attempt, *Anglican Eirenicon*. Writing this Prologue in the

wake of Lambeth 2008 and the GAFCON Conference of conservative evangelicals which preceded and challenged Lambeth, it may seem foolhardy to be in the least optimistic about Anglican unity worldwide. Nevertheless, taking a long term view – as this author does throughout – and bearing in mind the prospects of an agreed Anglican Covenant, it may yet prove justified. Thus Chapters 7, 8, and 9 would appear not too far-fetched in their hopes of an enduring, worldwide unity. In any case, may God's will be done. That, in the long run, is all that matters.

This Prologue, written by the author after the rest of the book, now concludes, leaving him (boldly assuming the first person singular in place of the old fashioned periphrasis) to take up the theme in his own somewhat rambling style. Be patient with him.

Ecclesiometry and Churchmanship

A few years ago, purely for my own amusement, I coined a new word "ecclesiometry", with its cognates, "ecclesiometer" and "ecclesiometrist". As far as I know, they have yet to be recognised by any reputable dictionary. But I live in hope. In any case they will be put to serious use in this book; so that should do the trick!

Ecclesiometry, let me explain, is the art, technique or even (as some would maintain) the science of measuring, assessing and gauging (not churches but) what we Anglicans usually call CHURCHMANSHIP. An ecclesiometer is the instrument, or device, used in order to achieve this. As will emerge in the course of this chapter (towards the end) I myself designed an elementary one, but only on paper. I never got so far as to patent it, much less put it on the market as the Fitch ecclesiometer. An ecclesiometrist is, of course, a person trained and skilled in its use.

Amateur, untrained and unqualified ecclesiometrists abound; in fact one could almost go so far as to say, without exaggeration, that every Anglican, whether a regular churchgoer or not, considers him/herself an ecclesiometrist (though, *as yet*, he or she is pardonably ignorant of that word). An "old chestnut" will suffice to explain what I mean. A stranger to the parish: "How d'you like your new parson?" Parishioner: "Well, 'e do antick; but us likes our parson so when 'e antick, we antick along of 'e." From this it was to be deduced that the new parson was decidedly "High Church", but that all this new ceremonial ("anticking") was going down well in the parish. There was a different reaction in another country church. "I hear your new Vicar's a fine preacher." Parishioner, who happens to be employed as the church cleaner. "Popular preacher, indeed. I've no patience with

'im. We never 'ad all this mud in church afore 'e come." Obviously a "Low Church" hot gospeller – an evangelical.[1]

Amateur ecclesiometry like that was a bit of harmless fun in those unsophisticated days. We all indulged in it. It was a staple of churchy gossip, almost always confined to the vertical axis, "High" and "Low" with "Central" occasionally inbetween. I acquired the habit as a schoolboy and it stuck with me. It was based on a system of easily recognisable "indicators", mostly regarded as infallible. One was the Clerical Collar Test; the height, or width, of the clerical collar was in *inverse* ratio to the height or depth of the wearer's churchmanship. Thus a Rock Bottomer (extreme Low Church man) wore such a high collar that it usually concealed his chin, or lack of one. Whereas something resembling a piece of string round a priest's neck indicated a Spike (colloquial for extreme High Churchman). Another sure "indicator" was facial hair or its absence. Almost any kind of moustache, especially aggressive military-style whiskers, revealed a Low Churchman. Spikes were clean shaven unless they were exceptionally eccentric and sported beards (like Bishop Gore). But beards were a problem; hard to classify. Ultra spikes tended to wear funny hats in church, called birettas. If I remember rightly, these had a black pom-pom in the middle (or have I dreamed that?). And instead of a surplice they wore a short white garment trimmed with lace, called a cotta. This, like the biretta, they copied from Roman Catholic priests.

Amateur ecclesiometry was not focused only on the clergy, of course. Its other prong was, and is, based on the evidence of a church building. For example, the "Candle Test". Six tall candles on the "high altar", standing not directly on the altar itself but on a kind of shelf called a gradine with a locked "tabernacle" in the centre in which (or in an "aumbry" beside the altar) reposed consecrated bread and wine – the sacramental Body and Blood of Christ. A flickering sanctuary lamp would hang above or in front of it to indicate its presence to the initiated devout. There might also be a prominent Rood or life size Crucifix above the chancel arch with carved figures of Our Lady and St. John on either side and perhaps Stations of the Cross on the walls of nave for use in Lent, and statues of saints by side altars. Finally, a perceptible whiff of stale incense. All these infallibly signified an "advanced" Anglo-Catholic church.

The opposite extreme would be equally unmistakable: a bare

1. *Punch* 24 Jan. 1924. Classic George Belcher cartoon, reproduced in *The Reverend Mr. Punch* (Mowbray 1956).

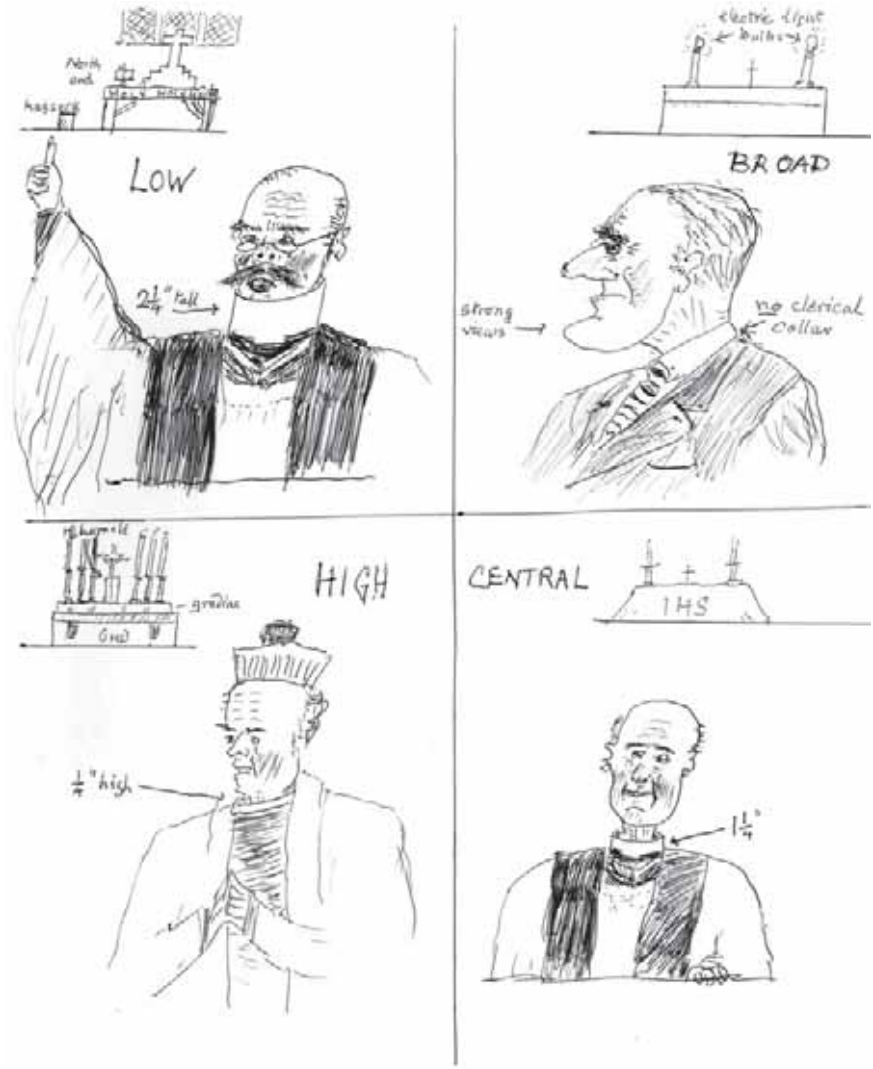


Fig. 1. Amateur (Juvenile) Ecclesiometry c. 1935

wooden table under the east window, with nothing more than an aggressively plain brass or wooden cross (not crucifix) in the middle and a prominent kneeler at the north end indicating the required position of the officiating minister. Not a ('popish') candle to be seen, and a pervading smell, not of incense, but of furniture polish!

Most churches were like neither of these; a dignified altar with a decent "frontal" and just two candles and perhaps a small crucifix by the pulpit, indicating middle of the road Anglican – "central" churchmanship, no extremes (see Fig.1) Probably, in days gone by, an aroma of decaying hassocks – the odour of sanctity?

These twin ecclesiometrical prongs seemed originally to focus solely on the vertical polarity of Anglicanism – High and Low with the main body of Central in between.

Gradually another axis came under review, the horizontal. Here we unavoidably come up against problems of nomenclature, ideological labels. We have deliberately avoided them until now. Instead of the old, historic and generally accepted Highs and Lows, the use of which goes back to the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, though with subtle alterations of meaning, we have to reckon with what are, in effect, battle cries, ideological slogans used to differentiate and identify rival parties in the established Church. Chief among them are "Evangelical", "Tractarian", and "Catholic" or "Anglo-Catholic" on the vertical axis, and "Latitudinarian", "Broad Church", "modernist", "liberal", "Conservative" and "Traditionalist" on the horizontal axis. It is worth pausing to note that whereas on the old vertical axis degrees of height and depth balanced each other on either side of Centre, although the term "Broad Church" was employed with varying shades of meaning it was never in the same way balanced by shades of Narrowness or Breadth. Possibly this was because it, "Narrow", was considered, mistakenly, to be too derogatory. More will be written about this towards the end of this chapter. Suffice it to say here that, for purposes of strict and impartial ecclesiometry the High/Low, Broad/Narrow system of classification has much in its favour – it is less colourfully partisan, more neutral and impersonal. At least I think so.

It is also worth a passing mention that with the passage of time, the increasingly diverse character of the National Church became more and more noticeable. With it, the prevalence of the amateur, slapdash ecclesiometry on which we have previously commented came to be increasingly reflected in English literature and the media, notably in the Victorian novels of (among others) Thackeray, George Eliot, Trollope and Samuel Butler. Also, more recently in those of

E.F. Benson, Barbara Pym, Susan Howatch and Joanna Trollope; in the light verse of John Betjeman *par excellence* and observant wits and satirists ranging from Osbert Lancaster to S.J. Forrest and Eric Mascall. The C. of E. has always been able to see the funny side of itself. Most, if not all, of this was good-natured and affectionate. Those days seem to have passed beyond recall.

The tribe of Religious Affairs Journalists: their function

These days the subject of and practice of ecclesiometry (despite pardonable ignorance of the term) is kept very much alive and in the eye of an increasingly bemused public by the select tribe of Religious Affairs Correspondents of what used to be, until recently, the respectable broadsheets. A year or two ago the most notable of this tribe were Ruth Gledhill of *The Times*, Jonathan Petre of *The Daily Telegraph* and Stephen Bates of *The Guardian*. At the time of writing, Gledhill is still in place, but Petre has been replaced by Martin Beckford and Bates by Riazat Butt. To this list should be added Robert Pigott of the BBC. Their business is to keep the public informed of any significant event or developments in, what in today's rabidly secular culture, is commonly perceived as the outdated sphere of "religion", and of their likely implications for and impact on the wider world we inhabit.

Any journalist worthy of his trade, whether in the Press, radio or television, puts Truth first. He sees his job as intelligent, fair, honest, truthful reporting *plus* clear, objective interpretation and, if need be, comment, in language his readers/listeners/viewers can readily understand. That is the ideal. It can seem an impossibly high one. Still, it remains the ideal and applies as much to the Religious Correspondent as to any other.

To do his job properly in the light of this ideal in the sceptical zeitgeist prevailing today, the Religious Correspondent must be thoroughly conversant not only, but chiefly, with the three great, historically related monotheistic "Abrahamic" faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam (to put them in the order of their historic emergence), each in the variant forms in which they are found today, and of the causes underlying these varieties. He/she must also have a working knowledge (at the least) of the *outlines* of the ancient Oriental religions, Buddhism, Hinduism and the Sikh religion, *their* varieties and the history of each in relation to the others and to world history. On top of all this he/she must be thoroughly *au fait* and *au courant* with all the main Christian denominations – Catholic, Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox – their history, their ramifying

organisations, memberships, leading authorities and personalities, liturgies, doctrines and ethical teachings and standards, missionary and evangelistic outreach, ecumenical relationships, and, especially, current controversies, schisms and points at issue between and within them. It goes almost without saying that a more than superficial familiarity with the Bible and the work of international scholarship upon it, as well as some acquaintance with the Qu'ran, is indispensable. This list is not exhaustive. In short, the Religious Correspondent, poor dear, must be all but omniscient. Since, even today, omniscience is still a little beyond human reach, what is more important is mature wisdom, sound judgment and a cross-bench mind. As good a role model as any for the Religious Correspondent would be the late Gerald Priestland of the BBC; and he was well aware of *his* limitations.

My purpose in that long, drawn-out digression was to put the ecclesiometrical demands which inevitably impinge on this select tribe of journalists into some sort of perspective. When it falls to their lot to single out some protagonist in a church controversy or debate, perhaps to report or summarise his arguments, it is natural enough to try to identify his standpoint further by attaching a ready made label to his name – "evangelical", "liberal", "conservative", "traditionalist", "charismatic" or whatever, only to incur a bitter complaint that the label doesn't fit, is inappropriate. No such label is ever completely adequate in particular cases. Let us be charitable and credit these hardworking, and mostly conscientious journalists with doing their best in an exceptionally difficult and demanding job. They are accountable, as we all are, to a just and merciful God whose interests are not confined to the "religious" and who has been this way himself in the person of his "Son", but in *their* case also, to the piercing scrutiny of Andrew Brown's weekly column on the media page of the *Church Times*. It always makes good reading. Finally, all Religious Correspondents inevitably have their own, individual standpoints and preconceptions. Some, e.g. Stephen Bates, make no secret of theirs. He is a liberal Roman Catholic with a fiercely Anglican evangelical wife! Ruth Gledhill's father is an Anglican bishop.

Author's Confession

This seems a good point for me to make a confession. In the sixty years that have so far elapsed since I was ordained deacon at Trinity in 1947, I have never once signed up to any churchmanship stance, any partisan point of view. There have been many occasions, such as

when I have been offered a new clerical job, or just moved to a new parish, when people have sought to pin a particular label on me and have been baffled when I have replied, "Oh, I'm just C. of E. That's good enough for me." I must also admit that I enjoy the consequent puzzled expression on their faces. What is the explanation? Indolence? Cowardice? Smug self-satisfaction on my part? I *am* (absurdly) a bit conceited and more than a little cowardly, but I don't think either is the explanation. It is simply that I am blessed, or cursed, with an incorrigibly cross-bench mind, I can't help seeing *both* sides of *almost* every question. This has become "more so" as I have grown older. It is not so much a virtue as a habit. And it can make life difficult at times.

There is, however, a little more to it than that. *What* that is must wait until later in this chapter.

A Problem: Defining Churchmanship

It may not have escaped your notice that, up to this point, although I have used the word "churchmanship" many times, I have assumed that its meaning is clear and clearly understood and have made no attempt to define it, still less to examine and unpack the concept underlying the word. The time has now come to tackle what is, once you come to think about it, quite an elusive quest. In fact the argument of this book stands or falls by the result. Have I got it right?

So *what, precisely* and *exactly, is* churchmanship? Most people, when they use the word, as we have been doing, take it for granted that they know what they are talking about. But do we? Immediately you try to find words to express and define it, you become aware of the difficulty. It is, in fact, slippery and elusive in both word and concept.

Let us begin by turning to the word experts, the lexicographers, and their most authoritative production, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (second edition 1989).[2] It gives the primary meaning as "the position, quality or action of a churchman". This is a bit disappointing, but it gives us a start. "Position", yes, as on a chessboard, but "quality" or "action" emphatically no: they seem irrelevant to its real meaning.

2. The usual citations from early known instances of the use of the word are interesting, though irrelevant to its meaning today. The earliest is Somers *Tracts* c.1680 .265: "It is well for the Church that she needs not apprehend any Retrospect into her Behaviour since as Times go with Churchmanship. . . ." The second earliest is more illuminating: *The Growth of Deism* 1696 p. 19: "your Churchmanship will not appear by any Mark so well as by the Hatred you bear to all Dissenters." (There will be further recourse to OED when we come to deal with the BROAD CHURCH.)

Churchmanship's New Testament origins and Church Unity, ideal and actual (past and present)

With "positioning" in mind, let us look more closely at the concept of "churchmanship", the thing itself. Obviously the *word* is not there but the thing it represents most certainly *is*. Christians have been "positioning" themselves, at variance with one another, forming parties, pressure groups, incipient sects, heresies and schisms around plausible standpoints, "on crucial matters of principle", generally coalescing round the name and person of some leader/ spokesman, right from the earliest days. Human nature doesn't change – much.

The Early Church

Consequently, the history of Christianity, that is to say the history of the Christian *Church* (community, brotherhood, family, the "mystical Body of Christ") from its very beginning until now is littered with the stories of disagreements, controversies, splits, heresies and schisms, damaging, threatening, breaking and destroying Christian Unity, which has to be rebuilt slowly and painfully. Heresy, now an unfashionable word, is essentially a *distortion* of *truth*, a kind of *half* truth posing as the *whole* truth. That is why it was, and is, so dangerous to Christian solidarity.

In the first five Christian centuries some such heresies are known by the name of the original breakaway leader (or "heresiarch" as he came to be called). Such were the Marcionites, Sabellians, Montanists, Arians, Nestorians and Pelagians. Others are named after their original distortion of Christian Faith/Truth, e.g. Gnostics, Docetists, Monophysites – all from Greek words (e.g. Gnosis = knowledge, distorted).

The New Testament

These later splits and distortions mostly have their origin in New Testament times, in the unique revelation of God in Christ, in the nature of His work of "redemption" and "reconciliation" through death and resurrection, and the experience of the/His Spirit in the Church and by individual Christians. Apart from the tensions among the chosen Twelve due to the naive ambitions of some of them, and their bid for precedence in the coming "Kingdom" (Mark 10 35-45) there is abundant evidence in Acts, in the letters of Paul, John and Jude, and in Revelation[3] of disruptive forces, both within and outside the brotherhood, threatening the harmony of the Apostolic Community.

3. Acts 15; Galatians 3. 1-5, 4. 8-11, 5. 7-10, 6. 12; Ephesians 4. 30; Colossians 2 8,10; 1 John 2. 22; Jude 8-13, 17-19; Revelation 2. 6,14f; 3. 9. 22. 18f

This is in no way surprising in view of the fundamental issues arising from the transformation in such a short while of a small Jewish sect (or what appeared to be such) into a universal, "catholic" *church*, comprising both Jews and (non-Jewish) Gentiles on an equal basis.

St. Paul

None of this has such direct bearing on the concept of "churchmanship" as the evidence of party strife *within* the young Church at Corinth which features so prominently in the first four chapters of Paul's first Letter to the Corinthians, written from Ephesus in or about A.D. 54, (at least a decade *before* the earliest Gospel).

The occasion which evoked this powerful letter was the deeply disturbing reports reaching Paul, its founding Apostle (Acts 18) and anxious "father" (1 Cor. 4, 15), of the appalling goings-on in that lively Christian community of some forty or so members.[4] The one that shocked him most, and with which the letter begins, was the development of no less than four rival factions in that primitive church, each apparently invoking in its support a personal loyalty, including one to Paul himself. "It has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you my brothers. What I mean is that each of you says, 'I belong to Paul … I belong to Apollos … I belong to Cephas … I belong to Christ'". (We may pause to note here that Cephas was the Aramaic form of the Greek nickname Peter, given by Jesus to Simon Bar (son of) Jona/John, and that Apollos was a brilliant Alexandrian Jewish Christian who had arrived in Corinth after Paul had left; also that, whereas one of these rival factions had had the cheek to claim the "Prince of the Apostles" – not known ever to have visited Corinth – as its patron, the fourth had the supreme oneupmanship to claim Christ Himself.)

After citing that report, Paul exploded. "Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you?" (1 Cor. 1. 11-13). He was revolted to the depth of his being by these reports. "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that all of you should be in agreement and that there should be no divisions among you, but that you should be united in the same mind and the same purpose" (1. Cor. 1. 10). Beyond that direct appeal for unity, his counter attack took two distinct forms.

4. This is the careful estimate of Jerome Murphy-O'Connor O.P. in his brilliant and stimulating commentary (1997) in the Bible Reading Fellowship People's Bible Commentary series, to which I am much indebted. The same author's *Paul: A Critical Life* (1998) should also be consulted.

Perceiving that the basic cleavage was between Paulites and Apollosites, he was at pains to point out that there was absolutely no rivalry between them, as both were equally God's willing servants. The difference was simply one of function. "What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth . . . For we are God's servants, working *together*; you are God's field, God's building," (1 Cor. 3. 5-9).

This leads Paul on directly to the second part of his counter attack, his conception of the essential nature of the Christian Church, the *ecclesia*, as literally and spiritually the dwelling place of the living, victorious Christ, and therefore in the highest degree *sacred*. Starting from the homely simile of the Church as God's field, farm or garden, he goes on to that of a building, of which the foundation, laid by "the skilled master builder", is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3. 10f.). This not entirely satisfactory image leads him on to that of a temple. "Do you not know that *you* are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in *you*? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy and *you* are that temple" (1 Cor. 3. 16f.). He sums up his argument so far in this typically Pauline sarcastic rhetoric: "So let no one boast about human leaders. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future – all belongs to you, and you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God," (1 Cor. 3. 21-23).[5]

It is, however, towards the end of this long letter that Paul returns to the theme of the essentially corporate and organic nature of Christian living, and this time he has *at last* found the perfect metaphor, no longer the field, garden, building, temple, but the human body. "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one spirit we were all baptised into one body – Jews or Greeks [i.e. non Jews, "Gentiles"], slaves or free – and were all made to 'drink' of one spirit . . . there are many members yet one body . . . If one member suffers, all suffer together with

5. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor's comment on this passage in his provocative commentary on 1 Corinthians (p. 41) is: "His inability to resist a chance to slide the knife did Paul no good among his readers, but what he wants to get across remains valid. The only reference point for Christians is Christ: to him alone do we belong." Murphy-O'Connor is severe on Paul's use of savage sarcasm.

it, if one is honoured all rejoice together with it. Now *you* are the body of Christ and *individually members* of it" (1 Cor. 12, 12f., 20, 26f.).

With this passage should be compared (i) Romans 12. 4f. where he uses almost exactly the same words, concluding "so we, who are many, are one body in Christ and individually members one of another" and (ii) two crucial passages in the Letter to the Ephesians, where he approaches the same theme from different angles, enriching it even further in the process.

In the first of these Paul is specifically addressing "you Gentiles by birth, called 'the uncircumcision' by those who are called 'the circumcision', at that time without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2. 11f.). He then goes on, "But *now in Christ Jesus* you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, *so that he might create in himself one new humanity* in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in *one body*, through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father", (Eph. 2. 13-17). And from that point Paul goes on triumphantly to conclude this great passage by including his earlier metaphors in the new panorama.

"So then you [Gentiles] are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God", (Eph. 2. 19-22). Paul surely is the world's champion master of mixed metaphors, and how effective they are in combination!

From the very beginning of Ephesians, Paul, or whoever it was who wrote in his name, (if, as seems possible, he was not himself the author) was working towards the great prayer with which the first half of the letter concludes, but which is not strictly relevant to our theme of peace and unity in the church (Eph. 3. 14-21).

The second half begins with Paul returning to this theme in one of the most purple passages in the New Testament. "I therefore, the

prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called . . . making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all", (Eph. 4. 1-6). Finally, in the sublime Christological passage in the first chapter of his (almost certainly authentic) Letter to the Colossians, beginning "He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation" (Col. 1. 15) Paul writes, "He himself is before all things and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church, the beginning, the first born from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross", (Col. 1. 17-20).

This brief overview of Paul's "high" doctrine of Christ-in-his-members would not be complete without reference to the significance of his characteristic use of the expression "in Christ". A typical example is the opening sentence of his letter to the Philippians, in which he addressed "all God's people at Philippi, who are *incorporated* in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 1. 1 in the Revised English Bible translation, which makes its meaning explicit inevitably reminding older Anglicans of "that we are very members incorporate in the mystical Body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people".)[6] Paul clarifies his meaning still further in 2 Cor. 5. 17: "For anyone united to Christ, there is a new creation; the old order has gone; a new order has already begun." (R.E.B. translation).

If we take Paul seriously, and (believer's) baptism does indeed entail union with, *incorporation into* the living Lord Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, *i.e.* his contemporary embodiment in His universal church, "one, holy, catholic and apostolic", there can be no room, and no excuse, for rival parties, dissension, factional in-fighting, conflict and strife.

But, rather than take it seriously, do we not say: Paul was writing in ideal terms? The actuality, given human shortcomings, is far different. We are so inured, after two millennia of Christian dissension, heresies, splits and schisms that we have come to regard it and our consequent ineffectiveness at representing the Prince of Peace in a hostile, divided world, as natural, inevitable, beyond all hope.

6. The alternative post-Communion prayer, otherwise known as the Prayer of Oblation, in the *Book of Common Prayer.*

The Four Gospels

Turning from Paul's letters to the Gospels, we find that, apart from two blatantly anachronistic[7] occurrences of the Greek word *ekklesia* in Matthew 16. 18 and 18. 17, there are no references in our Lord's reported utterances to "the church" in any gospel, because Jesus's teaching focused entirely on the coming of God's *Kingdom* in His own day.

However, in Matthew and Luke (only) he teaches his disciples to pray, using the outline formula we know as the Lord's Prayer; it takes a slightly different form in the first and third gospels – Luke's version is briefer, more terse.[8] (It is absent from Mark and John). Its opening words "*Our* Father" teach all who use it to see themselves not as isolated individuals but brothers and sisters in the "family" of God, siblings one of another in the bond of mutual love and brotherhood, with unlimited and unconditional readiness to forgive as a condition of being forgiven our sins by our heavenly Father. Jesus is consistently reported in all the Synoptics (as in John 13) as constantly dinning into his disciples/apostles the urgent need to follow his example of service (an echo here of the four servant songs in Isaiah 42-53). (Mark 9. 35ff. and 10.42-45; Luke 22. 24-27).

Mark reports Jesus saying, "Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another", (Mark 9. 50).

The Fourth Gospel: St. John

But it is when we come to the fourth Gospel, bearing the name of John, that we have the most explicit teaching on the ideal nature of the Church, and in each case it takes the form of words (in two cases teaching, in the third, prayer) composed by "John" and placed upon the lips of Our Lord.

The first instance of John's liberality with creative licence is in Chapter 10, sayings characteristic of this gospel – not paralleled in the first three, the Synoptics. Here Jesus, using the introductory "I am" which may be a deliberate echo of the sacred name of God (Exodus 3. 13-15) describes himself both as the Good Shepherd and as the door or gate of the sheepfold. The language put on his lips is strongly reminiscent of that used by the prophet Ezekiel in relation to ancient Israel, the Old Covenant "People of God" (Ezek. 34) but, of course, refers to the New Covenant Israel, the all-embracing, i.e.

7. By "anachronistic" I mean that Jesus could not possibly have spoken of "my church". This concept (church) post dates his Resurrection. It was added to this saying later, by the evangelist. (Matthew)
8. Matthew 6. 9-13; Luke 11. 2-4

catholic Church – "other sheep I have which do not belong to this fold" – the Gentiles. "I must bring them also and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd" (Verse 16). This is one of the most precious chapters of the Bible.

The second instance is in Chapter 15, part of the long Johannine discourses at the Last Supper. Again, it is an "I am" passage. Jesus *is* "the True Vine". The vine throughout the Old Testament is the recognised symbol of Israel – the O.T. "Church". (See especially Isaiah chapter 5 and Psalm 80 verses 8-13). So Jesus *is* God's People personified. "I am the vine, you are the branches". Jesus's disciples, his "branches", must "abide" in him. Only so will they be able to be fruitful – and flourish. In other words there is no such thing as individual Christianity. The Christian must actively belong to the Body, the Church. Thus does St. John (whoever he was; in this world we shall never penetrate the mystery of his true identity) reinforce, in Christ's name, the teaching of St. Paul.

Finally we approach, with reverence, fear and trembling, the third and perhaps the greatest of these Johannine passages, chapter 17, often called "The High Priestly Prayer" in recognition of the fact that in this wonderful composition, placed by the evangelist on the lips of our "Great High Priest after the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 4. 14 and 5. 5f.), in which He offers and consecrates Himself as the all sufficient sacrifice on behalf of us, His sinful people. It takes the place of the simple Synoptic narrative of Our Lord's agonised prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane (but in no way contradicts it) "Father, for you all things are possible. Remove this "cup" [of sacrifice and suffering] from me. Yet not what I want, but what you want", (Mark 14. 36). (R.S.V.)

In the course of this long prayer, Jesus is made (by "John") to ask that those the Father has given Him "may be one as we are one" (verse 11). Some verses later (20-23),

> on behalf of these, but also of those who *will* believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

I have dared to extract from this complete composition only those sections which are directly relevant to the New Testament witness

to the theme of *Christian Solidarity* – Christ and Christians in His Body the Church.

Probably no two people will react in quite the same way to these typically Johannine monologues. To me they faithfully represent the consecrated human mind of our Saviour at the supreme crisis of his earthly life and ministry, *as interpreted* (I believe, correctly) for posterity with uncanny, God-given insight, long after the event itself, by John who, whatever his precise historical identity, was uniquely qualified, equipped and (if you like) inspired to find the right, simple words in which to express the almost inexpressible mystery of the Divine Identity. This, or something like it, seems to me the only credible explanation, not only of this unique prayer, but of the entire Gospel which bears John's name. Among others, the nineteenth century poet Robert Browning, author of *A Death in the Desert*,[9] seems to have been of the opinion that John's Gospel was the product in extreme old age of John, the son of Zebedee and brother of James, following a long lifetime of reflection and meditation on the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus. This seems plausible, but certainty eludes us. I wonder what you think?

New Testament evidence summarised

This cursory review of the New Testament evidence as to *both* (i) the *essential, ideal* nature of the Christian Church as clearly conceived in the minds of St. Paul and St. John and vividly expressed in the correspondence of the former and the gospel compositions of the latter, and hinted at (?) in the Synoptics, and (ii) the *actual* conditions prevailing in the apostolic churches of which we have record, is now complete. What does it tell us and how is this relevant to our theme of "churchmanship"?

(i) The evidence for the ideal (as we should call it) vision of the Church in the minds of Paul and John could not be stronger or more clear. It is indisputable. Though using different figures of speech (the human body and its "members", Paul; the vine and its branches, John) they both conceived of the Church as *an organic extension of the risen life of Jesus, so that the baptised faithful were literally incorporated in Him*. For both, the ideal *was* the actual; the inevitable consequence being fierce stress on the absolute necessity of unity, concord and agreement among Christians and consequent horror at discord, rivalry, infighting, and factional partisanship in churches.

9. Printed in full in the *Oxford Book of Christian Verse*. ed. Lord David Cecil (1940)

Whether this concept in the minds of Paul and John originated in that of Our Saviour himself cannot be known. It is bound to be a matter of conjecture and of the balance of probability. But it may be conceded that Paul and John were both in a better position to know His mind than we are, and that their clear agreement favours this supposition.

(ii) As for the actuality in the New Testament churches, the evidence is mixed. Not all the churches of which we have knowledge in the New Testament were like that of Corinth. Far from it. Those of Philippi, Thessalonica and Rome were warmly commended by Paul (Phil. 1. 3-11; 1 Thess. 1. 2-10 and Rom. 1. 7-12), as were those of Smyrna and Philadelphia by the John who wrote *Revelation* (Rev. 2. 8-11 and 3. 7-13). But there is no reason to believe that Corinth was unique in its rival factions, and disorderly conduct, which incurred such severe apostolic rebuke. The Galatians were notorious backsliders and the Colossian Church, which Paul had never visited in person, but with which he had precious links through Philemon and Onesimus, clearly needed to be kept up to the mark and warned against the machinations of fussy conservatives (Col. 2. 16-23). Four of the Asia Minor churches addressed by John got it severely in the neck from him (Rev. 2. 12-29 and 3. 1-6 and 14-22).

The fact is that the apostles were up against stubborn human nature. This was not lost on Paul, who, despite his idealism, was capable of being a sensible, hard-headed realist, as when he wrote in 1 Corinthians, "When you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you; and to some extent I believe it. Indeed there have to be factions among you, for only so will it become clear who among you is genuine . . ." (1 Cor. 11. 18f.). On the face of it this seems disconcertingly to contradict much of what he had written earlier in the same letter. It is almost as if he were climbing down off his doctrinaire high horse, like a thoroughly pragmatic Anglican! It is this gift of flexibility, this many sidedness which makes him so fascinating to study and as we shall see a little further on when we consider his missionary/evangelistic strategy – "all things to all men" (1 Cor. 9.20).

What then, provisionally, are we to conclude from all this? I suggest that, as with our Lord's strict teaching about marriage (Mark 10. 5-9, with which compare Matt. 19. 8f.) we must strictly uphold the ideal, while making due allowance for human frailty, thus opening ourselves, as we have done, to the charge of inconsistency, or worse, hypocrisy. Total consistency is a luxury only affordable by the most determined martyr and most of us run-of-the-mill Christians do not seem to be cut out for that.

A little light relief

After this, it is time (you may think, more than time) for a little light relief.

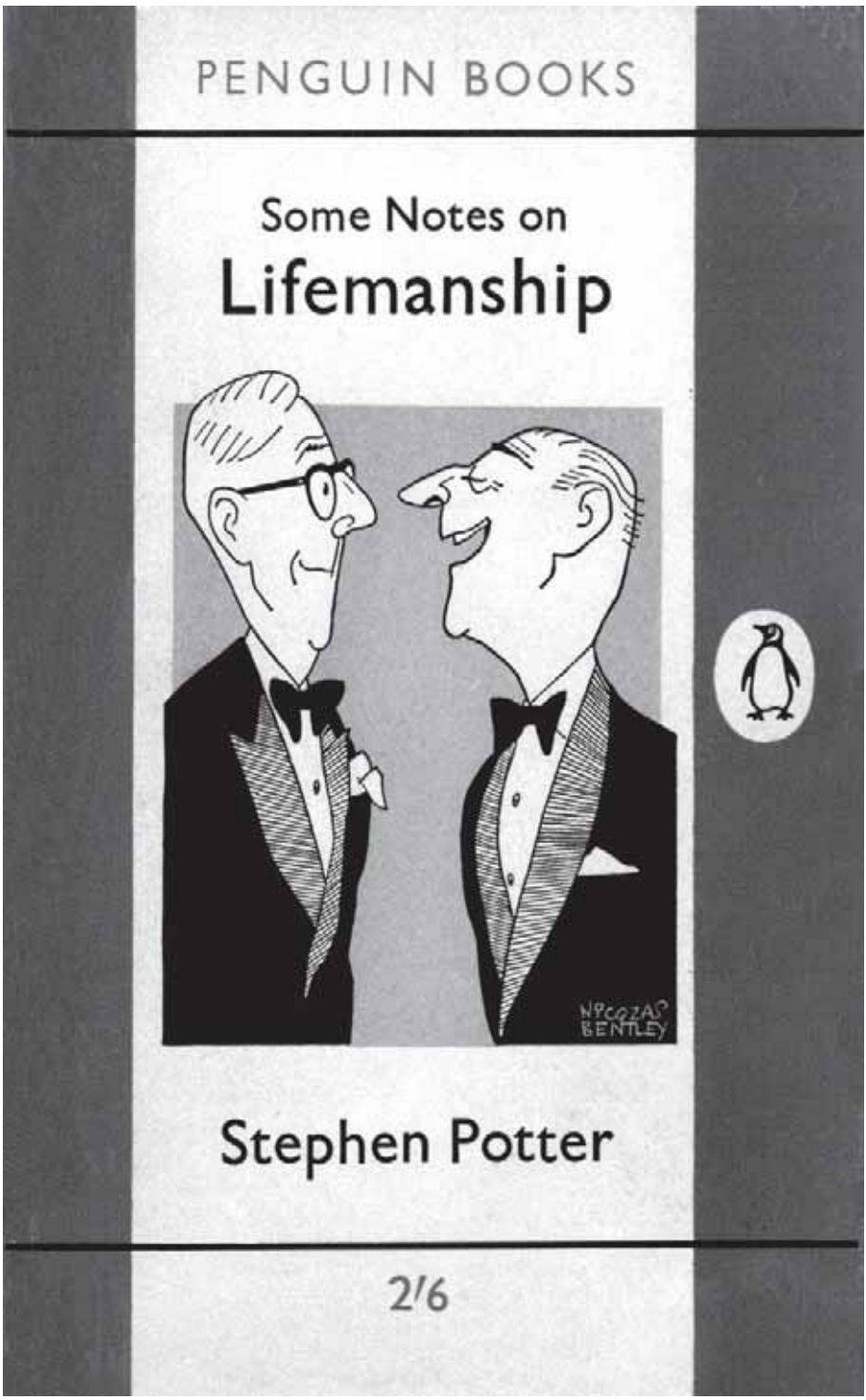
Several years ago, when turning over matters ecclesiometrical in my head, it occurred to me that some useful light might be thrown on the basic nature of churchmanship by a judicious comparison with the valuable researches of the late Stephen Potter on the kindred subjects of Lifemanship, Gamesmanship and Oneupmanship. That dates it, and me, a bit. I was thinking particularly of Potter's seminal treatise, *Notes on Lifemanship*, published by Penguin as long ago as 1950 at the modest price of two shillings and sixpence (half a crown) paperback. My own copy, a prized possession, is a little battered from constant use. It has a distinguished cover illustration by Nicolas Bentley. In our enlightened days this will almost certainly lay it open to the serious charge of blatant élitism. I wonder if any of my readers have ever come across it? If so, they must be nearly as senile as I am.[10]

The very title Potter chose, *Lifemanship*, so evocative of the universal scope of his ingenious theories, inevitably suggests close kinship to *Churchmanship* and to my mind it is one of the not-so-minor tragedies of twentieth-century English literature, and indeed philosophy, that, for some obscure reason, Potter never got round to the application of his philosophy to "Churchmanship". For, had he done so, daily life, to say nothing of thought, in the C. of E. and indeed the Anglican Communion worldwide, at all levels from the domestic and parochial to the archiepiscopal and synodical, would have been immeasurably enriched. The Life/Churchman basic one-up principle would have been clearly enunciated with examples cited, and illustrated, as in *Lifemanship*, from the experience of leading exponents such as Odoreida and Gattling-Fenn with the actual conversational gambits, ploys and counters they had perfected.

Seriously, depending on your view of human nature, and especially of ecclesiastical human nature, it may, or may not, surprise you to realise that "churchmanship" and "lifemanship" (in its aspect of oneupmanship) are not so far apart as you might have thought.

The principles of both are timeless. Indeed we have already noticed two instances in the New Testament. Those two disciples, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were trying out a very crude

10. Should any reader hail from Somerset, he will surely be acquainted with the statue of the great Lifeman himself; it stands outside his former H.Q. at 680, Station Road, Yeovil (and is illustrated as the frontispiece to *Lifemanship*). It should also appear in the forthcoming revised edition of Pevsner's *Somerset*.



ploy when they (or their mother, Mrs. Zebedee, on their behalf) sought to "bag" two top posts in Jesus's future Cabinet. No wonder the other disciples were miffed. Who wouldn't have been? The other example, of course, is the rival factions forming in Corinth, each named after distinguished church leaders, while one group (early evangelicals?) had gone one better than the rest, claiming the *highest* authority – "*I* am of *Christ*". Similarly today one occasionally comes across people who call themselves "committed Christians". To them an effective counter is, "Oh, I am only an *un*committed Christian", thus effortlessly going one up on both modesty and humility. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*

That interval of light relief is now *almost* over, unless we extend it still more briefly to include a reference to three lively surveys of the Church of England, published in the final decade of the twentieth century. They were Michael De La Noy's *The Church of England* (1993), perhaps the most thorough; Ysenda Maxtone Graham's *The Church Hesitant: A Portrait of the Church of England* (also 1993), the liveliest and most entertaining; and Monica Furlong: *The C of E: the State its in* (2000), possibly the most perceptive, as it is the most recent. Sadly, Furlong and De La Noy have since died.

All three are fair minded, largely orientated to the divisions over the ordination of women, illuminating on the varieties of theological colleges and their distinctive ethos, and very much alive to the wide varieties of Churchmanship (described by Maxtone Graham as "the Spectrum", a term which has since gained wider currency, as has the misuse of the term "tradition" (evangelical, catholic, liberal) to make partisanship or organised party strife, sound more respectable.)

These three "surveys", all by intelligent lay folk, taken together have real value still, but, sadly, all three now have a slightly period flavour. The Anglican scene is even less attractive today.

New light on Churchmanship

In this penultimate stage of our exhaustive pursuit of an accurate but at the same time realistic understanding and definition of this slippery concept of churchmanship, we cannot avoid turning to an important new book specifically devoted to that very subject, but, perhaps due to its quizzical review by John Pridmore in the *Church Times* of 6 Jan 2006, less widely read than it deserved to be.

Published by Ashgate, Aldershot, in 2005, it is entitled *Evangelicals etcetera: Conflict and Conviction in the Church of England's Parties.* Its author is Kelvin Randall. On the flyleaf we are told that he is

"an Anglican Vicar and Clergy Trainer at Southampton and is also Researcher at the National Centre for Religious Education, University of Wales, Bangor, U.K." From this it is no surprise that an enthusiastic blurb appears on the back paper cover from the pen of Professor Leslie J. Francis, also of the University of Wales at Bangor, or that Randall's extensive bibliography includes no less than sixty books or articles by the prolific Leslie J. Francis[11] either alone or in collaboration with others (pp. 224-227). Bangor is his power base and Randall and Francis would both claim to be, among other things, serious, scientific sociologists of religion. Randall's findings from numerous recent "surveys" among mostly young Anglican clergy on a variety of subjects ranging from extraversion/introversion, stable/neurotic, liability to "burn out", happy/unhappy, masculine/feminine, to priorities for ministry, patterns of belief and behaviour, are set out in methodical detail in the bulk of the book, together with elaborate classifications of the self-claimed churchmanship of the participants/victims.

Whatever value we may attach to these findings, I suspect that for most of Randall's readers the main interest of the book lies in its opening chapters. The first of these (pp. 1-43) claims to set out impartially, "the origin" and history "of churchmanship differences", from which much may be learnt. It is followed (pp. 44-63) by a fascinating review of ways in which churchmanship differences have been, and are still being, measured, in other words "pure ecclesiometry", with a few diagrams of what are, in fact, primitive ecclesiometers and their rationales – although, of course, without using that word.

I was delighted to learn from this chapter two things – first (Randall p. 44) that the Anglican pioneer of ecclesiometry was the Revd. W.J. Coneybeare who in an article on *"Church Parties"* published in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1853 (vol. 98 pp. 273-342) "recognised that there were not two, or even three, but nine parties in sight. They are commonly called the Low Church, the High Church and the Broad Church parties, but such an enumeration is the result of an incomplete analysis. On a closer inspection, it is seen that each of these is again triply subdivided into sections which exemplify respectively the exaggeration, the stagnation and the normal development of the principles which they severally claim to represent . . ." (op.cit. p. 273).[12]

But what gave me even greater pleasure was the discovery (Randall

11. Francis, a graduate of both Oxford and Cambridge, had begun his Anglican ministry as curate of Haverhill to its energetic Vicar Eric Graves in the 1970s. I remember him there.

12. On wider grounds a claim to be THE pioneer of ecclesiometry could be advanced for Jonathan Swift: *A Tale of a Tub* (1704)

pp. 47ff.) that my ecclesiometer had in outline been anticipated by one M.G. Daniel in 1968.

According to Randall, Daniel (1967) was the first to see the need for, and make use of, a second dimension as well as the standard Catholic/Evangelical axis. His was a sociological study arising from interviews with 96 clergymen serving in the Greater London Council area and ordained in 1955, 1960 or 1965. He was concerned to discover whether or not the new currents of theological thought in the 1960's were changing the clergy's self-image. His conclusion was that churchmanship was the main criterion for determining the clergy's reaction to new ideas. Daniel is quoted by Randall as writing: "The factor determining which alternative a clergyman will choose is *the particular religious ideology which he already holds – that nexus of beliefs and interpretations which in the Church of England is called churchmanship*" (Daniel, *Catholic, Evangelical and Liberal in the Anglican Priesthood* in D. Martin (ed.) *A Sociological Year Book of Religion* SCM 1968 vol. 9 pp. 232-249 (My italics)).

Here, then, incidentally, in the passage italicised, we have an attempted definition of churchmanship. We will consider it later, when reaching a final conclusion.

To resume a summary of Daniel's method of assessing churchmanship, "he plotted" individual "positions on two axes representing sources of authority". He wrote that "in practice, churchmanship positions usually appeal to the authority of the Bible (evangelical), or of the church (catholic) in the first place, and after that to tradition (conservative), or to human reason (liberal)" (Daniel, unpublished dissertation, 1967, cited by Randall).

To illustrate this understanding of churchmanship which in its basic simplicity is substantially the same as mine, Daniel constructed a chart (reproduced in Randall p. 48 Fig. 2.1) in the form of a cross; its vertical section below the point of intersection with the horizontal axis is inscribed "evangelical" and is based on the BIBLE, its upper section is, of course, "Catholic", and above it is CHURCH. The horizontal arms are, to the left "Conservative", based on TRADITION and the right "liberal" based on REASON.

Ideally, I would have liked to be able on facing pages here to illustrate the Daniel diagram opposite my putative ecclesiometer. If this were possible, the comparison would be obvious and immediate – as would, I hope, the advantages of my inclination towards simplicity. This would be criticised by Randall (and others) as *too* simplistic. He and his fellow researchers desiderate a *third* axis – that of Pentecostalism/ the Charismatic movement. While frankly admitting my personal

ignorance of this more recent phenomenon I would argue that it is historically, like its eighteenth-century predecessor (to the study of which and its precursors and antecedents, Ronald Knox devoted his seminal work *Enthusiasm*, 1950, O.U.P) closely akin to aspects of Evangelicalism, and that the overriding merit of the Daniel/Fitch model is its underlying simplicity, which is truly basic, fundamental, rooted in the ultimate reality of unchanging (and unchangeable) Christian belief/experience in a constantly changing world.

We are now, at long last, clearly within sight of "the object of our journey" and of the end of this chapter. If the route has at times been wearisome and repetitive the fault is entirely mine and I apologise. I am neither a professional theologian nor a logician – that is only too obvious. It has too often been a case (hopefully) of *solvitur ambulando* – thinking it out as we go along. Still, we *must* get it right in the end.

An elusive concept, hard to define

In attempting to define such a vague, elusive concept as churchmanship I may have been attempting an impossibility. We have, in passing, glanced at several attempted definitions, none of them entirely satisfactory. Let us have one final attempt, bearing in mind all the considerations we have encountered along the way.

I have now come to believe that some if not most of our difficulties have arisen from a confusion between two separate and conflicting senses in which the word and concept is sometimes used. One is idealistic, the other factual.

(i) Is there not a sense in which churchmanship embraces the *totality* of Christian faith, experience and commitment? "The faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3), the unchanging and unchangeable faith to which the Scriptures bear witness, and to which the Catholic Creeds give classic expression, that unswerving faith "which has been believed everywhere, always and by all" which the Vincentian Canon proclaims, *together with and alongside* the *interpretation*, often radical, of that unchanging faith by the unquenchable "Spirit of truth" (John 15. 26 and 16. 13) in successive generations of our ever changing and developing world, but restrained from falsehood and excess by traditional wisdom?

I believe that in the minds of those familiar with this concept, there is some such arrière pensée, to which I have perhaps assigned too definite a content, and that it is only in the light of such an ideal, however vague or precise, that the much more familiar, secondary usage makes sense. I will now attempt to define that.

Churchmanship defined – at last!

(ii) The peculiarly Anglican concept of churchmanship is the deliberate choice or identification of one or more of *four* distinctly separable, but essentially complementary and interlocking aspects or elements of Christian belief/commitment, seen and emphasised as being of *supreme* importance over against the others, and used as a label for his/her "churchmanship". This use of the expression is inevitably in conflict with the ideal, inclusive first sense.

The four separable but complementary aspects, elements or strands of the properly indivisible whole are those commonly known these days as (i) evangelical (ii) catholic (iii) liberal and (iv) conservative (or traditional). In earlier times, and still perhaps by the less sophisticated, they were called (i) Low Church (ii) High Church (iii) Broad Church and (iv) (should have been called) Narrow Church – a phrase with, properly, no derogatory overtones (see Matthew 7. 13).

In writing the above I have, of course, in mind the two axes of my ecclesiometer, as foreshadowed by Daniel, 1967. The vertical axis, evangelical, catholic, represents the basic unchanging Christian faith. The horizontal axis, liberal/conservative equally clearly represents the guidance of the Holy Spirit of Truth, in both its positive, radical and its negative, restraining, moderating, traditional aspects.

There is, thus, a slight difference between the rationales of M.G. Daniel's chart and my putative ecclesiometer constructed to exemplify the foregoing definition, but it is not substantial. I am happy to accept his formulae as *in substance* no different from mine. Both are essentially four square. For those who value a Biblical analogy, I would refer them to Revelation 21.16.

Finally – my proposal

If, therefore, I may claim M.G. Daniel as an ally, the proposal now put forward as a formula for advancing both Anglican, and wider Christian unity is simplicity itself. Maintaining that for twenty first-century Christian orthodoxy the four aspects or elements represented by the words evangelical, catholic, liberal and conservative/traditional are *all equally essential and interlocking, interdependent, complementary, and ultimately inseparable*, two things follow.

1. for any individual Anglican, or group of Anglicans to isolate or overemphasise any one or more of these at the expense of the rest is to *distort* true Christianity and to *undermine* Christian Unity. And,

2. It is incumbent upon all Anglicans to think, work and pray to enter more and more deeply into the *fullness* of the Christian heritage of faith and truth, and to open themselves at every point to the influence of the Spirit of Truth, praying that He would overcome all prejudice.

It may be said that this is no more, or less, than a plea for old fashioned Central Churchmanship. If by Central Churchmanship is meant scoring an ecclesiometrical BULLSEYE by aiming one's thought and prayer at the point of the intersection itself, the CROSS in the middle of the Ecclesiometer (or Daniel's Diagram) I should be only too happy to agree.

I have long had reason to suspect that Central Churchmanship in this best sense of the term, is, and certainly was, far more widely prevalent in the C. of E., especially among its upper echelons and among the sensible laity, than most people would suppose. Among the latter I suspect that, just as in politics the ideal position for a successful politician is slightly to the left of centre, the same, by and large, is true of the Church. English people for the most part, least of all Anglicans, are not intellectuals, still less amateur theologians. Most shrink from any form of extremism.

As for the upper echelons of the clergy, such as bishops and archdeacons, having constantly to deal with strongly opinionated, partisan clergy of all shapes and sizes, there would be a strong temptation to an easy flexibility. That kind of lazy, unprincipled "central Churchmanship", the line of least resistance, (on which a certain Archbishop of Canterbury is said to have possessed a season ticket), is the last thing I am advocating. I disassociate myself from it.

It is perfectly *possible* to embrace all four "positions" simultaneously. I say that because I do it myself. No supple feat of intellectual gymnastics is required. But it does help (and here is a useful tip) constantly to bear in mind the axiom variously ascribed to S.T. Coleridge and F.D. Maurice: "Men are mostly right in what they affirm and wrong in what they deny".[13]

In the next four chapters we will look at each "position" in turn.

13. A.R. Vidler *"The Church in the Age of Revolution"*. (Penguin 1961) p. 84.