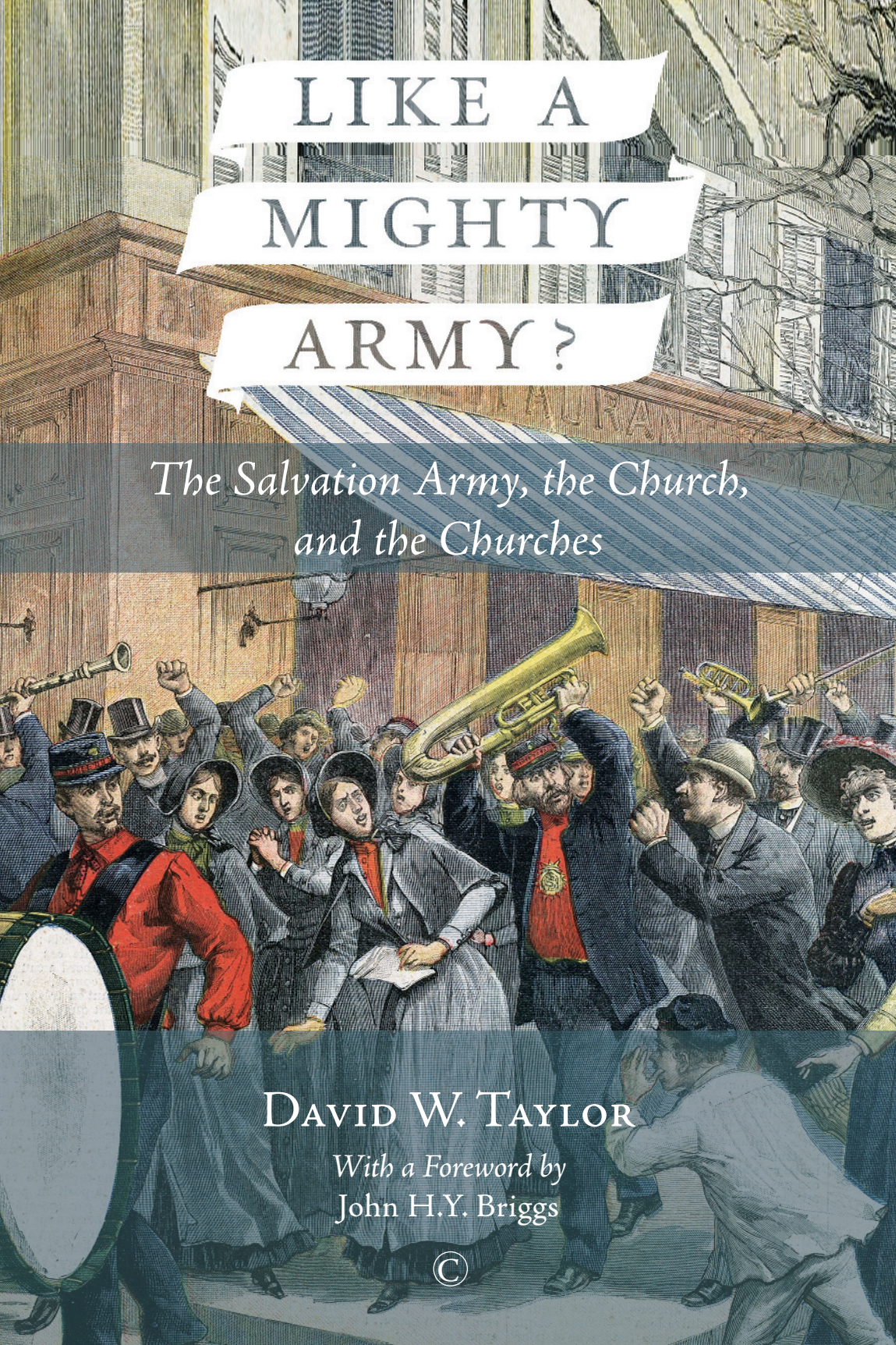

LIKE A MIGHTY ARMY?

The Salvation Army, the Church, and the Churches

DAVID W. TAYLOR

With a Foreword by
John H.Y. Briggs

Like a Mighty Army?

James Clarke & Co

and

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James Clarke & Co

To Kathy, Anna, Jenni, Sam and Samuel,
and the Church in Wood Green

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Foreword

David Taylor's *Like a Mighty Army?* is a fine example of a study of the interplay of historical research, theological interrogation, and the analysis of emerging ecclesiastical practice, well illustrating the impact of the mental exercise of historical and theological enquiry on the practical issue presently confronting The Salvation Army in exploring the nature of its identity and mission in the modern world. Thus, the roots of the movement are traced back, religiously, to North American Holiness movements, derived as they were from John Wesley's own convictions about Christian perfectionism, and, organisationally, to English Methodism, particularly as expressed in its non-Wesleyan Methodist connexions. At the same time, the origins of the movement were also quite literally earthed in the desperate social situation confronting the new urban masses, and therefore the Churches, so robustly portrayed in *In Darkest England and the Way Out* first published in 1890. It was just here that William Booth sought to contextualise the mission of the Church

By that date the East London Mission had already morphed into The Salvation Army, thereby supplying two key words in the life of this ecclesiastical community—Mission and Army, spelling out both the urgency of the task, and the discipline needed to be effective in undertaking such a critical endeavour. The military metaphor, with its focus on an aggressive determination to secure well-defined goals, in the last decades of the nineteenth century spoke to and from a culture much influenced by the jingoism of empire, laying much emphasis on the subjective self, implicitly downplaying the significance of the corporate. This is not to deny that its life and work, as conceived by William Booth, had to do as much with the immediate deprivations of the urban working classes and with practical programmes to meet that need, as with the eternal salvation of the individual soul, so the dynamics of Mission and

Army, evangelism and social welfare, the personal and the corporate, were early brought creatively together within the life of the movement.

Notwithstanding some criticism from the established Churches—as for example the jibe of an aged Earl of Shaftesbury who said of the Army that it was "in action as extravagant and in expression as offensive as any that ever disgraced the wildest fanaticism"—it was often seen as doing a job, namely effectively evangelising the lower orders in society, for which other branches of Christendom were ill-equipped, so that in some senses the Army was viewed as undertaking a particularly difficult task on behalf of all the churches. However, as a divided Christendom became more conscious of the need to establish relationships between its several parts, so the question as to the status of The Salvation Army became ever more pressing: was it or was it not a Church, and if a Church where were the classic marks of the life of the Church to be found within a body both non-sacerdotal and non-sacramental, and indeed in many respects non-ecclesial? Taylor tackles these critical questions both historically and theologically, the latter by submitting the Army's life to interrogation from the main contours of the doctrine of the Church as expounded in an ecumenical context by the reformed theologian, Karl Barth, an academic exercise prescient with potential suggestions for practical changes within the contemporary ordering of the Army.

Confusion on this issue existed at the highest level. For example, when the World Council of Churches was founded in 1948, the Army was admitted without question as a member Church. This, and other developing ecumenical relationships, increasingly placed upon the Army some examination of its own self-understanding of its ecclesial position, explorations of which are here properly and helpfully analysed. Living within an ecumenical context necessarily raised questions. One example of the pressure placed upon the Army by its ecumenical engagement can be seen in the debate at the Nairobi Assembly of the World Council in 1975 in which it was proposed to change the clause on "Functions and Purposes" within its constitution to read that the Council exists, amongst other purposes, "to call the Churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship." For Churches with an exclusivist view of the Church this was acceptable as a long-term aim though they were unable to contemplate any form of more intermediate inter-communion. The problem for The Salvation Army was of a different order: in the debate Commissioner Williams pointed out that

the inclusion of the phrase "eucharistic fellowship" "acted against such denominations as The Salvation Army and the Society of Friends." This intervention called forth the clarification from the General Secretary that "the functions are not binding upon the member Churches but are what the WCC is expected to promote." In this interchange The Salvation Army clearly identifies itself as a "denomination," even though the WCC was in process of adopting language which was problematic for the Army.

In the event, three years later, the Army suspended its membership of the Council, in part because of the grant made by the WCC's programme to Combat Racism to the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe in 1978. It also provided an opportunity for the Army to clarify the appropriate way in which it might relate to the Council, for the body which had joined in 1948 was not a national Church, as the WCC rules require, but the International Headquarters of the Army in the UK. The appropriate relationship after 1981was perceived to be that of a Christian World Communion, a status which provides for a presence in the counsels of the WCC but without voting rights. The latest Handbook of the WCC opens the section on the Army with the words "The Salvation Army is an integral part of the Christian Church, although distinctive in government and practice." It notes that whilst "no Army Churches are member Churches of the WCC," most of its national bodies are members of National Councils which are themselves associated with the WCC.

In streamlining its activities in the interests of its mission, the Army had deprived itself of what other Christians regarded as essential marks of the Church—particularly an ordained ministry and the sacraments of baptism and holy communion. Whilst there were emphases within the life of the Army which could be recognised as serving a similar purpose—the commissioning of officers as creating something akin to an ordained ministry, [and certainly at law Salvation Army officers are recognised as ministers of religion], a dedication service fulfilling some of the functions of infant baptism, the tendency was to stress the subjective experience of the believer, rather more than rejoicing in the objective nature of a grace already secured through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There were accordingly weaknesses in the structure of the Army, for example the establishment of a hierarchical ruling class of officers, convenient for the effective implementation of policy but without theological rationale. Whilst lay participation was maintained

in the guise of the positive service of the Christian soldier, it was highly regulated, disciplined and exclusive of individuals unwilling to take the necessary vows of "practical holiness."

Of course, Mission and Church belong closely together, in the sense that a Church indifferent to its mission to the world is grievously heretical, whilst mission cannot be isolated from the ongoing witness of the body of the Risen Christ. Whilst the current study carefully documents the development of Salvationist thinking on this relationship and on the Army as a Church, it convincingly argues that the thought in earlier times was essentially pragmatic, and only in the most recent decades has a more rigorously theological approach been adopted, a development which the present study will certainly advance.

Thus the present work is essential reading for all Salvationists seeking to deepen their understanding of their churchmanship and for all the Army's ecumenical partners, intent on understanding its ecclesial self-understanding, and deepening ecumenical partnership.

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Preface

This book came to be written for three very specific reasons. Firstly, I happen to possess a possibly unique claim to two parents, four grandparents and eight great-grandparents, who were Salvation Army Officers stretching back to the very beginnings of the movement, with William and Catherine Booth. That heritage has understandably instilled in me a deep sense of loyalty and commitment to what has proved to be a quite remarkable phenomenon. Secondly, with my wife, I have been a Salvation Army Officer, offering leadership and service within a number of Salvation Army congregations for nearly thirty years, most recently in Wood Green, London, where we grew together, with other Christian partners, in a deepening understanding of *koinonia*, for nineteen years. Thirdly, I hold a deep longing to see the Church of God, in ecumenical unity and partnership, find a more robust theological foundation upon which it might visibly live and express the gospel of God's grace in a fractured world.

It is from those three perspectives that this study has sought to investigate and interrogate, what it might mean for The Salvation Army to live and demonstrate the reality of God's Church in the world, offering a gospel of grace in word , deed, and generous community. Whilst some might find the interrogation in places to be uncomfortable, I hope that ultimately it will be discerned to have stemmed from a genuine sense of loyalty for the honour and glory of God, and therefore faithfulness to the cause of The Salvation Army. Certainly, I cannot rest content to withstand Karl Barth's perceptive and striking challenge against all acquiescent and complacent denominationalism, in the face of the "one Church." Truly, the Church—*ecclesia semper reformanda*—is in need of constant reformation as it seeks to enter into God's mission.

David Taylor
August 8, 2014

Introduction

Ecclesiology must surely have at its heart an earnest and passionate interest in the true nature, form and mission of the Church, including a clear understanding of its unity and diversity, at a time when there has been an explosion of Christian endeavor, particularly in many of the developing nations of the world. There are more Christian denominations and expressions of Christian community than ever. Reporting to the Ninth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 2006, the Moderator of the WCC Central Committee, Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia, admits that "for many, unity is no longer an ecumenical priority but, rather, an academic topic or, at best, an eschatological goal."[1] Recognizing that "a divided church cannot have a credible witness in a broken world" he calls for a renewed recognition that "being church" is "an ecumenical issue; it means challenging and helping the church to become an efficient and credible instrument of God's transformation in a changing world."[2] The Ninth Assembly, in its statement, *Called To Be The One Church,* urges churches to recognize their "*mutual responsibility* to one another" to "continue to facilitate *deep conversations* among various churches" and "to engage in the hard task of giving a candid account of the relation of their own faith and order to the faith and order of other churches."[3]

This study is principally an examination of The Salvation Army and its emerging ecclesiological conviction and practise within an ecumenical context. Founded in London, England, in 1865 by William and Catherine Booth, it has emerged as an international Christian denomination, with a presence in 121 nations of the world.[4] The last fifty years

1. Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia, "Report of the Moderator," 125.
2. Ibid., 118f.
3. The World Council of Churches, "Called To Be The One Church," 259.
4. The Salvation Army, *The Salvation Army Year Book, 2011*, 27–28.

in particular have witnessed a significant shift in the denomination's self-understanding. In 1954 its sixth General, Albert Orsborn, informed Salvationists that whilst they were "part of the body of Christ called 'the Church militant,'" they were "not a Church," but "a permanent mission to the unconverted."[5] The most recent ecclesiological statement, issued in 2008, informs Salvationists that they are "an international Christian church in permanent mission to the unconverted . . . an integral part of the Body of Christ like other Christian churches, and that the Army's local corps are local congregations like the local congregations of other Christian churches."[6] Acknowledging this shift of emphasis John Larsson suggested in 2001 to the delegates of The Salvation Army's first International Theological Symposium, that "we are in a period of transition towards a fuller understanding of ourselves as a church—and theological concerns lie at the very heart of this process,"[7] in which "a great deal of thinking has yet to be done."[8]

This study is in two parts. The first part is an examination of the historical development of The Salvation Army's ecclesiological understanding in three phases: its origins as a Christian Mission in the East End of London, its establishment as The Salvation Army and its contemporary ecclesiological conviction as an international denomination of the Church. Under particular examination is the military metaphor of an army. Chosen pragmatically within the context of holiness revivalism as an aggressive means of Christian mission, it became established as a kind of spiritual emergency service or quasi-missionary religious order within and alongside the Church and ultimately has evolved as the dominant metaphor that informs Salvationists of what it means to be the Church. This study aims to assess the extent to which Larsson's comments have been heeded, in terms of firstly, the depth of internal theological reflection that has been given to the metaphor of the Church as an army, and secondly, the extent to which The Salvation Army has engaged in dialogue with the convictions of other churches. It concludes that in both cases the reflection and dialogue have been limited. Inasmuch as the metaphor of an army was the sociological and pragmatic outcome of a largely individualistic and subjective approach to salvation, it does not

5. Orsborn, "The World Council of Churches," 74.
6. The Salvation Army, *The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ*, 10.
7. Larsson, "Salvationist Theology," 12.
8. Ibid., 11.

adequately characterize the theological nature and form of the Christian community, and continues to afflict the Army's ecclesiology. In particular, this dominant metaphor presents a tangled cord of three separately identifiable ecclesial strands of mission, army and church.

In view of these findings, the second part of the study represents a dialogue with the ecclesiology of Karl Barth. Barth is chosen as a helpful discussion partner principally for the way in which, in the articulation of his ecclesiology and from his overall understanding of theological anthropology, he rejects both individualism and subjectivism, whilst strongly affirming The Salvation Army's own conviction about the priority of mission. Furthermore, his coherent Christological ecclesiology is able to assist The Salvation Army in addressing the tangled ecclesial cords of mission, army and church. His ecclesiology encourages Salvationists to examine their visible form from a deeper and more objective theological perspective.

Barth was himself intensely interested in Christian unity to which his recently re-published 1936 text, *The Church and the Churches*, delivered to the 1937 global Second World Conference on Faith and Order, in Edinburgh, clearly testifies. He believed that "the union of the churches is a thing which cannot be manufactured, but must be found and confessed, in subordination to that already accomplished oneness of the Church which is in Jesus Christ."[9] For Barth, the union of the churches was nothing short of "one unanimous confession"[10] without "taint of compromise, or of an assent to forms and formulae of union which would camouflage division without transcending it."[11] Barth encourages the churches, The Salvation Army included, to both deepen their internal theological reflection and engage in ecumenical discussion. He concludes that "only in our own church can we listen to Christ"[12] and "with humble but complete sincerity endorse the confession of our own church"[13] in such a way that confessions come "into the open, over

9. Barth, *The Church and the Churches*, 39.
10. Ibid. 41.
11. Ibid., 43.
12. Ibid., 49.
13. Ibid., 51.

against each other, in sharp and surprising contrast"[14] and we allow "thesis and antithesis well thought out to meet each other face to face."[15]

The highly pragmatic and activist nature of Salvation Army mission and service, has, from its founder William Booth's example, generally undervalued theological reflection. Barth offers a challenge to the Army's emerging ecclesiological conviction and practise, when he says that, "it is vital that once more in every church, in its own special atmosphere and thus with an ear attentive to Christ, real sober strict genuine theology should become active."[16] Ultimately therefore the aim of this study is, with the help of Barth, to demonstrate what it means for The Salvation Army to deepen theological reflection upon its identity and to engage wholeheartedly in an ecumenical journey with the churches, towards the goal of the visible unity of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

14. Ibid., 57.
15. Ibid., 58.
16. Ibid., 59.

Part One

Emerging Salvationist Ecclesiology

Introduction

This book proposes that there have been three defining phases in the emerging ecclesiological conviction and practise of The Salvation Army. The first phase began when William Booth and his wife Catherine, fresh from their independent itinerant holiness revivalism in England and Wales, took leadership of a group of "lay missioners" working from a tent in Whitechapel, London, and set about adapting holiness revivalism to the particular challenge of London's East End, with its stark poverty and low church attendance. During this phase, 1865–1878, the Booths, after a quick succession of several named organizations, ultimately founded "The Christian Mission." Characterized by William Booth's naïve declaration that he was not creating another sect or church, this phase was deeply influenced by the Booths' understanding of the current trans-Atlantic holiness revivalism that they so eagerly exploited. They could not foresee the eventual size, impact and influence of the organization that they had initiated.

The second phase emerged in the rapid growth and organization of a movement that quickly established the quasi-military identity and structure of an Army. In an ecclesial sense this phase dates from the failed negotiations for co-operation with the Church of England which fizzled out in the early 1880s, galvanizing Booth's perception of his Army as a kind of spiritual emergency service within the Church. The phase began with the Christian Mission's change of name to The Salvation Army in 1878, and characterizes the incipient and institutionalizing period of its first two Generals, William, and his son, Bramwell Booth, to the year 1929, though may for the purposes of this study be extended to the inception of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948. It was a phase in which The Salvation Army, whilst still not claiming to be "a church," was nevertheless in its own opinion, and within its own militaristic and missional terms of reference, to be reckoned as an equal

partner, alongside other major denominations, as "part" of the universal Christian Church. It was a position which enabled The Salvation Army enigmatically to be a founding member of the WCC, whilst still officially disavowing that it was a church.

The third phase represents the development of this emerging conviction and practise, to The Salvation Army's contemporary ecclesiological understanding. It charts briefly the influence of twentieth-century ecumenism upon The Salvation Army, and in particular the WCC invitation to respond to the Faith and Order paper *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (*BEM*), in which it found itself having to reflect more fully upon its own idiosyncratic ecclesiological convictions. The ecumenical movement, including *BEM* and the Army's response to it, has proved to be the catalyst towards the recent publication of a brief official clarification that seeks to outline The Salvation Army's current ecclesiological convictions. In this publication The Salvation Army, which continued for a large part of its history to strenuously deny that it was a church, asserts that in its own understanding it is to be understood in these terms.

The first part of this study represents the charting and analysis of emerging convictions and practise through these three phases, in order to assess their theological character and coherency. It is argued that these three phases also loosely describe three identifiable ecclesial strands that have in the historical development of The Salvation Army become tangled. In the first phase, the dominant influence of holiness revivalism and its espousal of what became popularly known as "aggressive Christianity" inspired the ecclesial strand of a Christian mission, in London's East End. In the second phase, this aggressive evangelical mission logically led to the establishing of the ecclesial strand of a Christian army; The Salvation Army. This quasi-military denomination, with its emphasis upon what it termed "practical holiness" rapidly developed the character of a quasi-missionary religious order within the wider church. Booth likened it to a spiritual emergency service, with a disciplined regime of order, regulation and lifestyle requirements. Finally in the third phase, partly through the familiar sociological development of a denomination, and partly the tentative theological enquiry of a movement exposed to an emerging ecumenical consensus, there has been an attempt to retrieve an understanding of The Salvation Army as a church. These three tangled strands are, for ease of identification in this study, simply termed "mission," "army" and "church." What follows in this first

part of the study is the characterization of these three defining phases, together with the three identifiable ecclesial strands that loosely emerge within them.

1

The Origins of a "Christian Mission"

Introduction

The Methodist roots of William[1] and Catherine[2] Booth and The Salvation Army[3] which they founded, come as no surprise to Salvationists, bred on an understanding of William's teenage conversion in a Methodist chapel in Nottingham. The Salvation Army is viewed as the last of a series of schisms in the history of nineteenth-century Methodism.[4] On the other hand, The Salvation Army's origins in what is termed in this study the "holiness revivalism" of the nineteenth-century "holiness movement," are surprisingly poorly understood in Salvation Army literature, and much is still to be learned about these formative influences.[5] This book argues that William Booth's Methodism was mediated more through these influences, than directly from John Wesley. Paul Rader was right to recognise this in a brief article that just pre-

1. See in particular: Begbie, *Life of William Booth*; Ervine, *God's Soldier*; Stead, *General Booth*; Nicol, *General Booth*; Railton, *The Authoritative Life of General William Booth*; Bennett, *The General*; Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth*.

2. See in particular: Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Catherine Booth*; Stead, *Mrs. Booth of The Salvation Army*; Bramwell-Booth, *Catherine Booth*; Green, *Catherine Booth*; Kew, *Catherine Booth*.

3. The official history is recorded as *The History of the Salvation Army*, in 7 volumes. See in addition: Coutts, *No Discharge In This War*; Rhemick, *A New People of God*; Murdoch, *Origins of The Salvation Army*.

4. See Hattersley, *Blood and Fire*, 31.

5. See Kent, *Holding The Fort*; Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*; Dieter, *The Holiness Revival*; Scotland, *Apostles of the Spirit and Fire*.

dated the research of John Kent and Richard Carwardine, who both linked William and Catherine Booth to holiness revivalism's predominant personalities:

> One can understand William Booth and The Salvation Army's heritage of holiness only in terms of the dynamic spiritual movement within which they were cradled. That movement may have had more to do with what the founders were and The Army became, than with their debt to Wesley and Methodism.[6]

In a letter of 1876 to his eldest son, Bramwell, whom he had been developing as a young leader,[7] William Booth wrote: "Making saints must be *our* work, that is *yours* and *mine*. G.S.R. [George Scott Railton] and others are all for converting sinners and making *workers*. We want *saints*."[8] He can scarcely contain his delight, when a month later he commented on Bramwell's reply:

> He wrote me last week saying that it is the *experimental realisation* and *definite teaching* of the blessing of holiness that alone can make us different from the other organisations around us. I say *Amen*. And only this, it seems to me, can justify us in having any separate existence at all.[9]

This "experimental realisation" and "definite teaching" which lay at the heart of the identity of Booth's mission and "alone" justified its existence as an "organization," can only be appreciated in a brief review of both his Methodist and holiness revivalist origins, in order that their influence on The Salvation Army's emerging ecclesiological convictions and practise may be charted.

William and Catherine Booth as Methodists

Though christened in an Anglican parish church in Sneinton, Nottingham, William Booth (1829–1912) experienced little religious influence at home or religious training at church. After his father died, the impoverished family was forced to move to the Goose Green area. A middle-aged couple took a special interest in him and introduced him

6. Rader, "Holiness, Revival and Mission," 74.
7. See Bramwell-Booth, *Bramwell Booth*.
8. Cited in ibid., 143. See Watson, *Soldier Saint*.
9. Cited in Bramwell-Booth, *Bramwell Booth*, 142.

to the Broad Street Wesley Chapel, where he attended Sunday services, became a member of Brother Henry Carey's midweek class, and in his early teens experienced a life-changing conversion. It propelled him into active evangelism with his boyhood friend, Will Sansom. They "conducted religious meetings on the streets, and led processions on Sunday evenings from street meeting to indoor meeting."[10] When in 1849, at the age of nineteen, he moved to London to find work in the familiar pawnbroker's trade in Walworth, he threw himself into the life of Wesleyan Methodism as a lay preacher.

It was a period of turmoil within Wesleyan Methodism. The so called "Fly Sheet" controversy came to a head in that year.[11] The annual Conference expelled three Ministers, one of whom was Samuel Dunn, Booth's Minister at Broad Street Chapel in Nottingham. Considerable unrest followed from what was considered a heavy-handed response. One hundred thousand Methodists, in sympathy with the reformers, found their membership tickets were not renewed, and were effectively expelled to join congregations with reforming sympathies. One of these members in London was Catherine Mumford (1829–1890). Her biographer records that, "the outspoken manner in which Miss Mumford had expressed her condemnation of the Conference and sympathy with the Reformers was naturally objected to by her class-leader, who remonstrated with her on the folly of her course, reminding her that in identifying herself with the malcontents she would not only forfeit her position in the church she loved, but seriously injure her worldly prospects."[12]

Equally, when William Booth resigned his appointment as a lay preacher with the Wesleyans in the Lambeth circuit, so that he could "better serve my generation by preaching in the streets" his superintendent minister, John Hall, most likely suspecting that he may have sympathies with the reformers, "without reply . . . withdrew my ticket of membership."[13] Mr. Rabbits, a wealthy businessman impressed by his preaching, decided to sponsor him. He preached his first sermon in the Walworth Road Chapel, which had gone over to the Wesleyan Reform movement. In the congregation that day was Catherine Mumford. They

10. Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth*, 13.
11. See Chadwick, *The Victorian Church: Part One*, 380–86.
12. Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Catherine Booth*, 49.
13. Stead, *General Booth*, 37.

soon became engaged to be married and together began a search for a spiritual home through a variety of early Methodist splinter groups. Booth's affections never lay heavily with the reformers and even more so when his opportunities for preaching were limited due to the democratic nature of the reformers belief that "priest and people were one in the sight of God."[14] There followed, at Catherine's suggestion, a brief flirtation with Congregationalism, in spite of what she describes as her husband's love for Methodism "that amounted almost to idolatry."[15]

It did not take Booth long to discover that his theology was out of harmony with a Congregational emphasis upon election.[16] He had never been quite as certain as his fiancée about this venture. He wrote to Catherine:

> It is one thing to forsake Methodism. It is quite another to abandon a doctrine which I look upon as a cardinal point in Christ's redemption plan—His universal love, and the possibility of all being saved who will avail themselves of His mercy.[17]

Within a week of leaving the Cotton End Congregational College,[18] he found his way back into the Wesleyan Reform movement, and was invited to become the minister of a Church in Spalding, Lincolnshire.

After eighteen months in this circuit, he joined the Methodist New Connexion, which in 1797 had been the first of the splinters from Wesleyan Methodism. Booth struggled with what he considered the Reformers' disorganization and democratic inclinations in making decisions that affected his ministry, as indicated by his fiancée Catherine:

> There is not the least security for the future, & the spirit of some may spread & become the spirit of many, and to be dependent on the will of a disorganized society for your position & bread will not be at all congenial to a temperament like yours . . . they are generally so democratical [*sic*], nay, absurdly, extravagantly so.[19]

14. Hattersley, *Blood and Fire*, 48.

15. Begbie, *William Booth*, 1:139.

16. Ibid., 1:139–40.

17. Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Catherine Booth*, 1:74.

18. The six months spent at this college represent the full extent of his formal theological education.

19. Bennett, *The Letters of William and Catherine Booth*, No. CM72, 184. Hereafter *Letters*.

This move is difficult to understand in that the New Connexion had seceded from Wesleyanism largely on the grounds of demanding greater local autonomy and congregational participation. Catherine argued:

> The Reform Movement is no home and sphere for you; whereas the principles of the Connexion you live in your very soul. I believe you will be satisfied, when once from under the influence of your Spalding friends.[20]

The Wesleyan community was principally divided by theological issues of authority and governance, inherited from Wesley. The Booths eventually left the Methodist New Connexion to become independent itinerant evangelists, frustrated by the Conference decision that William should remain a circuit minister in Gateshead, when his talents clearly lay in itinerant revivalist preaching. The decision launched them into an independent campaign, based largely on Methodist chapels that would welcome them. They finally settled in London in 1865, and joined the Special Services Committee's mission work in the East End. It was their Methodism that doctrinally shaped their understanding of that mission. A comparison of the twelve doctrines of the Methodist New Connexion (1838), the seven doctrines of the East London Christian Revival Society (1865), the ten doctrines of the Christian Mission, (1870) and the eleven doctrines of The Salvation Army (1878),[21] shows a remarkably close alignment. In John Rhemick's estimation they were "essentially the same statements of faith,"[22] bearing in mind that more of the New Connexion doctrines were added with each revision. Roger Green confirms that:

> One of the great faults of some of the previous biographies of Booth is that they have failed to understand that he was driven by a particular theological vision . . . not merely broadly Protestant or even generically Evangelical. It was Wesleyan, and Booth's theology of redemption—including his understanding of sin, grace, salvation, holiness—can be understood only if this is taken into account.[23]

20. Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Catherine Booth*, 1:109.

21. See Murdoch, *Origins of The Salvation Army,* 173–75; Rhemick, *A New People of God*, 30–34.

22. Rhemick, *A New People of God*, 34.

23. Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth*, 1. See also Green, "William Booth and Methodism"; Green, "The Salvation Army and the Evangelical Tradition," 51–69. See in particular Green's opposition to Murdoch, "Evangelical Sources of Salvation

Booth later revealed the depth of his own admiration for John Wesley:

> I worshipped everything that bore the name of Methodist. To me there was one God, and John Wesley was his prophet . . . and all that was wanted, in my estimation, for the salvation of the world was the faithful carrying into practice of the letter and the spirit of his instructions.[24]

When Booth addressed the Wesleyan Conference in 1880 he confidently informed them that The Salvation Army was, "the continuation of the work of Mr. Wesley, for we have gone on, only a great deal further, on the same lines which he travelled."[25]

Nineteenth-Century Trans-Atlantic "Holiness Revivalism"

If their Methodist roots offer little surprise to Salvationists, the foremost influence upon the young teenage convert in Nottingham was the visiting American Methodist and holiness revivalist preacher James Caughey. His influence on Booth has not escaped the attention of Salvation Army historians, but his brand of holiness revivalism and the tension that it precipitated amongst the Methodist churches in Britain, who eventually asked him to leave, has not been fully acknowledged. To appreciate the nature of this tension, it is necessary to understand the nineteenth century trans-Atlantic movement of holiness revivalism.

Wesley sent ten of his itinerants between 1769 and 1774, including Francis Asbury in 1771, to largely respond to the unofficial exploits of Methodist settlers in America. Asbury was made "General Assistant" for America in September 1783 and urged by Wesley to "keep to the British standards of the *Notes, Sermons and Minutes*."[26] According to Timothy Smith, despite Asbury's best efforts, Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection "did not occupy a chief place in early Methodist preaching in the New World . . . The moral needs of rural and Western America directed attention to the more elemental work of saving sinners."[27] The rise of interest in holiness in urban America may have been sparked by the publi-

Army Doctrine," 235–44, a view later modified in Murdoch, *Origins Of The Salvation Army*, 65–66. See also ibid., 173–75, appendix A.

24. Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Catherine Booth*, 1:52.
25. Booth, "The General's Address at the Wesleyan Conference," 1.
26. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast,* 409.
27. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, 115.

cation in 1825 of Timothy Merritt's *Treatise on Christian Perfection, with Directions for Obtaining That State*. Merritt was a well-known minister in the New York City District, and his book appeared in 33 editions by 1871. A wave of other publications followed. The General Conference of 1832 called for a revival of holiness, and in 1841 Luther Meyrick and the Wesleyan Methodists seceded from the parent body citing both their objection to compromises on the issue of slavery, which they were against, and the neglect of Christian perfection teaching. In 1842 the Methodists and Oberlin College, where Charles Finney was Professor of Theology and Asa Mahan was President, combined in holiness conventions around the New York City and New England area, where both James Caughey and Phoebe Palmer were active in Methodism. Finney, Mahan, Caughey and Palmer were four leading personalities in holiness revivalism, who each made a significant impact across the Atlantic, an impact that did not escape the attention of William and Catherine Booth, eager to absorb revivalist influences that would further their cause.

Melvin Dieter, in *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century*, describes a developing synthesis between American revivalism and Wesleyan perfectionism that he believes can only be understood by looking back to both Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley for inspiration. Jonathan Edwards with his revival theology and methods shaped American revivalism in a way that his successors carried into the renewed search for holiness in the 1830s. Edwards' basic principle of evangelism was that the moment of salvation was "now." The gospel message was urgent and it was the immediate duty of everyone who heard its call to repent and be saved. The synthesis developed as Methodists translated this current sense of immediacy in the expectation of conversion, into the sphere of sanctification, or Christian perfection. As Dieter explains:

> To the Wesleyan perfectionists who believed that the sinner's response to the revivalist's appeal for justification by faith still left him, as a Christian convert, short of a life of uninterrupted love for God and man; it was but a short step given the prevailing mood and methods of American revivalism, to move in with the 'second blessing' message . . . of a second crisis in the Christian's life . . . The sense of immediacy was also there; the time to enter the "higher life" was "now."[28]

28. Dieter, *The Holiness Revival*, 19.

Dieter finds clear testimony to this development in the writings of Harriet Beecher Stowe who commented,

> that pressing men to an immediate and definite point of conversion produced immediate and definite results and so it may be found among Christians pressing them to an immediate and definite point of attainment (i.e. entire sanctification) will, in like manner, result in marked and decided progress.[29]

Holiness revivalism, as practiced by the Booths, is crucial to an understanding of the Salvationist ecclesiology that has emerged, especially in regard to an emphasis on individual salvation, a subjective focus on the conditions that the individual must fulfill in their "attainment" of personal justification and sanctification and the pragmatic methods that this revivalism espoused. Many of the itinerant or lay revivalists that most influenced the Booths, visited churches, but were not themselves primarily focused upon the life of the community. Their concern was the personal salvation and sanctification of individuals. These key individuals and their influence require introduction, before examining the outworking of this American synthesis in the ministry of William and Catherine Booth.

James Caughey

James Caughey was a Methodist minister, yet more pertinently a product of what Dieter describes as, "all that was American in the nineteenth century promotion and practices of the Wesleyan emphasis."[30] He was a leading exponent of this American synthesis of holiness revivalism—its message of entire sanctification and its pragmatic methods geared towards an immediate response. In his campaign in Britain (1841–1847), he brought both a renewed emphasis upon Wesleyan perfectionism to a Methodist tradition that had begun to lose its focus upon a second work of grace, and a new sense of urgency and immediacy in receiving it.

Born on 9th April, 1810, in the north of Ireland, he emigrated with his family to America, grew up in New York State, and became a Methodist, turning away from his family's Calvinism. He was caught up in the local revival, in 1830. Within two years he was a preacher on probation, in a further two years a deacon and by 1836 an ordained el-

29. Cited in ibid., 20.

30. Ibid.

der. Caughey became a successful preacher and a prolific writer, with dramatic appeals for the blessing of holiness. He arrived in England in July 1841, and at the Manchester Wesleyan Methodist Conference was offered a pulpit in Dublin by Thomas Waugh. His first sermon led to a five-month revival with seven hundred converts recorded. Not all in the Conference approved of his methods, but he was welcomed in particular by the Wesleyan Reformers, one of whom was the Rev. Samuel Dunn, minister of Broad Street Wesley Chapel in Nottingham, where Booth was a teenager. Caughey spoke in Nottingham and made a profound and lasting impact upon the young William Booth.[31] Whilst Booth's conversion pre-dated by two years his introduction to Caughey,[32] he recalled Caughey's immense impact upon him:

> He was an extraordinary preacher filling up his sermons with thrilling anecdotes and vivid illustrations, and for the straightforward declaration of scriptural truth and striking appeals to the conscience, I had up to that time never heard his equal . . . Multitudes were saved, many of whom became the most useful members of the society. All this had a powerful effect upon my young heart. The straightforward conversational way of putting the truth . . . the common-sense method of pushing the people up to decision . . . the corresponding results that followed, in the conversion and sanctification of hundreds of people, made an ineffaceable impression on my mind, filling me . . . with confidence in the power and willingness of God to save all those that come unto Him.[33]

Richard Carwardine records that "after nearly six years of revivals . . . including two trips to the Continent, Caughey could claim to have been instrumental in over twenty thousand conversions and to have brought nine thousand to experience 'entire sanctification.'"[34]

Booth witnessed and approved the dramatic, if divisive impact of holiness revivalism in Caughey's ministry, fresh as it was from the cauldron of New York State's "burned-over" district.[35] Carwardine suggests that whilst British Methodism instinctively understood revivalism, pos-

31. Sandall, *The History of The Salvation Army,* 1:3; Kent, *Holding The Fort*, 38; Dieter, *The Holiness Revival*, 60; Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 102.

32. See Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth*, 237 n. 36.

33. Booth, "How We Began," 8.

34. Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 111.

35. See Cross, *The Burned-Over District*, 173–84.

sessing "an Arminian theology that sanctioned an unrestricted appeal to all men,"[36] American Methodism was in Caughey's estimation "clearly more emotional, revival-centered, and tolerant of innovation than that of British Wesleyans."[37] He notes the measure of distrust that lingered in British Methodism against American revivalism and its camp meetings, from the earlier influence of Lorenzo Dow and the emergence of the Primitive Methodist movement with which he was associated:

> Dow and camp meetings had not inoculated Wesleyan Methodists against revivalism as such, but they had injected them with a fear of the schismatic tendencies of revival and a sense that American evangelicalism was less well disciplined than it ought to be . . . When . . . James Caughey, arrived to give them effect, he would find a residue of distrust for things American that no amount of practical success could ever remove.[38]

Despite the impressive statistics of those converted and sanctified,[39] Caughey's critics detected something new in his methods. In contrast to the spontaneity of previous revivals, such as those of the English Methodist, William Bramwell (1759–1818), "Caughey's meetings . . . were premeditated, part of a preconceived campaign to stir a religious awakening, more or less without regard to the initial receptiveness of the audience."[40] Carwardine comments that, "with James Caughey the day of the revival technician who was paid for his services had arrived."[41] Amongst the many elements in Caughey's preaching were methods he learned in the revival fervour of 1830s America, such as "knee work" (prayer meetings after preaching), and the altar call, where Caughey would invite people to move forward to either the communion rail or the "penitent's form" to make an immediate response. This method, Carwardine explains, was seen as "the 'most remarkable' feature of his

36. Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 103.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid., 107.

39. See the statistical list given in defense of Caughey in 1847 by a Wesleyan Methodist, cited in Kent, *Holding the Fort*, 312; and in Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 4, 112–14.

40. Ibid., 127.

41. Ibid., 128.