“Especially the Poor”: The London City Mission, 1835-1914

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For LCM

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Abstract

This dissertation considers the work of the London City Mission (LCM) between 1835 and 1914. It presents an analysis of the evangelical faith, agency, and achievements of LCM's working-class missionaries as they lived and worked among people whom many have believed to have been religiously ignorant and indifferent. This was not the case. This dissertation is not a study of LCM's success measured by the details of new evidence of working-class churchgoing and churchgoers, but an analysis of the way in which LCM's missionaries' undenominational religious teaching became available to substantial numbers of those whom they sought to reach in anything they might be doing, and everywhere they might be met. It is a dissertation whose perspective is different. It is a discussion of working-class Christian faith that was experienced at a significant distance from the sacraments and structures of institutional and denominational religion. Its evidence is drawn from the hitherto unknown eye-witness accounts of LCM's missionaries that are contained within LCM's extraordinary archive. This study details the fundamental principles of LCM, identifies its unique character, and reveals the unrecognised scale and scope of their evangelical mission. It discusses LCM's working-class missionaries, their backgrounds, their motivation in their work, and illustrates the way in which their spiritual imperative in mission was inseparable from their deep social concern. It explores the diversity and creativity of the missionaries' agency. It demonstrates how over generations, in their districts and fields of special mission, because of their mutual understanding, and support, LCM's evangelical mission thrived and was accepted as an integral part of everyday life by hundreds of thousands of working-class people.

Abbreviations

BFBS British and Foreign Bible Society

CCA Christian Colportage Association

CMS Church Missionary Society

COS Charity Organisation Society

CPAS Church Pastoral Aid Society

GCM Glasgow City Mission

LCM London City Mission

LCMA London City Mission Archive

LFM London Female Mission

LFPRI London Female Preventive and Reformatory Institution

LMA London Metropolitan Archive

LSE London School of Economics

MCM Manchester City Mission

O-AM Open-Air Mission

PRO Public Record Office

RSU Ragged School Union

RBM Ranyard Bible Mission

RTS Religious Tract Society

SRA Scripture Readers Association

TNA The National Archives

LCM Sources

LCMAR London City Mission Annual Report

LCMM London City Mission Magazine

LCMMB Minute Books of the London City Mission Committee

LCMECMB Minute Books of the London City Mission Examining Committee

LCMLSDR London City Mission Life Service and Disablement Records, 1835-1915.

Style

Throughout this work, grammar, spelling, the use of capital or lower case letters, italics, and punctuation, in quotations from manuscript and published primary sources have **not** been regularised.

'The object of this Society shall be to extend the knowledge of the Gospel, irrespective of particular tenets in regard to Church government among the inhabitants of London (especially the poor).'

David Nasmith, 'London City Mission Minutes. London May 16th 1835.'[1]



Figure 1. unknown children, LCMA

[1] LCMMB, 16 May 1835.

Introduction

This dissertation has been written as a consequence of realising that the unexplored evidence of the missionaries of the London City Mission has the potential to transform our understanding of working-class religion. It is a study of the evangelical faith, agency, and achievements of LCM's working-class missionaries as they lived and worked among people whom many have believed to have been religiously ignorant and indifferent. This was not the case.

LCM's sources and their interpretation

LCM's uncatalogued archive contains copies of their published Magazines and Annual Reports, their Committees' Minutes Books, staff records and correspondence, together with missionaries' published biographies, autobiographies, and tracts. LCM's Magazines include the transcribed speeches of all of those who spoke at their meetings. They reveal hitherto unknown and substantial contributions from leading religious, social, and political figures, Shaftesbury for example. A number of their missionaries also spoke at each of LCM's meetings, where they introduced themselves, and described their work in detail to their audience. These important texts have the character of oral evidence. LCM's archive's rarest contents, however, are the manuscript autobiographies, biographies, tracts, journals, reports, missionary applications, essays, documentary photographs, and lantern slides that were created by the missionaries themselves.

Many hundreds of missionary journal accounts were published in LCM's Magazines, the majority anonymously so. In order to release the full potential of their evidence it has been necessary to establish a means whereby each author can be identified. Between 1835-1914, LCM employed 2,133 missionaries. A database of LCM's missionaries has been prepared from a combination of LCM's archive material and with reference to Ancestry's sources. The database includes dates of service, age upon application, previous employment and income, marital status, residence upon application, denomination, and from LCM's listings in each Annual Report, the location of a missionary's specific mission by year, that is to say his district or field of special mission. These have been entered together with the details of promotion, or the ending of his LCM appointment, and, if appropriate, subsequent employment, and his death. To these fields have been added interview notes, biographical notes, reference to the missionary's reports' inclusion in Magazines, discussion of him in LCM's publications, obituaries, and references to entries in Booth's agents' notebooks or his own manuscript biographical, autobiographical, and published works. It is from the creation of this database that the author of each of LCM's published journal or annual reports becomes known, the context of his mission located, and the opportunity for comparative analysis from any field of data has been established.

Scholarship

Contemporary witnesses who worked with LCM's missionaries, Mayhew, Mearns, and Booth, for example, understood the scale, scope, and influence of LCM's undenominational mission, but historians have not cited their expressed admiration for its character and achievements. Scholarship has not ignored, but often contained only infrequent and passing mention of LCM, and only Donald Lewis has made LCM a major focus of his research and publications. In *Lighten Their Darkness* the central theme of Lewis' study was the detail

and timing of the gradual resolution between 1828-60 of the long-standing conflict between evangelical Nonconformity and the Church of England.[1] He revealed the complexity of constantly shifting religious and political factions and clarified intricate patterns of cause and effect. He explored the difficulties created for evangelical mission by Church hostility to extra-parochial lay-agency and from evangelical disunion. Lewis's 'elemental' finding was that a shared concern for urban evangelisation helped to bring the established Church and Dissenting bodies together, where in pan-evangelical urban mission and of that of LCM in particular, this gap had been bridged substantially before 1850. He described a rare liberality of spirit in the catholicity of the lay and clerical supporters of LCM, and demonstrated how Evangelical Anglican incumbents had supported LCM in large numbers by 1860. Lewis acknowledged that a significant limitation upon his research was its concentration on the formative years of LCM's urban mission. Consequently, he observed, intrinsically interesting discussions, including the message and strategies of mission, and the response of the poor to evangelical mission were minor, not major themes. When Lewis concluded that urban mission was the most influential religious crusade to affect the Victorian working classes during the nineteenth century, implicit in his conclusion was an understanding that the role of LCM in the years following 1860, was yet to be detailed.

Lewis reflected upon his earlier work in his recent publication, *In Darkest London*, wherein he presented a transcript and analysis of the manuscript mission journal of Joseph Oppenheimer who worked in LCM's Dudley-street district, St Giles, between 1859-62, when

[1] D. M. Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness, The Evangelical Mission to Working-Class London, 1828-1860* (London, 1986).

he resigned from LCM in ill-health.[2] The journal, dating from September 1861 - May 1862, was introduced in *Lighten Their Darkness*, and Lewis used its entries as a means to assess the 'evangelicals' effectiveness' in the evidence of the work of a single agent.[3] Lewis' research was based upon his understanding that Oppenheimer's journal, located in the keeping of the church of St Giles'-in-the-Fields, appeared to be the only surviving manuscript journal of its kind from the nineteenth century.[4] Lewis acknowledged that in his appointment Oppenheimer was a well-educated outsider, a middle-class teacher of ancient languages who was German-born and Jewish. Lewis recognised that Oppenheimer was not typical of LCM's missionaries, yet he argued that because he believed that his views and his methods had all been adopted 'wholesale from the London evangelicals' that in some ways, he may well have reflected more clearly than others the version of Christianity that he had embraced.[5]

How does this dissertation sit alongside *In Darkest London*? They are very different, because Lewis leaves his reader with the overwhelming sense that Oppenheimer was a loner, and lonely in his mission. As this study will show, the work of an LCM missionary rested not in isolation, but substantially within his district's mission history, in the presence and engagement of others' local agency, and with the support of those among whom he lived. It is important to recognise that these influences were of overarching importance within the broader and continually developing fields of LCM's mission.

[2] D. M. Lewis, *In Darkest London, The Manuscript Journal of Joseph Oppenheimer, City Missionary* (Vancouver, 2018).
[3] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.131.
[4] Ibid., p.133.
[5] Ibid., p.132.

It is not an exaggeration to say that LCM's historiographical field has been 'owned' by Lewis, and since the publication of *Lighten their Darkness* in 1986, when LCM has appeared in wider historiography it has been by reference to Lewis' work. In 2018, in introducing *In Darkest London,* Lewis reflected upon what he described as historians' 'overlooking of the whole religious enterprise that was represented by the city missions and similar organisations operating in the poorest areas of London to a surprising degree'.[6] It has been a paucity of sources that has prevented a clearer understanding among historians of the nature of working-class evangelical mission in London.

In the historiographical field of working-class religion in the nineteenth century, much of its literature sits within the debate about whether or not the urban working classes were disengaged from religion. With a generally pessimistic approach in early studies, influenced by the dominance of the secularisation paradigm, historians described the disengagement of the working classes from religion as an important stage in the emergence of a more secular society.[7] With revisionist optimism, historians identified continuing strength in urban working-class religion.[8] They reappraised censuses of religion, examined the social composition of churches' congregations, and illustrated vital church communities.[9]

[6] Lewis, *In Darkest London,* p.xxii.
[7] See, E. R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City* (London, 1957), and K. S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England* (London, 1963).
[8] Extensive contributions from this perspective have been made by Cox and Brown. See, for example, C. G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain, Understanding Secularisation, 1800-2000* (London, 2001).
[9] Notably in the evidence of M. Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society: Oldham and Saddleworth 1740-1865* (Oxford, 1994), and P. Hillis, *The Barony of Glasgow, A Window onto Church and People in Nineteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2007).

Historians have considered the vision and experience of urban mission of Thomas Chalmers and his influence upon David Nasmith.[10] In studies of the churches' missions to the working classes in towns and cities, historians have analysed their motivation, demonstrated their support in welfare, and detailed individual achievements and failures.[11] They have explored the role of women in missions' funding and delivery, and the diversity and significance of the social activities that they offered.[12]

Throughout decades of scholarship, however, the sightlines of historians' research have rarely changed in one fundamental and critical respect. Predominantly, they have been fixed and framed by their church-based points of reference, and that it is why the perspective of this dissertation is different. It is not about the working classes and the churches. It is a study of LCM's missionaries' evidence of a working-class Christian faith that was experienced at a

[10] See, S. J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth in Scotland* (Oxford, 1982), I. J. Shaw, 'Thomas Chalmers, David Nasmith, and the Origins of the City Mission Movement', *The Evangelical Quarterly,* 76/1 (2004), pp.31-46, and S. Orchard, 'David Nasmith (1799-1839), Philanthropy Expressed as Campaigning' in C. Binfield, G. M. Ditchfield, and D. L. Wykes, (eds) *Protestant dissent and philanthropy in Britain, 1660-1914* (Woodbridge, 2020), pp.95-112. See also, LCM's self-account, I. Howat and J. Nicholls, *Streets Paved with Gold, The Story of the London City Mission* (London, 2003), pp.26-8.

[11] See, for example, analysis of the motivation and reception of the Carrs Lane missionaries in Birmingham, in G. Robson, *Dark Satanic Mills? Religion and Irreligion in Birmingham and the Black Country* (Milton Keynes, 2002). For a wide-ranging discussion of the churches' role in the provision of social welfare see, L. Husselbee and P. Ballard, (eds), *Free Churches and Society, The Nonconformist Contribution to Social Welfare 1800-2010* (London, 2012). For an illustration of the diversity in experience of Liverpool's Anglican churches' local missions, see A. Wilcox, *The Church and the Slums, The Victorian Church and its Mission to Liverpool's Poor* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2014).

[12] For compelling evidence of the involvement of women in their cities' missions; in a discussion of Sheffield, see, A. Twells, *The Civilising Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850: The "Heathen" at Home and Overseas* (Basingstoke, 2009); in Belfast, see J. N. Ian Dickson, 'Evangelical Religion and Victorian Women: The Belfast Female Mission, 1859-1903', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 55/4 (2004*),* pp.700-25, and A. Johnson, *Middle-class life in Victorian Belfast* (Liverpool, 2020). For a discussion of social activities, for example, the spiritual consequences of competition between religion and recreation, see, D. Erdozain, *The Problem of Pleasure: Sport, Recreation and the Crisis of Victorian Religion* (Woodbridge, 2010).

significant distance from the sacraments and structures of institutional and denominational religion.

Studies of mission, and of working-class religion in London

Bartlett, in his discussion of the churches in Bermondsey observed how by 1880, if the mainstream denominations were in some difficulties, in comparison the undenominational missions were climbing 'a pinnacle of success' but that much of the evidence of their work had been 'lost' and was 'obscure'.[13] In his study of Lambeth's churches, Cox concluded that there had not been a widescale working-class disengagement with religious ideas. He observed, 'there is some evidence that working-class and poor people took over some institutions and made them into something which they could consider their own' and he argued that the people of Lambeth thought of themselves as Christians but insisted on defining their own religious beliefs rather than taking them from clergymen.[14] It is possible to consider LCM's evidence in the context of these local studies and to address and to support their occasionally tentative conclusions, because evidence of the way in which working-class Christians worshipped together, but not within the institutions of either church or chapel, and of how this took place not only in Bermondsey and Lambeth, but across London, lies in the accounts of the missionaries.

This dissertation makes close reference to Williams' study of popular religion in Southwark.[15] They share their focus in being about ordinary people and the nature and expression of their religious ideas in the day-to-day life of their localities, where they are concerned

[13] A. B. Bartlett, 'The Churches in Bermondsey, 1880-1939' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1987), p.92.
[14] J. Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society, Lambeth 1870-1930* (Oxford, 1982), p.269.
[15] S. C. Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture in Southwark c.1880-1939* (Oxford, 1999).

largely with individuals and details. They are both drawn from the first-hand and self-written evidence of their subjects. Williams argued that she extended the characterisation of popular belief given by Bartlett and Cox into its more diffusive aspects, not only within the context of popular culture, but a super-empirical sphere drawn from folk discourses. Williams defined popular religion as a generally shared understanding of religious meaning including folk beliefs as well as formal and officially sanctioned practices and ideas that operated within a loosely-bound interpretive community. The missionaries' evidence reveals that from their perspective working-class religiosity was more nuanced, and more spiritually reflective than Williams identified, because beyond the influence of church-based religion, for many working-class men and women their faith included a deep and personal relationship with God, which held individual meaning, and which represented more than an engagement with nature, man's place in it, and man's culturally shared morals, or ethics. LCM's missionaries' local influence predated the period of her study by generations, and each year, LCM's mission was experienced by hundreds of thousands of people in their homes, places of work, streets, and public-houses. The missionaries' evidence moderates her conclusions about popular religion and her discussion of how its origins lay in the way in which church-based Christianity had been incorporated or filtered within popular culture, because LCM's undenominational teaching engaged with and recognised popular religion, and as a consequence popular religion was experienced and tempered by the working classes not only through a coalescence of folk and church-based discourses, but directly in its daily engagement with LCM's evangelical mission.

Although LCM's presence in the historiography of mission in London has been slight, the Settlement movement has featured prominently, but the questions which historians have explored in their studies of Settlements are pertinent for a study of LCM. Scotland's research

revealed as many as 50 separate missions affiliated to universities and public schools operating in London, but unlike LCM's mission, they barely survived the generation which founded them.[16] Barnett witnessed their demise, and he concluded that Settlements had been inclined to become too much like the parish that they had been designed to supplement.[17]

In his recent study of the intentions and strategies of Settlement reformers, Ginn argued that late-Victorian cultural philanthropy was nothing so simple as a middle-class attempt to impose bourgeois values and inculcate docility in an urban working class whose true interests lay elsewhere.[18] Scotland acknowledged that it was not difficult to level accusations of condescension against the Settlers but his consideration of whose needs were being met in their action, and for whom the missions were established, ranged more broadly. In a field wherein explanations might appear to be self-evidently uncomplicated his analysis went further. He considered the motivation of those who founded and colonised the Settlements and concluded that in the final analysis it was neither social control nor self-interest but Tractarian spirituality. It is a conclusion which is mirrored in this dissertation's evidence and understanding of LCM's evangelical missionaries' motivation.

The work of the London City Mission, 1835-1914

This dissertation is divided into three parts each focussing upon one of its central themes; the unique character of LCM and its mission, LCM's agency, and LCM's achievement.

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[16] N. Scotland, *Squires in the Slums, Settlements and Missions in Late Victorian London* (London, 2007). See also S. Koven, *Slumming, Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (Oxford, 2006), pp.228-81.
[17] L. E. Ellis, *Toynbee Hall and the University Settlements* (1948), p.167, cited in Scotland, *Squires,* p.210.
[18] G. A. C. Ginn, *Culture, Philanthropy and the Poor in Late-Victorian London* (London, 2017), p.274.

Chapter 1 Introduces LCM and illustrates why and how from among Britain's home mission societies, and with particular reference to Glasgow and Manchester City Missions, LCM's work represented a singular expression and delivery of Nasmith's plan, developed from the ideas of Chalmers, for urban mission. It discusses LCM's fundamental and distinctive characteristics in its mission strategy, undenominational teaching, complex operational structure, understanding of locality, and funding. It reveals the hitherto unknown extent to which LCM's missionaries assisted Booth's agents in his research, and how with an understanding of LCM's position concerning temporal relief, their approach to mission met with his approval. It charts LCM's development, and presents their mission's data, by year, in an overview of LCM from 1835-1914, which describes their expansion, income, introduction and continuation of fields of special mission, and gives a statistical summary of their missionaries' activities.

Chapter 2 discusses the men whom LCM appointed as missionaries. It establishes their occupational and denominational backgrounds, considers their applications and appointment, and identifies LCM's concerns in their selection process. From self-written testimony, and extending beyond the scope of the Society's own records and publications, the missionaries' motivation to mission is explored. Following upon the overview presented in Chapter 1, this chapter highlights the missionaries' increasingly important role within the development of LCM's fields of mission, and it discusses the multi-faceted nature of their influence upon those of influence within society.

The second part of this study considers LCM's agency in their mission. Chapter 3 illustrates the way in which LCM's spiritual mission was inseparable from their temporal agency, and how this was reflected in their work among prostitutes. It demonstrates that in a field that

has been discussed widely by historians, the pioneering work of LCM's missionaries and their wives in rescue has not been recognised, and in examples from the evidence of the missionaries, the character of their engagement with LCM's spiritual mission is revealed.

The nature of LCM's moral leadership is analysed in Chapter 4, which discusses their special mission in public-houses. LCM was not a temperance society and their influence on the question of drink is considered with particular reference to Harrison's conclusions that London's experience was singular.[19] It is argued, from the evidence of LCM's missionaries, that this was as a consequence of their understanding of the place of public-houses in working-class lives, and how their spiritual mission was taken into, and accepted within them.

The Victorian Sabbath has been characterised by historians as an emblematic feature of nineteenth-century life, but the day they described was a middle-class Sabbath. In Chapter 5, LCM's working-class missionaries' evidence is presented with reference to Sunday labour, Sunday trading, and Sunday worship. LCM's concerns included their anxiety to reach those among the working-classes who laboured on Sundays and who were unable therefore to attend public worship. The way in which LCM's concerns were addressed, and how it was done with the support and agency of working men is demonstrated in a discussion of their commencement of their special missions among navvies, and lamplighters and gasmen. The missionaries understood the complexity of issues surrounding Sunday trading, and recognised how the practice often exploited the working classes. With reference to Sunday trading in Lambeth, it is revealed through his manuscript reports' evidence how LCM's missionary, Edwin Blanchard responded to the issue when he commenced what were

[19] B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians* (London, 1971).

widely-attended and locally supported Sunday morning open-air meetings. In an analysis of Sunday worship in Bethnal Green at the turn of the twentieth century, the manuscript journals of LCM's missionary, Henry Lockyer, reveal a working-class missionary and his wife's religious agency in working with those who lived in one of the poorest of LCM's districts. He described the working-class informality of the character of their Sundays' meetings, and the scale of local engagement with his mission as a consequence. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the extent to which LCM's missionaries' meetings' attendances were omitted from the *Daily News* Census of worship, and with close reference to McLeod's conclusions about working-class religion in London, its implications for our understanding of working-class religious practice.[20]

In the final part of this study, LCM's achievements are discussed in case studies of their district and special mission. The focus of Chapter 6 is upon LCM's district mission in Ada-street, Poplar, during the 1890s. Its main sources are John Galt's manuscript autobiography, and his manuscript autobiographical account of his mission in Poplar. This chapter presents and considers his evidence of his district's Christian activity and its Christian character. It is placed within the context of Galt's interview given for Booth's research, together with that of the interview of his contemporary in Settlement mission, James Carroll, Vicar of the parish of St Frideswide's. It is in this case study that popular religion is discussed, and its character is analysed and qualified from the perspective of LCM's mission experience. The creative achievements of Galt's work are considered alongside the mission strategies of a number of his LCM missionary contemporaries. It is demonstrated how their mission work was deeply rooted in their own working-class life experiences, and the locality of their districts.

[20] See H. McLeod, *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City* (London, 1974), and *Piety and Poverty Working-Class Religion in Berlin, London and New York* (New York, 1996).

It describes how working-class men and women influenced LCM's missionaries' work because of their mutual understanding. In conclusion, the continuing achievement of LCM's mission in Galt's Ida-street district is explored with reference to the manuscript evidence of one of his successors, Bertie Goodwin, who commenced work there in 1912.

As a counterpoint to a focused account of a mission in a particular place, Chapter 7 presents a view of LCM's special mission to London's cabmen. LCM described the work with affection as 'an old and favourite field' and their missionaries' accounts of it begin in 1844. Their evidence illustrates the missionaries' knowledge of and empathy with the men among whom they worked. It demonstrates how the cabmen joined with LCM's missionaries to reform their trade's working practices, and reveals the ways in which they held faith, discussed religion, and how they in turn supported and developed LCM's evangelical mission. It is a chapter which details specifically the spiritual awareness of working-class men.

Limitations and what is revealed

It is inevitable with recognition of the potential of LCM's archive, that this dissertation will serve as an introduction to its subject and its sources, and that it represents a point of departure for future scholarship. It is not a theological analysis. Its contribution, and the central theme of this study, is the way and the extent to which the working classes engaged with LCM's evangelical mission. It allows historians to put aside the view that working-class faith, and especially how it was secured and expressed through LCM's mission, had been wholly dependent upon the upper and middle classes for its sustenance and vitality. Examining how the poor experienced and understood religion has been made possible by LCM's extraordinary record of ordinary people.

Chapter 1. The London City Mission.

In 1865, LCM reflected

> While thus one generation has passed away and another generation has succeeded, it is satisfactory to the Committee to record that the principles of the Society have continued unchanged. Great varieties of opinion have gained ascendancy from time to time during the generation. But these changes in the outer Church have not affected the Mission. The Committee see no reason now to deviate from the principles on which they determined to act 30 years since. And the experience of that period only endears those principles to them the more.[1]

Their conclusion would have applied in equal measure to their operations in 1914. This chapter discusses LCM's fundamental principles, demonstrated in their adherence to Nasmith's ideal of urban mission, and it gives an overview of their unique achievement.[2] Its headings are drawn from LCM's paper, published in 1852, and entitled, '*The Claims of the London City Mission, Founded on its Ten Distinctive Characteristics*'.[3]

Lewis concluded that as the century progressed, LCM's mission experience in London became representative of what happened throughout England, and that their means of operation and evangelical strategy set the pattern for smaller interdenominational ventures.[4] This dissertation argues that this was not necessarily the case, and its evidence

[1] *LCMAR, 1865,* pp.2-3.
[2] LCM's Constitution was transcribed by Nasmith within the minutes of the Society's First Meeting, see LCMMB, 16 May 1835.
[3] *LCMM, 1852*, pp.1-24.
[4] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.4.

supports McLeod's contrasting conclusion that urban religion operated in individual circumstances across place and time, and that it was substantially modified at a local level by highly variable factors.[5]

Understanding of both the influence of Chalmers and the strategic principles of Nasmith are essential in a discussion of nineteenth century undenominational mission in Britain. Within the historiography of urban mission Chalmers has been prominent. Callum Brown observed that Chalmers' fame came to rest on his vision of the troubled industrial city which ensured that from the 1820s to the 1880s he was the most widely quoted source on urban religion.[6] In contrasting research Stewart Brown and Roxborough have discussed Chalmers' urban mission.[7] Brown, in his biography, described Chalmers' failure to reach the working classes, neither gaining their confidence nor convincing them that their condition would improve within his ideal parish communities.[8] He concluded that the industrial working classes were being lost to organised religion and that Chalmers proved unable to reverse this trend.[9] Although Brown's study's focus was not upon Chalmers' mission work, he distilled Chalmers' experience and substantial body of writing and identified three critically influential elements within his social ideal; the principle of 'locality', 'aggression' in the concept of domestic visitation, and his emphasis on education and instruction as the most effective response to poverty.[10]

[5] H. McLeod, 'Religion in the City'*, Urban History Yearbook* (Cambridge, 1978), pp.18-19.
[6] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain,* p.24.
[7] Brown, *Thomas Chalmers*, and J. Roxborough, *Thomas Chalmers: Enthusiast for Mission. The Christian Good of Scotland and the Rise of the Missionary Movement* (Carlisle, 1999).
[8] Brown, *Thomas Chalmers,* p.352.
[9] Ibid., p.372.
[10] Ibid., p.376.

David Nasmith formed the Glasgow City Mission in 1826, the Dublin City Mission in 1828, and the New York City Mission in 1830.[11] During his tour of America and Canada, 16 city missions were initiated. In 1832, he founded both the Edinburgh and Paris City Missions. In 1835, he came to London and rented a small house in Hoxton. It was there on 16 May 1835, that the London City Mission was founded.[12] Rev John Garwood, Vicar of St Mary's, Spitalfields, offered to superintend a missionary and the first LCM missionary appointed, William Barfoot, who had been a schoolmaster in the City, was to LCM's district of Norton-folgate. At the end of their first reported year, LCM employed 40 missionaries. Despite Chalmers' influence upon Nasmith, and Chalmers' endorsement of GCM, their models of urban mission differed considerably. While embracing Chalmers' social ideals in the principle of locality, and aggression in the concept of domestic visitation, Nasmith envisaged that his missions would be established and operate in every respect upon an undenominational basis, that they would offer no temporal relief to those whom they visited, and that they would directly appoint and manage their own paid lay agency.

Lewis charted LCM's early crisis during 1837, at which time, fearing that the Society would become 'shipwrecked' and to secure Anglican support, LCM's Committee changed the Society's Constitution in order to formally establish an equal representation of Anglicans and Nonconformists within LCM's Committee and nominated Examiners.[13] Concluding that this action had prescribed denominational division, Nasmith resigned his office within LCM. Nasmith continued to contribute towards the establishment of new home mission societies, including the Manchester City Mission in 1837, but he died in 1839.

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[11] J. Campbell, *Memoirs of David Nasmith* (London, 1844), p.135.
[12] Ibid., p.287.
[13] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* pp.55-60.

In 1859, in LCM's Magazine, Rev John Garwood, one of LCM's two Secretaries, reported from The Birmingham City and Town Missions Conference to which LCM had sent a delegation and at which he had spoken.[14] He advised their readers that in 1838, the number of Missions had been 141, in 1848 it was 363, and in 1858, the number had risen to 666.[15] He wrote that he was certain that the success of LCM rested in its catholic basis and the security of all parties in its Constitution. He argued that if the Society had been tempted to yield under the pressures of the denominational difficulties that had arisen in its early years, LCM would not have survived.[16] He observed that many kindred associations had been established throughout the country, where some had never flourished and others, notably those in Manchester and Glasgow, had attained great prosperity and efficiency.[17] He commented in detail upon the differences between the Missions of London, Manchester, and Glasgow, and it is with reference to these Societies, that LCM's distinctly different experience of mission will be discussed in this chapter.

It is a Society to promote Man's Spiritual Welfare

LCM's mission reflected its commitment to their spiritual purpose. When in 1852, LCM set out its distinctive principles, the promotion of spiritual welfare was cited as their first principle.[18] LCM observed that a large proportion, or by far the larger proportion, of London's Societies were 'for the body', LCM's plea was 'What is the death of the body when

[14] *LCMM, 1859*, pp.89-103.
[15] Ibid., p.91.
[16] Ibid., pp.92-3.
[17] Ibid., p.99.
[18] *LCMM, 1852*, pp.1-24.

compared with the death of the soul? And what the loss of temporal, when compared with the loss of everlasting life?'[19]

In 1852, LCM calculated that 26,000 people died each year in London. And of the 26,000 deaths of the body, they argued, '*one* soul outweighs them all.'[20] It is important to recognise that this was the perspective from which LCM viewed their mission, and to note the way in which their spiritual arithmetic influenced LCM's Committee in the choices that they made, and the daily work of the missionaries. In 1888, Arthur Kinnaird spoke at LCM's Annual Meeting.[21] Summarising LCM's view he explained

> Let us remember that the want of London is, what I believe it has ever been, individual house to house, soul to soul work.
>
> We must not think that anyone is not worth visiting, or think that anyone is outside the pale of the Gospel. I heard this afternoon of an incident in the Peninsular War. The British army were told to take up fresh ground. They had to do it in the face of the French army. They were ordered to cross a river, so as to place it between them and the enemy; and when they got there, they saw a woman, a poor camp-follower, between the two armies. The English were on one side, and the French were pouring in their fire on them. The woman held up her hand, and an English officer plunged in, and a French officer plunged in. Their firing ceased, and a cheer went up from both sides when they brought her back. How many might have said, "It is not worth risking a soldier's life for one poor person." But let us display the same zeal, and may hereafter hear those words addressed to *us,* "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."[22]

In 1900, LCM described where and how they understood souls were won by their missionaries. They reflected that it was in a private dwelling, in factories, workshops, on the

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[19] Ibid., p.5.
[20] Ibid.
[21] *LCMM, 1888*, pp.158-60. Speaking in 1888, Arthur Kinnaird, 11th Lord Kinnaird, paid tribute to his father. Arthur Kinnaird, 10th Lord Kinnaird, a banker, and Liberal MP, was a Member of LCM's Committee, 1844-83. See, F. Prochaska, 'Kinnaird, Arthur Fitzgerald' (1814-87), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, September 2004), https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15631 (29 August 2021). LCM listed its Committee Members each year in their Annual Reports.
[22] Ibid., p.160.

silent canals as well as on the noisy highways of the city, and even in public-houses, and explained that was why it was the *personal* dealing which mostly occupied the time and attention of the missionaries, and how by pressing home the claims of God upon an individual conscience, men and women were separately won for Christ.[23]

Temporal relief

Chalmers asserted that religious instruction and temporal relief could not be advantageously imparted by the same individual in Britain's large cities.[24] Although maintaining that it was a rule of the Society that LCM's missionaries should not distribute temporal relief, they facilitated particularly local agency by establishing the principle that a missionary should pass on the intelligence of need to those whom he knew in his district who were in a position to help in cases of distress. In 1839, LCM's stance was detailed in their Committee's minutes

> That as the object of this mission is purely of a spiritual nature it is not deemed consistent or expedient that the missionaries should be almoners of the temporal bounty of the benevolent on their districts being assured that their religious labors will be hypocritically sought for if the poor have the idea that the missionary has it in his power to distribute money: if he fail, or is partial in such distribution that he will be treated with indifference or contempt. At the same time this Committee cannot but express their deep interest in the comfort and temporal welfare of the poor, & have no objection to the missionaries recommending such cases as may appear to them truly deserving either to their superintendents or other benevolent individuals, & induce them to relieve such cases without it appearing to the poor to have been done by the missionary.[25]

As a consequence of LCM's recognition of the problems inherent in the direct distribution of temporal relief, and following Nasmith's design, the experience of their missionaries from

[23] *LCMAR, 1900,* pp.xiii-xiv.
[24] *LCMM, 1847*, pp.141-8, wherein LCM cited and discussed Chalmers following his death.
[25] LCMMB, 2 April 1839.

the earliest years of their work was different from those employed by other missions. Thomas Finegan worked for the Carrs Lane Congregational Mission in Birmingham between June 1837 and May 1838.[26] Finegan had come to Birmingham directly from Ireland, and he worked among the Irish in his district. The Carrs Lane missionaries were expected to distribute tickets for food, clothing, and fuel as well as to pass on charitable donations. Finegan became drawn into local battles of politics and poverty. He wrote to newspapers, sent reports to the Statistical Society, and campaigned to address the discrimination that he witnessed against the Irish in the distribution of relief. After 10 months in the work, he was released from his employment. In 1837, John Pullin was LCM's missionary in their Tash-street district, Spitalfields.[27] Pullin, an Anglican, had been a teacher in the Baldwins-gardens Infant School before he was introduced to LCM by Baptist Noel who became his Local Superintendent.[28] In his Annual Report, Pullin wrote

> Distress has prevailed to a very alarming extent in the district during the past year, arising in a great measure from a want of employment, and the severity of the winter: and had it not been for that timely relief which has been so kindly afforded by the District Visiting Society of St John's – The Strangers Friend Society - and a subscription raised in the parish of St Andrew for bread, potatoes, coals, &c., there is reason to fear that many must have died of actual starvation. And even then, had it not been for the visits of your missionary many of the aged, infirm, and most deserving, would have pined away in misery, without deriving any benefit from these benevolent Societies; being either unable or unwilling to make application: but they were sought out and comforted, not only with the bread that perisheth, but with the bread of heaven.[29]

The contrast in experience between the missions of Finegan and Pullin is important. What emerges from LCM's evidence is that their support came not only from local Societies, and

[26] LCM's minutes noted that the first Application to become an LCM missionary had been received from Thomas Finegan, a missionary at Dublin City Mission, LCMMB, 16 May 1835. For a detailed discussion of the Carrs Lane Missionaries, see Robson, *Dark Satanic Mills,* pp.171-85.
[27] LCMMB, 9 March 1836, noting Pullin was funded by the Tash-street Working Men's Association.
[28] Ibid., 11 January 1837.
[29] *LCMM, 1838,* p.112.

those with means through the connections of LCM's Local Superintendents, but with the engagement of friends and neighbours of all classes. From their inception, LCM's diverse but local evangelical networks for relief enabled the missionary to focus upon his spiritual mission for as long as he was able to connect with them, and they had the resources for him to be able to do so.

LCM carefully monitored the application of their rule concerning temporal relief. LCM's missionaries, and wives, did not distribute relief on behalf of other Societies, although LCM's Committee and Secretaries often received and refused requests for them to do so. LCM did not allow their Local Superintendents to use their missionaries to distribute relief. Very rarely, their rule was temporarily suspended, when the time was recognised by LCM's Committee to be one of crisis, in the years of cholera epidemics, and exceptionally severe winters, for example. In 1882, LCM established a Winter Relief Fund for which they invited contributions directly from their supporters in their magazines, thereafter donations to LCM for the Fund were sought each winter. LCM's magazines detailed the way in which through their mission rooms and halls, the missionaries provided hot dinners, cocoa, bread and butter meals, and distributed surplus food that had been collected from restaurants in the City, all of which was undertaken with the practical assistance of local working-class people. LCM's missionaries' evidence detailed also how with co-operation they ensured that their relief work did not conflict with or duplicate that of other Societies, and how it varied from district to district, for example, in their providing meals at different times of day from the Salvation Army, when they were working in the same localities.

LCM and Charles Booth

Gibson-Brydon argued in his analysis of Charles Booth's work that by the time that he began the 'Religious Influences' series, Booth had become convinced that religious organisations, churches, chapels, and missions, were ruining the otherwise positive nature of unadulterated religious influence because of their charitable activities, where in philanthropic work London's churches, rather than inculcating values of self-sufficiency were creating dependence and thus moral ruin.[30] Booth's ambitions, Gibson-Brydon advised, were to create a clear set of 'scientific' maps and labels which would enable those who distributed charity in the metropolis to see the hierarchy of working people in their visiting districts and thereby distinguish who should receive help and who should not.[31] Moreover, he added, the interviews sought to convey ideals and methods of charity control.[32]

LCM co-operated fully with Booth in his research. Between June 1897-December 1900, Rev Robert Dawson, who was LCM's Secretary, and 108 missionaries gave interviews to his agents.[33] They included Henry Lockyer, and John Galt whose district missions in Bethnal Green and Poplar are discussed in later chapters. LCM's missionaries' contributions to Booth's research, which were recorded in his agents' notebooks, together with details of their Local Superintendents, have been fully identified and collated for the first time in the preparation of this dissertation.

[30] T. R. C. Gibson-Brydon, *The Moral Mapping of Victorian and Edwardian London, Charles Booth, Christian Charity, and the Poor-but-Respectable* (Montreal, 2016), p.7.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] London School of Economics, Charles Booth archive, Religious Notebooks, B45-313. Hereafter, referenced, for example, Booth/B/172.

When Booth's work is viewed, as Gibson-Brydon suggested, it can be understood as an audit of London church charity. LCM's substantial absence from Booth's published works lies in this understanding of his purpose. Despite the volume of LCM's evidence in his agents' notebooks, Booth discussed LCM in fewer than 700 words in his Religious Influences Series' Summary. LCM, in their not being an instrument of church charity in Booth's view, thus stood apart from his investigation's purpose.[34] He gave an insight into his opinion of the character of LCM's mission

> The rules of the Society forbid almsgiving, and the relations of the missionaries with the poor are by this made all the better. In some sort the rule is evaded, as, people often stand by ready to help through the missionary, or follow any hint that he may give them. This roundabout method affords, however, some guarantee of care, and the ways in which the restriction is got over are hardly to be accounted an abuse.[35]

Booth's agents recorded what they perceived to be the missionaries' relationship with those who lived in their districts and he concluded

> The place these missionaries fill and the part they play are quite unique: their experiences are related with the *naivete* of a medieval saint. Not too far removed in social status from those they visit – father confessor at once and friend; themselves absolutely satisfied of the truth and sufficiency of the simple Gospel they preach; neither distrusted nor pandered to; …they are more than all the rest, in tune with the sentiments of the people.[36]

During the early years of the twentieth century, LCM's missionaries' accounts continued to reveal how they and their families lived among the people whose calls for temporal aid were loudest, but they were also the people with whom they worked to relieve distress and at times starvation in their locality. Subsequent chapters will illustrate how they drew upon

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[34] C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London: Third Series: Religious Influences: Volume 7, Summary* (London, 1902), pp.289-90.
[35] Ibid., p.290.
[36] Ibid.

each other's support in a far broader and more complex exchange of experience than the provision of temporal relief.

It is a catholic and unfettered Society

Nasmith's ideal, framed within LCM's Constitution, was that 'the object of this Society shall be to extend the knowledge of the Gospel, irrespective of peculiar tenets in regard to Church government'.[37] In 1868, LCM wrote

> The Society's teaching in every parish and district of the metropolis is one and the same. It simply leaves alone matters of difference, and unites in the great verities of the Christian faith.[38]

Shaw's discussion of GCM in the nineteenth century detailed the extent to which their paid agents were ministerial probationers or divinity students, employed not for life, but to gain experience before ordination as future clergymen, and overseas missionaries.[39] He noted that John Paton, while a missionary with GCM, became an elder in his church.[40] In 1859, Garwood reported that GCM's agents were effectively employed and superintended by Glasgow's Churches'.[41] In contrast, LCM's Rule was for their missionaries to remain wholly undenominational in their mission's presentation. In 1852, LCM wrote

> If an individual were to accompany their missionaries in their visits from one month's end to another, he would find it impossible to determine the private views of the missionary on church order or discipline.[42]

[37] LCMMB, 15 May 1835.
[38] *LCMAR, 1868,* p.28.
[39] Shaw, 'Thomas Chalmers', pp.41-3.
[40] I. J. Shaw, 'John Paton and Urban Mission in Nineteenth-Century Glasgow', *Scottish Church History,* 35/1 (2005), pp.171-3.
[41] *LCMM, 1859*, p.99-100.
[42] *LCMM, 1852*, p.19.

The central theme of *Lighten Their Darkness,* Lewis explained, was the relationship between Anglican and Dissenting Evangelicals, where he demonstrated their willingness to engage with LCM in significant numbers.[43] The context for LCM's undenominational rigour, however, which was upheld in every aspect of their work, lay in the scale of their mission's spiritual ambition, the broad and distinct basis of its Constitution, and their determination to draw a line around their independence. It was a line that they did not cross. They understood and jealously protected the advantages which they perceived for their mission in doing so

> It collects together the poor for prayer and familiar exposition of the Scriptures, which no exclusively Church Society has yet been able to do….and on the other hand it obtains an amount of aid and influence in the prosecution of its work, which it could not expect to receive if it were exclusively a Dissenting Society.
>
> These features open it to opportunities of usefulness of a larger order than possessed by kindred Societies…and their operations on a narrower basis.
>
> The large territory of the Metropolis, in its deplorable condition is *only* to be reached by a Society with a Constitution such as that of the London City Mission.[44]

LCM recognised the value of the support that it received and the scope of the influence that they secured in their work by its remaining unimpaired by denominational division. The impact of LCM's undenominational mission on the character of the faith of the working classes is discussed in this dissertation's case studies.

It is a lay Society

In Nasmith's blueprint for urban mission, a Society not only selected the districts in which it found visitation to be most needed, and the men they believed best adapted for the work

[43] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.267.
[44] *LCMM, 1852*, p.21.

assigned to them, but they also became themselves the superintendents of their own operations. LCM's uniquely complex operational structure included the direct supervision of their missionaries by the Society's General Superintendents and in addition, as Nasmith had envisaged, the individual and voluntary *local* superintendence of each missionary by a clergymen, minister, or laymen who was resident in, or immediately connected with the district (or field of special mission) in which he was working. In their strategy, and inclusivity, LCM's Committee took advantage of as much support and opportunity for co-operation as was possible from within what they perceived to be London's vast mission field.

In 1861, LCM observed that a large number of Provincial Missions had always refused to allow the superintendence of their missionaries to be in the hands of ministers.[45] Both the Manchester and Edinburgh City Missions abandoned the use of voluntary Local Superintendents in their early years, using instead only directly employed General Superintendents to supervise their missionaries.[46] LCM noted of MCM's decision that it had come about because Manchester was a predominantly manufacturing town with a small body of influential laity, their largest supporters financially, and who were apprehensive of 'ministerial influence' but at the same time MCM acknowledged that they had lost valuable clerical support.[47] In correspondence with LCM, MCM observed how 'extremely desirable' LCM's position was in comparison with reference to their own 'causes of soreness' but added that they understood that Manchester was differently circumstanced from London, and in consideration of the views of its employers of labour, they concluded that their own system was best suited to themselves.[48]

[45] *LCMM, 1861*, p.177.
[46] Ibid., p.161.
[47] Ibid., pp.176-7.
[48] Ibid.

LCM's appointment of a Local Superintendent, if he were a clergyman or minister, made a significantly different provision for the character of his relationship with LCM's missionary from the way in which a lay agent might be employed to assist him in his parish through other Societies in London. The CPAS made its grants to clergymen, and left the appointment of the lay agent with the clergyman himself.[49] After the appointment, the Society did not control or direct the agent. The rules of the SRA differed only slightly from those of the CPAS, wherein appointments were vested in the Committee, but thereafter the reader was wholly under the control of the incumbent.[50]

LCM's General Superintendents were almost always promoted to the position from among the missionaries. They were not responsible for any of the financial aspects of the districts, but they read each journal and report and they visited the missionaries in their work. In later years they oversaw their training. LCM's complex superintendency was detailed each year to its supporters in their Annual Report, in which all of LCM's voluntary Local Superintendents were listed alongside the missionary, and their district or field of special mission.

From an analysis of LCM's lists, taken at decadal intervals it can be illustrated that in their early years LCM appointed relatively equal numbers of clergy and laymen as Local Superintendents. [**Table 1**] By the 1870s there were more laymen than clergy among their number but their details reveal that they were predominantly the Local Superintendents of missionaries in special mission, representing approximately two-thirds to four-fifths of their number. In an analysis of the denominations of the clergymen, from the 1850s onwards,

[49] *LCMM, 1851*, p.45.
[50] Ibid.

there were greater numbers of Anglican Local Superintendents of missionaries in both district and special mission, but in the early years of the twentieth century the balance between Anglican and Nonconformist Local Superintendents had equalised. **[Tables 2.1 and 2.2]** It is not known, however, whether there had been fewer Anglicans among LCM's lay Superintendents at any time, because their denominations have not been ascertained.

Table 1: Overview of LCM's Local Superintendents, 1841-1911.

	Missionaries	District Mission				Special Mission				Totals			
		Clergy	%	Lay	%	Clergy	%	Lay	%	Clergy	%	Lay	%
1841	63	14	29	35	71	0	0	0	0	14	29	35	71
1851	251	106	46	126	54	3	37	5	63	109	45	131	55
1861	389	184	52	169	48	8	35	15	65	192	51	184	49
1871	385	200	57	148	43	18	64	10	36	218	58	158	42
1881	449	200	54	169	46	23	36	41	64	192	44	241	56
1891	504	146	42	205	58	31	37	53	63	177	41	258	59
1901	460	113	39	176	61	23	24	71	76	136	36	247	64
1911	395	119	48	130	52	13	19	54	81	132	42	184	58

Sources: *LCMAR, 1841-1911*.

Note: The number of superintendencies accounts for every missionary **with** a superintendent but not those without in each year

Table 2.1: LCM's Local Superintendents in all mission.

	1846		1866		1886		1906	
	total	**%**	**total**	**%**	**total**	**%**	**total**	**%**
Anglican	29	19	109	29	103	22	72	17
Nonconformist	32	22	73	20	68	15	57	14
Laymen	83	55	184	50	248	54	211	49
None	8	4	5	1	43	9	87	20
	152		**371**		**462**		**427**	

Sources: *LCMAR, 1846; LCMAR, 1866; LCMAR, 1886; LCMAR, 1906.*

Table 2.2: LCM's Local Superintendents in special mission.

	1846		1866		1886		1906	
	total	**%**	**total**	**%**	**total**	**%**	**total**	**%**
Anglican	0		9	28	13	15	10	8
Nonconformist	0		3	9	8	10	6	5
Laymen	4	80	20	63	45	53	68	57
None	1	20	0		19	22	36	30
	5		**32**		**85**		**120**	

Sources: *LCMAR, 1846; LCMAR, 1866; LCMAR, 1886; LCMAR, 1906.*

From LCM's evidence, the appointment and management of LCM's Local Superintendents demanded a great deal of firm diplomacy and discretion. In 1861, Garwood commented

> There are, of course, great differences of efficiency [among the missionaries]; but great as these are, they are really trifling compared with the differences in the efficiency of their local superintendents. The difference with them is immense.[51]

A Local Superintendent was required by LCM to satisfy himself that the missionary was conforming to LCM's regulations in his mission. LCM detailed their requirements for a Local Superintendent's engagement each year in their Annual Report. He was required to read the missionary's journal and schedules, to meet him weekly, to report to LCM monthly upon their work in the completion of a Monthly Schedule, to visit the missionary, to attend his meetings occasionally, and to aid and encourage him. LCM asked particularly that incumbents did not delegate their role to one of their assistants due to pressures of time, and they set out the character of the relationship between Local Superintendent and missionary to which they aspired

> It is not a master to be set over him that the missionary requires. His work is very arduous, full of difficulties and dangers requiring frequent encouragement to be given to him, and continual sympathy to be manifested towards him.[52]

LCM were careful in their placements of missionaries with respect to their superintendence, however, their overarching concern remained in their not compromising the catholicity of the Mission in the relationship. For example, in 1866, Joseph Woolard complained that he could not work with the Army's Military Chaplains and maintain the catholic principles of

[51] *LCMM, 1861*, p.170.
[52] *LCMM*, *1861*, p.168 and pp.178-9.

the Mission in his appointment by LCM at the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich and LCM discontinued their engagement.[53]

A more complex problem for LCM lay in situations where the relationship between a missionary and his Local Superintendent was successful to the extent that it might lead to their jointly breaking LCM's rules. In 1867, Charles Double who was LCM's missionary in their Old-ford district of Bethnal Green, was dismissed by LCM for preaching in chapel, although it had been established that it was after his Local Superintendent, Rev Seddon, of Victoria-park Congregational Church, had given him permission to do so.[54] LCM encouraged a missionary to resign to enter the direct employment of a clergyman or minister who was their Local Superintendent by agreement with them rather than that they should break LCM's rules.

In LCM's most successful working relationships their mission flourished. The involvement of both lay and clerical Local Superintendents brought them far greater rewards than broader financial support. In 1861, LCM noted that they hoped that the supervision of a missionary might be considered to be considered 'an honour.'[55] In a study of the records of those who became Local Superintendents the diversity and influence of those who became involved with LCM in this role are truly remarkable. In LCM's special mission especially so. The men who laboured upon London's enormous civil engineering projects were visited by LCM's Missionaries to the Navvies. Their Local Superintendents included Sir Joseph Bazalgette and Charles Douglas Fox. Bazalgette superintended missionaries from 1877, until his death in 1891. His work was continued by his son, Edward, who was also a civil engineer. They

[53] LCMMB, 12 March 1866.
[54] Ibid., 4 November 1867.
[55] *LCMM, 1861*, p.17.

supported the missionaries in their initiatives to establish evening classes for men who could neither read nor write, and provided the materials for them to do so.[56] With increasing literacy among the men, they gave additional funding for LCM to supply all of their labourers with copies of *The British Workman,* the publication that the missionaries had identified that the navvies preferred to read.[57] From the missionaries' evidence, Bazalgette and Fox committed themselves to spending a significant amount of time with their missionaries, and they took an interest in their families and their wellbeing.

In Poplar, LCM worked closely with Trinity Congregational Chapel's ministers who, without interruption became Local Superintendents and sponsors of LCM's missionaries' work in district mission close by the Chapel, which was located in East India Dock-road, from its opening in 1851, and continued to do so in 1914. Rev James Chadburn was Local Superintendent to James Aulds, in LCM's Trinity-chapel district in 1888.[58] In his speech given at LCM's Annual Meeting, he revealed how he relied wholly upon Aulds' work to reach those in his locality who never came to church

> Now I ask you, how could any minister, or how could any number of ministers, that are possible in a place like the East End of London, hope to compete with this enormous growth of population? …Now, I say, if a minister had two lives, and if each one of his days was composed of 48 hours, and if he had four arms with which to work, and half-a-dozen feet to run to his work with, he could not fairly overtake all that naturally falls upon him. Then, how can he hope to touch the dense mass of life which is around him?....Well, I hold, it altogether depends upon the men themselves, upon the Missionaries.[59]

[56] *LCMM, 1875*, pp.185-92.
[57] *The British Workman* was published in the format of an illustrated broadsheet newspaper.
[58] Aulds, a weaver from Ballymoney, joined LCM in 1869. He was a Congregationalist, see LCMMB, 23 August 1869.
[59] *LCMM, 1888*, p.169.

Among LCM's clergymen Local Superintendents, Daniel Wilson, Vicar of Islington, was outstanding. He identified and funded new fields of mission in Islington. He supported LCM's mission to the Fever Hospital in Liverpool Road which commenced in 1848, wherein theirs was the only Christian agency in the Hospital among its sick and dying patients. In 1864, he suggested to LCM's Committee a field of special mission to the Drovers and Slaughtermen in the Metropolitan Cattle Market, which he undertook to sponsor and superintend.[60] His genuine friendships in superintendency were recorded in detail by the missionaries in their journals. Their expansion of the work, which made no institutional connections with Islington's Anglican churches, and their extensive engagement of the men whose employment connected them with the Market made it one of LCM's most successful fields of special mission.

It is an aggressive Society

LCM's mission strategy; the aggressive system and locality

Following Nasmith and Chalmers' mission ideals, LCM argued that Christianity was essentially an aggressive system, and that it was ever intended that it should be propagated by aggressive means.[61] LCM described, however, the way in which they were an aggressive Society *in an especial manner* because they took the Gospel from house to house, and from room to room, passing over no family, however ignorant, or however sinful.[62] Observing that churches, chapels, and schools effected no benefit except to those who went to them, and that those who most needed them were exactly those who did not come to them, they

[60] LCMMB, 5 December 1864.
[61] *LCMM, 1852*, p.12.
[62] Ibid.

went, they declared, where other agency ordinarily did not reach.[63] With Biblical reference, they concluded, the stray sheep were represented in the Parable as more important to be sought after than even those within the fold.[64]

LCM developed their mission field within 'necessitous' districts with a combination of extremely detailed research and their increasing experience. In 1843, they presented their overview of the attendance at public worship in London.[65] They calculated that for a population of 2,103,279 persons, 351,290 sittings were provided by the Established Church and 250,228 were provided by the various classes of Nonconformists.[66] They recorded that the regular attendance on the morning or evening of the Lord's Day in every place of worship within eight miles around St Paul's Cathedral during January 1843, had not exceeded 400,000 persons.[67]

LCM believed that Church extension was not the means whereby the poor could be reached, declaring

> Even if there were enough churches and chapels to accommodate them, it is not enough to say, they ought to attend. Educated and intelligent persons in respectable neighbourhoods needing a church or chapel will attend as soon as the place is opened, but it is not so with the illiterate and neglected poor.[68]

On 27 November 1842, LCM had recorded the attendances at the morning services of four of Bishop Blomfield's Bethnal Green churches that had been open for twelve months, St Peter's with 1200 sittings; 194 adults, 149 children; St James the Less with 1200 sittings; 97

[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] *LCMM, 1846,* p.3.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.
[68] *LCMM, 1843*, p.7.

adults, 162 children; St Philip's with 1200 sittings; 26 adults, 194 children and St Andrew's, with 1200 sittings; 40 adults, 138 children where it was added, that on one Sabbath morning in September there were only seven adults present.[69] They reported their findings and noted

> These are FACTS and plainly show that some additional agency is required, and of another class, to interest the people. It is well known that we do not state these facts to blame the clergy, or Dissenting ministers; far otherwise. It is the agency of the Mission which precisely meets the circumstances of those who know no Sabbath.[70]

LCM understood that there were insufficient numbers of clergy in London for them to be able to engage with the poor. They analysed the 1841 Census, and identified that nationally there were 23,543 persons committed to the religious instruction of a population of 18,844,434.[71] They calculated that for London with its population of 1,873,676 *pro rata* there should have been 2,354 clergy within this number. There were, however, 1,275. LCM drove home their point

> If we proceed to compare the numbers of what may be called our spiritual staff with those who are occupied in the supply of the superfluities of life the comparison is no less humiliating. There are in London 1,025 individuals employed in the exclusive manufacture and sale of artificial flowers.[72]

LCM expressed their unchanging understanding of the need for lay agency in London in 1910

> There is a general consensus of opinion among the Missionaries that the Society has acted wisely from the very first in making house-to-house visitation the primary duty of every Missionary. It is this which is, perforce, so sadly lacking in the Churches. The many engagements for religious services and the varied duties which devolve upon Clergymen and Ministers of the Gospel, in attending the spiritual needs of members

[69] Ibid., p.9.
[70] Ibid., p.10.
[71] *LCMM, 1845*, pp.77-8.
[72] Ibid., p.79.

> of their congregation, render it impossible for them to devote much time, if any, to the visitation of *non-church-goers.*[73]

In 1838, LCM described the research which they undertook *before* a missionary was introduced to his district.[74] In their overview of work which they planned to undertake they had identified 433 districts, and estimated that at least 400 missionaries would be required. A missionary's district was defined by the streets, courts, and lanes which it contained but it was established by the numbers of families which he was to visit within the footprint. By 'visitable houses' they advised, is meant '*all* of the poorest and lowest class, and all the small shops in more private streets and all small houses inhabited by the humbler classes, parts of which are let out to other families.'[75] His district would have contained approximately 500-600 families. Missionaries were required to live within one mile of their districts.[76] LCM's districts were reviewed each year, not least because their specific funding was critical to their continuation, but a footprint might be adjusted to reflect an increasing or changing population, the visitation of workplaces, the work of a 'kindred' Society, or the commencement of local special mission.

In 1841, LCM's missionaries visited in 51 districts, and by 1860, this had increased to 349. In 1890, LCM's missionaries worked in 405 districts. Initially LCM described that they worked within a 5 mile radius of St Paul's Cathedral. From 1860, the field of LCM's mission extended within a 12 mile radius of Charing Cross.

LCM's districts did not follow parish boundaries. When Rev John Garwood, spoke at the Birmingham City and Towns Mission Conference in 1859, he argued that one of the greatest

[73] *LCMAR, 1910,* p.10.
[74] *LCMM, 1838*, pp.165-73.
[75] Ibid., p.166.
[76] *LCMM, 1849*, p.236.

problems that he perceived to be faced by other Societies was when the districts that their agents occupied coincided with the ecclesiastical districts of clergymen.[77]

LCM addressed clergymen's concerns concerning their district's footprints with firm diplomacy. On 8 April 1872, it was noted that Rev Edgar Jacob, Curate in charge of St James, Bermondsey, complained of the appointment of a missionary in his parish without LCM having had conference with him.[78] He argued that the area was 'already well worked with other agency.' However, on 15 April, it was recorded that following an interview with Rev Jacob it was agreed that the missionary be retained.[79] On 19 February 1900, it was noted that Rev Thomas Turner, Vicar of St Saviour's, Fitzroy-square, asked that Ebenezer Goozee might be withdrawn from the part of his district which lay in St Saviour's parish.[80] LCM's District Secretary investigated and reported that the district was one, 'needing visitation as much as any in London' and it was agreed that 'Mr Turner be informed that the Committee did not see their way to withdraw Mr. Goozee.'[81]

LCM defended not only their analysis of need concerning the districts in which they worked, but their missionaries' use of public space within their districts for open-air mission. On 24 May 1869, it was reported in LCM's Committee minutes that Mr Foster, the Superintendent of the City Police, had called at the Mission house to express the wish of the Lord Mayor, and of the Commissioner of City Police that Walker's open-air services before the Exchange on Sunday afternoons should be discontinued, on the ground of the Secularists claiming a like privilege.[82] On 31 May, it was recorded that Mr McArthur, Mr Hogg, Mr Fowler, Mr

[77] *LCMM, 1859*, p.101.
[78] LCMMB, 8 April 1872.
[79] Ibid., 15 April 1872.
[80] Ibid., 19 February 1900.
[81] Ibid., 26 February 1900.
[82] Ibid, 24 May 1869.

Phillips, Rev Garwood, and Rev Windle, had waited during the week on the Lord Mayor with reference to the Services in front of the Royal Exchange, and that the Lord Mayor had 'agreed to their being resumed on Sunday next.'[83]

In 1913, LCM's confidence in the value of their strategy was robust

> This domiciliary visitation of the people in regular and persistent endeavour has, from the first, distinguished the work of the Society. It is a difficult and arduous undertaking, but the method has no equal.[84]

Mann cited Chalmers in his Census Report, observing of London, 'the influence of locality is powerless here: the area is too extensive and the multitude too vast' yet Chalmers 'principle of locality' was secured in LCM's uniquely small and necessitous districts to great effect.[85] With expansion and specialisation, LCM did not revisit Nasmith's strategy in the context of their mission; it remained in people's homes, workplaces, and wherever they might be met within their locality. Callum Brown concluded that one of the most remarkable features of the aggressive system was the opening up of the British working-class home.[86] Every LCM missionary recognised that to have been invited to cross the threshold of a home, even if it were only a room, was a meaningful moment of opportunity for individual soul-winning. The aggressive system of the missionaries' visitation, established at LCM's inception, remained consistently at the heart of LCM's work, and it underpinned their achievement.

[83] Ibid., 31 May 1869.
[84] *LCMAR, 1913,* p.48.
[85] Cited in Brown, *Death of Christian Britain,* p.25.
[86] Ibid., pp.46-47.

LCM and Mission Halls

In 1865, LCM discussed their mission strategy with reference to the relative significance of domestic visitation and the meetings which their missionaries held on their districts

> Reverting again to the 2,000,000 visits of the year, the Committee cannot but express their conviction that the domestic visitation of the people must ever be regarded as the main and most important work of the Society, to which all else needs to be made subservient…. Next in importance to the visitation are probably the familiar meetings held by the missionaries.[87]

In his unpublished thesis Tidball discussed English Nonconformist home mission between 1796-1901.[88] He observed that he had identified a common framework of experience to which all denominations, despite their differences, had been subjected. Against the grain of his discussion, however, he illustrated a different picture of LCM. He argued that LCM had made a more significant and novel contribution to home mission than any other mission Society, wherein they had truly reached the poorest of the working classes. In his analysis of why other missions had not succeeded, he concluded that not only had they failed to plan a home mission strategy, but critically, he argued, it was in their focus upon buildings that they had diverted time, money, and personnel away from person-centred mission. He believed that the buildings that mission societies had constructed had created geographical inflexibility, and had fostered middle-class attitudes of respectability in their fine architecture.

[87] *LCMAR, 1865,* p.13.
[88] D. J. Tidball, 'English Nonconformist Home Missions, 1796-1901' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Keele, 1981), pp.242-66.

In 1884, MCM's first purpose-built Mission Hall opened.[89] Its meeting room held 350 persons, and the building included three classrooms. During 1885, MCM opened six Mission Halls, and in 1886, MCM completed the construction of their Shaftesbury Institute and School, within an impressive building which had cost £1,600 to construct.[90] By 1889, when they employed approximately 93 missionaries, MCM owned 27 Mission Halls and Rooms.[91] In 1889, when LCM employed 491 missionaries, they explained, 'The Committee never provide such rooms for the Missionaries, the funds of the Society being devoted entirely to the support of the living agent.'[92] In 1897, LCM detailed the status of the halls and rooms which their missionaries used; 136 rooms were lent to LCM *by* local friends, 126 were rented by local friends *for* LCM, and 18 were placed in trust for the use of the missionaries.[93] LCM's mission halls were extremely modest and domestic in character; from illustrations within LCM's magazines, Nasmith Mission Hall, in Hoxton, or the Minto-street district's Mission Hall in Bermondsey reflect the way in which they were integrated among their districts' homes and businesses. [**Figures 2 and 3**] It can be demonstrated from LCM's Committee minutes that LCM's occupation of unremarkable buildings within their districts was a consequence of a determined strategy, rather than a lack of opportunity for them to create prominent and permanent institutions. LCM had worked closely with the Billingsgate Christian Mission since its establishment following when in 1861, their missionaries had been participants in the activism which led to its Sunday closure.[94] Subsequently the

[89] R. Lees, *The Cry of Two Cities, A Memorial of Ninety Years' City Mission Work in Manchester, Salford, and District* (London, 1927), p.84.
[90] Ibid., p.85.
[91] Ibid.
[92] *LCMAR, 1889,* p.xviii.
[93] *LCMAR, 1897,* p.xxi. In practice, as with Edwin Blanchard, it was often the missionaries who 'found' a suitable place which was rented by a local Committee, and financed by local collections, see Chapter 5.
[94] J. M Weylland, *Round the Tower* (London, 1874), pp.139-42.

Billingsgate Christian Mission had invested in the construction of a large Mission building, the Billingsgate Mission Hospital, which contained offices, a dispensary, a library, and meeting rooms. LCM continued their mission among those who lived and worked in the district. The district's poorest residents, their missionary Thomas Vicary noted in 1889, were mostly widows who were engaged as office cleaners in the City.[95] LCM's missionaries had arranged their own rentals in differing locations over the years, but Vicary described his own mission room as being, 'Far down approached by side doors and Jacob's ladder, a cavernous cellar, 30 feet below ground, a crypt-like arch' yet with 'an attendance each morning, noon, or afternoon of two hundred guests.'[96] In 1891, the Billingsgate Christian Mission, in an attempt to clear the debt of £4,000 which they held on their Hall, asked LCM if they could include LCM's subscribers in their appeal for support which they were about to send, on the understanding that when the debt was cleared, the Hall would be placed in trust with LCM.[97] LCM declined their offer.[98]

[95] *LCMM, 1889*, p.195. Vicary, a shipwright, joined LCM in 1873. His denomination was Independent, see LCMLSDR, p.71.
[96] Ibid., p.207.
[97] LCMMB, 5 October 1891.
[98] Ibid.

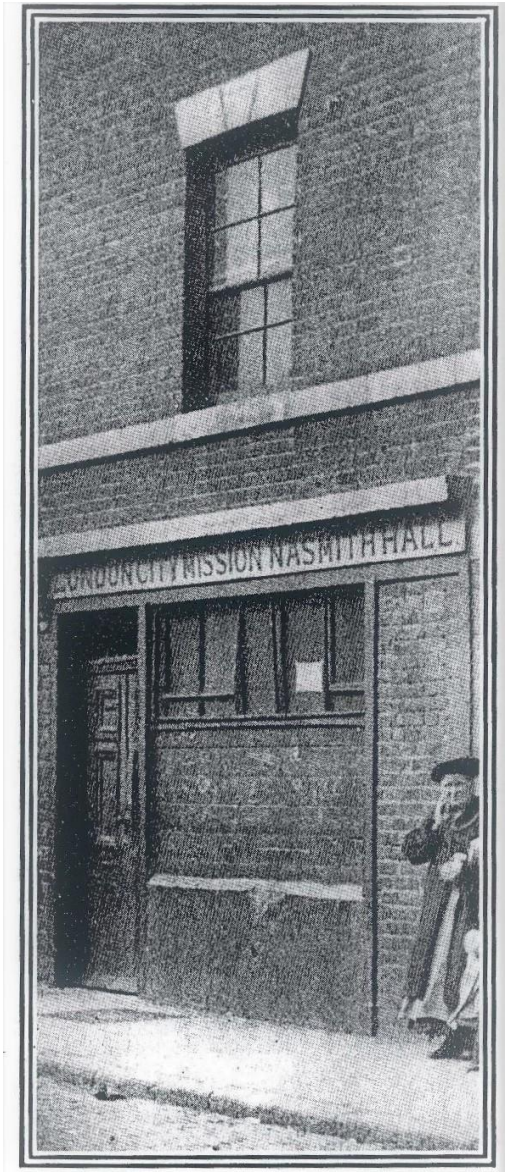

Figure 2. LCM's Nasmith Hall,

Canal-road, Hoxton, 1913, LCMA



Figure 3. LCM's Minto-street district's Mission Hall, Bermondsey, 1897, LCMA

LCM did not wish to construct large or prominent mission halls. They explained in 1900, that their halls reflected the humble services held within.[99] They were not deflected from their domestic ambition in visitation during a time when Britain's home mission societies were building institutions. Their reasons for doing so encompassed more than their caution about financial commitment and responsibility. They reflected their distinctive mission strategy. The extent to which the choice of LCM's economically and locally rented mission

[99] *LCMAR, 1900,* p.xxiv.

rooms, which were as familiar and uncomplicated as a district's corner shop in character, engaged the working-classes and thrived, will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

It is an economical Society

LCM's funding

In times when other societies struggled or failed, LCM's efficient mission was sustained by its Committee's adherence to their founding principles, their prudence, and the continuing engagement of its longstanding, diverse, and complex networks of supporters, among whom the working classes themselves were critical.

Stewart Brown concluded that Chalmers' influence was limited mainly to the educated upper and middle classes, and especially to the young.[100] There is evidence that this was not the case with LCM. Flew discussed the funding of a range of Anglican home-missionary organisations in operation in the diocese of London during the period 1856-1914, and included LCM in her study.[101] She demonstrated that during a period which was one of decline for the Anglican organisations, LCM's income levels remained robust.[102] She ascribed LCM's buoyancy to Nonconformist participation, and the strength of women's support from among a 'groundswell of thousands of people giving small amounts.'[103] She concluded that the decline in giving to Anglican home-missionary organisations was evidence of a change in the relationship between the laity and the Church at the end of the nineteenth century, wherein a new generation of wealthy businessmen no longer felt

[100] Brown, *Thomas Chalmers,* p.372.
[101] S. Flew, *Philanthropy and the Funding of the Church of England, 1856-1914* (London, 2015).
[102] Ibid., p.136.
[103] Ibid., p.137.

financial responsibility for upholding the Church.[104] This dissertation supports her conclusions with reference to LCM, but would qualify them in detail to argue that a critical element in LCM's different experience at a time when both Nonconformist and Anglican organisations faced decline, was LCM's deep-rooted undenominational working-class support from women *and* men from within their own local mission fields.

LCM appointed missionaries upon the basis of locality. In 1903, they explained the importance of the principle

> That the Committee consider it a fundamental principle, only to be deviated from under circumstances of a very special character, that no Missionary be appointed or continued except at least a *definite portion* of his salary is promised or guaranteed to the Society, from or for the district to which he is appointed. This rule has been acted upon almost from the establishment of the Society; and, after long experience of the results of its working, the Committee are increasingly impressed with its importance in calling forth the aid of the benevolent, and in economizing the funds of the Society.[105]

LCM's operational funds came from subscriptions, donations, legacies, investments, and collections received from their nationwide Auxiliaries and Associations, as well as from within the missionaries' districts. LCM employed full-time Agents who travelled throughout England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales to maintain contact with all of LCM's funding Associations. They were supported in their fundraising by missionaries who gave talks about their work, which they presented with lantern slides. [**Figure 4**] Those who supported LCM received copies of LCM's Annual Reports, full financial accounts, and generously detailed Monthly Magazines, within which they could follow the progress of 'their' missionary, from within the entirety of LCM's mission field. From LCM's inception, 'distant' funds were

[104] Ibid., pp.62-3.
[105] *LCMAR, 1903*, p.13.

allocated appositely by LCM, and all of their missionaries were identified in LCM's Annual Reports alongside their source of funding. In 1843, for example, LCM established a district adjacent to East India Docks, in Poplar, which they named 'The Madras District'.[106] The greater part of the missionary's funding came from India, from officers in the Madras Engineers, and members of the Madras Civil Service, but their sponsorship was supplemented by contributions from the congregation of the East India Company's Episcopal Chapel in Poplar.[107]

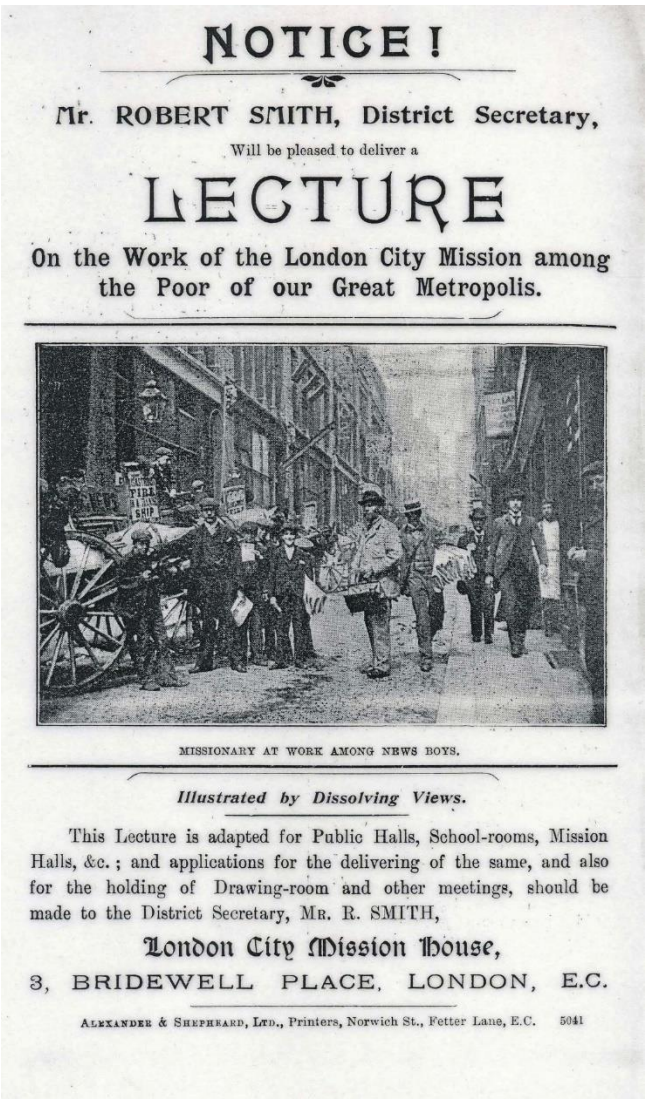

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Figure 4. Handbill for LCM lantern slide lectures, LCMA

[106] *LCMM, 1843*, pp.33-4.
[107] Ibid., and *LCMM, 1871*, pp.9-10.

It is possible to demonstrate the breadth of LCM's local sources of funding by examining the case of seven missionaries who were newly appointed within the Marylebone and Paddington Auxiliary in 1849.[108] [**Table 3**] Their funding was derived from within this district's local LCM funding Auxiliaries, congregations, ladies' Associations, private men of means, Working Men's Associations, and servants' Associations. Not only were LCM's financial supporters drawn from all social classes, but their operation reflected at the same time the complexity and diversity of the Society's pan-evangelical backgrounds in their lay and clerical appointments of their Local Superintendents and in their missionaries' denominations.

Table 3: New districts in the Marylebone and Paddington Auxiliary, 1849.

District	Funded by	Superintendent	his denomination	Missionary	his denomination
Cambridge-court	The Tradesmen's and Working Men's Association	Rev Gilbert Elliott, Rector of Trinity Church Marylebone	Anglican	Samuel Richards	*unknown*
Great Barlow-street	The General Fund of the Marylebone and Paddington Auxiliary	George Corderoy, surveyor	Wesleyan	John Baker	Baptist
Hyde-park-gardens	The Servants Association (Hyde-park-mews)	Edward Stephenson, solicitor	Anglican	Charles Forder	Anglican
Kensal New Town	West Paddington Branch Ladies Association	Rev Martin Wall, Assistant Minister of Percy Chapel	Anglican	Thomas Lee	Anglican
Nutford-place	Trinity Chapel Association	Rev Ridley Haim Herschall, Minister of Trinity Chapel	Independent	George Hunt	none *'decidedly Calvanistic'*
Oxford Market	William Mason	William Mason, actuary	Anglican	James Swinbourne	Anglican
Upper George-street	Marylebone Presbyterian Church Association	Rev William Chalmers, Minister of Marylebone Presbyterian Church	Presbyterian	Joseph Withers	Wesleyan

Source: *LCMAR, 1849,* pp.xiv-xv.

It is important to recognise the extent to which working men supported LCM's missionaries. LCM's Constitution made special provision for the inclusion of working men's funding of a missionary to their district at a reduced rate, which was established as a £35 minimum

[108] *LCMM, 1849*, pp.167-8.

contribution, and they continued to do so. In 1903, when other Societies' financial support had declined, their priority remained in maintaining and creating new districts with working-class funds

> *Districts in the more central and crowded parts of the Metropolis of a poor and necessitous character….*
>
> To districts strictly of this class, as an especial encouragement to *bona fide* Working Men's Associations, the Committee, when the funds allow it, will appoint Missionaries at the low rate of £35 a-year, but that no new appointment of Missionaries be made to Associations which are not those of working men on terms so low as these, except under very special circumstances.[109]

Between 1842 and 1868, from correspondence discussed within LCM's Committee, the number of Working Men's Associations who supported LCM missionaries was at least 12.[110] They were established across London, from among working men who were neighbours and who either shared or held diverse occupations. Many more local working-class Associations existed, named for example, by their locality, or connections with a Ragged School. There is evidence that Associations organised and developed their engagement with LCM further in order to support missionaries in adjoining local and perhaps poorer districts, as was the case in St George's-in-the-East.[111] For example, in 1869, in Shadwell, those who were visited by a missionary, whom they supported, in turn formed themselves into an Association to sponsor a missionary for an adjoining district. The funding, £40, had been raised in very small payments from the contents of no fewer than 300 collecting boxes distributed by the Shadwell Association. LCM described how they found when opened that they had contained

[109] *LCMAR, 1903*, p.15.
[110] For examples, see LCMMB, 9 March 1836, 24 October 1842, 15 August 1845, 5 January 1846, 9 August 1847, 29 January 1848, 21 January 1850, 16 September 1850, 1 March 1852, 15 November 1865, 12 March 1866, 13 January 1868.
[111] *LCMAR, 1869,* p.6.

only coppers and small silver coins, averaging upwards of 4s. each, among which one box's contents were 192 farthings.[112]

Working-class men supported LCM not only through their own Associations, but they contributed to collection boxes that had been placed in their workplaces. There were districts in which workplaces were closely integrated amongst the dwellings of those who were employed in specialist trades, the potteries in Lambeth, for example. It was the Lambeth Working Men's Association who funded LCM's work among these potteries. Their Secretary had guaranteed £35 a year for a missionary to visit both the potteries and homes in the surrounding district.[113] The missionary whom LCM appointed to the Lambeth-walk potteries district sought immediately to engage the men whom he visited in providing additional financial support for LCM's work. Samuel Tietgen had been a shoemaker before joining LCM.[114] He did not come from a background of home missionary work, but he described his initiative.[115] He decided to test the feelings of the men he visited and had a collection box for LCM placed in a particular pottery, 'in case any of the men liked to put in their pence as a sort of thank-offering'. He revealed that the first time that it was opened it had in it 19s. 8½d, the second time 1l. 16s. 7d, and the third time 2l. 5s, together 5l. 1s. 3½d. Tietgen estimated that between 150-200 men and boys were employed in this pottery and he believed that about 50 of them had contributed. He added that he had placed boxes in two other large potteries as a consequence.[116]

[112] *LCMAR, 1870,* p.18.
[113] LCMMB*,* 26 October 1863.
[114] Ibid.
[115] *LCMAR, 1869,* p.19.
[116] Ibid.

LCM reported the unsolicited charitable kindness of the people among whom they lived and worked not only in support of LCM's mission but towards the missionaries themselves. In 1869, they described two collections

> On one district, the poor presented the missionary with a purse of 4*l.* collected entirely among themselves, thinking he looked worn, that it might defray the expense of his getting a summer change. And on another district, a missionary found the same sum of 4*l.* had been collected by them during his absence from the district, the doctor having ordered him into the country.[117]

Historians have described the poor's inability to engage with urban mission *because* of their poverty. Catterall, in his discussion of Nonconformist missions, believed that by the 1870s the recognition had dawned among the churches that those who lived in social degradation were not in a position to listen to any spiritual message.[118] Yeo, in his study of Reading, considered whether there was a common context for voluntary and religious organisations, and argued that poverty was a barrier to sustained organisational commitment.[119] McLeod disagreed with Yeo, and cited contemporary evidence from New York where he described Irish families affording greater support to their churches, from deeper poverty, than those in Italian communities.[120] People who lived in poverty gave openly to LCM's missionaries, in support of their work. Edwin King who worked for LCM in district mission in Bethnal Green from 1876, in the Virginia-row district, Gossett-street district, and then in special mission to the Factories in Bethnal Green, engaged himself in raising funds for LCM after he had retired.[121] In his obituary LCM described

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[117] Ibid., p.7.
[118] P. Catterall, 'Slums and Salvation', in L. Husselbee and P. Ballard (eds), *Free Churches and Society,* p.114.
[119] S. Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organisation in Crisis* (London, 1976).
[120] McLeod, 'Religion in the City', pp.13-14.
[121] *LCMM, 1921,* p.46. King, a carter before he joined LCM, was illiterate. He was converted by an LCM missionary in Bethnal Green, see *LCMM, 1924,* p.164.

> Broken in health he relinquished his task with tears and regret, but he continued to sell LCM's literature, induced friends to subscribe to its funds, and himself, in his old age, collected thousands of pennies in aid of the work.[122]

LCM's financial support remained more robust than other Societies because they continued to be funded from *within* their own local mission fields despite the migration from their districts of the middle classes. Flew analysed LCM's receipts during 1884. She noted that LCM's vast network of supporters typically gave only very small sums: of the 38,224 payments made, 54% (20,726) were under £1, and only 0.3% (114) were for more than £100.[123] It is possible to extend her analysis, and to demonstrate that LCM's donations from within London did not decline in proportion with its countrywide income. In 1860, when LCM employed 375 missionaries, LCM was supported by 208 Metropolitan and Suburban Associations and Districts, and 255 Provincial Associations. Their contributions were £23,844 and £6,966, respectively.[124] In 1900, when LCM employed 460 missionaries, the Metropolitan Associations and Districts (within LCM's boundaries of Mission), numbered 189, and their Country Associations, 232. They donated £29,678 and £5,803, respectively.[125] LCM's income did not experience substantial decline in the years before the First World War. In 1912, LCM's receipts actually increased by £6,654 to £58,889 when compared with the receipts of 1911.[126] A comparison with MCM's financial position is striking. Immediately after the First World War, and with the responsibility of their mission halls, MCM acknowledged that the annual income which they required was £16,000 per annum, but

[122] Ibid.
[123] Flew, *Philanthropy,* p.71.
[124] *LCMAR, 1860,* pp.195-200.
[125] *LCMAR, 1901,* pp.174-81.
[126] *LCMAR*, *1912*, p.19.

that their income averaged only £10,000.[127] In 1918, LCM's receipts were £62,057, yet their expenses had been £45,389.[128]

LCM recognised the great change in the social character of many districts, and they 'earnestly' appealed to the wealthy 'and those who have made their fortunes through the daily toil of London's industrial classes to assist the Society' but at the same time LCM was an economical society.[129] Their finances were carefully managed, and they remained unencumbered by institutional responsibilities. Critically, however, its affordable mission continued to reach, and remained substantially supported locally by the working classes among whom their missionaries lived and worked.

It is a tried and tested Society

In 1853, Robert Bickersteth, Rector of St Giles, described LCM's position

> This Society has taken the lead – the foremost place, in bringing lay agency to bear on the spiritual welfare of the vast mass of our poor.[130]

In *Lighten their Darkness,* Lewis concluded that by 1860, LCM had overcome 'all obstacles' and consequently, he argued, at a time when many new societies were being formed following the 1859 Revival, LCM had no reason to fear any competition.[131]

Booth noted LCM's 'horror of Rome and Romish ways' and the 'positively hostile' relationship between their missionaries and 'the Ritualists' but he reported also that they were always with 'a good word for every Evangelical Church or Protestant sect'.[132] McLeod

[127] Lees, *The Cry,* p.127.
[128] *LCMAR, 1918,* p.31.
[129] *LCMAR, 1899*, p.liv.
[130] *LCMM, 1853*, p.126.
[131] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.5.
[132] Booth, *Life and Labour: Religious Influences: Summary,* p.290.

considered Steinhoff's study of Protestantism in Strasbourg between 1871-1918, in which he described a highly competitive and vital urban religious environment.[133] McLeod suggested that the most promising way forward for historians was to see the nineteenth and early twentieth century city primarily as a site of religious contest.[134] While acknowledging competition and examples of low levels of mutual acceptance, as discussed in this dissertation's case studies, there is another perspective from which to view the work of LCM's missionaries, that of their co-operation, because LCM always acknowledged that the scale of their evangelical mission's spiritual ambition exceeded their own resources.

In 1887, William Hurlin, who had been LCM's missionary in their Kingsland district, Hackney between 1840-9, wrote in detail about missionary work in London.[135] He had emigrated to America and became a Baptist minister in New Hampshire. His article's purpose was to introduce the subject to a wider audience. He claimed that from a long and intimate knowledge of the matter, he had no hesitation in saying that there was no city in the world, where, in proportion to the population, there was so much Christian missionary work done, as in London.[136] His independent analysis captured LCM's perspective upon shared evangelical responsibility and he discussed the Societies, both denominational and undenominational, with whom LCM's missionaries co-operated whilst adhering to their own Rules and maintaining their independence. Hurlin explained

> It is to be borne in mind that these institutions are all Christian missionary societies; that those connected with them are Christian workers, and that very nearly all of them

[133] H. McLeod, 'Religion in an Urbanising Europe, c.1840-1939', *Journal of Urban History,* 39/6 (2013), p.1177. McLeod referred to A. J. Steinhoff, *The Gods of the City: Protestantism and Religious Culture in Strasbourg, 1870-1914* (Leiden, 2008).
[134] Ibid., p.1179.
[135] W. Hurlin, 'Missionary Work in London', *Bibliotheca Sacra,* 44/174 (1877), pp.251-73. Before his appointment to LCM, Hurlin had been a weaver in Spitalfields, LCMMB, 13 April 1840.
[136] Ibid., p.251.

> are undenominational. Some go into one field and others into another. And still others take a broader survey and seek to reach many classes. But they all believe that only the gospel of Jesus Christ can effectively benefit those for whom they care; and hence, while doing what they can to present the gospel to each one of them, press it upon their attention, and urge them to accept it at once, that they may be respected and happy here, and safe hereafter.[137]

Hurlin described the agency of the SRA, Ellen Ranyard's Bible Women and Bible Nurses, the RSU, the Ragged Churches and Chapel Union, The O-AM, Charrington's Tower Hamlets' Mission, the Female Preventive and Reformatory Institution, the Midnight Meeting Movement, the St Giles Christian Mission and Mrs Meredith's parallel work for female discharged prisoners. He listed eight further Societies, and added that if there were space he would speak of many further institutions.[138]

LCM's missionaries were allowed to assist at the lectures and meetings of Societies which were constituted on a similarly catholic basis of agency. LCM's records reveal the correspondence of LCM's Committee with other Societies' representatives, including the RTS, and the BFBS, whose literature and tracts LCM purchased for distribution at substantially discounted prices.[139] From among the foregoing Societies noted by Hurlin, LCM worked especially closely with the undenominational O-AM, which had been founded in 1853.[140] LCM recognised the significance in their own work of open-air services and the benefits of their co-operation. Both Societies were encouraged and supported in their work by Shaftesbury. The O-AM worked on a national basis, but their Report for 1878, spoke of their having over 150 regular preaching places in London.[141] Gawin Kirkham was Secretary

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[137] Ibid., p.272.
[138] Ibid., p.271.
[139] LCMMB, 15 February 1864, and 8 August 1864.
[140] E. Jealous, *On the Beaten Track, Commemorating one Hundred Years of Open-Air Mission Service in the Highways and Byways of Britain* (London, 1953), p.9.
[141] Ibid., p.11.

of the O-AM between 1860-92.[142] His regular correspondence with LCM's Committee confirmed their shared activity, avoidance of duplication in the locations of their open-air work, and included his references for candidates from among their accredited preachers in their applications to become LCM missionaries.

The engagement of women within LCM

In her study of Sheffield, Twells discussed local middle-class women's involvement in both home and overseas mission.[143] Dickson described how the Belfast City Mission was significant as a radicalising influence upon the middle-class women who worked for it, and Flew identified women's particular financial support for LCM, but in many respects, the role of women of all classes within home missionary societies has remained opaque.[144] In his overview of foreign mission Cox demonstrated that by the end of the nineteenth century, a majority of missionaries were women, and the problem which remained in mission historiography, he argued, was to establish the role of the wives of male missionaries, as missionaries in their own right, which he concluded, they had been from the very first days of overseas missionary effort.[145] Harnes, in her study of women in the CMS, concluded that it was not until the mid-twentieth century within mission societies that a husband and wife were perceived to be separate and that the idea of a companionate missionary marriage was replaced.[146]

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[142] Ibid., pp.15-17.
[143] Twells, *Civilising Mission*.
[144] Ian Dickson, 'Evangelical Religion and Victorian Women', pp.700-25, and Flew, *Philanthropy*, p.154.
[145] J. Cox, 'What I Have Learned About Missions from Writing 'The British Missionary Enterprise Since 1700' in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research,* 32/2 (2008), pp.86-7.
[146] H. Harnes, *Pioneer Workers, Invaluable Helpmeets, Good Mothers, A Study of the Role of the Missionary Wife in the Church Missionary Society* (Leiden, 2004).

Lewis noted that LCM always 'stopped short' of directly employing women as agents.[147] He argued that this stemmed in early years from a concern for the danger to their health, but also in observation of the experience of district visitation, where Victorian men hesitated to perform work that was associated with women.[148] Button, in her study of Canterbury City Mission echoed Lewis' conclusion. She believed that employing women in this capacity risked shaping the public perception of the Mission as women's work and jeopardised the willingness of committed men to apply for the position of city missionary.[149] This dissertation argues that LCM chose not to directly employ female missionaries for differing reasons; firstly, because LCM worked closely with 'kindred' agencies who employed only female agents and whose work they neither wished nor needed to duplicate, and secondly, because their missionaries' wives and daughters were openly recognised and encouraged by LCM to become 'helpmates' in their missionaries' work, if they chose to do so, from LCM's earliest years.

By the late 1850s, the Edinburgh and Norwich Town Missions employed female agents.[150] It is from the contemporary sources of MCM, however, that an insight is given into LCM's position. Lees detailed the context of their advertisement for their first 'Female Bible-Hawker and Missionary' in Manchester in 1860, it being, he stated, because they, unlike LCM, did not benefit from the co-existence of either Ellen Ranyard's London Bible and Domestic

[147] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* pp.220-1.
[148] Ibid.
[149] M. D. Button, 'Protecting Canterbury's Poor, City Missions and the Protestant Laity', in M. D. Button and J. A. Sheetz-Nguyen, (eds), *Victorians and the Case for Charity, Essays on Responses to English Poverty by the State, the Church, and the Literati* (London, 2014), p.189.
[150] LCMMB, 2 November 1857, and 22 February 1858.

Female Mission, who by 1860, employed 137 women, or the Mildmay Deaconess Movement, recently established by Rev and Mrs Pennefather.[151]

Lewis observed that the similarities between LCM and the London Bible and Domestic Female Mission, which became the RBM were striking, not only in their Societies' approach and structure, but that those who directed the work of the missions and those to whom the missions were directed also clearly overlapped.[152] LCM's evidence suggests that theirs was intentionally a plan of co-operation. LCM's Committee minutes reveal that when they discussed female agency in meetings held between 1857-60, they had consulted with Ellen Ranyard at length before determining their position.[153] It was Mary Jane Kinnaird, Arthur Kinnaird's wife who was a member of the London Bible and Domestic Female Mission's governing Council, who liaised with her and reported to LCM's Committee.[154] They recognised the way in which they were kindred and closely connected societies, and thereafter they worked together, as LCM's missionaries, and Booth's agents' evidence confirmed.

In practice, LCM had employed missionaries and their wives in mission agency from LCM's earliest years. Wives were encouraged to work with their husbands and they were acknowledged for doing so in LCM's Magazines and Annual Reports. In LCM's interviews, candidates were asked about their wives, their conversion experiences, and their evangelical work. Missionaries' wives were not limited by LCM from employment in an independent occupation if they wished to do so. Hurlin's wife, for example, worked as a dressmaker. LCM did not pay a missionary's wife for her work, but she received his pension. The substantial

[151] Lees, *The Cry,* pp.44-6.
[152] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.223.
[153] LCMMB, 22 February 1858.
[154] Ibid.

engagement of their missionaries' wives and daughters must certainly have benefitted LCM's strategic economy as a Society.

In operation, the work of LCM and RBM was more complex than can be represented in a presentation of separate spheres. Although, in 1887, when he wrote about LCM's relationship with other Societies, Hurlin perceived RBM's mission as being a mission of women, to women, he observed also that both directly and indirectly men benefitted by her mission's work.[155] There were many illustrations in LCM's Magazines and Reports of the ways in which women did not necessarily operate in separate spheres from men as missionaries within LCM's work. As did their missionaries, missionary wives and daughters established ragged schools. In 1854, LCM discussed Elizabeth Jenkin's school in Bethnal Green.[156] In 1849, she had re-opened the school, which was in her father's district, Boundary-street, after it had been closed because its funding had been withdrawn by its only sponsor. Martha Baxendale ran the Greenwich Female Refuge in partnership with her husband, and it was she who completed his LCM journal and reports as he was unable to write.[157] In a published extract from his Annual Report in 1863, John Saxby, LCM's missionary in their Belgrave-road district, Pimlico, discussed his wife, Susan's work as equal to his own

> My wife I consider to be as good a missionary as myself, although she is unpaid as such. Besides all the Mission work at home, which she undertook last year, and which was very considerable, she made 1,814 visits, 479 of which were to the sick.[158]

[155] Hurlin, 'Missionary Work', pp.258-9.
[156] *LCMM, 1854*, pp.158-9. Jenkin, a stonemason, from Cornwall, joined LCM in 1844. He left LCM to become the Independent Minister of Union Chapel in New Nichol-street, Bethnal Green, see LCMLSDR, p.21.
[157] LCMMB, 23 June 1856. James Baxendale's rescue work is discussed in Chapter 3.
[158] *LCMAR, 1864*, pp.9-10. Saxby, a Wesleyan Methodist, was employed as a foreman in the tube factory of the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, before he joined LCM in 1860, see LCMMB, 11 June 1860.

The work of the wives of LCM's missionaries is discussed in detail throughout this dissertation's subsequent chapters.

The development of LCM's mission

The growth of LCM's mission was characterised by its general expansion, and its development of specialised mission fields. At the end of their first year, LCM employed 40 missionaries, in 1861-2, their number was 400; by 1881-2, it had increased to 450; and in 1901-02, their total was 463.[159]

It was within their districts that LCM's missionaries initiated fields of special mission, because they sought the opportunity to visit those who could not easily be met at home, especially working men. LCM's special mission began in 1844, with their mission to cabmen.[160] By 1869, LCM concluded, 'It can now most certainly no longer be said with truth that the missionary's work is mainly with women and children. The men constitute continually a more and more prominent part of their labour.' [161]

Bartlett observed of LCM's missionaries' work in Bermondsey

> Without doubt, they penetrated to where clergy and ministers hesitated to tread – the pubs, the tan-yards, the worst slums – and the best of them performed heroic deeds of visiting and were looked on as friends by those whom they sought out.[162]

To illustrate the character of how LCM's missionaries commenced special mission among working men in their districts it is possible to draw upon the evidence of Charles

[159] *LCMAR, 1837,* p.4*, LCMAR, 1862,* p.viii, *LCMAR, 1882,* p.viii, *LCMAR, 1902,* p.xii.
[160] *LCMAR, 1844,* pp.21-2.
[161] *LCMAR, 1869,* p.12.
[162] Bartlett, 'The Churches in Bermondsey', p.94.

Lillywhite.[163] He was LCM's first missionary to visit all of the tan-yards within his district in Bermondsey. In LCM's magazines of 1867, 1868, and 1872, extracts from his journals were published.[164] He combined his domestic visitation with visiting men in the yards. He noted the advantages, for his mission, of knowing when men became sick or unemployed, so that he could then visit them at home. In 1868, he noted, 'I cannot say that as a general thing my visits are desired by employers of labour. Perhaps that would be too much to expect. There are a few who welcome me, but as a rule I feel instinctively that I am there only on sufferance.'[165] By 1872, he visited all but two of the 74 tan-yards in his district. Of the two which he did not visit he explained; in one he knew the foreman, with whom he had spoken, and he had apologised because the men were under pressure to complete an order for the Army. The other yard had recently changed hands. He was optimistic that he would soon visit all the tanneries and wrote

> I have such free access to the men in the yards during their hours of labour that if my physical strength were equal to it, I might spend very nearly all my time *in the tanyards.*[166]

He believed that his most promising work had been among the small shops of curriers and leather dressers, in which from ten to thirty men and lads were employed. He described its character

> While the men are taking luncheon, they will gather round me in the shops and in a few of them I make a practice of offering prayer before I begin to read the Word of God and address them. Here the attention of the men is all that any minister of the Gospel could wish, if he were addressing them. The message spoken shortly and

[163] Lillywhite, an Anglican, had been in the Navy before he joined LCM, and carried injuries from two bullets, one in the side of his face, and one in his leg, taken in the Burmese War, see LCMMB, 14 March 1864.
[164] *LCMM, 1867*, pp.87-94, *LCMM, 1868*, pp.137-42, *LCMM, 1872*, pp.11-20.
[165] *LCMM, 1868,* p.138.
[166] *LCMM, 1872*, p.12.

> simply is received without a murmur of disapprobation. I think it right to remark that this state of things did not exist when I first came here, but it has come about gradually.[167]

He met working men when they were standing about the streets of his district on Sunday mornings. He thought that he had missed doing this for only three Sundays during the winter.[168] He explained that he was able to meet with men of all trades and occupations, and all shades of religious opinions, where sometimes a large group of men would gather to listen to him if he read a short portion of Scripture and the speaking to them from it. He concluded that he was optimistic about his work in all respects with the exception of the men's attendance at public worship. He wrote

> I have often tried to induce the men to attend some place of worship, of which there are several of various denominations close at hand, but in this I have been singularly unsuccessful, having, as far as I am aware, induced only one man to attend once. He went to work in Newcastle the following week, so I lost sight of him.[169]

Lillywhite's evidence introduced themes, for example the men's religious knowledge rather than ignorance, and their engagement with him in debate, which are discussed in detail in this dissertation's case study of LCM's special mission among London's cabmen.

From LCM's earliest years, the missionaries visited their districts' lodging-houses, and throughout the 1840s they secured permissions to visit local Workhouses, and Hospitals. These became fields of LCM's special mission as their work expanded. LCM constantly reviewed their opportunities for mission with the advice of their missionaries. In 1886, John Kipling, who was LCM's Missionary to the Navvies in Westminster, wrote to LCM's Secretary

[167] *LCMM, 1867*, p.93.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.

with a suggestion for a new opening among lodging-houses which had presented itself to him in his work

> Dear Sir, - I have counted up the lodging-houses, and I find that there are forty-five, which accommodate 3,680 men. Most of the houses are well filled, day and night. The boundaries are:- Vauxhall Bridge Road, Birdcage Walk, Parliaments Street, St. Martin's Lane and Crown Street, High Holborn, Chancery Lane, and the River Thames. I would willingly hand over my portion of the work to any man who might be appointed, as I should like a part of Sunday to visit some of the special cases among my builders at their homes. There would be plenty of work for one man: and I feel sure that, if the friends of our Society were made acquainted with the need, funds would soon come in.[170]

As a consequence of Kipling's proposal, as was often the case within the Society, it was the missionaries' agency that gave direction to LCM's mission, and LCM's special mission to lodging-houses in Westminster commenced in 1887.[171]

From the 1840s onwards, LCM sought to engage specific working-class communities in their localities, including the Welsh, Irish, and the Jews. LCM's special fields of mission included the visitation of poor foreigners who lived in London, for example, the French who lived and worked in Somers Town. They also visited Italians, and Germans. Among LCM's richest sources are the autobiographies of their missionaries who visited the Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and French sailors, and the Asian, African, and Scandinavians, whose ships came into London's Docks.

Each of LCM's fields of special mission, the year of its commencement, and numbers of missionaries involved, is presented in 'London City Mission, an overview, 1835-1914'. [**Appendix Table**] In 1860, 32 missionaries were employed in special mission, 130 in 1890,

[170] LCMA, Kipling to LCM's Secretary, letter, 1 January 1886. Kipling, a Presbyterian, from Lambeth, had been a porter before he joined LCM in 1872, see *LCMM, 1926,* p.76.
[171] *LCMAR, 1887,* p.229.

and 131 in 1913. The numbers sustained in special mission between 1890-1913 reflected their continuing local support and their priority in LCM's mission strategy to engage working-class men and women wherever they gathered. It was still the case, however, that many missionaries continued, as the missionaries always had done in district mission, to visit the workshops, lodging-houses, and smaller Institutions which lay within their districts. In the early years of the twentieth century, LCM's missionaries visited in special mission those who worked in London's Markets, among bakers, cabmen, canal boatmen, coachmen, grooms, and stablemen, coalheavers, dockers, men and women employed in larger factories not visited in district mission, the Fire Brigade, gas workers, navvies and builders, omnibus and tramcar men, millers, the Police, postal and telegraph employees, servants in Clubs, servants in Hotels, railwaymen, scavengers; and theatre employees. They engaged unemployed men as they gathered to seek work in open-air special mission. In addition, LCM recorded, 425,000 persons were met in public-houses and coffee-shops, of whom they estimated 300,000 were men.[172] LCM's special mission in public-houses is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

LCM recognised the enormity of their reach. In 1897, they wrote, 'On investigating the work in detail, its vastness becomes still more apparent.'[173] To consider the Results for the year 1903, the year in which Mudie-Smith undertook his religious census of public worship in London, Mudie-Smith concluded that from a population in London, and Greater London of 6,240,336 *excluding* dwellers in Institutions, the number of worshippers had been 1,252,443.[174] LCM published from their aggregation of the daily totals recorded in the

[172] *LCMAR, 1897,* p.xxxiv.
[173] *LCMAR, 1903,* p.xii.
[174] R. Mudie-Smith, *The Religious Life of London* (London, 1904), pp.17-18.

missionaries journals that they had made 800,001 calls and 1,530,428 visits in house to house visitation; including 248,346 visits to the sick and dying; had held individual conversations with 1,268,658 people visited in special mission; held 60,475 meetings in special mission; held 39,701 meetings in 'cottage' and mission rooms; held 8,487 open-air meetings; gave 692,044 readings of Holy Scripture in visitation; and had distributed 233,994 Testaments and portions and 4,917,474 religious tracts.[175]

In 1904, when he spoke at LCM's Annual Meeting, William Coates, who was LCM's Missionary to the Scavengers declared, 'Wherever we go we find that these men welcome a missionary because they have known one in years gone by.'[176] From LCM's data it is possible to appreciate the context of his observation. In 1903, LCM reported

> In conclusion, the Committee would state their deep conviction that the records of the Missionaries' labours during the past year, of which the foregoing is but a brief summary, prove conclusively that no new methods are needed for the winning of immortal souls to Christ.[177]

Booth described the character of LCM's presence in London as being 'ubiquitous' wherein their emissaries were to be found in every poor part of London.[178] It is within this understanding, of their being a familiar and constant presence not only within homes and workplaces, but wherever the working classes might be met across the City, that their mission strategy's results can be appreciated. LCM's confidence in their work was confirmed in their closing words of their Annual Report in May, 1914, 'It needs only a larger staff of Godly men to visit daily among the people to accomplish greater things'.[179] It is notable

[175] *LCMAR, 1903,* p.xii.
[176] *LCMM, 1904*, p.169. Coates, a Baptist, had been a printer in Hackney before he joined LCM in 1881, see LCMLSDR*,* p.93.
[177] *LCMAR, 1903,* p.lxii.
[178] Booth, *Life and Labour: Religious Influences: Summary,* p.289.
[179] *LCMAR, 1914,* p.68.

that in their expansion and achievement, LCM had held closely, perhaps uniquely among Britain's mission Societies, to Nasmith's ideal of urban mission.

Chapter 2. LCM's missionaries.

Charles Spurgeon addressed LCM's Annual Meeting in 1891.[1] He declared

> I do not think there would have been a Church at all if there had not been City Missionaries. If you turn to the Acts of the Apostles, you will, I believe, find my authority for that statement…I believe in the London City Mission because I believe in the *men* who go to make it up.[2]

Between 1835-1914, LCM employed 2,133 missionaries. This chapter concerns the experience of becoming and being employed as a London City Missionary, and the missionaries' motivation in doing so. It presents an analysis of the social and religious backgrounds of the missionaries who were working for LCM in 1863, and 1890. In 1849, LCM discussed the widespread 'prejudices' that prevailed against lay agency.[3] They observed that those who opposed lay agency considered it to be 'as second best, to be accepted from the force of circumstances, and from the lack of ministers of religion'.[4] If their critics, LCM continued, were to admit that laymen might be engaged in the work of the Lord, they considered that these laymen ought to be men of 'liberal education, of refined manners, and of influence in society'.[5] This chapter illustrates the extent to which LCM's

[1] *LCMM, 1891*, pp.166-7.
[2] Ibid., p.166.
[3] *LCMM, 1849*, pp.135-41.
[4] Ibid., p.137.
[5] Ibid.

appointment of their missionaries was unlimited by contemporary spiritual and social prejudice. It also considers the subject of influence. It discusses the increasing influence of the missionaries within LCM and how the missionaries influenced those of influence in society.

The social and religious backgrounds of LCM's missionaries

In 1849, LCM published details of the social and religious backgrounds of the 214 missionaries whom they employed. Lewis considered their report.[6] He noted that concerning the missionaries' social backgrounds two facts were clear; a quarter of the workers were drawn from the lower middle class or above, and at least half of the agents were drawn from the mainstream of the working class where they had known, in McLeod's words which he quoted, 'the stigmata of the manual worker – ingrained dirt, workman's clothes – and the contagion of a rough working environment.'[7]

It has been possible to extend LCM's presentation from 1849, and to consider the social and religious backgrounds of two further cohorts of missionaries; those who were working for LCM in 1863 and in 1890. **[Tables 4, 5, and 6]** In 1863, LCM employed 388, and in 1890, they employed 502 missionaries. Working with McLeod's choice of Classification of Occupations from his study of Bethnal Green, the previous occupations of the missionaries in each cohort have been noted.[8] **[Table 7]** The Classification in the analysis distinguishes between Skilled, Partly-skilled, and Unskilled manual, and non-manual labour.

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[6] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* pp.120-1.

[7] Ibid., Lewis cited H. McLeod, 'Class, Community and Region: The Religious Geography of Nineteenth-Century England', in ed. E. Hill, *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain*, 6 (London, 1973), p.57.

[8] McLeod, *Class and Religion,* referenced, General Register Office, *Classification of Occupations* (London, 1966),

Table 4: The previous occupations of the missionaries employed by LCM in 1849

(presented in the format in which it was published)

Ministers of the Gospel	3
Priest of Church of Rome	1
Undergraduate of C.C.C. Cambridge	1
Student of St. Bee's College	1
Catechist of Church Missionary Society	1
Missionary of Wesleyan Missionary Society	1
Missionary of London Missionary Society	1
Catechist of London Society for promoting Christianity amongst the Jews	1
Missionaries of Home Missionary Society	2
Missionaries of Town Mission and Scripture Readers Society	3
Paid Agent of Christian Instruction Society	1
Readers of Scripture Readers Assocaition	2
Scripture Readers employed by Clergymen privately	5
Irish Scripture Readers	4
Carried forward	27
continued	
Brought forward	85
Butcher	1
Cabinet-makers	2
Cabmen	2
Carpenters	5
Carvers and Gilders	3
Clerks, Mercantile	2
Clerk, Lawyer's	1
Coachmaker	1
Coachsmiths	2
Coal Merchant	1
Compositors	5
Confectioners	2
Corn-chandlers	2
Curriers	3
Farmers & c.	6
Retired	1
Fellmonger	1
Gardeners	4
General Shopkeeper	1
Greengrocer	1
Grocer	4
Hairdresser	1
Ironfounder	1
Labourer in Gas Works	1
Linendrapers	4
Miller	1
Miner	1
Officer in the Corporation of the City of London	1
Painters, Plumbers, &c.	9
Carried forward	

Brought forward	27
Lay Agent of Cork Pastoral Aid Society	1
Colporteurs of British and Foreign Bible Society	2
Temperance Society Agents	2
Schoolmasters	24
Teachers in Schools	2
Public Lecturer on Scientific Subjects	1
Surgeon	1
Artist	1
Servants, Steward	1
Butlers	2
Other Servants	4
Soldiers	2
Musician in 56th Regiment	1
Alamode Beef Shop, keeper of	1
Bakers	2
Bird Fancier	1
Block Printer	1
Bookseller	1
Botanist	1
Brewer	1
Brushmaker	1
Builders, Bricklayers, &c.	5
Carried forward	85
Brought forward	154
Paperhanger	1
Patten and Clog Maker	1
Perfumer	1
Porters	2
Print Cutter	1
Saddlers	2
Salesman	1
Sealing-wax maker	1
Shipbroker	1
Shoemakers	11
Shopmen	3
Silk Manufacturer	1
Silk Weavers	6
Silversmith	1
Stage Coachman	1
Table-cover Printer	1
Tailors	10
Tobacco Manufacturer	1
Tobacconist	1
Tobacco-pipe Maker	1
Travellers	2
Waiter at Hotel	1
Warehousemen	3
Wheelwright	1
Woolcomber	1
Woolstapler	1
Woollen Cloth-worker	1
Wove Spinner	1
Writer and Grainer	1
Total	214

Source: *LCMM, 1849,* pp.135-6.

Table 5: The previous occupations of missionaries employed by LCM in 1863

Occupation	No.	Occupation	No.	Occupation	No.	
assayer	1	gunsmith	1	seedsman	1	
baker	3	gunsmith's assistant	1	servant	9	
bird dealer	1	hairdresser	1	shingler	1	
bookbinder	3	harnessmaker	1	ship's master	1	
brass founder	1	hosier	1	shipwright	4	
brickmaker	1	house decorator	1	shoemaker	39	
brushmaker	3	insurance agent	1	shopman	5	
builder	2	labourer	11	silk weaver	3	
butcher	2	lamplighter	1	silver plate worker	1	
buttonmaker	1	lath render	1	silversmith	1	
cabinetmaker	1	leather dresser	1	smallholder	3	
cabman	1	linen draper	1	smith	1	
carpenter	14	linen trade worker	1	soldier	4	
cheesemonger	3	locksmith	1	stoker	1	
chenille cutter	1	machinist	2	stonemason	1	
coachsmith	2	mill worker	3	switchman	1	
coalwhipper	1	miller	5	tailor	11	
coffee-house keeper	2	miner	4	tailor's assistant	1	
colporteur	1	minister	2	tallow chandler	1	
compositor	4	missionary	35	tea dealer	1	
confectioner	3	organ builder	1	theology student	2	
cordwainer	2	packer	1	upholsterer	1	
cotton spinner	2	papermaker	2	visitor of the blind	1	
draper	1	pastor	1	waiter	1	
draper's assistant	2	paver	1	warehouseman	6	
drayman	1	pawnbroker's assistant	1	weaver	5	
engineer	1	pipemaker	1	wharf foreman	1	
evangelist	2	plasterer	4	woodcarver	1	
farrier	2	pocket book maker	1	woodturner	2	
fellmonger	1	policemen	6	woolcomber	1	
fire escape conductor	1	porter	3			
framework knitter	1	potter	1	unknown	13	
french polisher	1	preacher	5	Total	388	
gardener	11	printer	4			
gilder	1	publican	1	**From among the foregoing are**		
glazier	1	reformatory master	1	**those in 'religious' emloyment:**		
glover	1	rugmaker	1	missionary	35	
greengrocer	1	sailor	1	evangelist	2	
grocer	6	sawyer	4	preacher	5	
grocer's assistant	1	schoolmaster	28	minister	2	
groom	1	scripture reader	31	colporteur	1	
				scripture reader	31	
				theology student	2	
				Total	**78**	**20%**
				schoolmasters	**28**	**7%**

Sources: LCMMB, LCMECMB, LCMLSDR, Census Entries.

Table 6: The previous occupations of missionaries employed by LCM in 1890

Occupation	No.	Occupation	No.	Occupation	No.	
accountant	1	foreman	2	policeman	15	
actor	1	framework knitter	1	porter	13	
baker	6	gardener	15	preacher	2	
blacksmith	4	gas fitter	1	printer	4	
bookbinder	3	gas inspector	1	prison warder	2	
boot clicker	2	gilder	2	quarryman	3	
boot closer	2	glover	1	rabbi	1	
brass foundry worker	2	goods checker	1	railway ticket inspector	1	
bricklayer	5	grocer	5	sailor	13	
brushmaker	1	groom	1	salesman	1	
builder	1	guard	5	sawyer	3	
butcher	1	hairdresser	1	schoolmaster	15	
cabman	5	handyman	1	scripture reader	12	
cabinetmaker	6	harnessmaker	2	seed crusher	1	
carman	2	house painter	3	servant	15	
carpenter	14	insurance agent	4	shipwright	3	
carrier	1	iron moulder	2	shoemaker or bootmaker	24	
carter	3	joiner	3	shop assistant	13	
carver	1	labourer	28	shopkeeper	2	
cellarman	1	lath render	1	shopman	3	
cheesemonger	1	leather case maker	1	signalman	4	
Church Army	6	leather dresser	1	smallholder	1	
cleaner	1	letter carrier	2	soldier	14	
clerk	8	locksmith	1	stationerymaker	2	
clockmaker	1	lodging-house worker	1	steel metter	1	
clothworker	1	machinist	1	stoker	1	
coachbuilder	1	mason	1	stone carver	1	
coffee-house keeper	1	mattress maker	1	tailor	10	
colporteur	10	mechanic	1	tallow chandler	1	
commission agent	1	messenger	3	tanner	2	
confectioner	2	milk carrier	1	telegraph operator	2	
cooper	3	miller	4	ticket collector	1	
coppersmith	2	milliner	1	tinsmith	2	
cordwainer	2	miner	7	tobacconist	1	
cottager	1	minister	4	waiter	3	
dairyman	1	missionary	15	warehouseman	7	
dispensary worker	1	moulder	1	weaver	5	
docks foreman	1	newspaper & seed agent	1	wheelwright	3	
draper	1	organ builder	1	whitesmith	1	
drover	1	overlooker in cotton mill	2	woodcarver	1	
emery cloth maker	1	packer	1	zinc plate worker	1	
engine fitter	5	painter & glazier	2			
engineer	4	painter & decorator	2	unknown	18	
evangelist	2	paper hanger	1	Total	502	
farmer	1	pastry cook	1			
farrier	2	pawnbroker's assistant	1	**From among the foregoing are**		
fireman	3	piano maker	1	**those in 'religious' employment:**		
fisherman	1	plasterer	1	missionary	15	
fishing rod maker	1	plate layer (railway)	1	evangelist	2	
fishmonger	2	plumber	3	preacher	2	
				minister	4	
				colporteur	10	
				scripture reader	12	
				Church Army	6	
				Total	**51**	**10%**
				schoolmasters	**15**	**3%**

Sources: LCMMB, LCMECMB, LCMLSDR, Census Entries.

Table 7: Classification of the previous occupations of LCM's missionaries

Classification	Type	1849 total	1849 %	1863 total	1863 %	1890 total	1890 %
Professional	non-manual	8	**4**	9	**2**	8	**2**
Intermediate	non-manual	57	**27**	111	**29**	74	**15**
	agricultural	7	**3**	3	**1**	2	**nom.**
Skilled	non-manual	24	**11**	17	**4**	48	**10**
	manual	84	**39**	148	**38**	191	**38**
	agricultural			1	**nom.**	1	**nom.**
Partly skilled	non-manual	9	**4**	20	**5**	25	**5**
	manual	19	**9**	45	**12**	65	**13**
	agricultural					1	**nom.**
Unskilled	manual	3	**1.5**	18	**5**	56	**11**
Armed Forces		3	**1.5**	4	**1**	14	**3**
unknown				12	**3**	17	**3**
		214		388		502	

Sources: LCMMB, LCMECMB, LCMLSDR, Census Entries.

In 1849, 34% of LCM's missionaries were drawn from Professional and Intermediate Classes, 39% had been Skilled manual workers, 9% Partly-skilled manual workers, and 1% Unskilled manual labourers. In 1863, 32% of LCM's missionaries were from Professional and Intermediate Classes, which included full-time 'spiritual' occupations, as a minister, home missionary, or scripture reader. 38% of the missionaries had been in Skilled manual occupations, 12% were Partly-skilled manual workers, and only 5% were Unskilled manual labourers. In 1890, a substantially reduced proportion, 17% of LCM's missionaries, were from the Professional and Intermediate Classes, but remarkably similar percentages came from among Skilled manual, and Partly-skilled manual workers; 38% and 13% respectively.

While the numbers of Professional men had decreased during the intervening years, the percentage of Unskilled manual labourers had increased to 11%.

In 1849, LCM reflected that their missionaries had been drawn from almost every trade with none in predominance, the exception in occupation being schoolmasters and teachers, who were 26 in number (12%).[9] In their presentation of occupations, their notes separated those who had been in full-time 'spiritual' employment; ministers, missionaries, scripture readers, of whom there were 32/214, or 15%. In 1863, the number of those who had been in full-time 'spiritual' employment was 78/388 (20%) and the number of schoolmasters was 28/388 (7%). In 1890 the proportion was 51/502 (10%) who had been in full time 'spiritual employment' and 15/502 (3%) who had been schoolmasters. As will be illustrated from detail in the applications of 1863 and 1890, over time LCM chose to appoint fewer candidates from full-time 'spiritual' employment with mission Societies, and selected instead candidates who applied to them from among working-class men who were living in the districts in which their missionaries were working.

In 1849, LCM did not note the age upon acceptance of the missionaries whom they employed, and insufficient data survives from which to make a calculation, but in 1863 the mean age upon appointment of the 388 missionaries whom they employed was 31.6 years (median 31), and these figures remained exactly the same for the 502 missionaries who were employed in 1890.

LCM, in their report in 1849, advised their readers that their missionaries had come from all over the country, and that only a small proportion of them had resided previously in

[9] *LCMM, 1849*, p.136.

London.[10] Doubtless, drawing attention to this detail would have supported and encouraged the country-wide financial basis of LCM's subscriptions, but in 1863, 57% of LCM's missionaries had been living in London, and within the footprint of LCM's mission field, when they made their applications. In 1890, the figure was 55%. By 1890, the numbers of candidates from Ireland had decreased, but those from other locations outside London remained similar in proportion. **[Table 8]**

Table 8: Residence of candidates when they applied to join LCM

those employed in the year	**1863**		**1890**	
	total	**%**	total	**%**
within LCM's districts	221	**57**	274	**55**
rest of England	126	**33**	176	**35**
Ireland	29	**8**	16	**3**
Scotland	5	**1**	7	**1**
Wales	2	**nom.**	8	**2**
Abroad	2	**nom.**	10	**2**
unknown	3	**1**	11	**2**

Sources: LCMMB, LCMECMB, LCMLSDR, Census Entries.

LCM confirmed in 1849, that they applied an approximate quota in the denominations of those whom they employed; the Church of England, one third, where the other Christian bodies, had 'tolerably equally furnished' the remainder.[11] The reasoning for LCM's 'balancing' ratio, Lewis explained, was because of the numbers of Anglican agents who were employed in London by the CPAS and SRA.[12] Cox noted the co-operation of Anglican

[10] Ibid., pp.136-7.
[11] Ibid., p.136.
[12] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.120.

evangelicals with LCM in Lambeth, but observed that clergymen almost always identified London City Missionaries as Dissenters even if they claimed to be Anglicans.[13]

There is no evidence that there were ever strictly rigid rather than approximately applied quotas when LCM considered applicants' denominational backgrounds, not least because the numbers of missionaries whom they employed changed from year to year. Each year there were more applicants than places available, and this is perhaps where in the application process broad 'balancing' choices might have been made before suitable candidates were selected for interview. It is also important to recognise that the missionaries' own denominational choices fluctuated over time, and that a few chose to attend the services of differing denominations, as a matter of course. The known denominations of the missionaries who were employed in 1863, and 1890, have been tabulated. In 1863, the balance was 32% Anglican with 53% Nonconformist, and in 1890, the percentages were proportionately similar, 34% being Anglican and 58% Nonconformist.

[Table 9]

[13] Cox, *English Churches,* pp.57-8.

Table 9: The denominations of missionaries employed by LCM

Denomination	**1863**	**1890**
Anglican	125	172
Baptist	32	66
Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion	5	1
Congregational	33	40
Dutch Church		1
Independent	20	9
Methodist (unspecified)	18	27
Nonconformist	30	66
Open Brethren		1
Plymouth Brethren		4
Primitive Methodist	3	17
Presbyterian	13	19
undenominational		3
Welsh Calvinist	1	0
Wesleyan Methodist	52	42
unknown	56	34

Summary

	1863	**1890**
Anglican	32%	34%
Nonconformist	53%	58%
undenominational		1%
unknown	15%	7%

Sources: LCMMB, LCMECMB, LCMLSDR, Census Entries.

What emerges from the data is a consistency in many aspects of the backgrounds of the corps of men who worked for LCM. Importantly, however, the evidence reveals that as the century progressed, in terms of their social, and occupational backgrounds they were drawn increasingly from among the working-class men whom LCM sought to reach in their mission.

Task and employment

In 1849, LCM outlined the task of a missionary to their readers

> Their duty shall be to visit from house to house in the respective District that shall be assigned to them; read the Scriptures, engage in religious conversation, and urge those who are living in neglect of religion to observe the Sabbath, and to attend public worship. They shall also see that all persons possess the Scriptures; shall distribute approved religious tracts, and in obtaining scriptural education for the children of the poor. By the approval of the Committee, they shall hold meetings for reading and expounding the Scriptures, and prayer, and shall adopt such other means as the Committee may think necessary for the accomplishment of the object of the Mission.[14]

From an examination of their detail in publication, LCM's Missionary Rules did not change greatly during the nineteenth century.[15] In 1862, their Rules stated that the missionaries were expected to work thirty-six hours a week, exclusive of preparation for or holding of meetings, writing their journal and reports, or attending meetings with their Local Superintendents.[16] The missionaries were asked 'in ordinary circumstances' to attend Divine service on Sunday mornings, but it was also required that they should spend at least three hours in visitation during the day, because Sunday was identified as perhaps the only day in which working men might be expected to be met at home, and therefore it represented an important window of opportunity. Missionaries were instructed to visit consecutively through their districts, that is to visit each household in turn. The exception to this routine was in their visits to the sick and the dying who were always considered to be a priority. The missionaries' meetings, LCM advised, were intended for those who did not attend public worship. They were required to hold two meetings each week, neither of which was to be of more than an hour in length. It was strictly forbidden to hold an indoor meeting in a

[14] *LCMM, 1849*, p.227.
[15] LCM published their Rules in full in their Annual Reports.
[16] *LCMAR, 1862,* 'Appendix', pp.30-46.

room where other religious services might be held by parties who were not connected with the Mission.

Each missionary was expected to keep a record of his work in his journal. LCM supplied two journals at this time; one to be in use, and then rotated on a bi-monthly exchange with one which was held in LCM's Office. The missionaries' journals were not private. They were made available as they were exchanged to be read in turn by Local Superintendents, Divisional Superintendents, and LCM's Secretaries. Weekly entries and monthly schedules were counter-signed by a missionary's Local Superintendent in evidence of them having been checked by him. In addition to their journals, the missionaries prepared two copies of their Annual Reports, one of which was submitted, and one that was to be held by them for future reference. LCM were strict in their instructions for the preparation of journals and reports. They stated, 'NO OVER-STATEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE' with the explanation that the keeping of unexaggerated accounts was essential both for the Society's support from the public to be upheld, and because the public was entitled to faithfully reported work. There are examples in LCM's staff records of immediate dismissal for false entries having been made by missionaries in their journals.[17]

Missionary salaries were increased in a scale that reflected a missionary's family status and rewarded the length of his employment. In 1862, for example, these were as follows

single man	£65
married man	£70
with one child	£75
with three children	£80

[17] For example, John Ewins was dismissed for a writing a false account concerning conversion, LCMMB, 13 November 1848.

with six, or more children £85[18]

An additional 3% was added at the expiration of 3,7, and 12 years' service.[19] Children were considered as being under 16 years of age, but missionaries' disabled children were supported by LCM throughout their lives. In 1888, a single man was paid, £67.10s.0, a married man, £72,10s.0, and for each child under 17 years of age his salary was increased by £2.10s.0.[20] An additional £5 was paid after 3, 7, 12, and 16 years' service.[21] Upon retirement missionaries were placed upon LCM's Disabled Fund, from which they received a weekly pension.

The benefits of being employed by LCM extended beyond a missionary's salary, and access to LCM's Disabled Fund. When ill, missionaries, their wives, and dependent children were given free medical attendance from any one of LCM's locally appointed medical officers of their choice.[22] This benefit also included free medicines. The missionaries were allowed one fortnight's holiday each year, plus three days at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide.

Application, appointment, and training

Applicants to LCM completed a detailed form, which they submitted with the names of persons who would supply references. Candidates were invited to interview first by LCM's Examining Sub-Committee and afterwards by members of LCM's General Committee. Those who passed the interviews were then examined by at least three of LCM's Clerical Examiners, in lengthy individual interviews, following which reports were sent and if necessary, because

[18] Ibid., p.38.
[19] Ibid.
[20] *LCMAR, 1888,* Appendix, p.8.
[21] Ibid.
[22] The names of doctors, surgeons, and dentists who gave their services for free to LCM were published in LCM's Annual Reports.

a report was qualified, further interviews were held. Candidates then attended a full medical examination. Having passed their examinations, candidates were accepted for a minimum period of Probation of at least three months. Upon a successful review of their work as a Probationer while working on a district of their own, a formal appointment was made to become an LCM missionary.

The interviews of candidates before the General Committee were recorded in the General Committee's Minutes Books from 1837, onwards and in addition to these, LCM's archive contains the Examining Committee's Minutes Books, including Probationer Reports, which date from 1887. LCM's archive's rarest manuscript detail survives in 57 'Applicant's Admission' envelopes, dating from 1879, which contain their completed Application Forms, essays, references, Examiners' Reports, correspondence, and Medical Examination records.

The employers' view

LCM sought in their selection process to establish the religious character, and practical experience in spiritual work of the candidates. They ensured that their conversion experience was deeply rooted, not recent, and that it embraced a self-recognised and thoroughly-considered Divine missionary calling. They required that each applicant held a clear understanding and detailed knowledge of the gospel that they would proclaim.

LCM's belief was that many of the qualifications which they sought in a missionary were gifts. In 1875, they explained

> God gives different Gifts to His people, and these gifts may, and no doubt do, severally tend to the furtherance of the great purposes for which His Church was established in this world.[23]

[23] *LCMM, 1875*, p.193.

For 30 years, Canon Garratt worked with LCM. He first superintended missionaries in Lincoln's-Inn-fields, after he was appointed in 1850, to Trinity Church, Little Queen-street. In 1898, he recalled the gifts of the missionaries with whom he had worked.[24] He observed that one had the gift of being studious, a second, the gift of being able to speak with very great blessing in small meetings, and gatherings in houses, and of the third he recalled

> Well, he had none of the gifts that I have spoken of, but he had another, that of patience. He was one of the most patient men I ever saw. He went along with his work of home visitation, and in his district, he was as much respected as a man could be, and, I believe, had as many seals to his ministry as those whose gifts were more than those which we are inclined to admire.[25]

In the minutes of their interviews LCM referred often and without censure to a candidate's lack of the 'advantages of education.' LCM employed men who were illiterate, and they did so throughout the century. In 1875, LCM acknowledged that many of the missionaries could not write at all so as to give interest to the readers of their magazine, but 'as they were not engaged for such a purpose, the Society is contented if they do their work faithfully in the visitation of the poor.'[26] Others, LCM noted, reported their work clearly, 'although plainly, where frequently the plain tale as given by them is the more valuable from its plainness, as it shows that there is no attempt at setting it off, and the facts are left to speak for themselves.'[27]

The skill in communication which LCM valued was not literacy, but speech. LCM employed candidates who were thoroughly conversant in the Scriptures, and for those who could neither read nor write, their fluency was determined and demonstrated in their recall of

[24] *LCMM, 1898*, pp.156-9.
[25] Ibid., p.158.
[26] *LCMM, 1875*, p.193.
[27] Ibid.

passages that they had learned by heart.[28] Writing about the missionaries of MCM, Lee emphasised, 'A successful missionary needs to have a wide grasp of Scripture, and to be able just at the right time to turn to the only passage which is likely to arrest attention or to let the truth in.'[29] LCM, increasingly sought the skills that were required in holding open-air meetings because in these they had the opportunity to reach those whom others might not. Galt explained

> Indoors the preacher finds his audience waiting for him, and it is always a more or less sympathetic one….Out of doors the audience is composed of elements that are most dissimilar. There will be, in almost every open-air congregation, the *Indifferent,* the *Opposer,* the *Backslider,* and the *Fallen*; each difficult to deal with individually, how much more so when mixed with the others. So, the task before the open-air preacher is to arouse the indifferent, to convince the sceptical, to silence the opposer, to restore the backslider, and to raise the fallen.[30]

Selective admission

From the minutes of examinations there is evidence of LCM's Secretaries and Committee being aware of vacancies that had arisen in districts, or mission fields that they particularly wished to open or expand, and that in their interviews with a number of candidates they had these placements in mind.

LCM experienced difficulties throughout the years in their special mission to bakers. Their problems lay in access to bakeries. These were not overcome. They were open in their

[28] Missionaries who were illiterate were either excused from completing a journal, or by agreement with the Secretaries, their entries were transcribed, as was the case with James Baxendale.
[29] Lee, *The Cry,* p.67.
[30] J. Galt, *Open-Air Preaching* (London, 1903), pp.13-14. From the early 1850s LCM published accounts of their missionaries' open-air meetings, for example, Simmonds' work in Brunswick-street, see Chapter 3. From 1855, LCM published the total numbers of those who attended their missionaries' open-air meetings, see Appendix Table.

publications in their acknowledgment of their failings. When William Hicks, a journeyman baker from Balham, applied to LCM in 1853, considerable allowance was made in recognition of his individual circumstances to secure his appointment.[31] His conversion had taken place only between two and three years previously. His interview notes recorded that due to the nature of his employment, having commenced work at 1.00am and continued until 6.00pm, having only been able to return home from work to his wife and family for only one or two nights each week, and remaining in his work clothes for five or six days together, he had had little opportunity for reading the Scriptures, or 'making himself useful' in gaining evangelical experience. The Sub-Committee concluded, 'This is a case in which a Candidate needs to be tried in the work, to determine as to his suitableness, & they will be disappointed if he is not found a good missionary when placed in more favourable circumstances.'[32] Hicks remained with LCM until 1878, when he was placed on the Disabled Fund.

What were LCM's concerns in appointments?

LCM reflected upon whether a candidate might be 'too disadvantaged' to be considered, or 'too rough' or whether the religious experience of a man with scarcely any education had led to 'theological peculiarities'.[33] In 1848, LCM's Committee interviewed George Hunt, a printer from Basingstoke.[34] They observed

> This is an extraordinary young man…but he appears to be entirely ignorant of parties, & to have been self-taught except by the Spirit of God. The Sub-Committee cannot discover that he has even a preference for one religious body more than

[31] LCMMB, 28 March 1853.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., 3 April 1848.
[34] Ibid.

> another…they are willing to accept him without a testimonial from any Christian church or pastor.[35]

LCM accepted candidates with disabilities. John Hitchcock, from Southwark, was a coachman who had become almost blind when he made his application.[36] His appointment, in 1845, was conditional upon his not immediately seeking relief from the Disabled Fund should his blindness interfere with his labours. He worked in Greenwich for 11 years. George Gatton, a scripture reader from Glamorgan, was deaf when he applied to join LCM in 1878, thereafter he was funded entirely by those who lived in his district, Old Beckenham, until 1903, when he retired.[37]

LCM were not anxious about the physical appearance of a missionary, provided that it would not compromise his work. James Fitzgerald was described as being of a 'very rough' appearance and he had lost the use of one hand, although it was noted that he could write with the other.[38] The Committee were concerned, however, about a missionary's character or self-presentation if it suggested self-confidence or conceit. LCM's Committee's minutes of their interview with John Lockton in 1847, a shoemaker who was living in City-road, recorded that he appeared to be 'self-confident' but observed, 'our work will soon cure him of that failing'.[39]

The applications and appointments of 1863 and 1890

As with this dissertation's analysis of the social backgrounds of the missionaries, the years 1863 and 1890 have been selected for a discussion of what LCM sought in the spiritual and

[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid., 7 April 1845.
[37] Ibid., 4 February 1878.
[38] Ibid., 7 April 1851.
[39] Ibid., 6 December 1847.

practical experience of their candidates and for an overview of the outcomes of their applications. From a comparison of these years, it has been possible to identify how considerations changed and what remained constant in their detail. There is nothing in LCM's records to suggest that either year was unrepresentative or exceptional in character.

In 1863, LCM interviewed 31 applicants, 24 of whom were accepted, where one did not commence work, one applicant was asked to re-apply and was later accepted, and 6 applicants were declined. Of the 6 who were declined, 2 were refused on their lack of knowledge of the Scriptures, and 4 failed their medical examination. Of the candidates who were accepted, 3 were declined at the end of their Probation period. In 1890, LCM interviewed 36 candidates from whom they accepted 24, and 11 were declined. One withdrew his application. From among those who were declined, one application for re-admission was refused, and one second application was not accepted. Of the 9, whose first applications were declined, 6 were on the basis of a lack of knowledge of the Scriptures, and 3 failed their medical examinations. All of those who were accepted in 1890, passed their period of Probation and were appointed.

LCM were aware of the possibility of financial ambition in an application, but it was never cited explicitly as a reason for an applicant's refusal. This concern was exemplified in their discussion of William Robinson, a schoolmaster from Camden, in 1861, in the circumstances of his not having been able to supply a recent testimonial, 'The Committee were satisfied that Robinson was not seeking employment in the Mission simply for a livelihood'.[40] LCM noted their applicants' incomes during their interviews. For example, in 1863, John Barclay, a chenille cutter from Bethnal Green earned £120 a year, and his income fell to £80 a year

[40] Ibid., 7 October 1861.

when he joined LCM.[41] William Tuddenham, who was living in Camberwell, was an unemployed agricultural labourer from Norfolk, where he had been earning 13/- a week.[42] His income increased to £80 a year when he joined LCM. Both men worked with LCM until they were placed on the Disabled Fund, after 19 and 36 years, respectively.

LCM ascertained whether a candidate had secured conversions, and they looked for experience that had been gained in opportunities for preaching, holding both indoor and open-air meetings, sick visitation, Sunday-school teaching, and tract distribution. In 1863, 5 candidates had been scripture readers and 2 had been town missionaries. Each had lost his funding, and had turned to LCM for employment. There is no evidence that LCM sought to 'poach' agents from other Societies at any time, or that there were complaints received from other Societies that they did so. It is possible to suggest that by 1863, despite their experience, professional missionaries were not necessarily LCM's candidates of preference, as perhaps they had been in the Mission's early years. To have been a missionary by occupation, either in 1863 or 1890, did not guarantee acceptance. In both 1863, and 1890, LCM rejected applicants who had worked in full-time spiritual employment. In 1890, 4 of the candidates had been missionaries or evangelists, 2 candidates had worked for the Church Army, and 5 were colporteurs with the CCA. The increasing numbers of local colporteurs who applied to LCM during the last quarter of the century are notable. They have not been identified as having direct connections with LCM, but the CCA was deeply rooted and familiar amongst LCM's missionaries. The Association had been founded in

[41] Ibid., 23 February 1863.
[42] Ibid., 7 September 1863.

1874, by LCM's missionary John Farley while he was working in his district, Harvey-street, Hoxton.[43]

The spiritual work in which candidates had been involved was similar across the years with the exception of experience in open-air mission which became more widespread. In 1890, it was the increasing evidence of applicants having been assistants and helpers with LCM's missionaries' work from among those who lived in London which is significant. It reflects both the level of engagement that the missionaries were achieving among working men, and their individual influence in turn upon the men who sought missionary employment with LCM. From among the 24 candidates who were accepted in 1890, 10 discussed in detail in their applications and in interviews, their involvement with LCM's missionaries' work.

Evidence of the increasing influence of the missionaries upon recruitment within LCM lies also in the references that the candidates submitted. Abraham West's application envelope which dates from 1890, contained three references.[44] One was written by his employer, Rev William Corbett, and two by LCM's missionaries, Joseph Denchfield and William Hitchcock.[45] As might be expected, a reference from a missionary to LCM, by whom he was employed, contained all that he imagined that the Examiners would wish to read, but they were at the same time remarkably direct and spontaneous in their character. They were a personal

[43] *LCMM, 1920,* p.103, in which Farley wrote, 'meeting with an ardent young convert whom I had "nurtured in the admonition of the Lord" (he is now a London City Missionary) [*Arthur Smith*], I laid out a small capital of thirty shillings, and started him as a colporteur. That humble beginning in the providence of God led to the formation of the "Christian Colportage Association", [*in 1874*] a Society whose agents are to-day working with such beneficent results in many of the counties of England.'

[44] LCMA, 'West envelope', uncatalogued, Application Form, 21 November 1889, noting West, an engineer's fitter by trade, had been employed for two years before his application by the SRS, and that he had received three years of education, between the ages of 7-10 years.

[45] 'West envelope', containing letter Denchfield to LCM, 21 November 1889; letter Hitchcock to LCM, 22 November 1889; letter Rev W. A. Cobbett to LCM, 29 January 1890.

expression of qualities which the missionaries valued and admired in their colleagues and they reflected their understanding of what was needed to succeed in mission. Denchfield had known West for 9 years, and it was he who had converted West when he was working on his Columbia Market district.[46] He commented upon West's circumstances, 'His experience in life has been a varied one, but as such an one that has given him good judgment of character amongst the working classes even of the lowest type.'[47] Hitchcock wrote at length about the two years during which he had worked with West in his district, and why he understood that West would prefer to be a missionary rather than to remain as a scripture reader

> He is an exlerint speaker both out door and in He as been a great help to me in the open air work for this last two years and also indoor meetings = He is a good House to House Visiter and as a very exlerent way in wining the people. He as also a meeting very Tuesday evening which is well attended = He is of a very genial spirit I have never heard any one speak evil of him – his health is good.
>
> His abject I believe in joining our beloved Mission his to be moore fully employed in the work of the Lord as he is now employed a great Deal in secular work.[48]

The Examining Committee's minutes reveal that each candidate was asked to discuss his conversion. From those recorded during 1890, diverse experiences were described. The age at which it took place varied considerably. For some it had been experienced in crisis, and with anxiety, for others it had been a gradual and steadily reflective process. Those who had influenced conversions were noted by the Examiners, family members, wives in particular, and especially the involvement of LCM's own missionaries. George Cockle's conversion had

[46] Denchfield, a builder from Kent, joined LCM in 1878. He was a Wesleyan Methodist, see LCMLSDR, p.91.
[47] Denchfield to LCM, 21 November 1889.
[48] Hitchcock to LCM, 22 November 1889. Hitchcock, an Anglican, joined LCM in 1884. He had previously been a warder in H. M. Prison, Rochester, see LCMLSDR, p.99.

taken place 10 years before he applied to join LCM.[49] He escaped narrowly from a railway accident and had reflected immediately afterwards, 'If I had been killed where would my soul be now?' He related that the same night he had found peace in his kitchen in believing.[50] Reuben Keep explained that he had been placed in prison when he was in the Army, and it was while he was in prison that he began to read the Bible. His reading had led to his conversion.[51] Mark Lane had been converted at a meeting held by Moody in Kensington, and he declared that as soon as he had experienced conversion, he 'began to work for God'.[52] Thomas Moore was converted by Ned Wright at a meeting held in the West London Tabernacle following which, and immediately, he had 'given himself to God'.[53] Four of the candidates who were appointed in 1890, had been converted by LCM's missionaries in their districts, one of whom was William Baker who had been converted by Frank Burrough. The Examiners' called him 'a child of the Mission' with obvious warmth.[54]

It is possible to discern candidates who were perceived to hold great promise, or for whom the Examiners took an instant liking. In 1863, William Krause drew their attention with his uncomplicated declaration that he 'loves mission work.'[55] He had been a hospital sergeant in the Army where he had served for 21 years. He applied to LCM when he was aged 40. He was a Methodist, and although it was noted that he had secured the confidence of his

[49] LCMECMB, 6 January 1890, noting Cockle, a Primitive Methodist, had been employed by the Parcel Post Service in Kentish Town before he joined LCM.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid., 19 May 1890.
[52] Ibid., 6 January 1890, noting Lane, an Anglican, had been an indoor servant in Kensington before he joined LCM.
[53] Ibid., 23 June 1890, noting Moore had been working for the Church Army before he joined LCM.
[54] Ibid., 17 November 1890, noting Baker, a stone-carver by trade, was aged 24 when he applied and that he had attended Burrough's Mission in Fulham since childhood. Burrough had secured his conversion 8 years previously. He was noted as being Burrough's 'right hand man for the last few years' who had demonstrated a 'decided influence' in the conversions of others, including his parents. He was a member of the Open Brethren.
[55] LCMMB, 26 October 1863.

minister and others of his Christian zeal and consistency he was at the same time 'not so ready' in his quotation of Scripture or the leading doctrines.[56] It was in his character that his potential mission skills were observed and where it was recorded

> There is a great gentleness in his manner and he manifests a most kindly disposition. He is just the person to conciliate all parties whether superior or inferior from his great simplicity and entire freedom from all pretention.[57]

From among those who applied in 1890, it is possible to hear a prayer in the Committee's thoughts about Reuben Keep, who was 44, and a cellarman and bottler at Gibleys.[58] They noted, 'His knowledge of Scripture is somewhat fragmentary but his spirit is so earnest and whole-hearted that the Committee hope he may be able to pass the Examiners.'[59] He did pass the Examiners. The Committee's optimism was rewarded in the Probationary Report of his Training Superintendent who wrote

> Though an illiterate man and not possessing too accurate a knowledge of Scripture he seems to be a man full of the Spirit of God, and has already obtained a remarkable influence over the people; the very poorest and also the railway men and artisans appreciate his visits and addresses. He promises to be a most successful missionary.[60]

The Reports that were prepared by the missionaries who oversaw and worked closely with the Probationers are important sources. An experienced missionary from an adjoining district oversaw the work of a Probationer who worked on his own district. They confirm that the missionaries' opinions were valued and that they influenced the decisions which were taken upon appointments. They reflect an appraisal of the quality of the Probationers'

[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] LCMECMB, 19 May 1890, noting Keep was an Anglican.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid., 6 October 1890.

work and their potential from first-hand observation. John Bird noted Reuben Keep's success

> Kind brotherly spirit; strong sympathy with the people in their difficulties and trials. He gains ready access and is plain and faithful in dealing with them, having a pointed, earnest style of speaking to heart and conscience. It is evident that the Lord is working with him.[61]

It is possible to illustrate how the missionaries perceived both strengths and failings in the Probationers whom they discussed. Ebenezer Goozee, for example, wrote of George Cockle, 'Humble, zealous, courageous and persevering. Tact and freshness and readiness of mind. His meetings are well attended bright and cheerful.'[62] Of those about whom the missionaries wrote with criticism, Edwin Kent, was observed to be a 'weak' missionary, because of his 'unreadiness to break the ice in conversation and a difficulty in gaining access.'[63] His services were 'dispensed with' soon afterwards, in 1893.[64] Of Henry Gordon, it was noted, 'His weakness is perhaps too much self-esteem.'[65] He resigned from LCM within a year of his appointment to become a CMS missionary in Uganda.[66]

Motives and motivation

In comparison with literature which has described foreign missionary experience, very few studies have explored the individual motivation of home missionaries. In his discussion of their journals, Robson was critical of the motives of evangelical missionaries working in

[61] Ibid., Bird, a teacher, joined LCM in 1860. He was a Primitive Methodist, see LCMLSDR, p.57.
[62] Ibid., 9 June 1890. Goozee, a railway porter from Bethnal Green, joined LCM in 1875, see LCMLSDR, p.85.
[63] Ibid., 15 December 1890. Kent, a Wesleyan Methodist, worked as a missionary for the Seamen's Rest and Aid Society in Jersey before he joined LCM, see LCMECMB, 17 February 1890.
[64] LCMLSDR, p.105.
[65] LCMECMB, 27 April 1891. Gordon had been a sub-inspector in a gas company before he joined LCM. His father was a Wesleyan missionary in Sierra Leone, see LCMECMB, 10 November 1890.
[66] LCMLSDR, p.107.

Birmingham in the 1840s.[67] He asked, 'What led them to persevere despite the evident fruitlessness of their labours?' He answered his question, 'Conviction of their own superiority as agents of divine judgement on sin'.[68] His studies are unique for his unqualified criticism of the town missionaries' motivation, which he considered to be self-serving.

In his study of the foreign missionary experience of men who worked in India, Williams used CMS sources from between 1840-1910.[69] He observed that in motivation foreign missionaries who were, 'not quite gentlemen' had sought social advancement and respectability. Proctor identified Scottish missionaries who worked in India as a special interest group, whom he described as shrewd pragmatists who attached a high priority to the attainment of particular professional objectives.[70] He illustrated the importance for them of their connections and of their continuing contact with one another.

Temporal motives

In missionary literature Piggin's research is unique for the depth of his analysis.[71] He investigated the backgrounds of 550 missionaries to India, appointed between 1789-1858, from the records of 13 mission societies. From his analysis, mission to India was a predominantly middle-class enterprise, where skilled artisans and working-class candidates comprised only 16% of applicants. Piggin's conclusions about the financial motivation of

[67] G. Robson, 'The Failures of Success: Working Class Evangelists in Early Victorian Birmingham', *Studies in Church History, Volume 15: Religious Motivation Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Historian* (Cambridge, 1978), pp.381-91.
[68] Ibid., p.382.
[69] C. P. Williams, '*"Not Quite Gentlemen": an Examination of "Middling Class" Protestant Missionaries from Britain, c.1850-1900', The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 31/3 (1990), pp.301-15.*
[70] J. H. Proctor, 'Scottish missionaries in India: An inquiry into motivation, South Asia', *Journal of South Asian Studies*, 13/1 (1990), pp.43-61.
[71] S. Piggin, *Making Evangelical Missionaries 1789-1858, The Social Background, Motives and Training of British Protestant Missionaries to India* (Abingdon, 1985).

applicants in foreign mission reflected one of the differences between home and foreign mission. Many candidates had suffered economic misfortune. He described the men as opportunists although rarely unscrupulous, and that they were men for whom, in particular, the Church was not able to provide all of those who desired to serve it with an adequate income; a problem for which overseas service provided a possible solution.[72]

There were temporal concerns in candidates' motivation to join LCM in which for some the quest for financial security, as has been discussed as a particular concern for LCM, will have been a consideration, but the desire for respectability also played a part, and LCM were not critical of the ambition for respectability.

Why LCM?

It is possible to illustrate why a number of candidates sought specifically to join LCM. For some, the influence of LCM's missionaries had developed over many years. William Mason recalled that the son of a missionary had asked him for a penny for the Mission.[73] He had not heard of LCM, but became a subscriber. He became Secretary to the Tash-street Working Men's Auxiliary that had been established to aid LCM's funding. He then left his trade as a printer to become an LCM missionary in 1846.[74] James Dawkins who was LCM's office messenger, was surrounded by the comings and goings of the missionaries, they befriended and inspired him. In 1882, he applied to become a missionary and was accepted.[75] There were candidates who wished to join LCM who were not deterred by rejection. Ernest Baker explained when he spoke at LCM's Annual Meeting in 1908, that he

[72] Ibid., p.47.
[73] LCMA, *Annual Statement of the Disabled Missionaries Fund*, *1885*, p.3.
[74] LCMLSDR, p.21.
[75]Ibid., p.95.

had heard a missionary speak outside All Souls, Langham Place, when he was a child and there and then he had resolved that he wished to become a missionary.[76] He applied to LCM twelve times, and until the Secretary asked,' "How many more times are you going to try?" I said, "Until I get in," and so I did, and was at last accepted." '[77]

Reuben Tschertkoff identified that it was the framework of the employment of LCM's missionaries that appealed to him; to be working under supervision with support, alongside other missionaries, and with the routines of keeping a journal and writing reports.[78] In 1893, when he considered leaving the Jewish Refuge Society after 10 years work in their medical mission he noted, 'I like all that; I believe in system and order, and so long as I am thoroughly well, I would not give it up. I should like to have a try.'[79]

Spiritual motivation

Candidates who had worked as scripture readers and colporteurs revealed the specific problems that they had experienced with temporal concerns. Thomas Kruse had worked for five years as a scripture reader in Greenwich before he applied to LCM in 1869.[80] He described that he 'wanted to be freed from the disadvantages of administering temporal relief, & other services of a somewhat secular kind'. In 1890, Thomas Roote explained why he sought to join LCM in giving up his employment as a colporteur. He explained that it was because 'It was becoming too much of a mere business.'[81]

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[76] *LCMM, 1908*, pp.109-12. Baker, a Baptist, had been a foreman for a provisions dealer before he joined LCM in 1900, see LCMECMB, 26 November 1900.
[77] Ibid., p.109.
[78] *LCMM, 1900*, pp.129-34. Tschertkoff, a doctor, was a Russian Jewish convert. He joined LCM in 1893, see LCMECMB, 6 March 1893.
[79] Ibid., p.132.
[80] LCMMB, 1 February 1869.
[81] LCMECMB, 16 June 1890, noting Roote, a Baptist, worked for the Village Gospel Mission for a year before he applied to LCM. Previously he had been in the Royal Marines, witnessed the death

In 1897, Henry Palmer spoke about the reason why he worked as a missionary

> My desire in entering the London City Mission was that I might be a servant of Christ, even though in the lowest sphere. I had no idea of becoming a big man. I do not want to be a big man; they get in everybody's way. I want to be a quiet worker for Christ.[82]

His uncomplicated expression is generally representative of the evidence contained within LCM's archive about the spiritual motivation for becoming and being a missionary. This dissertation's evidence supports the conclusions of Piggin and Lewis, where without doubt, the experience of conversion was the most significant element in the missionaries' religious life, and in their motivation to mission. Piggin cautioned that historians have always found missionary inspiration hard to chart, because prayerfulness and spirituality have an elusive quality and it has always seemed easier to dismiss evangelical missionaries as a product of a narrow outlook, a rigid mechanical system, and a judgmental spirit rather than a creative enterprise.[83] He concluded that this was at best a shallow view dictated by hindsight, and at worst, a serious distortion.[84] In Lewis' discussion of the motivation of Ranyard's Bible women, he reflected

> In the 30 years since first writing about the matter I find only my view to be reinforced by the evidence…It is difficult almost impossible for historians today to appreciate the deeply religious motives and consuming passion that moved Ranyard and her Biblenurses. Genuinely altruistic motives are discounted and alternative motives are posited as primary.[85]

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of comrades at the bombardment of Alexandria, and experienced conversion afterwards. Thereafter, he became the means of conversion on his ship "The Wanderer" of 17 men.

[82] *LCMM, 1897*, pp.151-3. Palmer, an Anglican, was LCM's Missionary to public-houses in Shoreditch. He had been a railway guard in Southwark before he joined LCM in 1883. He was converted by LCM's missionary John Sansom, see LCMLSDR, p.97.

[83] Piggin, *Making Evangelical Missionaries,* p.250.

[84] Ibid.

[85] D. M. Lewis, 'A Sisterhood Powerful for Motherhood, Ellen Ranyard's "Biblewomen" and "Biblewomen Nurses" 'in Button and Sheetz-Nguyen, (eds), *Victorians and the Case for Charity*, pp.159-83.

The candidates whom Piggin discussed were perhaps more socially confident than many of LCM's applicants. What emerges from LCM's evidence is that often candidates had genuine trouble in articulating what they felt or knew in their interviews. LCM's General Committee and Clerical Examiners appear from missionary accounts to have been understanding, and encouraging in this respect. When he spoke at LCM's Annual Meeting in 1894, John Davis recalled the experience of being interviewed by the collected members of LCM's General Committee and his nervousness

> It has been a puzzle to me for a long time why the London City Mission accepted me at all. But after coming in contact with many of the Committee I have thought them very kindly, and I suppose they said, "He will do his best, we will accept him." I did not know much seventeen years ago when I was examined, so to speak, by the Committee. And what is more I then seemed to forget what I *had* known. The Chairman said to me, "Mr Davis, you do not know much." "No," I remarked, "I do not, and what I did know I have forgotten, sir." He then said, "What *do* you know?" I replied, "Sir, I know that God has saved my soul." Then one of the Committee after the close of the meeting gave me a pat on the back and said, "I believe the Lord will open the way for you."[86]

There were influences upon candidates that have not been captured in others' studies of mission. There were applicants who described having reconsidered the future course of their lives in grief, following a sudden glimpse of their own mortality, or in remorse, and there were many who revealed that they had asked for guidance in their decision in prayer. A calling to mission was not described by them as a consideration of heavenly personal reward, but one of their immediate usefulness. There is a sense also of unease should their conversion imperative to save souls not be acted upon. In their discussions of those among whom they were working, or seeking to work, they identified that they faced a challenge, or duty to save souls, but, unlike the missionaries' whom Robson described, it was not

[86] *LCMM, 1894*, pp.166-8. For a detailed discussion of Davis' mission see Chapter 6.

expressed in feelings of condemnation for those who were living without religion, but instead with kindness and compassion in believing that they could make a difference in turning around their state of ignorance. In their own conversions they acknowledged a deep personal gratitude to God and they demonstrated how they became compelled knowing they were loved, to long for others to secure the same experience. Their accounts reveal that they often commenced immediately in their hope to share their experience among family and friends.

Marcus Bergmann and Joseph Wright

From within many accounts which are held in LCM's archive's material, the evidence of Marcus Bergmann and Joseph Wright has been selected to illustrate the character of the missionaries' evangelical motivation. Neither man's experience was written for the records or publications of LCM, and they cannot as such reasonably be considered to have been influenced by them in any way for the purposes of joining, promoting, or publicising the Society.

Marcus Bergmann's biography was written by his wife, Maya.[87] It is a slight but extraordinarily important work. Marcus Bergmann was born in Silesia in 1846. He was a rabbi. His conversion took place in London. He married Maya Brown, the daughter of a scripture reader from Walworth in 1866. Before he joined LCM in 1870, he was employed for two years by the Operative Jewish Converts Institution. During the time that he worked with LCM, Maya noted, he was offered the opportunity to enter Holy Orders 'more than once', but he believed 'that it would take him out of Jewish mission work and fetter him so

[87] M.S.C.B. *God's Faithfulness* (London, 1911). Bergmann translated The Bible into Yiddish while working for LCM. He also prepared a Diglot Bible with Hebrew and Yiddish in parallel columns, see, p.v, and p.98.

to speak.'[88] The book includes transcripts of a substantial exchange of letters between Bergmann and his sister in which he described his conversion and its effect upon him, and on her part, the anxiety and dismay that it caused to her and to his family. On 29 June 1868, he explained to her

> He has manifested Himself to a poor, sinful, guilt-laden creature.
>
> This redemption work [*mission*] is done from a conscientious sense of duty.
>
> I am so happy! I feel that God loves me, and that I love him.
>
> Believe me, beloved sister, I am not in error, neither do I deceive myself; oh no! I am as certain that through my Redeemer all my sins are forgiven as I am sure of the existence of God Himself. I could tell you the minute when I first received this conviction, and could rejoice in God my salvation, and if you, my beloved sister, ever discern the love of God, that alone will suffice to convince you of the truth.[89]

Bergmann worked for LCM, as their Missionary to the Germans and Jews in St George's-in-the-East until 1918. He died in 1922.[90]

It might be argued that Bergmann was more articulate than many of LCM's missionaries but the feelings that he expressed were not unique.

Joseph Wright was a candidate among LCM's applicants of 1890.[91] John Galt transcribed his life story from their conversations and with the experience of having worked alongside one another for 18 years, in his unpublished autobiography, 'Joe the Man'.[92] Galt explained his opportunity and purpose in doing so

[88] Ibid., p.20.
[89] Ibid., pp.12-13.
[90]LCMLSDR, p.73.
[91] LCMECMB, 8 December 1890.
[92] LCMA, J. Wright, 'Joe the Man', (n.d.)

> Fortunately the present writer made notes of the story so that it was perfectly simple to add the details which a long close and sympathetic comradeship made so well known.
>
> Mr Wright can hardly be imagined as telling his life story for any other purpose than to illustrate or reinforce some principle which he counted of great importance. As here set down however no theory or principle is advanced it being thought that the story itself will convey its own lessons to earnest and honest seekers after reality and truth in human life.
>
> The final value of this work will probably be on account of its being the record of the experiences reactions and developments of a personality which owed hardly anything to convention or education as education is generally understood.[93]

Wright was a bootmaker by trade, and a Champion boxer. He joined the Army and deserted. He had been illiterate until he was 35 years old when he taught himself his letters and began to read, because, he explained, as a consequence of his conversion he sought to read The Bible. Galt's text detailed that his conversion took place, following what he described as a remarkable dream. He visited a chapel, when during the singing of the hymn 'Jesus sought me when a stranger' he felt peace come into his soul. He challenged God to help him immediately afterwards when he became lost late at night. He believed that God responded to his challenge and in doing so He secured his soul.

Wright recalled the effect of his conversion, 'I had a peace of spirit that astonished me, and made me want to see other people have it too but I was too shy of speaking to anyone feeling as I did that most folks knew a great deal more than I did.'[94] He sought his sister, whom he had not seen for many years, and found her working as a prostitute. He believed the timing of his discovery of her to be Providential. She had tried to commit suicide. At her lodgings and among her companions he described the meaning for himself and for them

[93] Ibid., pp.1-2.
[94] Ibid., p.71

of acting upon his recent conversion's evangelical imperative, 'I was in my element again. I was preaching to real sinners that knew that they were sinners and for a long time these women sat and cried with tears as I preached.'[95] He was in no doubt of the conversions he secured among the women who stayed with his sister in the lodging-house and who looked after her during the following days, and of the effect of his words on them. He observed, 'I am liking that I will see them in heaven.'[96] His sister died. He reflected

> I told them I was not depending entirely on the things that I had been taught by other people not just the things that I had read about in a book. That I had tried and proved God and that He had answered me and helped me and made a new man of me and I besought every one of them to accept the Invitation of the Saviour to come to Him to find rest for their souls.
>
> I fully believed that everybody had a ministry and that everybody was expressly made for that ministry.[97]

Thereafter, and before joining LCM, Wright worked as a colporteur in the Docks for the CCA. He came into contact with LCM's missionaries and helped them in their mission. He explained that he came to think of their calling as being 'above anything else in all the world, "almost a heavenly calling" and to be set apart to do so was as such'.[98] He joined LCM in 1890, aged 43, nine years after his conversion. Wright spoke at LCM's Annual meeting in 1902, where he introduced himself, and his daily motivation in his work

> I am now a Public-house missionary, and I love the work.
>
> The Committee appointed me to visit the public-houses in a neighbourhood where I spent twenty years, the wildest years of my life, and therefore I know all the public-houses well. I have told my conversion in hundreds of tap-rooms and it always has power.

[95] Ibid., p.88.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid., p.99.
[98] Ibid.

> If it was not for the power and grace of God, I have said to myself when I have seen some poor drunkard lying in the gutter, "There is poor old Joe Wright."[99]

Wright worked for LCM until 1922. He died in 1923.[100]

Bergmann and Wright's accounts are important because they were written from the perspective of those who have been particularly silent to date in the literature of London's mission history, Jewish and working-class men. They revealed in detail their individual and overwhelmingly spiritual motivation in becoming missionaries, and their lifelong commitment to their work.

Influence

In 1860, LCM observed,

> A missionary is sometimes regarded as merely one of a large number of adjuncts which pertain to a district.
>
> This is a most inadequate idea of a missionary…
>
> IT TAKES AWAY FROM HIM THAT ORIGINATING POWER IN WHICH SO MUCH OF HIS INFLUENCE EXISTS[101]

LCM's missionaries' influence extended as a consequence of their faith, and their detailed knowledge of the places and people among whom they lived and worked.

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[99] *LCMM, 1902*, pp.198-202, noting Wright was LCM's Missionary to public-houses in Spitalfields and Bethnal Green.
[100] LCMLSDR, p.107.
[101] *LCMAR, 1860*, p.23.

The spiritual influence of a working-class missionary

It is important to recognise that spiritual influence was the overarching aim and achievement of LCM's missionaries. William Champneys superintended four LCM missionaries between 1847-59, during the time when he was Rector of Whitechapel.[102] He understood the influence of their mission within his parish, and he recognised it was work that neither he nor his curates were able to do.

David McIlhiney observed that Champneys never wrote about his experience in the East End, but LCM's sources include evidence of detailed correspondence between Champneys and LCM's Committee which dates from 1844, onwards, and transcripts of the speeches which he gave at LCM's Annual Meetings in 1850, 1852, and 1861.[103] McIlhiney concluded that the focus of Champneys' work in Whitechapel had been young people, and remarked that the most that he could have hoped for was to redeem a proportion of his young parishioners from their culture of poverty. He argued that Champneys left the day-to-day work of the church in his curates' hands, and that by not living in the parish and leading its work personally, he was a precursor rather than the founder of the late-nineteenth century style of slum ministry.[104]

It is clear from LCM's evidence that Champneys' spiritual interest for those who lived in Whitechapel encompassed concern and action for many more souls than those of the young, and that it was LCM's missionaries whom he entrusted with this work. In future studies, the close relationship of men like Champneys with LCM will change our

[102] Details published in LCM's Annual Reports, 1847-59.
[103] D. B McIlhiney, *A Gentleman in Every Slum, Church of England Missions in East London, 1837-1914* (Pennsylvania, 1988), p.76., and *LCMM*, *1850*, pp.139-42, *LCMM*, *1852*, pp.140-45, *LCMM, 1861*, pp.147-50.
[104] McIlhiney, *A Gentleman,* pp.76-7.

understanding of the character of Evangelical slum parish ministry. In 1850, Champneys spoke about the missionaries' influence within his parish and his recognition of why they, rather than he, were uniquely placed to secure it. He acknowledged

> I, as a minister of a large parish, know that, much as I should prefer the work of going from house to house, as I might in a smaller parish, I can only work upon masses; I can only talk to hundreds; but there are hundreds and thousands in my parish, who will not hear the Gospel unless it is taken to them.
>
> What is a striking fact is that so large a number of the dying – now the dead – would never have heard the Gospel but for the missionaries of this Society…..But why have these men been called upon in sickness? They were no strangers and this is the secret of it. I do not doubt that, if the history of those persons were analysed, it would be found that the reason which led them to send for the missionary in their dying moments was, that the missionary had sought them in their living ones.[105]

In 1846, Champneys had introduced Richardson, who had been a gardener as a candidate to LCM.[106] He also secured his funding, the Scott Legacy.[107] William Richardson's LCM district included Whitechapel Workhouse where Richardson visited among the able-bodied and in the Infirmary. Champneys was his Local Superintendent, but Richardson was not Champneys' assistant, and his lifelong mission continued after Champneys left Whitechapel. Richardson visited the Whitechapel Workhouse for 12 years, and The London Hospital for 23 years. In recognition of his work's achievements Richardson was appointed a Life-Governor of the Hospital.[108]

The influence of a missionary upon the provision of free drinking water in his district

LCM's connection with the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain Association is unknown. Historians have described the Association as having originated in the work of the

[105] *LCMM*, *1850*, p.140.
[106] *LCMM, 1884*, pp.147-8. Richardson, an Anglican, was Disabled in 1882, see LCMLSDR, p.21.
[107] LCMMB, 15 June 1846, noting Scott had been a surgeon at The London Hospital.
[108] *LCMAR*, *1885*, p.33.

temperance movement but in London this was not the case.[109] In his discussion of the public drinking fountain movement Malchow observed that within a relatively short space of time London was covered with hundreds of public fountains which improved considerably the pleasure of city walking.[110] For the poor, however, their need lay in the provision of free and clean drinking water, where local authorities would not commit themselves to an obligation which they believed would become a permanent charge on public rates.

In their Annual Report of 1860, LCM wrote about Thomas Everest's achievement for his district, Hosier-lane, Spitalfields

> The Committee feeling the vast importance of this movement, allowed one of their missionaries to devote a large part of some months of the year to organising the Metropolitan Association. As his reward, the first fountain standard was erected in his district, and since 50 fountains have been erected, or are in the course of erection in the metropolis.[111]

The Metropolitan Association was founded in 1859, by Samuel Gurney and Edward Wakefield, and its objective of a continuous supply of drinking water for London's poorest citizens was advocated by Shaftesbury.[112] Gurney was not a member of LCM's Committee and he did not superintend a missionary.[113] The Association's first fountain was located against the railings of the church of St Sepulchre-without-Newgate, Snow Hill. It was

[109] H. Malchow, 'Free Water: the Public Drinking Fountain Movement and Victorian London', *The London Journal,* 4/2 (1978), pp.181-203,
[110] Ibid. p.184.
[111] *LCMAR, 1860*, p.22.
[112] *The Times,* [London], no. 23,279, (13 April 1859), p.10, col. d.
[113] Gurney made a substantial donation to LCM at this time. It was recorded, 'Reported that the £500 contribution liberally promised by Saml. Gurney, Esq., MP, had been paid in at the Bankers.' See, LCMMB, 23 January 1860.

opened on 21 April 1859, following which it was reported that it was used immediately by about 7,000 people a day.[114] The water was filtered by the Association.[115]

Thomas Everest had asked LCM for temporary leave from the greater part of his daily district mission work to realise a project to which he was deeply committed.[116] Everest's district was extremely poor but Everest was funded by those who lived in his district and they had applied to LCM in 1853, for him to be their missionary through John Stabb and the members Committee of the Fox and Knot-court Ragged School.[117] Everest had been a wheelwright living in Clerkenwell before he joined LCM, where during the cholera epidemic of the following winter he had almost died from an exceedingly severe attack of dysentery.[118] LCM's Committee Minutes Books reveal that they had asked for a guarantee of £35, the lowest sum that the Society's rules allowed due to the 'necessitous condition' of the district and that in the years when their guarantee had not been met Everest's work was continued without LCM having received the full contribution.[119] Thomas Everest was a working-class missionary, supported by working-class funds, and he had secured for those among whom he lived London's first clean water public fountain.

The influence of missionary knowledge

Lewis discussed the lay agents' role as information gatherers, and their reputation for familiarising the Victorian public with London's slums, and he noted that the 'better-

[114] *The Illustrated London News,* 30 April 1859, p.24, (Author's copy).
[115] LMA, Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association, Minute Book of the Executive Committee, 1859-1866, London, LMA, ACC/3168/001.
[116] *LCMAR, 1860*, p.22. Everest was a Wesleyan Methodist. After working with Gurney, he returned to his district's mission full-time, see LCMLSDR, p.41.
[117] LCMMB, 7 November 1853.
[118] *LCMM, 1854*, p.256
[119] LCMMB, 7 November 1853.

educated missionary' was often called upon for information as 'one of the few educated observers, apart from the doctor' who entered them.[120] Mayhew and Mearns depended upon LCM's missionaries for information and access. It is extremely important to recognise, however, that LCM did not select their 'best educated' missionaries for the task; they selected missionaries with apposite knowledge and experience, which was far from being the same thing.

Mayhew was accompanied in his information-gathering role among lodging-houses, vagrants, and thieves in his district of Goodman's-fields in the early 1850s, by Thomas Jackson, by Frederick Maddock among the 70 lodging-houses in Keate-street, Spitalfields, the densest number of lodging-houses in any of LCM's districts, and by George Grimmett in his special mission for LCM among London's cabmen.[121] Thomas Jackson, a corn miller from Manchester, had not been able to sign his name upon his marriage.[122] Frederick Maddock had been a carman in City-road before he joined LCM, and George Grimmett had been a labourer in St Pancras.[123] Nevertheless, and without an education to recommend them, the missionaries work had a profound effect upon Mayhew. In 1861, in *Life and Labour* he spoke with unqualified admiration for LCM's mission

> The very silent and unobtrusive character of the work thus effected, precludes anything like an accurate estimate of results, or a showy parade of success. It works secretly, quietly, and savingly, in districts too vast to admit of pastoral supervision, and in neighbourhoods too outwardly unattractive and unpropitious to win the

[120] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.121.
[121] Jackson, an Anglican, joined LCM in 1839, see LCMLSDR, p.71. Maddock, an Anglican, joined LCM in 1852, see LCMLSDR, p.35. Grimmett, an Anglican, joined LCM in 1849, see LCMLSDR, p.29. Grimmett is discussed in Chapter 7.
[122] Manchester, Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives, *England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1930, ref*. L48/1/4/16, http://www.ancestry.co.uk (23 August 2021).
[123] LCMMB, 15 March 1852, and LCMMB, 15 October 1849.

> attention of any who are not animated with a devoted love of souls. The influence which is thus exerted in a social and religious point of view is inestimable.[124]

Gilbert described *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* as 'perhaps the most influential single piece of writing about the poor that England has ever seen'.[125] The twenty-page penny pamphlet was published by the London Congregational Union in October 1883.[126] In it, Mearns, the Union's Secretary, appraised the physical and moral condition of London's slums. Wohl observed that it created a furore to which the government responded by appointing the Royal Commission on the Houses of the Working-classes (1884-5).[127] He argued that it inspired the Settlement House Movement. Bartlett concluded that Mearns' *Bitter Cry* was the catalyst in the recognition of deepening crisis for Wesleyan Methodism's 'Forward Movement' and its large central halls, mission stations, and social and evangelistic agencies.[128]

In the pamphlet's opening paragraph Mearns acknowledged, 'We are not losing sight of the London City Mission whose agents are everywhere, and whose noble work our investigations have led us to value more than ever'.[129]

As with Mayhew, Mearns accompanied missionaries who held highly relevant experience. William Baker, LCM's missionary in their High-street and Long-lane district, Borough, Southwark, guided Mearns around his district. In Baker's obituary LCM wrote, 'He furnished

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[124] H. Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. IV* (London, 1861-2), p.xxii.
[125] B. B. Gilbert, *The Evolution of National Insurance in Great Britain, The Origins of the Welfare State* (London, 1966), p.28.
[126] A. Mearns, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London: An Inquiry into the Condition of the Abject Poor*, (London, 1883), pp.924-33.
[127] A. S. Wohl, 'Mearns, Andrew (1837-1925)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Oxford, September 2004), https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/56012, (20 August 2021).
[128] Bartlett, 'The Churches', p.261.
[129] Mearns, *The Bitter Cry,* p.924.

many of the facts contained in *The Bitter Cry* a book that revealed the social and spiritual destitution in a way that stirred the whole country and turned streams of help in the direction of the starving and suffering poor.'[130] William Tuddenham took Mearns with him as he worked in the lodging-houses of St Luke's.[131] Tuddenham, who has been mentioned among LCM's candidates in 1863, came to London from Norfolk where he had been an agricultural labourer earning 13/- a week.[132]

In November 1883, LCM agreed to assist Mearns with the 'statistics and particulars' that could be provided to him by all of their missionaries in their Second Division.[133] Thereafter Mearns was provided with information by 81 of LCM's missionaries who worked in East and East-Central London.

Mearns spoke at LCM's Annual and Jubilee Year Meeting in May 1884.[134] He acknowledged the influence of the missionaries upon him. He admitted that he spoke not with respect to the resolution that he had undertaken to support at the Meeting but that he wished instead to bear a personal testimony

> I have not gone into a garret or a cellar in a district where a missionary is at work where he is not known and esteemed. These poorest people are among those who respect and love your missionaries the most.
>
> I can tell you that to go with one of your missionaries for two or three hours exhausts me for the day….Three hours of that kind of work gives me a headache for the day and a sleepless night as well.
>
> I value the work of the City Mission more than ever before. I had my prejudice against it but I am converted. I sometimes thought that there wasn't much to show for the

[130] *LCMM, 1922*, p.109, noting Baker, a Wesleyan Methodist, joined LCM in 1877, previously he had been working as a colporteur in Dorking.
[131] *LCMM, 1884,* pp.49-55, where LCM published Mearns' description of his visit.
[132] LCMMB*,* 24 August 1863.
[133] Ibid.*,* 19 November 1883.
[134] *LCMM, 1884*, pp.133-7.

> labours of so many men. I am now on the other side, and wonder at the outward visible result of their labours under such trying circumstances.[135]

Historians have demonstrated that mission societies were highly motivated to publicise their works to secure funding, and yet, as Mayhew, and Mearns observed, LCM were considered by them to understate their influence.

The creative influence of LCM's missionaries

Andrew Provan and Andrew Walker attracted the attention of the celebrated author, Charles Dickens to the ragged schools that they founded.[136] It is evident that the missionaries' experience captured Dickens' imagination and that they offered him, as he visited them in their work, an insight into places and people whom he incorporated into his writing. They were a conduit for him to meet people whom Dickens described as 'a class upon whom society turns its back'.[137]

Among the children who attended Provan's ragged school were several who had been born in the thieves houses of West-street, Holborn. At no. 3, West-street, Provan described, there were two traps set into the floor; one for the concealment of property and the other was a known felon's means of escape, where lifting a covering of wood, about three feet square the cellar beneath was exposed and by his putting a plank, kept in constant readiness, across the Fleet ditch, and drawing it over after him, he was at once in Black Boy-alley, cut off from

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[135] Ibid., p.136.

[136] Provan, a Presbyterian, joined LCM in 1841, see LCMLSDR, p.11. He founded the Field-lane Ragged School on his district in 1841, see *LCMAR, 1842,* p.18. Walker, a Presbyterian, and a gardener by occupation, joined LCM in 1838, see LCMLSDR, p.7. He founded the New Pie-street Ragged School in January 1840, see *LCMM, 1841,* p.108.

[137] C. Dickens, (ed), *Household Words, "The Devil's Acre"*, I/13 (22 June 1850), p.300.

pursuit.[138] In his Report, Provan's emphasis was upon the spiritual character of those whom he introduced to Dickens

> During the last three years I perceive, by reference to my journal, that I visited this dismal place upwards of one hundred and fifty times, and though its inhabitants were the most abandoned, yet they generally treated me with civility and listened with attention while I addressed them on the importance of their sins being blotted out through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Numbers of them attended my prayer meeting during the winter months. I have frequently addressed them standing unconsciously on one of the trap doors before referred to: and though I can reckon on about sixty who have left this part of the district as exiles from their native land, after having received the sentence of transportation, I indulge the hope that some Scripture text, spoken by the City Missionary, has in a distant region, on some future day, come to their recollection and that God will bless to them His own word.[139]

Andrew Walker secured Dickens' editorial approval, notably, in 1850 and 1857, in articles in *Household Words,* in which Walker was credited with laying the foundations of both local ragged schools and reformatories.[140] In 1850, in a discussion of Walker's Old-Pie-street district, in Westminster, *Household Words* described to its readers how for twelve years and 'not without success', Walker 'by his energy, tact, and perseverance had acquired such an influence over the turbulent and lawless population of his district, as had made him a safer escort to the stranger desirous of visiting it than a whole posse of police'.[141] In 1857, *Household Words* detailed Walker's establishment and operation of an 'Industrial Nursery' in Wellington-road, Brixton in which between 10-20 discharged prisoners worked in his nursery garden.[142] Walker had taken on the garden at a cheap rent with a repairing lease. In return for work, the men and youths received food, lodging, and 'proper wages.' The

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[138] *LCMM, 1844,* pp.152-3.
[139] Ibid.
[140]Dickens*, "The Devil's Acre"*, pp.297-301, and C. Dickens, (ed), *Household Words, Tilling the Devil's Acre*, XV/377 (13 June 1857), pp.553-8.
[141] Dickens*, "The Devil's Acre"*, p.298.
[142] Dickens, *Tilling the Devil's Acre*, p.553.

article observed the character of Walker's experience and of his engagement with those who came to him

> "I know," said Mr. Walker to one newcomer, "all your past life. I can tell you every prison you have been in. Don't think I am mistaken as to what you have been. But I tell you what you are. You are an honest man. There's no such thing as a thief upon these premises."[143]

It witnessed the influence of Walker upon those whom he sought to influence and concluded

> The reform of these poor fellows does not mean the imparting to them of any special refinement, any great delicacy of sentiment. It means also, only now and again, the working of a deep and manifest religious change. They cease to be thieves, as they acquire strength and means to lead an honest life…..A certain sense of God, the acquirement at any rate some sort of religious tone, belongs of course, to the acceptance for the first time of a code of morals; but, there is not necessarily, although there is sometimes, what is called inward repentance or awakening. Mr. Walker tries for that, but without strain; he is well satisfied if the reformed thieves become only as good as three-fourths in the number of the honest men, to whose ranks they pass over.[144]

The influence of missionary friendships

Turnbull identified that Shaftesbury's personal connections with the missionaries were influential upon him and that it was through co-operation with LCM at this level that he was able to pursue his concerns for both the eternal and temporal welfare of the poor of London.[145] He concluded, however, that Shaftesbury's relationships were established with individual missionaries rather than LCM's Committee, where, for example, in the issue of

[143] Ibid., p.556.
[144] Ibid., p.557.
[145] R. D. Turnbull, 'The place of the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury within the Evangelical tradition, with particular reference to his understanding of the relationship of evangelistic mission to social reform.' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Durham, 1996), p.197.

temporal relief Shaftesbury interpreted the objectives of LCM in a different way from its Committee.[146] It can be demonstrated from the minutes of LCM's Committee Meetings that Shaftesbury's relationship with LCM's Committee was more complex than has been indicated by Turnbull. He contacted them, for example, through LCM's Secretaries to facilitate or to assist in specific initiatives. In 1851, Shaftesbury suggested that LCM should appoint two Irish-speaking missionaries, whom he promised to support from a fund which was at his disposal, although the subsequent appointments of candidates, Local Superintendents, and decisions upon the districts' footprints rested with LCM.[147] With their understanding of the Irish character of St Giles, LCM appointed James Fitzgerald, from Dingle, who was a convert from Roman Catholicism, to their newly created district of Brewer's-court, noting 'he will do for one of the districts Lord Ashley wishes occupied.'[148]

In 1884, Shaftesbury spoke about his relationship with LCM

> Though I have been often associated with this blessed society, I have never had any part in its direction or superintendence; and, therefore, when I praise it, as I *will* praise it, I shall not be guilty of any self-glorification.[149]

He spoke also of LCM's missionaries and his esteem for them

> I speak from intimate acquaintance…as long as I have known them, I was never deceived by any exaggerated account by them of what they were doing, never misled, never asked for anything but correct information was given me. They were men who wrought marvels…
>
> Read their reports, which are never highly coloured. Mighty results have been obtained by these simple men, who had and have nothing to recommend them but the Word of God.[150]

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[146] Ibid.
[147] LCMMB*,* 7 April 1851.
[148] Ibid., 14 April 1851.
[149] *LCMM, 1884*, p.144.
[150] Ibid.

Shaftesbury's close association with LCM was an inspiration for individual missionaries. James Dunn wrote

> For although I had it in my heart to tell him something in reference to myself, I failed to do so in his lifetime. He did not know that I had been one of the poor little collier children, that I wore the gallery belt and chain in those dismal mines, and was one of those for whom he never ceased to pray and labour until the day of emancipation came.[151]

Historians have discussed Shaftesbury's work with Thomas Jackson, but it was perhaps less significant than his association with either John Weylland or Roger Miller.[152] It can be demonstrated from LCM's records that it was through the early work of the missionaries in establishing ragged schools in their districts that Shaftesbury was first drawn to their work. In 1848, he commented when discussing Shoe-lane Ragged School, 'Whenever you enter a ragged school, remember this – we are indebted for nine-tenths of them to the humble, the pious, the earnest City Missionary'.[153]

Weylland who was the author of several publications about LCM while he worked as a missionary, observed of Shaftesbury, 'He had few personal friends, as he was slow in giving his full confidence, but when this was secured, he was confiding and affectionate.'[154] Weylland met Shaftesbury at a meeting of the ragged school which he had established in George-street, Lisson-grove, in March 1849. He described that while Lord Ashley had been speaking, he had kept his eyes upon him and at the close of the meeting he had approached Weylland, shaken his hand, and remarked, 'Come and see me, as I should like to know you.'[155] A few days later he had visited his house. He explained to him that he wished that

[151] *LCMM, 1886*, p.141.
[152] See, for example, N. Pope, *Dickens and Charity* (London, 1978), pp.112-17.
[153] *LCMM*, *1848*, p.156.
[154] J. M. Weylland, *The Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury and Our Mission* (London, 1885), p.27.
[155] J. M. Weylland, *Valiant for the Truth* (London, 1899), p.49.

he could know all of the workers in the good cause, but as this would be impossible, and so he made friends with a few. Thereafter Weylland visited him regularly, and for more than thirty years their friendship developed and deepened. He accompanied Shaftesbury to Parliament, to the funeral of his friend Smithies, he collected and read correspondence on his behalf, visited him at home, and he became his confidant.

Shaftesbury's association with Roger Miller was documented by both men.[156] Despite an extraordinary contrast in their social backgrounds, they became friends. Miller, who joined LCM in 1840, was killed in a railway accident in 1847. Hodder noted that it was Miller who had attracted Shaftesbury's attention.[157] Shaftesbury met Miller, and it is possible to argue that it was he who played an influential role in first drawing him into pan-evangelical participation through his deep and immediate interest in Miller's work and his district's ragged school, and that their connection determined his subsequent involvement with the RSU.[158] Miller had placed an advertisement for funds in support of his work in establishing the Jurston-street school and Shaftesbury responded to him directly. Miller recalled

> In April and May 1846 I was favoured with the company of the Right Hon. Lord Ashley, who for several days visited with me from house to house, and from room to room, in some of the most wretched and ill-ventilated parts of the district. After one of the days so spent in visitation, as his Lordship sat in my house conversing on the different scenes we had witnessed, I suggested the institution of an evening school, when his Lordship kindly said that he would do all in his power to aid me in the matter.
>
> The interest Lord Ashley has taken in this school may be understood, when I say that since its commencement in July last, he has given and collected upwards of 100*l*

[156] See *LCMAR, 1847,* pp.157-8, noting Miller was born in Carlisle. He was placed in a workhouse in Blackburn when 6. He walked to Manchester, aged 8, where he worked in a cotton mill, then apprenticed to a copper-plate printer. In 1838, he came to London. He attended Leifchild's Craven Chapel. He joined LCM in 1840, and was appointed to their Broadwall district. His Local Superintendent was James Hawke Harriss, a wholesale tallow chandler, see *LCMAR 1841-7*.
[157] E. Hodder, *Life and Work of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury,* (London, 1886) ii, p.151.
[158] Ibid., pp.166-7.

> towards defraying the expense of the first year. Its probable annual expense will be 120*l,* if conducted on its present scale.[159]

Shortly after Miller died, Shaftesbury wrote about him

> I may say I lived with him on terms of intimacy and friendship; I may say, that day by day, and night by night, we have perambulated the places of which you have been hearing; I may say, that we have "taken sweet counsel together;" and I should be sorry indeed, as he has left children and a widow behind him, not to add, if that could be any balm whatsoever to a wounded spirit, that a more admirable man, more devoted to his duty, more full of spirit and zeal, more animated with earnest desire to advance the cause of religion and improve the condition of his fellow creatures, it never was my good fortune to meet.
>
> I went down to his district shortly afterwards
>
> I think I may venture to say, that among the hundreds gathered from that wild district, known only a short time ago by its filth and its lawlessness, there was not an eye that was not filled with tears for the loss of that excellent man. On the day he was carried to his grave, hundreds walked on foot from Broadwall to Kensal-green; but no less than 300, I was told, were turned back at Waterloo-bridge, not having a halfpenny wherewith to pay the toll.[160]

There is sense, previously unrecognised, from Shaftesbury's declaration, that Miller's influence upon Shaftesbury had been truly formative. Weylland recorded that 'late in life, when the shadows were closing round him' Shaftesbury spoke of Miller with considerable emotion

> He was a humble, lowly man, and poorly dressed, but I loved him for the excellent spirit that was in him; and he was blessed to my spiritual advancement. I could speak to that man with confidence, and then his sudden death led me to a more full dedication of myself to God and His poor.[161]

[159] *LCMM, 1847*, p.159.
[160] *LCMM, 1848*, p.127.
[161] Weylland, *The Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury,* pp.6-7.

Shaftesbury's friendship with Miller was unique, but what it represented was not - the remarkable influence of humble men upon those whom they met in the course of their work as city missionaries. LCM's missionaries' influence was social, and political. Most importantly, however, it can be acknowledged as an expression of their working-class evangelical faith.

Chapter 3. LCM's mission among prostitutes.

In 1846, LCM declared their mission's priority in spiritual agency, but they acknowledged at the same time their role in promoting the temporal welfare of those among whom they worked

> It may not be out of place for your Committee to state, in reference to their *general* operations, that whatever they can accomplish by the press, by communicating information to the constituted authorities, or by moral and religious influence, within the sphere of their labours, they deem it their duty to attempt; if others will take up this department of work, your Committee will either aid them, or retire; but if not, they will persevere, encouraged by the blessing of God upon their past labours.
>
> But such benefits, great as they undoubtedly are, are yet only the incidental and indirect benefits of the Mission. Its great design is, to SAVE THE SOUL from everlasting ruin, and render it meet for everlasting bliss – to direct the sinner to the Saviour of mankind, and to make known from house to house the Gospel of Jesus Christ.[1]

In *Lighten their Darkness*, Lewis concluded that prostitution was 'one important area within the mission's proper scope that it had failed to develop.'[2] He believed this to have been a reflection of LCM's attitude that the issue of prostitution aroused female sympathies, but

[1] *LCMAR, 1846,* p.40.

[2] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.220. See also, *In Darkest London*, pp.204-19. Scant mention of LCM's funding and an introduction by a City Missionary to a Ranyard Bible woman was made in F. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy* (Oxford, 1980), otherwise no mention of LCM has been made in influential studies of prostitution. See, J. R Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society, women, class and the state* (Cambridge, 1980), and *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago, 1992); L. Mahood, *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1990); S. Jeffreys, *The Spinster and her Enemies: Feminism and Sexuality, 1880-1930* (London, 1997); P. Bartley, *Prostitution: Prevention and Reform in England, 1860-1914* (New York, 2000); S. Koven, *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (Princeton, 2004). In his recent discussion of prostitution, Shaw made no mention of LCM, see, I. J. Shaw, *Evangelicals and Social Action, From John Wesley to John Stott* (London, 2021), pp.261-75.

they did not employ female agents, and it was widely felt among evangelicals that 'women were the most effective in befriending and aiding prostitutes.'[3] This dissertation argues in contrast that LCM's spiritual and temporal mission among prostitutes was vital and successful. LCM's work was characterised by engagement, creativity, and innovation in the field. Critically, and from their earliest years, LCM's missionaries were working alongside their wives and local working-class women to rescue prostitutes and vulnerable women and children in ways that have not been recognised.

Roger Miller's mission in Southwark

Roger Miller's friendship with Shaftesbury has been discussed in the previous Chapter. His pioneering work among prostitutes in LCM's Broadwall district, Lambeth, between 1840 and his death in 1847, has not hitherto been identified by historians. In his biography of Miller, Orme wrote

> His office as a city missionary had to do only with the spiritual welfare of the poor among whom he laboured. But while chiefly seeking this, he took a living interest also in their temporal circumstances, and often exerted himself greatly in their behalf.[4]

Maidment, in his discussion of suicide in mid-nineteenth century London, cited Orme's description of Miller's involvement in the rescue of a prostitute and concluded that it was likely to have been a fictional account because of its character, wherein he argued, the normal agencies of social concern had been replaced by the random kindness of strangers.[5] Orme related that 'a stranger' had prevented Fanny from throwing herself from Waterloo

[3] Ibid.
[4] G. Orme, *Roger Miller ; or, Heroism in Humble Life* (London, 1848), p.31. Orme quoted Miller's LCM Reports throughout his biography.
[5] B. E. Maidment, *Reading Popular Prints, 1790-1870* (Manchester, 1996), pp.150-1.

Bridge, taken her to a nearby house, and from there to Mr Miller, whom it was known could help her.[6] Maidment concluded

> But the stranger, in the casualness and arbitrariness of his presence in the narrative, also serves, in fictional terms to deconstruct the asserted and presumably intended naturalism of the fictional biography. What is supposed to demonstrate the redemptive power of God actually only calls attention to itself as a feebly incredible fictional closure. Randomly redemptive strangers belong more to fiction than to the real world of Victorian prostitution.[7]

With an understanding, from Miller's Reports, of the character of his established local network of female support it is reasonable to suggest that 'the stranger' had in fact been a real working-class woman. In 1840, in his first Annual Report Miller described the conversions of local working-class women, and noted that thereafter they attended his meetings.[8] He recorded that between November 1840 and January 1841, the women began to deliver tracts for him.[9] With their support his mission expanded. In his second Report, Miller noted that during the year, 28 'flagrantly immoral and irreligious women' had been reclaimed and 16,000 tracts were delivered.[10] Miller worked with his wife, Mary. He described how she met women at their house, visited in special cases of need on his behalf, and dealt with emergencies. They used their home as a temporary lodging for women. Fanny's case was not fictional. Miller recorded that she stayed with them for two weeks before a place was found for her at The White Lion Street Female Penitentiary.[11]

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[6] Orme, *Miller,* p.38.
[7] Ibid. Although identities were recorded in journals as they were written, LCM did not reveal the identities of those whom the missionaries discussed in publication.
[8] Ibid., pp.19-32.
[9] Ibid., p.32.
[10] Ibid., p.51.
[11] Ibid., pp.37-8, noting that Miller secured Fanny's place and its financial support, which was charged at 5/- a week. She stayed there for six months and subsequently remained in contact with Miller. Orme reported that she married an artisan, a widower with children, but she and her husband died in the cholera epidemic of 1849. The Home for Penitent Females, 57, White Lion

In February 1841, Miller, and the women with whom he worked formed the Southwark Auxiliary of the London Female Mission.[12] Their office was Miller's house. They published a statement of its aims and purpose. Their provisions included a network for employment, access to a refuge for homeless and friendless young women, and a route through which 'fallen women' could be admitted to a penitentiary.[13] They detailed

> *II. The design of the society shall be to promote the moral and spiritual improvement of females…..*
>
> *III. 3. To secure a temporary refuge, with employment and instruction, for indigent young women of good character, through the medium of the Refuge for Indigent Females, 3A, Princes Street, Red Lion Square.*
>
> *4. To assist deserving females in finding situations in which they may procure an honest livelihood.*
>
> *5. To secure the admission of fallen females, desirous of returning to the paths of virtue, into the Probationary House of the London Female Mission.*[14]

Webber expressed her concern about historians' lack of scrutiny of the concept of agency in their discussions of poverty, welfare, and charity.[15] She observed that they should acknowledge that historical actors conceived of and exercised agency in ways that are alien to modern eyes because it existed for them in ways beyond autonomous, secular, and individualistic twenty-first century characterisation.[16] It is important to recognise that LCM's missionaries understood their agency in a specific evangelical context, in the instrumental sense of their acting as agents in Providential plans. In 1846, Miller recorded his rescue of

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Street, admitted penitent destitute cases. In 1850, its Secretary was Theophilius Smith, see S. Low, *Charities of London* (London, 1850), p.104.

[12] Ibid., p. 33. David Nasmith founded the LFM in December 1836. It was a separate Society from LCM. The LFM became the Female Aid Society, see Low, *Charities,* pp.103-4.

[13] Ibid., pp.33-4.

[14] Ibid.

[15] M. C. Webber, 'Troubling agency: agency and charity in early nineteenth-century London', *Historical Research*, 91/251 (2018), pp.116–36.

[16] Ibid., p.120.

Emma, who was 16. His account demonstrated the familiarity of his work among local prostitutes, and how it was he to whom they would turn, but critically, it illustrated the spiritual nature of Providential influence through which he understood his mission

> She had been on the streets but fourteen days, when, far from being satisfied with such a life of drunkenness and debauchery, she had become intensely disgusted with it, and was overwhelmed with remorse and misery for her present conduct. Unable to continue in it any longer, and yet seeing no way of escape, she was seriously contemplating self-destruction. It was a solemn crisis in her history, and Providence interposed for her rescue. By what seemed accident, she met with one of her companions in vice and shame, to whom she opened her mind. "Go to Mr. Miller, then, the missionary of Broadwall" said the other unhappy creature, "if you don't like the streets; he'll do all he can to get you into a penitentiary."[17]

Emma went to Miller's house where she was given lodging. A few days later she was admitted, through the instrumentality of the Southwark Auxiliary, to the London Female Penitentiary.[18] Emma continued to visit Miller after she left the Penitentiary.

LCM's missionaries' agency and experience

By the late 1840s, LCM recognised that the greatest problem that the missionaries faced in their work among prostitutes was that they were unable to offer places of refuge to match the numbers of women and young girls who sought them. As with the missionaries' initiatives in the creation of ragged schools, LCM did not wish to establish institutions in their own name, or for which they would become responsible. Their genius lay in their ability to place their fledgling projects into the hands of others for their independent development and management. LCM's understanding that their mission was spiritual, and that it was the basis upon which they were supported financially was consistently clear, but that is not to say that they became distanced from the institutions which the missionaries and their wives

[17] Orme, *Miller*, pp.130-1.
[18] Ibid., p.131.

established, where LCM, in their own particularly flexible way, accommodated their missionaries' initiatives when circumstances suited.

In 1849, LCM wrote

> So great is the desire to be reformed that the missionaries of the LCM could, last year, without other agency, and without going out of their way, have themselves filled every penitentiary and reformatory which exists in this philanthropic city with willing inmates. But these benevolent institutions were all previously full and the difficulty is to gain admission for new objects.[19]

Their estimate was that between 8,000 and 12,000 women might be reached, but that only 440 places could be offered in total.[20] The missionaries confirmed that institutions had been 'painfully compelled' to turn away applicants. Against contemporary opinion that girls should be returned to their parents LCM argued that an asylum place offered a *spiritual* refuge and they supported their case with detailed figures from the Magdalen Hospital, where LCM advised that '*more than two-thirds of the number were permanently reclaimed*'.[21] Historians have disputed contemporary statistics concerning institutional success, but LCM's conviction was strong, and the missionaries' determination to secure refuge places for cases was evident in their reports.

William Richardson, Champneys, and the Whitechapel Refuge

Between 1847-60, as has been noted in the previous Chapter, William Richardson was LCM's missionary in LCM's Whitechapel-workhouse district. His experience convinced him that there was an urgent need for the establishment of preliminary houses of rescue for women

[19] *LCMM, 1849*, pp.6-7.
[20] Ibid., p.8.
[21] Ibid., pp.10-11, noting that statistics were quoted for the year 1843, by LCM, 'as a sample', which they claimed would be supported by 'a great variety of somewhat similar returns given to them by other penitentiaries.'

for whom there could be a long wait before institutional places became available. He described with anxiety hopeful cases of women who were living among companions and in lodging-houses where he feared that his spiritual work might be undone.[22] 'The Magdalene' he noted, met once a month to discuss admissions, but only in the event of there being an available place.[23] In 1855, with Richardson's advice, his Local Superintendent, Champneys persuaded the Rescue Society to open its first house of emergency placement.[24] Champneys' influence would have been critical in the project's realisation and its funding. In 1858, LCM confirmed that Richardson had advised upon every case that had been admitted and that he regularly visited the women who stayed there. By 1859, the Whitechapel Probationary Refuge had received 257 women, of whom 65 had been sent to asylums, 87 placed in service, 60 restored to friends, 22 having left of their own accord, 20 remaining, and 3 in hospital.[25] LCM emphasised that the enterprise had required both time and expertise to realise and concluded that the achievement had been 'truly encouraging, by Divine blessing, from the efforts of a single missionary, in so short a period of time!'[26]

[22] *LCMAR, 1858*, p.14.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid., p.15. The Rescue Society was founded by Daniel Cooper in 1853. It was closely connected with LCM from the first through Randall Litten. Cooper was its Secretary. Its Treasurer was Samuel Gurney. (Fully named; the Society for the Rescue of Young Women and Children). In 1861, it had 12 Houses. See Low, *Charities,* p.65.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.

James Baxendale and the Prior Street Refuge, Greenwich

In 1856, James Baxendale established the Prior Street Refuge in Greenwich which he ran jointly with his wife.[27] Upon his retirement in 1885, LCM wrote

> One Missionary, indeed, has devoted his whole time to this work [*the rescue of young women and children*] for the space of twenty-eight years. Originally a public-house missionary, he met so many of the unfortunate and vicious, and felt his heart so drawn out in sympathy towards them, that the Committee departed from their usual role, and permitted him with his wife to take charge of a Refuge, situated in Prior Street, Greenwich.[28]

The 1861 Census recorded the domestic character of the house at 14 Prior Street, where Baxendale, his wife, their four sons and daughter lived together with five female boarders, all noted as 'female servants' by occupation, whose ages were between 10-21 years.[29] In 1862, Martha Baxendale died, and in handwritten notes dated four months later, LCM detailed how it had been she who had managed the house. As a consequence of her death, they noted, local Bible women had taken in 'the girls' and their rescue work continued.[30] It is an illustration of the character of support and co-operation that existed on a domestic scale between local women and LCM's mission. LCM's Committee reflected whether Baxendale might possibly remarry, and discussed his family, their financial obligations, absence of debt, and how without his wife's support, LCM might assist financially in continuing his rescue work, and the 'very great good' that had been effected. Baxendale remarried in 1863, and thereafter he, and his second wife Margaret continued their mission.

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[27] *LCMM, 1885*, pp.221-3. Baxendale, an Anglican, was a smith, living in Deptford before he joined LCM. In his interview he was described as being 'a very illiterate and rough looking person.' The Committee added, 'But he possesses considerable natural powers and energy of character. He is also a very fluent speaker.' See LCMMB, 23 June 1856.
[28] Ibid., p.221.
[29] *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1861*. Kew, Surrey, England: The National Archives of the UK (TNA), Public Record Office (PRO), Class: *RG 9*, Piece: *399*, Folio: *130*; p.22.
[30] LCMMB, 26 July 1862, notes bound within book.

In 1882, he gave evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Contagious Diseases Acts.[31] He confirmed that their house had accommodation for between four and six women, and that since the commencement of their work 3,361 women had been taken in, three-fourths of whom were "fallen women".[32] He ascribed their achievements in spiritual mission, and in reclamation to the establishment of trust. He detailed his approach

> A good deal depends on trusting them. I find that my own way of dealing with them succeeds. I have given them half a sovereign, and said, "Go and fetch half a peck of meal or flour," on the first day that they came to the house. I have no locks or bolts; a child of 10 years of age can open my door; and I would not alter my system of sitting down and dining with them; they have the same food as myself.[33]

Many influential figures among London's pioneering rescue societies had worked previously as LCM missionaries. They were working-class men. Their experiences and backgrounds made their expertise invaluable. Their accounts reveal their evangelical activism, friendships, and shared purpose. With LCM's evidence it is possible to reveal the extent to which LCM remained deeply connected with and committed to their rescue work.

Edward Thomas and the Female Preventive and Reformative Institution

Edward Thomas joined LCM in 1851.[34] He had been a crepe-dresser by occupation, living in Goswell-road.[35] At interview, LCM's Committee observed that although he had been employed for more than 12 hours in this work each day, he had yet found time to visit the poor.[36] He was assigned the Cromer-street district, St Pancras. His Local Superintendent was

[31] *Parliamentary Papers*, (1882), Report from the Select Committee on Contagious Diseases Acts, pp.348-62.
[32] Ibid., p.348.
[33] Ibid., p.361.
[34] LCMMB, 26 May 1851. Thomas was an Anglican.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.

Alfred Saul, Secretary of the London and Lancashire Fire and Life Insurance Company.[37] Thomas recalled one of the first meetings that he held on his district, and the prostitutes who had attended

> This unusual procedure in the place soon secured for me a motley congregation, a few children in addition, and men with pipes in their mouths came, moved evidently by curiosity. There was also a good sprinkling of fallen women, and among them one unfortunate – only partly dressed – who sat down in front of me, and said, "Now I will have my dinner." She had brought a plate of meat and vegetables in her hand. As I attempted to expound with all simplicity a suitable passage of Scripture, this virago proceeded to crack jokes at my expense, and do all she could to hinder and annoy me. However, we both continued – I my discourse, she her meal; after which she turned her plate over and deliberately smashed it into fragments, and then flung piece after piece at my head, without, however, hurting me.[38]

Thomas observed that within three years he had won the people's confidence and became well known. He illustrated how he visited the prostitutes who lived in his district, and had established a class in which he taught them basic skills of literacy. He arranged for marriages, including that of a prostitute whom he had rescued, all of which he noted that Canon Dale would undertake without charge.[39] In 1854, he reported that he held two weekly Bible-classes; one at the London Female Dormitory, one at the Female Temporary Home.[40] He confirmed that the one at the Female Temporary Home was commenced at the solicitation of the inmates themselves, because they had sent a request to him, that he might hold a similar class for them having heard of the one that he held at the Dormitory. He reflected

> Considering that they were fallen females, and anxious to have the Word explained to them, I did not feel at liberty to refuse, though being fully employed, but

[37] *LCMAR, 1852-5*.
[38] E. W. Thomas, *Twenty-five Years Labour Among the Friendless and Fallen* (London, 1879), pp.10-11.
[39] Ibid., p.17.
[40] Ibid., p.273.

> commenced, relying on God for strength and the teaching and guidance of the Holy Ghost, and I am often encouraged by the attention of the inmates.'[41]

He noted that between 1851-4, 31 fallen females had been placed in asylums through his mission where the majority were admitted to the London Female Dormitory which was located at 18 Georgiana-street.[42] The Dormitory had been established in 1850, and its Patron was Shaftesbury.[43] Its matrons were a widow, Maria Abell, and her sister-in-law, Sarah Flower.[44] Flower's husband was a horse keeper at Pickfords in Paddington as had been Abell's husband.[45] They were not middle-class philanthropists but ordinary working people, and the Dormitory's inmates shared their home. Thomas described the Dormitory as the first Home that had been established in London on the 'family principle.'[46] In the 1851 Census, five young women were living with them; three aged 17 years, one 18, and one 21.[47]

Thomas described how he and Abell had worked together

> Finding there was a disposition on the part of some of the poor outcasts to speak with me, and to ask how they might be saved, my late wife arranged to provide an inexpensive meal for those who might be anxious to adopt measures for their own reclamation, and frequently one and another would come. As the arrangement became known greater confidence was reposed in us and these visits became useful to several in bringing them out of the snares of evil.[48]

In 1855, Thomas married Abell and resigned from LCM to run the Dormitory with her. In 1857, together with their friend John Blackmore, they founded the London Female

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[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., p.274.
[43] W. J. Taylor, *The Story of the Homes* (London, 1907), p.31, noting that following their rescue of one woman who had been taken to Abell's house, the Dormitory was established by John Blackmore and Maria Abell. Blackmore was a close friend of Roger Miller. He became Secretary of the Jurston-street Ragged School which Miller founded in 1846, see Orme, *Miller,* p.111 and p.122.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid., and TNA, PRO HO 107/1497, f. 135, p.12.
[46] Thomas, *Twenty-five Years,* pp.15-16.
[47] TNA, PRO HO107/1497, f. 135, p.12.
[48] Thomas, *Twenty-five Years*, p.16.

Preventive and Reformative Institution which incorporated both the Dormitory and the Female Temporary Home.[49] Thomas remained its Secretary until his death in 1893. During its first year, it was located at 26 Grafton-place, Euston-square, and had 16 places.[50] Maria Thomas received no salary. In the first six months, while unpaid, Thomas contributed £10 towards the Home's rent, and £12 towards his and his wife's board.[51] By 1861, assisted by Maria's sister-in-law, the Home, then based at 200 Euston-road, had 29 inmates who were recorded in the Census as being between the ages of 17-31 years.[52]

Roberts, in his discussion of voluntary association and moral reform activities, called the reclamation aims of the LFPRI pace-setting when he cited their Prospectus from 1860, but it is possible from LCM's evidence to demonstrate that it had framed in its temporal and spiritual objectives, a continuation of the Thomas' earlier work

> *I To seek the destitute and fallen by voluntary missionary effort*
>
> *II To afford temporary protection to friendless young women whose circumstances expose them to danger; also to effect the rescue of the fallen, especially those decoyed from the country, by admitting them to the benefits of an Institution….*
>
> *VI Above all, to seek the spiritual welfare of the inmates*[53]

During the 1860s the LFPRI expanded rapidly. Archer recorded that within ten months during 1869, it had taken in 178 friendless women and 279 prostitutes into their Homes, and 890 women in their Open-All-Night Refuge.[54] By 1877, its Open-All-Night Refuge at

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[49] They had worked together since Thomas' first night with LCM. See Thomas, see *Twenty-five Years Labour,* p. 61. Rev Canon Dale was LFPRI's President, Samuel Gurney its Treasurer, Edward Thomas its Secretary, and Maria Thomas its Matron, see Low, *Charities,* p.65.
[50] Taylor, *The Story of the Homes,* p.31.
[51] Thomas, *Twenty-five Years*, pp.15-16.
[52] TNA, PRO RG 9/604, f. 109, p.34, and W. Thomas, *Twenty-five Years*, p.72.
[53] Roberts, *Making English Morals, Voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England, 1787-1886* (Cambridge, 2004), p.201.
[54] T. Archer, *The Terrible Sights of London and Labours of Love in the Midst of Them* (London, 1870), p.37, noting that The Open-All-Night Refuge was established in 1867.

Manchester-street, Kings Cross, had admitted 8,050 women and the Society ran seven Homes.[55]

Randall Litten and the Society for the Rescue of Young Women and Children

Between 1853-61, LCM appointed a Missionary to Fallen Females in Marylebone.[56] It was as a consequence of a specific request and funding from Sir Joseph Copley.[57] LCM selected their missionary Randall Litten to the post, who previously had been working among prostitutes in the Clipstone-street district.[58] In 1853, Litten joined with Daniel Cooper in the formation of the Society for the Rescue of Young Women and Children, which became known as the Rescue Society.[59] Weylland confirmed that together Cooper and Litten had written its constitution.[60]Thereafter, Litten visited the Rescue Society's first Home in his work as an LCM missionary. In 1867, the Society had expanded to run 7 Rescue Homes with 160 places.[61] By 1887, they had 10 Homes, where Weylland noted that they had received no less than 1,630 women and children through the agency of LCM's missionaries.[62]

[55] Thomas, *Twenty-five Years*, pp.197-201.
[56] LCM published extracts from Litten's reports of his work between 1851-5. He discussed the character of prostitution in Marylebone, supported by evidence of the women's ages, backgrounds, employment, with many examples of cases, see *LCMM, 1856*, pp.173-81.
[57] Copley wished his support to remain anonymous, see LCMMB, 14 November 1853.
[58] Before joining LCM in 1852, Litten, an Anglican, had been a cheesemonger, see LCMMB, 18 February 1852.
[59] J. M. Weylland, *These Fifty Years* (London, 1885), p.111. Shaftesbury was the Rescue Society's President, Champneys its Vice-President. Its Treasurer was Samuel Gurney. See, *The Times,* [London], no. 23,832, (17 January 1861), p.21 col. e.
[60] Weylland, *These Fifty Years,* p.111.
[61] A. P. Ryder, *Rescue of Fallen Women* (London, 1868), p.8.
[62] LMA, COS draft report, 21 April 1885; A/FWA/C/D53/1, and Weylland, *These Fifty Years,* p.111.

William Hornibrook and the Homes of Hope

In 1858, William Hornibrook succeeded Litten as LCM's Missionary to Fallen Females in Marylebone.[63] In 1861, Hornibrook resigned from LCM to become Secretary of the newly established Home of Hope for the Restoration of Fallen & the Protection of Friendless Young Women.[64] LCM reported that it had been established in direct connection with his work among fallen females, and noted that its internal management would be arranged as far as was possible on the principles of a family.[65] He remained its Secretary in 1886.[66]

Rogers argued that the reclamation movement failed to provide for mothers in its work. He suggested that they were envisioning and perpetuating traditional notions of prostitutes where only a particular type of woman who matched a predefined narrative fantasy of prostitutes was admitted and that mothers with children, as exceptions from this, were ignored.[67] The focus of the Homes of Hope was the rescue of unmarried mothers and their first infants ,and their underlying 'hope' was the deterrence of infanticide.[68] In its first year it admitted 73 women and girls, 10 of whom were aged under 16 years.[69] In 1866, Hornibrook reported that during the year it had admitted 216 women.[70] Jerrold noted that

[63] Hornibrook, a teacher, had been an agent for the CPAS in Islington before he joined LCM in 1855, see LCMMB, 1 October 1855.
[64] LCMMB, 11 February 1861, noting Hornibrook's funding from Copley was transferred from LCM to the Home with LCM's agreement. Thereafter LCM ceased its special mission to Fallen Females in Marylebone.
[65] *LCMM, 1860*, p.292.
[66] *The Times,* [London], no. 31,932, (25 December 1886), p.14, col. e.
[67] S. Rogers, 'Domestic Servants, Midnight Meetings, and The Magdalen's Friend and Female Homes' Intelligencer', *Victorian Literature and Culture,* 39/2 (2011), p.455.
[68] Their concern was not unfounded. Between 1857-60, the numbers of cases of infanticide recorded in London had increased annually from 177 to 272 from an analysis of Coroner's inquests, see, B. Jerrold, *Signals of Distress* (London, 1863), p.252.
[69] Jerrold, *Signals of Distress,* p.251.
[70] *The Times,* [London], no. 25,695, (31 December 1866), p. 9, col. c.

only its matron was paid and that all other money raised went directly to the support of the women and their illegitimate children.[71]

The Midnight Meeting Movement

The Midnight Meeting Movement was a confluence of evangelical activism and expertise. Roberts described its inception as the point at which a complex tangle of experimental efforts that had sprung into formal existence and supporters of these were then inspired to launch a general reclamation campaign.[72] It is possible to untangle the tangle of experimental efforts with an understanding of LCM's connections within them.

In 1860, LCM published a detailed report, *The Midnight Meetings and their Results*.[73] They commented upon the origins and proceedings of the Movement

> It was not that of the Committee of our Society; but it originated and had been carried on by those, almost all of whom are or have been our missionaries, and by the Secretaries of Societies formed by Mr Nasmith, our own founder, as complements and auxiliaries to the work of the London City Mission.[74]

LCM discussed those who had been the Movement's originators, had formed its Committee, and become its promoters; Theophilus Smith, John Stabb, Edward Wilson, Edward Thomas, Daniel Cooper, and William Hornibrook.[75] They noted those who offered prayers at its first Meeting; Baptist Noel, Samuel Haughton, and Rev William O'Neil.[76] They detailed their connections with LCM

[71] Jerrold, *Signals of Distress*, p.251.
[72] Roberts, *Making English Morals,* p.201.
[73] *LCMM, 1860*, pp.280-96.
[74] Ibid., p.280.
[75] Ibid., p.283.
[76] Ibid., p.285. Baptist Noel was an LCM Examiner of Missionaries, 1837-69. LCM listed their Examiners of Missionaries in their Annual Reports.

Theophilus Smith; The secretary of the Female Aid Society – a Society founded by Mr. Nasmith, and for some years called the London Female Mission, 27, Red Lion-square.

John Stabb; The Secretary of the Monthly Tract Society, - another Society formed by Mr. Nasmith,-27, Red Lion-square.[77]

Edward Wilson; The Secretary of the Country Towns' Mission, 27, Red Lion-square, a third Society formed by Mr. Nasmith

Edward Thomas; Formerly a missionary of the London City Mission, and now Superintendent of the London Female Preventive and Reformatory Institution, 200, Euston-road.

Daniel Cooper; The Secretary of the Rescue Society, 11, Poultry - a Society to which the London City Mission is largely indebted for the very considerable number of the missionary cases which it has provided for.

William Hornibrook; The missionary of the London City Mission to Fallen Females.

Samuel Haughton; A missionary of the London City Mission[78]

Rev. William O'Neill; Formerly a missionary of the London City Mission, but now Minister of New Broad-street Chapel.[79]

From 9 o'clock in the evening of 8 February 1860, 500 cards of invitation were circulated in the Holborn and Argyle casinos, and throughout Regent-street, Coventry-street, and the Haymarket, by four members of the Committee. Approximately 250 women came to St James' restaurant before midnight, ate, and at one o'clock the purpose of the meeting was revealed to them. Prayers were offered, and it was announced that any present who wished to forsake their sin would be received immediately into 'Homes'.[80] There were some present who accepted at once, and the others were given a second invitation advising them to go afterwards to one of those whose details were written on the back of the invitation, at any

[77] Stabb is discussed in Chapter 2 in connection with Thomas Everest.
[78] Haughton was LCM's missionary in the St George's-road, Pimlico district. He joined LCM in 1855. He had been an assistant-draper in Lambeth. He resigned from LCM to become a Methodist preacher, see LCMLSDR, p.45.
[79] O'Neill, a Baptist, joined LCM in 1836. He resigned from LCM to become minister of New Broad-street Chapel, see LCMLSDR, p.5.
[80] *LCMM, 1860*, pp.284-6.

time, and to accept the help which would be offered.[81] Thomas detailed his wife's participation

> My late devoted wife was with me on the occasion, and she determined to take as many to the Home that night, or rather morning, as would go with her. And so about half-past two we turned out into the cold and almost deserted streets with the little host following two and two. Here and there stragglers looked at us with apparent wonder; the police were surprised. At length we reached the Home, and many of those who accompanied us were permanently reclaimed, and one in particular became an assistant in a Home.[82]

LCM noted nine subsequent meetings, which had taken place in different locations across London in 1860.[83] The Midnight Meeting Movement had been established as a separate Society from LCM and it remained so. During the same year, 524 women had also been rescued by LCM's missionaries in their own mission.[84] LCM reported that upwards of 100 women had been rescued through the Midnight Meetings. LCM's support was wholehearted but their report conveyed a sense of their concern for the fledgling Movement and its public reception

> The promoters have had opportunities of observing, both at the meetings and in the streets, that the interest felt by the poor women in the manifestation of Christian kindness has continued unabated – a state of feeling of far greater consequence to the movement than the view which may be taken of it by the public in general.[85]

Thomas wrote

> Of course there were many hard and unfriendly criticisms heard, as is always the case when any new effort is put forth to benefit fallen humanity, and also there were many good Christian people who smiled with much satisfaction as they condemned this new piece of fanaticism.[86]

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[81] Ibid., p.284.
[82] Thomas, *Twenty-five Years,* p.78.
[83] *LCMM, 1860*, pp.284-6.
[84] Ibid., p.281. See also, Appendix Table.
[85] Ibid., p.287.
[86] Thomas, *Twenty-five Years,* p.79.

LCM cited the response of *The Lancet* rather than engaging with contemporary press reports

> The Midnight Meetings are not a mere temporary or local effervescence of theological zeal. These women have never before been taught to think seriously of the moral and physical consequences of their manner of life. We can affirm that their behaviour in the "Homes" is unexceptionable and that the hundreds who will thus be wholly saved will be far outnumbered by those who carry away a salutary and abiding impression, which will not suffer them again to be as they have been.[87]

The selected extract reflected LCM's enduring optimism in Providential and yet unknown effects of their own mission. They concluded that the Movement was one 'full of hope.'[88]

Prochaska explored the Movement's expansion into other British cities and towns and he detailed its successes, especially those that were achieved by women working in rescue mission. He commented that the Movement had its critics, and observed that it would be wise to be wary of the statistics that were published on the number of prostitutes who were reformed by the Movement.[89] Hurlin confirmed the Movement's continued activism in London in 1884, citing that during the year it held 46 meetings with an aggregate attendance of 2,498.[90]

Prostitutes visited in district mission

In district mission LCM's missionaries visited prostitutes in their homes. They arranged refuge places but LCM's overarching purpose was spiritual. From the missionaries' accounts, it is possible to illustrate the character of their work among prostitutes in a local and domestic context. The missionaries' evidence reveals that the women were not religiously

[87] *LCMM, 1860*, p.288.
[88] Ibid., p.280.
[89] Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy*, pp.194-6.
[90] Hurlin, *Missionary Work,* pp.269-70.

indifferent, and illustrates how they engaged with LCM's working-class mission. Critically the accounts confirmed how much LCM's mission mattered not only to the missionaries, but for the women among whom they lived and worked.

Henry Simmonds' mission in Brunswick-street

From among many missionaries' accounts of their work among prostitutes, Henry Simmonds' evidence is remarkable for its context and its detail. He was LCM's first missionary in their Brunswick-street district, St George's-in-the-East, between 1852-65. In 1855, substantial extracts from his journals were published in LCM's Magazine.[91] Born in St Martins-in-the-Fields, he was living in Walworth before he joined LCM aged 23.[92] He had been employed as a bootmaker, but he admitted at his interview that he had hoped to become an actor before his conversion, and had 'practiced a little in this line' in saloon bars.[93] He was a Baptist, and a member of Surrey Chapel. His Local Superintendent was Rev Philip Dickerson of Little Alie-street Chapel, Whitechapel.[94]

Mayhew visited Brunswick-street.[95] It is important to distinguish his impressions of the prostitutes who lived there from Simmonds' reports, and to establish the reliability of Simmonds' evidence. In many instances Mayhew was indebted to the city missionaries for his knowledge of the city of which he wrote but he did not visit Brunswick-street with an LCM missionary. He went there with a Police Sergeant and two uniformed officers, and the Police were searching for a specific woman whom they described as a felon, and a criminal.[96]

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[91] *LCMM, 1855,* pp.120-4.
[92] LCMMB, 4 October 1852.
[93] Ibid.
[94] *LCMAR, 1852-65.*
[95] H. Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor,* Volume IV, (London, 1862), pp.229-30.
[96] Ibid.

Mayhew's investigation's purpose was into the specific character of 'sailors' women'.[97] His visit had taken place at night-time, and afterwards he met two prostitutes who were being held in the Station House cells. He described them as 'murderous' and 'repulsive.'[98] He concluded that there were very few English girls who could properly be termed 'sailors women' for most of them, he believed, were either German or Irish.[99]

Simmonds lived with his wife and young children in Christian-street, which was built back-to-back with the east-side of Brunswick-street.[100] The predominant character of the streets was that of densely constructed small two-storey terraced houses. **[Figure 5]** Simmonds wrote

> The whole of the houses in Brunswick-street, without one single exception, are inhabited by the fallen, and many others are interspersed throughout the district.[101]
>
> The average number of prostitutes on the district is 200. They consist of Jewesses, and of English, Irish, and Germans. The number of illegitimate children is really surprising.[102]

He identified the character of the prostitution which took place and illustrated its domestic context. He made no mention of thieves

> Some of the houses in Brunswick-street have been enlarged, and rooms have been built at the backs. The persons who rent them carry on a system of gain, by letting the rooms to these degraded women, ready furnished, at an exorbitant rent. A room is generally taken by two females, who pay the rent between them; and it is quite a common thing to see 2, 4, 6, and even 8, of these wretched creatures in one house.[103]

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[97] Ibid., pp.226-33.
[98] Ibid., p.228.
[99] Ibid.
[100] TNA, PRO RG 9/276, f. 64, p.26.
[101] *LCMM, 1855,* p.120.
[102] Ibid., p.121.
[103] Ibid., p.120.

> In the light of day, Sundays not excepted, there is often a commotion on account of the vast numbers of sea-faring men who are 'cabbed' to the different houses in the street, for the worst of purposes.[104]



Figure 5. The corner of Brunswick-street, LCMA

Simmonds' evidence is supported by the 1851 Census entries for Brunswick-street. He did not exaggerate the density of the street's occupation, or the character of households which it contained. The Census confirms that women lived together in households with their children. Many of the households included male visitors. In total there were 55 households comprising 83 adult women with 34 children, and 37 men.[105] The street's exceptional entry was the Irish family who ran the corner shop. Of the women who lived in the street 11 were

[104] Ibid., p.121.
[105] TNA, PRO HO 107/1547, pp.471-2, 437-8, 445-6, 438-9.

Irish, 2 were German, and 67 were English, among whom 28 women's occupation was recorded as being 'prostitute', but none was noted as a brothel-keeper.[106]

Prochaska reflected upon the experience of brothel-visiting and described it as 'the charitable woman's ultimate challenge, for in her imagination it was not unlike a journey into hell itself.'[107] He commented that for them, their rescue work which might involve searching the streets at night and passing out leaflets for shelters and that it could be both exhilarating and dangerous.[108] He identified the importance of their work and its achievements, but he observed that their access in visitation was problematic because predictably brothel-keepers were difficult and often obstructive.[109] Prochaska's discussion illustrates the contrast between the women's rescue work and Simmonds' experience because he lived for many years among prostitutes as their neighbour.

By 1854, Simmonds reported, every house of infamy in his district had been brought under a systematic course of domiciliary visitation and where he could go from apartment to apartment.[110] It was a remarkable achievement. He visited the prostitutes' households in exactly the same way that he visited every family in his district. He explained how he had been assisted by the women themselves

> It is something to get into people's houses in such a district as this; to overcome prejudice; to obtain a hearing; to silence ridicule; to read and expound the sacred Scriptures; to exhort, and rebuke, and pray with the people. This, in a certain sense, is breaking up the fallow ground, and, if I mistake not, is a very important feature in missionary labour. I have good access in the district, and I believe I am much respected by the people, even by those who were formerly my enemies.

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[106] Ibid.
[107] Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy*, p.197.
[108] Ibid., p.193.
[109] Ibid., p.197.
[110] *LCMM, 1855*, p.121.

> The class of persons who live in this street, [Brunswick] as may be expected, are of a migratory character. They are in this house to-day and that house to-morrow, and in a month hence, they have removed from the district, so that I am always open to fresh insult by 'new comers,' who doubtless, would take advantage of me, if the 'old ones' did not interfere, as they continually do, for my protection.[111]

He recognised the thresholds which he crossed, and significantly that he had been invited into the women's homes

> When I first saw Mrs. ------, it was at No. --, --------- street. She was living with two of her daughters (both fallen), one of the age of 17, the other 26. The elder daughter was married. Her husband is a ship's carpenter, and though she receives, when he is away, his half-pay which is about 9s. 6d. per week, yet she lives in adultery with others in his absence. They were very civil to me and very politely accommodated me with a seat.[112]

Simmonds held open-air services and he concluded that since their commencement he had certainly secured better access to the houses. To his surprise he noted that both Roman Catholics and Jews, whom he commented would not enter Protestant places of worship, would stay to listen to a discourse in the streets. He described their engagement as 'come-at-[t]able.' He observed

> If we did not hold the service at the usual time, or omitted a service, the people in the street were afraid that they had offended us, and would ask me, the next time I saw them, the reason why we stayed away, and so interested were some of the people, that they would arrange themselves by their doors or windows, waiting for us, and if we omitted going were disappointed, and would even send their children into the next street to see whether we were gone there instead.[113]

Prochaska, Bartley, and Roberts have discussed 'Magdalenism' which they identified as the defining characteristic of rescue mission among prostitutes from the late 1850s.[114] Roberts

[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid., p.123.
[113] Ibid., p.124.
[114] Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy*, pp.199-202, P. Bartley, *Prostitution and Reform,* pp.30-4, Roberts, *Making English Morals,* pp.200-1.

observed that it was a discourse of non-condemnation which distinguished itself from the traditionalist view which did not distinguish between sin and criminality.[115] In rescue, Simmonds could offer a refuge place through LCM's connections, and he detailed, for example, the case of a girl who went upon his recommendation and in his company to the Penitent Female Refuge in Cambridge-heath-road. Simmonds' most extraordinary evidence, however, concerned the way in which the prostitutes engaged with his mission spiritually. In 1854, he explained how *he* felt

> I believe (humanly speaking) that the reason I have good access to this wretched class is the attention I have paid to them in visiting them when sick. These poor outcasts, insensible as they may appear to outward honour and inward virtue, know how to appreciate Christian kindness. Blunt as they may appear their moral sensibilities, they are nevertheless to be awakened by sympathy and fellow-feeling, and it does not follow, because they are a degraded class, that therefore they are not to be pitied. On the contrary, their base, degraded, and almost lost condition, entitle them to a greater claim upon our sympathies. Surely no excuse can be framed why we should not endeavour to rescue them from infamy and eternal misery, seeing that Jesus Christ came into the world to seek and to save them that were lost.[116]

In sickness and in death the prostitutes asked Simmonds to visit them, and they sent for him. He illustrated what he described as 'a few of the dying scenes of the year.' From his first example, it is significant to note that the prostitute's household had a Bible, that her child could read it to her, and that she thought that she should ask her to do so in preparation for her death

> She was very ill, and the hectic flush on her cheek indicated that she was not long for this world. Her cough was very troublesome, and she could only whisper. In answer to a question, she said, "I don't think I shall ever get better. I expect to die." I read a portion of the 11th chap. of St. John, "Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," &c. I endeavoured to explain this verse, by showing that Jesus was able, by His spirit, to quicken those who were dead in sins, and also to raise their bodies at the last day. The poor creature

[115] Roberts, *Making English Morals,* p.201.
[116] Ibid., p.122.

> listened attentively, and appeared sensible that *none but* Jesus could save her. She said, "My little girl has been reading to me out of the Bible. I cannot read myself, and she cannot explain the Bible to me. I wish to express my thanks to you for your kindness, and hope that you will still continue to visit me." I said, "Dear -----, if God spares me, I will continue to visit you – though your past life has been irregular and sinful, look to Jesus, for he is able to save the uttermost." She died not many hours afterwards.[117]

In his second case, Simmonds was present among a prostitute's companions at her bedside by her invitation and with their acceptance. His placement there, and the spiritual opportunity which it offered, were of great meaning for him. He described her response

> At No.-, Brunswick-street, I visited ----- -----. She was in a consumption. A few months ago she was a fine, stout young woman. When I visited her she used to tell me that she neither wanted me nor my religion. She has often told me to "be off!" "What is the use of your visiting the like of us? There always were the like of us since the creation of the world. We must do something for a living." To-day she sent for me to visit her. When I saw her I found she was dying, and several of her companions crowded round her, to witness the last struggles of expiring nature. I could not help repeating aloud, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life to all them that believe through Jesus Christ our Lord." I shall never forget her countenance. She confessed *she* was a sinner. I said, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners even the chief." I then read a portion of the Word of God, and delivered an address, in the form of an exhortation, to the women present, urged them to take warning from the scene which they were called now to witness, and, as life was short, to flee to Jesus for refuge. I concluded with prayer. ----- ----- died a few days afterwards.[118]

LCM introduced Brunswick-street by having said that no words could fitly describe its awful character, and then illustrated how their mission was far from being spiritually hopeless in their work among those whom their success might have been least expected. Simmonds visited prostitutes in their homes in exactly the same way in which he visited everyone in his district. In their response to his mission, it is important to recognise that not only did prostitutes receive him in every 'ill-famed' house as he worked from day to day, but they

[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.

engaged with his religious services, asked him to visit them, and depended upon him when they faced a spiritual crisis in their lives, in sickness and in death.

Frederick Robinson's mission in Union-road, and concluding thoughts

LCM's missionaries' reports recorded how LCM's mission continued to be experienced among prostitutes and vulnerable women and children in the poorest parts of London. Frederick Robinson's manuscript journal entries, dating from 1912, illustrate how important for those among whom he worked LCM's mission remained.[119] Robinson's district was Union-road, Southwark, and his experiences echoed those of Miller from the 1840s. Robinson illustrated how he was assisted in his work by his wife, Susan, and how they were supported by local working-class people. He recorded, for example, the case of a prostitute, whom he called a 'modern Magdalene', her conversion, and subsequent participation in LCM's mission

> The open-air meeting attracted many around to-night. There is a charm about the old Gospel hymn and it has a special attraction for Annie W. Poor soul! She was terribly convicted; and this led to special visits from the wife and myself. Her life was a bad one, too bad to record. One evening she came again to the open-air meeting and then to the Mission service and here gave her heart to God, married, and settled down and became one of my best workers. Her delight was to visit from house to house with tracts.[120]

As with Miller, it was Robinson who had been contacted by local people when a woman attempted suicide. He and his wife took in the woman's husband, whom he noted as being 'recently out of Prison and the Infirmary,' into their own home. Robinson described

[119] LCMA, F. B. Robinson, 'Journal Extracts', pages are un-numbered, (n.d.)
[120] Robinson, 'Journal Extracts', Robinson, a Methodist, worked in an engineering company in Leyton before joining LCM. He was converted by Alfred Young at an LCM meeting, see LCMECMB, 18 March 1912.

> She attempted to take the lives of herself and her children by gas poisoning but the supply of gas ran out. Later she succeeds in gas poisoning herself and I was called to the house where the poor soul was sitting dead in a chair, the house reeking with gas. Mercifully the children were spared. H….makes his home with me for a time and secures a better berth. Later on he became Secretary of our Mission and a local preacher.[121]

His mission encompassed both temporal and spiritual agency, in which his work concerned not only of the lives of prostitutes, but vulnerable children. His agency in 'rescue' took place in a way that has neither been recognised or imagined. He visited the Southwark Union Workhouse and its hospital wards. He detailed his work among those infected with venereal disease, and the disease's presence among children

> The venereal wards were regularly visited by me and I have sat in the centre of these leprous men, reading and praying with them, pointing them to the leper's friend. It is a terrible sight to see little children polluted with this fearful disease.

He described how he helped a boy with venereal disease whom he met in his door to door visitation

> In the next room we find quite a lad living with a woman old enough to be his mother. They belong to Kingston and have come to live in these furnished rooms at a rent of 7/6 per week. They are veritable dens of iniquity. The lad is feverish and I trace venereal disease. Trace also his father and mother. Consult the Relieving Officer on the matter and the case is removed to hospital. I followed the lad up and assist him into employment. The result is gratifying, for he makes good.[122]

Robinson's evidence of his mission's spiritual significance for local prostitutes and their regular engagement with his mission, was at its most compelling in his accounts of his Sunday services

> The Lodging House meetings are well attended; we have had three this afternoon, and what congregations. Flower sellers, pedlers, pick-pockets and the rest, but they are very reverent. They are quite familiar with the hymn tunes and words. Mrs

[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.

> Robinson, (my curate), plays and sings and I do the rest. In the women's kitchen there are about fifty women, mostly prostitutes getting ready to be off for the night, but stop for the service.[123]

From the missionaries' accounts, it was their evidence of mutual trust, acceptance, and understanding that characterised their work among prostitutes. LCM's mission's success depended upon local working-class people, especially women, and it was with their support that it secured its results. It is essential to recognise that for each and every woman who was met, the missionaries' agency in rescue was woven with their ambition of soul-winning.

From LCM's evidence, to work among prostitutes was not a rare experience in their mission. As a consequence of the missionaries' creative and entrepreneurial agency they were involved in the establishment of institutions and initiatives which became separate from LCM, but their spiritual mission remained their missionaries' overarching focus. Prostitutes were never for them simply 'fallen women' to be restored or bodies to be rescued but souls to be introduced to eternal life.

[123] Ibid.

Chapter 4. LCM's moral leadership in their public-house mission.

'If the temperance movement had worked through the 'godly publican',' Harrison concluded 'and if it had exploited the strong connections between religion and the drink interest – it might have kept more closely in touch with reality.'[1] He observed that England's nineteenth century industrial greatness was symbolised by the huge breweries of the Buxtons, Hanburys, Hoares, and Barclays and he reflected that a man like Thomas Fowell Buxton could certainly have been mobilised behind a 'reasonable' temperance campaign.[2] LCM's aim in their public-house mission was to save souls and to rescue drunkards. Their spiritual mission was supported substantially by the Buxtons, Hanburys, Hoares, and Barclays. This dissertation argues that LCM's moral leadership in their unique mission in public-houses, which remained completely separate from the temperance movement and its political activism, not only as a consequence of their undenominational basis, but because of their missionaries' sympathetic and realistic understanding of the working classes and their social conditions, was critical in the formation of the distinctly milder character of London's drink problems that historians have identified.

Heasman observed that the only sphere in which the Evangelicals took little part in gaining the passage of legislation was temperance.[3] LCM's mission in public-houses has not been

[1] B. Harrison, *Drink,* p.362.
[2] Ibid., p.59. Thomas Fowell Buxton donated £14,040 to LCM. It was LCM's fourth largest total amongst donors in their accounts before 1914, see Flew, *Philanthropy,* p.172.
[3] K. Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action, An Appraisal of their Social Work* (London, 1962), p.146.

noted by historians in their analysis of the drink question, where in many more recent studies its religious context, as opposed to its political significance, social placement, medical interest, and consideration of production and consumption, has often been a minor theme.[4] Roberts discussed the political context of the temperance movement with reference to morality. He illustrated the origins and development of the mainstream temperance movement and its projection of itself as a public assertion of Nonconformist moral credentials.[5] He identified how from the 1880s it had explicitly tied the achievement of its goals to the fortunes of the Gladstonian Liberal Party, and that after 1895, the Liberal Party had distanced itself from all temperance issues after their disastrous electoral defeat.[6] He demonstrated that in the north of England by the end of the nineteenth century temperance-dominated town councils had become almost the standard model of civic responsibility, but this was not the case in London.

LCM and the temperance movement

LCM was not a temperance society, and they did not work with any other temperance society. Through its spiritual mission, and in its moral leadership, LCM sought to prevent the poverty and degradation that the missionaries witnessed as a consequence of the excessive consumption of alcohol, not to promote prohibition. They hoped to secure

[4] See D. M. Fahey, *Temperance Societies in Late Victorian and Edwardian England* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2020) for a discussion of temperance Societies and significant figures within the temperance movement; J. Nicholls, *The politics of Alcohol: A History of the Drink Question in England* (Manchester, 2009) for a political analysis; D. Gutske, *Protecting the Pub: Brewers and Publicans Against Temperance* (London, 1984); and T. Hands, *Drinking in Victorian and Edwardian Britain: Beyond the Spectre of the Drunkard* (Glasgow, 2018), for her discussion of societal consumption; F. Knight, 'Recreation or Renunciation? Episcopal Interventions in the Drink Question in the 1890s', in S. J. Brown, F. Knight, and J. Morgan-Guy (eds), *Religion, Identity and Conflict in Britain: From the Restoration to the Twentieth Century: Essays in Honour of Keith Robbins* (London, 2016), pp.157-73 for a discussion of episcopal temperance objectives.

[5] Roberts, *Making English Morals,* pp.116-17, 150-2, 165-8, 202-4, 212-13, 246-7, 274-5.

[6] Ibid., p.246 and p.274.

conversions and they did not ask the missionaries to take pledges.[7] Weylland, LCM's first missionary to public-houses, confirmed LCM's position in reply to a question asked of him when he gave evidence to the House of Lords Committee on Intemperance in 1877

> Are you in connection with any temperance society? Do you give these people a pledge, or anything of that sort?
>
> We are not a temperance society, but we make a great number of teetotallers.[8]

Lewis identified LCM's early role to be what he described as their playing watchdog of taverns in its self-appointed role as guardians of London's morals.[9] In 1854, Weylland gave evidence to the House of Commons Committee with specific reference to LCM's interest in night-houses in connection with their mission among cabmen and prostitutes.[10] Weylland was recalled in 1877, to give evidence to the House of Lords Committee on Intemperance. LCM were concerned to confirm to their supporters that the Committee of the Mission carefully guarded the Society from interference in 'things political' and they stressed that the missionaries were expressly forbidden to converse with people they visit on such questions. They stated that his attendance had been in obedience to a Summons.[11]

Their Committee's minutes reveal that during the summer of 1896, LCM strongly resisted repeated requests that any of the public-house missionaries should be called to give evidence to the Temperance Central Evidence Board for the Royal Commission on Licencing Laws.[12] They argued in carefully drafted and re-drafted correspondence the reasons why they did not wish to receive a Summons for any of the missionaries to do so. They advised

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[7] Lewis noted that from LCM's earliest years its Committee were unwilling to endorse the practice of taking the pledge of total abstinence, see Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.76.
[8] *LCMM, 1878*, p.203.
[9] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.76.
[10] *LCMM, 1878*, pp.201-2.
[11] *LCMM, 1878*, p.201.
[12] LCMMB, 1 June 1896, 8 June 1896, 15 June 1896.

that the request put them under 'considerable difficulties' and would present 'a serious injury' to their work because it would compromise the goodwill of landlords upon whom their access in public-house mission *entirely* depended. Despite the Board's offer that they could take evidence in confidence LCM would not alter their position, and no Summons was made.

LCM never formed an affiliation with a temperance society, and carefully avoided all of the political connections which were made between mainstream temperance movements and the Liberal Party. LCM's Committee minutes reveal how LCM's independent position was maintained consistently in their decisions. In 1877, William Downing offered to sponsor in full a public-house missionary in Leytonstone if he were a teetotaller and would hold temperance meetings.[13] LCM declined his offer advising him that his conditions were against the principles of the Mission. In 1883, LCM informed the Early Closing Association that they could not assist them in their campaign to change licencing hours, nor would they allow them to send a letter to each of the missionaries on the issue because it would 'create a precedent of which other societies might take an advantage.'[14] In 1901, LCM would not permit their missionaries to answer papers of questions respecting landlords and their customers in public-houses following repeated requests for them to do so from Noel Buxton.[15] In 1903, Miss Perkins, 'for a Temperance Society', requested information about barmaids.[16] LCM responded to her that in giving such information it would 'greatly hinder' the missionaries' work. On 6 June 1904, the Secretary of the Anti-Licencing Bill Committee asked LCM if the missionaries might help with a demonstration on the 25th. LCM noted

[13] Ibid., 13 August 1877.
[14] Ibid., 5 February 1883.
[15] Ibid., 7 June 1896, 14 January 1901, 21 January 1901.
[16] Ibid., 19 January 1903.

simply, 'Request Refused.'[17] In 1912, LCM declined to assist the National Temperance League with statistics concerning 'the drinking habits of the people.'[18]

LCM's position was significantly different from those held by the Glasgow and Manchester City Missions. GCM was closely connected with the Scottish Temperance League, where Robert Kettle, Secretary of GCM, was also Editor of *The Scottish Temperance Journal* and became President of the Scottish Temperance League in 1848.[19] MCM held Gospel Temperance Crusades in temporarily rented halls which were capable of holding large numbers of people, where those who joined were given pledge books and sent out to solicit their friends and companions to come and join the Movement. Lee recorded in connection with a meeting held in Salford in 1885

> Every abstainer was made an aggressor the moment he took the pledge on clear and definite lines, told with marked effect.[20]

LCM's Sabbatarian position on temperance

Wigley argued that there was an important distinction between the Sabbatarian and teetotal movements and he cited Weylland's answers given to the Lords' Committee in 1877, in support of this.[21] Wigley concluded that Weylland had not asked for the Sunday closure of public-houses because he was sufficiently realistic and flexible in his attitude to see the impracticability of restricting this aspect of working-class life, and sufficiently sensible to confine his efforts to closing museums and galleries in which, Wigley observed,

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[17] Ibid., 6 June 1904.
[18] Ibid., 1 July 1912.
[19] A. Cooke, *A History of Drinking, The Scottish Pub Since 1700* (Edinburgh, 2015), p.110.
[20] Lee, *The Cry,* p.86, noting MCM employed only one missionary in public-house mission in the years before the First World War, where in 1885, there were 3,000 public-houses in Manchester. In 1885, LCM employed 19 missionaries in special mission to London's 10,000 public-houses, see *LCMAR, 1885,* p.240.
[21] J. Wigley, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Sunday* (Manchester, 1980), pp.173-4.

the working classes, despite Radical hopes and aspirations, really took but a meagre interest. Wigley pondered two elements which he believed underpinned Weylland's position; either that Sunday drinking was of greater social desirability than Sunday recreation, or that Sunday drinking was not as sinful in itself whereas Sunday recreation was. As a consequence, Wigley concluded, Sabbatarians like Weylland were not intimately associated with the temperance movement. Weylland was not expressing a prescriptive Sabbatarian view on Sabbath recreation, but LCM's position on the importance of the protection of the working-class Sabbath, which was for them, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, a distinct issue. Clearly stating both his own and LCM's concerns about increasing Sunday labour Weylland answered Viscount Gordon's question in the context that Sunday pleasure for *others* would lead to Sunday labour for the working-classes

> I would say that the people who get drunk and spend their evenings in public houses would never be drawn away by such places. I have often put the question to labourers, costermongers, and roughs: if the museums were open on Sunday, would you visit them and they say no. The working classes do not desire to have these places open.
>
> The feeling is that Sunday pleasure would lead to Sunday labour, and the working classes do not desire that. Employees would be required and visitors to London, 120,000 foreigners, would visit them. It would not affect the drinking class in ANY way.[22]

It is possible to make a comparison between LCM's position on intemperance, and that of Shaftesbury. Finlayson noted that Shaftesbury displayed an attitude to drink which was by no means extreme or fanatical, for he drank wine.[23] Finlayson cited Shaftesbury's feelings on the custom of drinking a glass of wine with one's fellow man, which he described as being 'one of the wisest institutions which appears to have been formed for conviviality and

[22] *LCMM, 1878*, p.209.
[23] G. B. A. M. Finlayson, *The Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury* (Vancouver, 1981), pp.544-5.

promoting good feeling one towards another…' and how he urged his hearers 'never to give it up, but to take it, like you should every other means of enjoyment, in moderation.'[24] On moral issues, Finlayson argued, Shaftesbury did not belong to the strictest school. He observed that Shaftesbury believed in temperance rather than teetotalism.[25] In this context, Finlayson concluded, 'Shaftesbury showed undiminished readiness to help enterprises which would relieve destitution and restrain the excesses which might lead to it.'[26] In 1875, Shaftesbury became President of LCM's Auxiliary Committee to Public-houses whose aim was to secure funding for the visitation of all of London's public-houses and coffee-shops by LCM's missionaries.[27]

Heasman considered the extent to which the religious motive in temperance had eclipsed the moral in America where confusion had arisen between 'total abstinence' and 'salvation.'[28] She argued that a similar confusion was to be found in the later stages of 'gospel temperance' movement in England during the last quarter of the nineteenth century where 'conversion' was not regarded as authentic unless it was accompanied by the pledge. Hence, she argued, the effect of gospel temperance was to change the issue from a moral one to a spiritual one.[29] There is no evidence that LCM, either in their Instructions given to their missionaries or in their published texts, expressed the view that it was necessary for anyone to have taken the pledge for them to have experienced an authentic conversion. Whereas Heasman concluded that total abstinence became usual for most Evangelicals, and many members of other persuasions, she noted that some of the 'older school' who

[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid., p.607.
[26] Ibid., p.544.
[27] *LCMAR, 1875*, p.18.
[28] Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action*, p.129.
[29] Ibid., p.133.

included Shaftesbury, refused to change their views.[30] LCM were characteristically flexible but they ensured that the missionaries made a clear distinction between their own LCM Prayer Meetings, and their participation in gospel temperance meetings which a missionary *might* do in addition to his LCM Prayer Meetings if he wished, or believed that he should do so.[31]

LCM's mission in public-houses

Harrison concluded that the teetotal movement made two serious errors; that its whole attitude towards its task was sectarian, and that it gave inadequate attention to the environmental factors which created drunkenness.[32] In contrast there were two specific considerations which influenced the position held by LCM in their work in public-houses; firstly the undenominational character of the Society within which an individual's beliefs on the subject were always respected, and secondly their clear understanding of the social conditions of working-class lives. LCM's perspective was deeply rooted in the missionaries own working-class backgrounds. For LCM's missionaries the motivation in their work was not one of establishing social control in working-class social places for political reasons, rather they acted from their evangelical imperative to secure a spiritual influence in places in which they sought to become familiar and widely accepted.

In 1875, LCM explained the undenominational basis in which they worked in public-house mission

[30] Ibid., p.135.
[31] LCM's Rules required the missionaries to report to the General Committee if they assisted at Band of Hope or Temperance Meetings. See, for example, *LCMAR, 1875,* p.34.
[32] Harrison, *Drink*, p.355. His discussion of sectarianism was explored in detail by Roberts who supported his conclusions, see Roberts, *Making English Morals,* pp.202-4.

> There are differences of opinion among Christians on the subject of temperance, or rather of abstinence. Even those who carry out the Society's work in public-houses hold different views on this matter. With these the Society cannot meddle. But whatever views may be entertained, the Committee trust all will agree that the Gospel ought to be taken wherever men and women are willing to listen to it.[33]

LCM recognised the physical and cultural position of the public-house in working-class lives. In 1894, LCM commented upon the decrease in drunkenness that the public-house missionaries had reported 'in not a few of their districts' and observed that it had taken place in streets where the splendours of the gin palaces were in proportion to the misery in which they were set, and where intemperance proved a strong inducement to escape from those wretched places when a brilliantly lighted public-house was seen hard by, with its warm and comfortable rooms.[34] Abraham Belton was LCM's missionary to public-houses in Paddington and he understood the historically social significance of public-houses in the lives of the poor.[35] In his annual report in 1865, he wrote

> By their customs and their habits they are very frequently drawn into a public-house, and at the same time there is no prospect of the ordinary means that are used being successful in getting them to a place of worship; for it is a well-known fact that if a calamity or trouble overtake the people, a public-house is the first place they go to 'to get something', as they say, 'to cheer them'; or, if prosperity should be their portion, the public-house is the first place to which they wend their way on purpose to drink in commemoration of the event; if it is a funeral they are called by Providence to attend, a public-house must be attended; if a birth, Christening, or a wedding occur, it is the same; if it is hot there is an excuse for them to go, if it is cold it is just the same. It appears as if they look upon it as a settled fact that the whole of the happiness of their lives must be in connexion with a public house.[36]

[33] *LCMAR, 1875*, p.23.
[34] *LCMAR, 1894*, p.xxi.
[35] Belton, an Anglican, had been a coach-maker before he joined LCM in 1849, see, LCMMB, 8 October 1849.
[36] *LCMM, 1866*, p.90.

The funding and undenominational basis of LCM's public-house mission

The General Committee's meetings' minutes show that LCM's Committee members held a special interest in their public-house mission and that at the same time they sponsored the establishment of coffee-shops. Edward Buxton and Joseph Hoare supported public-house missionaries.[37] Garwood sponsored both the City and Deptford public-house missionaries.[38] Flew identified the large donations which were made to LCM by the Buxton, Bevan, Hanbury, and Hoare families through successive generations.[39] As a company Truman, Hanbury, and Buxton were noted by her as being LCM's 7th largest donor.[40] Her analysis illustrated the sums given by known sources. Flew did not identify and include additional donations which had been made and concealed in LCM's published accounts as in the case of Edward Buxton. In 1858, following his death, it was recorded in LCM's minutes

> Nor can the Committee now pass over in silence the very great liberality of Sir Edwd to the Society. He was the largest subscriber which has yet been raised up to it. For many years past, he has given more than £1000 annly to its funds, besides occasional large donations in which his name was concealed, thus his liberality might not be known.[41]

Erdozain observed that during the 1830s brewers could be found in both the Clapham Sect and several missionary societies when their Evangelical fear was of the fanaticism of teetotalism not the profanity of drinking.[42] It could be argued that they continued throughout the century to hold this position in LCM. Cox noted that the brewers' companies

[37] LCMMB, 28 February 1876, and *LCMAR, 1886*, p.23.
[38] *LCMM, 1889*, p.232.
[39] Flew, *Philanthropy,* p.172, 'Table A.4.1f: LCM Top 20 Funders.'
[40] Ibid.
[41] LCMMB, 14 June 1858.
[42] D. Erdozain, 'The Secularisation of Sin', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 62/1 (January 2011), p.75.

had a vested interest in creating 'a sober and industrious nation.'[43] Flew, in response to his conclusion argued that 'secular' historians' positions which focus on guilt 'denigrate the spiritual motivations which underpinned the philanthropic impulse'.[44] There is no evidence in LCM's sources of any of the soul-searching which lay behind their individual positions, but in 1892, George Hanbury, who had been a member of LCM's General Committee since 1861, chaired and spoke at LCM's Annual Evening Meeting. He reflected, 'What is the need of this Mission when there are so many ministers, both of the Church of England and other denominations?'[45] He advised that those who asked the question should go out into the city's streets and in dark nights stand by the doors of the public-houses. He expressed his certainty in the value of *preaching* amongst the people and his own reasons for his support of LCM's missionaries' work

> I am quite sure that a Christian cannot be a socialist of the violent type, that he cannot be an anarchist, that he cannot be a drunkard. If a man is a Christian, he cannot be a thief. And what we are doing is to try, by the grace of God, to stop these people in their downward career, and to beseech them by the mercies of God to turn and give their souls to Him.[46]

LCM were cautious in their appeals to their supporters for funds for public-house mission and they placed these when they were made in a broad undenominational context

> For eight years the Society had one such missionary for the parish of Marylebone, and for all that time he stood alone in the work. It was considered to be a work so difficult, and in many respects, so strange, that a lengthened experience of its practicability and its great importance was required by Christian persons before the work was extended.[47]
>
> If (as is probably true) there are more public-houses than even the wants, real or imaginary, of the people ask for, and if (as no doubt is the case) there are to be met

[43] Cited by Flew, *Philanthropy,* p.104.
[44] Ibid.
[45] *LCMM, 1892*, p.173.
[46] Ibid.
[47] *LCMAR, 1875*, pp.17-18.

> with in these public-houses those who had better be elsewhere, there are no legitimate reasons why these people should not be followed where they are, and dealt faithfully with there. The Committee therefore entreat their friends, whether themselves total abstainers or otherwise, to aid them in this work, and to recognise as a duty above all others to carry the Gospel to those who purchase drink either moderately or in excess, believing the Gospel to be the sovereign remedy for every evil of any description.[48]

Before LCM 'officially' commenced their special mission in public-houses in 1853, they had consulted the missionaries about doing so.[49] No denomination predominated among the missionaries, and their Local Superintendents included Anglican clergymen, Nonconformist ministers, and laymen of all denominations. In this context LCM's mission in public-houses cannot be considered to have represented the expression of a Society of Nonconformist conscience.

Those whom the churches could not reach

It is impossible to overestimate the goodwill which the missionaries secured in their public-house visitation, the scale of its undertaking, and how fiercely LCM's Committee protected the independence of their work. Both LCM's Committee and the missionaries recognised the importance of their public-house mission because of the numbers of people who could be met, and the character of the time that could be spent with them. LCM continued to expand their mission in public-houses during the last quarter of the nineteenth century because of its success.

The missionaries noted the numbers of public-houses, beer-houses, and coffee-shops within their districts in their reports each year, and they declared the numbers of these that

[48] Ibid., p.23.
[49] Weylland, *These Fifty Years,* p.224. LCM's missionaries visited public-houses in mission before this time, for example Grimmett in cabmen's mission, see Chapter 7.

they had visited. They recorded houses which had changed hands, new establishments, and those which had closed. LCM's Magazines and Annual Reports gave their overview of the numbers of licenced premises which were visited by the missionaries; in 1875, LCM recorded that 2,000 public-houses had been visited by 12 missionaries; in 1886, Weylland wrote that all of London's 10,650 public-houses, beer-houses, and houses of refreshment were visited by LCM's 26 missionaries, with the exception only of but a few outlying places; in 1894, LCM reported that during the past year 270,000 men had been met by 27 missionaries in 10,000 out of London's 12,000 licenced premises.[50]

From among LCM's 107 appointments of their public-house missionaries' Local Superintendents, 31 were clergymen, and it was acknowledged on occasion in LCM's reports that the work was one that they would not wish to undertake themselves. In 1861, William Brinton, LCM's missionary to public-houses in Bermondsey, noted

> An excellent clergyman a short while back stated to me that he 'found it very difficult to meet with working men.' He went on to say, that he 'had called at their houses at all times, but, as a rule, he could not meet with them' when we spoke of the visitation to public-houses. This he fully endorsed, but added, 'I can't see *my* way clear to adopt that plan. I don't think it prudent for a *clergyman* to visit such places.'[51]

Working men and women who were not visited in their homes or places of work could be met in public-houses. In 1870, LCM cited a missionary who had written in his report that he brought the Gospel before more men in one evening in public-houses than he had found when the missionary of a district, that he could speak to in three months at their homes.[52]

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[50] *LCMAR, 1875,* p.21, *LCMM,* 1889, p.213, *LCMAR, 1895,* p.xxxvii.
[51] *LCMM, 1862*, p.79. Brinton, an Anglican, had been a printer before he joined LCM in 1855, see LCMMB, 12 March 1855.
[52] *LCMAR, 1870,* p.15.

In 1866, Belton compared his work in public-house mission with the difficulties that were encountered by the missionaries to factories and workshops

> If they are followed into their workshops or places of employment it is seldom that an opportunity is offered to have so free a conversation with them. If they are at piece work, they do not like to be hindered; on the other hand, if at day work, the employer or his deputy will soon interfere, and remind the missionary that it is very improper to hinder any person when his time is paid for by another.[53]

In 1869, William Clarke, LCM's missionary to public-houses in St Georges-in-the-East and Stepney described the spiritual opportunity that he perceived in his work

> I am more than ever convinced of the importance of public-house visitation. This is a sentence I have often used, but I cannot help repeating it, because often I meet with Christian men who question the wisdom of such work. It is true that the work is very peculiar, but if we wait till men come and ask to be taught the way of the Lord, we shall wait too long, and time will have changed for eternity.
>
> My own decided conviction is, after eight years of ordinary mission work, and four years of public-house visitation there is not another work, in or out of the Mission, so necessary, or likely to prove so beneficial to the souls and the bodies of the lowest classes of society, as public-house visitation.[54]

LCM's missionaries visited public-houses on Sundays

The missionaries visited public houses when they were open on Sundays. In 1863, John Bolam, LCM's public-house missionary in Bethnal Green, detailed the advantages for his mission in visiting public-houses on Sunday afternoons

> I take the whole of the houses in Bishopsgate Without, from Union-street down to the Station, and in all but two have been kindly received. I find those houses sometimes crowded with people, especially on a Sunday afternoon, and I find this a good time for missionary work, for the men have not had time to get intoxicated, and

[53] *LCMM, 1866*, p.91.
[54] *LCMM*, *1869*, p.97. Before joining LCM in 1857, Clarke, who was illiterate, had been a coalheaver. He described himself as having earned 35s.-40s. a week where 'the greater part was frequently spent in the public-house', see *LCMM, 1879*, p.1. An Anglican, he was converted by LCM's missionary Evan Berry, see LCMMB, 31 August 1857.

> they are likely to read the tracts, or take them home and read them as soon as the houses are closed.[55]

John Santo, LCM's missionary to public-houses in St Pancras discussed the spiritual memory of those he met in his work on Sundays. He described how the missionaries reminded people who had no regular contact with the churches of the place of religion in their childhood and reintroduced it into their lives. He wrote about, 'the great moral principles of the Gospel' where he observed in his mission, 'these truths have been seen to convey a charm with them and the common people have heard them gladly.'[56] He advised that he would not be untruthful in saying that the greater half of those whom he met had given him some mark of their approbation.[57]

In 1858, Weylland noted in his journal, 'Instead of going to church this evening, went to the public-houses, and spoke there to a good 200 people about their souls.'[58] Weylland placed the importance of his mission in public-houses on the Sabbath in a broader context, as the missionaries met not only working men and women, but those whose employment associated them with public-houses

> There is probably no more gigantic power at work on the poorer population of London than of its public-houses. It is to be remembered that no other society than our own is engaged in this work, and that it is one generally avoided by ministers of religion. But will the publicans admit the missionaries? It may be asked; and the answer is that there is not one in a hundred who will not. Not only are the publicans and coffee-shop keepers visited, but 10,000 barmaids and thousands of waitresses and large numbers of domestic servants (we say not how rightly) sent out to public houses for dinner and supper beer.[59]

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[55] *LCMM, 1863*, pp.72-3. Bolam, who had been a tailor before he joined LCM in 1852, was a Wesleyan Methodist, see LCMMB, 13 December 1852.
[56] *LCMM, 1866*, pp.93-4. Santo, a Methodist, had been a butcher before he joined LCM in 1842, see LCMLSDR, p.13.
[57] Ibid.
[58] *LCMAR, 1859,* p.22.
[59] *LCMM, 1875*, p.18.

LCM's missionaries and the publicans

Walker in her discussion of the temperance work of the Salvation Army argued that the most distinctive feature of late-nineteenth century urban religion was conflict.[60] She described the Salvationists' command 'to do battle with the enemy' found in music halls, and public-houses.[61] She detailed how brewers and publicans were presented by Salvationists as the Army's 'sinful, degraded and heathen' opponents, wherein opposition to their work was orchestrated by them for the purposes of serving their corrupt business interests.[62]

LCM's missionaries recognised that their access to public-houses lay in the goodwill of the publicans. Their genius in the work lies in this understanding. It might be suggested that the missionaries exaggerated the character of their reception, and the extent of their access, but their accounts recorded their own surprise. John Reycraft was LCM's first missionary to public-houses in Poplar. In 1863, the year in which he began his work, he noted that there were in his district, 132 public-houses, 64 beer-houses, and 45 coffee and eating-houses, making a total of 241 visitable houses.[63] He reported

> In visiting these I found, contrary to my expectations, little or no opposition from the landlords, and have been permitted to enter every place, whether tap-room, parlour, or bar, freely: the proprietors in several instances, when I was strange to the house, acting as guide to the different rooms, whilst others left me to do the best I could, taking apparently but little notice of me; and the few who seemed in any way disposed to oppose me have always been checked by some of their customers standing up in my defence.

[60] P. J. Walker, 'A Carnival of Equality': The Salvation Army and the Politics of Religion in Working-Class Communities', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 5/1 (2000), p.77.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid., p.65.
[63] *LCMM, 1863*, p.88. Reycraft, a Primitive Methodist from Chatham, had been a paver before he joined LCM in 1860, see LCMMB, 13 February 1860.

> This reception on the part of the landlords in general has given me courage, and though it may seem to some incredible, as it did to me formerly, yet it is a fact that I have every facility afforded to me to speak to every one I may meet in most of the houses. Indeed I was never positively forbidden but once, and that was under peculiar circumstances.[64]

The missionaries invited and encouraged the publicans to share the moral leadership which was implicit in their mission, and the publicans, in the main, accepted this responsibility. The missionaries' evidence of their confident working relationships and many friendships with publicans is strong.

Nicholls discussed the Church of England Temperance Society and their campaigns for licencing reform. They backed reductions in public-house numbers, reductions in opening hours, the abolition of Sunday trading and prevention of the sale of alcohol to children but as Nicholls observed, they 'made simply no effort to grasp the fact that for vast numbers of people the pub was not just a necessary evil, it was a positive good.'[65] The Church of England Temperance Society, unlike LCM, was not willing to countenance the idea that public-houses were a valid social institution, or to imagine that publicans were in a position to be able to, or to be prepared to assist in spiritual mission.

William Vere succeeded Weylland as LCM's missionary to public-houses in Marylebone in 1869.[66] In 1875, he expressed his support and fellowship for the publicans with whom LCM's missionaries worked

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[64] Ibid.

[65] Nicholls, *The Politics of Alcohol,* pp.137-8.

[66] Vere, a Congregationalist, had been a shoemaker, and teacher in the Grotto Passage Ragged Schools in Marylebone before he joined LCM in 1854. He was converted by LCM's missionary, John Barker. Vere, in connection with his work among the French who lived in Somers-town became fluent in French. He translated for those whom he met in his work who were arrested by the Police, see *LCMM, 1890,* pp.10-12. Referring to Vere, Weylland wrote, 'Men with exceptional gifts were appointed to visit public-houses', see *Valiant,* p.233.

> The marvel is that the licenced victuallers should tolerate our visits, considering how they have been treated by the professing Church of God. They are denounced from nearly every pulpit, and condemned in almost every tract. Yet not withstanding the unwise way in which they have been handled, and – may I say – the culpable way in which their spiritual welfare has been neglected, they are, almost universally, ready to hail any effort that may be made to aid them in overcoming evil, resisting temptation, and improving the habits of their customers.
>
> The cause of temperance is chiefly in the hands of the publicans. Influence the publican for good, and drunkenness will be checked and discouraged through the length and breadth of the land; but not so long as the Church stands aside and apart only to denounce, and not to instruct and save, intemperance will spread, and the other efforts of our Christian philanthropists will continue to receive many a sad disappointment.
>
> Many a young family has listened on the Lord's-day afternoon to the reading of 'The Sunday at Home' or a narrative tract owing to my visits. Drunkenness is eating the vitals out of the people. There are many Christian publicans but they all find it hard to maintain a steady balance. Our job is not to judge, still less to condemn.[67]

In his autobiography James Dunn, who from 1876, was appointed LCM's missionary to public-houses in Shoreditch, Hoxton, and Haggerstone, recalled a first encounter with a landlord on his district.[68] His conversation illustrated how from the outset of his work he sought to establish a relationship of shared and equal spiritual citizenship with every publican that he met

> On the way out I asked the landlord if he would accept one of my books. "Well, just a minute," said he, "don't you parsons say that we publicans are all sinners?" "Certainly," I replied. Then, with a curl of the lip, he said, "I should like to know what you are?" "Well, sir, I am a sinner too." "Now, that caps all that I ever heard." "I'll have one of your books, and I'll read it too, and I am sure that my wife will, for she reads her prayer-book every Sunday afternoon."[69]

It is reasonable to suggest that for the publicans and their staff excessive drunkenness and its consequences were unwelcomed in their houses, but at the same time the missionaries

[67] *LCMM, 1875*, pp.94-5.
[68] J. Dunn, *From the Coal Mine Upwards: or Seventy Years of an Eventful Life* (London, 1910), pp.156-7.
[69] Ibid.

believed that their visits, and moral leadership in its deterrence, were welcomed for more complex social reasons. William Brinton observed, for example, 'There is a kind of pride evinced by some landlords in having their establishments visited by a missionary, 'This is *our* missionary.'[70]

How the missionaries worked in public-houses without taking a drink

The missionaries noted their invitations to drink. Not all of the missionaries were teetotallers, but they did not take a drink while they worked. Belton explained how he navigated around the invitations which he received without causing offence

> I am often invited, and pressed very hard, to partake of the drink. When I refuse it is annoying to them and they are led to suspect that I am proud or think myself more holy than they. So I have to make my apologies and beg of them to excuse me. I say I am not used to drinking and a little would affect me and as I go to several houses if I should only take a little drop in each house then I should be anything but sober when I was done. They acknowledged this, and so I get away excused, and am friends.[71]

George Bradley, LCM's missionary to public-houses in Poplar, explained why he did not drink while he worked and he related an exchange with a man during his break as an example of his moderate advice in return

> In the public-houses I visit I receive a number of invitations to drink, generally from the men I am addressing, and frequently from the landlord or landlady. Hardly a day passes without my being two or three times invited to drink. These invitations I am obliged to refuse, for it would be quite inconsistent with the character of a missionary to become the pothouse companion of those to whom he was sent. I, however, try to decline in as kind a manner as possible. They suppose I must be a total-abstinence man when pressed though,
>
> "I did not refuse because I do not drink beer as you appear to suppose, but I do not think it would be right to deprive a working man of his beer, particularly as I am not in want of it at present. Now, suppose I was to drink all of your beer, how would you

[70] *LCMM, 1863*, p.83.
[71] *LCMM, 1863*, pp.86-7.

> get on with your work today?" At that he looked rather serious, but replied he could not work without beer. I told him I did not think he could, but hoped he would try. I tasted his beer, which I pronounced to be good, and returned him his pot.[72]

LCM's public-house mission in the context of universal literacy and public opinion

Roberts concluded that by 1870, society had moved to one which openly encouraged universal literacy and the expression of 'local opinion' on 'national issues' with the coming of democracy.[73] There is evidence that the missionaries viewed their own work in this context. They distributed widely read and popular reading material, and they encouraged conversations with customers in which they could introduce spiritual and moral debates from a discussion of current affairs. In 1863, Walshe, who had visited among the Chartists in Manchester during the 1840s, reported that in *every* house which he had visited he had been able to leave LCM's reading material

> I have been permitted to lay copies of 'The British Workman' or 'Band of Hope' on the tap-room and parlour tables, side by side with the 'Times' and other morning papers. One man, enjoying his pipe and glass, said, 'Well, it's a new thing indeed, to see those papers on public-house tables; I hope, Sir, they will do good.'[74]

William Winton noted that he could truly testify that his literature was valued and largely read.[75] He added that with few exceptions it taken with pleasure and read with profit.[76] LCM's missionaries may have undertaken not to discuss politics with those whom they met

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[72] *LCMM, 1866*, p.96. Bradley joined LCM in 1865. He had served in the Army for 21 years. He was placed immediately in public-house mission. His placement suggests the spiritual and moral leadership which it was hoped that he might bring to his work. He had entered the Army as a Private and was promoted with Commission to Ensign at the Siege of Delhi where he had been wounded. He was a Congregationalist, see LCMMB, 28 August 1865.
[73] Roberts, *Making English Morals,* pp.97-8.
[74] *LCMM, 1863*, p.75. Walshe, an Anglican, had been a navvy, and worked in Mission in Manchester before joining LCM in 1857, see LCMMB, 16 March 1857.
[75] *LCMM, 1889*, p.227, noting Winton was LCM's missionary to public-houses in Kensington, Fulham, and Hammersmith. Winton, an Anglican, had been a shoemaker before he joined LCM in 1861, see LCMMB, 19 August 1861.
[76] Ibid.

in their Appointment, but their accounts confirm that they were regularly drawn into conversations about current affairs. In his report from 1865, Belton wrote

> The topics of the day are sure to be brought into a public-house and I am compelled to have some little to say about them. Among other things there are two to which I will refer, this is the American war and the cattle plague. There was great excitement on account of the American war, and the horrors accompanying it have often been referred to by the people. When I have heard working men speaking in a mourning tone about the cattle plague, I have sympathised with them, acknowledging that it is hard for them, especially with those who have large families. While I have been doing this, I have drawn them to the interest they have in Jesus through the Gospel.[77]

In 1877, Dunn illustrated the immediate interest, when asked for something to read, which LCM's mission texts could raise by their engaging content

> I gave several papers which contained extracts from Lord Shaftesbury's speech in the House of Lords, on the Vivisection Bill. One man, as soon as he looked at it, said, "Why, landlord, here is the very thing we have been talking about, Lord Shaftesbury's speech in the House of Lords."[78]

What did the missionaries achieve?

LCM appraised their work in public houses in a detailed report in 1898. They reflected that like all Christian enterprises it was, of course, a 'work of faith' but they felt that its success was 'unequivocal' where the 'exact results' of the missionaries' efforts could be tabulated, and in which the first of their achievements was headed, '*The standard of morality is raised amongst the frequenters of these places.*'[79]

The missionaries' moral influence was demonstrated in their many surviving reports. Charles Tubb expressed his achievement simply, 'I have obtained the respect of the men, without

[77] *LCMM, 1866*, pp.91-2.
[78] Dunn, *From the Coal Mine,* pp.154-5.
[79] *LCMAR, 1898,* pp.xxxix-xliv.

which it is impossible to influence them to the right.'[80] The missionaries took religion into public-houses each and every day and those whom they met expected to see them there. They were places in which for many decades religion became familiar as a consequence. Ordinary people experienced in public-houses many of the things that they would have seen in a mission hall had they chosen to go to one. Not unexpectedly the missionaries' reports illustrated how people were met and they detailed conversations that had been held. They gave accounts of drunkards reclaimed. But the missionaries' evidence was more complex than might have been expected because they revealed that on many occasions they gave Bible readings, prayed, sang hymns, and held meetings in public-houses.

The missionaries' view

In 1865, William Clarke commenced visiting public houses in Wapping, Shadwell, St George's-in-the-East and Mile End Old Town.[81] He placed his understanding of his mission in his own experience, and he observed that his life from his youth had made him conversant with the characteristics of the men whom he met.[82] In 1879, Clarke confirmed that he visited 421 public-houses and 67 coffee-houses.[83] His account of ten years in public-house mission gave LCM's clearest published detail of the scope of their work at the time. He admitted

[80] *LCMM, 1889*, p.230, noting Tubb was LCM's missionary to public-houses in Marylebone. Tubb, a Primitive Methodist, who was illiterate had been a labourer in a flour mill before he joined LCM in 1871, see LCMLSDR, p.75.
[81] *LCMM, 1879*, p.6.
[82] Ibid., p.2.
[83] Ibid. Clarke reported, 'Every one of these Public-houses without exception, is open to your missionary, so that he is able, in each of them, to talk of Jesus and his salvation.' See, J. M. Weylland, *Our Veterans,* (London, 1881), p.13.

that he had commenced in his appointment with 'much trembling' and revealed the continuing importance for him each day of prayer

> I make it a constant habit to pray earnestly to God to be with me in every public-house I enter, that is, at the time I do enter; and I have had answers to my prayers many times.[84]

Clarke was realistic in his expectations of those whom he met, but he was optimistic

> Is it likely that such people are ever to be found in the house of God? I don't think we should exceed the bounds of charity if we said, No.
>
> It must not be taken as granted that the missionary has it all his own way in a public-house. Most men have a will of their own, and some wills are very stubborn, and delight in opposition; not because they believe they are right, but for the pure love of contradicting. Here the wisdom of the serpent with the gentleness of the dove is necessary. You want to win this man, not to make him your enemy.
>
> I thank God that among this rough class the Gospel has a power.
>
> Of course it may be felt by all who consider the nature of the work, and the class of persons we meet with in public-houses, that the fruits of the labours of the missionary in a public-house can be but dimly seen; but yet I firmly believe 'the day' will manifest that the work was not in vain.[85]

He detailed a day's work in Ratcliff Highway as a means of illustrating his mission. He visited public-houses, gin-palaces, and their dancing-saloons at a time at night when they were at their busiest, where he was able to demonstrate his relationship with the landlord, his exchanges with the house's customers, and the character of the place. He also visited all of those who might be found employed there when they were not working, and he revealed how they responded to him. Clarke visited the girls who earned their livings in the long rooms of the Highway, barmaids, dancers, and prostitutes, during the daytime. He

[84] *LCMM, 1879*, p.6.
[85] *LCMM, 1869*, p.99.

illustrated vividly the ease with which he was able to place himself in their company and engage their attention. He related

> It is 5 o'clock on a cold winter's afternoon. From 20 to 30 of these poor girls are sitting round a large fire. The landlord has kindly had it lighted two hours earlier on purpose to administer to their comfort. Some are at needlework, others boiling their tea, or cooking their food. As soon as I enter I hear one remark, in an undertone, 'Here's that missionary again.' I take no notice but walk up and compliment them upon their industry and quietness, and how glad I was to see them partaking of the 'cup that cheers but not inebriates.' 'Yes,' said one, 'tea is better than gin but we don't always think so.' I said I should like to read to them a little, to which they readily assented, and one gave up her seat to me. They gathered round me and listened with rapt attention while I read the 15th chapter of St. Luke's Gospel. I described the lost sheep, the good shepherd going after it, finding it, and returning home with it on his shoulders rejoicing; the woman losing the piece of silver, and, when she found it, called her neighbours to rejoice with her; just so will the angels of God rejoice over every sinner that repenteth. There I sat like a father in the midst of his family, exhorting to repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The power of God was present to wound and to heal. Scarcely a dry eye was to be seen. Sad were the tales that I heard.[86]

He returned in the evening, firstly around seven to speak with the musicians who were engaged for the evening's entertainment, then again at ten o'clock when the house's business was at its height. He recorded

> The music is playing loudly, though we cannot say sweetly. The door of the long room is open, but long red curtains are hanging across the entrance, which, while it allows the music to be heard plainly by the passer-by, prevents the dancing or whatever might be going on to be seen. Drawing the curtains aside, we enter. The manager turns sharply round to see who it is, but having recognised us with a nod of the head, takes no further notice of us till we are about to leave. He then calls us quietly to one side, and says, 'He would be very thankful if we would visit his brother, who is very ill and dying over at the -----.' Of course we promise to do so. [*A description of the room and the dancing followed*] …. While the dance is on we must be quiet, for order is strictly observed during the performance. The dance being over it is acknowledged with rapturous applause. We now have perfect liberty, so we go to the first table.[87]

[86] *LCMM, 1879*, pp.10-11.
[87] Ibid., pp.9-10.

The views of others

LCM stated that they were inclined to believe that public-house mission was the most successful of all modes of visitation so far as the men were concerned.[88] The missionaries' accounts included working men's responses to their work, and these are sources from which it is possible to gauge the impact of their mission from another perspective; those whom they sought to reach.

Dunn's autobiography was considered in Neuberg's study of popular literature.[89] Neuberg advised that his purpose was to define popular literature, to examine the 'world of the inarticulate,' and to ask whether it was possible to measure moral climates.[90] He concluded that although the literature of evangelism was enormous much of it was of doubtful quality.[91] Against the grain of his conclusion it is possible to illustrate that Dunn had cited the reflection of a working man who had given him a moral appraisal of his spiritual mission.[92] Dunn recalled that on a cold day he had visited a public-house which he described as a 'trade society's club house' where most of the members who were present were either unemployed or ill.[93] He had observed a noticeably sick man, Jim White, who was resting by the public-house fire. White asked Dunn in their conversation if he could arrange a hospital admission for him. Dunn undertook to help him, obtained a letter of admission, and took it to White's lodgings. Dunn visited White in hospital, and secured his conversion before he

[88] *LCMM, 1866*, p.78.
[89] V. E. Neuberg, *Popular Literature, A History and Guide* (Harmondsworth, 1977).
[90] Ibid., p.11, pp.15-16.
[91] Ibid., p.293.
[92] Dunn, *From the Coal Mine*, pp.178-81. Before joining LCM, Dunn had been a labourer. He worked on the construction of the Crystal Palace, and joined Sir Joseph Paxton's Corps of working men who went to the Crimean War. He served in Sebastopol and Balaclava. As a consequence, Dunn related, he planned his mission as if it were a siege, and concentrated his fire upon a point of weakness that he had identified until a breach was made, see, p.172.
[93] Ibid., p.178.

died. Dunn saw numbers of his companions who had also visited him in hospital, and he noted that their friend's end had caused some of them to think seriously. Later a man spoke with him in a bar, and explained that he had been present on the day that Dunn had first met White and he advised him of Dunn's mission's effect among the men

> They said afterwards your reasoning was good: but what you said to poor Jim at the time, and your kindness to him until he died, knocked the infidelity out of them more than all your arguments.[94]

It is possible to recognise the missionaries' effect in men's actions, as well as their words and evidence of this was given by Thomas Price in his annual report in 1888. He was LCM's missionary to public-houses in Spitalfields and Bethnal Green. He recorded his inclusion in a situation where from his mission's perspective he had been able to say exactly the right thing at the right time

> The tap-room door was hard to open; but when I had got in I found that a big rough man had his back against the door. There were fourteen men in the room, and two were taking off their clothes; for a pot of ale had been bet on which could show the worst back – their backs had been scored with the lash. I shall not soon forget the sight. I told them of two men who received the lash because they were *good*. That was hard for them to believe. I read and expounded Acts xvi, from the 19th verse, and part of Isaiah liii. Several were affected to tears, and said, 'We shall not forget this sermon.' They all thanked me, and when the ale came in the man who should have drunk first wished me to have the 'first pull because you are a proper cove of a parson to come and do us good' which, of course, I refused.[95]

Aberdeen and Shaftesbury witnessed LCM's mission in public-houses and observed its moral influence. After having given evidence to the House of Lords Committee on Intemperance in 1877, Lord Aberdeen asked Weylland to arrange for him to accompany a

[94] Ibid., p.181.
[95] *LCMM, 1889*, p.226. Price had been a servant, before he joined LCM in 1856. He was a member at Surrey Chapel, see LCMLSDR, p.47.

missionary in order to help him understand the statements which he had heard.[96] They accompanied William Clarke as he visited seven public-houses in Whitechapel-road the following Saturday night. They moved on to Shoreditch, visited three gin-palaces, and watched the turn-out at midnight. Weylland recorded Aberdeen's response

> 'That man is doing a wonderful work,' observed his Lordship as the missionary passed away. 'He evidently has the goodwill of the landlord and their barmen, as all treat him with respect, and his presence is evidently a power and a reproof to the wretched customers. He is as bold as a lion.'[97]

In 1885, Shaftesbury accompanied Weylland and William Siggers in a visit to several gin-palaces in Whitechapel.[98] Weylland noted Siggers' reception in them; 'All seemed to know him, and some shook hands, and others saluted him with a punch in the side so friendly that some people would have been knocked over.'[99] Unlike Aberdeen, who observed the work, Shaftesbury joined in. He secured the attention of 150 men and women who were drinking, he gave away tracts, and began teaching. Weylland recalled that the people pressed near to listen. Shaftesbury held a long conversation with the palace's entertainer, an old fire-eater, and they discussed their approaching deaths, sin, and eternity. On returning home Shaftesbury expressed his thoughts on Siggers' mission to Weylland

> Why, that missionary has gained an immense influence over a number of the most dangerous men in the world. The depraved and desperate are brought by him to listen to saving truth. This visiting of public-houses is a great UPRAISING POWER among the people. God prosper the work.[100]

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[96] Weylland, *Valiant,* pp.196-7.
[97] *LCMM, 1878*, p.215. Neither Clark's nor Aberdeen's identity was revealed in LCM's Magazine.
[98] LCMA, J. M. Weylland, *Upraising Power, A Narrative of Christian Work in Public Houses,* uncatalogued pamphlet, (n.d.). Siggers, a member of the Open Brethren, had been in the Army before he joined LCM, but left 'because he could not love his neighbour and shoot him'. LCM described, 'The people are frightfully poor but they almost worship him.' See, LCMECMB, 22 November 1915.
[99] Ibid., p. 4.
[100] Ibid., p.7.

Conclusion

LCM constantly reviewed their objectives in moral reform and by the early years of the twentieth century did not perceive drunkenness as the chief vice to be addressed in their moral leadership and mission; it was gambling. The missionaries' reports confirmed their concerns. In 1913, LCM wrote

> Betting and gambling, it is not too much to say, is a more insidious enemy of the working man and his home than is intemperance. The press has not yet ceased to encourage this wretched business, and new forms of the evil are constantly being introduced.[101]

Harrison concluded that by 1908, there was no alliance between the temperance movement and the spokesmen of the working classes.[102] He argued that the contradiction between class loyalty and the pursuit of respectability had been exposed in the demolition and destruction of the teetotal movement by socialist reason. In their awareness of the complexity of the causes of poverty, he observed, critics of the temperance movement began to suspect the whole notion of isolating 'the drink problem' from other social questions with which it should have been connected.[103]

LCM had always recognised the complexity of the causes of poverty in London. Pope described Dickens' respect for LCM as being quite distinct from his intense dislike of evangelical missionaries, and concluded that this was as a consequence of their understanding of poverty, social conditions, and their stance on temperance.[104] Each year after 1885, in their Annual Reports, LCM wrote about 'The Condition of the People' and it

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[101] *LCMAR, 1913,* p.43.
[102] Harrison, *Drink,* p.405. For a discussion of the Socialist perspective on the demise of the temperance movement, see, J. Nicholls, *The Politics of Alcohol,* pp.152-4.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Pope, *Dickens and Charity,* pp.113-4.

was in this context that they listed and reappraised their priorities in their mission. *Poverty* was always their first discussion. It was their overarching and primary concern because in their spiritual understanding it was from 'a chronic state of want' that the 'evils' which they sought to address originated. In 1896, LCM outlined the 'evils' which they perceived

> First.- To *overcrowding,* which is injurious and often fatal to both physical health and moral character. The very poor, who can scarcely obtain bread for themselves and their families, cannot afford to pay rent for more than one room, and in a small tenement, only a few feet square parents and children, however numerous, must herd together.
>
> Secondly.- Poverty leads to *over-work*, and is painful in the extreme to the Society's Missionaries to have to witness the constant strain to which many of the poor are put to earn a livelihood, and under which they too often sink. It is no uncommon thing for people to work twelve, fourteen, sixteen, and even eighteen hours a day. …In some branches of women's work they also labour for many hours, *sometimes all night*. …Is it any wonder, that people thus struggling for their physical existence, have but little time for attending religious services, and for seeking the higher interests of their souls?
>
> Thirdly.- It leads to *gradual collapse of effort*. Though the vast majority of the poor bravely struggle on, whilst strength lasts, to keep body and soul together, many give way to despair, yield to the temptation to drown their troubles in drink, sink to the low level of common lodging-house life, and become loafers in the streets.[105]

Booth discussed drunkenness in London in the context of poverty. He concluded that only 13% of the poor and 14% of the very poor in his sample owed their misfortunes directly to drink, where questions of illness, unemployment, and family size were far more relevant to the problem.[106] Harrison concluded that his evidence pointed towards polarization.[107] He added that temperance reformers observed that drunkards were less obtrusive in London, where drinking places were relatively few; where the relatively mild drinks, beer, and tea,

[105] *LCMAR, 1896,* pp.xii-ix.
[106] C. Booth, *Life & Labour in London: First Series: Poverty,* I (London, 1902), p.147.
[107] Harrison, *Drink,* p.363. See also Roberts discussion of the Temperance Movement's radicalisation, *Making English Morals,* pp.150-2.

were notoriously popular and where the temperance movement was always weak.[108] In the North of England, Harrison argued, extreme temperance policies had been a natural response to excessive drinking.[109]

Funded substantially by both London's brewers *and* the working classes, LCM walked along a tightrope from which they did not fall in their public-house mission. They were not drawn from their position of undenominational neutrality into partisan political commitment in the temperance movement. They pursued their influential spiritual mission and encouraged sobriety. In the demonstrable moral influence of LCM, and the omnipresence of their missionaries in London's licenced houses, together with their complete familiarity among generations of working-class people by whom they were respected, and whom they understood, lies an explanation for the distinct character of London's experience of intemperance.

[108] Harrison, *Drink,* p.363.
[109] Ibid.

Chapter 5. The working-class Sabbath.

A: Sunday labour

Wigley concluded that Sabbatarianism was concerned with Sin, men's relations with God and obedience to His Law, rather than morality or social reform.[1] He argued that Sabbatarianism taught that personal and national Sabbath-keeping or –breaking would produce a divine reaction and that Social Sabbatarianism was an attempt to demonstrate that essentially religious acts would produce a social reaction too wherein sinful Sunday amusement resulted in anti-social Sunday labour. He observed that this outlook led to priorities which at first sight appeared to be paradoxical but were the inevitable outcome of Sabbatarianism; its comparative unconcern with Sunday labour, its prohibition of Sunday recreation; its criticism of Sunday travelling and its relative indifference to Sunday drinking. The Victorian Sunday, Wigley concluded, was formed by these priorities.[2]

LCM's Sabbatarianism was significantly different from the Sabbatarianism which was discussed by Wigley because of their concern for those among the poor who laboured on Sundays and their acceptance of what they understood to be reasonable popular leisure. Their response and agency on behalf of those among the working classes, whom they recognised to be spiritually neglected as a consequence of their Sunday labour, opened up new fields in which they could be met and which became cornerstones of LCM's work in specialist mission.

[1] Wigley, *The Rise and Fall,* pp.184-5.
[2] Ibid., p.185.

As was the case with temperance, it can be demonstrated that LCM's Sabbatarian view was close to the position which was held by Shaftesbury. Finlayson noted that although he was an upholder of Sabbatarianism, Shaftesbury did not wish to obstruct harmless enjoyment and recreation on a Sunday provided that this did not mean that other people had to work to make it possible.[3] He observed that Shaftesbury was always conscious of the difficulties and dangers of appearing to deny recreation and amusement to the working classes by an extreme Sabbatarianism.[4] Furse-Roberts concluded that while Shaftesbury may have had fairly specific ideas as to how he and other Evangelicals ought to observe the Sabbath, his primary concern was about ensuring that the institution maintained its universal status and where he emphasised what he saw as the practical benefit of the Sabbath with its provision of a weekly rest-day for the labour-weary working classes.[5]

LCM and working men's essays on the Sabbath

During the late 1840s and early 1850s working-class men were invited to depict and discuss the principles of the Sabbath in essay competitions. The body of work which they produced was of considerable importance for LCM. In February 1849, LCM considered Henderson's working men's essays on the Sabbath.[6] A total of 1,045 essays were submitted in response to the competition which he had arranged. A Report upon the essays' content and character was read at a meeting held at Exeter Hall on 27 December 1848. It was chaired, before Lord

[3] Finlayson, *The Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury,* p.607.
[4] Ibid., p. 393.
[5] D. A. B. Furse-Roberts, 'The Making of an Evangelical Tory: The Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury (1801-1885) and the Evolving Character of Victorian Evangelicalism' (Ph.D. thesis, University of New South Wales, 2015), p.327.
[6] *LCMM, 1849,* pp.31-7.

Ashley's arrival, by Sir Edward North Buxton, LCM's Treasurer. LCM published the Report's text. It outlined the competition's origins, and detailed the significance of its results

> A brief advertisement, a newspaper paragraph, has brought up from crowded workshops, darksome mines, rural fields, and 'cottages obscure' the rays of truth, the illumination of which cannot fail to reach every corner of the land, and every order of men. Merchants, manufacturers, railway directors, together with vast multitudes of the productive and consuming classes, will be taught, by a new method, the injustice of tempting or constraining men to violate the Sabbath.[7]

LCM's approval for the project was unequivocal and they wrote

> We repeat, that we do not know of any circumstance, of late years, connected with the working classes, more encouraging or interesting than the one here related. We could almost covet the whole of these 76 prizemen as new missionaries to our Society.[8]

During 1851, a special distribution of copies of the Sabbath Prize Essays was made by the missionaries, and LCM declared that it had been received with great acceptance by the people.[9]

Spence analysed the working men's essays produced in response to competitions arranged at this time not only by Henderson, but also the Evangelical Alliance, and the RTS.[10] He sought to understand what he described as the essayists 'own way' of viewing the Sabbath and what was for them its rich symbolic meaning. He observed that the theme of Sundays as the 'people's day' was central to the prize-winning entries, and that there was a radical tinge in its imagery in the essayists' appeal to Sunday as the divine basis for ending social

[7] Ibid., p.33.
[8] Ibid., p.37.
[9] *LCMAR, 1851,* p.55.
[10] M. Spence, 'Writing the Sabbath: The Literature of the Nineteenth-Century Sunday Observance Debate', *Studies in Church History*, *Volume 48: The Church and Literature*, (Cambridge, 2012), pp.283–95.

inequalities. He commented that the RTS had felt compelled to issue a disclaimer to its volume of essays, warning

> Coming from the working classes, there is very occasionally a freedom of remark respecting their position in society which must not be considered as our own sentiment.[11]

In August 1851, LCM cited extracts from two of the prize-winning essays from the RTS competition in their analysis of results concerning London's population which had been released from the 1851 Census.[12] LCM included the essayists' texts without a disclaimer. The details of the Census' inquiry into attendances at churches and chapels on Sunday 30 March had not yet been published but LCM anticipated its character

> The class of society which the London City Mission especially seeks to benefit is the poor. These will, of course, not be distinguished from others in the government returns. But if a return had been given of the number of the working classes, and especially working men, who attended public worship on the Sunday in question, we believe the number would have been almost incredibly small.[13]

LCM explained to their readers that they valued the essayists' opinions in evidence of the great neglect of public worship by the working classes because their authors were 'intimately acquainted with the habits of those concerning whom they write.'[14] LCM advocated in response to the issues which the working men raised, the opportunity and necessity for the expansion of lay agency

> Both the prize essays, from which we have just quoted, refer prominently to the great difficulty, in the present condition of the working-classes, in the way of hoping that they will be very materially elevated and evangelised by the means of *ministers of religion*. The last writer quoted from observes:-

[11] Ibid., p.292. Spence cited *Prize Essays on the Temporal Advantages of the Sabbath to the Labouring Classes* (London, 1849) p.x.
[12] *LCMM, 1851,* pp.178-9.
[13] Ibid., p.178.
[14] Ibid.

> "The working classes are not, as a general principle, likely to accept religious instruction from any class of men who are known, or believed, to stand as obstructions in the way of obtaining what they deem their lawful rights…….It is a matter of special Regret that the ministers of religion have not escaped the suspicion of the working classes. Their position, as connected with the parties already described (the higher classes), has laid them open to surmise. They are thought to be their friends, and, in tacit, if not avowed, combination with them to maintain the existing supremacy." [LCM's edit][15]

LCM had made it clear in their publication of the essays that they had relied upon the working men's 'powerful feelings' to advance the points which they in turn wished to make.

LCM and the Crystal Palace

LCM's Committee's priorities in their mission and their commitment to the protection of the working-class Sabbath as a day of rest were illustrated, and perhaps, defined for future years in their response to the debate surrounding the opening of the Crystal Palace on Sundays. In his study, Cantor argued that the Great Exhibition should not be portrayed simply by historians as a secular event because it had multiple religious meanings.[16] Lewis discussed Anglican Evangelicals' lead in attempting to enact Sabbatarian legislation, and the establishment of the Lord's Day Observance Society.[17]LCM's Committee members were divided upon their response to the proposal that the Palace would be opened on Sundays. Their meetings' minutes during the autumn and winter of 1852-3 recorded the lengthy debate which took place before they agreed the text of a memorandum which they sent to the Directors of the Crystal Palace Company.[18] It explained their opposition to the Palace's

[15] Ibid., p.179.
[16] G. Cantor, *Religion and The Great Exhibition of 1851* (Oxford, 2011).
[17] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* pp.232-42.
[18] LCMMB, 13 September 1852, 20 September 1852, 27 September 1852, 4 October 1852, 11 October 1852, 18 October 1852, 25 October 1852, 15 November 1852, 22 November 1852, 3 January 1853.

Sunday opening, consistent with the principle in all of LCM's discussions of Sunday labour, the protection of the working-class Sabbath as a day of rest. In February 1853, they wrote

> Looking at the matter simply, so far as the interests of the working classes are concerned, it is most important to bear in mind what we apprehend *all* must agree to, who have their welfare at heart – that the working man pre-eminently requires one day in seven, as a day of cessation from the routine of his ordinary weekly toil. Already this is infringed on to an extent which probably very few persons who have not given attention to the subject believe. There is supposed to be now very nearly one poor man in every four throughout England who has to work on Sunday the same as any other day, and for his 7 days' work receives only what he would otherwise would for 6 days. Is this immense proportion of Sunday work to be added to, as it necessarily must be most fearfully, by the opening of the new Crystal Palace on the Sunday, in the multitudes of servants who will be required to wait on the visitors, and still more in the precedent which it will establish for future progress?[19]

LCM argued that the poor had not been excluded from visiting the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park in 1851, although it had been closed on Sundays, and that they *ardently* desired that the poor should be enabled to attend rather than being shut out from the new Palace, especially with funds being raised for them to enable them to do so, but not on Sundays.

What resulted from their exchange with the Crystal Palace Company's directors was the decision which mattered for the development and subsequent character of LCM's mission. LCM's Committee secured their approval for a missionary to visit among the workmen who were engaged in the reconstruction of the Crystal Palace on Sydenham Hill together with its railway connection, which had commenced in 1852, for the duration of the works. Their decision was noted on 17 January 1853.[20] It was one of LCM's earliest appointments in special mission, and their first among unskilled labouring men at work. LCM selected John

[19] *LCMM, 1853,* p.28.
[20] LCMMB, 17 January 1853.

Young as their Missionary to the Workmen at Crystal Palace. Young, a Baptist, had been by trade a coach-smith before joining LCM in 1846.[21]

Young reported that there were more than 2,000 men employed in the project, among whom the navvies exceeded 1,000.[22] LCM published a transcript of his daily journal, about 15,000 words in total, in their Magazines of October and November 1853.[23] Young's writing might not have won a prize in an essay-writing competition but his journal's publication completely changed the character of LCM's Magazine. LCM backed their missionary's own and uninterrupted words as the most lucid way of communicating the importance of his mission. He witnessed the construction's collapse with many injuries and 10 fatalities and recorded his immediate ministry among survivors. He described the funeral procession of those who had died, and the near 2,000 working men who followed. The entries' extraordinary detail must have left every reader wishing to read more.

Young's commitment to the workmen was clear. In November 1855, he wrote to LCM's Committee to request that he could be allowed to retain his connection with the Mission but to take leave to go to the Crimea with the men among whom he had worked at the Crystal Palace in connection with the Army Works Corps.[24] He did so, and returned to LCM in August 1856.[25]

[21] LCM described Young as 'A plain simple minded man but devout and zealous. He has had such few advantages of education but has diligently improved such opportunities for gaining information as have been within his reach.' LCMMB, 9 November 1846.
[22] *LCMM, 1853,* p.218.
[23] Ibid., *1853,* pp.218–24, and *LCMM, 1853,* pp.227–41.
[24] LCMMB, 19 November 1855.
[25] Ibid., 24 March 1856, and 25 August 1856.

Lamplighters and gasmen

LCM's agency in their subsequent expansion of their special mission to men who worked on the Sabbath was illustrated in the published detail of the appointment of their first missionary to lamplighters and gasmen. Their discussion was important in principle and by extension because their proposed development of fields of special mission immediately concerned many classes of Sunday-working men including, for example, bakers, railway employees, and omnibus-men. LCM aimed in their discussions to involve the men themselves, to engage with and to encourage their own agency, and to draw upon their financial support.

LCM recognised the problems which were inherent in their making a prescriptive Sabbatarian judgment upon which types of labour were necessary, or not, and instead they urged their supporters to enable them to reach those who were unable to attend public worship because of their employment. In their appeal in 1861, LCM explained

> We are not prepared to affirm that it is a Christian duty for Christian congregations either to worship God in the dark, or to worship Him with only candles or oil to light up the church or the chapel, because of the use of gas necessitates the employment of labourers on the Lord's-day in order to furnish a supply.
>
> But we think we are entitled to affirm, that if Christians in their churches and chapels, in the streets through which they walk to them, and in the houses in which they dwell, make use of gas on the Lord's-day, they are under obligations, as Christians, to make some provision for the religious welfare of that large class of men with whose religious privileges, if only as a matter of necessity or of mercy, they themselves so largely interfere.[26]

LCM published extracts from an exchange of correspondence which had taken place between a lamplighter and LCM's Secretary, Rev John Garwood.[27] The lamplighter explained

[26] *LCMM, 1861,* p.241.
[27] Ibid., pp.242-3.

the need for LCM to act in the appointment of a missionary to London's lamplighters and gasmen, the merits of his request, and the opportunity for their combined effort in doing so

> REV. SIR, - The lamplighters of London number about 2,000 men, and the men employed inside the gas-works make a total of 4,000. I do think these men, *especially the latter*, if their case was only known, would receive the serious consideration of your Society. Could not something be done to carry the blessed tidings of salvation to these poor men, whose isolated condition, and the very nature of their employment, keeps them from the house of God and the society of Christians? Oh, if the London City Mission would but appoint a missionary to the lamplighters and gasmen in the factories in London, what a field of labour it would be! Do think it over; recollect that these poor men serve seven days a week. The Companies are all rich and liberal. They could, and I believe would, give a place at every factory to hold religious services in, having so many places that would answer the purpose so well. I am a foreman lamplighter. I should be most happy to afford you any information on the subject. I wish the case of our dear fellow-workmen was but known. But God is Himself working, and by the humblest means. He has blest the feeble efforts of myself and one or two others in a marked manner, and a great, good work has commenced; but what can we expect to do among such a body of men, and scattered as they are so wide apart over this great city? We cannot go to them, so we are endeavouring to send to them. I have written a tract specially addressed to them. We hope to be enabled to send every lamplighter we can find one each; but the other men we cannot reach, though we are going to try this winter, and the Lord will send help. Now, we do ask you just to consider the claims of our dear fellow-workmen.
>
> "*Rev. J. Garwood.*" "Yours most obediently, ----- ------[28]

In reply LCM shared with their readers their fears that financial support for a missionary would not be forthcoming from the men's employers as a consequence of their denominational differences, and they fixed their direct appeal for funds firmly within the context of the men's spiritual neglect

> We confess we have more faith in receiving pecuniary aid for these men from Christian individuals than we have from gas companies, which are large bodies of those whose religious views are very different from each other, and which are apt to plead this fact

[28] Ibid., p.242.

> as an argument against contributions, on their part, as a company, for religious objects, although here and there a contribution might be obtained from them. If funds are to be raised, however, for the religious instruction of these men, we trust our readers will remember they must mainly come from individuals, or in all human probability they will not otherwise be obtained.
>
> We consider their claims a *very* strong one indeed on the Christian Church, and we cannot but consider that the Christian Church has hitherto been guilty of a neglect of duty to them, perhaps greater than can be shown towards any other class of persons. That the very persons who supply light to the church should by the church be left in darkness is a reproach to the Christian Church which needs to be removed.[29]

LCM's presentation was complex. At face value it illustrated the respectable and earnest entreaty of a working man to LCM's affluent clerical and lay supporters, but LCM was at this time also very substantially supported by working men's associations, as has been discussed, and their magazine was widely read among them. The individual donations of working-class supporters were of great importance to LCM. Their appeal, therefore, was not only to the middle-class users of lamplight but to those among the poor whose sympathies lay with those who laboured on Sundays in its provision, rather than their employers. Importantly, they cited an example of the religiosity and religious agency on the part of working men themselves.

LCM secured the funds to appoint their first missionary to the lamplighters and gasmen, and they selected George Warry.[30] In 1862, Warry reported that within his first two or three months in the work he had established access into 10 of the gas companies' factories, each employing between 100-300 men, and where in some instances, as he had hoped, accommodation had been provided for him in which he could hold religious services.[31]

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[29] Ibid., p.243.
[30] Warry, an Anglican, had been a sailor before he joined LCM in 1846, see LCMMB, 1 June, 1846.
[31] *LCMAR, 1862,* p.27.

Throughout the century LCM expanded their special mission to gasmen. In 1902, they increased the number of missionaries in the work from 3 to 4. In 1906, Alfred Martin who was LCM's missionary to the gasworks at Nine Elms spoke at LCM's Annual Meeting.[32] He illustrated the character of his mission among the men whom he visited, and remarked that their employment 'robs' them of the chance of attending a place of worship.[33] He explained that he took a fiddle with him on his 'visitations', not a classical violin, but a fiddle and that his fiddle often found him a hearing when otherwise he should not have won it.[34] He discussed his mission's Services, and the context in which they were held and regarded by the men

> I remember one such service where the men stayed a little longer than usual, and the foreman began to wonder why the men were so long. They were on piece-work, and so were not obliged to resume work at a stated time, although there was a certain time by which the work had to be done. I had been reading the Scriptures, and we had some singing, when the foreman came to see what was up. When he looked in the door, one of the men said, "Can't you see we are in church?" That, I believe is the way to get people to church, by taking the church to them.[35]

Conclusion

LCM's mission to those who laboured on the Sabbath became a substantial part of their work. LCM's Committee supported petitions which were made to Parliament for the closure of specific institutions on Sundays. For example, in May 1869, LCM supported the Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Association's petition to the House of Commons against the opening of museums on Sundays. On 7 May 1883, LCM investigated whether any steps could be

[32] *LCMAR, 1906,* pp.200-4. Martin, a Wesleyan, had been in the Army before joining LCM in 1894, see LCMECMB, 29 October 1894.
[33] Ibid., p.202.
[34] Ibid., p.203.
[35] Ibid.

taken to prevent the Fisheries Exhibition being opened on Sundays, and on 11 June 1894, LCM expressed sympathy and were prepared to join with the Lord's Day Observance Society's appeal to Lord Roseberry against the Sunday opening of national museums, picture galleries, and libraries.[36] LCM's Committee's support for these petitions was consistent, their objection in principle remained that Sunday pleasure for others would lead to Sunday labour for the working classes.

In 1898, LCM discussed those who were 'necessarily engaged' in Sunday labour. They included bakers, milkmen, canal-boatmen, dockers, lightermen, and watermen, The Fire Brigade, police, gas-workers, railwaymen, omnibus-men, and tramcar-men, servants in hotels and Clubs, and employees in public-houses. LCM employed 55 missionaries to visit these classes. They asked, 'How else can they be reached other than by godly laymen going to them in the midst of their work?'[37]

When the numbers of those who were employed on a Sunday were detailed the scale of their agency in special mission was revealed. In 1901, LCM advised

> *Adding all these Sunday toilers together, the astounding fact is reached that, apart from the many who unnecessarily keep their shops open on the Lord's Day, or take part in the work at Sunday markets, at a rough estimate, upwards of* 100,000 *men are engaged more or less in the service of the public in London every Sunday!* Surely the Christian Churches of the land have a duty to perform towards these often weary workers! One moment's serious reflection on the subject must convince every earnest Christian of the immense value of this special branch of the Society's work.[38]

[36] LCMMB, 24 May 1869, 7 May 1883, 11 June 1894.
[37] *LCMAR, 1898,* pp.xxxi-xxxiv.
[38] *LCMAR, 1901,* p.160.

It was LCM's Committee's highly developed understanding of the importance of their mission to the Sabbath-labouring poor that was LCM's priority and it defined their unique Sabbatarian position.

B: Sunday trading

Lewis emphasised Oppenheimer's opposition to Sunday trading, but Oppenheimer was not typical of LCM's missionaries, and his response stands apart from many missionaries' accounts.[39] Perhaps Oppenheimer's understanding reflected his upbringing and Jewish Sabbath experience. His journal recorded

> *27 September 1861*, Broad Street, Had another conversation with Mr. Sullivan, an Irishman on the evil of Sunday trading, read a portion of Scripture, and endeavoured to impress upon him the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the reality of that place, where the worm never dieth, & the fire is never quenched; listed attentively but brought forward the miserable excuse that because others do it he is compelled to do the same. After my urgent pleading with him to flee from the wrath to come, I left him with that solemn warning, "Be not deceived God is not mocked for what a man soweth that shall he also reap."[40]

From their earliest experience in mission LCM both understood and respected the weight of the poor's dilemma in their Sabbath trading. Their evidence, throughout the century, suggests that a continuing engagement with the poor in their spiritual mission was of greater importance to them than making an unrealistic or prescriptive Sabbatarian judgement. They were flexible in their understanding of the individual circumstances of a

[39] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* pp.145-6.
[40] Ibid., p.146.

missionary's district, and optimistic about the results that might be achieved in a more creative and patient approach than that which was followed by Oppenheimer.

Evidence from the years before those in which Oppenheimer worked with LCM

William Hurlin was LCM's first missionary to work in their Kingsland district, Hackney, between 1840-9. In 1840, he noted that there were 35 shops on his district that opened on the Sabbath.[41] He was purposeful in his work to achieve an end to Sabbath trading but his approach was far more measured than that of Oppenheimer. Sarah Fisher sold second-hand clothes on Sunday mornings and Hurlin described Sunday as the day on which there was a considerable demand for these but he observed that 'she was so poor that she could not resist the temptation to sell.'[42] Many working men's wages were paid on Saturday nights in Kingsland, as was the practice across London, and the poor shopped on Sunday mornings. He persuaded Sarah Fisher, and her husband Robert, a bricklayer, to attend his meetings, at which he observed that her husband did not say much but always appeared to listen. After five years of their attendance Hurlin reported that she gave up her Sabbath trading altogether. With characteristic patience he sought their conversions, his mission's spiritual priority, and waited for her to reach her own decision.

Sunday trading was an issue of concern for LCM on social as well as spiritual grounds because they perceived that it exploited the poor. During 1847-8, LCM published transcripts of the evidence which was given to the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the

[41] *LCMM, 1841*, p.113.
[42] LCMA, W. Hurlin, 'Annual Report, 1844-5', pp.11-12.

subject of Sunday Trading.[43] They commented upon its detail and discussed its Report's conclusions.

LCM advised their readers that 5,000 shops across London were opened for business on Sundays, and where as many as 15,000 journeymen and boys were employed by the tradesmen who did so.[44] They noted that the districts in which Sunday trading was most extensively carried on were those principally inhabited by the poor, and that it was chiefly this class who resorted to the shops which were open on a Sunday. The Parliamentary Committee's Report concluded

> It is in evidence, before your Committee that in some places from 10 to 20 per cent more is charged on Sunday than on any other day, and where that is not done the article sold is generally of an inferior quality.[45]

LCM appraised Lambeth as the parish in London in which Sabbath trading was pre-eminent, where its focus was in the area of Lower Marsh, popularly called the New Cut.[46] Robert Taylor, a guardian of the poor in Lambeth, who informed the Committee that he had lived in Lambeth all of his life, reported of the shops there, 'I should say there was scarcely one in twenty that shut; *perhaps one in fifty*.'[47] Charles James, a cheesemonger and grocer who had two shops in Lower Marsh gave evidence on the context of his trading

> The wife does not receive her husband's wages until late on Saturday night and cannot shop before Sunday.

As a consequence of this, he explained

[43] *LCMM, 1847,* pp.229-61, *LCM Magazine, 1848,* pp.8-15, and pp.39-45.
[44] *LCMM, 1847,* pp.229-30.
[45] *LCMM, 1848,* p.40.
[46] *LCMM, 1847,* p.230.
[47] Ibid., p.252.

I always make it a rule to charge more for the goods. I have more wages to pay.

The Committee enquired about his personal circumstances and his family's attendance at public worship and he replied

Does your wife attend in the shop?

- Yes, a very important part, the money taking.

Have you time to go to church?

- Not in the morning. I have taken a pew in the church, and most of the tradesman in the Marsh have taken them, and do go there on Sunday evening.[48]

When asked by the Committee if a working man, or his wife, would purchase their provisions on a Saturday if he were paid on a Friday night rather than a Saturday night and if in doing so would the practice tend to do away with Sunday trading Edward Sheppard, a butcher with shops located in Lower Marsh, gave his opinion

> Not the least in the world. Because it would give them a greater scope to debase themselves in public-houses. I think there is many a man who, if he got his wages on Friday, would not go to work on Saturdays.[49]

James Surrell, a local bookbinder, addressed the exploitation of the poor in his evidence. He advised that there was no such thing as an inspector of weights and measures ever following his occupation on a Sunday morning. He noted, 'I have myself weighed things that have been fetched on the Sunday morning many times, and have found them short of weight, which I have seen done.'[50] Of the Lower Marsh tradesmen he commented, 'I do not wish to cast reflection on any man, but it is in human nature that wherever they have an

[48] Ibid., p.235, where James confirmed, 'Last Sunday morning I took between 24*l* and 25*l* in the cheesemonger's shop and 24*l* in the other shop. On a weekday we consider 12*l* or 14*l* a very good day; sometimes 8*l* or 10*l*.'
[49] Ibid., p.257.
[50] Ibid., p.256.

opportunity of getting money they do.'[51] Of the tradesmen's customers he observed, 'The working people do not often weigh the things that they buy. I wish they did.'[52]

Following the publication of the Parliamentary Committee's Report, LCM confirmed their support for the proposed Bill in the context of their overarching priority in the Society's mission. LCM concluded, 'Sunday (where it is not desecrated by trade) is often worth all the other days of the week together, in the suitable opportunity it affords our missionaries to inculcate religious truths, and the results which, by the Divine blessing, follow from such inculcation.'[53]

Edwin Blanchard's mission in Lambeth

Between 1870-86, Edwin Blanchard was LCM's missionary in Tracy-street, Kennington-road, and Robert-street, Lower Marsh.[54] In 1877, he confirmed that nearly one half of the shops in his district were kept open on the Sabbath morning, but noted that he was encouraged by the improvement that had taken place in recent years

> Some tradesmen of longstanding have informed me that the New Cut is a very different place to what it was 20 years ago, for then you could walk upon the heads of the people. We are evidently moving in the right direction for which we thank God and take courage.[55]

He described his district's character on a Sunday morning as being more like a 'Fair or Market.' He recorded

> The interior of the district is inhabited by very poor people generally, consisting of Costermongers, Shoemakers, or as they are frequently termed in this neighbourhood

[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] *LCMM, 1848,* p.45.
[54] LCMA, E. Blanchard, 'Annual Reports, 1871-87', and 'Reminiscences of Edwin Blanchard, Late Missionary in the London City Mission', (n.d.), Blanchard, a Wesleyan Methodist, had been employed in the Thames Iron Works before he joined LCM in 1870, see LCMLSDR, p.71.
[55] Blanchard, 'Annual Report, 1883-4', p.3.

> (translators or converters) Laundresses, Labourers, Widows who are willing to do anything to earn a crust of bread, Secondhand Clothes Dealers, these people often pile up a heap of Clothing in the middle of the street or in the Lower Marsh, and are swarmed around by a crowd of poor women eager to buy something for a few halfpence for themselves & little ones. The Shoemakers or translators before named, purchase the uppers of their Boots in Petticoat Lane, they take with them a sack, which they get filled, and having brought it home, they are busy during the whole of the week in patching and mending, soleing and heeling, until you would not recognise the article when they are offered for sale. Sundays is their best day. If the District were traversed on a Sunday morning, one would see here and there the windows and pavements near the house crowded with boots to be sold for a mere trifle, and when I have endeavoured to expostulate with them, they have assured me that they did more trade on Sundays than during the entire week.[56]

Blanchard observed trading practices which were very similar to those that had been described in evidence to the Parliamentary Committee. He detailed

> More than half of the shops in the New Cut and Lower Marsh being open on the Lord's day, the Greengrocers and Butchers' shops in particular doing a large trade: in some instances the Butchers buy all the lowest quality meat on the Saturday which they reserve until Late on Sunday morning, when it is sold in joints by Dutch Auction as they term it, naming first of all an exorbitant price, and reducing it to the lowest possible figure so that a Shoulder of Mutton about 6lbs in weight may be purchased for less than a shilling or at the rate of 2d per lb; of course these shops are largely patronized by the very poorest the shops being (during the last hour of opening) often surrounded by hundreds of people.[57]

Cox identified that the people of Lambeth thought of themselves as Christians, but insisted upon defining their own religious beliefs rather than taking them from clergymen.[58] He reflected that his research's evidence was that working-class and poor people took over some institutions and made them into something which they could consider their own.

[56] Ibid., pp.5-6. 'Translator' and 'Convertor' were the names given to the occupations of those who repaired and then offered for sale second-hand shoes and boots.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Cox, *English Churches,* p.92.

Blanchard's accounts support Cox's conclusions and they reveal the way in which LCM's mission adapted and responded in the specific context of his district.

Blanchard was not impressed by the example of the affluent butchers and grocers. He reported that the poor's Sabbath street-trading could not be wondered at when one remembered that nearly half of the tradesmen in the New Cut, Lower Marsh, and Oakley-street, those whose shops were open on Sunday mornings, were considerably better off than the poor people who did exactly the same thing. He commented that a moderate number of the shopkeepers attended the churches and chapels adjacent; but 'the most of these have the form of godliness only being destitute of its power – only attending because it is decent and respectable to do so.'[59]

Blanchard was distressed by the poverty that he witnessed and it was with empathy, rather than inflexible Sabbatarianism that he pursued his mission. In 1883, he reported

> It seems to me that nearly every calling of the artisan and labouring class have suffered from depression of trade during the past year – the number of strikes that have occurred have influenced a large variety of working men in their endeavours to procure work and it has been somewhat distressing to me to find that men who have the heart and will and disposition and strength to work yet are unable to obtain it and in many instances I have seen them crouching around the fire with long faces and heavy hearts unable to make a single stride towards obtaining the means to procure the bread that perisheth, and of course under such circumstances it has been downright hard work to tell them of that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.[60]

In 1874, Charles Hill, Secretary of the Lord's Day Rest Society asked LCM if their missionaries would carry a pledge book which could be signed by persons who would pledge to abstain from buying, selling, and travelling on the Lord's Day.[61] LCM's Committee confirmed in reply

[59] Blanchard, 'Annual Report 1877-8', p.5.
[60] Ibid., p.8.
[61] LCMMB, 22 June 1874.

that they would not instruct the missionaries in the matter but noted that individually the missionaries were at liberty to act as they 'may think right or expedient.'[62] There is no evidence that Blanchard carried one of their pledge books although his daughter Elsie recalled that her family were 'all against' spending money on a Sunday.[63]

Blanchard did not discount or set aside his Sabbath trading concerns. He recognised that he met regularly on Sunday mornings those who did not and would not attend public worship. In his report for the year 1884-5, he noted

> I have distributed in the New Cut and Lower Marsh 7,800 tracts. I scarcely ever met with a refusal, for having during the past eight years been very regular in distributing these silent messengers, I am now known to the majority of the people, for I have noticed they are invariably the same people Sunday after Sunday that frequent this noted thoroughfare.[64]

Blanchard knew that his regular meetings were very well attended, and upon reading his reports it is evident that their success came about as a consequence of his energy, his creative approach to his mission, and the level of support which he received from local working-class people. Blanchard found and arranged the leases for each of the successive premises which he used as his mission 'halls.' In 1877, he reported that his mission hall had been open for five years. He recalled that formerly it had been a notorious beer-shop called 'The Golden Lion' which had been closed by the Police for illicit trading. He wrote

> Seeing how desirable such a place would be for the purpose of a mission hall if it could be secured I made enquiries, found it could be had, and having made all the necessary arrangements in the form of a Committee it was opened.[65]

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[62] Ibid.
[63] LCMA, E. Yates, 'Memoirs from the Life of Mrs. E. Yates', (n.d.), p.4.
[64] Blanchard, 'Annual Report, 1884-5', p.4.
[65] Blanchard, 'Annual Report, 1877', p.9.

Blanchard held services in the hall on Sunday afternoons, Sunday evenings, and Wednesday evenings. By arrangement local working men held their own meetings there on Tuesday and Thursday nights. He had also extended his mission to include open-air Services which he described

> For one thing I am especially thankful, viz: that God gave me a musical ear: so that I am not only able to preach the Gospel but to sing the same accompanied by my new and powerful toned concertina, kindly presented to me by J. Renshaw, Esq., my Local Superintendent. I have been able in consequence (in conjunction with my faithful band of Open Air workers) to gather together from 300 to 500 of the people who have listened attentively to the Gospel and joined us in singing God's praises.[66]

Recognising that he had the opportunity to reach many men and women in the New Cut on Sunday mornings when its trading was at its busiest Blanchard proposed a solution to LCM's Secretary. It went directly against LCM's Rule that the missionaries could not hold their meetings during the hours of public worship, 11.00am and 1.00pm, on Sunday mornings.[67] He wrote

> I feel there is an urgent need for something to be done beyond this in order that the people might be reached. I do hope that our Committee will give way and allow me the privilege on the Sabbath morning to carry on a Service for their especial benefit, something ought to be done. The Open Air Mission are doing positively nothing here and shall these people (many of whom being doubtless prejudiced against Churches and Chapels) go down to the grave saying "No man cared for my soul." God forbid. I trust this matter will not be allowed to drop, but that I shall at least be allowed to attempt to do something in Open Air Work in this densely thronged thoroughfare.[68]

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[66] Ibid., pp.15-16.

[67]LCM's Rule stated, "The Committee do not sanction, under any circumstances, a meeting being held during the ordinary hours of Divine service on Sunday *morning* except in Penitentiaries or Workhouses." See, for example, *LCMAR, 1884, 'Rules and Regulations',* V, *'Meetings',* No. 9, p.6. From LCM's inception their missionaries had held their meetings, indoors and in the open-air, at other hours on Sundays.

[68] Blanchard, 'Annual Report, 1884-5', p.4.

In a clear illustration of LCM's flexibility and in their recognition of Blanchard's own skills in the work and specific opportunity for his mission to engage with many of the poor who not only lived in, but visited his district on Sunday mornings, LCM's Secretary, Dawson, agreed to his proposal. Blanchard recorded their immediate success, and an important example of voluntary support for LCM's work

> By Kind permission of Rev R Dawson I was able to start an Open Air Service in Robert Street, Lower Marsh, on Sunday mornings during the past summer from 11 till 1. We commenced on the 29th of June and continued until 16th of November, 21 meetings were held, attended by a gross total of 4860 persons, or an average attendance of 231 persons. The concertina given to me by my late Local Superintendent was used & was the means of drawing together a large concourse of persons. I was assisted by 17 friends at these meetings.[69]

LCM's evidence illustrates the complexities within the issue of Sunday trading in London's poorest districts; the payment of working men's wages on Saturday nights, the views of traders, the affluent traders' 'respectable' attendance at public worship, the pressures upon those who traded and many who purchased, and the opportunism inherent in the practice. While LCM's Committee consistently expressed Sabbatarian concern in their published discussions of Sunday trading both they and the missionaries were at the same time extremely realistic in their approach towards their mission. The missionaries' accounts reveal how flexible LCM's position could be within the context of each district and an individual missionary's concerns or conscience in the matter. Most striking, however, was their rule-breaking recognition of the priority of their mission's engagement with the poor which they achieved through their holding of open-air mission Services, in the midst of Sunday trading, during the hours of public-worship. LCM revised their Rules to allow the

[69] Ibid.

undertaking of 'open-air work' on Sunday mornings. There were LCM Rules, notably the catholic principles of the Mission which were unbreakable in any circumstances, but this was not one of them.

C: Sunday worship

In 1864, Francis Close, Rector of Cheltenham, gave a speech to the Annual Meeting of the CPAS. Its title was 'How do the working classes spend their Sunday mornings?'[70] Close had sent his curate to investigate this question and the curate had responded, 'I feel ashamed to commit it to paper. I blush that it should be known.'[71] He commenced his report with evidence of working-class women's Sabbath abuses, 'We found women washing and scrubbing their cottages; others were making or mending clothes; others were buying and selling in shops with open doors – and in some cases with open shutters.'[72] Close asked why this was the case, and he answered his question, 'Why? Satan had taught the people that they would not be interfered with – that everyone who was likely to interfere with them was at church.'[73]

There were many reasons why the poor, and especially working-class women, did not attend church on Sunday mornings. LCM's evidence reveals the agency and understanding with which the missionaries and their wives provided a spiritual safety net in their mission in which to catch and to support those who were genuinely unable, unprepared, and by middle-class observers, unexpected to attend church on Sundays.

[70] *LCMM, 1853*, pp.147-9.
[71] Ibid., p.148.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid., p.149.

Henry Lockyer's mission in Bethnal Green

Among LCM's most compelling sources about the character of their mission's Sabbaths are (William) Henry Lockyer's manuscript journals from 1895, and 1904-5.[74] Together with his review of 17 years work in Bethnal Green published by LCM in 1898, and the transcript of the speech which he gave at LCM's Annual Meeting in 1904, they recorded in detail the character not only of his own Sundays but the Sundays of some of London's poorest people amongst whom he and his wife lived and worked.[75] They reveal that the Sabbath was held as a distinct and special day in his districts. They illustrate that the poor engaged with his Sunday mission, that it developed from their mutual understanding with an overarching characteristic of informality, and that as a consequence they attended LCM's meetings in far greater numbers than have been recognised. None of his evidence has hitherto been discussed by historians.

Lockyer worked in LCM's George-gardens, and then Cudworth-street districts in Bethnal Green between 1881-1928.[76] A Baptist, he joined LCM in 1881, having been by trade, a farrier.[77] His wife Rebekah, who was from Rotherhithe, was the daughter of a labourer.[78]

His evidence is important because it can be viewed within the independent context of the notebook entries of two of Booth's agents, Duckworth and Arkell. Duckworth visited the streets within Lockyer's Cudworth-street district on 29 March 1898 with Police Inspector

[74] LCMA, H. Lockyer, 'Journal, 1895', and 'Journal, 1904-5'.
[75] *LCMM, 1898*, pp.69-75, *LCMM,1904*, pp.194-8.
[76] In 1895, Lockyer's Local Superintendent was J. Marnham, and his mission was funded by LCM's Spitalfields and Bethnal Green Association, see *LCMAR, 1895,* p.187. John Marnham was a Member of LCM's Committee. In 1904-5, Lockyer's Local Superintendent was F. J. Marnham, by whom he was funded, see *LCMAR, 1905,* p.217.
[77] LCMLSDR, p.93.
[78] TNA, PRO *RG 9*/391, f. 30, p.4.

Barker.[79] His focus was upon the streets' physical character, and they considered the criminality of those who lived there. In 1898, Arkell interviewed Lockyer at length together with LCM's missionary Alfred Robins who worked in the adjoining LCM district of Punderson-gardens.[80] They discussed their work and the religious character of their districts.

LCM's George-gardens district was sited to the north of Bethnal Green-road, partly in the parish of St Jude's and partly in the parish of St James-the-Great. Lockyer advised Arkell that it contained 800 families.[81] Lockyer recalled that during the early years in which he worked there its cottages had been occupied by mechanics who had grown flowers in their gardens and that they had sold them in the evenings.[82] In 1898, he observed the changes which had taken place

> The gardens are but waste ground, and the cottages are veritable hovels. All of these hovels have been condemned and many of the tenants have left and gone to the suburbs to live. The pulling down of a large number of houses in Spitalfields and Shoreditch drove the inhabitants to Bethnal Green, and with a little patching up of these hovels, they soon took possession of them.[83]

Evidence of the acute problem of overcrowding in his district was confirmed in the Reports of John Foot, Bethnal Green's Chief Sanitary Inspector.[84] As a consequence of slum clearance and redevelopment the pressure upon Bethnal Green's poorest districts' remaining housing had increased rather than diminished. Foot wrote

> The Council turned out several thousand people from the Boundary-street area, not 5 per cent of whom are going back. The reason is because the rents are more than

[79] Booth/B/351, pp.233-47.
[80] Booth/B/229, pp.125-39.
[81] Ibid., p.133.
[82] *LCMM, 1898*, pp.69-75.
[83] Ibid., p.69.
[84] Ibid., pp.67-9.

> they can pay. Where have they gone? They have simply crowded into the previously overcrowded small houses of Bethnal Green.[85]

After 1898, the properties at the heart of Lockyer's district, George-gardens, were themselves demolished. He then began work south of Bethnal Green-road in LCM's Cudworth-street district, in the parish of St Bartholomew, where he remained until 1928.

The poverty of those who lived in the George-gardens district was described by Lockyer. He revealed the dependence of families upon the earnings of women and children

> During the winter there is great distress among these costermongers, barrow-men, and casual labourers; but this has been alleviated by a 'stay busk manufacturer' who gave out to these poor women ladies dress steels to cover and sew, and thousands of grosses are done by the women and children. I have also seen *men*, when out of work, sewing them.[86]

In 1904, he discussed similar levels of poverty among the families in his Cudworth-street district

> My district is a very poor one. Most of the families would have been starving last winter had it not been for the help of friends. Some of them have had to pack their furniture into a neighbour's room and go into the workhouse, and then come out again in the spring with the prospect of going into the country to do agricultural work, to gather in the harvest, and so forth, so that they may get the money enough to, if possible, tide them over next winter.[87]

Duckworth recorded the physical character of the Cudworth-street district and he reviewed the streets' map colouring for Booth. His notes confirmed the heavy influence of the Police's perspective upon his impressions, for example in his description of Little Collingwood-street

> Inhabitants, very poor & very rough, windows broken & stuffed with rags some not stopped at all, blinds dirty, holes. South down Little Collingwood St. narrow. 9 ft across road from house to house! 2 st. [*storeys*] db, [*dark blue*] rather than black of map; all

[85] Ibid., p.67.
[86] Ibid., p.70.
[87] *LCMM, 1904*, pp.194.

English: no prostitutes or bullies: inhabs, costers & fish curers: some thieves & many juvenile thieves.[88]

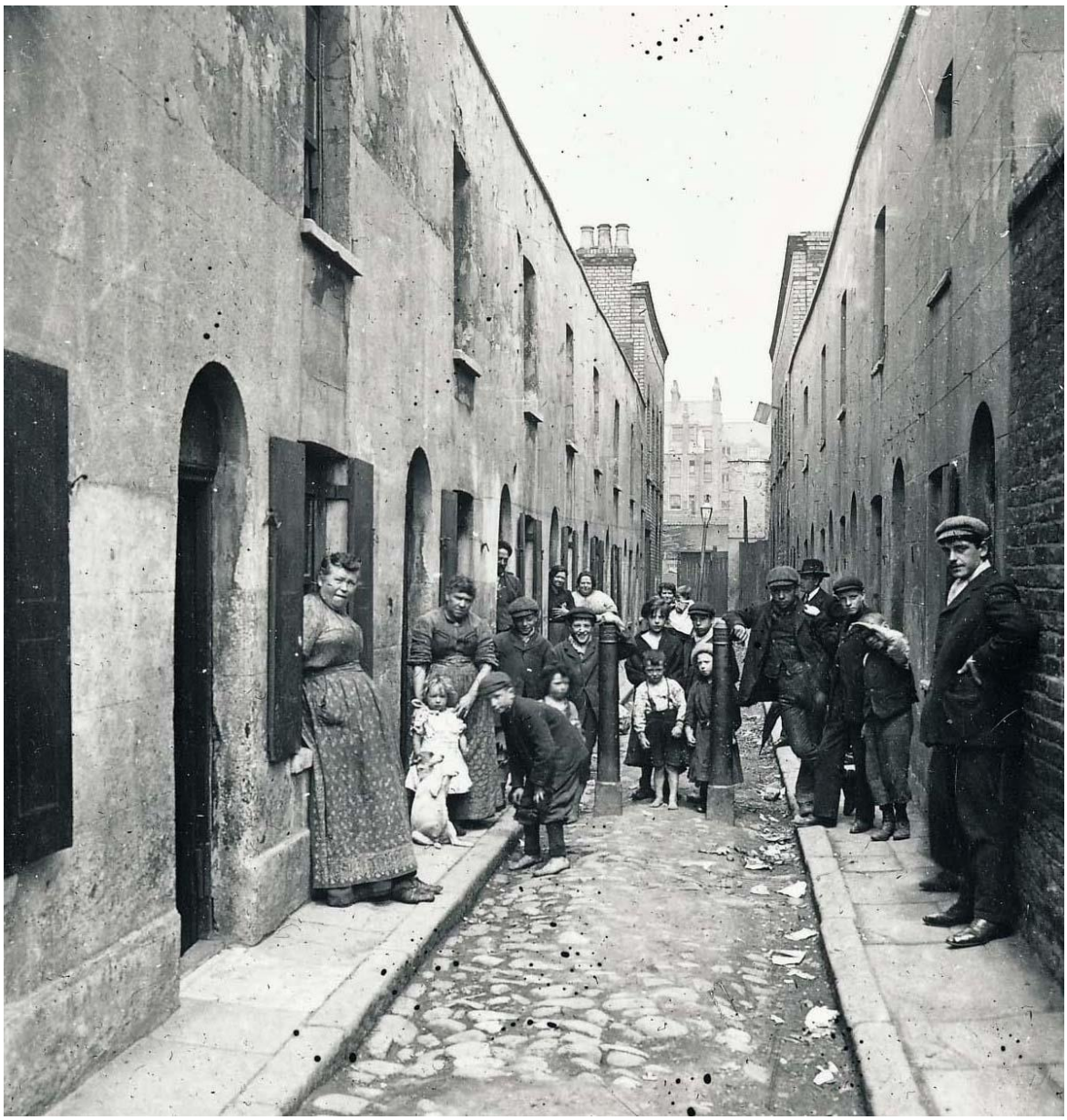

Figure 6. Little Collingwood-street, by John Galt, LCMA

Historians have followed Booth's evidence that in London missions were 'more numerous than schools or churches, and only less numerous than public houses' but this was not the case in LCMs George-gardens district.[89] In Arkell's conversation with him, Lockyer described

[88] Booth/B/351, pp.235.
[89] Booth, *Life and Labour, Religious Influences,* p.270.

the paucity of religious mission agencies in his district, including those of both local churches and Settlements. Arkell's notes confirmed his evidence. As a consequence, it can be argued, Lockyer's own mission was of greater significance for those among whom he lived than might have been imagined. Its location, that is the specific streets and boundaries set by LCM, confirms also that LCM were placing their missionaries in areas of identified spiritual need. Lockyer mentioned no denominational or mission rivalries in his districts in any of his texts.

Lockyer outlined to Arkell the 'other religious agencies' within his district; St Jude's Church, Mansford-street Unitarian Church, and St James-the-Great Church which was known locally as the 'Red Church'.[90] He noted that St Jude's Church had a Scripture Reader and Bible-women, but commented that they only visited 'their own.'[91] The Unitarians, Lockyer related, 'went around collecting pence, but that is all the good that they do'.[92] He was particularly critical of St James-the-Great Church, the district's parish church, observing

> Nobody there. Dead. "The only thing was getting married" Only see 10 or 12 old women and if the curate was there you would find him reading one of Spurgeon's sermons ~~so~~ generally had a good sermon. Coke (the late vicar) said, "I ought to have a good congregation: I give them all 14lbs of coal". Has a scripture reader and bible women but they do nothing except take the magazine round 2 or 3 members…
>
> At the Red Church they have now taken to charging or rather begging at marriages. A L.C.M. took a couple there to be married & just as the ceremony was to be performed a contribution bag was pushed under the bridegroom's nose. The missionary protested as the Red Church has an endowment for marriages.[93]

[90] Booth/B/229, pp.133-5.
[91] Ibid., p.133.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid., p.133 and p.135. McLeod discussed E. F. Coke, Vicar of St James-the-Great, from 1852-1898, and his appeal for a Bethnal Green marriages fund to raise money in order to greatly reduce his charges for marriages and thus to attract couples from all over the East End. McLeod observed that he 'lived outside the parish and left a curate to do such work as there was to be done.' See *Class and Religion,* p.123.

Lockyer praised the work of 'Mr Ditchfield' Vicar of St James the Less, whose parish lay beyond his district. Lockyer told Arkell that he was 'doing the best work in East London for some years' and added, 'Wish we had one or two more like him'.[94]

Public worship

Lockyer's mission reflected his own working-class experience of Sunday mornings. He knew why many of the women who lived in his districts did not attend public worship. It was because they were looking after their children. Data from the 1901 Census, confirms that from the district's households, 46% of these contained at least one child aged four years or younger.[95]

When his children were young, he and his wife took it in turns to attend public worship on Sundays. In his journal he recorded how their arrangements changed each week.[96] He recognised the responsibility of their care, and his entries suggest that he and his wife took equal shares from one Sunday morning to another. On many Sundays, including 9 June 1895, he wrote

> I did not attend any place of Worship this morning and I gave my wife the privilege & I looked after the little ones.[97]

[94] John Watts-Ditchfield was Vicar of St James-the-Less, Bethnal Green, between 1897-1914. He provided a medical service and a parish centre among other facilities for his poor parishioners, and was a Local Superintendent of LCM missionaries. He was considered for a bishopric when Lichfield became vacant in 1913, but he was not recommended by the Archbishop of Canterbury who wrote 'Watts-Ditchfield with all his gifts is on a distinctly low plane. Not a graduate or a man of any mental calibre ... though a real power with working men and a very nice fellow.' See, McIlhiney, *A Gentleman in Every Slum,* pp.77-94.
[95] See Bibliography for a full list of references.
[96] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1895'.
[97] Ibid.

LCM's rules 'counselled and instructed' the missionaries in the matter of attendance at public worship on Sundays, but it was one of LCM's rules which was not strictly enforced in the case of missionaries with families. LCM's rule advised

> It is expected by the Committee that, under ordinary circumstances, you attend Divine Service on Sunday morning. *They also expect that you will connect yourself with some church in your neighbourhood,* and regularly receive the Lord's Supper once a month, except you are a member of a Church where it is less frequently administered.[98]

Lockyer did not worship as a regular member of any one local congregation. On the Sunday mornings when he, rather than his wife, attended public worship during 1895, he noted four places of worship, none of which he attended more regularly than another. When his daughters were older, he still did not attend one particular chapel regularly. During 1904-5, he recorded that he had been to three different places of worship on Sunday mornings.[99]

Visitation and reception

Lockyer visited from house to house on weekday mornings, moving methodically from one street in his district to another and then starting over again. He also visited workshops and shops on his district. He noted each week details of people who discussed their spiritual worries with him, prayed with him, or simply engaged with him in conversation. He described his reception in Little Collingwood-street on Thursday, 29 May 1905, 'all the people were glad to see me and it was hard to get away from them.'[100] On Tuesday, 9 May 1905, he recorded

> I here met Mr Martin and his wife. They occupy two little rooms. One he lives in and the other he sublets to a poor widow with two children. He has a lathe in this room

[98] *LCMAR*, *1898*, p.3.
[99] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5'.
[100] Ibid.

> for turning Mallet's & the widow was busy finishing trousers. I put the gospel before them and they stoped work to listen & thanked me for calling.[101]

Lockyer told Arkell that while he visited, he secured promises for attendances at his Sunday meetings. Arkell noted, 'Regard congregation as a result of the visitation. People promise to come and "do not like to break their word." '[102]

Lockyer's journals' entries illustrated that the working men and women in his district used Saturday *every* week to prepare for a Sunday which was different for them from other days of the week, and that he did not visit among them on Saturdays each week *because* of this. On Saturday, 15 June 1895, he recorded

> I did not do any visitation today as it is not convenient with the people. Men are finishing there work to take home & women are finishing their washing & cleaning the house.[103]

When he worked in LCM's George-gardens district he held his meetings in the Old Zion Chapel, Old Bethnal Green-road.[104] No longer a Congregational chapel, a lease had been taken for three months, eighteen years earlier by Lockyer and it continued to be used.[105] Arkell noted that it had been partitioned with a large classroom to each side with the central portion of the building containing seating for about 300 people.[106]

In George-gardens, in 1898, Lockyer's Sunday-school had fourteen teachers; most of whom he advised had been converted in the school and he informed Arkell that 150 local children were registered on the books.[107] In Cudworth-street, in 1904-5 his Sunday-school

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[101] Ibid.
[102] Booth/B/229, p.129.
[103] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1895'.
[104] Booth/B/229, p.125.
[105] Ibid., p.129.
[106] Ibid., p.125.
[107] Ibid., p.129.

attendances were recorded by him as having been between 120-40 each Sunday afternoon.[108] He did not necessarily stay in the hall once the school had commenced but instead he went into Old Bethnal Green-road to meet the men who were leaving the public-houses. He observed that 'some good conversations follow' and he gave examples

> To another man returning from his club I offered a tract; he took it politely and said: 'Now, Guv'nor, you are a teacher of the Bible. Can you tell me when Isaiah was converted? I know, but I want to see if you know. 'I don't know I replied; 'you had better tell me.' 'Well, don't he say, "Woe is me, for I'm a man of unclean lips? " ' 'That is what I thought you were referring to,' I said. I read and explained to him the sixth chapter of Isaiah for a quarter of an hour, when, with tears in his eyes, he said, 'God bless you; I was brought up in a Wesleyan school, and I have three boys at home, and I would rather see them like you, giving tracts away, than coming from the hell (club) that I have come from.'[109]

Following the Sunday-school, and tea in the hall, Lockyer always held an outdoor meeting. In doing so he sought to attract as many people as possible to attend his following indoor Service. He recognised that there were those who would listen outdoors whom he might not otherwise reach. He recorded in his journals that Jewish people who lived in his district would observe his outdoor meetings but would not come inside, for example on 10 April 1904

> At 6.30 we held an open air meeting to try & get the people into the hall. & we had a good audience of Jews and Jewesses but they would not come into the hall.[110]

The commitment made, or perhaps courage required by an individual in first entering the mission hall should not be underestimated, and Lockyer appreciated that in doing so it was one of crossing both a spatial and spiritual threshold. He illustrated his understanding of this experience

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[108] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5'.
[109] *LCMM, 1898*, p.72.
[110] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5'.

> Mrs. D lived a most debauched life, and her husband was even worse than herself. One Sunday evening this poor woman sat in her home (if it could be called by such a name) as miserable as a woman could be, when a voice seemed to say to her, 'Why don't you go down to the Mission Hall?' 'I will,' she said, and jumped up, took her bonnet and shawl, and came to the hall door, but did not like to enter. As she stood there she heard a chorus sung which proved the means of her conversion;
>
> "I am trusting, Lord, in Thee, Blessed Lamb, of Calvary; Humbly at Thy cross I bow; Save me Jesus, save me now.'
>
> She then pushed open the door and came in, and attended the Mission Hall as long as she lived in the neighbourhood.[111]

He called his Service, held indoors each Sunday evening, a 'simple gospel service'. During the winter and inclement weather, he followed the indoor Service with a prayer meeting otherwise he held an open-air meeting which lasted from about 8-10pm. He varied the place in which he held outdoor meetings from week to week, with at least five different locations, and in fine weather he also held late-evening open-air meetings on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings around his district. In inclement weather he held cottage meetings in people's homes.

There were practical reasons why he held outdoor meetings when he worked on his Cudworth-street district. He described his hall's particular problem on Sunday, 21 May 1905, 'It is suffocating hot & although it is kept very clean the stench is abominable'.[112] Without doubt his open-air meetings were attended by more people than those which he held in his hall. Outdoors there was always the probability that people could have attended his meetings by chance, but the reasons for many attendances were more complex than might be supposed. Spatially his meetings were attractive in their proximity to people's homes, and he was democratic in his choice of locations around his district. Mothers might

[111] *LCMM, 1898*, pp.73-4.
[112] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5'.

keep their children close-by in a way that would not have been possible in an attendance at church or chapel. Men who would never have attended a church or chapel smoked their pipes, wore their work-clothes, and engaged with his open-air Services without formality. Wolffe wrote that by the end of the nineteenth century the Lords Day Observance Society had secured many of its objectives, and in doing so created the austere Sundays of Victorian Britain.[113] There is no feeling of austerity in Lockyer's descriptions of working-class Sundays in Bethnal Green. There is instead a sense of spontaneity and pleasure in his decisions to take the mission's harmonium outdoors to street corners in fine weather and they suggest that the character of his meetings reflected this. Critically his most popular meetings were held at times which suited the poorest working people whom he sought to reach, late into the evenings. Historians have not recognised the inclusive and relaxed character of the mission Services which LCM held, their welcome and popularity among the poor, and their effect upon those who attended. On Thursday, 4 May 1905, Lockyer wrote

> In the Evening we conducted an Open Air Meeting on the district and we had a mixed Audience, Hooligans, Drunkard's children Jew & Gentiles by the hundred's, & the down stairs Lodgers stood at their doors & smoked their pipes & their wifes stood round the ring & listened. We had a good meeting till 10pm. And the people would like us to stay till 11 if we could.[114]

There were those, however, whom he knew he could not reach each Sunday, especially mothers with very young children.

[113] J. Wolffe, *The Expansion of Evangelicalism* (Nottingham, 2006), p.170.
[114] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5'.

Rebekah Lockyer's agency

Roberts argued that religion had not lost its hold on the urban working class in the north-west of England during the years before the First World War.[115] She concluded that religion was expressed in social relations, attitudes, and ways of doing things where working-class women were not so much interested in doctrine as establishing an ethical pattern to their lives and that they shared some fundamental beliefs - loving one's neighbour, justice, and the work ethic. She confirmed that many were connected to a church, and some attended services, often in a mission, and that they sent their children to a Sunday-school.[116]

Williams observed in her discussion of Southwark that many of the mothers who were insistent that their children attended Sunday-school were themselves part of the regular core of attenders at the local Mothers' Meeting. Lockyer's evidence supports Roberts' and Williams' conclusions. He recorded not only the numbers of children who attended his Sunday-school, but also how the women who lived in his district engaged with his wife's mission and her meetings' role in influencing the ethical and spiritual character of their lives.

Historians have written about philanthropy as a major channel for women's energies. Bebbington noted women's roles in the Young Women's Christian Association, Christian Endeavour, and Student Volunteer Movements which he observed all sprang from 'Evangelical soil.'[117] He reflected that women could occupy official positions as deaconesses in the Church of England from 1862, as preachers among the Quakers, the Primitive

[115] E. Roberts, *A Woman's Place, An Oral History of Working-Class Women, 1890-1940* (Oxford, 1984), p.4.
[116] Ibid., p.6.
[117] D. Bebbington, *'Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, 1898), pp.128-9.

Methodists, and the Bible Christians, or as officers in the Salvation Army.[118] He argued that evangelical religion, despite its emphasis on the domestic role of women, was more important than feminism in enlarging their sphere in the nineteenth century.[119] The agency of some of Bethnal Green's poorest working-class women and their engagement in LCM's mission are demonstrated in the work of Rebekah Lockyer.

Rebekah Lockyer held her Women's Meeting on Monday or Tuesday afternoons, at a time, unlike Sundays, when she knew that the women of the district could come together.[120] Lockyer recalled the origins of the meetings when he spoke at LCM's Annual meeting in 1904

> When I was passing by a "model" I saw a group of women, and the face of one of them was covered with blood. I said, "What is the matter with your face?" "I have just fallen downstairs!" "You lie!" said another woman; "you know very well you have been fighting with Mrs. Brown, and she has given you the ten commandments down your face!" I remonstrated with them, and talked with them seriously. In the evening I met Mrs. Brown with a pair of black eyes. She was in very deep mourning indeed, and I said, "What! Have you been fighting again?" "No but my husband came home and gave me a good thrashing." Our wives are a great help in our Christian work. I should like to say a good word for our wives. My wife immediately remarked, "We must have a meeting for these women purposely." We started a meeting for them. At the first meeting we had seven women; to-day we have 110, and we could have 210 if we had the means to carry on the work.[121]

[118] Bebbington cited A. T. Pierson, *Forward Movements of the Last Half Century* (New York, 1900), Chapter 13; Z. Fairchild, *Some Aspects of the Women's Movement* (London, 1915), Appendix, see pp.174f; and Anderson, *Women Preachers* cited by Prochaska in *Women and Philanthropy*, p.207. See also L. Wilson, *Constrained by Zeal: Female Spirituality among Nonconformists, 1825-75* (Carlisle, 2000).
[119] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism,* p.129.
[120] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5'.
[121] *LCMM, 1904*, pp.197-8.

Her first meetings had been held in the George-gardens district. In his journals Lockyer called the women who attended, 'the right sort' meaning that they were the women for whom the meetings were intended. In 1898, he described those who came

> The women are so very poor and degraded. Here we have the match-box maker, the water-cress vendor, night-cap knitter, shoe-bow maker, women mending old clothes to sell at the corners of the streets, and, last, the steel coverer for ladies' bodices.
>
> This is a good gathering of women of the right sort – that is young women with two or three little babies. These women could not possibly come to any other meeting as some of them have nine or eleven little ones, and they would be in continual fear of the lamp being turned over, or the children running about the street in their night-dress 'till mother comes home.'[122]

LCM's missionaries' meetings had a clearly identified purpose which was set out in LCM's Rules

> *10*. Missionaries must keep in mind that their meetings are not intended for those who usually attend public worship, and they should endeavour to collect only such as live in the neglect of the means of grace. They should also impress on the minds of those who come to their meetings that their attendance out not to be regarded as a substitute for attendance at public worship in churches or chapels. They should also advise and entreat any who show signs of real conversion to become united with some Christian church for fellowship and the advantages of pastoral instruction and oversight.[123]

LCM's Rules allowed the missionaries discretion in asking suitable persons to offer prayers at their meetings, and they were permitted to appoint substitutes other than 'brother missionaries' to conduct their meetings when they were ill or absent from London with the permission of their General Superintendent or one of the Secretaries.[124] From LCM's evidence the missionaries' wives shared or assumed these responsibilities. Edward Kennett's

[122] *LCMM, 1898*, pp.74-5.
[123] *LCMAR*, *1898*, p.8.
[124] Ibid., p.9.

district was Sale-street, Bethnal Green.[125] The Kennetts and Lockyers were close friends.[126] Kennett died, after a 'protracted' illness in 1896. His wife Amelia's work was recognised by LCM in his obituary

> Many of the poor inquired for him during his last illness, and not a few brought touching tokens of affection, whilst his devoted wife not only attended to his bodily needs, but also greatly relieved his mind of its burden of responsibility by herself taking his meetings and distributing his monthly parcel of religious periodicals and tracts, both in factories and private houses.[127]

Lockyer's evidence

Lockyer's journals' entries detailed the spiritual rather than merely ethical character of the Women's Meetings. They demonstrate his understanding of their significance for the women who attended but also his recognition of their importance in *introducing* local women to LCM's mission's spiritual purpose

> *Monday 25th April,* At 2.30 Mrs Lockyer conducted her Meeting for women and we had a good number of very rough women from the district & many a tear was seen running down their faces as Mrs Lockyer told them of the love of God to them.
>
> *Monday 1st May,* In the afternoon I helped my wife conduct her Meeting for Women & we had a good number present who seems interested in the meeting. One woman making the remark "I long for Monday afternoons to come."
>
> *Monday 8th May,* In the afternoon I helped Mrs Lockyer conduct her meeting for women & what a good gathering we had. Most of them would not hear the gospel or attend any place of Worship, But this meeting is a great attraction to the women of the district.
>
> *Monday 22nd May,* In the Afternoon I helped Mrs Lockyer conduct her Mothers Meeting with a good number of fresh ones present.

[125] Kennett, who had been a sailor before he joined LCM in 1884, was a Baptist. See LCMLSDR, p.99.
[126] Amelia Kennett was a witness at Henry and Rebekah Lockyer's wedding in 1887. See, LMA, London, *London Church of England Parish Registers*, Reference Number: *P73/AND/009*, Source, Ancestry.com. *London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1936*, (30 August 2021).
[127] *LCMM, 1896*, pp.102-3.

> *Monday 29th May,* Mothers Meeting as usual conducted by my wife with a good number of the right sort of women present. This is a simple gospel Service & the women seem to enjoy it as they join heartily in the singing & many are living different lives.[128]

Mother's meetings were held in connection with many missions and churches across London. In 1897, Samuel Edge, Vicar of St Mark's, Tollington-park, Islington, observed to Booth's agent, who interviewed him, that the fifty or so women who attended his church's Mothers' Meetings

> …would be much better at home cleaning up their place and making it decent and tidy for their husbands to come home to. The majority do no work at the meetings, but sit and gossip and like to be waited on.[129]

The contrast between Edge's meeting and Rebekah Lockyer's meetings is marked. She understood that many of the women who came were those who could not have attended public worship. From Lockyer's journals' entries, it is evident that at times the meetings were for them not only companionable but spiritually profound.

Arkell asked Lockyer and Robins about 'Prostitution & Immorality' in their districts and he noted

> Not a bad house in the district but much immorality. Case recently reported of a girl (13) who gave birth to a child by her father. Girls are frequently in the family way when married. When referring to this subject they mentioned the names of some dozen or more young women to each other, more to ensure being right in their answer than to enlighten me.[130]

Rebekah Lockyer lived and worked among women who experienced domestic abuse, and as her husband observed, so did their children. She held meetings which were of substantial

[128] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5'.
[129] Booth/B/205, p.9.
[130] Booth/B/229, p.137.

social value but critically for LCM's mission's purpose, during her meetings she was also securing conversions. In 1904, when he spoke at LCM's Annual Meeting, Lockyer related

> During this year five of them have given their hearts to the Lord. One afternoon, while we were speaking, a young woman was in tears. After the meeting my wife took her on one side, and she became soundly converted.[131]

In his journals and reports he discussed women who came to the Women's Meeting who had no experience of public worship but he also described those who attended LCM's meetings who had experienced conversion. He observed that there were many who attended both his and his wife's meetings *and* public worship on the Sabbath who had not. Erdozain challenged revisionist historians whom he believed to have assumed that Christian ethics stood as unambiguous evidence of Christian vitality, but where, he argued, religion and morality have been confused.[132] Lockyer's mission was vital, he welcomed the attendances which he and his wife secured at their meetings, and the moral difference that they made in people's lives, but he did not lose sight of their mission's evangelical ambition of soul-winning. In the patient process of conversion, and in their meetings' steady attendances, however, he showed that he understood that many different and still incomplete spiritual journeys were taking place.

Implications

Lockyer's unknown evidence can be discussed in the context of McLeod's study of working-class religion in Bethnal Green in *Class and Religion*. It supports in part but also challenges his conclusions. It offers a response to questions which he raised and advised that he was unable to answer. McLeod identified a characteristic in Bethnal Green's working-class which

[131] *LCMAR, 1904,* p.197.
[132] Erdozain, *The Secularisation of Sin,* pp.59-88.

he believed to have been misunderstood by those from different social backgrounds who went there to work in 'slum' mission. He observed that young High Churchmen sometimes feared the informality of East End life, and desired to impose patterns of discipline and regularity which were drawn from a different culture.[133] Lockyer's mission, on the other hand, was as informal as he felt that his mission needed to be.

Arkell did not question Lockyer's evidence but he was admittedly uncomfortable in his company and observed, 'He may be a diamond but he is very rough.[134] McLeod concluded that in nineteenth-century London 'most religious activists, like most political activists, were drawn from the more prosperous sections of the working-class, those whose lack of status and power was more acute than their material need, and whose style of life was closer to the lower middle-class than to the rough working-class.'[135] This was not the case with LCM's missionaries who worked in their poorest districts. Of their Bethnal Green missionaries who were interviewed by Arkell; Edwin King, LCM's Missionary to Factories and Workshops, had been a carter, Robert Allinson had been a lead miner, and Samuel Matcham, a stone quarryman.[136] LCM's Secretaries understood the character of the districts in which their missionaries worked and they selected those whom they placed in them carefully.

Arkell noted alongside his main interview's text, 'Had 100 converts last year. Joined neighbouring churches, St Jude's, Adelphi, Congregational in Bethnal Green Road, Charrington's but most went to the East London Tabernacle'. Both 'Charrington's' which was Tower Hamlet's Mission's Great Assembly Hall in Mile End-road, and the East London

[133] Ibid., pp.110-12.
[134] Booth/B/229, p.139.
[135] McLeod, *Class and Religion,* p.283.
[136] See *LCMM, 1924,* p.164, LCMA, 'Allinson envelope', Application Form, 9 April 1881, and LCMECMB, 23 January 1888.

Tabernacle, in Burdett-road, were in Stepney, rather than being local churches within Bethnal Green. They were located between a mile and a half and two miles away from various parts of each of Lockyer's districts. They achieved extremely large attendances within the *Daily News* Census of 1902-3; 3,039 at the Great Assembly Hall, and 2,216 at the East London Tabernacle.[137]

Lockyer's journals are of considerable importance because four of his 'Monthly Schedules' have survived.[138] They date from April, July, and October, 1904, together with February, 1905. In his Schedules he recorded his numbers of indoor meetings held and their attendances. The attendances can be set alongside the data which was recorded in the *Daily News* Census of 1902-3.[139] McLeod based his analysis of church attendance in Bethnal Green upon the results of the Census.[140] He described the Census as having been, 'probably the fullest and most accurate census of church attendance ever taken in Britain'.[141] In the Tables for Bethnal Green only two of LCM's missionaries' districts were included; Gossett-street and Brick-lane[142]. There were, however, 16 of LCM's missionaries working and holding meetings on Sundays in Bethnal Green at this time.[143]

In his Appraisal of the Census results for East London for Mudie-Smith, Alden made no mention of LCM, but he described by 'classes' those who did not attend public worship on Sundays as 'the estranged and the antagonistic' and 'the apathetic and the careless'.[144] He

[137] Mudie-Smith, *Religious Life,* pp.50-1.
[138] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5', 'Schedules'.
[139] Mudie-Smith, *Religious Life*.
[140] McLeod, *Class and Religion,* p.295.
[141] Ibid., p.25.
[142] Mudie-Smith, *Religious Life,* pp.59-61. King's Sunday Meetings in Gossett-street would have been held in addition to his weekday meetings, which because of his mission being as LCM's Missionary to Factories, would have taken place during the working week.
[143] See *LCMAR, 1902,* pp.206-26.
[144] P. Alden, 'The Problem of East London', in Mudie-Smith, *Religious Life,* p.28.

asked, and then answered his own question about what he perceived to be the failures of small missions which operated in East London. He wrote

> Why are small missions admittedly a failure? Because, as a rule you have given the poor not something first-rate in the way of a building, but something third-rate; it is often the most neglected and forlorn-looking edifice in the whole street, and the missioner is too frequently an underpaid and over-worked man – quite hopeless and despairing. I regret to have to add that sometimes he is a man who has utterly failed in every other walk of life.[145]

To have dismissed LCM's missionaries and their work with this conclusion would have been to misunderstand the genius in LCM's mission. Lockyer's recorded average total indoor attendances each Sunday were for April 1904, 193; July, 177; October, 197; and February 1905, 193.[146] Lockyer's district's parish church, St Bartholomew's, in Buckhurst-street had total attendances from the *entire* parish of 210 in the Census Tables.[147] As has been discussed, Lockyer also held outdoor Services on Sundays where the attendances were substantially greater than for those which he held indoors. Lockyer's attendances were a remarkable omission from the Census. The omission is compounded by the omission of large numbers of LCM's missionaries' meetings, not only within Bethnal Green, but across London at a time when LCM employed 460 missionaries.[148]

LCM's sources are opaque about their engagement with the *Daily News* Census and silent about its results. The only reference made to the 'Religious Census' was in the General Committee's minutes of 15 December 1902

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[145] Ibid., p.33.
[146] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5', 'Schedules'.
[147] Mudie-Smith, *Religious Life,* p.55.
[148] In total for the year 1902-3, LCM's 460 missionaries held 760,956 meetings. *LCMAR, 1902, Table of Districts*, pp.206-26 and *LCMAR, 1903*, *Some of the Results,* p.xii. See also Appendix Table. Only 94 entries, however, were made in Mudie-Smith's Census Tables for LCM meetings held throughout Inner and Outer London.

> Mr. Mudie Smith having written asking for the names and addresses of the Society's Mission Rooms for the purposes of the Religious Census, it was agreed that the same be forwarded to him.[149]

It is possible that from Mudie-Smith's description of the 'Methods' employed in arranging the Census that LCM's missing mission venues had not been 'discovered' by his inspectors. He acknowledged his difficulties in that many missions exhibited no times of Services, and presented no boards or bills of any description to witness their presence.[150]

The absence of Lockyer's attendances in Bethnal Green's Census data is significant. As McLeod observed, Bethnal Green was 'overwhelmingly' working-class in character and the two distinctly working-class denominations, the Salvation Army and Primitive Methodists had attracted only 84 and 118 attendances respectively *in total* throughout all of Bethnal Green.[151] There were Sundays where Lockyer had recorded more than 202 attendances, their *combined* total attendance, at his indoor meetings.[152] McLeod reflected in *Class and Religion's* concluding chapter

> The more interesting and difficult question is why working men did not respond to exclusion from the major denominations by forming their own sects, and why such bodies as the Primitive Methodists and the Salvation Army were even weaker in London than the Anglicans or Wesleyans. It may be that the democratic sect makes greater demands on its members than most people are prepared to meet, but the fact remains that religion of this kind did attract a significant following in some parts of the country.[153]

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[149] LCMMB, 15 December 1902.
[150] Mudie-Smith, *Religious Life,* p.4.
[151] Ibid., p.61.
[152] Lockyer, 'Journal, 1904-5', 'Monthly Schedules'. It is not possible to verify Lockyer's figures, but missionaries' self-recorded totals were witnessed and checked by LCM's General Superintendents in monthly visitation. They also were verified by signature as being accurate by the missionary's Local Superintendent. The decision to engage with, or reply to a Census Inspector's written enquiry, had rested with each missionary.
[153] McLeod, *Class and Religion,* p.282.

It can be demonstrated from LCM's evidence that in Bethnal Green, and by extension across London, working-class men, and women, rather than forming their own sects, had worked together with, and for LCM in the establishment of LCM's own local undenominational missions. As a consequence of LCM's missionaries' evidence, it is possible to begin to present a completely new view of evangelical working-class Sundays. LCM's mission was dynamic and flexible, and its overarching characteristic was its working-class quality of informality.

Chapter 6. District mission: John Galt's mission in Ida-street, Poplar, 1892-8.

It is from John Galt's experience of district mission in Poplar that this chapter's study is drawn. Lewis observed that LCM's statistics did not give a feeling for what was happening at the local and personal level, an appreciation of which could only be gained by listening to the oral testimony of those directly involved.[1] He presented what he described as an alternative means of assessing the evangelicals' effectiveness in the study of the work of a single agent. His task was simplified, he noted, for the period of the focus of his study, the years before 1860, by the survival of Oppenheimer's journal.[2] Galt's unpublished work, including his autobiography 'A Providence That Shapes', and his autobiographical account of his mission in Poplar, 'Saints in the Slums', offer an equally rare opportunity to discuss working-class evangelical Christian activity and Christian character in LCM's Ida-street district in Poplar at the end of the century.[3]

[1] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness,* p.129.
[2] Ibid., p.131.
[3] LCMA, manuscripts, J. Galt, 'A Providence That Shapes' (n.d., pp.264, c. 85,000 words), and 'Saints in the Slums' (n.d., pp.216, c.75,000 words). 'Providence' discusses Galt's life between 1863-1923. It is probable that Galt wrote 'Saints' after he left Poplar in 1898, but before 1907 when he resigned from LCM.

In 1972, when Galt's son, Ian proposed to send his father's papers and photographs to LCM, he introduced *both* his parents as having been missionaries employed by the Society.[4] He explained the context for his father having recorded his experiences

> SAINTS IN THE SLUMS is a story of Gospel ministry in the east end of London in the eighteen-nineties. Its writing was prompted by Dr. John Watson (Ian Maclaren) in the course of a lecture in the City Temple. Dr. Watson said that everything he had read concerning the people of the East End seemed unreal. He suggested that someone who really knew the people, who felt <u>with</u> them rather than just for them, should write of them and their life as it really was.
>
> In the course of his ministry as a London City Missionary father made copious notes which formed the basis of this book. To quote the author – "Every character is an actual person, only names are fictitious; every incident actually occurred; every sentiment or bit of philosophy is such as were commonly held and freely expressed; records of reactions to the Evangel are fully authentic."[5]

Cox noted that the most abundant sources of evidence about the late-nineteenth century were the books and articles of middle-class social observers.[6] He concluded that their views were flawed because they projected their own preconceptions onto the minds of ordinary people. Galt explicitly sought to correct middle-class misunderstanding. At times he projected his own preconceptions onto his evidence, but his preconceptions are in themselves of great value as an insight into his working-class missionary perspective. His extensive use of colloquial speech and improvised spelling is awkward to read at times, but it has the character of transcribed oral history, albeit self-edited, and it is vivid. 'Saints' is discussed as eye-witness testimony because only the identities within it are fictional, not the views and activities of the characters.[7]

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[4] LCMA, letter, Ian Galt to Rev Whyte, 5 July 1972. At the same time, he sent transparencies of his father's photographs to the Museum of London.
[5] Galt, 'Saints in the Slums', 'Forward' by Ian Galt, (January, 1973).
[6] Cox, *The English Churches,* pp.90-1.
[7] In 'Saints' Galt followed LCM's practice of concealing the identities of cases discussed within their missionaries' published reports. It is not known whether Galt sought to publish 'Saints' while he

John Galt

John Galt was born in 1863, in Elgin, Morayshire.[8] He left school to work with his father as a builder's labourer when he was aged 11.[9] At 22, he moved to London, where he was employed in a drapery store.[10] He resigned from this position, he explained, because his conscience would not allow him to follow the store's sales practices.[11] During this time he attended Regents Park Baptist Chapel where Rev F. B. Meyer became his mentor and friend. Meyer suggested that Galt should assist the Forward Movement, organised from John-street Chapel by Rev John Shepherd, in full-time employment.[12] Meanwhile, Galt prepared his application to become a missionary in the Belgian Congo, but it was turned down on medical grounds.[13] On the advice of Meyer, he applied to LCM.[14]

Galt was accepted by LCM in January 1890.[15] His references were written by Meyer and Shepherd. LCM sent him to work in their Tent-street district, Bethnal Green.[16] In 1892, Galt moved from Bethnal Green to Poplar, to LCM's Ida-street district where he worked until 1898.[17] In 1894, Galt married Frances Jackson.[18] She was a dressmaker, living in Camden-

worked for LCM. With cross-reference to 'Providence', some of the identities of those described within 'Saints' become known. In 'Providence Galt concealed a few of the identities of those whom he discussed, Tom Pearson, for example, and he called himself 'Mr Peck' but he also included notes within his text to reveal and confirm each identity.

[8] Galt, 'Providence', p.1.
[9] Ibid., pp.21-2.
[10] Ibid., p.72.
[11] Ibid., pp.84-7.
[12] Ibid., pp.100-1.
[13] LCMA, I. Galt, notes (2), 1 January 1973.
[14] Galt, 'Providence', p.133.
[15] LCMMB, 27 January 1890.
[16] Galt, 'Providence', p.135. Galt's Local Superintendent was Robert L. Barclay, and his mission was funded by LCM's Spitalfields and Bethnal Green Association, see *LCMAR, 1891,* p.192.
[17] Galt's Local Superintendent was Edward E. Barclay, and his mission was funded jointly by LCM's Ramsgate Association, and Poplar Association, see *LCMAR, 1892,* p.198.
[18] TNA, PRO RG9/83, f. 45, p. 28 and RG12/116, f. 100, p.25.

town, and her father had been a cab-driver.[19] In 1898, Galt was promoted to special mission to became LCM's Missionary to Cabmen in North London. As a consequence of his young son's ill-health Galt resigned from LCM in 1907, and emigrated to Canada where he subsequently held nine pastorates within the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec.[20] He died in Toronto in 1942.[21]

Galt's faith

Galt declared that he wrote his autobiography with the purpose of 'illustrating the dealings of God in the personal affairs of an ordinary man, just that, and nothing more.'[22] In 'Saints' he addressed his mission with LCM from two perspectives; from that of an educated middle-class visitor, whom he called Miss Bain, a Presbyterian Sunday-school teacher from Elgin, who stayed with a city missionary and his wife, Mr. and Mrs Mann, in Poplar. She witnessed their work, and interrogated them. In their replies he recorded their opinions and experiences, and therein revealed the character of his own faith. Miss Bain asked Mrs Mann about her husband's position

> "does he really stand by the old paths? Has he not gone a little off the track in regard to sudden conversions and that kind of thing?"
>
> "Oh" was the laughing reply, "he has not departed in any way, and he is not likely to do so; he is too busy dealing with real things to find time to dabble with new ideas. Don't you know that Mr Spurgeon said that there was just one class of preachers from whom there had been no down-grade doctrine or heresy, and from whom he could not imagine that any would ever come; the City Missionaries who being daily in personal touch with real sinners and real sorrows and so would know by instinct that nothing would meet the case but the Gospel of the Grace of god as found in the new Testament. You need have no fears as to our orthodoxy, even taking your own Presbyterian ideas of orthodoxy as the standard, for although Mr Mann withdrew from

[19] Ibid.
[20] I. Galt to Rev Whyte, 5 July 1972.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Galt, 'Providence', 'Forward', p.1.

that Denomination before he came to London he holds the doctrines of the Westminster Confession far more completely than the great majority of your own ministers do."[23]

Poplar

Poplar has not featured in historians' studies of working-class religion in London in the late-nineteenth century. Originally part of the parish of Stepney, Poplar became a civil parish in 1817.[24] In 1855, Poplar joined with neighbouring Bromley and Bow to form the Poplar District which became the Metropolitan Borough of Poplar in 1900.[25] In 1831, its population was 25,066, by 1851 it was 47,162, in 1871, it had increased to 116,376 and in 1891, it reached 166,748.[26] The District's riverside on the Thames was the dominant influence upon its economy, and its inhabitants' employment.

In 1843, LCM appointed two missionaries to their newly created districts in Poplar; East India-road and Madras.[27] In 1857, LCM employed three missionaries in Poplar, and by 1875, the number had increased to seven. In 1892, when John Galt began to work in Ida-street, LCM employed nine missionaries in the locality in district mission; in the Isle of Dogs, Mile End, Plaistow North, Plaistow South, Madras, Robin Hood-lane, Trinity Chapel, and to the immediate west of Ida-street, in Grundy-street. In special mission they employed missionaries in the East and West India Docks, Millwall and London Docks, two missionaries to the 'Asiatics' in the Docks, Foreign Sailors in the Docks East of Stepney, and to Spanish,

[23] Galt, 'Saints', pp.92-3.
[24] H. Hobhouse, (ed), 'General Introduction', *Survey of London: Volumes 43 and 44, Poplar, Blackwall and Isle of Dogs* (London, 1994), pp.1-20.
[25] Ibid.
[26] https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10111936/census (20 August 2021)
[27] *LCMM, 1843,* pp.33-4.

French, Portuguese, and Italian Sailors who visited the Docks, and a missionary to the Public-houses and Coffee-shops of Poplar.

In his examination of working-class politics in the East End of London, Brodie argued that the factors which acted upon working-class politics created a web which is only understood within a very specific and detailed context, and that this context required a very close examination of localised community and workplace structures.[28] He concluded that the East End was not as unrelievedly and uniformly poor as has been portrayed by historians, particularly in Stedman Jones' influential study *Outcast London,* and that poverty itself was far less widespread and its economic conditions were far more variable than has been assumed.[29] In 1843, in his first report's discussion of the Madras district, John Munro wrote

> During the past month nothing has struck me more forcibly than the amount in many cases of hopeless poverty among the people. This district, on the whole, is better than many parts around us as to the apparent state of the people; yet the frequency of cases of distress is very painful. There are numbers of mechanics and labourers out of employ from one month to nine or ten months; some even a longer period than that. Such a state of things I have seen has the worst effects upon the parties.[30]

Throughout the century, LCM's missionaries' reports confirmed that in immediately adjoining districts in Poplar economic conditions could be very different but in *all* of their districts those who lived within them became vulnerable to severe poverty and starvation with unemployment.

Ida-street, Poplar

LCM's Ida-street district was bounded to the south by East India Dock-road, north by Willis-street, east by St Leonard's-road and west by Chrisp-street. It lay in three-quarter parts in

[28] M. Brodie, *The Politics of the Poor, The East End of London 1885-1914* (Oxford, 2004), p.3.
[29] Ibid., p.5.
[30] *LCMM, 1844,* p.46.

the parish of St Frideswide, and one-quarter in the parish of All Saints. The greater number of its streets was in Bromley, but its mission hall was in Poplar and the district was regarded as being in Poplar by those who lived there. **[Figure 7]**



Figure 7. LCM's Ida-street district, Poplar, source: OS, 1894-96, London Sheet VIII.61, author's copy.

It has been possible to make an analysis of the inhabitants of the district from the 1891 Census; 37% had been born in Poplar, 17% in Bromley, 21% in other parts of Middlesex, 21% in the rest of England, 1% in Ireland, and the remaining 3%, either in other parts of the world, or unknown.[31]

[31] See Bibliography for References.

It is also possible to compare Booth's colouring of the streets in Galt's districts in Bethnal Green and Poplar from his Poverty Map of 1898-9.[32] In LCM's Tent-street district, Booth's colouring described approximately 80% of the dwellings as blue, blue-black, and black. In their Ida-street district, in contrast only approximately 30% of dwellings were blue, and there were no streets coloured blue-black or black. **[Figure 8]** Galt, with his complete understanding of the far from uniform distribution of poverty in the East End, either by location or in changing circumstances in employment, declared that those who lived in the Ida-street district were **'**just the ordinary people of London: not the best or the lowest.'[33]

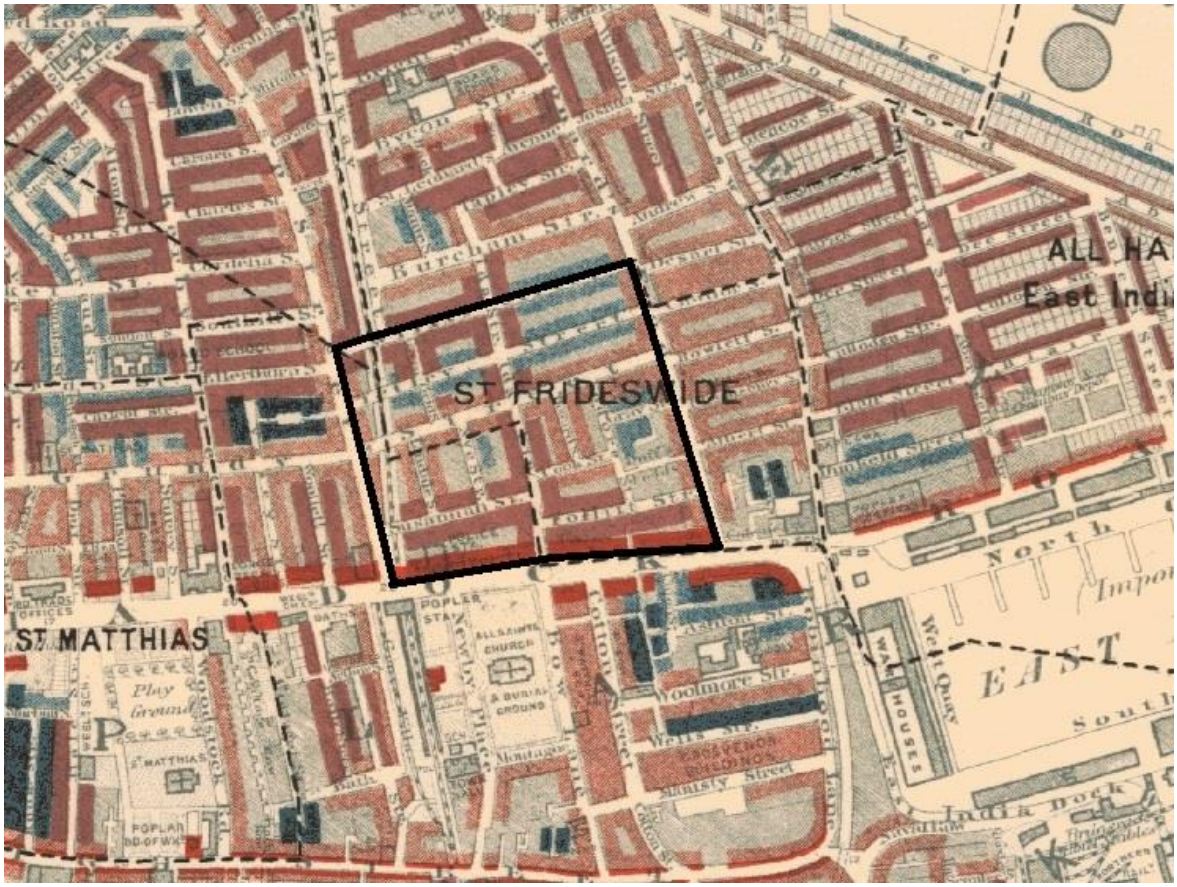

Figure 8. LCM's Ida-street district located upon Booth's 'Map Descriptive of London Poverty 1898-9', Sheet 1, LCMA

[32] LCMA, Booth, 'Maps Descriptive of London Poverty, 1898-9', Sheet 1, author's edit.
[33] Booth/B/172, p.9.

It is probable that Arkell's undated interview with Galt for Booth's research took place in 1897. He described him as a 'thoughtful earnest man' and concluded

> Mr Galt is one of the most interesting men I have met. He was familiar with our books and evidently took a keen interest in the life of the people around. Upon most questions that arose he was at home and had his own opinions which he often expressed in pithy circumstances.[34]

Galt sketched the character of his district in his interview. He told Arkell that three-quarters of the men among whom he worked were employed in connection with shipping, and that it meant that their work was irregular citing that by being 'in and out' of work they would earn good money only when at work.[35] He believed that there was little crime in his district, because he had observed that the people were both working class and law-abiding. During the winter of 1894-5, when the Thames had frozen, and when nearly all of those in his district had been out of work, he described, there had been not one arrest for theft although thousands of pounds worth of goods had been exposed in Chrisp-street.[36]

In comparison with his Ida-street district's population, Galt believed that the Bethnal Green people were not so well educated.[37] The majority of marriages in Bethnal Green, he noted, had been of those under the age of twenty, but in comparison in Ida-street, he believed that people were usually married when above that age.[38] Galt explained that he was impressed by the thrift of those who lived in the Ida-street district, and their placing of savings in Loan and Investment Societies, and he gave an example of their levels of saving;

[34] Ibid., p.17.
[35] Ibid., p.8.
[36] Ibid., p.14.
[37] Ibid., p.17.
[38] Ibid., p.14.

of about 6d a week by a household through the year which was then shared out in payments at the end of each year.[39] Over £2,000 of savings had been distributed the previous Christmas he recalled and where the two largest Societies had been run out of local public-houses, *The White* Swan and *The Brown Horse***,** who had paid out in the order of £1,000 and £500 respectively.[40] His own Mission ran a Savings and Loan Society, with about 100 members, which had a Christmas distribution of about £250.[41] He believed that in ratio, among these Societies, only once in twenty instances of saving had any member asked for a loan.[42] His criticism of those who lived and worked in his district was made with reference to their gambling which he described as being 'terribly prevalent'.[43]

Under Arkell's heading of 'Charitable Relief' he recorded that LCM did not co-operate in any charitable work and that Galt only gave relief "in cases of absolute pressing need" where he had given about £5 at Christmas and no more than 50/- during the rest of the year.[44] They discussed the COS about whom Galt commented that it was "hated with bitter hate. Men swear & women weep when you mention it."[45] Galt gave an example of their having suggested "Could you not take in washing?" to a woman with 5 children, one of whom was 'a cripple'. Arkell wrote, 'Mr Galt evidently felt as strongly as any of the people for he gave me several other instances of the way of COS visitors…. He also insinuated that it was too much dominated by the Church.'[46] When asked about other agencies who were working in

[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid., p.15.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., p.14.
[43] Ibid., p.17.
[44] Ibid., p.11.
[45] Ibid., p.13. LCM did not work with the COS. For example, in the Committee's minutes of 14 November 1881, LCM recorded that they would not provide them with the names and addresses of their missionaries after they had been requested by them to do so.
[46] Ibid.

the area Galt mentioned his LCM colleagues, St Frideswide's, The Salvation Army, and Poplar and Bromley Tabernacle.

In his discussion of other agencies, Galt observed that from among them, although St Frideswide's and their Mission undertook the most visitations in the parish, he did not believe that they had the most influence.[47] He perceived that The Salvation Army had a 'great influence', especially as a consequence of their open-air work.[48] Galt discussed the agency of St Frideswide's, which he understood to have 11 visitors working within the parish including the Sisters of St John and St Frideswide's own trained nurse. He noted that their efforts focussed on trying to bring people 'to the Church'. He added that he believed that the Churches were not reaching the people, but that this was not the fault of the people. He commented that many of the deacons and elders were foremen or managers in the Yards, and that their conduct did not always recommend the Church. He argued that there was a good deal of "creedism" where a creed was preached instead of Christ. Arkell noted that Galt had concluded that all of these things hindered the Churches.[49]

Baxter interviewed Rev James Carroll of St Frideswide's for Booth's research in 1897.[50] Two-fifths of the parish lay within Galt's district. Baxter's notes reveal Galt's and Carroll's contrasting views about the people who lived there. Carroll observed that although few of the streets within the parish were poor the people seemed always to be close to the edge of poverty, where the majority of them earned good wages, they were improvident and

[47] Ibid., pp.11-12.
[48] Ibid., p.12.
[49] Ibid., pp.15-16.
[50] Booth/B/175, pp.98-115. The Mission Church of St Frideswide's was dedicated in 1890. It was built by the Hon. and Revd James Adderley who had been head of Oxford House since 1886. 1893, Adderley was succeeded by Carroll as Warden. He remained in the post until 1898. See, Scotland, *Squires in the Slums,* p.75. For discussions of Adderley's condemnation of 'fashionable slumming' and his sexual ambiguity see Koven, *Slumming*, pp.6-8 and pp.273-6.

there was always much distress if work were slack.[51] Carroll criticised Adderley, his predecessor who had founded and built St Frideswide's, and its Mission House, concluding that he had been moved solely by pity and that he had done all he could to pauperise the people, including having given away his own clothes to them. In contrast, he stressed, his own relief was given along COS lines. He noted that this totalled about £200 a year.[52] Baxter recorded that Carroll was careful not to induce people to come [to Church] by bribery, and that he had now 'shed all the old humbugs' who had attached themselves to Adderley.[53] It is interesting to note that despite their contrasting backgrounds, Galt and Adderley were in later years in contact with one another. Galt's book, *Open-Air Preaching* was published in 1903, Adderley reviewed the work before its publication and wrote to him to congratulate him upon its value.[54]

Carroll, when asked about 'other religious influences' in the area, commented that the Salvation Army 'made a good deal of noise but had no influence'.[55] He considered Galt, and noted, 'the London City Missionary is the only Dissenter' and described him as 'a genuine man but without much influence who is liked a good deal.'[56] In summary, Carroll told Baxter that from among the 7,000 who lived in the parish, probably not more than 2,000 came under the influence of religion.[57] From Galt's evidence, however, it is possible to illustrate how he engaged with those among the 5,000 whom Carroll perceived to be religiously

[51] Ibid., pp.99-100.
[52] Ibid., p.111.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Galt, *Open-Air Preaching*. Adderley's review was included as a Postscript.
[55] Booth/B/175, p.112.
[56] Ibid., p.111.
[57] Ibid., p.103.

indifferent, and how the distinctive religious character of his mission was informed by their mutual understanding.

B. Christian activities

When John Galt wrote about his mission, he made a distinction between the two fundamental aspects of his work: its Christian activities and Christian character. From Shaw's study is possible to observe the contrast between Galt's districts' Christian activities and those of John Paton who worked for GCM. Paton was employed in their Calton district between 1850-7, while he was studying for the ministry at Glasgow University.[58] His ambition upon ordination was to become a foreign missionary.[59] He worked under the direction of the Great Hamilton Street Reformed Presbyterian Church who funded his mission.[60] They raised £100 annually for the poor of their congregation and Paton distributed money among them for food, and gave coals, blankets, tokens, and soup tickets.[61] In 1853, he was elected an Elder of the Church.[62] At this time the congregation purchased a block of buildings; a church, schools, and manse for its own and its mission's use.[63] Paton's mission was institutionally rooted and centred. There was one significant aspect of his work, however, that Galt would have recognised. It was the critical role of those for whom their missions were intended in their missions' success.

[58] Shaw, 'John Paton and Urban Mission', pp.163-92.
[59] Ibid., p.171.
[60] Ibid., p.173.
[61] Ibid., p.185.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid., p.187.

The essential role of local working-class support

Paton, at the end of his first year in Calton, had attracted only 6 or 7 hearers to his weekly meetings, and Shaw commented that although his personal commitment was huge, and his ideals high, everything that he achieved had depended on others.[64] Paton pleaded that each of the 6 or 7 people who had attended his meetings might bring another person with them, which they did. Then, and over time, he trained 8-10 young men, and 20 young women to assist him. Only with their assistance, Shaw concluded, his mission began to develop.

Galt learned from experience that without the active support of working-class people in his district his mission would have failed. In LCM's Tent-street district in Bethnal Green, Galt's predecessor had been Lawrence Wilks.[65] Galt noted with admiration that his district's mission hall seated 200, and that it had been crowded to excess at all of Wilks meetings.[66] Wilks had organised and led a Fife and Drum Band but their instruments had been returned to the dealer by the retiring missionary. Galt understood that the young people had been greatly attached to the man who had done so much for them, but he feared that they were not prepared to transfer their attachment to his successor. As time passed, he saw that they blamed him for their loss and 'tormented' anyone who gave him their support. Within 6 months of his commencing his work, he recorded with 'deep humiliation' that his meetings attracted between only 20-40 attendances.[67] He arranged a children's excursion, but he admitted that it had been a 'nine day wonder.' He doubted whether he could continue as a missionary with LCM, and recognised that his mission's future rested in winning back the

[64] Ibid.
[65] Wilks, a Congregationalist, had been a painter and decorator in Bethnal Green before he joined LCM in 1887, see LCMECMB, 21 November 1887.
[66] Galt, 'Providence', p.135.
[67] Ibid., p.143.

group of approximately twenty youths whose support he sorely needed. He secured their attention by lighting his mission hall's stove each Wednesday night during a bitter winter, and he offered them its comfort, as an alternative to their gathering outdoors. His offer was made in exchange, he explained to them, for their listening to him during each of the evenings for 'THREE' minutes only.[68] Galt related how he engaged Tom Pearson's conscience, and together they then persuaded a dozen of the others to a 'voluntary confession of faith' during subsequent Wednesday nights, thereafter the youths became what Galt called the 'backbone' of his mission.[69]

When Galt moved from Bethnal Green to Poplar, he recognised that it was the support of those who lived in his new district which would determine his mission's success. He observed of his predecessor Anders Siden

> He had been a sailor and had literally sailed the seven seas. He retained much of the manners of a sailor and knew and used the patter of the dockside workers who abounded in the neighbourhood. He was possessed of very great vitality and used it to the limit in preaching both indoors and out of doors. He was known within his circle as "Poplar's popular preacher". In personality and capabilities his successor was about as far removed from this dynamo as the east is removed from the west; so their was no danger of being tempted to become a weak imitation.
>
> I could see a work to be done which had not yet been attempted. If the workers who had so nobly stood by the cause in the past would continue their support and loyalty it would be possible.[70]

[68] Ibid., p.153.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid., p.160. Siden, a Baptist, was Swedish, and illiterate. He joined LCM in 1884. He worked in their Ida-street district ,1885-1892, *LCMM, 1928,* p.122.

He described his plan and recorded how it was achieved within two years with the support that he had hoped for, but added that this happened together with many activities which, at first had not been thought of.[71]

Galt's mission's Christian activities



Figure 9. LCM's Ida-street district's Mission Hall in Grundy-street, Poplar, by John Galt, LCMA

Arkell recorded that Galt was assisted in his mission by 40 helpers, two thirds of whom were women, but he made no special mention of Frances Galt.[72] Their work, however, reflected the married partnerships that were to be found at the core of much of LCM's missionary activity. Galt's mission hall was located at 130 Grundy-street. Arkell noted that it occupied the ground floor of a corner property, where its frontage was about 18-20 feet but the

[71] Ibid., pp.161-2.
[72] Booth/B/175, p.9.

building itself extended back for a considerable depth and the hall could seat 150 people.[73] The upper parts were the missionary's own accommodation. [**Figure 9]** It is evident from Galt's photograph how humble, or domestic its character would have been within the grain of his district's streets. Their work may have centred upon Galt's home and hall, but in their aggressive mission their work extended throughout and beyond the district as a consequence of the support that they secured. In 'Saints' Galt documented the scale, and scope of the work that was undertaken

> I may say that all of our activities are carefully planned to be the means of either bringing the people to the Gospel or taking the Gospel to the people. The preaching services in the mission have in all probability impressed you most of all but they are not by any means the greatest agency; in all they bring us into effective touch with about one hundred and fifty persons per week. Our other agencies are the means of placing us in touch with at least Ten Thousand people weekly which is more than the population of your own home city with it's seven Churches each with it's minister. Our Tract Society members go from door to door every Sunday leaving Gospel Literature at every house, moreover the literature is actually read….We now visit twenty-eight (public) houses every Sunday and on average meet fifteen hundred men and not one in a hundred refuses to take the proffered paper….Then there is the mother's Meeting…last year over one mile of one brand of flannelette was sold to the mothers most of which was made up into children's garments. Preaching in the workhouse is another of our agencies which brings us into touch with about four hundred and seventy-five a week that is to say as many as are touched by an ordinary church ministry. Our Open-Air Preaching may be said to bring us into contact with the same people mentioned in connection with the Tract Society work; we make it our aim to preach the Gospel within earshot of every home in the district at least once a year but we generally manage to get round twice. We change our pitch every time moving on about fifty yards each time till we have gone through every street; then beginning all over again….Our young men do wonderful work among the sailors on the ships in the Docks….Then there is the Sunday School; the Band of Hope; the Girls Own Mission; and what is sometimes called the Bad Boy's Meeting and last but not least my daily work of going from door to door as a Christian Messenger. Now, concluded Mr Mann, do you suppose that any church, the pastorate of which might be open to me, would

[73] Ibid., p.8.

> afford equal doors of opportunity and do you suppose that in any church there could be equal freedom and scope for initiative equal to what I now have?[74]

Galt acknowledged that he and his helpers were not the only ones who touched the lives of those whom they met with a purpose for their good, but he concluded that they touched them more systematically and more regularly than did others.[75] It was on the basis of the numbers reached in the distribution of Christian literature by his mission's Tract Society that he discussed having reached 10,000 people. He explained that this was not the total number of people living within his district's footprint. Having many helpers he noted, they had been able to work within its adjacent streets. He shared an immediate LCM 'boundary' only to the west of his district. The literature was distributed by Frances Galt and the women and girls who helped the mission. He recorded that it was their own, rather than LCM's choice of material and he outlined how the work had commenced

> Having made use of Horner's Penny Stories with most gratifying results in Bethnal Green it was decided to circulate them from door to door in Poplar. These were highly interesting as well as distinctly evangelistic in content and similar in outward appearance to the widely read but trashy novelettes. A number of sets of fifty were procured and sewn into stiff paper covers and were placed in the homes with a promise that another would be brought next Sunday and that exchanges would be made weekly if reasonable care were taken. In a month the plan proved a great success and there was a surplus of workers so we were able to open a new "Tract District" each week for a long time indeed this process continued with but little interruption till the planned ten thousand were supplied weekly. From the start the work was self-sustaining by reason of a collection taken each year from door to door and revenue from carefully selected advertizements placed on the superior cover.[76]

[74]Galt, 'Saints', pp.203-5. Galt quantified their activity during the year 1896. He recorded that 60,000 book exchanges had been made; 950 gospel meetings held, 5 tons of literature had been distributed, the bulk being back-numbers of the *Christian Herald*, and that at least 50,000 tracts had been handed out in the workhouse, ships in the East India Docks, and elsewhere, 'Providence', pp.167-8.

[75] Galt, 'Providence', p.205.

[76] Ibid., p.161.

Frances Galt initiated the Mothers Meeting and its Maternity Society. At their meetings baby clothes were made. These were included a 'maternity bag' of 'nice and useful things' which was taken to *any* woman in the district who might be in need after the birth of her baby. It contained sheets and blankets, nightdresses, and a few everyday provisions such as soap, tea, oatmeal, and sugar. The bedding was later collected and laundered for reuse. The project was funded entirely from within the district by the women's subscriptions to their meeting.[77]

Galt admitted that his special interest lay in reaching working men. Together with the men and boys who helped him they visited the bars of public-houses and ships in the Docks.[78] He noted that there were 28 public-houses in his district, and in these they distributed back copies of the *Christian Herald* each Sunday. It was Galt, rather than LCM, who secured their supply. They were offered with the option of giving a donation into a collection box, and from the first to the last, week in, week out, year upon year, he advised, the enterprise had been self-supporting, and 1,500 papers were distributed weekly.[79] He remarked that within three months of commencing the work he had become on speaking terms with every landlord and manager, and thereafter on 'nodding' or 'hailing' terms with almost all of the men who frequented their premises.[80] He declared how meaningful the work had been for him, 'On the whole it can be stated that never in the course of a full lifetime did I experience as great kindness and courtesy as in the Public Houses of Poplar.'[81]

[77] Galt, 'Saints', pp.53-7.
[78] Galt, 'Providence', pp.161-2.
[79] Ibid., p.162.
[80] Ibid., p.163.
[81] Ibid.

Shaw detailed Paton's institutional responsibilities and observed his church's middle-class congregation's controlling influence upon his mission, but Galt framed his description of his mission's activities with recognition of the agency with which he was able to work. He wrote of his 'liberty and freedom from interference or dictation such as [he] could not look for in the ministry of the church'.[82]

In her study of the impact of the Industrial Revolution on ordinary lives from the evidence of working-class life-writing, Griffin cited Thompson's powerful interpretation of exploitation, oppression, and human suffering but she observed, 'The only difficulty is that the autobiographies, those rare and unique records in which the labouring poor retold their stories refuse to cooperate.'[83] It is possible to challenge her assumption that evangelical fulfilment lay only in Nonconformity but she convincingly demonstrated the participatory nature of working-class evangelical Christianity for the poor. Griffin's writers described a shared experience of Bible-reading, prayer, and religious discussion. Rather than being passive recipients of instruction she revealed that her authors were participants in their own distinctive religious culture. The theme of working-class agency, and the self-recognised and confident sense of achievement that Griffin identified is important for an understanding of Galt's evidence. Galt recorded the crisis of poverty and starvation in his district as a consequence of the Thames being frozen. He spoke of his distress in the suffering he witnessed, but when he wrote about his mission, its working-class support, and its opportunities he wrote with unqualified optimism.

[82] Galt, 'Saints', p.92.
[83] E. Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn: A People's History of the Industrial Revolution* (London, 2014), p.16.

Galt's support for 'invisible' working-class Christian activities in Poplar

Kershen and Vaughan discussed the religious experience of migrant Jews in the East End of London.[84] They detailed the establishment of working-class chevrot which thrived between 1880-1914. In the context of Spitalfields, they described a chevra as a 'small, homely place of worship' because 'the designation of synagogue was somewhat elaborate for the poorly furnished and maintained rooms or small buildings[85] Their evidence revealed them to be self-created, self-supported, self-governed, and independent of the British Chief Rabbi. Worship was led by working-class preachers and speakers, and held in places which were woven within familiar streets, homes, yards, and places of work. They described how hierarchies of the secular world were turned on their heads as workshop masters became subservient to their more knowledgeable employees who often took the services. The chevrot within Spitalfields' streets were unrecorded in surveys of religion, yet during the early years of the twentieth century they were secure in their membership and attachment to the Jewish traditions of religion remained. They concluded that it was only with the movement by Jews out of the East End in the 1920s that their membership fell. Their research suggested themes which are yet to be explored because their research was linear. They did not contextualise the poverty of the Jewish immigrant community's life within the religious experiences of Christians who were living at the same time in Spitalfields' streets, and they did not investigate their religious co-existence, diffusive influences, or exchanges.

[84] A. J. Kershen and L. Vaughan, 'There was a Priest, a Rabbi and an Imam….an analysis of urban space and religious practice in London's East End, 1685-2010', *Material Religion,* 9 (2015), pp.10-35.
[85] A. J. Kershen, *Strangers, Aliens and Asians: Hugenots, Jews and Bangladeshis in Spitalfields 1660-2000* (London, 2005), p.85.

Galt was removed by LCM from their Tent-street district in Bethnal Green after the lease on his mission hall expired.[86] Not only had the hall been rented, but he explained that they owned none of its furniture. His mission's only possession was its harmonium.[87] He witnessed, however, the success of Pearson and his companions' evangelical mission in Bethnal Green after he had moved to Poplar, where it was continued by them at least until the time when Pearson was accepted by LCM as a missionary.[88] Their work was undertaken without a mission hall. Bartlett commented that even the cost of renting and maintaining a simple hall could be a heavy drain on the limited surplus income of a small group of working-class Christians but Galt detailed Pearson's work's character and how it was sustained

> The work of the Tent Street Mission Band was carried on with fine devotion and great efficiency for at least four years and with wonderful and most gratifying results. A number who had lapsed from a former religious standard of life, or service, were restored to peace and usefulness while a still larger number for the first time committed themselves to living the christian life either through the means of books circulated or through the word of life proclaimed in the streets and courts of the district. It is worthy of note that, except for the donation of books with which to make the beginning of the work, the cost of carrying on was defrayed entirely by the workers themselves. The cost was considerable for the whole of the Tent Street district was covered and there was no revenue from advertising seeing they placed the books in a plain cover.[89]

It would be wrong to assume that Galt's focus was placed solely upon the development of his own mission. He encouraged others when he recognised that their undenominational Christian activities might thrive if it were in any way possible for him to help them. In 'Saints' Galt revealed the existence of long-established undenominational working-class Christian

[86] Galt, 'Providence', p.158.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Galt, 'Providence', p.179. Pearson, who had been born in Bethnal Green, was a blacksmith. He resigned from LCM in 1909, to become an Anglican clergyman, LCMLSDR, p.113.
[89] Bartlett, *The Churches in Bermondsey,* p.289, and Galt, 'Providence', p.161.

'cottage' meetings in Poplar, and described how Mr Mann gave them his support in his engagement with the man whom he called 'Cripple Tom'.[90] Galt wrote that he was a well-known character in the neighbourhood and regarded by the people as the most holy man among them.[91] He reflected that Tom never preached in the ordinary sense of the term but that there were more people in his district living Christian lives through his instrumentality than through the instruction of any other individual.[92] Mann made his mission hall available to Tom for his prayer meetings and Tom helped him in his work.

Tom had contracted muscular rheumatism as a child and it had stiffened his joints to the extent that his body had become as rigid as a log and he could not turn his head. He experienced his conversion at a prayer meeting at his father's friend's house, a 'working man' whom Tom called 'his spiritual father', and he described that it had taken place among those who met there regularly.[93] Galt did not discuss how many people had been or were converted in his district in the cottage meetings that were held there, but Tom had been converted in his youth, forty years earlier. That the poor of his district had worshipped together for many years was revealed in his detailed discussion of the meetings. Mann advised that, 'Tom had quite a following of people of all evangelical sects and of no sect.'[94] After his father's friend's death Tom had taken over the meeting, and he explained that he had learned long parts of the Bible by heart and, he declared, 'I'd proved God.'[95] Over time, local accounts of his prayers having been answered in remarkable circumstances had drawn others in the district to him and to the cottage meetings. He recalled

[90] Galt, 'Saints', pp.31-45.
[91] Ibid., p.31.
[92] Ibid., p.32.
[93] Ibid., p.35.
[94] Ibid., p.31.
[95] Ibid., p.41.

> "When we could get what we asked for in the name of Jesus we would just ask for things an' get them. That was just what we did at my meetin' we just went on prayin' and the Lord He kept on answerin' all the time an very soon people sent us to pray for them all over the neighbourhood an' sometimes from a distance as well."[96]

In the context of his poverty, and that of his friends and neighbours, the prayers which he offered had been for things as pressing as a next meal, but also in matters of much wider importance. 'Mrs Giles', for example, observed of good fortune concerning the ending of 'th' strike', 'mebbe Cripple Tom he's bin praying about things; th' Lord don't seem t'hev the 'Eart t'refuse 'im anythink.'[97]

Galt witnessed a working-class evangelical culture in his district that pre-dated his mission and whose origins are unknown. In his texts he illustrated its influence and character and described the way in which he co-operated rather than competed with those who embraced its popular faith. Further research might uncover similar examples of indigenous working-class religiosity elsewhere in London.

The individuality of LCM's missionaries' work

LCM's mission was not rigidly prescriptive. It is important to recognise not only the distinct character of each of their districts but also the creativity that the missionaries brought to their work. Their achievements reflected their life experience, skills, and interests. From among Galt's contemporaries, it is possible to illustrate their missions' diversity and to discuss Galt's photographic work and its legacy.

[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid., p.100.

Thomas Duke

Thomas Duke was LCM's missionary in their Hague-street district, Bethnal Green, from 1881-1911.[98] He visited the Bird Fair in Sclater-street each Sunday morning, as did many thousands of working men and boys. He had done so since he was young and he was extremely knowledgeable about the training of birds for singing matches, and pigeon flying. LCM did not seek the closure of the fair or criticise its practices in any way in their reports of his work. He observed that in the small courts of his district, 'the tones of a harmonium no sooner vibrate through the air than the people collect in their door-ways, and heads appear at open windows.'[99] In 1887, LCM cited a newspaper report of his open-air mission's achievement

> He was preaching as usual on Sunday morning from twelve till half-past one o'clock, with a crowd of from five to six hundred people, chiefly men, listening the whole time. There are few who can command a similar crowd at midsummer, and yet he has been doing it the whole winter. And if he only stops on a week-night, and puts himself in an attitude of speaking, crowds assemble.[100]

By the end of the century almost every LCM missionary undertook open-air mission in their districts. Spurgeon declared, 'There are some customs for which nothing can be pleaded except that they are very old; open air preaching is as old as preaching itself'.[101] Duke's reports convey his spiritual confidence and complete enjoyment in his work. They give an indication that he had been able to engage the attention of those whom he sought to reach in significant numbers because he was preaching at the right time, and in the right place.

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[98] Duke, an Anglican, joined LCM in 1881. He was converted by LCM's missionary, Samuel Billington. He had been an emery-glass cloth maker in Rotherhithe, see LCMLSDR, p.95.
[99] *LCMM*, *1896*, p.275.
[100] *LCMM, 1887*, p.41.
[101] C. H. Spurgeon, *Second Series of Lectures to My Students: being addresses delivered to the students of The Pastors' College, Metropolitan Tabernacle* (London, 1877), p.54.

John Davis

Before joining LCM in 1877, John Davis had been a sailor and he was an American Civil War veteran.[102] From 1878-1915, he was LCM's missionary in Neckinger-road, Bermondsey.[103] His mission was remarkable for his creation of the Bermondsey Ragged School Rescue Lifeboat Crew who worked on the Thames. There were 4 separate crews with 30 members in each. Their spiritual metaphor was self-evident, but their work demonstrated the remarkable imagination of LCM's missionaries in creating new methods and approaches to mission. Davis was the captain of the whole. Each member, and they included both men and women, had experienced conversion, and was expected by him to speak out for Christ at any time. During the winter months each of the 4 crews held separate cottage meetings in the district. During the summer, large open-air meetings were held by them collectively from a bandstand in Southwark Park.[104] Davis spoke at LCM's Annual meeting in 1903.[105] He described his own shipwreck experience, and the achievement of one of his lifeboat crews' members

> Some years ago, being a sailor, I was overboard struggling with the waves among some wreckage, and there were men beside me crying for help. But I could not help them because I was paralysed, benumbed with the cold. Many Christians are benumbed with the cold and paralysed, and they have got to hold on like grim death themselves. But the Lord can anoint us with the Holy Ghost, and fit us for His work. I could tell you, if I had time, of one woman who would tuck up her sleeves and was a match for any two men, but God saved her, and through her, saved a dozen at least.

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[102] Davis, who was a Methodist, joined LCM in 1877. LCMLSDR, p.89. Born in Meon Stoke, Hampshire, he left school aged 9, and went to sea. See, H Codling, *A Marvel of Mercy, the Life-story of John Davis, American Naval Officer and London City Missionary* (London, 1899), p.38, describing how he had been one of three survivors of the sinking of the gunboat *Tulip* and awarded a gallantry medal.

[103] Codling, *A Marvel of Mercy*, p.93, noting Davis' mission hall was a railway arch in Gedling-street, nicknamed 'The Telescope' because it was 20' wide x 120' long and lined with corrugated iron. It seated 450, but his regular Sunday evening attendance was reported to have been 250.

[104] Ibid., pp.103-7.

[105] *LCMM, 1903*, pp.154-6.

> When we buried her, a little while ago, about one thousand people followed the remains and they said: "If God can save a wretched woman like that, He can save anybody."[106]

James Caulton

Many of LCM's missionaries brought the experience and particular understanding of their former employment to their mission. Before joining LCM, James Caulton had been a docker, he was the son of a docker, and he became LCM's missionary to the East and West India Docks in 1881.[107] Caulton worked alongside the Docks' labourers as if they were employed together. He described a day's work and an opportunity taken during his dinner-hour spent among the 200 men employed in the Wood Department

> My plan is to mount a stack of mahogany logs, or other timber, and to jocosely remark that I place myself there as a target to be fired at. 'Now gentlemen, here I am; fire away.' Instantly I am assailed by a running fire of questions, some of which can be answered, while others cannot. If a question is beyond my reach, I frankly admit that it is so. No good result is gained by shirking a question or beating about the bush, while the goodwill of the men is gained by an opposite course…..
>
> In the afternoon I shall probably go down to one of those ships on the jetty, and in the semi-darkness will take off my coat and show them that the dockers' Missionary can also work. When the bell rings, I cease work along with the others, and meantime I have been wound up to such physical exertion as to bring me into a state of perspiration. Then I go home, and during a cup of tea rehearse the day's experience to a sympathetic wife.[108]

He placed tracts in coat pockets as they hung up while men were working, or in the sleeves of shirts if they had been removed. He gave an example of a meaningful bet that he had placed

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[106] Ibid., p.156.

[107] Caulton, an Anglican, joined LCM in 1881. He was born in Limehouse and lived in Poplar. He was converted by LCM's missionary William Grace, LCM's missionary to the West India Dock, see *LCMM*, *1912*, p.14.

[108] *LCMM, 1893*, pp.176-8.

> 'Can't you give us something more substantial than tracts?' 'What do you mean by something more substantial?' 'Half-a-crown would be a bloomin' treat; wouldn't it, Jim?' appealing to his mate at the truck. 'I haven't been able to have a blazing good drink for a good month – strike me lucky if I have. My mate here will tell you the same. Have I, Jim? I could just do it on half-a-crown. Won't you part, guv'nor?' 'You would not be mean enough to take a half-a-crown from a poor man like myself, surely, without doing something to earn it? But I promise it to you for a very small amount of labour.' 'What is it, Mister? I'll do it sharp.' 'No; I'll give you plenty of time. Repeat this prayer every night before retiring to bed for fourteen nights: "God be merciful to me a sinner." Will you do it?' He promised, and I agreed to accept his bare word as fulfilment. I did not see him till long afterwards, and then he said that he had earned the money, but refused to accept it, although in pecuniary straits. On pressing him for the reason, he had said that using that simple prayer at first in more flippant mockery led him to think seriously. In a few nights he felt compelled to kneel while he repeated it. He then became alarmed at his spiritual condition as revealed to him by the Holy Ghost. Conscience was once more at work, and, although far from being right with God, he is now a seeker after God's pardoning grace. I compelled him to take the half crown, but, afterwards said, he could not touch it. Neither, by some strange phantasy, could he be induced to spend it; so at last he gave it to swell the funds of Poplar Hospital, dropping it into a box which was presented at his window on the top of a pole.[109]

In 1912, in his obituary LCM wrote, 'He had full scope among all grades, from the officers and clerks at their desks down to the dockers in warehouse and ship. He understood the men, and they understood him, and for 22 years he carried on a successful and soul-saving work, many among them coming out fully for Christ.'[110] Caulton's hitherto unknown evidence, which included his accounts of the Strikes, reveals the way in which religious conversations, debate, and prayer were an everyday and integral part of working-class men's lives in London's Docks.

[109] *LCMM, 1891*, pp.237-8.
[110] *LCMM*, *1912*, p.14.

Galt's photographs

Stubenrauch demonstrated that against the historiographical perception of evangelical faith having stood in inherent tension with modernity, during the first half of the nineteenth century through their use of cheap print and mass produced goods evangelical societies embraced developments in technology.[111] In the 1860s, LCM purchased their first magic lantern and it was used by the missionaries.[112] Throughout the second half of the century LCM made extensive use of photographic images taken by their missionaries, which were reproduced in their magazines and as slides in order to give magic lantern lectures to publicise and raise funds for their work. Sceptical argument might claim that mission photographs were taken *only* to support fundraising, but implicit in this view would be a conclusion that the missionaries had been engaged in an overarching editorial policy aimed at maximising support rather than recording and communicating their experience. Galt's mission images demonstrate why this was not the case.

In Spring's discussion of the photographs taken by Thomas Annan in Glasgow during the 1860s, he described Annan's documentary approach to his subjects and their immediacy despite the technical constraints of his equipment.[113] They were photographs, Spring argued, which were created to record a social history that Annan recognised.[114] His images showed ordinary men, women, and children within their streets and tenements that were the context spatially, of their poverty. His meaning, Spring concluded, rested wholly within the images which he created. From the identification of the existence of early documentary

[111] J. Stubenrauch, *The Evangelical Age of Ingenuity in Industrial Britain* (Oxford, 2016).
[112] *LCMAR, 1865,* pp.15-16.
[113] I. Spring, 'Midnight Scenes and Social Photographs: Thomas Annan's Glasgow', in D. N. Mancoff and D. J. Trela, (eds), *Victorian Urban Settings: Essays on the Nineteenth-Century City and its Context* (London, 1996), pp.195-213.
[114] Ibid., p.196.

photography by Spring, it is possible to consider the way in which Galt's images captured the experience of LCM's urban mission in social history. Galt was extraordinarily well placed to record the communities in which he lived and worked. He made images of his districts, the people who lived there, his mission, and his mission's helpers. It is possible to argue, as is the case with Annan, and in the context of their unique place in the Museum of London's collection, not that Galt's photographs were missionary propaganda, but important and rare examples of early documentary photography, wherein ordinary working-class people whom he knew, and with whom he worked, would certainly have recognised their portrayal by him.

[See Figures 10-15 placed at the end of the text]

Williams' evidence from oral interviews demonstrated the power of visual images and the place that they held in memory. She reported conversations in which those who were interviewed vividly recalled the 'limelight slides' that had been shown in Sunday-schools in Southwark.[115] LCM reported the missionaries' use of magic lanterns in their work and their great popularity. Frederick Sear, for example, described how he gave slideshows to between 300-400 adults and children at two shows which he held each Friday night in his district in Edmonton.[116] He observed that they 'were the rag-tag and bob-tail sort' who attended, but the slides' importance for him was in their effect upon his audience because, as he explained, *'I reach them, and I hold them.'*[117]

Galt used his own magic lantern to engage those whom he believed that he would not have otherwise reached in his mission. In 'Saints' he related how Mann had arranged a free tea and asked a boy whom he knew in the district to spread the word among his friends to

[115] Williams, *Religious Belief,* p.133.
[116] *LCMM, 1904*, p.261.
[117] Ibid.

come to the Mission Hall.[118] He told him that they were to be the 'boys who didn't go to Sunday School, or Band of Hope; who didn't wear white collars or shiny shoes.'[119] Fifty boys came. At his first meeting he made a short speech and showed many coloured lantern slides including the one which he believed to be the most popular of 'a man swallowing rats while asleep.'[120] He told the boys that he would continue to hold a meeting for them each week. He concluded

> Of course it was a great success; the pictures were very highly coloured and when a very brilliant one was shown they all said OH------ no matter what the picture represented. With the pictures I could speak to the boys for more than an hour and they were as quiet as any set of people in a church.[121]

He called their meeting 'The Bad Boys Club' and he noted that by and by lots of the boys began to act in a different way, although he observed that 'none of them became just like the very superior and wise boys that were sometimes read about in the books of Sunday School Libraries!'[122] His combination of free teas and lantern slides illustrate the ease with which it was possible to engage the boys' attention, but for him their success was spiritual, in his seeing a change in them, in kindness in their actions that he respected and valued.

C. Christian character

Galt discussed his pastoral care of those among whom he worked. He detailed his involvement in their rites of passage, and his visitation of the sick and dying. He illustrated the popular faith that he encountered and described some of the individual spiritual

[118] Galt, 'Saints', pp.75-8.
[119] Ibid., p.76.
[120] Ibid., p.77.
[121] Ibid., p.78.
[122] Ibid., p.83.

journeys which took place among those who engaged with his mission. What emerges from his examples is the opportunity to understand a working-class evangelical perspective upon working-class faith, to examine the exchange of ideas which took place between a working-class missionary and the poor, and to recognise the nature of their influence upon one another.

Williams identified the 'undenominationalism' of non-church attending parents in Southwark with respect, for example, to their children's attendance at Sunday-schools, and indicated that it was symptomatic of a general attitude which underpinned the beliefs that she observed.[123] She cited Rev Pickford, of St Jude's Church, who commented 'The vast majority are ignorant of the differences of standpoint and would not care two pence about them if they did know.'[124] Williams argued that religion was defined by the participants in terms other than specifically doctrinal or denominational ones, where the general ideals of the Christian faith were upheld as important within popular culture, but the specifics were seen as subsidiary if not irrelevant. LCM's evidence suggests that working-class people's experience of their mission was not necessarily filtered through popular culture because it was experienced directly in the missionaries' visits, teaching, and ministry. Their mission developed and thrived alongside popular culture. The missionaries understood popular culture, and they always sought to influence popular religion. This dissertation argues that the undenominational character of working-class faith in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century in London which has been discussed by historians was at least partly a

[123] Williams, *Religious Belief,* p.141.
[124] Ibid.

consequence of LCM's undenominational mission and a product of their missionaries' influence within their districts.

Galt's influence upon working-class faith in his mission

Tidball observed that the style of the evangelical approach to mission was aggressive without being offensive.[125] He concluded that its aim was the conversion of individuals, whether the conversion was sudden or gradual and whether it was effected in a group or private context.[126] LCM's mission followed this aim and Galt explained how he developed his own approach.

When Galt spoke at LCM's Annual meeting in 1902, he detailed the immediate impact of the condition of the people in his district upon his thoughts.[127] He recalled his arrival in Bethnal Green in 1890, 'I will not try to describe the houses, but the people with whom we are more concerned were of the very poorest of the poor, the most hopeless of the hopeless, overworked, underpaid, ill-clad, ill-fed, and ill-instructed, so much so that more than half the population of my district could neither read nor write.'[128] Within a very short space of time, he confirmed, he had realised that neither he nor they would reach a shared spiritual understanding if he were to preach to them in a 'conventional' sense. He described his response and its effect

[125] Tidball, 'English Nonconformist Home Missions', p.243.
[126] Ibid.
[127] *LCMM, 1902,* p.191.
[128] Ibid.

> I do not think that I had been working there for more than a fortnight when I had to give up lecturing as a thing impossible, for a great sense of pity for those poor people seemed to swallow up every feeling that one was capable of. And then one began to feel the force of what is recorded of the Master when He saw the multitude – that He was moved with compassion. And then, telling the simple story of Jesus Christ and His love, and especially dwelling on the sadder side of His history, became the most easy thing in the world, and it was there more than anywhere else I proved the truth of the statement of the Gospel is the power of God unto Salvation. Under the simple recital of the facts about Jesus Christ, how He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, …and about His awful death, I have seen tired hands falling into work, I have seen grimy faces assume a look of sympathy and pity for the Master with deep drawn sighs. That God was at work, that God would have it that this Gospel preached in such simplicity should be His power to salvation, I have never yet had the slightest doubt. I cannot tell you of the many cases of blessing which followed the preaching of the Gospel there.[129]

In 'Providence' he illustrated how he made connections between Christ's life on earth and the struggles of those who lived in his district in his teaching

> In my visitation I soon discovered that to apply the facts of the earthly life of the Lord Jesus to the facts of the lives of my hearers always secured attention and, I was able to believe, tended to create a sense of the intimate between His life and lot and theirs. Thus it came about when called on to offer comfort in time of sorrow it seemed natural, and proved effective to tell of Him who was "A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." When told of the difficulty of keeping the home together then one could tell of the One and He the holiest who ever trod the earth who said of Himself "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." When told of gross ill treatment it was effective to invite the complaining one to "consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself."[130]

He perceived that in encouraging empathy with Christ through self-identification with His experience it would resonate in his mission, and it was, perhaps as a consequence of the emphasis in his teaching, and his own interest in recording its effect, a strong characteristic within the faith of the poor whom he discussed.

[129] Ibid., pp.191-2.
[130] Galt, 'Providence', p.141.

Luck

Undoubtedly, and as both Williams and Cox identified in their studies of Southwark and Lambeth, Galt witnessed a widespread belief in luck. He recorded the ways in which he saw that people sought to extract good luck or to remove ill-luck when they secured the blessing of God through his ministry, for example, in baptism. Williams discussed the nominal membership of the church which was conferred through the baptismal ritual which was believed to be sufficient to ensure that an individual would be 'all right' when it came to the final judgement, as in being baptised his or her identification with the sacred community was ensured.[131] Galt, however, illustrated the gamble with luck that was perceived in having a child baptised in church and how it could be avoided if he were called upon to bless a baby instead. In 'Saints' the woman whom he called Mrs. Giles described the choice that women made between his blessing or 'the gin dodge'

> "…Well 'Ee talks a bit like 'Ee might be expected t'do an' offers up a prayer an' would ye believe it lots of wimmin don't 'ave their bibies christened 'cause they say a prayer frim 'im is jest as good as spillin' a drop of water on the kid's fice in church an' besides it don't never make 'em holler like the water offen does…I know the Bible it do say that the fervent prayer ov a righteous man availeth much, an' Mr Mann is a righteous man, all right; so he is. Besides if they don't git christ'nd the pore little kids don't 'ave t'be made drunk and that's one blessin' anyhow…w'y it's a common thing t'give th' pore mites enough Gin t'keep 'em quiet w'ile they'r bein' 'anded about an' w'en the water's bein put on their fices. It's considered very unlucky, you know, w'en a child cries w'en they'r tikin th'water, as its called, so th' mothers they don't take no chances that a little bit of gin will get rid ov."[132]

Galt's visitation of the sick and dying

LCM's missionaries did not administer the sacraments but they were connected with ordinary people's lives in their rites of passage. Galt revealed many aspects of his work in

[131] Ibid., p.88.
[132] Galt, 'Saints', p.54.

his texts, but his discussion of his ministry among the sick and dying is their rarest element and one which has eluded both middle-class contemporaries and historians.

Galt recorded in his discussions of his mission in Bethnal Green and in Poplar that the presence of a religious figure in a person's dying hours among the working classes was held to be of enormous importance and that it was almost universally sought by them. He made no mention, in any of his examples of his ministry, of his ever having attended a dying person without having been called upon to do so. He advised that the poor made no distinction between his role as a missionary and that of a local clergyman in their sending for him, where he explicitly described himself as being a mission-worker and not a minister. He revealed that it was held that the religious figure's attendance could be critical in influencing the soul's destination, and that it was thereafter appraised and related anecdotally by those who had witnessed the death. In 'Providence', Galt remembered his first impression of popular belief concerning death in Bethnal Green

> It was a common belief that if a person died quietly it indicated that the soul had certainly gone to heaven. If on the other hand a struggle preceded death it was concluded that the deceased must have been "An awful wicked one" and no mention of the destination of the soul would be made. Notwithstanding the contempt in which ministers of religion were all too commonly held extravagant estimates of their powers were all but universally held so that few died without having a minister or mission-worker called to the bedside. Seeing it was generally the case that the dying person had finally become unconscious before the minister arrived, it was difficult to understand what benefit the dying could be supposed to derive from the ministrations sought. Light was thrown on this problem when I, one day, chanced to mention the name of Dr Tyler, a well known Congregational minister. "Dr Tyler did ye sye Sir? That's a nime that'll always be remembered in this here fambley seein' as 'ow our mother is in 'even all on account ov 'im runnin' so fast that 'e got here afore she breathed her last. The doctor tole us, all unexpected like, that if there wuz enny wan thet we wanted ter see mother we'd better send for 'em and do it quick. Well I just ups an' ran as fast as my legs would carry me and knocked at Dr Tylers door. W'en 'e opened the door I jest screeched "Fer God's syke come at once to see mother she's adyin an' she aint ready. Wait till I get dressed say's 'e for it was in the middle ov the night. Well 'e come with me wivout even tyin' 'is bootlaces an' 'e ran all the wye too

> 'E jest got mother as she was breathin her last. 'E got right down on 'is knees an said a beautiful prayer an' read somethink out of the Bible. My didn't we think it lucky that we got 'im in time fer if we hadn't mother might be in the place down below fer ever an' ever. She wus a pretty rough un wuz mother."[133]

In 'Saints', following many years of experience, Galt reflected upon deathbed visitation in detail. Galt's accounts suggest that it was extremely rare for working-class people in his districts to have died alone. Roberts discussed mutual help and friendship in neighbourhoods in her study of working-class women's lives.[134] She concluded that the sick and dying had a very special claim on a neighbour's services. She explained that the concept of privatised, isolated family life was much later in reaching the working classes than in any other strata of society, for financial, social, and moral reasons.[135] In her evidence from the turn of the century in her study of the oral evidence of working-class women in Lancashire, most of the processes of birth and death, she observed, rested in the capable hands of women in the family and their neighbourhood helpers, where male undertakers merely took the body in the coffin they had made from the house to the church and or cemetery. The personal, practical, and direct help that she recorded was given by women. In Galt's detailed descriptions of his visits to the sick and dying the women who cared for the sick and dying were present in the rooms that he visited. In many instances they were not women who were family members, but they were women whose lives were closely woven together, not only as neighbours, or those with shared employment, but in their participation in LCM's mission. His evidence supports Roberts' view that working-class women took responsibility for death's arrangements, and he described in 'Saints' the character of their engagement,

[133] Galt, 'Providence', pp.139-40.
[134] Roberts, *A Woman's Place,* pp.189-92.
[135] Ibid., p.189.

and how public the experience of death often became when many women participated, as was the case when 'Doddie Dodds' was sent home from hospital

> When the lad arrived, the house was already full of women for word had passed round that Doddie was being sent home to die…..A messenger was sent to me but before I could get there he was pronounced dead and there was a great outcry because the preacher had not arrived in time. The body was "laid out" by the women who usually perform that office and there followed the flow of neighbours to view the corpse. In a very few hours Doddie had received more visitors than he had received in all the seventeen years of his life and more compliments on his good looks than he could have expected if he had lived for seventy years. Those going out whispered to those going in that Doddie was a beautiful corpse and this gem of consolation was likewise whispered to the weeping mother.[136]

McLeod, referring to the years 1850-1914, observed that women seemed to be more active in the churches than men, and that in the majority of working-class households women took the lead in religious matters.[137] He noted that they took responsibility for having children christened, for teaching them their prayers, and later for ensuring that they went to Sunday-school.[138] It is possible to extend his argument to include the responsibilities of death. In their being those who dealt with sickness and death it was much more likely, as a consequence, that it was working-class women who were present and had the opportunity to engage directly with Galt's ministry.

From their inception, LCM cautioned the missionaries against their reaching any conclusion about the spiritual condition of those whom they visited who were dying. In their 'Advice to Missionaries' in the preparation of their Annual Reports they instructed, 'The cases of persons who have begun only on their death-beds to pay attention to religion are those in

[136] Galt, 'Saints', pp.183-4.
[137] McLeod, *Religion and Society,* p.157.
[138] Ibid.

which the missionary can have but the least proof of a real change of heart.'[139] In consequence LCM advised that therefore two, or at the most, three, of such were all that needed to be given.[140] But many of the missionaries wrote in their reports about cases of those whose deathbed conversions they had been certain.

Galt did not suggest in the numbers who died it meant that he had witnessed anything other than a wholly individual experience of death, and that he treated each deathbed visit as a unique opportunity concerning a single soul. There is strong evidence that the missionaries of MCM held the same views in their ministry. Lees wrote

> Whilst other operations and organisations do a noble work and are being blessed by God, in a very special sense the City Mission stands alone in this door–to–door and individual pleading with sinners.
>
> In no two cases, or at least very seldom, is the need the same, nor is the soul seeking after Christ in the same way, and, therefore, needing the same treatment.[141]

In 'Saints', Galt carefully selected examples to reveal the breadth of his experience, but he stressed that he observed LCM's ethos of confidentiality in his ministry, 'on account of its privacy being too sacred'.[142] He followed their guidance that those who died without God and without hope should not become the subjects of his accounts. Undoubtedly, however, he encountered such cases, and about which he commented with great regret

> Nowhere else in life is the great gulf between belief and non-belief so abundantly manifest and so generally acknowledged and nowhere else is the refuge of lies, in which too many put their trust, when in health, seen to be as chaff which the wind driveth away.[143]

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[139] For example, *LCMAR, 1892,* Appendix, VII-REPORTS, p.7.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Lees, *The Cry,* pp.66-7.
[142] 'Saints', p.171.
[143] Ibid., p. 72.

He reflected that there were cases to which he was called which seemed to be without 'one ray of hope', but he understood why this had often been the case. What frustrated his work, he explained, was not widespread indifference, but the timing of his having been called. From their earliest years, in their reports, LCM's missionaries had made the same observation. In 1841, Hurlin wrote, 'In too many instances, it is not till the doctor can do no more for the body that the Missionary is sent for to speak of the soul.'[144] Galt recalled that with increasing experience, he had resolved that if he were unable to address the dying person, he took the opportunity to speak instead with others who were present in the room.[145]

He recognised that he had visited cases in which fright might be mistaken for repentance, and where alarm had led to offers of belief in anything or in anybody who might offer a better chance in the next world. In 'Saints' he detailed Mann's visit to a man who lived on his district who had claimed repeatedly that there was 'nothing at all in religion' and yet the time came when he was taken sick and he believed that he was going to die. He observed wryly

> There was no regret for the life that he had lived no repentance from miserable ways no sorrow for the harm that he had done just a miserable wish to escape the consequences. As I came out of his house I met the Salvation Army Officer going in and later in the day I learned that Eight workers had been in to see him that day representing six denominations. He assented to everything and considered himself prepared to die. Whether prepared to die or not he certainly was not prepared to live for he got better and within a month he was at his old tricks again.[146]

[144] *LCMM, 1841*, p.113.
[145] 'Saints', p.176.
[146] Ibid., p.182.

It is remarkable to contemplate the image of the queue of workers that he described and to note that within a short space of time the opportunity to secure the attention of so many religious agencies had been possible.

Galt explained that generally speaking he had found that it was easier for him to be of service to one who had no theory of his own, for when one refuge has failed it was more difficult to persuade the dying sinner that another refuge was worthy of implicit trust. He reflected that he had worked among many cases in which there had been a real element of certainty, and that perhaps it would be surprising for his reader to learn that they were mostly in the class of those who knew next to nothing about revealed religion. His experience, he concluded, had led him to believe that deep down in the hearts of even the most degraded there was, at the end, a groping after God.[147]

Bebbington wrote that a stern test of evangelical spirituality came with the approach of death when Evangelicals nurtured the ideal of a 'good death', a bedroom scene in which the dying saint made an unhurried disposition of affairs and testified to a calm assurance of faith.[148] He observed that it was noticeable that after the 1870s there had been a reaction against such scenes and when reticence in the face of death then seemed to become more appropriate. He explained that in recent studies of the following period Heaven had been recognised as a central theme of evangelical piety, where reunion with friends and family was commonly anticipated and where there was an expression of the solidarity of the fellowship of believers that would endure beyond the grave. In these, he concluded, the most common feature of anticipation of the afterlife was looking forward to being in the

[147] Ibid., p.177.
[148] D. W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism, The Age of Spurgeon and Moody* (Nottingham, 2005), p.82.

divine presence.[149] In contrast, the central theme in many of Galt's conversations about death, and in his deathbed accounts was forgiveness.

Galt recalled in considerable detail two deathbed cases which had held special meaning for him, not in an LCM report, but in 'Saints'.[150] In his account of 'Henry Stover' he did not relate a conversion of which he was certain. He qualified his narrative with an observation that this was because in deathbed repentance there were 'so many considerations' which would have had to have been taken into account. The significance of his experience included Stover's companions who were caring for him, because their spiritual condition moved him greatly. Throughout LCM's history their missionaries' consistent belief was that their mission facilitated a far more Providential influence among the poor than would ever be widely known or revealed to them. It was a fundamental motivation and understanding in their agency, but it was in their visitation of the sick and dying especially that they received affirmation of their hope.

Stover's death revealed the importance for Galt's mission of the circulation of the evangelical story books that had been taken from door to door each Sunday morning in his district by his wife and her helpers. Mann observed the Christian goodness of the women who cared for Stover and their unrecognised engagement with his mission's texts, neither of which he could have imagined had he not been sent for by them. He related

> The house I went to today is in a slum street where almost every room is a home, where children literally swarm in the roadway all day and where the doors stand wide open, in many instances both day and night. I found Henry Stover in a back room upstairs. I was allowed to go up alone, contrary to the usual custom which is that when one calls to minister to the dying every inmate of the house and frequently some of

[149] Ibid., pp.82-3.
[150] Galt, 'Saints', pp.171-84.

> the neighbours as well crowd in till there is hardly any standing room. The room was dirty, untidy, and bug-infested….
>
> When I entered the sick man turned his head slowly and gazed steadily at me for a few seconds and then he tried to speak but was seized with such a fit of coughing that it seemed as if he must certainly die.[151]

Mann explained that he wished to be of service to him. Stover asked Mann if he was the man from the Mission who sent the books around. Stover continued

> "Well then you'r th' bloke I want ter see cause there's somethin' I want ter know and you oughter know so tell th' truth an' no kiddin' but afore I ask my question I'd better tell ye who I am."
>
> "I'm a rotter Mister, I ain't no good ter nobody an' never wuz. My father an' mother were rotters too an' no good nohow an' they never learned me nuthin' cept what wuz bad. Afore I was twelve I wuz goin' regular ter 'nokkin shops an' I learnt lots ov other fellers ter go there too. The bad wimmin used ter bribe me ter bring boys in an' mos'ly they didn't know what they were goin' ter. Lots ov them boys didn't live long an' I suppose ye know th' reason? Before I wus fifteen I began ter tike fits an' th' doctors at the horspital sed that it wus my bad life wot done it an' that I wouldn't live more'n a year or two unless I'd clean up an' go straight. They wus wrong fer I did'nt clean up an' I didn't go straight an' I did live more'n a year or two fer I'm twenty seven but I'll never be no older for I'm done for now an' no mistake; coughin' up my lungs by th' mouthful day an' night an' that can't las' long. The doses I wuz getting' every now an' then mide me too weak ter be a bully so I carried on as a pimp an' ye wouldn't believe the dirty work thet I've done in thet line. I ain't been able ter do even thet fer more'n a year now an' all thet time I've been in 'Ell an' many's th' time I've gone ter mike away wiv meself, like so many ov th' girls do w'en they'r gonners; but I never hed th' guts ter do it. That's the kind ov rotter wot I've been."[152]

Stover remembered how six months earlier Mrs Mann had come to his door for the first time, and, although he could not read, he had taken the book that she had offered because of its pictures, and that a woman 'of the house' had then read it to him. Subsequently he waited to receive another book each Sunday, and the women took turns in reading them

[151] Ibid., pp.172-3.
[152] Ibid., p.174.

to him. He added, 'an sometimes I know they read 'em a second time, yes an' cry over 'em too.' He asked Mann to explain to him about forgiveness

> "I can't tell ye no more mister, my cough is comin' on an' it may be my las' spell. Tell me quick is it all straight goods wot it tells in them books thet th' God above do care for rotters like me. Did Jesus really die for my sins' an' all my dirty work? Will 'Ee forgive me an' save me if I ask 'Im an' trust in 'Im. Is all thet straight goods mister? Tell me true an' no kiddin'"
>
> "I asked him to listen to what the Lord Jesus Himself said to one who wanted to know and I read from the third chapter of the Gospel by John. When I looked from the page to the face of the dying man I found a look of eager wonder in his eyes and he said: "That's better'n th' books mister read jest thet agen". I did so and could hear him muttering "That's done me good: I'll put all my money on Him. Now I don't need ter be afraid ov death nor nuthin'. He lay perfectly quiet for a while and I thought that he had passed away but soon he aroused and then came the last dread struggle and the creaking of the bedstead attracted the attention of the two women of the house who were in the room in a moment. For a moment they were terror stricken as they saw the crimson tide of life welling from the dying man's lips and heard his laboured efforts to breathe. But the terror was only momentary their womanly ministering instincts awoke with the necessity for it transforming them in their every look and movement. In the presence of dire agony and need they seemed to fall back on a life which might still be theirs in spite of its having been crushed under a load of sin and awful dissipation. These women had kept that miserable man without fee or reward for nearly two years and when I left they were rejoicing over having kept the insurance up; so saving the poor body from the indignity of a Parish Funeral…And they were women of the city."[153]

Stover's conversation had been lucid. Stover had led and Mann followed. Mann carefully supplied the answers and reassurance that Stover had sought, and he cited the Bible to him in the way of it having been written especially for him.

In detailing the death of 'Betsy Mumms', Galt recorded that she had witnessed and remembered Mann's open-air teaching. It had held a meaning for her that was revealed to him and the women who were taking care of her only as she died.

[153] Ibid., pp.175-6.

Mann was called by 'Mrs Evans' who advised him that Betsy was dying, and the doctor had said that she could not last until the morning. She added that 'well she's the same sort ov woman that I am, & if yer don't know what that means I'll tell you about myself but I just can't make myself tell on her poor thing.'[154] Mann interrupted her to say that all he needed to know was that she was a sinner, and that his Master was the Friend of Sinners and that it was for sinners only that He died.

When he arrived at the house, he noted that Betsy's room was spotlessly clean and that a chair and lamp had been placed at the bedside in preparation for his visit. He observed that there were seven or eight women in the room of the dying woman, that all of them seemed to be fearfully frightened, and all of them were weeping. He recounted

> When I sat down beside the bed the poor sufferer turned her eyes on me and gasped "You won't preach at me will you?' cause I don't want no preachin'." I assured her that I would just read with her and pray for her and was relieved to hear her say that she didn't mind that. After having offered a few words of prayer for grace and help I was turning over the pages of my Testament when she said eagerly that she would like to hear the story of the "Prodigal what went back home".[155]

He read to her as she requested, offered prayer for the passing soul, asking that she might feel the Father's arms about her neck and the kiss of reconciliation on her lips, and that all present might have grace given to arise and come to the Father. He left, promising that he would return in the morning. When he did so, the woman who opened the door told him

> Poor Betsy don't need ye no more, sir, pore dear she went off early in th' morning an' it wuz pline to be seen thet she's gone ter a better plice w'rer she'll be better off then ever she's bin in this here world. Betsy was a great sinner, sir, jest as I'm a great sinner but she died at peace wiv all th' world and wiv th' Lord above as well. It ain't no use

[154] Ibid., p.177.
[155] Ibid., pp.178-9.

> no one sayin' thet there ain't no God after wot I seen las' night. Afore ye came, sir, Betsy was thet wild we couldn't 'ardly 'old 'er in bed....[156]

Betsy's friend explained to Mann that she had heard him telling the story of the prodigal son in the open air, and that Betsy had liked it very much because it was not preaching, and that was why she had come to ask for the story again the night before. She had asked for something that was meaningful for her, but had not revealed why to him. As with Stover Betsy had led and Mann had followed. Betsy's friend continued

> Well after ye went away she jest lay quiet for a good while an' then she says "Oh gels weren't that old father a good sort? ...She sed thet she was goin' back home t'say father I hev sinned, then she lay still agen for a bit. By an' bye she sed, "I wonder if 'E sees me a-comin' Then she sed gels lets all go back 'ome in a bunch fer 'E's a good sort. She kep' on whisperin' but we couldn't tell much ov wot she was sayin' cause we were all a-cryin' too much.
>
> About an 'our afore she went we seen a change come over 'er- th'wrinkles all went away an' she looked jest like a young gel- she could speak as plain as anythink an' her voice wasn't squeakey no more. We all got scared an' some ov us began ter cry ter th' Lord for mercy, me bein' one ov them an' I ain't shamed ter own it an' I do 'ope thet my prayer will be answered on th' jedgement day. She clasp't 'er 'ands like a little' un sayin' its prayers an' kep on sayin' 'E's a good sort! 'E's a good sort!! Over an' over. Jest afore th' breath was took from 'er she held up 'er fice jest as if some one wuz a-goin' ter kiss 'er and then she wuz gone without no struggle; jest like a bibey goin' ter sleep. We laid 'er out between us an' she looks jest lovely; t'look at 'er now ye'd never think thet there wuz anythink agenst Betsy. It looks ter me thet that there story ov th' prodigal wus jest mide fer No-Good-Betsy as we use'ter call 'er an' fer th' likes ov 'er."[157]

In this text Galt indicated how as he would have hoped, Mann's ministry had affected the women who were present.

Between 1890-7, the years in which Galt worked in district mission, the missionaries visited 64,204 people in their districts who had died, and among these 16,307 were visited only by

[156] Ibid., p.180.
[157] Ibid., pp.180-1.

LCM's missionaries.[158] Galt's character Mann had not recognised either Stover or Betsy, and it is unlikely therefore that they had ever attended his mission hall's services. Because there was no coming back from their final hours, and because the missionaries kept the confidence of those whom they visited, the numbers of those who had been truly receptive to the missionaries' ministry cannot ever be known. Galt cautioned against interpretations of swallows and summers but he confirmed that from his experience their numbers had been significant.

Popular religion in Galt's districts

Williams discussed the ideal of 'the true believer' where she argued that there was a recognition of the gulf between an ordinary lifestyle and the demands perceived to be inherent within the teaching propagated by the evangelist.[159] She concluded that self-professed believers were expected to 'go the whole way' whereas in popular religion it was held that it was possible for individuals to disassociate themselves from the particular standards which formal profession entailed while still pleasing God, being moral, and ensuring their salvation in the life to come.[160]

Galt recorded the elements of popular religion that Williams identified, but in his accounts, he demonstrated that working-class belief was more nuanced than there having been the contrasting positions of the formal profession of the regular church attender or simply observing the moral and ethical criteria implicit in popular religion. Between these were to be found those who engaged with LCM's mission, attended the missionaries' meetings regularly, or their open-air services irregularly, accepted their ministry, and who lived their

[158] See Appendix Table.
[159] Williams, *Religious Belief,* p.108.
[160] Ibid., p.115.

lives with diverse and fluctuating understanding of religion as relationship with God not just moral and ethical standards.

Williams argued that there was little doubt that the demands made of 'a true believer' acted as a barrier to church-going activity for many and were a prime source of alienation.[161] Galt's evidence suggests that he did not actively promote the ideal of 'a true believer' and that he sought to dismantle any apprehension of there being an expectation of becoming one in order to engage with his mission because he understood that it would have limited his opportunities and undermined its development. Galt was not naïve. He clearly recognised that a convert's life remained rooted within the social context of their family or household, and neighbours. From the missionary's perspective popular belief was often the starting point from which his work with an individual might begin. What characterises all of Galt's accounts is his flexibility in his engagement with popular religion, rather than its condemnation.

Williams demonstrated that the form which popular beliefs took could not be equated simply with Christian teaching without appreciating the process of reinterpretation which took place in popular *culture,* but from Galt's perspective substantial reinterpretation took place in individual and often domestic life-experience. Galt understood how this reinterpretation took place and why. His mission was based upon this understanding. He sought to address and to counter self-reasoning. He was patient. He put no pressures of time upon himself of those whom he met. His teaching was based upon conversations, debate, and an exchange of ideas. He absorbed the responses which he received, reflected upon their personal context, and how he would address them.

[161] Ibid., p.108.

In 'Saints', Galt cautioned against a prescriptive judgement about the faith of his mission's followers when Mann's visitor Miss Bain observed, "Are these creatures supposed to be saints. Why I should never have supposed that they were christians of any kind leave alone –-."[162] Mann answered that they were 'christians beyond doubt'.[163] Galt acknowledged flaws in his saints and he agreed with the comments which were made about other classes' Christian hypocrisy when they were expressed by his sinners.

The missionaries expected to work with and welcome those who associated themselves with their mission however spiritually misguided they considered their views to be. In 'Saints', the woman whom he called 'Uncle's Auntie' was described affectionately by Galt as 'one of my favourite sinners'.[164] Mann observed, 'Ada's mother and I have been the best of friends and I am privileged to say almost anything to her but although I have given her quite a good deal of her own kind of medicine I am afraid that I have not done her much good as yet.'[165] Without reading Galt's notes it is impossible to know whether each 'popular' opinion that was held by her was attributable to a single person known to him, or whether she represented a composite of the women he had encountered, but her character illustrated Galt's experience of popular religion and how it was revealed to him. She expressed her fear of extremism in religion, observed its 'proper place' in everyday life, noted the double-standards of middle-class Christians, witnessed her daughter's conversion, and husband's changed character as a consequence of attending Mann's meetings. She related her conversations with God, her understanding of Him, and she described the character of the faith that she had self-reasoned that He accepted from her.

[162] Galt, 'Saints', p.9.
[163] Ibid.
[164] Ibid., p.103.
[165] Ibid., p.104.

'Uncle' was the local nickname for a pawnbroker and on Saturdays, with her pram, Auntie redeemed pledges of Sunday clothes for her neighbours. She then returned them to Uncle on Monday mornings. In doing so she took a small commission. Galt detailed how she had developed this income for her family. She was anxious that in becoming 'very religious' she might be compelled to give up her work because she understood that 'very religious' people disapproved of the practice of pledging possessions with a pawnbroker. Auntie's opinion was combined with an accusation of hypocrisy in this position

> "…Th' rich uns borer money an' don' all pay it back agen; th' pore uns they borrers money on their own things an' never gets no shanst o' not payin' it back. Religious folks puts up big churches an' put in fine orgins an' they do tell me thet most ov th' churches an' orgins too heve been in pledge for years an' years an' it do seem funny t'me ter think thet they use them sime Cherches ter tell our kids in, thet it's wicked t'pledge their things in th' pawnshop. It ain't straight goods this here sayin' don' do as I do but do as I tell ye t'do; thet's wot my old father 'ud 'ave called preachin' Cream an practisin' skim milk."[166]

Auntie's daughter Ada was one of Mr and Mrs Mann's mission's helpers, and she had experienced conversion as a consequence of her prayers being answered when the family had been starving. Her mother acknowledged God's role in their Providential fortune and yet she was worried that Ada would become 'very religious'. She advised

> First an' foremost I want ye ter warn 'er agin' bein' too religious; jest pint out thet w'ile it's wicked not ter be religious at all it's foolish ter be too religious; thet th'One Above don't hev no use fer wicked people an' at th' sime time 'Ee don't want 'em ter be foolish so we'd best be neither Infidels nor fanatticks. Tell 'er th'way ter go looney is ter be all one thing all th' time w'ich th' One Above didn't never intend, nohow, seein' as 'ow 'Ee's mide us ter be lots ov things, an' it's a moral certainty thet it wasn't never intended, thet's as pline as th' nose on yer fice w'en ye jest remember thet w'en things wus mide there wuz only one day in th' week fer bein' religious an' six days fer bein' other things such as hevin' a good time an' getting' an' 'onest livin'….[167]

[166] Ibid., p.123.
[167] Ibid., pp.118-9.

Auntie's husband attended Mann's meetings and open-air Services when he could do so. She had noticed a change in his character, but he had not declared an experience of his own conversion to his wife. She observed

> Come day an' go day an' God send Sunday as my man used to say afore 'ee gone kind ov queer in th' ' ead wiv a-lissenin ter Mr Mann's preachin 'Ee jest don't as much as say boo ter a goose now; jest tikes things quiet an' patient like, jest ez if 'ee thought 'ee wuz goin' ter die an' go ter live wiv th' Hangels an' wanted ter git inter their nice ways; thet ain't no way ov livin' down 'ere seein' as this is not 'eaven by no means.[168]

Auntie's fear was of unrealistic 'goodness'. It was woven with her idea of it bringing a vulnerability to her family that would mean that her husband would not behave as she would wish when it came to coping with the family's 'this world' dealings with neighbours or enemies who would take advantage of what might have been understood by them to be not her husband's 'goodness' but weakness. The association of becoming 'very religious' and as a consequence 'less manly' on his part is also suggested. It is interesting that Auntie, the wife, and mother in the household was the one who was furthest from Mann's reach spiritually rather than her husband in what was a reversal of roles from a characterisation of maternal female piety.

Implicit in Auntie's discussion of religion was her fear of her own mortality. There is also an indication that she would be expected if she became 'very religious' that she would have to address her fear far sooner than she would wish. She explained

> "…I ain't no Infidel, Miss, an' if any ov my people wuz took ter die I'd be the fust ter send for the missionary or th' minister; but everythink in it's own plice sez I. W'en I die I hope an' expect ter' ave a coaffin, an'a shroud, as is fittin' I should, but I don't want no coaffin stood up in th' corner ov th' house all th' time, nor no shroud ter walk about

[168] Ibid., pp.125-6.

> in week days an' Sundays so long as I'm 'ale an' 'artey; time enough ter git thinkin' about them things w'en yer bloomin' well 'ave to sez I!"[169]

She held self-reasoned ideas about how ordinary people and not just the 'very' religious would find themselves in Heaven, for if it were not the case then, she reflected, Heaven would be quite an empty place. She observed

> "Besides! Wot is ter be will be, is my 'umble opinion, an' if y'er goin' ter 'eaven at last ye'll git ter 'eaven at last, - leastways if it ain't thet w'y there ain't a-goin' ter be much company up above! It fair hits me on th' funny bone ter 'ear them wot's very religious a-talkin' as if only a few ov them 'll git a look in on 'eaven, all th' rest bein' down below. A pretty fine circus that would be, wiv th' devil hevin all th' heathen an' about a thousan' t'one ov the' Christians inter th' bargain not meanin' ov coorse th' very religious Christians but jest th' Christians what ain't heathen."[170]

Galt's middle-class church-going character's immediate thought was that her philosophy was 'so strange, so daring, so blasphemous that it was difficult to adjust the mind to it even for the purpose of rejecting it.' But he added, in an example of tolerance and the need for time for reflection, 'Yet the woman was so evidently sincere that it did not seem right for her simply to rebuke her.' [171]

From his accounts, the conversions that Galt sought were achieved through his focus upon individuals, and where he recognised that there were often multiple issues involved. Galt illustrated in his discussions of popular religion that he had found that these could be at the same time both social and extremely personal.

[169] Ibid., pp.107-8.
[170] Ibid., pp.120-1.
[171] Ibid., p.121.

Galt's understanding of working-class faith

To reveal his understanding of working-class faith in his district in Poplar in 'Saints' was Galt's stated purpose in writing his book. Its distinct character and impact upon him were expressed in the final reflections of his middle-class visitor

> "…I have learned during my sojourn in the East End that there is quite another way than mine of feeling and acting towards God; a way which sometimes seems fearfully crude but far more real and honest than mine. To me reverence has always seemed the very essence of Religion but here confidence seems to take the place of reverence. I have been concerned about my treatment of God but your people seem rather to consider God's treatment of them. To be perfectly honest I am beginning to admit that I was concerned about my goodness while my friends here are concerned about God's goodness. I am most sensible of the obligation under which you have placed me in allowing me to come so intimately into contact with your Saints and believe that they will for the most part, be regarded as such by me as long as I live and that they will too be abiding factors in my life. I came to you thinking to be the means of turning your lives into worthier channels only to find that it is my own life that has been so turned."[172]

Implicit in Miss Bain's conclusion was Galt's argument that conventional church-going religiosity would be 'transformed' by encounter with the religiosity of the poorest working-class people among whom he had lived and worked and that it was a remarkable achievement on their part. For him they were not the passive recipients of his instruction because they were influential. He illustrated what he had learned of their faith in detail.

In 'Saints', Galt did not make an uncomplicated distinction between saints and sinners, despite his choice of his work's title. He was determined to demonstrate that none of those whom he discussed resembled the 'very religious' characters depicted in many middle-class evangelical publications. Auntie observed wryly, 'I wouldn't hev no kid ov mine comin' in

[172] Ibid., p.206.

an' a-dear-motherin' ov me an askin' if I wuz a-goin'ter 'eaven like some ov th' kids ov the' sunday School books do, not if I know it.'[173]

Galt called Mrs Giles, 'a sort of a Saint' because of her 'intensely human' nature.[174] His response when he thought about her was to quote, 'In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren ye have done it unto Me.'[175] He detailed what he called her 'selfless loyalty' in her work in connection with the Maternity Society, and noted that she was one of its principal workers. He explored also what he observed to be her uncomplicated generosity and honesty which reflected for him the working-class Christian way in which she felt and acted.

Galt's recording of Mrs Giles' work is important. Historians have discussed the RBM and their nurses' evangelical work among London's poor, but not the evidence of working-class women who were working in support of LCM's missions and whose meetings they attended. Arkell noted the qualities which were expected of a woman employed by The London Bible and Domestic Female Mission; 'they must be earnest Christians, a good needlewoman and have had some experience of mission work.'[176] They visited from house-to-house, read the Bible, and induced women to purchase it. They collected subscriptions. The Society employed 130 Bible women and 90 nurses in 1897.[177] Prochaska described how Ranyard's nurses were drawn for the respectable working-class and that by 1893, the nurses had spent one year at a general hospital and then attended a special hospital to gain a certificate.[178]

[173] Ibid., p.117.
[174] Ibid., p.9.
[175] Ibid., p.49.
[176] Booth/B/158, p.14.
[177] Ibid.
[178] F. K. Prochaska, 'Body and Soul: Bible Nurses and the Poor in Victorian London', *Historical Research*, 60/143 (October 1987), p.339.

Their programme was followed by probationary training in the districts. There they received a systematic course in anatomy, physiology, and general nursing on which the Mission examined them at the end of their first and second years.[179] Mrs Giles was not a nurse, and it would be stretching Galt's fondness for her to call her an 'earnest' Christian. She cautioned herself, for example, 'If I hev t'tell lies I'll tell 'em but I 'ope I won't git th' abit and tell more lies.'[180] Galt called them 'Holy Lies' because their purpose was well-intended. Mrs Giles' help was invaluable to Mrs Mann in the Maternity Society, not for her needlework skills, mission experience, or nursing qualifications, but in her knowing 'a good many ov th' ins an' outs ov 'ow things is done at them times' and it was her Christian kindness that Galt admired. She visited women in the district after their babies had been born. They were not necessarily her friends and neighbours, but any woman in need, and she explained

> Ov course I try t'do the pore souls enny good thet I kin, an' I keep an eye on th' other kids in th' house an' all that….W'en I goes t'a house I says to meself: now thet's me alyin' there an' I've bin there so long, an' so long, an' 'ow do I feel. Then I tike a look at th' bed an' I sez that's th' bed thet I'm alyin' on an' 'ow do it feel? Then maybe I look at th' mother's hair an' I sez that's my 'air an' it aint bin combed fer so long 'ow would I like t'hev it combed an' brushed. In my own clumsy wye I ginerilly git an' idear of somethink t'do an' I do it an' lots ov wimmin wot hev very little use fer me when they'er well is glad t'see me w'en they'er not well.[181]

In Baxter's notes of his interview with Rev William Carroll, he recorded Carroll's observation that Galt 'bribes a good deal, and is got-round by the humbugging old women who imposed on Adderley.'[182] Galt's evidence reveals no bribery of old women on his part, or that he was 'got-round' by the old women who helped his mission. In his discussion of Mrs

[179] Ibid., pp.343-4.
[180] Galt, 'Saints', p.100.
[181] Ibid., p.56.
[182] Booth/B/175, pp.113-14.

Giles, it was she who made a substantial contribution to Mann's mission's work and for which he was indebted to her.

Galt communicated the difficulties that women in his district experienced when they supported his mission, not only in terms of the challenges that they faced in poverty, but in examples of domestic abuse. In 'Saints' Mann discussed 'Melia Wallaker', and described how he felt about her Christian character

> If she is any kind of a saint it is greatly to her credit and if she were every kind of sinner it would be no more than might naturally be expected under the circumstances.[183]

He added, 'If I must tell the truth I like her best when she is a sinner.'[184] He admired her for her courage and for being a 'wonderful' mother to her four small children. She was married to a stevedore who believed that in keeping himself and paying the rent he had wholly discharged his duty to his family. Galt wrote

> Mrs Wallaker finds food and clothes for herself and children by making Baby Shoes at two pence halfpenny a pair for a firm in Bethnal Green: when her precious husband is out of work, she keeps him also.
>
> …He gets his own breakfast at a Coffee Shop and never by any chance does he ask if there is any food in the house for wife or children. In the evening he usually brings something substantial in for his supper, which his wife cooks for him, and then he eats it, every crumb, and will not allow so much as to let the children pick any bones that are on the plate….
>
> Mrs Wallaker seems to find a great deal of comfort in the Services in the Mission Hall and she is most regular in sending her children to Sunday School. The man never comes, and it is well known that he makes it as difficult for his wife and children to come as his perverted ingenuity enables him to make it.[185]

[183] Galt, 'Saints', p.149.
[184] Ibid., p.147.
[185] Ibid., pp.148-9.

He related that during a Mothers Meeting, Melia Wallaker's small son wandered from the Hall into the street. Street cleaners had emptied a sewage pit and the boy had become covered in waste. In fury and misunderstanding she fiercely attacked one of the men, whom she believed to have caused his accident. He described what happened when other members of the Meeting followed her outside

> The first to take action was the last who should have done so. Mrs Backer, who believed herself to be a born diplomat stepped forward with a dramatic air and did what a great many other supposed diplomats do – acted exactly like a born idiot. Looking very stern she said, "Melia! Do ye fergit that y'er a professin' Christian?" The shaft went home; the little body quivered and a pitiful look crept over the flushed face. All might have been well had not the cold voice of the diplomat, with true diplomatic ineptitude, added "And ye know Melia ye can't go ter 'eaven if ye fight in th' street."[186]

The mothers went home. Mrs Mann helped Melia to clean her son. The Police came to investigate the disturbance and began to ask questions of the neighbours and Mrs Mann, 'none of whom seemed able, or was it willing, to give any definite information.' Melia cried in expressing her fear to Mrs Mann that Mrs Backer's appraisal was correct. He recounted the support that she offered

> Mrs Wallaker pitifully protested that she didn't see how the Lord could love her no more. Mrs Mann said Did you love Alfie when he was dirty and in trouble? If you did cannot you believe that your Lord will love you when you are dirty and when you are in trouble and when you need Him so much.[187]

Galt illustrated that Melia held her faith not only within the context of her domestic life but also in challenges to it from among her social peers. Historians have implied that in not having made institutional attachments in church attendance and by rejecting constraining ideals of goodness and morality their involvement with a local 'religious agency' such as a

[186] Ibid., p.154.
[187] Ibid., p.156.

mission would have been, as Williams observed, a loose affiliation.[188] Galt's evidence suggests that many who worked with his mission and attended his services had made a very deep and determined connection although they did not attend local churches. What emerges from Galt's discussion of Mrs Giles and Melia Wallaker was not only his conviction that their working-class faith was genuine, the point that he sought to make, but also that it was substantially dependent upon Mann's mission to sustain and to nurture it; either to give it a framework of activities with which to engage and for it to develop, or for much needed support when it became vulnerable.

Galt's depiction of another 'Saint' in his district, 'Grannie Lakin', is important because of his discussion of her considerable influence upon Mann's own faith.[189] He revealed the strength of his admiration for her when he observed, 'I reverence her.' He described her effect upon him when he visited her, 'While she spoke of how she feels in her pitiful old age I seemed to hear a voice saying, "Put thy shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." '[190]

He believed her to be the oldest person in his district. She lived in a back-parlour, 'certainly no bigger than ten feet by eight feet' and had earned a few pennies by helping others with light housework. Her granddaughters took turns in calling on her and they kept up her 'Burial Fund Money' (*Industrial Insurance*) of which he noted, 'This being considered a paramount duty towards the aged in this particular locality.'[191] He confirmed that she had

[188] See, Williams, *Religious Belief,* p.162.
[189] Ibid., pp.131-45.
[190] Ibid., p.145.
[191] Ibid., p.132.

been brought up a Methodist 'and still retained the expressions and mannerisms of the older school of that body.'[192]

Tidball concluded that conversion was essentially a moral issue, and the test of a true conversion was whether or not a moral change had taken place in a person's life.[193] Her conversion would have been evident to Galt from her actions. She was confident that God had helped her by His Grace not to have done anything dishonest for money even when times had been extremely hard and when she had been offered 'good money' for work that was 'light and easy' by a fish curer who called from door to door. She recalled that her neighbours were 'tryin' ter 'elp themselv's out in ways thet they didn't oughter'.[194] He revealed his 'trade secret' of inserting a quill into the gullet of a lean bloater and inflating it with a great blow that would make it look like a big fat one with roe in it, and he offered to employ her to do this work for him. She explained that she had not been prepared to make a sin against God in this way by using the 'breath of life' for false measure.

Her lifelong faith was characterised by Galt in her spiritual gratitude and trust in God's goodness, and her conviction that He remembered her always

> "Wot an old woman like me oughter do instead ov tellin' stories is ter give her testimony an' experience like th' good old Methodists showed th' world 'ow ter do…Fer more'n th' allocated span ov' Three Score Years an' Ten I've trusted in th' Lord and 'Ee's never once gone back on 'Is word what 'Ee promis't…Th' Lord 'Ee never forgets me… Some folks think's I hevn't much ter thank God fer but Ain't it somethin' ter be thankful for thet th' Lord hev saved my soul and thet 'Ee keeps my soul as well as saves it…I never did think thet our Heavenly Father'd care ter see His own blood-bought children a-goin' ter th' workhouse but if ever 'Ee did let me go I would jest say praise th' Lord 'cause that wouldn't be my home, my 'ome bein' in 'eaven w'ere my Lord what died fer me an' is gone ter prepare me a plice fer me, is, an w'ere my

[192] Ibid., p.131.
[193] Tidball, 'English Nonconformist Home Missions', p.278.
[194] Galt, 'Saints', p.143.

> dear 'usband is a-waitin' fer me, jest like 'ee used ter w'en I went anyways 'ee'd be standin' at th' street door a-lookin' down th' street."[195]

In 'Saints', Grannie Lakin's faith pre-existed Mann's presence in Poplar. It became known to him only *because* he visited her. Hers was not an isolated example of working-class faith that was held in extreme poverty, disability, or need in Galt's texts but what is especially striking about his detailed account was that he revealed the part that she had played in his life. Her faith had motivated him in his work and it had influenced his own faith profoundly.

Conclusion

Without the influence of local churches, and beyond the wide acceptance of popular religion in Galt's district, LCM's mission can be recognised for its achievements on two levels; for those whose lives were spiritually transformed within Galt's soul-winning ministry while he was their missionary and because it continued to flourish for LCM under his successors. Galt's mission stands within the context of LCM's enduring achievement. Their missionaries had worked in Poplar since 1843, and their mission continued to thrive after Galt began work as LCM's Missionary to Cabmen in North London in 1898.

Galt's accounts were not distinct, either in their confidence or character, from those of other missionaries who continued LCM's work in Poplar in the years immediately before the First World War. Bertie Goodwin commenced work in the Ida-street district in 1911. His manuscript memoir, 'Memories of Poplar' detailed his mission with statistics.[196] Of his district's mothers' meeting he recalled, 'A WOMENS MEETING of 250 members (and a waiting list) in those days many of these came with their hair in curlers & wearing coarse

[195] Ibid., p.139.
[196] LCMA, B. Goodwin, 'Memories of Poplar', manuscript, (n.d.). Goodwin, a Baptist, had been a greengrocer in Watford, before he joined LCM in 1911, see LCMECMB, 29 May 1911.

aprons. Many of these became Godly mothers.'[197] He wrote also of his door-to-door visitation, crowded Sunday-school, weekly meeting for 120 'Crippled and Deformed' children, choir of 50 members, Prayer Meetings, Gospel Services, Open-air meetings, tract distribution, seaside and country outings, and collection boxes which raised in excess of £50 each year for LCM. Goodwin's account supports a conclusion that Galt had not exaggerated the importance of his work for those who lived in his district. The missionaries, as they moved into and worked in their districts in the early years of the twentieth century, met people whose lifetimes and those perhaps of their parents and grandparents had been spent in familiarity or engagement with LCM's local missions.

Lewis concluded that by the end of the century, the evangelicals' impact upon the working-class was not what they had desired. He argued that the aim of the movement was nothing less than the conversion of an entire social class that was largely indifferent to organised religion. Galt viewed his mission differently. His perspective concerned the people among whom he and his family lived. He made no suggestion that they were largely indifferent to his mission. To understand his achievement, it is important to recognise that for John Galt the measure of his success did not rest in a hope for the conversion of an entire social class. It lay in the inestimable value of the single souls that were won in his district, especially those from among the poorest and most vulnerable people in that class.

[197] Ibid., p.4.

Chapter 7. Occupational mission: LCM's special mission among cabmen.

In 1889, LCM wrote that of all their special missions 'THE CABMEN is one of the most interesting and most fruitful in good results.'[1] This chapter discusses LCM's achievements in their special mission among cabmen. Commenced in 1844, it was LCM's first field of special mission. It has been selected, not as a consequence of the longevity of their engagement, but because the missionaries' unpublished and published accounts, and the transcripts of their speeches, illustrated the characteristic qualities of their mission field with particular clarity. Their work was underpinned by high levels of commitment among the missionaries, and it benefitted substantially from mid-century reforms that were achieved in the cabmen's working lives in which they participated. Their evidence reflected the creativity of the missionaries in facilitating their mission. Critically, however, it demonstrated the way in which LCM's working-class missionaries had been able to engage with working men, many of whom in turn, had become active agents in their mission.

The working lives of cabmen were of particular interest to Mayhew. In 1887, George Grimmett, LCM's missionary to night cabmen, recalled the effect of his work with Mayhew

> Three years after we got the night houses closed all over London, when Mr Mayhew published his book on London Labour and the London Poor Mr Jackson and I supplied him with a good deal of the information it contained, and it caused quite a sensation, like the "Bitter Cry" of to-day.[2]

[1] *LCMAR, 1889*, p.xxvii.
[2] *LCMM, 1885*, p.166.

Mayhew's texts about cabmen were detailed.[3] He identified the majority of cabmen as London men, who usually resided in the neighbourhoods of cab proprietors' yards. He discussed the complexity of the ways in which they were employed, and the differences between those who were small owners and those who hired a vehicle and a horse from a proprietor. Within these two ways of employment, he explained, cabmen might also work for long or short hours, either during the day or at night, where there were many who held licences, but others who worked illegally. Mayhew drew upon Police statistics to support his discussions and he argued that the cabmen's honesty was greater than common report gave them credit for, and that their intemperance was much less than the nature of their calling had led the public to imagine.

Stedman Jones, in his examples of casual labour, placed cabmen alongside dock labourers as belonging to the residuum of poor rather than the respectable working classes.[4] LCM's missionaries to cabmen reported that LCM was the only Society in London which was working with the cabmen but Auerbach has revealed that for a short while between 1877-81, cabstands and cab shelters were visited by working-class missionaries from the London Police Court Mission.[5] Auerbach concluded that the missionaries' innovations complicated the picture of top-down penal reform which dominated the field's literature. He discussed the reform of the daily judicial process arguing that the London Police Court Missionaries' developing role had made them probation officers in all but name. Auerbach did not

[3] Mayhew, *London Labour,* III, pp.347-57.
[4] G. Stedman Jones, *Outcast London, A Study in the Relationship between Classes in Victorian Society* (London, 2013), pp.34, 40, 61-3, 73, 77, 79-80.
[5] S. Auerbach, 'Beyond the Pale of Mercy: Victorian Penal Culture, Police Court Missionaries, and the Origins of Probation in England', *Law & History,* 33/3 (2015), pp.622-60.

illustrate any of the religious aspects of their work, but his discussion of their unrecognised working-class agency resonates with the themes of this dissertation.

LCM commenced special mission among the cabmen in 1844. A second missionary followed in the work in 1846, but his funding failed. LCM expanded their mission once more in 1854, thereafter its funding remained secure. In 1862, work began among night cabmen and alongside the mission to day cabmen the numbers of missionaries gradually increased until there were six cab missionaries in 1878. The total fell to five in 1898, and to four in 1913. Between 1844-1914, LCM appointed twenty-five missionaries to cabmen.

There were missions to cabmen in other British cities. MCM reported that by 1850, their missionaries visited Coach Stands in the City, and in 1860, they confirmed that Cab-drivers were under regular visitation.[6] In 1856, The Birmingham City Mission commenced building cabmen's shelters with cooking and rest facilities, and as many as ten were in existence at the time that they were handed over to the City Corporation in 1904.[7]

After 1894, LCM recorded the overall numbers of cabmen who were visited annually by the missionaries but only a few individual schedules survive for earlier years. It is possible, however, to note the numbers of Licences held by cabmen, and the numbers of Licenced vehicles. **[Table 10]** The numbers of Licences held was always greater than the numbers of men who worked regularly due to the seasonal nature of their employment, but the missionaries reported that they were able to visit almost all of the men who worked regularly.

[6] Lee, *The Cry*, pp.69-74.

[7] W. B. Stephens, (ed), 'Religious History: Protestant Nonconformity', *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume VII, The City of Birmingham* (London, 1964), pp.480-1.

Table 10: Numbers of Licenced Cabmen and Cabs, 1831-1911.

year	cabmen licenced	cabs licenced	notes	source
1831	2,047			Garwood, *The Million-Peopled City*, p.170.
1833		1,200		May, *Gondolas and Growlers,* p.48.
1834		1,703		Ibid.
1844		2,400		Ibid.
1843	4,627			Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor,* III, p.347.
1851		3,458		May, *Gondolas and Growlers*, p.48.
1852	6,388	3,593	excluding 346 watermen	Garwood, *The Million-Peopled City,* p.170.
1861		5,119		May, *Gondolas and Growlers,* p.48.
1862	c.5,000*		breakdown includes: *at least* 2,000 small masters *or very nearly half* 1,500 long-daymen 150 long-nightmen 500 short nightmen 500 morning men	Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor,* III, p.353.
1869	10,474			Thomson and Smith, *Street Life in London,* p.6.
1871		7,818		May, *Gondolas and Growlers,* p.164.
1875	15,584			Thomson and Smith, *Street Life in London,* p.6.
1881		9,647		May, *Gondolas and Growlers,* p.165.
1889	15,100			*LCMAR, 1889,* p.xxvii.
1891		11,173		May, *Gondolas and Growlers,* p.165.
1892	15,336	11,297		Gordon, *The Horse World of London*, p.29.
1901		11,173	no motor cabs were licenced in 1901	May, *Gondolas and Growlers,* pp.165-6.
1911		10,993	3,347 horse drawn + 7,626 motor cabs	Ibid.

* This is the number of men working as advised by the missionaries rather than the numbers of licences held.

In the appointment of cabmen's missionaries LCM's Committee were flexible. They were prepared to set aside their guiding criteria and rules if they felt that a candidate would be what they described as 'a right good man for the work.'[8] They did not look especially to appoint candidates who had been cabmen to the positions, but cabmen applied to LCM with a special hope that they might undertake the work. In the early years of cabmen's mission LCM's evidence suggests that candidates were selected with their direct appointment to the cabmen's mission in mind. In later years missionaries were promoted to special mission from among those whose experience in district mission was well known to the Secretaries.

LCM's minutes reveal the qualities which had drawn their attention during interviews. Grimmett, a labourer from St Pancras, was described as being 'deeply imbued with a

[8]LCMMB, 15 October 1849.

missionary spirit' and displaying 'considerable natural power and energy.'[9] Henry Salter, a carpenter, had been instrumental in the establishment of one of London's first ragged churches in Mile End New-town.[10] He had visited the sick, taught in a Sunday-school, and delivered tracts. He was observed to have been 'gentle and kind' but 'timid and faltering in his quotation of the Scriptures'.[11] The Committee's strongest expression of rule-bending support for an applicant was in the case of William Shinn.[12] Shinn, a cabman from Kings Cross, had been converted by Grimmett. He was 50 years of age, where LCM's Rules excluded applicants over the age of 45. It was recorded that he was illiterate and possessed a 'rather defective knowledge of Scripture.' The Committee noted, however, 'There really appears to be so decisive an adaptation to the particular post he seeks & his Christian character appears so transparent the sub-committee agreed strongly to recommend him.'[13]

Faith and perseverance

The qualities of faith and perseverance which the Committee sought in their candidates were tested in the missionaries' working experience. Not all of LCM's cabmen's appointments were successful but the General Superintendents and Secretaries were quick to perceive when a mistake had been made. Of the twenty-five missionaries to cabmen, seven remained in the position for less than a year.

In their reports, George Grimmett and James Peyton recorded their demanding schedules of work, but they also revealed the spiritual and emotional difficulties which they faced.[14]

[9] Ibid., noting Grimmett was an Anglican.
[10]Ibid., 13 June 1859.
[11]Ibid.
[12]Ibid., 3 October 1853.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Peyton, an Anglican, from Sedgley, had been a coal miner before joining LCM in 1854, see LCMMB, 6 March 1854.

Their evidence is important because it allows for the dismissal of a suggestion that the missionaries' published reports were formulaic or focussed only upon LCM's achievements. Their accounts were personal and extremely honest. In 1853, Grimmett noted that he had walked upwards of 3,000 miles and made 13,000 visits, nearly 300 of which had been to sick and dying cabmen and their wives.[15] In 1857, Peyton recorded that he had spent 1,429 hours in visitation, and that he had walked 2,860 miles in the course of his duty, made 3,944 visits and 6,401 calls, distributed 10,346 tracts, and read the Scriptures 643 times.[16] In addition both missionaries had held weekly meetings and Bible-classes. In 1857, Peyton revealed the extent to which he had struggled

> It has been a year to me of much anxiety and great spiritual conflict. Sometimes I have been buoyed up on the wings of faith and hope; at others, when the difficulties I have had to encounter have rushed across my mind I have almost shrunk from the responsibilities of my position, and nearly given way to despair.[17]

During the same year, Grimmett wrote about his own challenges

> But in the early part of 1856, for (I have no doubt) a wise purpose, it pleased my heavenly Father to afflict my dear and faithful wife with the loss of her reason, leaving me to struggle on with the anxiety necessarily attendant on her affliction. My children, also, have all been much afflicted during the year. During this affliction my mind has been under a cloud and greatly exercised.[18]

Thomas Gent described his motivation in his work, and it was this spiritual imperative perhaps, which lay behind Grimmett and Peyton's perseverance. In 1902, after thirty years work among the cabmen, Gent explained, 'My aim has ever been the salvation of precious

[15] *LCMM, 1859*, p.249.
[16] Ibid., p.267.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., p.263.

souls and I am grateful for lesser blessings but I can never be satisfied with anything short of souls won for Christ.'[19]

Activism and reform

The extent to which LCM's mission was connected with mid-century reform in the cabmen's working lives has not been identified by historians. Inglis concluded that LCM employed 'extreme' evangelical missionaries who belonged to a group which defended unjust social arrangements.[20] It is not possible to support an argument that the cabmen's missionaries were working as agents of the middle classes from motives of social control from the missionaries' descriptions of the cabmen's working conditions. In 1853, Grimmett wrote

> I believe there is no class of men so much in need of public sympathy as the cabmen of London are. Some of the men are under hard taskmasters who tell them, when they ask for a day's rest on the Sunday, that it will be time for them to rest when they are dead.[21]

In 1856, Shinn's opinion was unequivocal

> Many of the seven day masters care less for the men than the cattle they drive and would sooner the man should die than the horse. This is strong language but nevertheless true.[22]

The Cabmen's Six-day Movement

LCM's political expression of their Sabbath-day conscience and their activism on behalf of working men has been discussed in Chapter 5. It was a critical element in the missionaries' work among cabmen. By 1856, the cabmen and LCM's missionaries were joined in action

[19] *LCMM, 1902*, p.229. Gent, a Methodist from Mile End, had been a builder's labourer before joining LCM in 1872, see LCMLSDR, p.75.
[20] K. S. Inglis, *The Churches and the Working Classes in England* (London, 1963), p.335.
[21] *LCMM, 1859*, p.250.
[22] Ibid., p.259.

for Sabbath reform. Peyton recorded the speed with which he and Grimmett had worked to lobby Parliament

> In the month of June 1855 I was, in conjunction with a brother cab missionary, by the consent of our Superintendent employed in obtaining from the men their signatures to a petition to the House of Commons to add them to Lord R Grosvenor's Bill for the Suppression of Sunday Trading at that time before the House. As the petition was prepared at the urgent request of many of the men, it may not be amiss to insert it, and so preserve a record of the event.[23]

Peyton obtained 502 signatures, and Grimmett 235. Peyton added that the withdrawal of the Bill had stopped them in their progress otherwise three-fourths of the cabmen would have attached their names.[24] In 1869, Grimmett explained the role that LCM had played in the legislative achievement of Six-day Licences for the cabmen and he revealed its immediate religious significance

> In 1862 the new Police Act came into force which materially aided me in my endeavours to elevate the religious and moral condition of these poor men. Seeing that Sunday work was a great evil among them, and that if a man kept his cabs at home he had to pay duty for them, the same as if they were out, through the influence of a clergyman, [Tait] I got a clause inserted to remit the duty on those cabs that did not work on the Lord's-day. Many cabmen availed themselves of this privilege. I then commenced a Cabman's Lord's-day Rest Society.
>
> There are now nearly 2,500 cabs that do not come out on the Lord's-day. Large numbers of the drivers and owners of them attend regularly the preaching of the Gospel and are consistent believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.[25]

Weylland confirmed that Bishops Blomfield, and Tait sought evidence from LCM's missionaries in connection with their involvement with House of Lords Committees between 1854-78.[26] The President of the Cabman's Lord's-day Rest Society upon its foundation was

[23] *LCMM, 1859*, p.261.
[24] Ibid., p.262.
[25] *LCMM, 1869*, p.218.
[26] Weylland, *These Fifty Years*, pp.229-32.

Lord Kinnaird.[27] As a consequence, and significantly for LCM, the 'preaching' which Grimmett noted, included their attendance of the missionaries' meetings.

Cabmen's Associations

In a striking contrast with LCM's experience in their mission among London's bakers, the missionaries recognised that during the late 1850s there was momentum and energy for workplace reform among the cabmen. The cabmen chose to include LCM's missionaries in the establishment of their Cabmen's Associations and they trusted them. William Bennett reported that on 16 September 1858, a public meeting had been held in the Bell-street Ragged Schoolroom.[28] He described that upwards of three hundred cabmen had attended to discuss how they could bring about reform in their trade. Following the meeting twelve cabmen had met with himself and Grimmett. Bennett recalled

> We enquired what they wanted. They unanimously replied, 'A reading room, a sick and provident fund, a penny bank, a registry for unemployed drivers, and Sunday services'.[29]

Five Cabmen's Associations were established with clubhouses in Westminster, Newington, Paddington, Bishopsgate, and Kings Cross. The rooms were rented and run by the Associations. The first opened in Bell-street on 21 February 1859. Its subscription was 1d a week to any cabman. It was arranged that LCM would use the room between 3.00pm-6.45pm on Sundays for Bible classes and Services for the cabmen and their families.[30] Previously Bennett had held his meetings outdoors during the summer months in Dorset-

[27] *LCMM, 1869*, p.218.
[28] Ibid., *1869*, p.269. Bennett, a Congregationalist, from Ottery St Mary, had been a calico-glazier before joining LCM in 1842, see LCMLSDR, p.11.
[29] Ibid.
[30] These were not the green cabmen's shelters which were established across London after 1870.

mews, and during the winter in the Bell-street Ragged Schoolroom. On 5 March 1859, *The Morning Post* reported upon their visit

> On Sunday, the 20th instant, we visited the Cabmen's Club which is situated in Bell-street, Lisson-grove. You enter by a narrow passage, and presently find yourself in a comfortable coffee-room, with a good fire and honest faces around it. When we arrived at six o'clock in the evening the men were taking tea together, and had just concluded their exercises under the teaching of Mr B----- the able and industrious missionary whose wife co-operates very heartily in securing the comfort of the men. A mere meeting and dispersion would not suffice; most of these men are accustomed to spend the few leisure hours they have in the public-house, and the object of providing them with tea and a comfortable fire is to give them no excuse for leaving, or the good accomplished by the reading and having explanations of the Scriptures might all be undone within an hour afterwards.[31]

The article noted the role of Bennett's wife, and LCM's subsequent reports confirmed the way in which not only Bennett's wife but the cabmen's wives had become involved and that they were able to bring their children to worship in the clubrooms. In September 1859, LCM confirmed that 226 cabmen had joined the Bell-street Club where at the meeting on the previous Sunday 93 cabmen and their wives had been present for prayer and an exposition of the Scriptures, which together with their children had made a total of 110.[32] They recorded that during the winter months the attendance had reached 170.[33]

The Cabmen's Associations established and continued a direct relationship between the cabmen's families and LCM's mission. It was an expression of their working-class faith, religious commitment, and confirmation of the importance of religion in their lives.

[31] *LCMM, 1859*, pp.271-2.
[32] Ibid., p.274.
[33] Ibid.

LCM's creative mission

Booth made no reference to LCM's cabmen's mission but he did describe what he perceived to be the 'social characteristics' of cabmen in *Life and Labour*. He wrote

> Cabmen have plenty of opportunity for reading the daily papers and for discussions among themselves, and as a result are generally up to date in general information, and often keen politicians, many being members of Radical Clubs. It is these men, one hears, who are the most conservative of all on trade questions. Many, again, are prominent in their temperance, or religious views.[34]

The missionaries developed strategies to promote their mission that reflected their deep understanding of the men among whom they worked. They recognised that the cabmen were literate, enjoyed reading, and that they had both opportunities and time to read while they worked. By 1859, unlike within other groups of working men, the navvies for example, Grimmett confirmed that there was scarcely a cabman who could not read.[35] In 1856, Peyton introduced what he described as a 'powerful auxiliary' to his mission effort in the circulation of library books among the watermen.[36] He added that he gave them leave to re-lend them among themselves and that he had a 'very good' number of books in continual circulation.

In 1856, LCM reported that the missionaries had distributed 6,544 Bibles.[37] Grimmett noted, however, that he had distributed only twenty, because among the five hundred or so cabmen's families whom he had visited he did not know of one that was not possessed of a Bible.[38] He did not rely upon his knowledge that cabmen's families possessed Bibles, because he recognised that they might not be read. In 1889, he described the night cabmen

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[34] C. Booth, 'Cab and Omnibus Service' in *Life and Labour of the People in London: Second Series: Industry,* IV (London, 1902), pp.300-1.
[35] *LCMM, 1859*, p.268.
[36] Ibid., p.261.
[37] *LCMAR, 1856*, p.13.
[38] *LCMM, 1859,* p.261.

with whom he worked. He detailed the ages of those who were licenced in 1887; no less than 884 were aged between 60-70, 111 were aged between 70-80, and 5 still working were over 80 years old.[39] He recounted the initiative that he had taken on their behalf

> I took on the distribution of the Testament with large type among the old night cabmen as the most successful means, in the hand of God, to their conversion. I do not say that many of them had not copies of the Scriptures in their homes; but the print was so small that they could not see to read them, or they were looked on as family relics, too sacred to be used in common. When a good large type, black print Testament is put into their hands, with the remark, 'Now, that is to be fairly used, and read from day to day, and when it is worn out, I will get you another;' then they are not afraid to use the book, and they become something like what the late Rev. Dr. Beaumont used to say he liked, when he would remark, 'Give me a good, thumb-worn dog-eared Bible.'[40]

In 1869, Grimmett recorded that during the year he had distributed 15,600 tracts, upwards of 2,500 copies of the *British Workman,* and 900 large-print Bibles among the night cabmen.[41]

In response to the conversations held in the course of his mission, John Galt wrote tracts. He became a working-class author of religious material which was widely read by working men.[42] He explained the reason for his initiative

> During 9 years it hardly ever chanced that a man asked a question to which a "Book answer" would have been satisfactory. Books and lectures deal mostly with the questions and objections of students and scholars. The man in the street had never heard of these questions so would have had no use for the answers to them.[43]

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[39] *LCMAR, 1889*, p.xxviii.
[40] *LCMM, 1869*, p.224.
[41] Ibid., p.220.
[42] Galt, 'Providence', pp.214-5, where Galt confirmed that 30 titles had been accepted for publication and their circulation had run into millions, some of which were still on the RTS' publications' list 30 years after they had been written.
[43] Ibid., p.214.

Galt confirmed that he made notes of the conversations which he held with cabmen and the questions that they asked him. He recalled that he had identified what he described as the most common of the 'Gags' which the men used in the streets.[44]

The tracts were illustrated with drawings of working men, often cabmen, and the specific location in which each conversation took place was identified. His texts were uncomplicated in that they posed one question, and contained a single discussion. They offered for consideration, a meaningful religious response to the question which had been raised. Unlike Oppenheimer's conversations he never closed down an argument without leaving his reader with an open avenue for thought. Nothing was ever black and white and Scriptural references were short and apposite. In many of his tracts, an everyday assertion was made to the author by a working man, often a cabman, then following the author's placement of an alternative and spiritual thought, the man, might moderate or expand his earlier point of view by his own reasoning. The context was always a debate and the man was never portrayed as foolish. The concluding thoughts from the author, perhaps a missionary, were reflective and reasonable. Galt selected one for discussion. He explained its content

> One in particular seems to have held a place for its self namely "A Knife and a bit of string and a Shilling" These things, a man told me, were all that a man needs with which to get though life successfully. In supporting his formula he suggested that if Parsons preached ordinary prudence instead of preaching about heaven and hell they would do a great deal more good and more people would attend the churches. The reply to this was that there were many things in life which a knife would not cut out such as a bad heart, the memory of past sin or a bad habit. There were many things that a shilling cannot buy such as peace of conscience, a new heart and right spirit, or the forgiveness of sin. There were many things that a bit of string or anything that string might stand for could not mend; such as a broken heart, a broken character, a broken law or a broken promise which had been made to God. The knife-string-

[44] Ibid., pp.214-5.

> shilling philosophy might be good for a carter in his ordinary work but it was worthless, or worse, for an immortal being who needed God and His Gospel both for the present life and for that which is to come.[45]

Galt concluded that his tracts had supplied a need which had been created by attitudes of mind and forms of unbelief which were prevalent at the time, but he had identified the opportunity to do so because of his understanding of how it would improve the quality of his mission among the cabmen.[46]

Cabmen and the missionaries

Crucial to the impact of their mission was the character of the relationship between the missionaries and the cabmen. In 1846, Rev James Sherman, Minister of Surrey Chapel, spoke at LCM's Annual Meeting.[47] He introduced John Adams, LCM's first missionary to the cabmen and he revealed not only his own but the cabmen's respect for him

> It was my happiness some two or three years ago, to be conveyed by a cabman to one of a series of Revival Meetings in which I had to take part; and when the man had opened the door to let me out, he said, "May God bless the word, Sir, you are going to preach to-night." I was utterly astounded with such a welcome from a cabman, for I had thought this was a class among whom no religion was found to exist. He said. "Will you allow me to wait for you till the service is over?" "Oh! Yes," said I, "pray do: but cannot you come in?" "Yes," he replied, "I am going to put up my horse, and then I will come into the service." I told him I was delighted to hear it, but could not stay then, and would hear more afterwards. He drove me home. I was going down the Blackfriars-road about two months ago, and a man came up to me and asked me, "Sir, do you recollect the cabman that drove you to such a place on such an occasion?" "Yes perfectly, "said I. "I am the man," he said. "I am Missionary now to the cabmen of London." I was happy to hail my brother under such circumstances. We walked together down Bridge Street, and I was surprised to see the watermen and drivers bowing to him in a most respectful manner. He stopped at the Stand in St. Paul's Church-yard and there also they recognised him; and one of them said in a most proper manner, "How do you do, Mr. Adams?" So interested did they seem in him,

[45] Ibid., p.215.
[46] Ibid.
[47] *LCMM, 1844*, pp.88-9.

> had a bishop been appointed to take his place, he could not have had more respect from them than that man had.[48]

The missionaries' reports confirmed that they were familiar with the majority of London's cabmen. Grimmett recalled that he was often deeply affected with the kind sympathy that he met, where in almost every street in which he was met a cabman would greet him with a touch of his hat from respect, or a friendly shake of the hand.[49] He worked among them with tenacity and empathy. He recalled his first day as a missionary in 1849

> I shall never forget the first cabstand that I visited. Groups of men stood idly by but no sooner did I approach with my Bible and tracts than the men fled into a gin-palace. My sheep were gone, but it was my duty as a good shepherd to follow them, and I entered the tap-room and read the parable of the Prodigal Son to them. Then I went round and shook hands with them and asked them about their welfare, offering if any of them were taken ill to go and see them. Men have consciences and cannot long withstand disinterested kindness.[50]

It is important to note that he had not hesitated to enter the public-house. His reports confirmed that there were thresholds in the way in which the missionary was respected in his work which when overstepped the cabmen, whether they were converted or not, would intervene. He illustrated an example of this understanding from within a Great Western coffee-shop one morning

> I found eleven cabmen and others. A man who is not a cabman tore the tract to pieces and actually ate it, meaning to show me that he was hungry and wanted food. A cabman said, 'Ah! Old fellow, that is how the devil will serve you some day if you don't alter your hand.' The man was rebuked by the proprietor and everyone in the house and shrunk out ashamed of himself.[51]

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[48] Ibid.
[49] *LCMM, 1859*, p.253.
[50] *LCMM, 1885*, pp.165-6.
[51] *LCMM, 1869*, pp.251-2.

Grimmett left no record of the numbers of conversions which he secured but the numbers of men who knew him as a friend is remarkable. In 1869, he reported that his round of the night cab stands took a month for him to complete and that he would visit approximately 1,250 night cabs, but that during this time, due to the nature of their work, he might meet the same men as many as five times within different parts of the City.[52] He mentioned that he never left a single man without 'a thought of words of love, or depositing a seed of truth in their hearts.'[53] His journals detailed many examples of the character of his reception among the cabmen

> Perhaps I may be allowed to give a description. I will take the ball of 2nd December at Willis's-rooms, which are brilliantly lighted up with a gay and fashionable company, dancing away the small hours of the night with every comfort and luxury to stimulate and excite them. Outside, however, it is far otherwise. St. James's-street is crowded with cabs from the bottom to the top, and the cabs extend along Pall-mall to the Haymarket-at least 250 of them. While inside it was warm enough; outside it was blowing a perfect hurricane, and the rain was pouring down in torrents. It was with the outside party that I had to do. The poor old cabmen had their hats tied on with almost every conceivable article, and frequently their huge cape would blow over their heads and leave them enveloped. After the rain had subsided a bit I commenced conversation, which as is frequently the case, turned on the troubles and trials of life. I said to the first man, 'They appear to be merry enough inside.' 'Ah,' he said, 'I don't blame them neither, I would not be here if I could help it.' I added, 'What a comfort it ought to be for you that there is a better place provided for all who seek it, a place where all sorrow and sighing are done away with, and where all tears are wiped from the eyes.' 'Well,' said he, 'that is a comfort to be sure, only we don't think sufficiently on it; it would be better if we did.'
>
> The next cabman to whom I came began, 'Here is our old friend, he always has a word of encouragement and friendship for us.'
>
> The third to whom I came made the remark, 'It will soon matter but little, sir, one day whether we have been driving a cab or riding in a carriage.'
>
> Next I came to a Christian man. He told several cabmen around him the anecdote of David Garrick, who showed Dr Johnson his new house and grounds, when the Doctor replied gravely, 'All very nice, Philip, but these are the things that make it hard to die.'

[52] Ibid., p.220.
[53] Ibid.

> 'Now,' said the cabman, applying his anecdote, 'we have nothing to make it hard to die but unpardoned sin. But if we are looking to the Saviour, His blood can cleanse us from all sin.'[54]

The missionaries recorded conversations which illustrated the many degrees and sometimes the considerable depth of the cabmen's religious knowledge, whether it was held in faith or not. In 1857, Peyton wrote

> Opinions of every shade and character respecting religion are held by them. The Infidel, the Deist, the Freethinker, the Socialist, the Socinian, the Papist, and even the Jew are found among them.[55]

The exchanges were not characterised by nagging, or the proselytising language that historians have associated with evangelical expression. It is not possible to describe the missionaries' published reports as records of their achievements because more often than not the accounts reflected only their own optimistic patience. This might be illustrated in Grimmett's brief note, 'Mr ----- a very wicked cabman, broke his leg and was conveyed to Middlesex Hospital, where I gave him a Testament.'[56] Their reports captured the missionaries' overarching understanding of how working men responded to their mission when it was taken to them at the right time, in the right place, and with exactly the right thing to say.

In a hospital visit, Grimmett knew that he could hold a quiet conversation about religion, but he recognised also that there were also particular times when he could engage the attention of large groups of men. Before they started their day's work at 4.30, cabmen and carmen gathered at stations at 4.00am in the morning. They waited for passengers, mail,

[54] Ibid., pp.222-3.
[55] *LCMM, 1859*, p.267.
[56] Ibid., p.223.

and goods from the night trains. Grimmett went to meet the men before the trains arrived. He observed, 'The first half hour's work, however, is mine.'[57] He described an early morning in Euston Station in his journal

> I took out my Bible and read the 55th chapter of Isaiah. A night superintendent was the first to break the silence after the reading; 'I went' said he, addressing me, 'to hear Dr Miller at St. Paul's Cathedral, last night sir, but I think you have got a larger place of worship than he had.'
>
> One of the men belonging to a mail van then spoke up and said, 'I know this gentleman well, I used to be a cabman, and he has often talked to me for my good. I used to be as great a drunkard as ever lived; I am now an altered man, I attend church every Sunday, so I can say for one that he has done me good.
>
> Another man then said, 'That is a beautiful chapter you read; it seems by that all may come and have what they need for their souls without money and without price.'[58]

During the winter months men would wait for the early morning trains in the station's coffee-houses which opened at 4.00am. Grimmett's reports illustrated his skill in his selection of texts which he could explain briefly. He observed the results that a carefully selected text might have

> On one occasion I found seventeen cabmen and some railway carters to whom I expounded the 15th chapter of St Luke's Gospel. A cabman said, 'Well, I never heard a better sermon that I see the whole drift of it. The Pharisees thought to trap Him, but they were mistaken, for He showed them He did not come for hypocrites but for sinners.' Another said, 'If you will believe me, I learned that whole sermon by heart when I went to school, and I like it better than any one in the whole Bible, and you have reminded me of what I used to read.' As he spoke he brushed a big tear from his eye.[59]

[57] Ibid., p.221.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.

Oppenheimer's journal reveals that he had relied heavily upon Scriptural quotation in his work.[60] He challenged those whom he met with fearful texts but Galt illustrated the quiet character of his individual teaching and its success.

> I found a man in a railway station one day and he said to me, "I think I will turn religious someday…" I said to him "Do you really mean business?" "Yes, I will be religious someday." I said, "Here I am, in the presence of God Almighty, and I bring a message from God to you. He is able to deal with you, as sure as truth is truth He is *willing* to deal with you." He said, "That is all very well; I will think about it when I go home." I said, "I have a text for you." "What is it?" "Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the Earth, for I am God and there is no one else." He said, "You would not have me say my prayers in a railway-station would you?" "Yes," I replied. "I have said my prayers in a railway-station many a time. "Then I tried to explain to this man what it meant to look and be saved. The fare came, and this man had to get on his box and go. In the afternoon I passed through the same station, and found the man with his face buried in his hands. I did not meet that man for some months afterwards, but one day I was in another station, talking very earnestly to two men, when a man came up behind me and put his mouth to my ear and said, "Let 'em have it, guv'nor, same as you let me have it. Tell 'em to look and be saved, and they will."[61]

As with all of LCM's missionaries Galt sought conversions. He knew that he could take as much time as he sensed was necessary when he spoke individually with cabmen and he took advantage of the time that was available to him as they waited for a fare or rested in their shelters. He understood that conversion could be an extremely reflective experience. He explained that he had sought to engage individually with every man whom he met and that he had made every possible effort to understand each question which was raised and to assume that the questioner was an honest enquirer.[62] He had learned in his work, he noted, that if he could tell the things of God to the men in ways of their own experience then it had far greater effect upon them than what he could try to prove by mere argument. He gave a detailed example which revealed the complexity of the debates into which he

[60] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness* pp.131-49.
[61] *LCMM, 1902*, pp.194-5.
[62] Galt, 'Providence', p.186.

was drawn. Galt met 'Weaver the Socialist' at the Primrose Hill cab stand.[63] He introduced himself to Galt saying that he was glad to meet a man engaged in working for the common good and for a better social order, as he himself was so working. Galt recounted their conversation in detail. It lasted for a considerable time and Galt acknowledged, 'It is undeniable that throughout the discussion as a whole the honours went to Weaver the Socialist.'[64]

Galt identified the point at which he believed that the debate had turned, and what he had been able to say. Weaver observed that the missionaries were dependent upon a 'Problematical God' who was a delusion and a snare and at best an opiate which caused many good men to be content with things as they were in the vain belief that at some other time and somewhere else wrong would be righted and crooked things made straight but that he believed that this was the place, and the present was the time for righting things that needed to be righted.[65] He told Galt that he, like other missionaries, could only tell him of wonders that had happened in other people's lives, and that ordinary people did not have these experiences. Galt asked Weaver to listen to his account of how he and his wife had lived in Poplar when the Thames had frozen and the people were starving and that they had agreed to devote all the spare money that they had, which was 14s 9d to buying bread, but meanwhile they had taken the problem to God in prayer. He told Weaver what had been achieved, and he recorded his response

> Weaver the Socialist looked thoughtful for a minute or so, then he said well I am prepared to admit that there are more things in heaven and earth than my philosophy has dreamed of. I mustn't say I don't believe you for I make it a principle not to doubt a man's word unless I have good reasons for doing so. I like that story and I'll tell you

[63] Ibid., pp.187-92.
[64] Ibid., p.188.
[65] Ibid., p.189.

> what I'll do. I'll take you in my hansom to St John's Wood Shelter if you will promise to tell that story to the men there.[66]

Galt had written tracts to reflect the questions which were asked of him by working men. Similarly, in describing his faith and agency both of which were rooted in his working-class and personal experience, Galt had been able to engage with Weaver. Critically, however, it had been the evidence for which Weaver had asked that Galt had been able to give him.

Cabmen as agents in LCM's mission

The missionaries' journals illustrated that from the earliest years of LCM's mission among the cabmen they had responded with agency of their own and in many differing ways, all of which had contributed to the success of the mission. Their evidence is rare and valuable because it details the evangelical agency of ordinary working men.

The importance that the Cabmen's Associations attached to their working relationship with LCM in their evangelical mission was demonstrated in 1861, when the Bell-street Cabmen's Association voted to guarantee the funding of a missionary to work among the cabmen of North London.[67] It had not been suggested to the cabmen by LCM, and their subscriptions could have been spent elsewhere but it was their choice, when the Association had become firmly established, to do so.

LCM's records reveal that nine of their missionaries had been cabmen before they joined the Mission. Grimmett recalled how he met George Shinn

> I remember one fine May morning visiting the cabmen on the House of Commons ranks. One of the cabmen, as I offered him a tract, thought he would have a bit of fun at my expense. As the tract was presented he asked if it was a five-pound note. "It may do you more good," was the reply, "for what shall it profit a man if he gain the

[66] Ibid., p.192.
[67] LCMMB, 25 November 1861.

> whole world and lose his own soul." That tract led to that man's conversion, and he became a London City Missionary, and was my colleague for seventeen years.[68]

Shinn became a missionary, but other cabmen who were converted by LCM's missionaries carried their spiritual influence into different fields. Grimmett reported

> The Clerical Secretary and I went to speak at a meeting in Richmond, and a cabman asked to be allowed to say a few words. He said, "I can corroborate all that Mr. Grimmett has said. I have many times played a practical joke on him and thrown a horse's nose-bag at him; but his continual kindness to me softened my heart, and rescued me from atheism. I became a Ragged-school teacher, and for thirty years I have loved the Lord Jesus Christ and am doing all in my power to bring others to the Saviour."[69]

There were cabmen who became evangelical teachers in their spare time. Galt revealed the circumstances in which he had been teased by a cabman during his first week of working among them.[70] He had called at the 'Cock of Highbury' Cabmen's Shelter where he introduced himself. He recalled that there followed two hours of challenging questions from a cabman about truth, the prevention of evil by God, sin, and repentance. He observed that throughout this time not a single man had spoken. Months later Galt noted that he had handed a tract to the same cabman whom he recognised as 'my friend of the hard questions'. The man had glanced at the tract and commented that it addressed the text on which he had spoken at Sunday-school the previous week. Galt replied that he was delighted to hear that he had experienced a change of heart, at which point the man had laughed, and revealed to Galt that it had not been on his own account that he had asked the questions, explaining that he was well known among the cabmen as a Christian and that he had asked all sorts of questions of Galt that he himself had been asked, and smiling he

[68] *LCMM, 1885*, p.166.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Galt, 'Providence', pp.185-6.

told him, 'the fellows pester me with all sorts of smart posers – I knew that you would be well posted in such reasons and proofs.'[71] The exchange had amused both the cabman, and Galt, but it illustrated the value of Galt's answers because they might be repeated in a very wide range of circumstances, not just in the cabman's role as a teacher, but in his conversations with his family, neighbours, and with other cabmen.

For a cabman to have become a missionary, or a teacher, was a clear indication of the effect of LCM's mission, but the missionaries' work was based also in the belief that their mission would have spiritual consequences of which they would not hear in their lifetimes. An example of unknown faith as a consequence of his work, was given to Peyton

> A young man reminded me today that several months since I gave him and his companion at that time a tract each, when visiting Kennington-cross Stand. His companion, named James, a short time afterwards enlisted for a soldier, went to the Crimea, and was killed in the trenches. In a letter sent, a short time before his death, home to his friends he wrote that that tract had been God's means of bringing him to Jesus. I regret that I don't know the name of the tract. In fact, I had forgotten the circumstance altogether.[72]

All of the cabmen's missionaries observed that there were men on the ranks who would discuss religion their absence. As early as in 1853, Grimmett noted

> One reason why this stand has been reckoned so notorious is, because of the numerous courts around it in which many of the men live on the sin of fallen females. On this stand I have been knocked down, and also threatened to be run over with the horse and cab, &c. I am happy, however, to say that this stand is now admitted by the cabmen themselves to be one of the most improved of any in London. I spend hours on it speaking of God's love. Mr --- extends a gracious influence on it boldly warning the men of their sinful habits, and impressing on their minds the importance of the things which belong to their everlasting peace. He is a member of the Christian Young

[71] Ibid.
[72] *LCMM, 1859*, p.263.

> Men's Association, and also a teacher of Field-lane Ragged-school. I am happy to say that a meek and kind disposition has made him their friend.[73]

In 1856, Peyton reported that he had many helpers in his work who were pious cabmen, and that there were some hundreds, who brought their Bibles with them each day, who when they had the opportunity would read to the others.[74]

Galt recalled that among the cabmen who met at the Haverstock Hill shelter there was a cabman who was known to pray for his colleagues and that that the cabman's prayers were familiar among those who gathered there.[75] He recorded their effect upon a cabman who sought similar faith

> 'I would give anything to be like B-. He prays for me every day.' (B-, it may be explained, is a Christian cabman who exerts an unusual influence over his fellow-drivers, and especially the more ungodly ones.)[76]

LCM's sources reveal how their evangelical mission was promoted by the cabmen in social gatherings. In 1902, Galt reported that it had been at the suggestion of some of the Christian drivers that he had arranged a meeting of cabmen and their wives.[77] Their object had been, he described, to reach some of the non-Christian drivers. He added that with this in mind it had been arranged that all the principal speakers and singers were cabmen. It was held at the Providence Hall in Islington. The meeting was felt by the cabmen to have been successful and a second meeting was arranged at Kings Cross with the hope that even more men might be met. At the second meeting, a cabman who was known 'in the profession' as

[73] Ibid., p.249.
[74] Ibid., p.261.
[75] *LCMM, 1902*, pp.232-3.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid., pp.228-9.

the 'Bishop of South London' spoke. He observed the religious change which had taken place among cabmen, and claimed for the cabmen their part in this having come about

> Thirty years ago a Christian cabman was a rarity – a kind of white blackbird; now a meeting of such can be called in any quarter of London. Thirty years ago a Christian man would have had to keep himself to himself; now no one even expects him to do that – he can now tell the people all around what a Saviour he had found. If some of the old drivers who have been dead twenty years could only come back to have a look round they would find it hard to believe that such a change could have taken place in such a short time, or, in fact in any space of time….
>
> I do not wish it to be understood that the London City Missionaries have done all the work. There has been a lot of man-to-man work among the drivers themselves, but I have to say that the City Mission have been at it all the time, and they have been the only ones who have been at it when everyone else seemed to think the cabman was no concern of theirs.[78]

Blanchard recorded the cabmen's meetings which were held in his district, Robert-street, Lambeth.[79] LCM's mission was extended to local working men by his offering his mission hall for others to use for 'purposes of a similar nature.'[80] On Thursday evenings it was used by the local cabmen whom he described

> Thursday evening 8'-15" till 10 South London United Cabmen's Gospel Temperance Meeting. These are a warm hearted body of men whose hearts have felt the Divine touch and it is a gratifying sight to see these men prior to the indoor meeting hold a short Open-Air service outside, whilst their cabs are ranged in order in front of the house, telling out the simple story of Redeeming love & singing for Jesus out of full hearts & afterwards adjourning to the Hall where short pointed Addresses are given by themselves & listened to by the people with closest attention.[81]

In what might be one of LCM's evidence's most detailed accounts of an individual's working-class faith, Galt recorded the intercession of a man in his support.[82] It was the

[78] Ibid., pp.229-30.
[79] Blanchard, 'Annual Report, 1884', pp.13-14.
[80] Ibid., pp.9-14.
[81] Ibid., pp.13-14.
[82] Galt, 'Providence', pp.200-4.

simplest form of agency, but one which he revealed to have had a profound effect upon him, and those present. Seeing that Galt had become completely at a loss for words when a man had challenged him with an exceptionally fierce attack upon every aspect of religion, the 'Looker-out', the man who minded the horses, stepped into Galt's place, and declared

> "Mister you say that there isn't any God. Well I say there is a God and I know there is because He came to see me once when I needed Him and nobody else would do. I am alive and speakin' to you, mister, because there is a God what hears folks when they cry to Him in their trouble …. I dropped in my tracks and was taken to the Infirmary, as everybody thought to die. The doctor said he thought the same. They put the screen around my bed saying it was only a matter of hours or maybe minutes anyway."[83]

Telling himself that he was going to die, the 'Looker-out' recited a prayer that he had learned as a child, the only religion he knew he explained, and what happened

> "….Then I began to see a beautiful kind face that seemed to be everywhere all the time. It was like the face of the one on the cross in the window of the church what I was sometimes took to when I was a little kid …. I kept lookin' at that face and then it seemed to look at me. I can't tell how long I was seein' and hearin' It may hev been five minutes but it might have been five years seein' I saw so much. I must have fell asleep for when I woke the screen wuz back round my bed an' the doctor an' the little nuss. The doctor he sed "He's goin to hev another chanst nuss an' she just sed "Yes Doctor".
>
> Leaning toward the man who had said there is no God the "Looker-out" said, "mister; you say that there ain't no God. If that's so who made me see an' hear all that. An' who made me better an' give me another chanst when the doctor sed it wuz only a matter ov maybe minutes? If there ain't no God as you say that there ain't, then who done it?"[84]

Galt concluded

> To this there was no answer so the "Looker-out" instinctively recognising the code of honour of the London streets part of which is that you never strike a man when he is down, turned quietly to give attention to the horses. He had shot an arrow which had found a cleft in the armour of the unbeliever and was content. Feeling that a deep impression had been made on all hearers I judged it best to follow the example of the

[83] Ibid., p.202.
[84] Ibid., p.203.

> man with the testimony and the courage to deliver himself of it to the very men on whom he depended for his living.[85]

Galt's faith, he explained, had compelled him to believe that an intervention of such Providence had been in aid of the cause of God. Such interpositions, he concluded, 'might reasonably be expected both to further the work and to prevent the worker from leaning on his own understanding.'[86] Galt drew together the themes which mattered to him. The incident was extraordinary for its revelation of an illiterate working man's faith, and his experience, but also Galt's own certainty that the man's agency was not only powerful and influential, but that it was as valuable and Providentially inspired as anything that might have been achieved by himself in LCM's mission.

Conclusion

In 1846, Adams, LCM's first missionary to the cabmen, observed that there was an old proverb that a cabman could not be both a cabman and a religious man because of his working hours.[87] He concluded that of the 4,000 cabmen and watermen whom he had visited not one was a member of a Christian church.[88] In 1896, LCM confirmed that from among 15,000 Licenced cabmen, the missionaries had reported that more than 3,000 of them regularly attended religious Services on Sundays.[89] In the context of contemporary statistical evidence their evidence reflected the success of LCM's mission. In 1903, the *Daily News* Survey recorded that in London 18.3% of its overall population attended public worship.[90] For the districts in which many of the cabmen and their families lived the

[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid., p.204.
[87] *LCMAR, 1873*, p.22.
[88] *LCMAR, 1889*, p.xxvii.
[89] *LCMM, 1896*, p.193.
[90] Mudie-Smith, *Religious Life*, p.18.

percentages were lower; 16% in Paddington, and 9% in St Pancras.[91] Mudie-Smith concluded that the Census had taught that churches should give place to large, handsome, central, and well-furnished halls for the working classes to be found in them and that the outstanding lesson of the Census was that 'the right man in the pulpit' could be 'an extraordinary ordinary man'.[92] LCM's mission had thrived since 1844, where no exceptional place had been required for cabmen to have been able to express their faith, and where the 'right man' could be, as the missionaries knew, an ordinary working man.

[91] Ibid., p.88, and p.141.
[92] Ibid., p.9.

Conclusion

In 1909, LCM declared, 'The Committee do not believe the statement often made that "Christianity fails to reach the working classes." They have many proofs to the contrary.'[1] In 1912, LCM concluded

> The aim of the Mission has never altered since the day it was established in 1835. It is simply, as expressed in its constitution, "to extend the knowledge of the Gospel among the inhabitants of London and its vicinity (especially the poor), without any reference to denominational distinctions."
>
> .....The Committee are happy to state that this object is largely attained.[2]

Cox reflected upon the way in which historians have judged religious movements, the Victorian churches, evangelicalism, or the Victorian missionary enterprise by the standards of the movement, wherein their extraordinary goals, he observed, could have been achieved only by force of arms, and therefore any aspect of the Victorian religious experiment can then be described as a failure because it did not achieve its goal even at the time of its maximum influence.[3]

LCM's mission's achievement denies historians expressions of great disappointment, and it is why their engagingly optimistic perspective matters. This dissertation is not a study of LCM's success measured by the details of new evidence of working-class churchgoing and churchgoers, but an analysis of the way in which LCM's missionaries' undenominational

[1] *LCMAR, 1909,* p.33.
[2] *LCMAR, 1912*, p.23.
[3] Cox, *English Churches,* p.265.

religious teaching became available to, and accepted as an integral part of their lives by substantial numbers of those whom they sought to reach in anything that they might be doing, and everywhere they might be met.

It has been possible to demonstrate the unrecognised character and scale of LCM's mission, and to support its detail with statistics of their visits and conversations held, of meetings and attendances, but in all of their evidence, manuscript and published, LCM and their missionaries were circumspect in their mention of the numbers of conversions that were secured, and it will never be possible for historians to present an estimate of their total. LCM's mission's ambition was soul-winning, but their spiritual arithmetic did not allow its calculation. In 1891, they explained

> The Committee do not believe that the results of spiritual work can be accurately gauged by man. Probably not one-fiftieth part of a good man's influence ever comes to his ears…Duties are ours, results are God's.[4]

This dissertation has taken 1914 as its point of conclusion because everything changed very suddenly for LCM with the outbreak of the First World War. In August 1914, LCM reduced each missionary's employment to a four-day week and asked him to support War work of his choosing.[5] LCM's funding was immediately affected by its supporters' donations being transferred from LCM to War charity appeals. A financial crisis became apparent to the Committee, but they chose not to seek in response to draw funds away from War charities.[6] They drew instead upon the Society's reserves and prayed.[7]

[4] *LCMM, 1891*, p.1.
[5] *LCMM, 1914*, p.173.
[6] LCMMB, 17 August 1914, and 24 August 1914.
[7] Ibid. By 1918, LCM's income had both recovered and increased beyond its pre-War levels.

The missionaries were unsure what their position would be in the event of conscription. They were not ordained clergy and not exempt. LCM confirmed that at least 82 of their missionaries had been of military age.[8] Within a month of the outbreak of War, LCM noted that 10 of their missionaries were engaged in special work among troops in different parts of the country, but as they knew, their local missions depended not only on their missionaries, and LCM reported that over 100 of the missionaries' sons had enlisted, together with more than 2,000 of their missions' meetings' helpers.[9] At the same time, a contingent of LCM's missionaries who had been members of their own branch of the St John's Ambulance Society since 1908, volunteered for Red Cross duty overseas, and LCM commenced negotiations with the Government for the transfer of a significant number of their missionaries to the Soldiers' Christian Association for service among the troops.[10]

The War brought new fields of special mission in London. In the autumn of 1914, thousands of men preparing for active service were posted to London and stationed at White City, Hampton, Islington, Woolwich, and Dulwich.[11] Many thousands of men were sent at the same time for naval training at Crystal Palace.[12] LCM's missionaries immediately undertook to work among them. As the War continued, the missionaries commenced work among Belgian refugees and German prisoners.[13] The accounts of the missionaries revealed that it was women whom they now visited in factories and workshops, and how they held mid-day services among them in works' canteens. The missionaries described the experience of War in their districts, zeppelin raids, and their work among home casualties and grieving families.

[8] *LCMM, 1916,* p.30.
[9] *LCMAR*, *1915,* p.37.
[10] LCMMB*,* 31 August 1914.
[11] *LCMAR, 1915,* p.41.
[12] Ibid.
[13] *LCMM, 1915,* p.23i.

To extend the period of study of LCM's mission beyond 1914, could be of enormous value in a discussion of the changing character of working-class religion in London.

It can be concluded that it was from LCM's earliest years, and not much later in the century as has been suggested by Lewis, that many of LCM's working-class missionaries became pastors of their own flocks.[14] It must be acknowledged that theirs were never shabby second congregations and that to consider them as such would be both to misunderstand LCM's undenominational rigour, and more importantly, to fail to recognise the presence and spiritual agency of ordinary people from within their mission's districts and fields of special mission, those upon whom the missionaries work depended, with whom it was shared, and by whom it was funded. LCM's evidence demonstrates how the missionaries' impact was reflected not only in the numbers of people with whom they engaged, but in their role as catalysts for a wider working-class religious culture in the evangelical idiom.

From LCM's evidence it has been possible to illustrate how their missionaries' evangelical imperative to save souls was inseparable from their deep concern to improve the lives of those among whom they lived and worked. Not only did they understand the context of the social problems that they encountered, but LCM was uniquely placed with its support, which was drawn from among all social classes, to act upon their missionaries' initiatives. While not all LCM missionaries were successful, the achievement of those who were was to use their understanding of local communities to enhance their day-to-day 'person-centred', flexible mission activity and to develop initiatives that actually did improve the lives of poor and vulnerable people. We have seen that the LCM missionaries were far less concerned

[14] Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness*, p.276.

with denominational divisions and rivalries, or the conflicts between the established Church and Dissent, than previous historians have argued.

LCM's missionaries crossed thresholds by invitation, and to be able to do so was of great meaning for the missionaries. Each and every threshold crossed was an opportunity for individual soul-winning. LCM's working-class missionaries and their wives and families were known by their neighbours as neighbours, and in their small and necessitous districts it was recognised with mutual understanding that they could be called upon for spiritual support, not charity, in a crisis, in times of sickness and death, and with confidence that the support which was sought would be given. For generations, and in ways and upon a scale that has been unimagined by historians of religion, LCM's mission and missionaries reached and remained the everyday religious focus of the lives of many hundreds of thousands of working-class people. It is within the texture of this engagement, rather than simply the arithmetic of churchgoing that we should measure the impact of Christianity on the working classes of London.

John Galt's photographs

John Galt's photographs were taken between 1890-1907. In 1973, sixty-nine of his images were given as transparencies to LCM by Ian Galt and Beulah F. Wilkins, his children. A few are included here. The titles and details given with them, Ian Galt explained, were transcribed from his father's notes.[1]



Figure 10. 'Home industry: Blacksmiths, both man and wife.'

'Making house-hold shovels, dustpans etc., mostly from scrap. For these they received sixpence a dozen. For better articles with wrought-iron handles they got a shilling a dozen.'

[1] LCMA, I. Galt, 'John Galt's London photographs', a list attached to letter dated 1 January 1973.

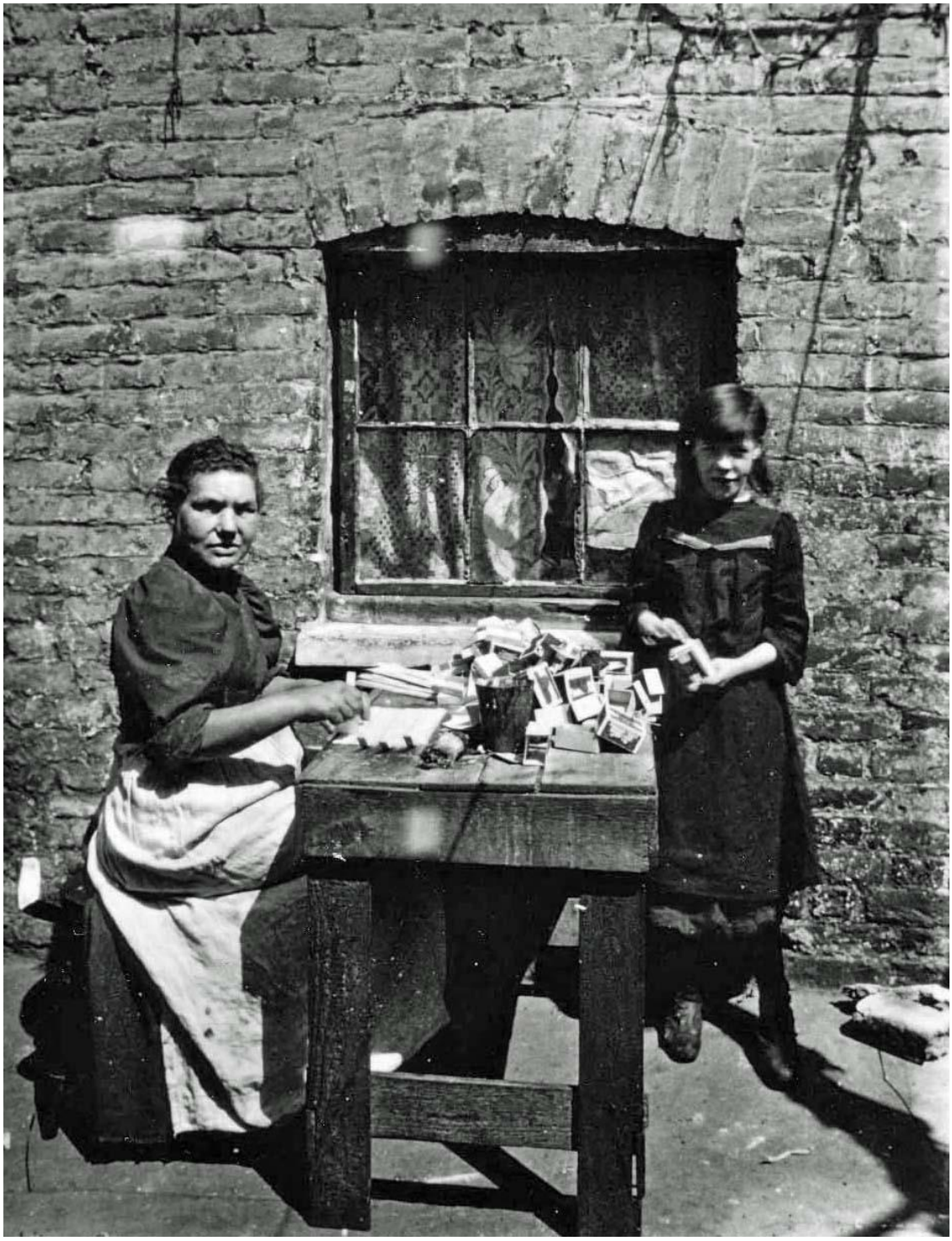

Figure 11. ‘Home industry: Match-box assembly.’

‘Women worked 16 hours a day and were paid 2 1/2d per gross of boxes. They delivered their product to a warehouse and picked up fresh supplies. The women furnished the paste, and string to tie the bundles. An expert worker could earn 2 shillings a day but most made no more than one shilling. Of course, these women had neither time nor energy for home-making.’



Figure 12. ‘Home industry: making fire-wood from scrap.’

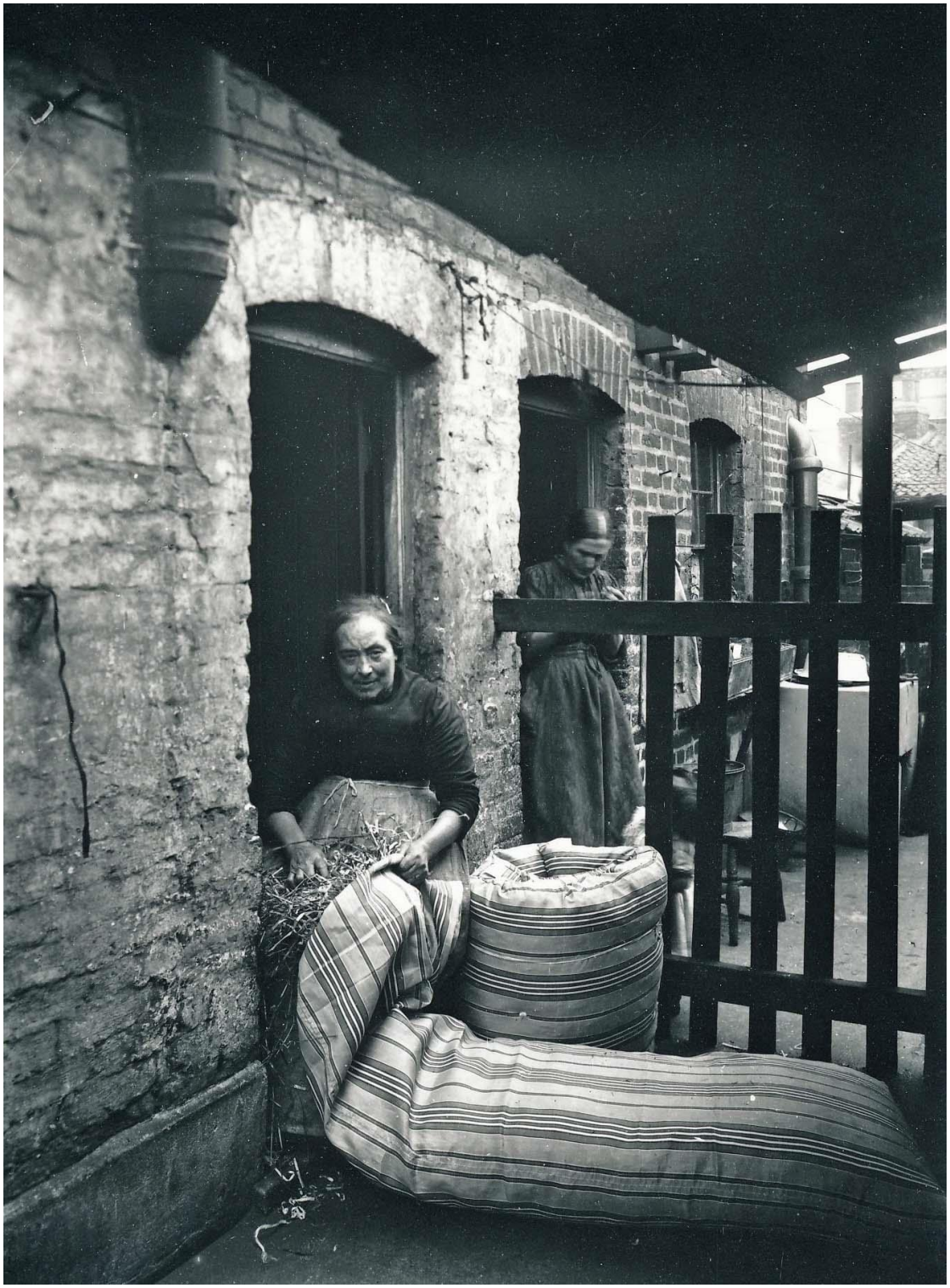

Figure 13. ‘Home industry: mattress making.’ [Mrs Robinson]

‘The workers supplied the materials and were paid one shilling per mattress.’

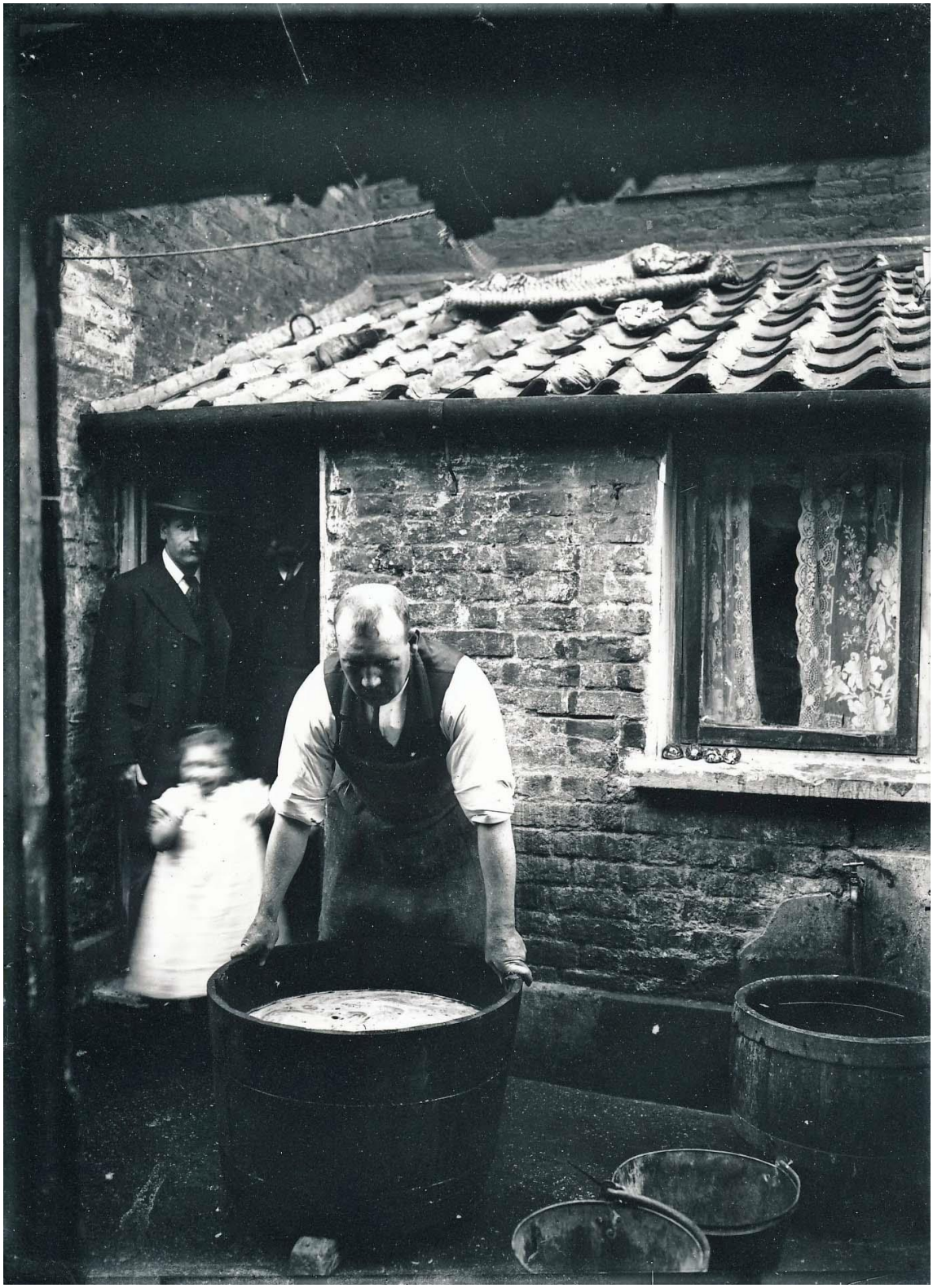

Figure 14. 'Home industry: Cleaning shells for manufacturers.' [The missionary is Tom Pearson]

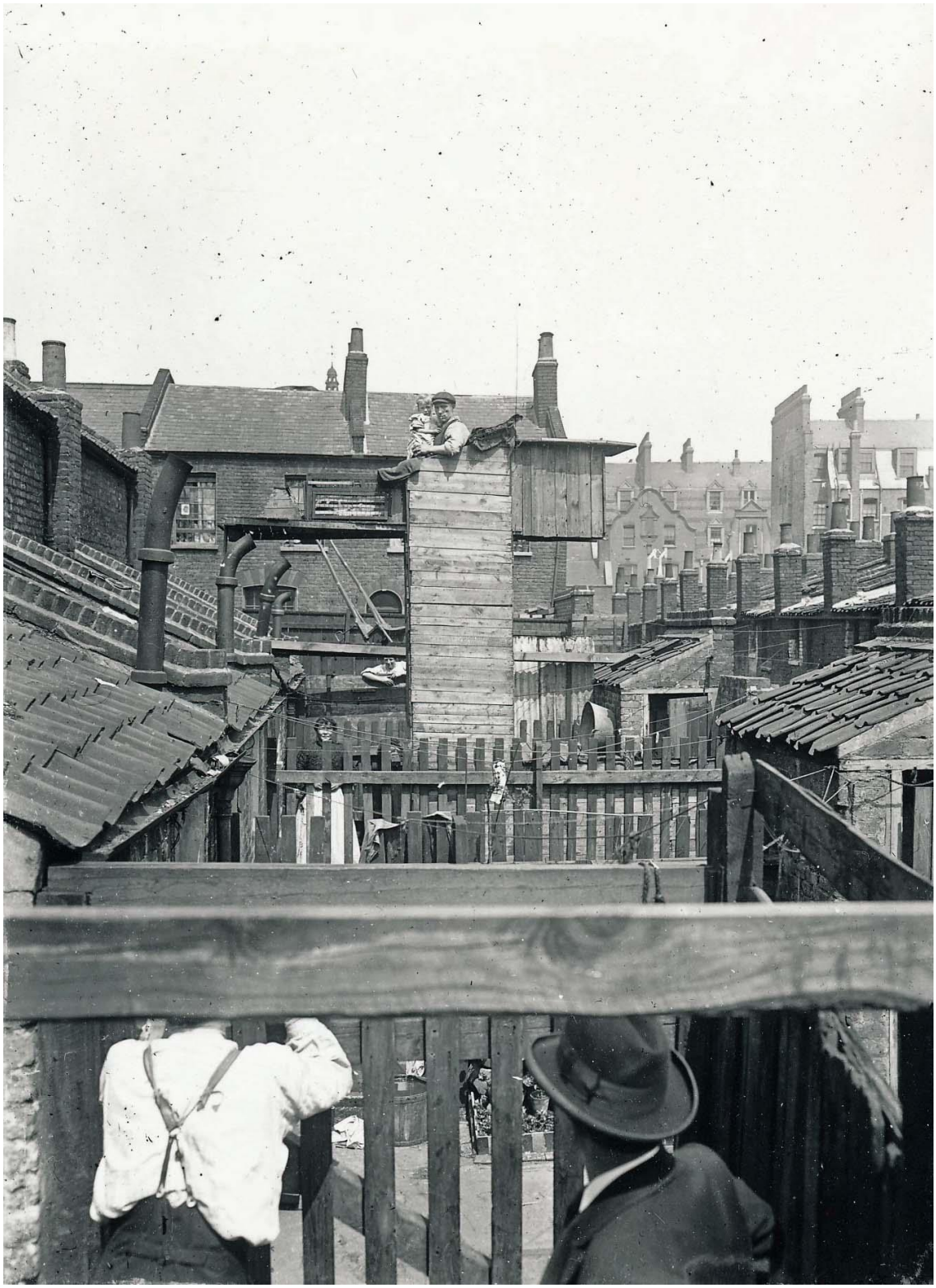

Figure 15. ‘Workers’ homes: leisure activity, flying pigeons from a back-yard pigeon dormer.’

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Greenfield-street, RG 12/326, fo.36

Grey-street, RG 12/327, fo.40

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Find me a Christian who lives up to his profession (London, n.d.)

Give us religion without hell (London, n.d.)

How can a man be dead and alive at the same time? (London, n.d.)

I can't take your Bible at any price (London, n.d.)

Is it all cant? (London, n.d.)

It's all according to how we are born (London, n.d.)

Live well while you can; you may be dead a long while (London, n.d.)

Religion is just a living (London, n.d.)

Religious people begin at the wrong end (London, n.d.)

Ten to one on the Bible (London, n.d.)

The Bible is a bad wicked book (London, n.d.)

Tracts won't fill my stomach (London, n.d.)

What would you do in Heaven when you got there? (London, n.d.)

When Christians agree I'll believe in religion (London, n.d.)

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