

Chapter Four: Cullingworth Conundrums

So where did the Smiths go after they left Sutton from in late 1832 to early 1834 period? The answer was not at all easy to find. At first Colne seemed the most likely prospect because family tradition had pointed to a strong association with this locality, and indeed the records of Sutton Chapel showed a William Smith having spent some time in Colne. However, just as this Family History was nearing its completion, what seemed to have been a clearly proven connection with Colne was deftly overturned by fresh evidence from such sources as the Baptismal Registers for Kildwick and the 1841 Census. Having provided useful background information my extensive research into Colne had led to some plausible but nonetheless very misleading conclusions (please see the first Case Study appended to the Statistical Supplement). Having what I had originally thought to be viable conclusions disproved in such a way caused me to be more wary of wholeheartedly trusting in any historical sources. I needed more in the way of corroborative evidence before I could even be remotely certain of anything.

The first clue to the Smiths' real location was provided by an entry in Kildwick Parish Church's Baptismal Register, discovered at Northallerton Archive Centre during a stormy Friday, June 15th 2001. One particular astonishing discovery was Edmund's birth having been registered at a Dissenting Chapel in Sutton on April 22nd 1832 and then later also christened in an Anglican Church, (this time along with his younger brother Daniel). This was the very discovery, which was to lead to a drastic reinterpretation of this Family History just before it was due to be completed! My eyes nearly 'popped out of my head' when the following details appeared on the micro-fiche – not least because I was trying to trace the details of quite another John and Anne Smith, of whom for at least nine months I had been fully convinced were my true Great, Great Grandparents! (For precise details as to how this mistake arose please refer to the second Case Study appended to the Statistical Supplement.)

When

Baptised?

Child's

Christian Name

Parents' Name

Abode

Quality, Trade, or Profession
Christian

Surname

Christened, 3rd August 1835

Born, 21st January 1832

No. 1133

Edmund

Son of

John Anne

Smith

Cullingworth

Miller

Christened, 3rd August 1835

Born, 27th June 1834

No. 1134

Daniel

Son of

John Anne

Smith

Cullingworth

Miller

As had been the case with their elder children during the late 1820s, the officiating minister was again the Reverend John Perring who would now have been approaching his seventieth year at the time of this christening ceremony. A number of unusual features were wrapped up with this document. Firstly, although it included Sutton, Kildwick Parish did not cover Cullingworth, which belonged to the neighbouring Parish of Bingley. Normally vicars were very firm about infants being christened in their own Parish; this was because they did not want to risk any appearance of rivalry with a neighbouring clergyman. The only conceivable reason why John Perring would have allowed the christening of Edmund and Daniel to have taken place in his Parish was because John and Ann Smith had already possessed very strong family links in Kildwick Parish. This implied that their move from Sutton had taken place in the last two or three years. At this point my Great, Great Grandparents do not appear to have put down deep roots in their new abode at Cullingworth, (They did not stay long at Cullingworth either – having left it by the time of the 1841 Census.) Secondly, in an age marked by strong Anglican and Dissenting hostility, my Great, Great Grandparents displayed mixed denominational loyalties. Through registering Edmund's birth at Sutton Chapel, Anne had provided decisive evidence of Baptist sympathies among my direct ancestors. However, christening him later in an Anglican Church appeared to indicate that these sympathies were not yet firmly fixed. A final surprise was the discovery that Edmund had a younger brother named Daniel.

Supplementing the above source of information was the following Birth Certificate, received by post on Saturday, July 14th 2001. It referred to the birth of Edmund's younger sister Ann in the "district of Bingley in the County of York, Registration district Bradford."

1

2

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9

When and where born

Name, if any

Sex

Name and surname of Father

Name, surname and maiden name of mother

Occupation of

Father

Signature, description and residence of informant

When registered

Signature of registrar

Twenty Fourth of December 1838 at Cullingworth

Ann

Girl

John

Smith

Ann Smith,

Formerly

Wilson

Corn

Miller

The marking X

Ann Smith mother Cullingworth

Seventeenth January

1839

Edward Sutcliffe

This document showed that even by her mid-thirties my Great, Great Grandmother had still not learnt to write. Very probably, the pressures of motherhood had prevented her from ever having enough time to learn this increasingly important skill. Unlike her older siblings Ann was never christened into the Anglican Church. Edmund and Daniel were the last children to undergo this rite.

According to p.45 of the first part of Pigot and Co.'s 1834 National Commercial Directory, Cullingworth was described as "a hamlet in the parish of Bingley in the upper division of Skyrack Wapentake, West Riding; about 3 miles W. (West) from Bingley, the like distance S. E. (South East) from Keighley, 7 from Bradford, and 8 from Halifax. The inhabitants of the hamlet, for the most part, are employed in the manufacturing establishments, the principal of which is that belonging to Messrs. George Townend and Brothers, worsted spinners and yarn manufacturers. There are two places of worship, one for Methodists, one for Baptists, and a license has been granted to convert the Odd Fellows Hall to the service of the established Church. A Sunday school is in the village. Population returned with the parish of Bingley." During a telephone conversation with the Bradford Archive made on Tuesday, 19th June 2001, I learnt that the Parish Church of Saint John was not opened until 1849 and that its burial records dated only from 1853. In the 1830s the Baptist and Wesleyan Chapels alone were available to meet the spiritual needs of the community. A reference to a map of 1850 revealed that Mannwell Beck ran through Cullingworth. Presumably, any Corn Mill would be located beside this stream, as its waterpower would have been used to drive the machinery.

Direct observation made during a visit made on Thursday July 19th 2001, confirmed that Cullingworth was a tri-angular shaped village lying on a fairly steep valley side. A few mill cottages dotted the valley bottom near to a crossing point called Cow House Bridge. Underneath it flowed the shallow Eller Carr Beck. A Wesleyan Chapel had been constructed in 1824, but was now used for private residential purposes. It was within a couple of minutes walking distance from the Baptist Chapel. Cullingworth was sited below some very bleak Mooreland. A large rubbish tip on these moors left a pungent stench in the air. Many birds hovered above it looking for easy pickings.

A visit to the Bradford Archive Centre made on Thursday, 21st June 2001 revealed more details about Cullingworth. According to Cudworth (1876) p. 251, "A corn mill and a worsted mill were built in Cullingworth by Mr. John Briggs about forty years ago; the former being worked some years by Benjamin, son of Edward Craven, the latter by John Anderton before his removal to Bent's Mill. These premises have been enlarged by Messrs. Townend and adapted to their business. A weaving mill was also built by Mr. Wilkinson of Harden at Cowhouse Bridge for Mr. William Harrop, and was worked by him for some years. This is known as Woodfield Mill, and is also the property of Messrs Townend." One useful point of information were the details concerning a new Corn Mill being built in about 1835, the approximate time of John Smith's arrival at Cullingworth. The convergence of these two facts did suggest that my Great, Great Grandfather had arrived in Cullingworth to take up a position in this new mill. One mystery was the failure of his employers to hire a local man - but perhaps John Smith was good at his job and had been recommended for the position by someone in Sutton. Part 1 of the 1841 Pigot Trade Directory showed that the only Corn Miller in Cullingworth was Benjamin Craven, so it seemed that he was the employer my Great, Great Grandfather had worked for. The only other accessible Corn Millers were Abraham Hardy and James Pearson, both of whom were based in nearby Thornton. However, Benjamin Craven still remained the most likely candidate.

A review of some early maps of Cullingworth held by the Family and Local History Section of Leeds City Library, suggested that the Corn Mill could have been stood on Eller Carr Beck

somewhat to the left of Cowhouse Bridge not too far distant from Woodfield Mill. This is now a long newly cleaned sandstone building standing on the right hand side of this crossing point. It has been converted into private accommodation. A stone inscription on the rear of this building reads, "Woodfield Mill, Converted 1999." Some old mill cottages still stand beside the road adjoining this building. It was probably inside one of these cottages that John Smith lived with his family. As will be seen presently both he and Ann had a very significant association with the Cowhouse Site.

Cudworth p. 253 also provided some useful details concerning the Baptist Chapel, whose records were thankfully found in Bradford Archive Centre. "About 1835 the Rev. M. Saunders of Haworth, being invited by Baptist families in and near Cullingworth, held services in the village, and engaged in the Oddfellows' Hall for public worship. This effort resulted in the formation of a Baptist Church and a Sunday school, and the erection of a Chapel in 1837. The latter is an unpretending but convenient building, and was erected from a design by Mr. Nichols of Hewenden. The founders of the Baptist Church were Messrs. W. S. and R. S. Nicholas, Thomas Green, John Robinson, Robert Hartley, Jonas Sugden, Sarah Taylor, Isaac Constantine, Abraham Moulding and Ellen Gregson. The Rev. J. Harvey was the first pastor, and was highly respected by all in the village." However, this last point was not strictly accurate.

A more detailed account of the Chapel's origins was provided in the Minutes Book, covering the period from 15th June 1836 until 30th June 1847, (with a two-year gap from the middle of 1840 until late 1842 and another gap from June 1842 until 1847). Despite its somewhat ponderous use of religious language, this Minute Book was an invaluable source in showing the religious fervour common in the early nineteenth century. The following extract begins with an account (date unknown) of the missionary activity, which had preceded the foundation of the Chapel. This was based around the Odd Fellows Hall, known also as The Lodge. (The Odd Fellows were a Friendly Society founded at Manchester in 1810. Many of its rituals have affinities to those of the Freemasons, although pp. 26-27 of the Spring 2001 issue of their Odd Fellow magazine portrayed a slightly touchy sensitivity on this point). This account proved that the establishment of a new chapel at Cullingworth began with some high, (perhaps unrealistically high) hopes:

"The establishment of a Church of Christ is a blessing of the highest order the means of Christian fellowship which is one of the greatest privileges. A reason for devout thanksgiving – when it is considered that a church formed on the model contained in the New Testament, is an image of that blessed abode, where the followers of the Lamb shall behold his glory and sing his praises and stand in immediate connection with our welfare in an eternal world. It must evidently appear interesting and instructive to trace its rise and progress. Trusting that [as] the Church of God we have had the happiness to see formed at Cullingworth, shall continue till the time of general assembly of the first born, whose names are written in heaven. We briefly record the manner of its commencement for the use of those who may arise after us to dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold His beauty and to enquire in his temple.

As early as the year 1820, or even before that period, thoughts of establishing the preaching of the Gospel at Cullingworth had occupied the minds of leading members of the Baptist Denomination in the adjacent towns; and though they did not accomplish their pious design, yet it seems to have

had the good effect of stirring up the Wesleyan brethren to increased exertions. Since that time the subject was occasionally referred to, and though no decisive steps were taken, there were a few persons living in the neighbourhood who continued attached to the Baptist cause and waited till the opportunity should arrive of seeing their desire realised.

The prosperity and increasing population of the village awakened fresh attention and during the summer of 1835, the Revd M. Saunders of Haworth consulted with the Revd D. Taylor of Bingley on the measures which ought to be taken, being encouraged by a liberal promise of support from Mr John Briggs of Cullingworth. (After the word Briggs another hand inserted the telling words, ‘ but never paid.’) The want of a suitable room has hitherto prevented a commencement from being made. Towards the close of the year this difficulty was removed. A commodious room was erected by the Society of Odd Fellows, who signified their intention to let it for the use of a religious body. M. Saunders immediately treated with them, and agreed on a moderate rent for the occupation of the room on the Sabbath, and one evening in the week.

On Tuesday the 16th February 1836 the Room called ‘The Lodge’ was opened for Divine worship and sermons were preached on the occasion by the Rev P. Scott of Shipley, and the Revd Blair of Wilsden; and on the following Sabbath by the Revd J. Ackworth [M.A] & D. Taylor of Bingley. The attendance was highly encouraging and a good spirit evidently prevailed.

On the 24th of February 1836 a meeting was convened when sixteen friends (including the Revd M. Saunders) were appointed as a Provisional Committee - with a Treasurer and Secretary for one year and a plan of supplies for three months was presented by M. Saunders. It was agreed that a quarterly collection should be made, beside which a private subscription was opened for the purpose of defraying the incidental expenses connected with carrying on the work of God.

At a meeting held on the 18th of March, it was resolved to establish a Sunday school. A considerable number of persons engaged themselves in this good work as teachers. Superintendents were appointed toward the close of the month with about 50 Scholars, the numbers have subsequently increased to upwards of 100.

On the approach of the annual vacation at Horton Academy, it was thought advisable to invite one of the students to supply at Cullingworth during that time and it was hoped the opportunity he would have of visiting the people at their homes would greatly tend to promote the cause of religion and to encourage those who were anxious for the blessings of salvation. Mr Harvey having won the affections of the friends was chosen to this duty was brought to labour among them in the first week of May. At this period the congregation averaged about 200 persons, many of whom were, previously to the opening of the Lodge living in the neglect of the ordinances of religion without God and without hope in the world. A great effectual door was opened for the preaching of the Gospel at Cullingworth – the good hand of the Lord was evidently with his servant – the attendance increased, the faithful were stirred up to greater diligence, backsliders were reclaimed and sinners converted. A spirit of supplication was prayed out, prayer meetings were established from house to house, as also the Sabbath morning & evening and experience meetings were held with much benefit. This sacred flame of holy piety kindled by the grace of God at Haworth was felt at the beginning of the year, large additions were made to the Church

and under the fostering care and zeal of the Revd. M. Saunders and others the influence extended to neighbouring villages – may it never expire, but spread more and more until it is lost in the full blaze of an eternal day.

The opportunity was embraced of forming a Christian Church, the materials were prepared by the Lord, living stones fit to be built together in Christ, and thus the way was opened to the full privileges of the gospel dispensation. Wednesday, 15th June [1836] was appointed for the solemn service of erecting this spiritual temple to God. The Revds B. Godwin, M. Saunders [O] Foster, [W. Jordan] and other Ministers attended to conduct the interesting proceedings of that day. Seven persons (out of the twelve baptised) made a public profession of their faith in Christ by baptism in the stream at Cowhouse Bridge. In the afternoon, B. Godwin discoursed in a very instructive manner on the nature and character of a Christian Church; after which, addressing himself to the candidates for communion. He desired them to give to each other the right hand of fellowship; on their having done so he acknowledged and pronounced them a Church of Christ, and in an affectionate manner shook hands with them all. Twenty-five persons were thus united in the Lord. 14 [Brothers] and 8 sisters - 3 of whom were received by dispersion from Hall Green, Haworth, 2 from West Lane, Haworth, 12 by baptism, (it appears that five of those baptised, including John Smith, had already professed their faith before this ceremony) and 5 who had previously been in connexion with other Churches, from whose Communion they had withdrawn from various causes.

The members then chose three persons from among themselves, by ballot, to serve the office of Deacon, John Robinson, Wm, S. Nichols, and Richard S. Nichols; whom [the Revd] Saunders, in a fervent prayer, commended to the care, guidance and counsel of the Great God and Head of the Church.

Mr Jordan next offered some admonition on the words of Scripture “Be vigilant.” The Lord’s supper was then celebrated. The hearts of the brethren were greatly encouraged by this means of grace and by the presence of about 100 followers of the Redeemer from neighbouring Churches, who sat down with them, in obedience to the gracious commandment of the Lord, “Do this in remembrance of me.”

The people being again assembled in the evening; Mr Foster gave the charge to the Deacons, setting before them, affectionately and faithfully, the duties God has called them to perform and Mr Godwin concluded by an exhortation, founded on the words: “Well done thou good and faithful servant, thou that hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.”

Thus far were the servants of God directed by his good providence. “This is the Lord’s doing, it is marvellous in our eyes;” and his merciful hand is still with them so that they prosper; their numbers increase and their union is cemented.

Mr Harvey having gained the esteem and the love of both the church and congregation has been unanimously invited to accept the Pastoral charge and arrangements are making for building a Chapel. May the Lord be pleased to make the handful of servants to flourish and may ‘the little

one become a thousand!' O Lord! Grant that this hill of thy Zion, which thou dost establish, may even be as the Churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia, which thou didst approve. May it be rich towards thee in humility, in love, in faith! And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us and establish through the work of our hands upon us, yea the work of our hands establish thou it!"

This fascinating description showed that Cullingworth Chapel was formed amidst an atmosphere of Protestant revivalism where anything seemed possible. One problem with such a vibrant and expectant atmosphere was the fostering of unrealistic expectations, which if left unfulfilled could lead to a trail of acrimony and disillusion. Such was to be the case at Cullingworth Chapel.

Of more direct relevance to this Family History was the possibility that a John Smith was one of those baptised on June 15th 1836 at Cowhouse Bridge. (Baptisms appear to have been carried out in three relays, with different ministers baptising at various times of the day, each group ranging in size from two to five people. If later evidence should confirm that he was indeed my forbear then a detailed account of this formal initiation into Christianity, has been preserved for future generations of Smiths.

John Smith appeared to have shown an interest in church business before his baptism – and had obviously given serious thought over this public commitment to his faith. He had attended the Opening Meeting held at the Odd Fellows Hall ('The Lodge') on 24th February 1836, the account of which made for informative reading. For ease of reference I have placed the names of the committee members in list format whilst inserting any other known extra details about them in brackets.

“The Minutes Book of Management for conducting Divine Service in the New Lodge, Cullingworth, which was opened for the purpose on Tuesday, February 16th in connection with the Baptist Denomination.

Lodge, Cullingworth, February 24th 1836

A meeting of a few friends of the cause having been convened, prayer was offered for Divine direction and and Revd Saunders of Haworth being called to the chair instructed the business of the meeting by stating the object to obtain for which they had been assembled.

The following friends were appointed to a Provisional Committee for the ensuing year with power to add to their number:

John Brigg (builder of the then new local Corn and Textile Mills, on some documents his surname was sometimes spelt Briggs. He appears to have been an influential figure in the community.)

Wm Ellison

A. Moulding

Thomas Sutcliffe

John Smith, (a Corn Miller, assuming him to be my Great, Great Grandfather)

Jonas Sudgen (formally received from West Lane, Haworth on 15/6/1836)

John Robinson (formally added to the Church on 15/6/1836)

John Greenwood

Thomas Craven

Edward Craven

Ben Craven (Manager at the Corn Mill built by John Brigg, and son of Edward Craven)

John Craven (formally received from Hall Green, Haworth on 15/6/1836, he later moved to Bradford)

Wm Nichols

R. Nichols

Saint Bland and

Revd M. Saunders (from Hall Green, Haworth – had hitherto been conducting cottage meetings having been invited to the locality by some of the Baptist families living within it).

Resolved

Resolved 1st that Wm. John Brigg be Treasurer for the coming year

Resolved 2nd that W. Tho. Sutcliffe be Secretary for the following year

Resolved 3rd that five persons constitute a quorum for the transaction of business

Resolved 4th that the committee meet once a month & oftener if need be

Resolved 5th that the plan for supplies submitted by M. Saunders be accepted

Resolved 6th that [voluntary] collection shall be made towards repaying all expenses

Resolved 7th that some of the [forms] be let [off] at 6d and a quarter for each sitting

Adjourned”

John Smith had also attended at least two other meetings - one on 18th March 1836 called by the Committee of Management and a special meeting on 7th April 1837. He was at the Open Meeting held on 28th April 1836 when the Church had resolved unanimously to allow only those baptised by full immersion to participate in Communion. He did not however appear to have attended a Committee of Management meeting on 5th March 1836.

The writing for the meeting held on 18th March was very poor and the help of an archivist was required in order to interpret some of the words, (at Bradford Archive Centre on Monday, July 8th 2002). With her invaluable assistance most of the details could be recorded.

“Lodge March 18th 1836

Present Rev. M. Saunders, J. Brigg, J. Sutcliffe R. S. Nichols, J. Sudgen, B. Craven,

J. Smith J. Craven W. Ellison, J. Robinson

The minutes of the former meeting were read

and confirmed.

Two delegates being present leave was asked to establish a Sunday

School and assurance given that any additional cleaning be defrayed

And the paintings screened to preserve them from injury. (Underlining in the original.)

Also

That permission be granted to affix

Back to six forms for the accommodation

Of aged and weak persons.

Also (the following resolution was indecipherable.)

To adopt as an experiment for one quarter the principle of support recommended in minute 8.

(This financial support was to be gained through the issue of quarterly collections.)

A list of teachers for the Sunday school

Was opened and other necessary preparations proposed.”

Provided here was the first firm evidence of a member of my family having supported a new educational project. Ironically, this discovery was made whilst I was engaged in a not too dissimilar enterprise in the Manchester area! Sunday schools were regarded with great importance because they represented the only means whereby children could learn to read and write. It was fascinating to discover how far back the Smith interest in education went. In 1836 John Smith had not yet learnt to sign his own name, yet already present was a noticeable desire to better himself. Such a desire appears to have been kindled by his affiliation with the Baptist church.

At the second ‘open’ meeting (also at the Lodge) John was known to have attended the Church, “resolved unanimously that, as it is the opinion of the New Testament, which is the Christian rule of faith and practice that we have no authority from Christ and his Apostles to admit unbaptised persons to the Lord’s Supper that we acknowledge no baptism as valid save that of immersion of believers on a profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ of their repentance towards God, that the admission of unbaptised persons into the church would break down the barriers that separates it from the world and would sanction the neglect of any or all the ordinances of the Christian religion and would inevitably lead to dissatisfaction, contention and disorganisation that may better keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace and hand down to posterity an example worthy of this imitation. We agree to admit no unbaptised person to the Lord’s Supper - or into Communion as a Church.”

Clearly, these were the words of a group keen to establish its corporate identity in the face of competition from the nearby Wesleyan Church. They were also the words of a group struggling for internal cohesion. However, later events would show that it had been totally naive of them to expect such rules to have saved them from, ‘dissatisfaction, contention and disorganisation.’ Later events would show these aplenty! The example Cullingworth Chapel gave to posterity was one most Churches would do well to avoid.

From these and other meeting transcripts emerged a clear impression of a Christian group determined to build its work upon sound practical foundations, even though it could be argued that to have sixteen on a Management Committee was rather too large a number. Throughout the proceedings the moving force appears to have been Revd M. Saunders who was perhaps instrumental in devising the following Bible-Based ‘Covenant of Faith.’ Here again was the

definite impression of a Chapel trying to do things ‘by the book’ – in this case ‘the good Book!’ All underlining and X shaped marks were present in the original document, but had been inserted at a later date. (Someone had struck out some words, which I have subsequently replaced within bold pointed brackets, ({ }). The same person also appears to have been responsible for the underlining.

“The Solemn Covenant of Church Communion”

We, a small handful of the unworthy dust of Zion, usually assembling for the worship of God at the Baptist Chapel Cullingworth, and conformity to the example of Jesus Christ and his faithful followers, recorded in the New Testament, immersed in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, having first given our own selves to the Lord are now met together with one accord to give up ourselves one to another, by mutual consent and Solemn Covenant according to the will of God, with deep humiliation for our own past sins, and earnest prayer to God for pardoning mercy, and assisting, persevering and preserving Grace, we say with our hearts we are the Lord’s and subscribe unto him with our hands, in manner following ----- namely,

1st We this day approach Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the One, only true and living God, for our New Covenant God, and all sufficient position, and give up ourselves to Him alone for his peculiar people in a perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten.

2ndly We receive and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, as our alone Saviour, Prophet, Priest, and King; in whom alone we trust for Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

3rdly We devote and consecrate ourselves as living temples to the Holy Ghost, our Sanctifier, Guide and Comforter, whose gracious operations and heavenly conduct we desire daily more and more to enjoy, experience and follow.

4thly we take the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the only ground and rule of our Faith and Practice desiring through the help of his Grace, therein promised to be in all things conformable to the Holy Will of God, therein revealed.

5thly According to the tenor of which divine Oracles, and depending for the performance only on the Divine help and assistance therein promised – as deeply sensible that we are not sufficient of ourselves, but that all our sufficiency, both to will and to do that which is good, is of God, whose grace alone is sufficient to enable us to do the following things through God strengthening us – in a single dependence on whom, and as in duty bound, we now covenant with God, each for ourselves and jointly together

1st To worship God in spirit and in truth, to observe his commandments and keep his ordinances,

as he hath delivered them to us.

2ndly To subject to that divine order and discipline which Jesus Christ our only King and Lawgiver hath appointed in his Church; X and not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together for the public worship of God in its appointed seasons; but to continue steadfastly in our relation to one another, and to fill up our own places duly in the House of God, and cheerfully maintain his worship therein, to the best of our capacity, until death or evident calls in divine Providence shall separate us one from another. X

3rdly To love one another with pure hearts fervently, and endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace for the honour of our God and our mutual good unto edification

4thly We will also make it our care, through the aforesaid help, to walk before the Lord in our own houses, with upright hearts, and to keep up the worship of God therein by daily prayers and praise to God, and by diligent reading of the Holy Scriptures, that the Word of God may dwell richly in us.

5thly And {as we have given our children to the Lord, by a solemn dedication} we will endeavour through divine help, to teach {them} our children the way of the Lord, and command them to keep it, setting before them an holy example, worthy of imitation, and continuing in prayer to God for their conversion and salvation.

6thly We will also endeavour by the grace of God to keep ourselves pure from the sins and vices of the times and places wherein we live, and so be holy in all manner of conversation, that none may have occasion given by our own unholy lives to speak evil of God's holy ways.

7thly And all this under an abiding sense that we must shortly give up our account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead, unto which Solemn Covenant we set our hands in the presence of the all seeing Heart.”

One fascinating feature was the way in which someone had underlined all those areas where the Church had been visibly failing by the time of Pastor Joseph Green's arrival in 1842. This made it most likely that he himself was the man to have made those underlines and to have deleted the document at the places denoted by the pointed brackets. He seemed to have been a rigorous and thorough man, assessing his congregation's behaviour against the standards, which they should have been following.

The following financial information was found in the “Accounts of the Baptist Church at Cullingworth” for the year 1836, compiled by John Briggs and Thomas Sutcliffe. For ease of clarity, it has been expressed in table form:

The Treasurer and Secretary John Brigg

Committee of Management for the Lodge - Secretary, Thomas Sutcliffe

Date

Collection

Amount

Date

Expenditure

Amount

1836

Total Collected;

£

s

d

1836

£

s

d

Feb 16

At the Opening Services

16

7

Feb 16

By acct 2/ By printing 8/

10

1st Quarterly Collection

2

17

1h

Mar 18

By cash for Bible

1

1

1st Quarterly subscription

May 10

By Rent

2

10

9

W. Ellison

10

21

By covers for front desks in Lodge

10

J. Briggs

1

5

27

By sundry fittings to Jn Smith as paid

7

10

A. Moulding

2

6

”

By supplies for Horton College to April 24

3

12

B. Craven

10

”

By 4 [forms]& back nails to old ones

2

4

Thos. Sutcliffe

2

”

By table & music stand

1

0

6

Jonas Sugden

2

June 24

By Mr Harvey for Easter Supply

5

John Robinson

2

Nov 9

By Rent for Lodge Room

5

9

Jn. Greenwood

10

Dec 4

By Jn Smith's a/c

10

h

Jn. Craven

5

By candles

3

h

Jn. Smith

2

Balance

9

8

9

A. [Heeland] (Donation)

2

6

July 31

2nd Quarterly Collection

3

13

6

Nov. 15

3rd Quarterly Collection

3

17

9

Cash for Bible from the Odd Fellows

1

1

Subscription of Sutcliffe & Hudson for table and music stand

1

1

32

6

10h

32

6

10h

1837

Feb 16

Total balance on hand

9

8

The Account Book showed John Smith pledging the very small sum of 2s for the quarter covering February 16th until May 22nd 1836, (compared to the 10s pledge of his possible employer B. Craven.) Significantly, in 7 of the 11 recorded cases the amount pledged lay in the 2s to 2/6d range. These small figures suggested that most of the active participants in this new Chapel were people of only limited financial means. Hardly surprisingly, mention was made in the records of it being a poor church. Certainly, it was unlikely to have been able to afford to pay for both a new Pastor and the costs of a new £900 building at the same time. (Not to mention the costs of running a new Sunday school.) Even if the congregation could give £25.00 per year to covering the costs of the new building, it would still take 45 years for it to have been repaid! These figures showed that the fellowship would either very quickly run into a major cash flow crisis or be forced to resort to dubious methods of fund raising. It seemed Cullingworth Chapel had tried to expand too quickly in too short a time. They would later come to regret their over-ambitious plans.

It was interesting to note the 7s 10d being paid into John Smith's account on May 27th 1837 for 'sundry fittings.' By December 4th of that year another 10s and half-a-pence was paid in. Apparently John Smith played an active part in furnishing the new Chapel even though he was not on the 'Building committee.' (Neither he nor Ann served on the Sunday school committee either. Sadly, the Sunday school minutes book did not contain the names of those children who attended its classes during this period) The implication of these figures was that he had supplemented his income as a Corn Miller by doing odd jobs – this was a practice very typical of the time. In general, the picture emerged that John Smith was a very useful Chapel member who could be relied upon to repair or make new fixtures. He also served on the occasional committee as long as he was not required to discharge those tasks, which involved strong numeric or literacy skills. In addition, he was willing to make a financial contribution despite having limited means. On the

whole he was very much a 'loyal stalwart,' willing to put in a helping hand, although not eloquent enough to have been considered for preaching or for some higher form of office.

A quick review of the available records did show John Smith as having served on the provisional Chapel Management Committee. This body lasted from Tuesday, February 16th until December 1836 when the new six-member 'Building Committee' superseded it. He did not serve on this committee but attended open meetings conducted under its auspices. The members of this Building Committee appeared to be fairly influential figures in the community. Their names were Edward Craven (whose son Benjamin acted as Manager at the then new Corn Mill), W.S. Nichols (Textiles Manufacturer), William Craven (Builder and Constructor), William Ellison, John Briggs (Shopkeeper and Grocer) and John Greenwood. With their previous track record of success it did not appear that much could go wrong. Consequently, after full consultation with the members it was decided at a meeting held on 6th June 1836, to erect a new Chapel.

The surviving records of Cullingworth Baptist Chapel also threw up an Ann as well as a John Smith. Her name cropped up in the following minutes for the year 1836:

“Minutes of Church Meeting held July 22nd the baptising having been postponed for a week.

The following persons came before the Church, John Berry, Wm. Wilkinson, Wm. Lund, Elizabeth Shoemith. Priscilla Waddington, Hannah Townsley, Ann Smith, Jane Taylor, Martha Craven, Ann Sutcliffe, Mary Huntley and Joseph Sutcliffe

Resolved 6th to accept them in full communion in their having been baptised

Resolved 7th The committee having made this request – it was to purchase 1500 yards of land more or less belonging to W. Waddington sited opposite to the gate of Messrs Townend and contiguous to the road

Resolved 8th To invite W. J. Harvey to become Pastor of the Church at Cullingworth on the termination of his studies at Horton – adjourned.”

Ominously, there was no record of anyone asking whether this pioneer work could afford to purchase both new land and hire a new Minister. Nor did anyone question whether it was wise to plunge an obviously inexperienced Minister into a situation where a great deal of mature judgement would be required. With hindsight, it was possible to see that, for all its concern with outward forms, the decision-making skills of this provisional Management Committee left a lot to be desired. They were rushing in to build a new work far too quickly. The members of this Chapel had much zeal but too little wisdom to give it a sense of balance.

In the membership lists John and Ann Smith occupied thirteenth and thirtieth positions respectively. Details were also included about Simon Mead because of the interesting location of his death, which showed that even a remote Yorkshire villager could have contacts with a very

different part of the world. (For further details, please see the statistical analysis of these membership lists in Section Two of the Statistical Supplement.)

Name

When Recorded

How Recorded

By whom Baptised

Dismissed

Separated

13. John Smith X

June 15th 1836

By Baptism at Cowhouse Bridge

Reverend M. Saunders - from Hall Green Baptist Church in Haworth

Removed to Skipton

December 21st 1842

16. Simon Mead X

June 15th 1836

By Baptism at Cowhouse Bridge

Reverend M. Saunders

30 Ann Smith X

July 24th 1836

By Baptism,

Cowhouse Bridge

Reverend James Ackworth, M.A. -- President of Horton Baptist College, Bradford

Removed to Skipton

December 21st 1842

NB: Simon Mead died on July 17th 1837 at Chicago, Illinois, "on his way to settle with his brother."

The 'separation date' could be recorded some considerable time after an actual removal to another location. All three names had X shaped marks beside them in the original lists (as distinct from a neater, later copy which I had reproduced at Bradford Archive Centre for statistical tabulation purposes) suggesting that all three new members were illiterate. Ann Smith was one of twelve people baptised on July 24th 1836, only four of whom were men.

The names of John and Ann Smith also appeared as signatories in connection with a rather grovelling letter sent to Joseph Harvey begging him to be Pastor. Dated July 24th 1836, it showed them both as established Chapel Members all of whom were formalising an important request.

“Copy of invitation to Joseph Hartley by the Baptist Church at Cullingworth requesting him to accept the Pastoral charge over them.

The Church of Jesus Christ meeting in The Lodge, Cullingworth, to their esteemed and beloved brother Joseph Hartley.

We fervently thank our Heavenly Father, the great shepherd of the Flock, who in his gracious Providence, directed you to labour amongst us during the recent vacation, and who honoured you in the manifestation of his grace to the awakening of careless sinners and the great edification of them who feared God. The Holy Spirit hath hereby stirred up in us such a love to your person and such an esteem for those gifts of sympathy and communication with which he hath especially blessed you, that our hearts are enlarged toward you.

Amidst the greatness of the Lord’s work, we see our insufficiency and weakness. We see the wisdom of the head of the Church in appointing the Pastoral Office, and we humbly but earnestly pray that our wants may be supplied, and the Church built up a glorious temple to the praise of God, by His appointed means – that we may be blessed in the labours of one whom the spirit of the Lord God hath anointed to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

We are highly favoured in the ministry of those who so acceptably distribute amongst us the bread of life on the Lord’s day, yet we feel the want of one who may discharge the equally important duties of the Pastoral Office during the week, by spiritual intercourse and the maintenance of prayer meetings, preaching and social religious instruction; that enquiring souls may be brought in, the wicked awakened, the borders Zion be enlarged, and her inhabitants directed and stimulated by such superintendence to diligent labour in the Lord’s vineyard.

To you beloved Brother, we look on him whom Providence has designed to fulfil these duties among us, our affections unite in you as those of one heart and our prayers and endeavours shall be constantly directed to promote your comfort and prosperity, should you be stationed over us.

We do therefore most affectionately and unanimously invite you to take oversight of us on the expiration of your term of studies.

May the wise and gracious Spirit guide your decision.

To him, in whom we are and whom we serve, we humbly commend you. Brother pray for us

July 24th 1836 (Signed by)

Wm, S. Nichols, and Richard S. Nichols & John Robinson – Deacons

T Shoesmith, W. Wilkinson, Joseph Sutcliffe, Abrm Moulding

Jonas Sudgen, Isaac Constantine, W Ellison, Jn Smith, Wm Lund,

Simon Mead, Robt Hartley, Cornelius Taylor, Geo: Hethrington,

Thos Ellison, John Berry,

Sarah Taylor, Ellen Gregson,

Ruth Sutcliffe, Rebecca Waddington, Nancy Sandham,

Marianne Craven, Emma Craven, Martha Craven,

Ann Smith, Hannah Townsley, Priscilla Waddington,

Elizabeth Shoesmith, Anne Sutcliffe, James Taylor, Mary Utley,

Grace Tilotson ----- Members.”

Including the three Deacons there were eighteen male and fourteen female members.

Through this correspondence a great deal of emotional pressure and flattery was being exerted on the Chapel’s prospective Minister. Hardly surprisingly, he was rather wary in his response, laying down strict conditions before he would accept the post. One of these was a demand for four weeks leave. From the onset it was obvious that desperation for strong leadership made Cullingworth Chapel far keener to have Joseph Harvey than Joseph Harvey was to have them. Evidence from his correspondence revealed that he already entertained strong doubts about the Chapel’s financial viability. This apparently young and rather insecure man perhaps wondered how the Church could feed him! He may also have felt that its members were rather unrealistic in their expectations of what he could do. A sense of unease was already present in his very first reply.

“To the Church of Jesus Christ meeting in the Lodge Cullingworth

Beloved Bretheren,

Having received from you, an invitation to become your Pastor, and sensible that this involves important consequences; I cannot presume to answer your request, until I have had time for serious consideration and prayer that this may be afforded, I beg your indulgence for 2 months, when you shall, (God willing) hear from me again.

Wishing your continued and increased prosperity and requesting an interest in your prayers.

I remain dear Brethren, your brother in Christ J. Harvey

Horton Academy, July 30th 1836”

At this point the Chapel perhaps should have taken the hint and either looked for another Pastor or better still done without one until their financial situation had improved.

Near the end of September 1836 it was obvious that Pastor Harvey was playing ‘hard to get.’ He appeared to be going out of his way to lay down stringent conditions, possibly in the hope that the congregation of Cullingworth would withdraw their offer without him having to suffer the embarrassment of refusing it! Yet even at this stage no one in the Chapel appeared to take the hint. This lack of discernment was evident in the minutes for September 25th 1836.

“Lords’ day Sept 25th the members of the Church were requested to stay after the service to consider propositions made by Mr Harvey previous to his accepting the invitation of the Church

Copy of J. Harvey’s proposals to the Church of Christ at Cullingworth: -

1st that he should only preach two sermons on the Lords day to the same people

2nd that he should have one month every year at his disposal, and that the Church should find supplies (meaning supply preachers) during that time

3rd that he wished to be exempt from begging for the Chapel

4th that he desires to know what they can do towards his support

If these proposals meet with the appropriation of the Church, he will accept of their invitation for 6 months with the prospect of settling if the providence seem favourable, September 24th 1836.”

The Church’s reply. Cullingworth Sept 25th 1836

Dear Sir,

Your three first propositions have met the appropriation of the Church and touching the fourth the following resolution has been come to – that the Church will do all in its power to make you comfortable and will give you a more decisive answer when the Chapel is built

To the Revd J. Harvey (Signed by)

John Robinson, Deacon”

- Who could by the way, write in a very clear manner.

Such an evasive reply on the matter of his support would hardly reassure an already doubtful Pastor Harvey that Cullingworth Chapel was in any position to ever successfully provide for him. Any doubts he would have had about accepting their offer could only have been reinforced. Moreover, he could easily draw the conclusion that this congregation wanted a pastor on the cheap Very possibly it did!

Another early indication of trouble was this letter received from Isaac Constantine thanking his fellow members for readmitting him to the Church after a period of estrangement. It was written in beautiful script writing.

“Sykes Dec. 3rd 1836

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The note of Brother E. Wadsworth informing me that by the unanimous consent of your church my unworthy name had been restored to the church book by some misadventure only reached me on Monday night. I beg now to express my sorrow that I ever requested it to be withdrawn and think I did wrong, pray for me that I may be forgiven. I take this opportunity for thanking you for this mark of your Christian confidence and hope. Let my life be long or short I shall not be unmindful of my obligations to my fellow members. Had I known in time I believe that notwithstanding my severe indisposition I should have been with you at the Lord's on Sunday last. May the Lord accept the will for the deed and now my dear Christian friends I beg an especial interest in your prayers and I will not forget you in mine.

On a review of my former connection with you although never quite destitute of the eventual qualification to the true Christian, yet I find a sad and mournful deficiency existed in my own case. Brotherly love is not only necessary to the prosperity of the church but also to individual progress in the divine life. Love covers a multitude of sins and enables us to bear each other's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ. It is that prominent mark, which separated the world from the church and is the brightest evidence of our having experienced that divine change so essential to salvation.

The love of Christ shed abroad in our hearts has also a counteracting influence over all our principles, disputations and actions and in dealing with our erring Brothers or Sisters with what tender and anxious solicitude should we endeavour to reform and restore such as one to his or her proper state of mind and were we on all occasions to pursue such a train of actions in dependence on divine influence and grace then I think much good would be the result. May the

head of the Church preside over us and direct my brothers and sisters of the Cullingworth Baptists in the prayer of your unworthy Brother in Christian Love, Isaac Constantine.”

After reading this letter one was left wondering ‘What happened here?’ It appeared that the most interesting things were those left unsaid. Obviously, there had been some disputation in which Isaac Constantine had perceived a lack of charity. No details were given over what had caused the rift and none were found in other records such as the minute book. This would suggest that the matter had not been all that serious; the fact that a restoration to membership was possible further reinforced that conclusion. In terms of personality, Isaac Constantine came across as a somewhat weak character desperate to belong to a group in order to gain some degree of self-worth. He appears to have suffered from depression, yet the suspicion emerged that his letter was a little too fulsome to be genuine. The writer was not above a little self-serving grovelling! Also present was a tendency to skirt round issues. In terms of style the letter was certainly something that could easily have come from a Charles Dickens novel. This would suggest that Isaac Constantine was a well-educated man. His address ‘Sykes’ appears to have been that of an outlying farm – a conclusion reinforced by the fact that it wasn’t found during a search of the 1841 Census Return for Cullingworth and its immediate vicinity. This search had taken place on Monday, 8th July 2002, the day I first transcribed the above letter at the Bradford Archive Centre.

Another mystery was the identity of E. Wadsworth – a name, which did not surface on any of the membership roles of the chapel. However, the Sunday School Teachers Minutes Book revealed that he was a Sunday School Teacher who had been asked by the relevant Committee to help set it up on 10th July 1837. Neither his name nor that of Isaac Constantine featured in any Trade Directory for the Cullingworth locality. This would suggest that in terms of wealth they did not number among the top one fifth of the population.

Overall, the letter written by Isaac Constantine was interesting because it had been written by a man who would have both seen and conversed (if only on a formal basis) with my Great, Great Grandfather, John Smith. Another interesting feature was the way it covered the affairs of a group to which my ancestor had belonged. It also provided evidence that tensions had been present from the very beginning. These were to grow ever more acute as time passed. On 11th April 1837 the minute book revealed that, “Discreditable reports being in circulation respecting Bro. Hartley of having for sometime being also not in attendance of the worship of God, Brother Robinson and Wilkinson were deputed to converse with him.” He was eventually excluded on the 3rd August 1838. Isaac Constantine had another ‘run in’ with the church sometime later.

Particular details, (kindly provided by Julie Skellern of New Zealand in late December 2003) made it possible to construct the following simple ‘Fact File’ concerning Isaac Constantine (one of Julie’s ancestors.) They formed a useful context to the letter just quoted. His service with the British army in the Spanish Peninsular suggested that he might have been a braver man than his letter would suggest.

“Name: Isaac CONSTANTINE 3rd

Birth: ca 1787 Haworth

Baptism: 31 Jul 1787 St Micheal & All Angels, Haworth

Residence: 1851 Sun Street, KEIGHLEY,

Residence: 1841 Hope Street, KEIGHLEY

Residence: 1830 Rycroft (Hamlet near Harden) Bingley Parish,

Residence: 1817 Rycroft (Hamlet near Harden) Bingley Parish,

Death: 1857 Keighley

Occupation: Wool comber (1817), Peninsular Wars - British Army, Weaver (1830), Teacher of
Leading & Lodging House Occ. (1851)

Father: Benjamin CONSTANTINE (ca1765-)

Mother: Margaret WILSON

Spouses

1) Alice HOLMES

Death: before 1830

Marriage: 11 Mar 1811 Haworth

Children: -

Benjamin (1811-1846)

Nanny (ca1815-1882)

Thomas (ca1817-?)

John (ca1821-?)

Holmes (ca1826-?)

2) Hannah PRESTON

Birth: ca 1801 @389

Residence: 1830 Rycroft

Death: Mar 1851 Sun Street, KEIGHLEY,

Burial: 30 Mar 1851 Keighley,

Father: PRESTON

Marriage: 27 Dec 1830 Bingley

Notes for Isaac CONSTANTINE 3rd

Thomas is baptised to Isaac & Alice in Bingley, but Benjamin is baptised just to Isaac in Haworth!
Other baptisms for his children (and there may be more) have not been found.

Joseph the bath proprietor refers to his Uncle Isaac being at Cullingworth..... in 1830s to 1846
and the tiny village of Rycroft (some 28 households) is just up the road from there - both fall in
the Parish of Bingley.

Last Modified: 27 Dec 2003

Created: 4 Jan 2004

Source

Julie M. Skellern
NEW ZEALAND 1750
email: jools@maxnet.co.nz

Matters rested whilst the Chapel building was being constructed in 1837 – the year Queen Victoria came to the throne. The Revd J. Harvey came only to preach and help out in the baptisms. (He baptised one man and three women at Cowhouse Bridge on July 30th 1837. During January 7th 1838 he baptised another one man and three women in the new chapel.) Only at “a Church Meeting held in the vestry February 2nd 1838” was the question of his pastorate renewed. It seems that during this interlude J. Harvey had been unsuccessful in his plans to find another Church to take his services. Looming into view was a dangerous situation in which a desperate congregation was looking for the services of a Pastor who himself was, because of financial pressures, increasingly desperate to find any position – no matter how unsuitable. In terms of ministerial material Cullingworth was in danger of taking on board a ‘reject’ by other Assemblies. Overall, a very unhappy situation was in the making. Undertones of this can be found in the following extract from the minutes of the meeting, which commenced at “Friday evening 8 o’clock February 2nd 1838.”

Brother Harvey having signified his determination (after many difficulties and much prayer, and contrary to all his former plans) to accept the cordial invitation of the Church (agreed unanimously by the congregation) to its Pastoral Superintendence he requested to know what support could be provided for him, and also stated his conscientious objections to the usual mode of Ordination and Recognition. It was therefore resolved that under present burdens of the Church and its limited resources, that sum cannot be guaranteed which the Church would desire to give and to which Bro. Harvey’s services entitle him and that sixty five pounds per annum with the use of the house be proposed, allowing one month’s absence in the year as before stipulated, the church during that time to provide supplies. Bro. Harvey also having reserved to himself the option to avail himself of such assistance as he may be able to procure for one of three services of the Lord’s day and conceding to the Church the remainder of the stipulations agreed according to the minutes Sept 25th 1836.”

The ominous words here were, “agreed unanimously by the congregation.” This provided decisive evidence that not one person was willing to publicly challenge the wisdom of appointing, at a time of severe financial difficulty, a Minister who seemed to raise one obstacle after another concerning the taking up of his position. No one asked the obvious question as to whether he was only considering the appointment because he had no better Church to go to? Nor did anyone query whether it was appropriate to appoint a Pastor when the Church obviously

could not afford one. The impression conveyed in these documents was of a Chapel whose decision-making processes were seriously flawed. There was an over eagerness to gain the respectability of having a properly accredited minister just like any other church. Although the motions of consulting the members was gone through, there was the possibility that Church meetings were commandeered by a few domineering personalities bent on having their own way. Later events showed that such personalities existed. Sadly, nothing emerged to confirm that John and Ann Smith ever opposed such a dangerous status quo. They were perhaps too young in the faith to have done so.

On Sunday, 23rd February 1838 Pastor Harvey was received into the ministry at Cullingworth Chapel amidst what appears to have been a rather grand ordination tea. At a meeting conducted under his auspices it was “resolved that the first subject for consideration be the Sufficiency of the Word of God as contained in the Old and New Testaments, for direction in faith and practice.

Resolved that Mr Giles of Leeds be requested to present the sermon on the Anniversary of the Chapel.

Resolved that W.S Nichols be allowed the use of the school room except on the Lord’s Day for the purposes of tuition on such matters as may be arranged at the next meeting.”

William Nichols was dismissed to Bradford Church on July 1st 1840, although later evidence will show that he was still in the Cullingworth locality during the middle of that month.

To the embarrassment of all concerned the Revd. J. Harvey turned out to be a one-month wonder. All the efforts taken to cajole him into accepting the ministry at Cullingworth Chapel had been in sheer waste of time. Undeniable proof of this point was found in records dated March 23rd 1838.

“At a special meeting of the Church conveyed by notice to the members personally, March 23rd Friday at 8 in the vestry. After the devotional exercises the following communication from Bro. Harvey was submitted to the Deacons.

Copy

To the Baptised Church of Jesus Christ meeting in Cullingworth Yorkshire: -

My beloved brethren! Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you.

Since my first knowledge of you, I have every reason to bless God on your behalf, because of the great things he has done for you. I feel thankful to the Father of all mercies for any token of his favour bestowed upon us and for peace and comfort attendant on acquaintance. Notwithstanding all that has been enjoyed and done, I am under the necessity of resigning my pastoral charge over you. And of separating myself altogether from the communion of the particular Baptists. I dare no longer continue in association with a body of professing Christians, which prostitute the worship of Jehovah; by allowing the ungodly to unite therein and make the world its ally, in maintaining the cause of God by seeking contributions from it.

(Was this a reference to seeking contributions from the Odd Fellows whose rituals J. Harvey may well have disliked for religious reasons? The accounts quoted previously did show at least one sum of £1 1s having been raised from that quarter to purchase a Bible. Another 'worldly' donor may well have been the business of Sutcliffe & Hudson who likewise had provided £1 1s.)

My views have not been hastily formed, for they are the result of much prayer, meditation, and searching the scriptures. The sacrifice I now make is on my own part a very great one. I have much feeling and many interests to relinquish. Yet if the sacrifice were tenfold greater, such is the force of truth on my conscience that I must make it. What am I, that I should withstand God? This I dare not do on any consideration; for I am fully persuaded in my own mind, that I am now doing my duty by handing in my resignation, and at once coming out from a communion, which I believe to be in practice erroneous. Such is the plain direction given in the word of God, which is not to separate a society, but to come out from those who maintain a fellowship with the world, which the scriptures forbid. Viz 2 Cor:6:14-18 & Rev 18.4.

In leaving your communion and neighbourhood, I can assure you that I shall retain the warmest affection for you all, and a grateful remembrance of the repeated kindness' you have showed me on various occasions. I take this opportunity of returning my sincere thanks for your forbearance with me amidst the numerous imperfections, which have blended with the performance of my pastoral duties. Believe me you shall not be forgotten at the throne of grace. My prayers to God for you shall be that the Lord may lead you with all truth and preserve you until that day, when we shall meet at the bar of our judge. & that we maybe found of him in peace. Until that period, cleave close to Christ with full purpose of heart. Be much in [prayer] with your Father and friend. Be diligent Bible students and the God of peace shall bless you, with the knowledge of his will, and with hearts to do and submit to the same.

(All underlining was present in the original document.)

Let me remind you that we part in peace, that I have no personal nor private animosities; that I do not blame you for not seeing as I see, and that I only ask in [grace] to be remembered by you when you are enjoying meetings with God, unto whom I now commit you, and shall ever remain, your brother in Christ.

Signed J. Harvey

The Church, after discussion, in consequence resolved that the faithful & zealous devotion of our beloved pastor to the welfare of sinners and the interests of this church – the unconscious affection of the church and congregation of him – and the blessing of God manifest on his labours – cause his present communication to be received with the deepest regret.”

Somehow it was very easy to imagine the stunned expressions on the faces of all the listeners as that letter was read. Among the dismayed gathering were two people who could have been my direct forbears. However, J. Harvey’s severance from the Chapel was not as decisive as his letter made out. He was still performing baptisms until July 8th 1838 - possibly while he was working his period of notice. Nor did he leave the neighbourhood for he was still ministering in the Bingley locality toward the end of 1839. Only then did this somewhat curiously weak man vanish from the scene.

Although an abundance of other evidence confirmed that his criticisms of the congregation were valid, one would have been more impressed by his letter if he had displayed real humility by openly admitting that he had been wrong to have ever taken up the offer of a Pastorate at Cullingworth Chapel. Joseph Harvey’s mistake had been to accept a position for which he had had no real calling. Beneath the pious wording of his correspondence there lay the distinct impression that he was heartily glad to be rid of this assembly. In reality, he had never really wanted to be so closely involved with it in the first place. Overall, it was a case of a minister being unable to identify with his congregation or to fit in with their requirements. Having said that, some of the congregation’s requirements do appear to have been unreasonable. It was evident that their ideal minister would someone who would be good at writing begging letters. Yet in fairness to Cullingworth Chapel, Pastor Harvey did receive a gift of eight pounds for the services he had rendered. Such an act possibly spoke of a guilty conscience for messing him around!

Thus Cudworth’s statement about Pastor J. Harvey was not confirmed by historical sources emanating from within Cullingworth Chapel itself. (See Bibliography for precise details of these sources.) I myself found the copy of J. Harvey’s letter to have been rather peevish in tone. His letter formed the basis of his excuse to leave. In addition, he should have had the common sense to ascertain what the fundraising methods were before accepting the post. As so often in church life a failure to ask the right questions at the right time had led to an unnecessary dispute.

An entry in the Minute Book for 1st June 1838 noted that the Chapel was without a Pastor, (the term was used interchangeably with minister) but had received seventeen new members by baptism and one by letter of recommendation, thus bringing the total membership to 69. The outstanding debt on the new building was £650.00. (A huge amount for those days!)

At a district meeting held on December 4th 1838, the Bradford District Committee recommended that Bingley and Cullingworth Chapel pool funds so that they could share the same minister. Two days later at “a Special Church Meeting after the afternoon service and in the schoolroom ... it was proposed that J. Harvey be requested to become the Pastor of the two Churches – the members of Bingley being agreeable.” (The records showed that deputies from Bingley were

present at this meeting in Cullingworth.)

However, at the Church meeting of January 11th in the following year, “it was reported to the Church that the resolution of the last meeting has been communicated to J. Harvey personally and that the following was his reply:

‘After most serious deliberation and prayer I am constrained to reply in the negative to the invitation I have received from the Churches at Cullingworth and Bingley.’”

Here were the words of a man who had definitely made up his mind. No ambiguity was shown this time around. He was ever so politely telling the two assemblies to ‘get lost.’ He must have felt a profound sense of mistrust toward their leaders to adopt this stance.

In May 1839, the Chapel was still looking for a new Minister (they did not receive one until July 1842.) By this time the Assembly still listed 69 members. In the previous year four members had been added by baptism, and four had been lost, (3 by exclusion and 1 by moving to another Chapel). These figures were interesting because they revealed that J. Harvey’s resignation had not generated a significant loss of membership. Such data confirmed that any support he had enjoyed within the Church had been of a very limited nature. He had not been a charismatic leader – (someone who could draw on large numbers of people for support.)

Sadly, as the months passed by Cullingworth Chapel fell into complete disarray, as is shown by the following extracts from the Minute Book, which probably recorded only snippets of what was going on: -

1/11/1839: “that bro. [Ellison] be appointed to visit Sister Sandham over the complaint of Sister S. Taylor.”

29/11/1839: “that the resignation of bro. Sandham of his post of Deacon be accepted and that he be continued as member of this Church.”

10/1/1840: “Resolved that Isaac Constantine be excluded for continued neglect of the worship of God among us.

The withdrawal of Elizabeth Holmes and Ann Sutcliffe was received.

Second that members absent from the Lord’s Supper for three months without sufficient reason be thereby excluded.”

8/5/1840: “It is painful to report to you the state of Church during past year. We are yet without a pastor – and have suffered so much from the want of that vigilance, reproof, encouragement and co-operation, which a judicious and active leader would have afforded to us.” (This was part of a ‘begging letter’ sent by the Deacons to the Baptist Association concerning the Chapel debts.)

One person who in the end was reconciled with the Chapel was Isaac Constantine. He was

restored on 28th November 1856 then died in March of the following year. The cause of death was attributed to old age. Somehow, one feels that Isaac Constantine was as much sinned against as sinning. It must be recalled that he was a man whose letter manifested a profound distaste for any form of conflict and by 1840 there were conflicts aplenty in the very assembly he had once been so keen to be part of. Given all of the acrimony that was present Isaac Constantine may have been right to keep away from it! In addition, it must also be remarked that it took him almost seventeen years to pluck up the enough courage to return. This does not speak of a man with fond memories. Perhaps in the end, he was 'hedging his bets' for the afterlife! Apart from my Great, Great Grandparents, Isaac Constantine was the only layperson connected to the Chapel in that the time that I felt I knew as an individual. The discovery of his letter had represented a major finding.

By 14th July 1840 membership was down to 60, with 14 being non-resident, the latter category apparently included John and Ann Smith. Part of the reason was a highly unpleasant state of affairs, which may have been instrumental in persuading John and Ann Smith to sever all contact with this assembly. At the very least it would have left a very charged atmosphere and it was symptomatic of an assembly turning inward. It involved a 'Brother Benjamin Sandham' who was first baptised on September 4th 1836 before being elected to the office of Deacon on 16th February 1838. He appears to have got into trouble over a pecuniary matter.

"At the Church Meeting on July 14th 1840, present 30 members W. S. Nichols presiding, Bro. Green detailed the proceedings of the Deacons in reference to the reports against Bro. Sandham that stating that dissatisfaction had been expressed with his conduct therein

Resolved (two Resns,) that the Church approves the conduct of the Deacons in Bro. Sandham's case

Also resolved that the Deacons be requested not to call in other members to advise them, or act in conjunction with them in matters belonging to their office was withdrawn on the Deacons expressing their determination not to do so except in cases of extreme emergency.

Resolved that the evidence against Bro. Sandham received by the Deacons & others at their meeting for that purpose be read to the Church.

That evidence having been read and all other charges brought forward which any member thought proper against Bro. Sandham was allowed to question the witnesses present respecting their evidence, and to offer explanation and defence of his conduct.

On the proposal that the Church do express its opinion by ballot whether Bro. Sandham's conduct on the evidence and defence produced had been consistent as a member of the Church.

Resolved (By a majority of 16 to 12) that the conduct of Bro. Sandham had been consistent.

Adjourned"

Nevertheless Bro. Sandham had won only a hollow victory. The membership list showed that he

withdrew from the Church on that very same day.

After this entry the Minutes Book fell silent for almost two years. The failure to keep up with it was another sign of disruption at Cullingworth Chapel. When entries were again resumed they began with this highly uncomplimentary description of its condition by Joseph Green, five days after he took up the Pastorate on July 4th 1842. Not from him the diplomatic equivocations of his predecessor. Joseph Green was of an altogether more decisive nature. Unlike the more hesitant J. Harvey he was certainly not a man to mince words with anyone. Indeed Pastor Green appears to have been something of an autocrat, one who did not suffer fools – least of all religious fools - gladly. Such traits were going to be needed, for by the time of his arrival the assembly was in total disarray. The extent of this disarray was highlighted by Pastor Green's first entry in the Minute Book.

“The following was penned by Joseph Green their Pastor.

From the time of the last minutes being entered the church entered upon a sad course of contention, confusion and decline. It is needless and impossible to enter into detail respecting its downward progress. Suffice it to say the pulpit was supplied by students from Horton and lay brethren in the neighbouring Churches, the congregation continued to decline until the writer of this account first visited the place, the congregation had dwindled down to 60 persons. I came here first on the 2nd Sabbath in January 1842 and supplied the pulpit for 1 month during which time the congregation doubled its members. Feeling concerned for the state of things I gave up my pastoral charge at Soham, Cambridgeshire, and in July following came to reside here for 1 year in order to try the station to see if it was possible to raise it from its awful state. An examination of its state had convinced me that I had undertaken a task of no ordinary difficulty.

The Sabbath school was under the direction and control of Socialists, Deists and Chartists, who had introduced several volumes of novels of a very questionable character amongst the books. No words can describe the awful condition of the Church. All discipline was at an end, the prayer and experience meetings existed only in name, while very few came to the Lord's Table. And how could it be otherwise with a raw inexperienced people utterly ignorant of the nature and design of Church order and divided in their views of divine truth. I think I have never met such a motley mixture of Armineans, Calvinists, and Hypers in my life. (Very briefly, Armineans emphasised the role human freewill played in choosing the moment one could come to faith in Christ, Calvinists highlighted the role of Divine election in the creation of this faith, whilst Hypers were extreme Calvinists who bordered on fatalism in their attitude to Divine election. All three factions still exist within different branches of Protestant Christianity.)

Finding such to be the state of things I requested the members to meet me in the vestry and after stating to them my view of their condition and informing them that I would have nothing to do with their past quarrels and dissension's. I proposed that I should dissolve their Church state and begin afresh. To this every one heartily consented. (They probably did not have much choice!) The following resolution was then proposed and agreed to.

Resolved that as there has been so much amongst us which has been unChristian and ungracious we agree to bury all our differences and begin afresh and in token thereof to sign the church covenant [and] after the Deacon had engaged in prayer the whole number present 20 signed the covenant. It was resolved: -

1. That if any member shall again introduce our former difficulties he has to be instantly expelled from the Church
2. That none of the former members shall be allowed to sit down with us at the Lord's table until they have signed the covenant and consented to bury former differences
3. That the Pastor and Deacon be requested to visit and affectionately invite our brethren who are absent to unite with us on the foregoing conditions
4. That those members who are living in other places at a distance be urged to obtain their dismissals to the churches where they reside.
5. That those who shall not have complied with our invitation to unite again with us or obtain their dismissal from us by Christmas shall then be separated from the Church. These things been attended to Wm. Wilkinson who sometime withdrew from the Church was restored. These resolutions were agreed to July 9th 1842 and that the meeting was adjourned to July 16th.

July 16th several friends signed the covenant making the number in communion now 34. Leaving 29 who have not yet done it.

Agreed to hold the Prayer meetings in the vestry on Monday evenings and an experience meeting on Wednesday evenings. Except once a month when there shall be a Church meeting, which is appointed to be held on the 2nd Wednesday, Also the Lords supper, which is to be administered on the 1st Sabbath of the month.

Resolved that the seat rents be made on the 2nd and 3rd Sabbaths in January, April, July and October.

Agreed that for the future the gravedigger shall have 3d for digging a grave and the minister 1s 6d for his fee. Application for graves to be made to the Pastor and Deacon.

Agreed to have a public collection every quarter for incidental expenses to be made in Sept, December, March and June.

August 17th Martha Parker, [Olivia] Hanson and Thomas Heay appeared before the Church, related their experience and accepted baptism and church fellowship. They were baptised August 20th.

October 19th Hannah Binns, Mary Ann Craven and Thomas Dinnean (who had been a Papist) were received as proper persons for membership. Baptised October 30th.

November 16th Mary Wright and James Briggs were accepted for membership. Baptised Nov 27th. Messengers having previously been sent out to Hannah Ackroyd they reported their message to the Church when the Church solemnly separated her from its communion for her conduct. Messengers were also appointed to visit John and Mary Berry to admonish up their place in the Church.”

The removal of John and Ann Smith from the fellowship was handled in Pastor Green’s usual highly direct manner. “Dec 21st Berrys case postponed.

Separated for not filling up their places, John and Dinah Robinson, John and Ann Smith, John and Mary Holmes, Ellen Gregson, Thos. Constantine, Joseph Tatham and Elizabeth Greenwood.

Dismissed Joseph Sutcliffe to Bradford, 2nd Church.”

In spite of some practical contributions to the life of Cullingworth Chapel neither John nor Ann Smith were prepared to remain there. Perhaps by the middle of 1840 it had already dawned on John that the Assembly was in such a bad way that the best course of action was to take himself and his family out of it. (Anyone involved in similar Church situation today could well sympathise with his decision.) Paradoxically, evidence cited later on in this history would show that his Baptist roots had not been entirely abandoned. My Great Grandfather Edmund was to return to those roots in a very surprising manner. Some light of faith had after all been kept burning. The lack of any further christenings also confirmed that John and Ann Smith did not renew any deep connection with the Anglican Church.

Nevertheless, this couple could have suffered a worse fate. John Robinson, who had been the Deacon so anxious to obtain the services of J. Harvey, was actively excluded. By that time he may have been a thoroughly discredited figure. His neat writing was however greatly missed the records becoming somewhat untidy after his exit.

Ironically, Pastor Green didn’t last long either. Within eleven months of taking up the call to be a minister on July 4th 1842 he had left. An entry laconically stated “Dismissed our Pastor Green, his wife and his servant to Golcar 12th June 1843.” (Golcar was a Township near Huddersfield. In 1841 it covered an area of 1560 Acres and had 3598 inhabitants.) There was one last entry in the minutes about a minor administrative matter on June 14th 1843 and then they fall silent until 1847. The chapel still did not seem able to put its affairs into any kind of order. Its members were always looking for a strong leader to sort their problems out.

Following a painstaking search through relevant documents I can only conclude that my possible Great, Great Grandparents had been wise to leave Cullingworth Chapel when they did. Bearing testimony to a marked sense of alienation was the fact that despite being given over five months grace they never replied to the request to obtain a dismissal to the Church at the place they

resided. By this lack of action John and Ann Smith showed that they wanted to place the many troubles associated with that fellowship firmly behind them. Another irony was that they probably came out of this story at least a little better than the assembly, which had dismissed them. Approximately 160 years after it was first made, their decision to leave Cullingworth Chapel has, through this history, been vindicated.

Despite his short stay Joseph Greens drastic measures did possibly contribute to this Assembly's survival. By 1870 Cullingworth Chapel was in a position to successfully enlarge its premises and to install an elaborate entrance, complete with sandstone pillars, at the doorway. It still had enough resources to renovate its premises again in 1909. However, during a visit to Cullingworth made on Thursday, July 19th 2001 a contact I met there divulged that the Chapel had closed about "twenty-two years previously, when only about five Baptists were left." A review of the membership book showed that the last names had been entered in 1980. All but three of the twenty-two names were women. Following its closure this grey sandstone building had become a private residence, which up to the present time has had up to two different owners. A thorough survey of it revealed that there had been minor structural flaws in its original construction, with slightly wrongly angled walls causing problems to the roof and brickwork. The overall impression was of a building being thrown up in a hurry. John Briggs, who was responsible for the construction did not seem to have had his heart in the job, presumably because there was no major financial gain to be made out of it. During my visit it was undergoing major renovation. A circular round stone near the roof had the inscription "Baptist Chapel 1837." There were still tombstones in the grounds.

An interesting notice in the Minutes Book gave one reason over why this assembly had run into problems. "After contending with many difficulties over the erection of our new chapel occasioned by the depression of trade we had the pleasure of opening it for divine Worship on October 11th [1837]. We have built our walls in troublesome times" (name indecipherable). This showed that its prosperity had depended heavily upon the economic condition of a community already operating on the margins of existence. Possibly it was this trade depression, which had prevented John Briggs from honouring a generous financial pledge. Pastor John Whittaker had been forced to resign because he was unable to support a family of three children on a wage of 15s a week, which the chapel members were barely able to afford. In his long and badly written resignation letter 3rd February 1847 he made it very clear that it was only the lack of money, which had provoked his resignation. He had no personal animosities and he had in fact left the Chapel in a more unified state than he had found it. Also mentioned was his background as a mill worker and his resentment at not obtaining support from the Itinerant Society because he had lacked a College based Theological Education. Maybe because of his working class background he appears to have genuinely liked the members of the Chapel.

It therefore can be seen that underlying any personality clashes and misjudgements by the leadership, there was a very real, long-term structural problem. This consisted of an inadequate and precarious financial basis of support. During good times a Minister could just about be afforded, but in the all too frequent bad times this was not the case. Moreover, its membership of

about seventy (of on the whole not very wealthy people) would have been the maximum it was most likely to have gained within the village. (Membership rarely rose above that figure.) Consequently, the Congregation was always on the borderline of being able to support a minister. These points were brought out by the Deacons who, at the end of the Minutes Book wrote, “A Short History of The Baptist Church at Cullingworth 1837–1911:”

“The Commercial condition of this village does not encourage the belief in its increase in population and trade expansion in the immediate future. Seeing that it has remained comparatively unproductive since 1837 to the time of the writing of this article worsted spinning being the only trace of industry. In consequence, large families are regularly leaving the district for large towns in order to find more lucrative and varied employment and for growing up sons and daughters. Obviously, the Churches find this to be a constant reducing tendency and regular disappointment. This accounts to a great extent for our inability to support a pastor continuously unaided. Six Pastors since 1837, namely Rev. J. Harvey 1837, J. Green 1842, Whittaker 1847, Spencer 1863, Berry 1876, Smith 1879 and Davis 1892. These pastorates were mainly for short-term service. In the interval, the pulpit has been creditably supplied by students from Rawdon College and by Preachers.” (In 1911 the Chapel had 70 members, 120 attendees at the Sunday service and 140 Sunday School Scholars. Characteristically, it was in debt to the tune of £350 – incurred because of building operations.)

Although a persistent problem of limited resources was present, it was worsened by the misjudgements caused by ‘conventional chapel thinking,’ whereby a congregation required a chapel building be hurriedly created even when it was obviously best not to do so. It was done out of a sense of wanting to be respectable. This had been the case at Cullingworth, which was a community desperately vulnerable to any down turn in trade, (which happened frequently in this period.) Also, it was this thinking which caused the church to always be hankering for a Pastor even when it couldn’t afford one. One wonders whether anybody ever raised the common sense point that the persistent lack of resources to pay for a Pastor was a sign that the good Lord didn’t want them to have one! For Cullingworth a rule by elders would have been a far more feasible (and biblical) option. Sadly, this alternative was never considered. One suspects that if it had ever been suggested then it would have been given very short shift. In the area of Church Government Cullingworth Chapel’s rule of faith owed more to Baptist Tradition than to the New Testament. As a result a ridiculous amount of time was wasted on Minister chasing. For all his many good qualities Pastor Saunders appears to have been the originator of this problem, for it was he who first moulded this Assembly along conventional Baptist lines. Care should have been taken to follow the Apostle Paul’s example in Titus 1:5 where priority was given to placing Churches under a proper Eldership. Cullingworth Chapel would have been far better doing this before any thought was given to buildings or Pastors.

Upon further reflection, it appears that mixed spiritual influences were the fundamental problem blighting this assembly. Evidence for this point was provided by Joseph Greens account. One particularly unsettling influence might have the Odd Fellows Friendly Society, which appears to have been connected with Cullingworth Chapel from its very beginning. It is hard to see how its

rituals could be reconciled with the beliefs and practices of a bible-centred form of Protestantism. Testifying to the size and importance of this order was the following tomb inscription found in the graveyard of Saint Mark's Church, Woodhouse Leeds. (This largely derelict Church was formally closed on Sunday; July 15th 2001. I attended its final service, which was held under the auspices of Headingley Deanery - the decaying interior reeked of damp rot and beautiful windows had been smashed by vandals.) The inscription was discovered whilst going for a walk with my wife during Boxing Day 2001. It was finally transcribed on Monday, May 13th 2002 and showed that, like Cullingworth Baptist Chapel mixed spiritual influences had been present almost from the moment of this Church's foundation in 1826.

“In memory of

WILLIAM ALEXANDER

who died Dec. 13th 1862

age 58 years.

This monument was erected

By the members of the Leeds district,

Of the Independent Order of

Odd Fellows, M. U.

In recognition of his zeal & integrity

Displayed by him in carrying out

The objects of the order

He was initiated in the year 1831, and

Immediately took an active part in the

Management of this lodge.

In 1836 he was elected

Grand Master of the district

And in 1840 corresponding Secretary,

Which office he held up to the

time of his death

He attended 21 A.M.CS and in 1858 was

Elected grand master of the order,

Numbering at that time

Upwards of 400,000 members.

He fulfilled the duties of his various

Offices, with honour to himself and

To the advantage of those by whom

He was appointed.”

On the plinth were added the words: -

“REQUIRAT IN PARR”

(Latin for ‘Rest in Peace.’)

The second inscription showed that this man was not immune to the domestic tragedies, which could blight even the most respectable of Victorian Households. It also gave details of his wife and daughter.

“In memory of

Anthony Adamson Alexander

Son of the said

William Alexander

Who died 1st May 1835

Age 6 years.

Also Ann Alexander

Daughter of the above who died,

January 6th 1865,

Age 29 years

Also of Elizabeth

Wife of the aforesaid

William Alexander

Born April 6th 1803

Died October 25th 1887”

In an alcove at the top of his inscription was a sculptured portrait of William Alexander. It showed a man with a domed forehead, long bushy sideboards forming into a beard (but no moustache) and a slightly bulbous nose. He was wearing a necktie. The expression on his face appeared to be as smug as the inscription beneath it.

A surprising amount of information has been discovered concerning the man who initiated John and Ann Smith into the Baptist faith. His name was the Reverend Moses Saunders, Minister at Hall Green Strict Baptist Church from the time the building was first constructed in 1825 until his replacement by Thomas Hanson in 1847, (having come from nearby Golcar Chapel.) Details concerning the history of Hall Green were provided by a Marjorie H. Day – herself a long-time member of the Chapel until shortly before her death (at the age of 84 on 9th August 1996). She'd

made the final corrections to her booklet only a week before her death. Despite a paucity of original records the following extracts from her lucidly written history confirm that she'd managed to obtain a significant amount of information concerning the man who'd been an 'Apostle' to the Smiths. I have placed Day's quotations in the order in which she gave them. In her first section, entitled "Beginnings," she states that: -

"Our own story really starts in 1824, but many years prior to this – in 1781 – half a dozen non-conformists – dissenters as they were known at first – started holding services in Leach's barn, just by the entrance to the Goit at the bottom of Brow Road in Haworth. Evidently, there was a growing worshipping community there for 40 years, and as numbers increased and they were outgrowing the barn; they decided to build a Chapel. Acquiring some land of Edward Ferrand of St Ives, Bingley, Lord of the Manor of Haworth, in 1824 they built our present Chapel on the village green opposite the Old Hall. Descendants of one John Moore, who helped physically in the Chapel building, are in membership to this day, to the sixth generation. The Chapel cost £1,700 to build and the schoolroom upwards of £200. One of the signatories of our trust deed was the Rev. Patrick Bronte of Haworth Church" (Day p.1. This indicates exceptionally good relations between the Anglican and Non-Conformists in the area – as Patrick Bronte was in effect giving his blessing to the competition; this act displayed a certain broad-minded attitude on his part. Eighteen men acted as the first trustees.)

"It is unfortunate that many of the Chapel records and minutes of church meetings have been lost. We have no details of the opening in 1825 of the Chapel, but we have an anniversary hymn sheet of 1826, the date 23rd April. The preacher was the Rev. Godwin, classical tutor of the Baptist Academy, Bradford. On the hymn sheet was printed an appeal from the Sunday School Committee to the inhabitants of Haworth and its vicinity. They gave a brief statement of school activities and needs, and were confident of the "support of the friends of Christ in helping to rescue many of the rising generation from the paths of vice and wretchedness, and of training them up for virtue, happiness and immortal life."

15 years after its opening it was found necessary to enlarge the Chapel, and additions were made of the organ gallery and vestries. In 1841 an organ was installed, built by Nicholson of Rochdale." (Day pp.1-2)

"The Sunday School was also very well attended, there being 281 scholars and 107 teachers on the register at one period. People attended the school and Chapel from far and near, and for most folk the only means of getting to the services was on foot. One family walked every Sunday from Hewenden, which is halfway to Bradford. Others walked from Oakworth, Ingrow, Stanbury, Queensbury and from distant farms on the moors surrounding Haworth. No wonder there are entries in the school book like: "John Pickles, no clothes to come in; Widdop brothers, no boots."

Each year, when they elected the various officials to run the school, a number of men and women were appointed to visit all the absentee scholars and teachers, and report back. In March 1844, ten people did this job, dividing Haworth and Oxenhope into five areas, each area covered by two visitors. On March 20th they brought their reports to a committee meeting. James Winterbottom and Abel Wadsworth had visited 17 people and found a number sick, some had left, some "lie too

long in the mornings,” one or two “will come again when the weather is better.” One boy must have given some trouble in the school – “he left for the Methodists – good rid.” Of another crafty boy, “his Father does not know but he comes.” James Feather and John Ratcliffe visited 12 people and brought back similar reports. “Mrs Tidwell’s lass, no hat, but will come again.” “Widow Kay’s lass, sick.” “John Redman very wild and has jobs to do for his grandfather, but will do better.” “ Thomas Wilkinson’s lass too cold to come, but will come again.”

In the beginning, they drew up a set of rules for the running of the school. These are written out in beautiful penmanship in the minute book, date 1825. The Old English long ‘s’ is used:

‘That the business of this institution be managed by a treasurer, superintendents, secretary and committee to consist of nine persons, with power to add to their number, three of whom will be competent to act.’

The committee numbered 20 and even more later on, and sub-committees were formed from time to time to look after special projects. For almost 100 years there were four superintendents, and the secretary had an assistant. Morning school opened at 8.30 in the summer months, 9 o’clock in the winter months. Afternoon school was at 1 o’ clock. After both sessions there was a Chapel, and everybody had to go. “The committee and teachers are to meet the last Monday evening in every month to transact the business of the institution.”

Teachers had to be proposed, and thereafter to appear and be received at a committee meeting. Rules of behaviour both for teachers and scholars were strict. Punctuality, order and decorum must be observed.

“The superintendents and teachers are requested to embrace every opportunity to communicate religious instruction to the children under their care.” This may sound to us a strange injunction in a Sunday School until we remember that in those days there was no compulsory education, so it was essential first to teach the children to read.” (Day pp.2-3)

“In 1825 the treasurer was instructed to order certain quantities of spelling books of various grades, pasteboard and alphabet sheets. Testaments at one shilling from the Bible Society at Haworth, and several dozen of Watts’ Divine Songs for Children; the children were allowed to have Bibles, Testaments and Hymn Books by paying for them at 1d per week.

Scholars were given ‘tasks’ to be learnt during the week, and repeated the following Sunday morning, those most proficient to repeat the tasks publicly to the Superintendent were rewarded according to merit.” (Day p.3. These rewards consisted of medals based on proficiency or regular attendance. Book prizes were also rewarded at Christmas.)

In her Second Section, entitled “Early Days In Sunday School.” Day stated: -

“By the early summer of 1826 it would seem that the Hall Green School was proving popular, if the quantities of books ordered are anything to go by. Bibles, Testaments, spelling books and record books were frequently sent for. During the summer eight more teachers were engaged, and

still another order for books of all kinds was made, including 100 copies of Watts' First Catechism. Robert Hartley was appointed to examine the boys and Martha Greenwood the girls in their catechisms.

Rules of behaviour continued very strict, indeed had to be with 180 children, later increasing to 280, being taught at the same time in the open schoolroom. The scholars were to walk in an orderly manner up into the Chapel after Sunday school led by their teachers, and "each scholar is to put his hat under the form on which he sits." Twelve teachers sat in their turn with the scholars in Chapel, to ensure good behaviour. In March 1834, it was resolved to appoint four persons as over-lookers in the school, and that rods be provided for them! The rods were to help maintain order among the children. Later on, the 'stick carriers' were also deputed to sit, in their turns with the children in Chapel. For persistent unruliness, and excessively bad behaviour, the punishment was exclusion from Sunday school until an apology had been received by the Superintendent.

In the earliest days, Hall Green School was a member of the Sunday School Union in Leeds, and our delegate was the Rev. Moses Saunders, our Pastor. Questionnaires were sent out by the Union. In 1826, after giving details about the number of children and officials, we replied, in answer to the questions: "Do all the children regularly attend preaching in the Chapel? If not why not?" "They all attend regularly." "Have you a select class?" "There is no select class at present." (Day p.4. A select Class was for adults. Men and Women met in different classes. They were first formed at Hall Green in October 1853 and lasted until the Interwar period.)

"In 1826 the Union wanted to know: "Have any beneficial effects been observed in the children, parents or neighbourhood, from the labours of the teachers?" Answer: "We think good has been done." (It is interesting to note that this answer could contain the actual words of the man who brought my Great, Great Grandparents into the Christian Faith.)

"Reward books and stationary were bought of the Union." (Parcels from the Union were conveyed to the Bradford warehouse of the Secretary William Greenwood Junior of Oxenhope who then brought them to the Chapel. The Greenwoods were worsted manufacturers who owned two mills in the local area. A John Greenwood was treasurer, but in 1834 he died "much lamented" and James Greenwood was appointed his successor.)

"For the most part, however, Hall Greeners have been humble, hard-working folk, the majority working in mills, but with a sprinkling of shop-keepers, a farrier or two and a few teachers," (Day pp.4-5)

"In January 1828 the School Committee met to discuss the formation of a Union of the various schools in the neighbourhood and decided to request the Reverend Patrick Bronte to call a meeting for that purpose, each school in the area to send two delegates.

We have no record of the meeting Parson Bronte was asked to call, but we know that a Sunday School Union was formed at Keighley in 1853, and we joined it, indeed we helped in the expenses of its formation.

By the year 1834, as more and more people had learned to read, there was a continuing thirst for knowledge and for reading material, and a library was established. From time to time, monies were allocated out of school funds to buy more books and a system of rewarding the children of the library was started. By 1840 it appears that the users of the library had read everything and Mr Saunders was asked to examine and compare the Cullingworth Baptist library books with those of Hall Green, and to take a valuation of each, "If found to be somewhat alike, a complete exchange is to be made."

In September 1848 it was necessary to appoint five librarians, as the library was now open on Wednesday evenings. At this time, too, there was a resolution that a night school should be started for teachers and scholars at their own expense." (Day p. 5)

In her third Section, entitled "Red Letter Days" Day recounted: -

"For the 1827 occasion (anniversary), we read from the minutes: "That Rev. M. Saunders and John Earnshaw are to give the necessary instructions to the children in singing." Their performance must have been a success, because it was resolved "that John Earnshaw receive the thanks of the Committee for his assistance in teaching the children singing and that he receive fifteen shillings as a small remuneration for his services." Also "that Archibald Leighton receive 3s, George Bland 2s and Robert Hartley 5s for erecting the platform with thanks for their services."

John Earnshaw continued to be a singing teacher for many years, assisted later by Thomas Murgatroyd. They were each paid a "consideration for their trouble." Archibald Leighton continued to erect and dismantle the platform, with or without helpers and then given a little monetary appreciation. It seems odd to us in these days that people who did jobs for the Chapel and school should be paid, but wages were very low, and most of the people who come into this story lived very frugally at best. There was, of course, no 'sick pay' or unemployment benefit for 80 years after this time, and when these misfortunes came people suffered desperate privation. So it was thought good evidently, to give out a little encouragement money to willing helpers.

In the 1840s the anniversary was moved from April into May. Ministers were invited from the nearer towns in Yorkshire and Lancashire, and even from Liverpool.

From the earliest times tea was provided for the anniversary singers, a practice, which has gone on until recent times." (Day p. 6)

"Work was very hard, hours long. No such things as tea breaks; they came in with the Second World War. Mill owners were in some cases Fatherly figures, who nevertheless inspired awe, and of course – like Fathers – were strict in Victorian England. They employed mill managers, who with their seemingly great power were often domineering. The overlookers and lesser bosses with some authority over ill-paid weavers and spinners were often overbearing, sometimes cruel. Operatives were afraid of losing their jobs and for most part did not answer back.

Employees of that day had no protection against harsh treatment. Employers could indulge their

whims., and there was no redress. As yet, there were no funds to draw on to keep the ‘wolf from the door,’ except what a man had himself put by against the evil day.

So life was a struggle, but it was not all grim. There were occasions of joy, laughter and fun. Ordinary people got their pleasure from simple things. Most families were connected with a place of worship, around which their social as well as religious life revolved. Whitsuntide was one of the highlights of the Sunday school year, and all places of worship had processions, teas and games. Indeed, in some of the Lancashire towns and cities today, beautifully dressed processions are still a spectacular feature of Whitsuntide.

The Whitsun treat was established in the very beginning.

The children were “each to have a cake and beer given them,” but not before they had listened to a few addresses and done a very long walk “in the best order possible.” Doubtless, the ‘band of music’ marching along at the front of the procession helped to keep them going in good order. In 1843, for some reason, it was decided to “dispense with the band, nevertheless thanking the Tansy End Band for their kind offer.” But in 1851 the band was again engaged.

As well as the children’s treat, there was also a public tea laid on, and for this you bought a ticket costing 4d to Hall Greeners, 6d to those not connected with the Chapel. About 150 adults sat down for tea,” – which mainly consisted of home made bread, current buns, cakes and tarts. (Day p. 8-9)

“For the 1835 treat, it was decided “that the Rev. M. Saunders engage to prepare lemon ale for drink for the children.” But before many years had gone by the selection in drinks was out, and it was tea all round, adults and children.

There must have been some disorderly ‘gate-crashing’ at the 1846 celebrations, with our own scholars missing their school buns altogether, so in future the children must wait for their names to be called before being given their ‘cake’ and the door would be policed to prevent children not entitled from entering.

After all this festivity there came the annual meeting, when a fresh committee and officers were elected each year.” (Day p.9)

In her fourth Section, entitled “Early Pastors” Day revealed that: -

“We have a somewhat blurred picture of the early Pastors of Hall Green. The Reverend Moses Saunders was the first. (We called our Pastors ‘Reverend’ in those days. He was Minister from 1825 until 1847, when he moved away from Haworth. It seems he kept himself very busy in the work of the Sunday School as well as the Chapel. Mr Saunders had a keen interest in missionary endeavour, and in his day there was a regular missionary prayer meeting. Mrs Martha Saunders too was busy in schoolwork, teaching and “examining the girls in their catechisms.” It is apparent that Mr Saunders did a good deal of visiting, and was usually in one of the teams deputed to seek out absentee scholars and teachers. The committee got very concerned from time to time about

absenteeism. In this day we would say that there was plenty of excuse, indeed good reason for it, in view of the hard life people had and their need for a bit of extra rest at the weekends.” (Day p.9-10)

Day’s chief value as an information source was the way in which she complemented the details gained from other sources connected to Sutton and Cullingworth Chapels. She conveyed something of the lives led by early nineteenth century Baptists. It was possible to learn a little of what Moses Saunders was like as a real human being as distinct from a name on a list. Although naturally biased in its favour, Day gave the convincing impression that, during the Reverend Saunders ministry, Hall Green was a thriving and robust assembly. However, it was perhaps the success of this ‘work’ at Haworth, which persuaded Moses Saunders that a similar success could be repeated at Cullingworth. If this was the case then he had fallen into the common missionary trap of assuming that one approach, which had worked successfully in one place, would also work successfully in another. Regrettably, this would not be the case - as later events would show.

One source of information, which failed to provide any data, was the 1841 Census. An extensive search undertaken on Wednesday, June 12th 2002 showed nothing. Yet p.329 of the 1837 and p.441 of the 1847 White’s Trade Directory contained the following entry “Saunders, Rev. Moses (Baptist).” He was recorded as living in Stanbury and Haworth, which were precisely the areas I had looked at two or three times already. The only likely explanation for this absence from the Census Return was to presume he’d been away on itinerant work. The 1847 Directory did reveal a Baptist Minister called John Winterbottem (aged 45 in 1841, the Census had him down as married with two boys and two girls), but he was a Pastor of a Chapel at a different end of Haworth. There was obviously no direct connection with Moses Saunders. For Bronte lovers, the 1841 Census did reveal: -

Patrick Bronte aged 61, ‘Clergyman’ born in Ireland

(Listed as “Bronte Patrick A. B. Incumbent” in the above cited Directories)

Elizabeth Beaumont aged 60, ‘Independent’ born in Cornwall

Emily Jane Bronte aged 20, born in Yorkshire

Ann Bronte aged 19, ‘Governess,’ born in Yorkshire

Martha Brown aged 15, ‘Female Servant,’ born in Yorkshire

The 1847 White’s Directory revealed that the proprietor of the Black Bull Inn was Abraham Wilkinson. It was here that Patrick Bronte’s son Branwell had spent his last two to three years drinking himself to death (from a mixture of consumption and alcoholism in September 1848). In contrast to his sisters and Father his had been a wasted life. He had shown no resilience in the face of failure.

From the 1822 GENUKI Bradford Website it was found that Haworth lay “in the parish of Bradford, Morley-division of Agsbrigg and Morley, Liberty of Pontefract. 4 miles S. of Keighly, 7 from Bradford, 8 from Halifax, 9 and a half from Colne (Lanc.) No market fairs, July

22, Pedlary ware and October 14 for horned cattle, pedlary ware & population 4,668. Here is a Chapel of Ease dedicated to St Michael. Patron, the Vicar of Bradford.” The population appears to have been much too high for Haworth Village and may either be a misprint or, as seems more likely, be one, which includes outlying areas. What this extract did not show was that in February 1820 Patrick Bronte had arrived in Haworth to take charge of Saint Michael’s with his ailing wife and six young children. His wife subsequently died in September 1821 – possibly of cancer, and was only 38 years old. This marked the beginning of many domestic sorrows, which would mould the literary genius of the three daughters who survived into adulthood.

When taken in conjunction with records from Cullingworth Baptist Chapel, these sources provided an illuminating insight into the character and gifts possessed by Moses Saunders. The available information would suggest that this minister was an activist who possessed many positive qualities and a few weaknesses. If a particular project were sound he would zealously propel it along until a great deal had been accomplished. Conversely, if (as appeared to be the case at Cullingworth) a project were not soundly based then he would keep it going long after it should have been stopped. More thoughtful people would have asked, “Is it worthwhile persisting in this work, given the endless financial and personal problems being encountered?” Pastor Saunders may well have replied “But didn’t the Apostles endure many problems with the Congregations they established?” This would have been a fair point, but also on a scriptural basis Pastor Saunders would have been aware that ‘weighing up the fruits’ existed whereby a particular endeavour is given care, attention and time to see if it will work out, then should it prove persistently bad and given a definite period of probation, it should then be ‘cut down’ (Luke 13:6-9). In the case of Cullingworth Chapel the fruits were so bad that by 1842 a completely new beginning had to be made. This would suggest that either a Chapel should never have been founded there in the first place or alternatively it was a work ‘born before its time.’ In either case, there had been a failure of discernment. The overall impression from surviving documents was of a fledgling congregation hurrying to build a Chapel because it was a ‘respectable’ thing to do. Perhaps against his better judgement the Reverend Saunders had allowed himself to be carried away by the popular enthusiasm of the Baptists at Cullingworth. They may well have broken away and joining some other denomination if he hadn’t supported their endeavours to found a ‘proper’ Chapel. Perhaps he’d also felt it better to stay on the scene rather than leave immature believers to become subverted by some other group like the Chartists. Cullingworth was a baby he just could not abandon. Whatever the motive his name became associated with a work, which did not prosper, and furthermore was one, which appears to have exercised a distressing influence upon my Great, Great Grandparents.

Nevertheless, following an interval of seventeen decades it would not be fair to be unduly critical of a man who, after all, had acted as ‘an apostle’ to the Smiths. His motives had been clearly honourable. He obviously had a gift for leadership and a willingness to engage in humble tasks such as preparing lemon ale for children. His commitments at Haworth were such that he could only give a very limited amount of time to the affairs at Cullingworth. The Reverend Saunders was a very busy man – perhaps too busy! Moreover, at Hall Green the fruit of his ministry was (and still is) good. An attendance (by my wife and myself) at two services on Easter Sunday, March 31st 2002 revealed that Hall Green still possessed a very lively congregation, robustly loyal to the Gospel teachings Moses Saunders had been committed to propagating all those years ago.

Indeed, he would have recognised everything except the modern style clothing and some unfamiliar words in the spoken English language. He would also perhaps have found the sermons a little too short and observed that those attending looked surprisingly well fed as compared to the people of his own time. What the Reverend Saunders could never have guessed was that one day a descendent of two people he had evangelised would be attending this very Chapel to obtain information about him! Could he have known, he would undoubtedly have attributed this development to the favour of God.

All these details to do with Cullingworth Chapel showed that both John and Ann Smith were somehow closely related, but in what way were they the John and Ann Smith who were my Great, Great Grandparents? The reason for asking this question was that the 1841 Census for Bascroft, Cullingworth recorded quite a different John and Ann Smith, who had had their children around the same time as Edmund and Daniel. They lived next door to three wool combers also called Smith, who were William (aged 20) James (aged 18) and John (aged 14). The Census details showed a household containing: -

John Smith (aged 45), Wool Comber

Ann Smith (aged 50)

Benjamin Smith (aged 20), Wool Comber

Francis Smith (aged 16), Wool Comber

[Laura] Smith (aged 11), Worsted Mill Worker

George Smith (aged 8), Worsted Mill Worker

These people possessed none of the right occupational or personal characteristics to have been Edmund's parents. So the problem arose over which John and Ann Smith were the records of Cullingworth Baptist Chapel referring to? Present was a serious conundrum, which required further research for its unravelling. My next step was to examine the 1841 Census Return for Skipton.