

The Recorder

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Bunyan Meeting at Banff, Canada

September 28-October 1

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Greg Randall

The few months since the last issue of The Recorder have been good ones for the Society, and I thank all of you who have responded so quickly when I faxed you or e-mailed you about the conference. I know that all of you are busy, that the global economy has put tremendous pressures upon the academic world, and that you are working hard to make a place for the Bunyan Society within your very active professional lives.

In the summer, I made several valuable contacts that illustrate a renewal of popular interest in the works of John Bunyan. An article in the September 1993 issue of the European Christian Bookstore Journal describes how Caleb Pearce and B.A. Ramsbottom collaborated together to form The Bunyan Press. In 1991, Mr. van der Braak of the Bunyan Society of Holland approached the Bunyan Press to see if they would be prepared to publish and market a new edition of The Pilgrim's Progress. Sceptical at first, the Bunyan Press eventually decided that there was a need for a good quality, attractively priced gift version that would appeal to the Christian and secular market. They consequently published a striking edition of Part One whose value, like that of its nineteenth-century counterparts, is in the beauty of the illustrations. Their new edition of Part Two was scheduled for early October. You may contact Caleb Pearce of The Bunyan Press by writing: 7 Brackendale Grove, Herts, AL5 3EL, England. If you want more information, concerning The Bunyan Society of Holland, you should write to John Bunyan Stichting,

PostBus 78, 3770 AB, Barneveld, Nederland.

While reading through The Primary Source, a Baptist newsletter, I came across an item that described a performance of a musical based on The Pilgrim's Progress. In a reply to my letter of inquiry, Jack Robertson wrote to say that he had approached the minister and deacons of the Kirkintilloch Baptist Church (about 10 miles from Glasgow) about putting on a musical, entitled The Pilgrim. He sent me a script and a cassette of the music, which he, David McVey, and Alan Penman wrote, composed, and arranged. In his letter, Mr. Robertson writes: "The story was put into a modern setting with 'Vanity Fair' being translated into current problems such as drugs and sexual promiscuity. . . . It is also worth noting that approximately 50 copies of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' were sold on the performance nights." Please contact Jack Robertson directly if you want more information. His address is 20 Lime Grove, Lenzie Glasgow, G66 4PD, Scotland.

Plans and funding for the conference are falling nicely into place, and I hope to have more precise details concerning prices, accommodations, and transportation available in the New Year. I have been in preliminary contact with Canadian and American airlines, and they have indicated that it is possible to fly into Edmonton and out of Calgary. Arlette Zinck and I are also working closely with the Banff Centre for the Fine Arts, which will provide us with a wide range of accommodations,

from the lavish to the spartan.

We are trying to make this as interdisciplinary a conference as possible, given the nature of Bunyan studies. With that in mind, we would like you to distribute the Call for Papers that we have sent you to as many of your colleagues as possible. As literary critics, Arlette and I need your help in recruiting more historians and scholars in religious studies.

Some time ago, T.N. Corns invited me to put together a special session for the Fifth Milton Symposium in Bangor, Wales, 11-14 July 1995. W.R. Owens will be chairing it; N.H. Keeble will present "Till one great man restore us ...": Images of Restoration in Milton and Bunyan"; Vera Camden will present "Paradise and Persecution: Bunyan's Exposition of the First Ten Chapters of Genesis"; and Arlette Zinck will present "Doctrine by Example: Sanctification through Literature in Milton and Bunyan." The Bunyan Society will also be holding a convivial business meeting during the cocktail hour, near the cocktail bar, so do plan to attend. Arlette will preside over that session.

1994 has seen many landmark events, with the revival of Bunyan Studies and the completion of the Oxford Bunyan. Both the Milton Symposium and the conference here are events you will not want to miss. The discussions will be stimulating, the contacts invaluable, and the settings indescribable, so please send in those papers and contact your travel agent.

Working to establish this society has been a very satisfying experience for me, and I have enjoyed corresponding

with each of you. I have seen my role as founder of the society change to that of co-organizer of the first North American Bunyan conference. With the society's foundation well-laid, I would like to take a less active role after our meeting here. I will still help Shannon Murray in her continuing role as editor of The Recorder and Bob Owens and Stuart Sim with Bunyan Studies. I would like to see a group of three or four of you volunteer to spearhead the organization of the next conference. This group would, in effect, become the Society's Executive. It is undeniably a lot of work, but the value of gathering together scholars, friends, disputants, and so on is inestimable. Organizing conferences and special sessions is a tangible way for the Society to promote Bunyan studies and to bring us together regularly. Please write to Richard Greaves or to me if you have any suggestions.

The Recorder

The Recorder is the newsletter of the John Bunyan Society. It is published twice yearly, in the spring and in the winter. Please send notes, queries, reviews, news of members, short articles, and conference notices by April 15 for the spring issue and by October 15 for the winter to

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The International John Bunyan Conference September 28-October 1, 1995

Arlette Zinck

Good news on the conference front. Plans are progressing nicely for the four-day affair that will be held at the University of Alberta campus and the Banff Conference Centre. The split venue will allow delegates to tour the outstanding Bunyan collection at the University Library and to take in a special musical extravaganza to be performed by the U. of A. music department. On the Friday morning, all delegates will be bused in style (gourmet boxed lunches and all) to the Banff Conference Centre. Sessions will begin on Friday evening and conclude Sunday afternoon.

The list of invited speakers and session leaders is impressive. Professors John Knott, Richard Greaves, and Neil Keeble have all agreed to give a plenary address, and many other noted scholars, including Dennis Danielson, Vera Camden, Conrad Massa, Bob Owens, and Ted Underwood have already agreed to present a paper and lead a session.

As you know, the conference will be an international and interdisciplinary gathering of scholars from departments of History, English, and Religious Studies, allowing an exchange of information on the historical, literary, and religious context in which John Bunyan's works were written. The specific focus of these discussions will be the unique tension created by the

traditional and revolutionary forces that shaped Bunyan's England.

If you have not already done so, please consider submitting a paper on or before the deadline of March 15, 1995. Papers that address either Bunyan's life, faith, or works directly or other literary, historical, political, or theological concerns from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries will be welcomed. Please send two copies of 10-page papers to David Gay at

The Department of English
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada T6G 2E5

If you are unable to submit a paper, plan to attend the conference anyway. It is guaranteed to be the social and intellectual event of the year! If you would like additional information about the conference, please contact Greg Randall, North American Baptist College, 11525-23 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6J 4T3, or Arlette Zinck, The Department of English, University of Alberta, Alberta, Canada, T6G 2E5.

John Bunyan's Bedfordshire in 1995

The following tour through Bunyan country comes from Vivienne Evans, of the Dunstable Historic and Heritage Studies.

The British Tourist Authority has designated 1995 as a Festival of Arts and Culture, including literature. In Bedfordshire we are preparing to welcome visitors from all over the world to come and explore the background to our humble tinker, preacher, and writer, John Bunyan.

November 12th, 1995, is the 335th anniversary of the arrest of John Bunyan as he began his meeting at Lower Samsell Farm, Harlington. During those 300 plus centuries, there have been many changes in Bedfordshire, but nevertheless there are still things left which Bunyan would recognise today.

Unfortunately, the cottage where he was born, at "Bunyan's End" in the fields between Elstow village and the outlying hamlet of Harrowden, has long since gone. A commemorative stone marks the spot, and a footpath crosses the low-lying, once marshy fields (Slough of Despond?) along which he used to walk reluctantly to church and probably to school.

ELSTOW: If in 1995 he walked once more beside the ditches that drain the marshy ground, he would be amazed to come out on a well-made High Street with pavements, but he would recognise many of the houses.

In 1792, Samuel Whitbread, the famous brewer and social reformer, bought the village and had all the cottages so well repaired that when in

the 1970s the Whitbread Trust passed these buildings to North Bedfordshire Borough Council, that Council could successfully restore them while leaving the street scene (apart from its present cleanliness!) as it was in the 17th century. Also thanks to the care of the Whitbread family, the Manor Court Rolls and many property deeds have survived, adding to our knowledge.

The deeds of both inns, the Swan and the Red Lion, go back to John Bunyan's childhood. We do not know in which cottage the "loose and ungodly wretch" lived, who referred to Bunyan as "the ungodliest fellow, for swearing that she ever heard in her life." We are, however, fairly certain which cottage Thomas Bunyan bought as a marriage settlement for his third wife, Anne Bidkin. The deeds of the present post office-general stores mention both Thomas Bunyan and the correct location. When John married for the first time and set up house without "having so much household stuff as a dish or spoon betwixt us," he may have lived at this house in the High Street when he first returned from the Civil War. The cottage where they lived and where their daughters Mary and Elizabeth were born has gone. A plaque marks the site in the carpark of the St. Helena Restaurant.

The Moot (village) Hall, which John knew well, was also preserved by the Whitbread family. This was given to Bedfordshire County Council, which restored it and opened it to the public.

The hall houses a collection of antique furniture of the 17th century, a room setting of a typical farmhouse living room, and many things associated with John Bunyan. Behind the hall is the well cared for Village Green, where John and his friends played Tip-Cat and other noisy games. Behind that is the beautiful Church of St. Mary and St. Helena, where John, his brother, sister, and his own two daughters were baptised, where Sunday after Sunday John sat listening to the Rev. Christopher Hall, and where he heard what he took as a personal reprimand on the wickedness of playing games on Sunday. Christopher Hall's pulpit is on display in the Moot Hall but the baptismal font is still in use in the church.

On one side of the church overlooking the Green is the famous Bell Tower, still in use today. Here, because of the growing opinion that bell ringing on the Sabbath was wrong, Bunyan struggled to subdue his love of ringing. With the clouds behind it, on a windy day, the tower does indeed appear to sway! On the other side, facing the private paddock under which are the foundations of a nunnery, are the remains of the Hillersden Mansion, built during John Bunyan's childhood.

BEDFORD, just up the road from Elstow, lies on either side of the River Ouse, and a plaque marks the place of John's adult baptism. South of the river, St. John's is still an active parish church, but The Rectory where John Gifford--friend, councillor and spiritual adviser to the distraught young Bunyan--lived is now the headquarters of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade. North of the river, St. Cuthbert's, in which

John's sons are thought to have been baptised, is also an active parish church but the nearby house to which the growing family moved has also gone. However, on the exact site in Mill Street where, in 1672, Bunyan and his friends bought a barn and part of an orchard, stands the Bunyan Meeting Free Church and Museum. The present building was put up in 1850, with additions in 1868 and 1892. The church contains not only the stained glass window, made famous by Terry Waite, of Bunyan in prison but also the communion table: part of the original table used for the celebration of communion by John Bunyan and his friends.

Bedford Borough Council has produced a pictorial leaflet/trail for those wanting to explore John Bunyan's Bedford and Elstow, and the staff at the Tourist Information Centre in St. Paul's Square are there to help.

HARLINGTON: During the 1980's the famous Bunyan Oak at Lower Samsell Farm, where John Bunyan was arrested, began to drop its branches. As part of the commemorative events marking the tercentenary of the 300th anniversary of Bunyan's death, internationally acclaimed botanist Dr. David Bellamy planted a new young tree which now stands beside its historic brother.

Several of the timber-framed and thatched cottages that Bunyan passed as he walked or rode from Samsell Farm to Harlington Manor House still stand today, as does the beautiful and historic Church of St. Mary. In 1660 the vicar was the Rev. Dr. Lindall, who encouraged his son-in-law, the

magistrate Francis Wingate, to order the arrest. Today Bunyan is very much respected by the church's vicar and his congregation. They are proud of their stained glass "Pilgrim" window and of their new communion table, carved by a local carpenter, from one of the fallen branches of "Bunyan's Oak."

The **Manor House**, to which the constable took Bunyan to await Wingate's arrival, still stands today and is lovingly cared for by its present owner. This is a private house, not open to the public, but part of the grounds has been walled off, and there is a warm welcome at the newly built Manor Restaurant.

Many of the **Bedfordshire** villages have connections with John Bunyan or are thought to have been in his mind as he sat in Bedford prison writing Pilgrim's Progress. A drive around these villages, with their churches, pubs, village greens and duck ponds, is an extra pleasure to round off a visit to Bunyan's Bedfordshire.

Early Modern Literary Studies: A Journal of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century English Literature

Announcing Early Modern Literary Studies, a refereed journal in electronic form which intends to serve both as a formal arena for scholarly discussion and as an academic resource for researchers in the area. Articles in EMLS will examine English literature, literary culture, and language during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from a variety of perspectives; well-

considered responses to published papers will also be published as part of a Reader's Forum. EMLS will be published three times a year for the on-line academic community by the University of British Columbia's English department; it will be available free of charge in hypertext format on the World Wide Web at

<http://unixg.ubc.ca:7001/0/e-sources/emls/emlshome.html>

It will also be available in ASCII format for retrieval using GOPHER at

edziza.arts.ubc.ca/english/emls

For further information, send a message to

Ed_Asst_EMLS@arts.ubc.ca.

News Of Members

Dayton Haskin has published Milton's Burden of Interpretation with the University of Pennsylvania Press, June 1994.

Tom Luxon has published "'Other Men's Words' and Bunyan's 'New Birth'" in Texas Studies in Language and Literature 36 (1994), and in January, Literal Figures: Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation will appear from the University of Chicago Press with two chapters on Bunyan.

Shannon Murray has published "Postlapsarian Types and Prelapsarian Parallels: Strategies for Reading and Rereading Paradise Lost" in Proceedings of the PMR Conference

16/17 (1992-3):213-22. She and her husband, Gerald Wandio, also a Bunyan Society member, had a baby girl, Celia Kathleen, on June 22.

Forthcoming Meetings and Conferences

Tenth Annual Conference of the John Donne Society, February 16-18, 1995, Gulfport, Mississippi. Write to Eugene Cunnar, English, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM 8803, U.S.A.

International Society for the Classical Tradition, March 8-12, 1995, Boston University, Boston, Mass. Write to Wolfgang Haase and Meyer Reinhold, Co-presidents, either at Institute for the Classical Tradition, Boston University, 745 Commonwealth Ave, Boston, MA 12215, U.S.A. or at Universitaet Tuebingen, Arbeitsstelle ANRW, Wilhelmstr. 36, D-72074 Tuebingen, Germany. E-mail isct@acs.bu.edu.

Fifth International Milton Symposium, July 9-14, 1995, Bangor, North Wales. Write to Thomas N. Corns, School of English and Linguistics, University of Wales, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2DG, UK.

Bunyan Meeting, September 28-October 1, 1995, Banff, Canada. Write to Greg Randall, North American Baptist College, 11525-23 Ave., Edmonton, AB, T6J 4T3.

De-Centring the Renaissance: Canada and Europe in Multi-Disciplinary Perspective, 1350-1700, March 7-10,

1996, Toronto. Write to Germaine Warkentin, Victoria College, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, M5S 1K7, Canada.

Please send notices of meetings and conferences by April 1995 for inclusion in the next Recorder.

Classified Ads

Wanted: 500-word book reviews to be published in The Recorder. Submit reviews to Shannon Murray, Editor.

Wanted: Volume Two of the Oxford Bunyan. Contact Greg Randall, North American Baptist College, 11525-23 Ave., Edmonton, AB T6J 4T3, Canada

Wanted: More historians and religious studies scholars as Bunyan Society members. Contact Aileen Ross, Treasurer, 7 Savoy Cres., Red Deer, AB T4N 0C9, Canada

Wanted: Contributors and proposals for a collection of essays tentatively titled The Theoretical Bunyan--essays analyzing Bunyan's major and/or miscellaneous works from a variety of theoretical perspectives: feminist, new historical, reader response, psychoanalytical, etc. Must be jargon-reduced and targeted at an undergraduate audience. Contact Greg Randall, Secretary (address above).

Wanted: Someone to edit an electronic version of The Recorder. Contact Shannon Murray, Editor.

Bunyan at the D Day Commemorations

Mary Trim

On June 6, 1994, allied nations involved in the D Day landing and the Normandy campaign of fifty years earlier held solemn commemorative services for those who died. At five of their former landing sites, the British remembrances included readings of the final scene from the life of Mr. Valiant-for-truth of The Pilgrim's Progress.

Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, read Bunyan's passage at the major ceremony, and it was read by an old soldier at another and by representative readers at the other three sites. When panned by television cameras, the faces of the listening survivors, their families, and descendants of the war-dead indicated the mourners' sympathy with Mr. Valiant-for-truth: "I am going to my Father's . . . my marks and scars I carry with me . . . 'Grave, where is thy victory?' So he passed over, and the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

The selection of this reading and its response certainly reaffirmed Bunyan's place in English literature.

Review of The Narrative of the Persecutions of Agnes Beaumont, ed. Vera J. Camden

(*East Lansing: Colleagues Press, 1992*).

84. \$14.95

Shannon Murray

Agnes Beaumont has long been known as the woman accused of adultery with John Bunyan, an event recounted both in his autobiography and in hers; Vera

Camden's new edition of the Narrative--the first since G. B. Harrison's now out-of-print edition in 1929--makes a convincing case for attention to Beaumont's work for its own sake. The text itself is modernized in spelling and punctuation but reproduces any grammatical inconsistencies and errors in Biblical quotation; the result is an edition that is readable without sacrificing the style and "conversational" quality of Beaumont's original.

Most noteworthy, though, is the introduction, in which Camden suggests how Beaumont's narrative may most fruitfully be read: as a "domestic instancing of the principle projected by greater prophets of her day, who, like Bunyan, embrace imprisonment and even martyrdom rather than enduring silence" (1). Beaumont's compelling story recounts her struggles against her father, who insisted that she abandon her regular prayer meetings and locked her out in the cold when she disobeyed; against the gossip of neighbours who accuse her of being seduced by Bunyan; and finally against the courts when she is falsely accused by a rejected suitor of having poisoned her father in a conspiracy with Bunyan. In the domestic arena, then, she does what Bunyan does in the political: she "resists . . . authority to obey her conscience" (2). Her story and Camden's introduction are worthy additions to the growing interest both in autobiography and in early women's writing, and they prove yet again that, despite what Virginia Woolf argued in A Room of One's Own, such women did write their own lives.

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