The page proofs of *Amores* (1916) and *New Poems* (1918) can also be studied alongside earlier versions of some of the same texts, preserved in the Nottingham University College notebook which Lawrence used in drafting his early poems. That Lawrence worked and reworked his early verse is of course well known, but the corrected page proofs help us to identify the point at which some of the revisions were made. We find here, for instance, the alteration of 'Spring Sunshine' to 'Autumn Sunshine' (*New Poems*) with textual changes reflecting the different mood. Even more intriguing are the substantial revisions to the early pages of *Amores*, as only a few of these were adopted in the Duckworth edition.

The acquisition of these papers coincided with the announcement by the University of its intention to establish a D.H.Lawrence International Centre to provide support for those who come to Nottingham to work on the collection and to encourage associated research and teaching programmes. It is hoped that the Library's rich base will in this context continue to be developed, not only through the addition of new material but through automated cataloguing and database provision, allowing distant access to the collection's finding aids.

Congregationalism in the Early Life of D.H.Lawrence: Ministers at the Eastwood Chapel

David Newmarch

An intriguing memoir of the young D.H.Lawrence is the passage in Ford Madox Ford's *Return to Yesterday* in which he reports a visit he says he once made to Lawrence's home - in 'Nottingham', as he puts it, though it turns out to be a veritable Athens. 'Never anywhere,' he says, had he 'found so educated a society.' There is a Saturday evening of talk with the 'young people ... about Nietzsche and Wagner and Leopardi and Flaubert and Karl Marx and Darwin .. the French Impressionists and the primitive Italians', with interjections from the Lawrence father and pauses for 'Chopin or Debussy on the piano', and then the next day Ford accompanies the family to Chapel.

> I went with them on the Sunday to a Nonconformist place of worship. It was the only time I was ever in one except that I once heard the Rev. Stopford Brooke who was a Unitarian preach a sermon on Tennyson. The Nottingham Chapel - it was I think Wesleyan - made me of course feel uncomfortable at first. But the sermon renewed my astonishment. It was almost entirely about - Nietzsche, Wagner, Leopardi, Karl Marx, Darwin, the French Impressionists and the primitive Italians. I asked one of Lawrence's friends if that was not an unusual sort of sermon. He looked at me with a sort of grim incredulity.

'What do you suppose?' he said. 'Do you think we would sit under that fellow if he could not preach like that for fifty-two Sundays a year? He would lose his job.'[1]

Ford's 'usual "impressionism"', Frank Kermode calls it.[2] Edward Nehls, who gives this passage in his *Composite Biography* of Lawrence, was not able to find anyone to corroborate Ford's claim that he made any such visit.[3] But the emphatic Ford is not easy to ignore and if this is myth-making it may at least serve us here as a provocation to establish something of the truer colours of that chapel milieu. More particularly, if the ministers of the Lawrence's Congregational Chapel in Eastwood were not quite like this, what sort of men were they?

Part of the question is resolved by John Beer in a useful *Times Literary Supplement* article: 'Ford's Impression of the Lawrences'.[4] He makes out the case for not wholly dismissing Ford's account, citing the preface to Ford's book where Ford concedes that his accounts are not always strictly true, but goes on:

> Where it has seemed expedient to me I have altered episodes that I have witnessed but I have been careful never to distort the character of the episode. The accuracies I deal in are the accuracies of my impressions.[5]

Taking this into account, Beer suggests, it is reasonable to suspect that, while Ford had not himself been to Nottingham (let alone Eastwood), he is nevertheless

drawing on what someone - Lawrence, perhaps, or Lawrence's girl-friend Jessie Chambers - had told him about intellectual life there, and he goes on to suggest that the Rev. J.M.Lloyd Thomas, minister of High Pavement *Unitarian* Chapel in Nottingham, whom Jessie Chambers, and very likely Lawrence too, knew and respected, was a man whose interests, and influence, would not be much misrepresented by Ford's description.[6] Lawrence himself in *Sons and Lovers*, has Paul Morel get 'more or less into connexion with the Socialist, Suffragette, Unitarian people in Nottingham'[7] and at the end of the novel Paul and Miriam meet by chance at the Unitarian Chapel. So that 'given its lack of precision', Beer concludes, 'Ford's account is by no means without truth to the situation.' Indeed 'it helps to illuminate a particular stage of Lawrence's development from the more devout Congregationalism of his earlier youth to the personally defined vitalism of his maturity.'

I find this an illuminating observation, and we could expand it by noting that Lawrence would have been well acquainted at first hand with the range of provincial Nonconformity. In a sermon-tasting age, just as he knew the 'personal emotionalism which one found among the Methodists when I was a boy',[8] so it would have been quite natural for him as a young man to go on to sample the more or less explicitly cultivated intellectualism of the Unitarians. But that would have been a late and momentary phase. The fundamental layer in that experience for Lawrence was, of course, the Congregational Chapel, as we know from 'Hymns in a Man's Life': 'good to be brought up a Protestant: and among Protestants a Nonconformist, and among Nonconformists a Congregationalist' ('HML', 600). And we know, too, how, for Jessie Chambers, the Congregational Chapel 'became the centre of our social life', one which her family had gravitated back to, having there 'roots and traditions of a sort'.[9]

The present paper is an attempt to find just one or two pointers to the character of Congregationalism in that Midlands mining town at the turn of the century. And in singling out the ministers who served the Eastwood Congregational Church we shall be following a lead from Jessie Chambers as well as from Ford Madox Ford. For of the two aspects of that Chapel ethos which she singles out, the principal one is her memory of those ministers, whose visits the family valued, and whose sermons they all discussed after the service on Sundays. The other is the Congregational Literary Society, but that is a subject beyond the scope of this paper.[10]

The Congregational Church in Eastwood was established in 1868, and so it had still had only a quite short history when Mrs Lawrence joined it some time after her marriage in 1875. But there was nothing new about Independency in that part of Nottinghamshire. The congregation at the hamlet of Moorgreen a mile from Eastwood dates back to 1662, and there were close relations between the two chapels (the Moorgreen minister assisted, for instance, at the funeral of Lawrence's brother Ernest in 1901[11] - and it is this picturesque little chapel in the fields, rather than the Eastwood chapel itself, that provides the most obvious

original for Morley Chapel, setting for the harvest festival in Lawrence's short story 'Fanny and Annie'). The principal chapel in Nottingham itself, Castle Gate, where Jessie Chamber's mother had attended with 'terrifying earnestness' as a girl (as J.D.Chambers, the youngest son, records in Nehls, III, 533), was likewise a seventeenth century foundation and had long been one of English Congregationalism's most important churches. If the assembly at Eastwood had no history going back to the time of embattled Saints harassed by the Conventicles Act of 1664 it had neighbours close enough that did.

Nevertheless it was middle-class Victorian enterprise, more or less Evangelical, that built the Eastwood chapel, rather than reforming Calvinist zeal. Jessie Chambers lived soon enough afterwards to know the stories about how it was done:

> Old-fashioned people ... did not speak of the Congregational chapel but referred to it as 'Butty's Lump'. The promoters of the scheme for building the new chapel were influential at the colliery, and the surest means of securing a good 'stall' in the pit was to make a handsome donation to the building fund.

'Perhaps,' she adds, 'that explains why our chapel had its air of elegance, so rare in nonconformist chapels' (E.T., 16).

The foundation, as reflected in this memoir, had been rather uncharacteristic for a Congregational church. More usually, a new Congregation first formed itself and then set about raising money for its own church building, but at Eastwood the building project had come first, at the instance of neighbouring Congregationalists, and then the church assembly was formed. The Eastwood Congregational chapel grew out of what were largely middle-class values and aspirations. And it showed a prosperous face to the world in its Gothic revival building; through to the 1960s, when it was eventually pulled down to make way for a supermarket, it remained one of the few more elegant buildings in the drab main street.[12]

There were altogether three ministers at Eastwood during Lawrence's early life up to the time he went away to teach in Croydon. The first, the Rev Charles Wesley Butler, came to Eastwood in 1874 and left in 1890 when Lawrence was only 4 years old. It could have been in his time that Mrs Lawrence went over from the Methodists to become a member of the Eastwood Congregational church, and if *Sons and Lovers* were really autobiographical then he would have been the original of the clergyman who visited Mrs Morel in Paul's infancy, and who with his 'quaint and fantastic' ideas she brings 'judiciously to earth' (*SL*, 46). Butler was not, however, 'a Bachelor of Arts of Cambridge,' nor indeed of any other University, and there is no particular reason to suppose that he was a young widower, or very poor, or very shy and no preacher.

But is is difficult to discover much more about Butler. For one thing, there isn't the usual, and useful obituary note in the Congregational *Yearbook* after his death,

as at some stage after leaving Eastwood he left the Congregational ministry to become a Unitarian,[13] though that in itself, at this period, suggests that he had decidedly intellectual inclinations.

The two ministers Lawrence would have remembered were the Rev John Loosemore, who was in Eastwood from 1890 to 1896, and the Rev Robert Reid, who took up the ministry there in 1898 and left in 1911. Both, like so many nonconformist ministers in England, were expatriates, so to speak: Loosemore, a Welshman and Reid, a Scot. Neither, that is, though it was very much part of the English Dissenting tradition that he should enter its ministry, came himself directly from that tradition. Each imbibed very characteristic, and to some degree interestingly different streams of that tradition in the course of his English education for the Congregational ministry - Loosemore's going rather more nearly back to the classical intellectual tradition in Congregationalism sustained by the old Dissenting Academies, and Reid's reflecting more of the organised, institutionalised forms of late Victorian Congregationalism in its encounter with the new conditions of industrial urban life.

John Loosemore was born in Swansea in 1859. His education followed a common Congregational pattern for the period: first a Scottish university - Glasgow - and then an Independent theological school - Airedale College, at Undercliffe near Bradford. At least that is how the obituary in the Congregational *Yearbook* for 1952 gives the sequence, but elsewhere it appears that it was the practice for all Airedale students to begin there in Yorkshire, then attend one of the British universities for the full undergraduate Arts course, and then return to Airedale for three years of theology (presumably more of them went to Scottish universities than to English ones). One of the Airedale professors would go to Scotland each year to visit the Airedale students at Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. It was very likely under this arrangement that John Loosemore went to Glasgow. Other, rawer lads who wanted 'polishing up' were sent to Edinburgh where they would get more of it.[14]

His first call was to Eastwood, where he went in 1890. Jessie Chambers remembers him as the 'charming young Welshman' who was a great friend of the family (E.T., 17). He seems to have left a deep impression on Jessie's intensely religious mother: Jessie's youngest brother, Dr J.D.Chambers, recalls how, twenty years afterwards, she would talk to him 'with rapt absorption' of the doings of Mr Loosemore (Nehls, III,534). Dr Chambers's recollection suggests that she would have had an instinctive reverence for the Congregationalist minister, but Loosemore was an astringent pastor whose ideas were lively and radical enough to disturb her deeply orthodox pieties. At Airedale he had come under the strong influence of the lively Old Testament scholar Dr Archibald Duff, and overtones of his enthusiasm for the new Higher Criticism he had freshly imbibed there can be heard in Jessie Chambers's memoir:

> He and father used to have long and animated discussions about the authenticity of the Bible. The minister offended mother when he said in his bright way that the story of the Garden of Eden was just a beautiful fairy-tale to explain the beginnings of life on earth to simple people. Mother protested with warmth:
>
> 'If you will doubt one part of the Bible you will doubt it all', and thereafter went to bed, leaving the men to discuss the Bible until the small hours (E.T., 17)

The history of Airedale College goes back directly to 1795 when it was formed in connection, initially, with the Upper Chapel at Idle in Yorkshire, (the name of the college was settled, for obvious reasons, as 'Airedale' soon afterwards), but it was also the successor to an earlier Academy at Heckmondwike dating from 1754.[15] Although even by the time of the original Heckmondwike Academy the old Dissenting Academies were becoming more and more explicitly bent on preparing men for the ministries of particular nonconformist bodies and had begun to lose some of their earlier breadth and liberality, the curriculum at Airedale in Loosemore's day still retained an element of the strength and openness of the old tradition. Students from their first year there took in a wider range of subjects than their counterparts at the established English universities, reading mathematics, English literature and German as well as the conventional classics.

Not much is to be discovered about the life and personality of John Loosemore beyond what is contained in the brief obituary in the Congregational *Yearbook* for 1952, the year after his death, in occasional mentions in the biography of his closest friend, Dr J.H.Jowett, and in Jessie Chambers's brief recollection of him. He married the Quaker sister of a Cambridge professor, he served as a minister in Birmingham and in Blackburn after he left Eastwood, and he retired from the ministry in 1917 when a throat condition began to interfere with his preaching. But our interest is in an ethos as well as in individuals and something of the ambient intellectual world of Loosemore's experience can be glimpsed in the quite closely associated life of Loosemore's great friend Dr Jowett.

John Henry Jowett D.D., C.H., President of the Free Church Council in 1910, was Congregationalism's most celebrated and indeed lionized preacher in his day. He and Loosemore formed a close friendship at Airedale which lasted until Jowett's death in 1924 when John Loosemore spoke the words of committal at his friend's funeral. Loosemore was best man at Jowett's wedding shortly before he himself came to Eastwood; after his own retirement in 1917 he went to help Jowett at Westminster Chapel; and Jowett's biographer makes it clear that the two men shared deeply similar interests. Loosemore himself recalled of his friend that he was 'very intimate with Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Emerson and Bunyan, and he was married to the Bible ... he crowded in beauty everywhere and made public worship "as interesting as a theatre", as one collarless man remarked on leaving a service.'[16]

Jowett's early life, in a village near Halifax, followed a familiar and classical sequence, of Sunday School, Grammar School, pupil-teaching at the

Board-school, books from the Library at the Mechanic's Institute and introduction to public and intellectual debate in Chapel societies. Then at the age of nineteen, conforming to the model that Mrs Lawrence seems to have had in view when, as Lawrence tells us, she hoped her youngest son 'who was "clever", might one day be a professor or a clergyman or perhaps even a little Mr Gladstone',[17] Jowett left school-teaching to enter Airedale College. His great reputation during his subsequent career was for his preaching, yet however he was idolized for it - in London and in New York - there was nothing flamboyant about his style or his emphasis. 'He eschewed theatrical gestures and rhetoric. He spoke in an almost conversational tone and his slight, straight, formally clad figure expounded an enlightened Evangelical doctrine with precise gestures. He was rarely sensational, never topical; his main concern was with the deeper elements of spiritual life. With an uncanny felicity of phrase he loved to extol Divine grace.'[18]

It is not possible to say whether Loosemore's history resembled Jowett's in any way before he went to Airedale College, and afterwards Jowett had a far more luminous career to which Loosemore was at most a quiet auxiliary, but at the time they both entered the ministry Loosemore certainly shared the great pleasure that Jowett took in scholarship. Loosemore 'maintained his intellectual interests till a few days before his death', the *Yearbook* obituary informs us. 'He loved his garden (also an echo of Jowett), his books and his Lord.'[19]

It may not be altogether fanciful to conceive of Loosemore as conforming to an image from an earlier generation, of the sequestered and bookish Dissenting minister such as we might encounter in George Eliot's Mr Lyon in *Felix Holt*, or in Mrs Gaskell's Mr Benson in *Ruth*. Robert Reid, on the other hand, comes across as a more actively late-Victorian figure, and, though he seems to have been a genial and attractive man, his associations were with a busier, institutionalising strain in Victorian Congregationalism inherited from the Evangelical movement rather than from Doddridge's eighteenth century, a Congregationalism more formally mobilized against the conditions of an industrialized society.

He was born at Stonehaven near Aberdeen in 1868, came to live in England in the course of what the Yearbook obituary in 1956 simply refers to as a 'business career', and at some time in his mid twenties entered the Congregational Institute at Nottingham under Dr J.B.Paton.

Nothing can be told about his early education, but his theological college, the Nottingham Institute, as it was commonly called, founded under Dr Paton in 1863, was intended to have the special function of training older men who wished to enter the ministry from other walks of life. It was one of Paton's ideas that the training there should be flexible, both compensating for early deficiencies in a student's education and taking account of the more practical inclinations of older men who would find it difficult to adapt themselves to conventional academic disciplines.[20]

Paton himself was a vigorous Evangelical at the period when the great Evangelical enterprise of the 'Inner Mission' to the urban masses was leading to a multiplication of Committees and Movements for formalizing the spread of enlightenment among the now increasingly literate populace. The Nottingham Institute was one of many enterprises he was involved in; amongst other things he was an important early promoter of University Extension, and he helped to launch the University College in Nottingham.

It would be easy to caricature the daunting Scottish drive of this mentor of Reid's. He seems to have had a penchant for mottoes. On his mantelpiece a framed card advocated 'Consecration - Concentration - Punctuality'; to a student he recommended 'three things you must cultivate: precision, decision, incision'.[21] His widely celebrated sermon class at the Institute was conducted on astringently critical lines. Robert Reid, who was evidently strongly impressed by his old principal, contributed a description of it to the biography by Paton's son.[22] The memoir isn't sufficient for us to form much of an impression from it of Reid himself, but his teacher is vivid enough. Paton's relentless Scottish insistence on 'effectiveness' emerges, together with the impression that he was an imposingly 'effective' pedagogue himself, but Reid does also seem to be drawing out a largeness and generosity in the man that was there to be recorded. It is clear too that Reid would afterwards have recognized that his own sermons had to be capable of meeting stern criticism and be intellectually coherent and responsible.

There may have been a continuing Smilesian tone to Paton's teaching but it is possible to hear through it older Independent themes. A memoir by another student, C.W.Clark, suggests something of the way that Paton might transmit characteristics of the old preaching tradition:

> Another thing he impressed on us was to remember that we were not going to be Methodist itinerants, going from Circuit to Circuit every three years, but pastors of a people perhaps for half a lifetime, or even a whole lifetime. Therefore we were not to ramble from field to field in search of flowers of rhetoric with which to decorate a sermon, but to select a spadebreadth and dig deep for thought to strengthen it. Then we should endure.[23]

The available sources give us no details of the curriculum that Reid would have followed as a student at the Institute, but some surmises can be made. An article in the (Congregational) *British Quarterly Review* in 1870 on 'The Congregational Ministry and its Education' mentions the Nottingham Institute as being intended to remedy 'the absence of education which has too often characterized the village pastors of Congregational churches' (as distinguished, that is, from those of the more prominent town churches), and what the writer has in mind as a standard is that ministers should at least have a fair acquaintance with the scriptures in Greek and Hebrew, with the literature 'out of which the New Testament, at least, made its appearance', with ancient and church history, with comparative theology, and even comparative religion - and some understanding too of 'the way in which

scientific method is now encroaching on the domain of religion,[24] not only in the cosmogeny of the Book of Genesis but in the realms of religious experience and the innermost shrine of Divine Life in the soul.'[25] The article makes out an insistent case for the liberal education of ministers that, on the face of it, would seem to have been the tradition at the older colleges, like Airedale, and Paton's college seems to have been taken as a place where the right sort of attempt was being made.[26]

Paton himself as principal was equipped to set his scratch assembly of students a considerable example of scholarship. C.W.Clarke remembered him with some awe:

> A profound scholar, generally admitted to be one of the most learned in Europe. Science, Philosophy, Theology, were as the alphabet to him, to say nothing of languages.[27]

And there is enough evidence to suggest that there was a fair amount of truth in this; Clarke has a note about extempore translations from Sanskrit. So we should expect Robert Reid to have been more than well enough equipped for the coaching in elementary Latin he consented to give the novice Lawrence.

Robert Reid came to Eastwood[28] very fresh from Paton's college, and the marks of his training are evident in what he set about doing there (like establishing the Cadet Corps and the Boy's Brigade) but his early popularity suggests that he had attractive personal qualities of his own by which to make his way. Before he had been in Eastwood a year we find him being saluted in the *Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser* as the 'highly esteemed' President of the new Congregational Literary Society.[29] Founding it had been one of his first enterprises. The evidence is fragmentary, but the impression one forms is that he was an energetic and intelligent man who easily and graciously filled the quite prominent position he occupied in the community as minister of the Congregational Church.

He established a reputation as a preacher, and sometimes his sermons would be reported in the *Advertiser*. In November 1903 there was a series of 'Powerful Sermons' on 'Modern Religious Perils' (Sentimentality, Inconsistency, etc); in December 1907 another on 'Religion and Science' ('Glad to see it', commented Lawrence's free-thinking friend Will Hopkin in his weekly column.[30]) The sermon on Evolution in the latter series invoked the monitory image of Galileo and, going by the reported outline, was generally well-informed about its subject.

The impression is confirmed by Jessie Chambers. She describes the interest she and Lawrence still took in Reid's sermons during Lawrence's College days (in about 1907), when they were beginning to question the orthodox dogmas:

> We were still regular attenders at the Congregational Chapel where our minister used to preach interesting sermons that were more lectures than sermons, and on the walk home we would discuss the sermon and religion in general(E.T.83).

She also tells of a scheme Lawrence conceived of for confronting Reid with their questioning:

> Lawrence had an idea of writing to our minister telling him of the agnostic authors he had read, particularly J.M. Robertson, T.H. Huxley and Haeckel, and asking him to define his position with regard to the standpoint of these writers. The letter was to be signed by the three of us, Lawrence, my brother ... and myself. I thought it was an excellent method of getting the minister to say where he stood, and warmly supported the idea, but Lawrence drew me up in his sharp way:
>
> 'It's all very well for you,' he said, 'you'll get none of the blame. I shall be the young man gone very much wrong.'
>
> Probably the thought of his mother held him back, for the letter was never sent to the minister (E.T., 84-5).

Jessie's response makes it clear that she, for her part, did not expect the minister to take offence, and that there was no question but that Reid could be counted on to *have* a considered opinion about these writers.

But while the joint letter was not sent Lawrence evidently hadn't too many qualms about being 'the young man gone very much wrong'. and went ahead on his own. The letter is in the first volume of the Cambridge Edition of the *Letters* together with a subsequent one of a few weeks later taking up Reid's response. The young University College student's letters have their share of 'the assurance and inflatus (*sic*) of youth', for which he asks Reid's pardon in the first,[31] but they also indicate an intellectual level at which Reid's preaching and ministry might engage some of his congregation.

The first letter (15 October 1907) comes directly enough to the point. Lawrence sets before Reid the reading he had done - Darwin, Herbert Spencer, Renan, and more recent critics of Christianity - and then he asks to know where indeed 'the Churches' do stand.

> On the subjects of the Miracles, Virgin Birth, the Atonement, and finally, The Divinity of Jesus. And I would like to know, because I am absolutely in ignorance, what is precisely the orthodox attitude - of the Nonconformist Churches to such questions as Evolution, with that the Origin of Sin, and as Heaven and Hell (*Letters*, i, 37).

The second letter (3 December 1907) is longer, and much more of a confessional declaration:

> I have been brought up to believe in the absolute necessity for a sudden spiritual conversion; I believed for many years that the Holy Ghost descended and took conscious possession of the 'elect' - the converted one; I thought all conversions were, to a greater or less degree, like that of Paul's. Naturally, I yearned for the same, something the same. That

> desire was most keen a year ago, and during the year before that ... 'Give yourself' you say. I was constantly endeavouring to give myself, but Sir, to this day I do not understand what this 'giving' consists in, embodies, and includes. I have been moved by Mr Lane, by Ritchie's dramatic fascination, by your earnest and less intoxicating appeal. Yet in the moments of deepest emotion myself has watched myself and seen that all the tumult has risen like a little storm, to die away again without great result (*Letters*, i, 39).

Years later, in 'Hymns in a Man's Life', Lawrence recalled his youthful shying away from what he identifies as a Methodist revivalism; 'The Primitive Methodists, when I was a boy were always having "revivals" and being "saved", and I always had a horror of being saved' ('HML', 600): for his own part, 'by the time I was sixteen I had criticised and got over the Christian dogma':

> It was quite easy for me: my immediate forbears had already done it for me. Salvation, heaven, Virgin birth, miracles, even the Christian dogmas of right and wrong - one soon got them adjusted ('HML', 599).

For the twenty-one year old Lawrence the perspective took longer to resolve itself into these simple lines. The 'adjustment' had been more protracted, and these letters to Reid show it still being sought for. The impulse to shock is there, but Reid seems not to have taken offence; the very survival of the letters (their editor, Professor Boulton has commented to me how carefully they were preserved by Reid to be passed on subsequently to his relatives) testifies both to the minister's methodical ways and to the respect he felt then and afterwards for his correspondent.

One of Reid's offices as Congregational minister was to preside over the committee of the Board School, and it was with this interest that he took the step of encouraging Lawrence to apply for the pupil-teacher's vacancy at the school.[32] He seems to have kept an active watch over the welfare of the pupil teachers too: a committee minute of 29 June 1902, for example, records that he would himself be making arrangements for May Chambers, Jessie's older sister, to be given more satisfactory study time.[33]

Reid was on close terms with both families. Ada Lawrence's memory of his visits to her mother one values for the glimpse it gives of Mrs Lawrence's vivid personality, but it also conveys an impression of the minister's own good humour:

> The minister liked to visit her, and they discussed religion and philosophy, for she was an excellent talker, and had a dry, whimsical sense of humour (Nehls, I, 9).[34]

May Chambers mentions an occasion when he came up to the farm with his child to take snapshots of them all, Lawrence being there too (Nehls, III, 567). But a later incident indicates that a certain distance might enter into relations with the minister, the social premium on visits like these being high enough to be gauged

rather sensitively: Lawrence 'stalked haughtily' into May's house one day (it would have been some time in 1907, after her marriage) to announce how slighted Mrs Lawrence felt because the minister's wife had been to visit May:

> 'She's never been to visit Mother, and Mother says she doesn't care if she never comes. She has nothing to say anyway when you do get into her company.'
>
> I felt ashamed that Bert should do such an errand; but remembering how he was dominated, I took the trouble of telling him in detail the reason for the visit, and he became himself again and ashamed of his errand.
>
> 'You know I like her, don't you?' he said earnestly.
>
> And we praised her dark and dainty beauty, her soft Scots accent and low voice, and the fun that could leap into her eyes. But I did not tell him she had invited me to visit her, nor did I pay the visit, fearing to inflame jealousy aroused and so endanger her peace of mind. But I was sorry not to go (Nehls, III 608).

The anecdote strikes me as having an authentic note, and suggests that the minister may have chosen to preserve a degree of pastoral formality in his relations with the Lawrences, stopping short of close personal friendship. They were not the most comfortable of families, and the tensions in the household were of a kind to make it inevitable that as the minister he would be drawn in.

The most direct token of his relation to the Lawrences comes in a final two letters Lawrence wrote to him, dated 13 January 1911 and 27 March 1911. The first of these, written a year after Mrs Lawrence's death, is in fact an appeal to the minister as the family pastor. Lawrence is in Croydon, and he writes to Reid about the difficult time Ada is having with their father, and he tells him that they wish for his support. It is not a request, quite. One forms the impression that the minister has already been involved. The letter is surprising, even rather shocking, in its unreservedly intimate familiarity. Lawrence is bitterly dismissive of his father. The old man has 'several times in the week' come in 'drunk or tipsy' (one wonders which) and there has been 'much bad blood' (*Letters*, i, 220). He is 'disgusting, irritating and selfish as a maggot ... Yet I am sorry for him: he's old, and stupid, and very helpless and futile ... If any woman would have him, and he'd marry, we'd be thankful.' There is a final accusatory note: 'If it hadn't been all so cruel for my mother, I could accept it better.' It is a railing, complaining outburst, in which Lawrence sees nothing in his animus to withhold from the minister. It is hard to imagine such raw and naked feelings being exposed except to someone very close to the family and to the writer. What can the minister have made of the perfunctory assumption of his partisanship that runs through the letter? 'I can't come down till Easter - and I've no money. Will you try and see things square at Lynn Croft? It's a shame to trouble you with such a job - but I know you are good.'

The crisis, or the 'bad blood', continues to surface in letters to Ada, and in one to Will Hopkin, during the next two months, but after that it seems to have settled. Perhaps Reid was the peacemaker. He himself was very soon to leave Eastwood to take up a new call to Pendleton, near Manchester, but in the meantime he had evidently continued to be a support to Ada (and perhaps to her father too?). On 8 March 1911 Lawrence writes to Ada: I am sorry Mr Reid is leaving – it will desolate you. But he'll be happier, poor man' (*Letters*, i, 236).

It is not likely that Lawrence ever saw Reid again. He had hoped the minister might still be in Eastwood when he came back for the Easter holidays in the middle of April, but by then Reid's ministry in Eastwood had already come to an end - officially on 26 March, the last Sunday in the month.[35] Lawrence's own farewell letter to the minister was written the next day. His departure will be a loss to Ada and to Emily, 'a loss to many people in the place' (*Letter*, i, 244). He thanks the minister

> for your goodness to my people. My mother held you very high, and the debt of gratitude the dead leave we can never discharge,

and he reflects on the vicissitudes of his own tutelage and its sequel:

> If I have ever been unmannerly or inimical towards you, I beg you to forgive me. I have a sense that your generosity has exceeded mine by a great way. In the face of differing opinions we mask and disfigure a real heart-esteem - which I have done ... If only we were allowed to look at Scripture in the light of our own experience, instead of having to see it displayed in a kind of theatre, false-real, and never developing, we should save such a lot of mistakes. It's the narrowness of folk's barb-wire restrictions we get our raw wounds from - and then blame the world.

There are reconstructions we could venture here of the history of this relationship: Lawrence and the minister have been close enough for the younger mans's repudiation of orthodoxy to have been felt in personal frictions. But the 'real heart-esteem' is there, and is confirmed by what Lawrence had written to Ada the same evening, mentioning that he was about to write to Reid: 'I'm sorry he's leaving: at the bottom, I like him: and I always respect him' (*Letter*,i, 243).

The religious *Bildung* of the young Lawrence is something that the biographer must seek to locate between the various co-ordinates of the Band of Hope battle-cry and Renan's *Life of Jesus*, the fierce residual Methodism of Lydia Lawrence, born Beardsall, the emancipated intellectualism of the 'Socialist, Suffragette, Unitarian people in Nottingham', and, somewhere in the centre, the 'earnest' thoughtfulness of Robert Reid's Congregationalism. We know that Lawrence's reaction was *away* from Reid's religion, and through to *Apocalypse* (1919) the terms of his repudiation do not really change from the statement we get of them in this valedictory letter: a Scripture 'false-real, and never developing'. But the letter commiserates more than it blames; the criticism is of the doctrine, not the man.

Donald Davie in his 1976 Clark Lectures argues the poverty - both in doctrine and liturgy - of the Dissenting religion that a minister in Reid's day would be likely to inherit for transmission. The classic tradition of the English Old Dissent was by the 1890s attenuated (overtaken by Evangelicalism) to the point that however 'touchingly' aware of it Lawrence shows himself to be in 'Hymns in a Mans's Life', he himself can scarcely be said to have known it from personal experience.[36] The Congregationalism of Eastwood, Davie conjectures, would have been 'as impoverished, intellectually and symbolically, as it was at that date through most of the kingdom', so that we must question, indeed 'whether (Christian) Revelation was ever presented to him in such a form that, when he rejected it, he knew what he was rejecting.'[37]

This is a judgement that our own findings can only partly challenge. Reid's doctrine, going by what we know of his training under Paton, would have been the conventional Evangelicalism of the period; intellectually, that could accommodate readily enough the new Higher Criticism in the study of Scripture; at a lower level the revivalism of Moody and Sankey would not have been doctrinally out of key. Yet Reid himself, Lawrence seems to suggest in 'Hymns in a Man's Life', did not care for Moody and Sankey, and he 'avoided sentimental messes' in his choice of hymns;[38] his personal style of preaching, as we have seen, Lawrence distinguished as an 'earnest and less intoxicating appeal'. Evangelical Congregationalism may no longer have been quite the *generator* of the 'peculiarly strong intellectual tradition' that F.R.Leavis invoked in his own tribute to Lawrence's Chapel upbringing,[39] but there was certainly no fundamentalist hostility to intellectual concerns. There was every assumption that orthodox cultivation of the mind would serve orthodox piety; 'civilization', for the Evangelicals, however philistine their vision of it might sometimes have been, was after all the manifestation of Christianity. And Lawrence's letters give us no reason for thinking of Reid as a philistine.

Robert Reid does not come across as a vivid or commanding personality in Lawrence's early life: Donald Davie's argument could be framed in another way by observing that Lawrence's conversion, as it were, to unbelief is a milder transition than, say, the passionate rebellion of a Stephen Daedalus against the forcing-house of Jesuit Catholicism. Yet Reid's was a tutelary presence, to encourage, to draw out, and also to serve as a marker for a widening intellectual divergence. That far, it was a classic role for the Independent minister.

'At the bottom, I like him: and I always respect him.' One mark of Lawrence's continued respect for Reid is in the fiction. Lawrence knew many ministers. As a boy he delighted in taking them off for the amusement of his friends like the Chambers family, and the satirical inclination carries over into the fiction, where the ministers nearly all share a certain comic and helpless unworldliness. I do not mean to elevate this into a generalisation about Lawrence's attitude to Non-conformist ministers, for the drift of the characterisation is in each case to be understood only within the particular context of the achieved fiction, calling

for analyses that cannot be attempted here, but the close reader will find, I suggest, that while we do catch glimpses of Reid here and there in the minister-constructs of the fiction, at just those points the satire is invariably deflected. Robert Reid *is* the minister in *The Lost Girl* whom the flightly and pretentious James Houghton resents for his 'coarse Scotch manner';[40] he is *not* Norman Dixon of the plump, fluttery hands in *Mr Noon*. He is scarcely the diffident, shy, inarticulate young widower with the Cambridge BA who defers to Mrs Morel in *Sons and Lovers* and is thrown into confusion by her pit-grimed husband. But when Lawrence sets the same young minister in the relation of godfather to Paul Morel, afterwards teaching his godson French and German and mathematics, in that symbolic guardianship may we not, perhaps, see one way in which the novelist did indeed take care to acknowledge his youthful debt to the minister of the Eastwood Chapel?

Notes

1. Ford Madox Ford, *Return to Yesterday* (London: Gollancz, 1931), pp. 392-3
2. F.Kermode, *Lawrence* (London: Fontana, 1973), p.10.
3. E.Nehls, *D.H.Lawrence; A Composite Biography*, 3 vols (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957-1959), I, pp. 151-2. Cited in the text as 'Nehls'.
4. *TLS*, 5 May 1972, p.520
5. Ford, *Return to Yesterday*, p.viii.
6. Those interests are illustrated in the subject on which Lloyd Thomas was invited to address the Eastwood Congregational Literary Society in October 1909: 'William Morris: Poet, Artist, Socialist'. (*Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser*, 18 October 1909.) By this date, of course, Lawrence himself had moved to Croydon.
7. *Sons and Lovers* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1948), p.316. Cited in the text as *SL*.
8. 'Hymns in a Man's Life' in *Phoenix II: Uncollected and Other Prose Works* by D.H.Lawrence, ed. Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore (London: Heinemann, 1968), p.600. Cited in the text as 'HML'.
9. E.T.(Jessie Chambers), *D.H.Lawrence: A Personal Record*, 2nd ed. (London: Cass, 1965), p.52. Cited in the text as 'E.T.'.
10. See David Newmarch, 'Literary and Kindred Evenings in D.H.Lawrence's Eastwood: the Eastwood Congregational Literary Society 1899-1909', *D.H.Lawrence: The Journal of the D.H.Lawrence Society*, Vol 4, no 3 (1988-89), pp 7-19.
11. This was the Rev. Geo. Ineson. *Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser*, 18 October 1901.
12. 'Tall and full of light, and yet still' ('HML' 600).
13. This much can be established from 'Surmans's Directory of Congregational Biography', a card index compilation kept at Dr Williams's Library in London. The dates of Butler's ministry in Eastwood - and other such dates in this paper - are taken from the relevant issues of the official *Yearbook* of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.
14. A. Porritt, *John Henry Jowett* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1924), p.35.

15. For the history of Airedale College see R.Tudur Jones *Congregationalism in England 1662-1962* (London: Independent Press, 1962), pp. 140-1, 177, 237; and for Duff and the Higher Criticism at Airedale, Jones, p.257.
16. John Loosemore, quoted in an editorial obituary; 'John Henry Jowett', *Congregational Quarterly*, 2 (1924) 135.
17. 'Autobiographical Sketch', *Phoenix II*, p.300
18. Jones, p.371.
19. *Yearbook* (1952), p.520.
20. J.L.Paton, *John Brown Paton: A Biography* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914), Chapter VI.
21. J.L.Paton, p.122.
22. J.L.Paton, p.99-105
23. C.W.Clarke, 'Dr J.B.Paton as I knew him', *Congregational Quarterly*, 16 (1938) 323.
24. Robert Reid's sermons on 'Religion and Science' were enough of a local event to call forth comment in the Eastwood *Advertiser; see below.*
25. *British Quarterley Review*, 52 (1870) 101.
26. At the more traditional colleges the degree requirements of London University increasingly influenced the curricula.
27. C.W.Clarke, p.322.
28. In about December 1898 - he had already accepted the call to the church there eighteen months earlier while he was still a student.
29. *Advertiser*, 5 October 1899.
30. W.E.Hopkin ('Anglo-Saxon'), *Advertiser*, 4 December 1907.
31. James T. Boulton (ed.), *The Letters of D.H.Lawrence*, vol. 1,1901-13 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p.37. Cited in the text as *Letters*, i.
32. Harry T. Moore, *The Priest of Love* (London: Heinemann, 1974), p.54.
33. In the Minute Book of the Eastwood British School Committee in the custody of the Hon. Secretary of the Eastwood Congregational Church. (A late minute, of 11 December 1902, gives Lawrence's starting wage as a pupil teacher: fixed at 3 shillings a week.)
34. Nehls is no doubt right in taking this to be about Reid, not Loosemore, who left Eastwood when Ada was nine. But almost certainly Loosmore would also have called on Mrs Lawrence.
35. *Advertiser*, 31 March 1911.
36. Donald Davie, *A Gathered Church* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), p.92.
37. Davie, p.95.
38. Though Lawrence himself, as Achsah Brewster remembered from 1928, 'knew all the Moody and Sankey revival songs, the Salvation Army tunes, every work of all the verses', and sang them with huge (and iconoclast) gusto (Brewster, in Nehls, III, pp. 216-7, to be read with pp.228-9 where Brewster recounts the mock sacramentals with

a baptism in wine, Sanskrit hymn and Navajo war-whoops of the day before Lawrence wrote 'Hymns in a Man's Life').

39. F.R. Leavis, *D.H.Lawrence: Novelist* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973), p.321.
40. D.H.Lawrence, *The Lost Girl* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1950), p.20.

'Nearly a Stranger' The letters of D.H.Lawrence to Blanche Jennings

Fabienne Blakey

> Because you are nearly a stranger, and one may always scatter the seeds of one's secret soul out to a stranger, hoping to find there fertile soil to replace the exhausted home earth, to which we will not, even cannot, confide what is precious to us; so because you are a cold stranger, and not my mother or my bosom friend, I will come to you for sympathy with that sore, that sickness of mine which is called 'Laetitia'.[1]

Ever since reading the first volume of the Cambridge edition of Lawrence's letters, I have been puzzled by the richness and variety of those addressed to Blanche Jennings. There are altogether twenty published letters, from April 1908 to January 1910. For those who know of the women who were acquainted with Lawrence before he met Frieda, Blanche Jennings precedes Louie Burrows. There were his Eastwood friends, Jessie Chambers, Alice Dax and Louie Burrows, who is mentioned as 'a girl, I am very fond of'(68); then later in Croydon, Agnes Holt whom he considered marrying, but who became detestable to him; and Helen Corke.

Born in 1881, Blanche was twenty-six years of age when she met Lawrence. In late 1907, she came to stay in Eastwood with her friend Alice Dax when she attended a women's rally in Nottingham. It is more than likely that it was Alice, with whom Lawrence later had an affair, who introduced Blanche to him. At that time, Blanche was living and working as a post-office clerk in Liverpool. What seems odd is that Lawrence should have asked Blanche for advice on his work, and maintained throughout 1908 a particularly intense epistolary relationship with her. One assumption, of course, is that Blanche was a sample of the society for whom his work would be written. He certainly did not object to changes in the social welfare of women, yet it was not, despite the fact that Blanche was a suffragette, the main subject of his correspondence. When Lawrence wrote to Blanche that 'women should refuse to be dominated, or even domineered, by the insolent "intellectuals"'(59), and barely five months later, that 'at bottom women love the brute in man best'(88), he seemed to test his intuitive knowledge against reality, and to listen for a woman's inner reactions. Lawrence's comments, and quotations from Blanche's letters indicate that Blanche became rather involved with him. At the height of the summer there must have been at least two letters a month in reply to his, and at Christmas she sent him a reproduction of Maurice Greiffenhagen's *Idyll*. Our impression is that Lawrence never took the point. Yet is was as if his letters and his emotions, confined by space and distance, expanded and worked in favour of an underground communication, which I have attempted to explore.

By the end of 1906, Lawrence had completed the first version of *The White Peacock*. Although the second version was no more satisfactory to him than the